

Development of An Innovation Model of Public Service in Education Management for the Disadvantaged Children of Local Government Organizations in the Area of Thai - Malaysian Border

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Abstract

Public service in education management plays a crucial role in ensuring that disadvantaged children have access to quality education and the opportunity to reach their full potential. Objectives: 1. To identify the factors that promote the quality of public services in education management for the disadvantaged children. 2. To develop innovative public service models in education management and policy recommendations to increase educational opportunities for disadvantaged children in local administrative organizations in the Thai-Malaysian border area. Methods: This study utilized mixed-method research. The quantitative phase was characterized by an initial quantitative phase of data collection by the questionnaire with 143 people from 61 Songkhla Province, 51 people from Narathiwat Province, 31 people from Satun Province by selecting through non-probability sampling by Quota methods was used for defining the sample. Then, the qualitative phase collected the data from 15 participants from group of executives, academics, experts, officials, and related people in the area in the southern border provinces. Participants were recruited using purposive sampling. Results: The result of the quantitative phase showed that there was no influence on the priority on the quality of public services in education management for disadvantaged children groups of local government organizations. The qualitative found the model of public service in education management for disadvantaged children of local government organizations in the area of the Thai-Malaysian border consists of formal education, a model aimed at direct access to children, establishment of specific institutions or special schools suitable for groups of disadvantaged children, and combination of multiple models for a comprehensive service.

Keywords: *Public Service, Education Management, Disadvantaged Children.*

Introduction

Public services are important functions that a government or public organization provides to meet the needs of citizens. These services are often funded by taxes or public revenue. The objective is to benefit society as a whole, not a specific person or group. Covers a variety of fields such as education, health care, social welfare, infrastructure, and public safety. Although the actual definition of public service may vary. But the main characteristics include public objectives. Nonprofit focus Government involvement and the status of essential services. Public services play an important role in promoting social justice, economic development, improving the quality of life, and upholding democratic values. However, the extent of government involvement in the provision of these services remains a matter of debate (Spicker, 2009; OECD, 2008; Pattanatornchai et al., 2024).

Disadvantaged children are children who face significant obstacles to their development and well-being. This is due to factors such as poverty, social exclusion, disability or conflict. These factors can limit access to education, health care, nutrition, and other important resources leading to worse outcomes in health, education and social development (Chien Thang & Thi Nguyet Trang, 2024; Zhao et al., 2023; OECD, 2022).

Millions of children around the world face significant barriers to accessing a quality education, including financial scarcity, inadequate teacher training, inadequate classrooms, limited teaching materials, and discrimination against children with disabilities. Physical disability is one of the most pressing challenges. Developing countries often face difficulties in securing adequate funding for education. Rely on foreign aid, which mainly benefits high-income countries. In addition, many countries lack adequately qualified teachers

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and classrooms are often overcrowded and lack adequate teaching materials, textbooks and other learning materials. There is a limited amount, which reduces the ability of students to learn. Moreover, children with disabilities face systematic discrimination and a lack of support, worsening educational inequalities. Addressing these issues requires concerted efforts from governments, international organizations, and civic society to ensure that every child has the opportunity to receive a quality education (Rueckert, 2019). In the United States schools in wealthier areas or those with fewer poor students receive more funding per capita than schools in very poor areas. This financial inequality creates inequality in access to resources and opportunities, resulting in educational inequality (Chasouras & Lopez, 2024).

The SEA-PLM 2019 Assessment showed the different significance in learning outcome of the grade 5 students in South East Asia. The study proceeded in Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, and Vietnam focused on the difference in the disadvantaged children. The wealthy children always had the study result better than the poor children (UNICEF, 2020).

According to the Quality Learning Foundation, Thailand has 6.4 million disadvantaged and out-of-school children. This includes over 30,000 street children, approximately 88,000 orphans, at least 10,000 child laborers under 15, and at least 25,000 children forced into prostitution or service industries. Nearly 3 million children were poor. The social and the economic condition in the present days is the vital factors that makes the children alone in the family (THAIRATH, 2013).

