Spirituality of principals
in Ecclesiastical Secondary Schools

"Dr.Phramaha Sakorn Pagdenog"

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the level of spirituality of principals in ecclesiastical secondary schools. The sample group was 338 teachers from ecclesiastical secondary schools in Thailand, selected by using a stratified random sampling technique. The questionnaire used in data collection was the improved questionnaire of spirituality from Miami Summer Project Trek Application (Roe, 2009) consisting of 11 aspects: (a) Responsibility, (b) Adaptability, (c) Personal Appearance and Manners, (d) Cooperation and Teamwork, (e) Communication, (f) Spiritual Maturity, g) Sensitivity, (h) Emotional Stability, (i) Personal Ministry, (j) Initiating with others, and (k) Teaching ability. The results of study indicated that the average attitude of teachers towards spirituality of principals in ecclesiastical secondary schools was in all aspects at a high level and teachers with different gender had different attitude towards spirituality of principals in ecclesiastical secondary schools.

Background

Spirituality is increasingly becoming a popular topic because of its significant role in organizations (Abdul Ghani, A., Naser Jamil, A., & Intsar Turki, A, 2009). Spirituality means willingness to change (Atmaswarupananda, 2002). That spirituality might be part of what makes leaders effective is gaining credibility (Abdul Ghani Kanesan Abdullah, Naser Jamil Alzaidiyeen, Intsar Turki Aldarabah, 2009). The definitions of spirituality fall into three categories: (1) Personal inner experience; (2) Values; and (3) Outer behaviors (Schmit and Allshied, 1991).

A definition of leadership in schools should include the dimensions of influence, competence, morality, and transformation (Smith and Piele, 2006). So spirituality is the moral principle of leadership in any organization. It has been shown that leadership behaviors affect student outcomes and the success or failure of schools (Creighton, 1999). Principals are the key persons affecting success or failure of any school. Spirituality of principals is the main factor in developing educational systems in society. School principals must be "responsible for building an organization where people are continually expanding their capabilities to shape their future-that is leaders are responsible for learning" (Senge, 1990).

There are problems with effectiveness in working of principals, especially about spirituality. Spiritual development encourages and facilitates positive changes in the school community and the lives of those within. School leaders who fail to realize the potential of spiritual development miss the strengths of its application in school leadership (Creighton, 1999). At present there are laws for reforming education with focus to manage lifelong learning, in managing schooling using student centered learning. Leaders with spirituality demonstrate a true "caring" for all in the organization, so the approach to problem solving is synergistic, not adversarial (Covey, 1998). Therefore, spirituality of principals is still a problem and necessary to develop. If the principals don't have spirituality, there won't be any change. Significant leadership results in change (Smith and Piele, 2006).

Ecclesiastical secondary schools are managed under Office of National Buddhism and administrated by monks in both Dhamma/Pali and secular studies. Ecclesiastical schools have organizational culture under Buddhist order.

Therefore, the researcher was interested in studying spirituality of principals in the ecclesiastical school by improved questionnaires of spirituality from Miami Summer Project Trek Application (Roe, 2009) consisting of 11 aspects: (a) Responsibility (b) Adaptability (c)

Personal Appearance and Manners (d) Cooperation and Teamwork (e) Communication (f) Spiritual Maturity g) Sensitivity (h) Emotional Stability (i) Personal Ministry (j) Initiating with others (k) Teaching ability.

Purpose of study
　　　　The purpose of this study was to investigate the level of spirituality of principals in ecclesiastical secondary schools.

Research Questions
　　　　1) To what degree did principals in ecclesiastical schools demonstrate spirituality in eleven dimensions according to the perceptions of their teacher?
　　　　2) Were there significant value differences in the perceptions of teachers about the demonstrated spirituality of principals according to the teacher's (a) gender, (b) age, (c) educational level and (d) years of work?

Hypothesis
　　　　Teachers with different gender, age, education level and years of work experience will have different attitudes towards spirituality of principals in ecclesiastical secondary schools.

Methodology
　　　　The survey research methodology was used in this study. The population comprised of a random sample from a total of 2,871 teachers from 401 ecclesiastical secondary schools in Thailand. Krejcie and Morgan's table for determining sample size at a significance level of .05 was subsequently used to determine study participants. The teachers were identified as participants for this study and initially selected using stratified random sampling (Mertler& Charles, 2008). The sampling group of 338 teachers was selected in this study. The survey instrument used was the "Spiritual Leadership Questionnaire" from the Miami Summer Project Trek Application (Roe, 2009), and at the same time, the researcher improved the questionnaires to cover the content of characteristics of principals who are the Buddhist monks in ecclesiastical secondary schools. They are consisted of 11 aspects: (a) responsibility, (b) adaptability, (c) personal appearance and manners, (d) cooperation and teamwork, (e) communication, (f) spiritual maturity, g) sensitivity, (h) emotional stability, (i) personal Ministry, (j) initiating with others, and (k) teaching ability.
　　　　An initial survey questionnaire was reviewed and approved by three experts in educational administration. After the expert approval, the researchers revised the questionnaire and gave to 30 teachers, not the sample population to confirm its reliability. The reliability of the test was calculated by using the method of Cronbach's coefficient alpha. The total Cronbach's alpha coefficient of reliability (Revelle, Zinbarg, 2009) was .977. Then the questionnaire was finally printed out for all sample population. Data were collected by researcher himself. A total of 338 survey questionnaires were returned representing a response rate of 100%. The"SPSS for Windows" statistical program package was used to analyze data. Statistics used for data analysis included frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, t-test and One-Way ANOVA.