Since the COVID-19 outbreak in the three southern border provinces, starting with a large cluster of 132 people who were locals but had recently returned from Malaysia, the number of cases in the region has continued to rise. The lifestyle of Muslims, which involves group gatherings for religious activities, and the fact that many locals continued their daily routines or traveled across regions to spread their religion, led to situations where some areas had so many infections that it was impossible to trace the initial carrier. For responding to those situation, the government used the strict measurement which impacted the children in the aspect of staying at home, and unable to go to the school. Many of them had to drop out of the school. After that, there was no agency to continue providing assistance. As a result, many children face uncertainty after completing their compulsory education (Komalnimi, 2022).

Most of the previous papers focused on many areas in this issue, for example, the first one, Gorard et al. studied in the title of “Lessons for addressing educational disadvantage from a range of studies”. The study investigated the education achievement by funding from the government (Gorard et al., 2023). The second one, Shohel studied in the title of “Impact of Childhood Poverty on Education for Disadvantaged Children in Bangladesh”. This research explored that the reason of the poor children quitted from the high school. The article recommends policy and practice changes to improve secondary education for disadvantaged children in Bangladesh (Shohel, 2014). The last one, Óhidy et al. studied in the title of “Mentoring programmes for disadvantaged children in selected European countries”. This study explored the feasibility of using the consult program for solving the inequity for the disadvantaged children in Europe (Óhidy et al., 2020).

The current study attempts to fill this gap in the literature by focusing on the factors that promote the quality of public services in education management for disadvantaged children and innovative public service models in education management and policy recommendations to increase educational opportunities for disadvantaged children in local administrative organizations in the Thai-Malaysian border area.

Objective

To identify the factors that promote the quality of public services in education management for the disadvantaged children.

To develop innovative public service models in education management and policy recommendations to increase educational opportunities for disadvantaged children in local administrative organizations in the Thai-Malaysian border area.

Methodology

This study utilized a mixed method research by using the quantitative research for studying factors affecting quality enhancement of public services in education for the disadvantaged children groups of local government organizations in the area of Thai-Malaysian border, and the qualitative research for studying of the process of developing an innovation model of public service in education management and policy recommendations for enhancing educational opportunities for the disadvantaged children of local government organizations in the area of Thai-Malaysian border.

Quantitative Study

Participants. One thousand people completed the quantitative survey. The sample was comprised of 143 people from 61 Songkhla Province, 51 people from Narathiwat Province, 31 people from Satun Province. Non-probability sampling by Quota methods was used for defining the sample.

Instrument. The researchers developed a questionnaire based on the previous literature, such as the service quality lens. The survey consisted of factors affecting the quality of public services in education for the disadvantaged children groups of local government organizations in the area of the Thai-Malaysian border.

Analysis. The quantitative data was analyzed by descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis.

Qualitative Study

Participants. 15 participants from group of executives, academics, experts, officials, and related people in the area in the southern border provinces. Participants were recruited using purposive sampling.

Instrument. The instrument for this study was the focus group discussion. It was used a semi-structured interview protocol guided the development of innovative public service in education management models for the disadvantaged children groups of local government organizations in the area of the Thai-Malaysian border, and to obtain a conceptual framework and innovative model of public service in education for the disadvantaged children of local government organizations in the area.

Analysis. The qualitative data was analyzed by content analysis.

Results

Quantitative Finding

Identify factors affecting the quality enhancement of public services in education for disadvantaged children groups of local government organizations in the area of Thai-Malaysian border by using descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis.

Table 1. The Result of Percentage and Number of the Population Classified by the Emphasis on Quality of Public Services in Education for Disadvantaged Children of Local Government Organizations in the Southern Border Provinces (N=143)

Factors affecting the enhancement of the quality of public services in education for disadvantaged children of local government organizations	Most important	Very important	Moderate	Unimportant	Not the most important
.1Equitable Service					
1.1 Providing the same service for all customers without discrimination	23.1 (33)	63.6 (91)	12.6 (18)	0.7 (1)	0.00 (0)
1.2 Customers are treated using the same service standards	60.8 (87)	23.8 (34)	14.7 (21)	0.7 (1)	0.00 (0)
.2Timely Service					
2.1 The service is provided for a specified time.	18.2 (26)	42.0 (60)	38.5 (55)	1.4 (2)	0.00 (0)
.3Ample Service					
3.1 There are a sufficient number of public services.	19.6 (28)	52.4 (75)	25.9 (37)	2.1 (3)	0.00 (0)
3.2 The location of the service is suitable for the customers.	20.3 (29)	50.3 (72)	28.7 (41)	0.7 (1)	0.00 (0)
.4Continuous Service					
4.1 Consistent public service	23.8 (34)	64.3 (92)	8.4 (12)	3.5 (5)	0.00 (0)
4.2 Providing public services based on public interest	55.2 (79)	29.4 (42)	14.0 (20)	1.4 (2)	0.00 (0)
.5Progressive Service					
5.1 The quality and performance of public service has been improved	21.7 (31)	60.8 (87)	15.4 (22)	2.1 (3)	0.00 (0)

The table 1 can be described that “Providing the same services for all without discrimination” found that the majority of the population gave 63.6 percent of the highest importance, followed by the most important, 23.1 percent, the moderately important, 12.6 percent, and the population gave less importance, 0.7 percent, respectively. “Treated using the same standard of service,” found that the majority of the population gave 60.8 percent of the highest priority, followed by the highest priority at 23.8 percent, the moderately rated 14.7 percent, and the population gave low importance, 0.7 percent, respectively. “Services are provided for a specified time,” found that 42.0 percent of the population gave high priority, followed by 38.5 percent of the population at medium. 18.2 Percent of the population gave the most priority, and the population gave less priority, 1.4 percent, respectively. “Adequate availability of public services,” found that 52.4 percent of the population gave a high priority, followed by 25.9 percent of the population. The population gave the most priority at 19.6 percent. The population gave the least priority at 2.1 percent, respectively. “Location of services is appropriate to the service recipients,” found that the majority of the population gave 50.3 percent of the population priority, followed by 28.7 percent of the population at moderate, and 20.3 percent of the population was the most important. The population gave low importance, 0.7 percent, respectively. “Providing public services consistently.” It was found that the majority of the population gave a high priority to 64.3 percent, followed by the most priority at 23.8 percent. 8.4 percent of the population gave moderate priority, and the population gave low importance at 3.5 percent, respectively. “Providing public services based on the public interest,” found that the majority of the population gave the most priority at 55.2 percent, followed by the most priority at 29.4 percent. The population gave moderate priority at 14 percent, and the population gave less priority was 1.4 percent. “There has been an improvement in the

quality and performance of public services,” found that the majority of the population gave 60.8 percent of the highest priority, followed by the highest priority, 21.7 percent. The population gave a moderate priority 15.4 percent. The population gave less priority to 2.1%, respectively.

Table 2. The Result of Analyzing the Relationship Between Personal Factors and the Priority on the Quality of Public Services in Education Management for Disadvantaged Children of Local Government Organizations in the Area of the Thai-Malaysian Border