Findings
Personnel information
　　　　Analyzing this information used Frequency expressed in Percentage ratio as follows;

Table 1 Showing numbers and percentage of personnel information of teachers in Ecclesiastical Secondary Schools classified according to sex

Sex	Number	Percentage
1. Male	254	75.1
2. Female	84	24.9
Sum	**338**	**100.0**

Table 1, indicates that most of the monk teachers were male 254 (75.1%).

Table 2 Showing numbers and percentage of personnel factors of teachers in Ecclesiastical Secondary Schools classified according to age

Age	Number	Percentage
1. Lower than 30 years	71	21.0
2. 31-40 years	111	32.8
3. 41-50 years	121	35.8
4. Over 51 years	35	10.4
Sum	**338**	**100.0**

The data in Table 2, indicate that more three quarters (68.6%) of the teachers were between 31-50 years of age. Approximately 20 % less than 30 years of age, and only approximately 10 % were more than 51 years of age.

Table 3 Showing numbers and percentage of personnel factors of teachers in Ecclesiastical Secondary Schools classified according to education level.

Education level	Number	Percentage
1. Under-graduate level	298	88.2
2. Graduate level or higher	22	6.5
3. others	18	5.3
Sum	**338**	**100.0**

Table 3, indicates that most of the teachers had under - graduate level education (88.2%). Those with graduate level or higher or other levels of education were less than 12 % (11.8 %).

Table 4 Showing numbers and percentage of personnel factors of teachers in Ecclesiastical Secondary Schools classified according to years of work

Years of work	Number	Percentage
1.Less than 10 years	210	62.1
2.Higher than 10 years	128	37.9
Sum	**338**	**100.0**

Table 4, indicates that most of the teachers had worked less than 10 years (62.1%)

Table 5 Showing Mean and standard deviation [SD] rating on attitude of teachers towards spirituality of principals in Ecclesiastical Secondary School

Spirituality of principals	$\overline{X}$	S.D.	Remarks
1. Responsibility	3.75	.84	high
2. Adaptability	3.78	.94	high
3. Personal Appearance and Manners	3.01	1.17	medium
4. Cooperation and Teamwork	3.82	.99	high
5. Communication	3.41	1.00	high
6. Spiritual Maturity	3.59	.96	high
7. Sensitivity	3.86	1.01	high
8. Emotional Stability	2.68	1.02	Medium
9. Personal Ministry	3.36	.94	Medium
10. Initiating with others	3.72	1.11	high
11. Teaching ability	3.81	1.00	high
Sum	**3.53**	**.54**	**high**

Data in Table 5 indicates that the attitude of teachers towards spirituallity of principals in over all items were rated at a high level. Considering each item, item No. 7, Sensitivity, and item No. 4, Cooperation and Teamwork were the highest levels and the lowest was No.8, Emotional Stability, at the medium level.

Table 6 Attitude of teachers towards spirituality of principals in Ecclesiastical Secondary School according to Gender

Group Statistics of Gender				
Gender	n	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Male	254	3.57	.49	.03
Female	84	3.40	.66	.07
Independent Samples Test				
	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		

Variances	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Equal variances assumed	6.63	.01	2.49	336.00	.01
Equal variances not assumed			2.14*	114.45	.03*

*P-value <.05

Data from table 6 indicate that teachers with different gender had different attitude towards spirituality of principals in Ecclesiastical Secondary School with the statistic significant figure .05. Male (3.57) rated principals significantly higher than Female (3.40).

Table 7 Attitude of teachers towards spirituality of principals in Ecclesiastical Secondary School according to Age

Description of Education level				
Age	n	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Lower than 30 years	71	3.43	.62	.07
within 31-40 years	111	3.51	.47	.04
within 41-50 years	121	3.56	3.43	.62
Over 51 years	35	3.69	3.51	.47

Total	338	3.53	3.56	.54

Test of Homogeneity of Variances – the variance is static			
Levene's Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
66.745	3	334	.100

ANOVA					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.802	3	.601	2.104	.100
Within Groups	95.346	334	.285		
Total	97.148	337			

Table 7 presents the data according to teachers' attitudes towards spirituality of principals in Ecclesiastical Secondary School were analyzed by using one way ANOVA. It found that there was no significant difference by the age of the teacher in their perception of principals in Ecclesiastical Schools.

Table 8 Attitude of teachers towards spirituality of principals in Ecclesiastical Secondary School according to Educational level.