Independent Variable	Beta	S.E.
Constant	27.135***	4.742
Children's gender		
Male (reference group)	-	-
Female	.035	.596
Children's age	-1.579***	.349
Children's domicile		
Songkhla Province (reference group)	-	-
Satun Province	1.889*	.862
Narathiwat Province	-1.264	.837
Children's religion		
Buddhism (reference group)	-	-
Islam	-.980	.718
Children's shelter		
Live with parents (reference group)	-	-
Live with relatives	2.009*	1.039
Parent's gender		
Male (reference group)	-	-
Female	1.443	.880
Age		
Under 20 years old (reference group)	-	-
21-40 years	4.679	3.692
41-60 years	4.368	3.721
60+ years	1.660	3.854
Highest level of education		
Elementary School (Reference Group)	-	-
Lower Secondary/ Upper Secondary/Equivalent	1.718**	.724
Bachelor's degree	3.863***	1.084
Postgraduate	6.333	3.944
Occupation		
Farmers (reference group)	-	-
Trade	-.981	.913
Employee	.511	.838
Housewife	4.197***	1.134
Government officer	1.625	2.081
R Square	0.485	
Adjusted R Square	0.415	

* Statistically significant at the 0.05 level

** Statistically significant at the 0.01 level

*** Statistically significant at the 0.001 level

From the table 2, it was found that all independent variables were the child's gender, the child's age, the child's domicile, the child's religion, the child's place of residence, parents' gender, parents' age, parent's education level, and parent's occupation. These variables influence the dependent variable. It was the

emphasis on the quality of public services in educational management for disadvantaged children of local government organizations in the area of the Thai-Malaysian border 48.5% (R-square). When other independent variables were fixed, it was found that a child's age increases by 1 year, the score on the quality of public services in education management decreased by 1.579 points.

Children who are domiciled in Satun Province, parents had a 1.889 score on the priority on the quality of public services in educational management than children residing in Songkhla, but there was no difference in Narathiwat.

Children who are living with parents, their parents had 2.009 scores higher for the priority on the quality of public services in education than the children who are living with relatives.

Parents who graduated from high school or equivalent had 1.718 scores of the priority on the quality of public services in education more than parents who graduated from primary school. Parents who graduated with a bachelor's degree had 3.863 scores of the priority on the quality of public services in education more than parents who graduated from primary school.

Parents who were housewives had 4.197 scores for the importance of the priority on the quality of public services in education, higher than that in agriculture, but there was no difference in other occupations.

In addition, the independent variables were found, such as a child's gender, religion, parent's gender, and age. There was no influence on the priority on the quality of public services in education management for disadvantaged children groups of local government organizations. The child disability variable was not taken into account because no sample group has disabilities.

In conclusion, the result of the quantitative phase showed that there was no influence on the priority on the quality of public services in education management for disadvantaged children groups of local government organizations.

Qualitative Finding

The qualitative finding the develop innovative public service models in education management and policy recommendations to increase educational opportunities for disadvantaged children in local administrative organizations in the Thai-Malaysian border area. It consists of Issue 1, innovation of public service education for disadvantaged children, Issue 2, factors related to the process of innovation of public service education for disadvantaged children. Issue 3, problems and approaches to solving problems in providing public services in education management to disadvantaged children as well as the application of public service innovations in education management to other local government organizations as follows:

The objective of public service provision of education and policy recommendations for enhancing educational opportunities for disadvantaged children of local government organizations in the area of the Thai-Malaysian border. Those who participated in the group discussion gave the same definitions of disadvantaged children in the educational context, which means poor children who are children of a person whose culture differs from the majority of the people of the country and lives a very difficult life or their parent are labor. As well as children living in remote areas or children in families who migrated to live along the borders of the country so that those children have no opportunity or difficult access to education or other services.

The concept of providing public services in education to disadvantaged children of local government organizations in the area of the Thai-Malaysian border consists of:

Multicultural concept

The Philosophy of Sufficiency Economy concept

Participation concept

Networking concept

Management concept

Public service quality concept

The concept of learning organization

The concept of Peace Building

Principles of good governance

Leadership

It can be seen that such concepts of providing public services in education to disadvantaged children of local government organizations in the area of the Thai-Malaysian border should be based on 4 main concepts:

Equality and Integration, which focuses on the rights and equality of all children to receive education

The quality of education, which focuses on learning for life. It must have both academic and life aspects in proportion to the conditions and needs of the child.