Description of Education level				
	n	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
1. Under-graduate level	298	3.53	.52	.03
2. Graduate level or higher	22	3.71	.49	.11
3. Others	18	3.31	.77	.18
Total	338	3.53	.54	.03

Test of Homogeneity of Variances – the variance is static			
Levene's Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
28.745	2	335	.062

ANOVA					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.600	2	.800	2.805	.062
Within Groups	95.548	335	.285		
Total	97.148	337			

Table 8 presents the data according to teachers' attitudes towards spirituality of principals in Ecclesiastical Secondary School, analyzed by using one way ANOVA. It found that teachers with different educational levels had no significant difference in their attitude towards spirituality of principals in Ecclesiastical school.

Table 9 Attitude of teachers towards spirituality of principals in Ecclesiastical Secondary School according to years of work

Group Statistics of Gender				
Years of work	n	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Lower than 10 years	210	3.48	.56	.04

Higher than 10 years	128	3.60	.50	.04

Independent Samples Test					
Variances	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Equal variances assumed	.64	.42	-1.87	336	.06
Equal variances not assumed			-1.92	292.07	.06

Data from table 9 indicate that teachers with different years of work had no significant in their attitude towards spirituality of principals in Ecclesiastical Secondary School with the statistic significant figure .05.

Discussion:

This study indicated that teachers' attitude towards spirituality of principals in Ecclesiastical Secondary Schools were rated in all aspects at a high level. In addition, it was found that male rated their principals significantly higher than female teachers. The results of this study indicated that teachers generally rated their spirituality of principals in terms of (a) responsibility, (b) adaptability, (d) cooperation and teamwork, (e) communication, (f) spiritual maturity, g) sensitivity, (j) initiating with others, and (k) teaching ability at a high level. This shows that spirituality of principals in Ecclesiastical Secondary Schools5rd is good. This research is important for development of the principals in Ecclesiastical Secondary School in Thailand, making Ecclesiastical Secondary School in Thailand improve. This result corresponds the definition of (Creighton, 1999) saying it has been shown that leadership behaviors affect student outcomes and the success or failure of schools.

Recommendation for further research:

Further research should get more deeply information because this research was Quantitative Research. It might not cover the content of all aspects or all teachers in Ecclesiastical Secondary School, and they might not give the true information. Further research should be the Qualitative Research to collect deep information from the teachers, should be conducted with other types of secondary schools and should study why male teachers rated principals significantly higher than female teachers in Ecclesiastical Secondary Schools.

References

Abdul Ghani, A., Naser Jamil, A., & Intsar Turki, A. (2009). **Workplace Spirituality and Leadership Effectiveness Among Educational Managers in Malaysia.** European Journal of Social Sciences, 10 (2), Retrieved Feb 4, 2010, from http://www.wiley. com/bw/journal.asp?ref=0031-5826

Atmaswarupananda, S. (2004, Oct 17). **Spirituality Means Willingness to Change.** Retrieved Jan 2, 2010, from http://www.dlshq.org/messages/meanschange.htm

Church based training (NZ) [n.d.]. Spiritual leadership, Retrieved Jan 2, 2010, from http://www.corpath.ca/resources/corpath_sli.pdf

Covey, S.R. (1998). **The ideal community**. In F. Hesselbein, M. Goldsmith, R. Beckhard, & R.F. Schubert (Eds.), *The community of the future* (pp. 49-58). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Creighton, T. **(1999) Spirituality and the Principalship: Leadership for the New Millennium,** National Electronic Journal for Leadership in Learning. Retrieved Jan 2, 2010, from http://www.ucalgary.ca/iejll/creighton

J.norris, G.barnett, R.Bason, & M.Yerkes. (2002). **Developing Educational Leaders**
A Working Model: The Learning Community in Action. America: Teachers
College Press.

Mertler, C.A., & Charles, C.M. (2008). **Introduction to educational research**. 6 th ed.
Boston: Pearson Education, Inc.

Nonsakul, S. (2005). Educational research: The Management of planded change model
administration institutions. Ph.D. Dissertation, Faculty of Education, Narasuan
University.

Roe, S. & Roe, B. (2009). Miami Summer Project Trek Application. Retrieved Jan 2, 2010,
from http://www.uppermidwest.org/Documents/Miami Summer Project Trek
Application.pdf

Schmit, M. J., and Allscheid, S. P. (1995). Employee attitudes and effectiveness: Examining
relations at an organizational level. Personnel Psychology, 48, pp. 853-863. Retrieved
Feb 4, 2010, from http://www.wiley.com/bw/journal.asp?ref=0031-5826

Senge, Peter. (1990, October 15). Leader's New Work: Building Learning Organizations.
Retrieved Jan 2, 2010, from http://sloanreview.mit.edu/the-magazine/ articles/1990/
fall/3211/the-leaders-new-work-building-learning-organizations/

Stuart C.Smith & Philip K.Piele. (2006). School Leadership. Amarica: Corwin Press.