Education and child development is a concept that views education as a tool to develop children's potential.

Cultural identity is a concept that aims to open the child's worldview to see the value of the cultural identity of each local context.

The model of public service in education management for disadvantaged children of local government organizations in the area of the Thai-Malaysian border consists of:

Formal education is the use of the school system as a base.

A model aimed at direct access to children is an emphasis on a service model that is easily accessible, attracting children to use the service, and accessing the children by using a mobile service vehicle, etc.

Establishment of specific institutions or special schools suitable for groups of disadvantaged children

Combination of multiple models for a comprehensive service

Policy recommendations for enhancing educational opportunities for disadvantaged children of local government organizations in the area of the Thai-Malaysian border.

Flexible adjustments of the process of providing public services in education management to meet various needs and adapt to the situation by combining many models to achieve a more comprehensive service. Local government organizations provide services to reach more disadvantaged children, such as having a mobile service vehicle, having a corresponding mechanism and process, and taking into account all aspects of the development of young children, including family and community.

There should be a push for relevant mechanisms, such as laws, policies, programs at local and national levels, and improving the teaching and learning curriculum to be effective standards.

Local government organizations create a situation that favors the provision of services, such as the participation of families, communities, and related agencies. They should decentralize the education management to the lower level more and create a network to support the education administration.

Discussion

The findings of this study were consistent with previous research that related to the topic in this research which can be described following the research issue which were as follows;

The concepts of providing public services in education to disadvantaged children of local government organizations in the area of the Thai-Malaysian border should be based on 4 main concepts:

Equality and Integration, which focuses on the rights and equality of all children to receive education. It is in line of Elfaizi and EL AOURI. They created the computable equilibrium for the students by not concerning about the defective learning (Elfaizi & EL AOURI, 2024).

The quality of education, which focuses on learning for life. It must have both academic and life aspects in proportion to the conditions and needs of the child. It is in line of Chopra. Results show that the low levels of learning are often associated with poor quality educational programmes (Chopra, 2015).

Education and child development is a concept that views education as a tool to develop children's potential. It is in line of Hysa and Jakupi. The result found that the education was the most profitable area and key to success for a society (Hysa & Jakupi, 2023).

Cultural identity is a concept that aims to open the child's worldview to see the value of the cultural identity of each local context. It is in line of Gunesch which found that the recognizing equally valuable cultural contributions would also improve institutions' diversity, equity, and inclusion, raising educational quality, motivations, and expectations. Cosmopolitan identity could thus educationally enrich and institutionally empower for global complexity and uncertainty (Gunesch, 2024).

Policy recommendations for enhancing educational opportunities for disadvantaged children of local government organizations in the area of the Thai-Malaysian border.

Flexible adjustments of the process of providing public services in education management to meet various needs and adapt to the situation by combining many models to achieve a more comprehensive service. Local government organizations provide services to reach more disadvantaged children, such as having a mobile service vehicle, having a corresponding mechanism and process, and taking into account all aspects of the development of young children, including family and community. It is in line of Santiago Jr. et al. Findings suggest that strengthening online teaching and delivery of methods by creating content tailored to the needs of the students during flexible learning will propel to ensuring the efficacy of teaching and learning processes. Various suggestions were offered for key players in education in addressing the challenges of online learning (Santiago Jr. et al., 2021).

There should be a push for relevant mechanisms, such as laws, policies, programs at local and national levels, and improving the teaching and learning curriculum to be effective standards. It is in line of Kumar and Rewari. Results found that the curriculum is the most important input, which can play a vital role in the overall development of students (Kumar & Rewari, 2022).

Local government organizations create a situation that favors the provision of services, such as the participation of families, communities, and related agencies. They should decentralize the education management to the lower level more and create a network to support the education administration. It is in line of Eden et al. It found that the parent participation in the children education was related to the better study grade (Eden et al., 2024).

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