
The Development of School Administrative Guidelines for Promoting Happy Organizations in Schools

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Abstract

This research aims to 1) study the current conditions, desired conditions, and necessary needs for school administration towards a happy organization in schools under Roi Et Primary Educational Service Area Office 3 and 2) develop guidelines for school administration towards a happy organization in schools under Roi Et Primary Educational Service Area Office 3. The study was conducted in two phases. Phase 1 the study of current conditions, desired conditions, and necessary needs. Phase 2 The development of school administrative guidelines for promoting Happy Organizations. The sample group consisted of 314 participants including school administrators and teachers under Roi Et Primary Educational Service Area Office 3, selected through stratified random sampling. The research instruments included questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and guideline suitability and feasibility assessment forms. Data were analyzed by using percentage, mean, standard deviation, and the Priority Needs Index (PNI). The results showed that; 1. the current state of school administration towards Happy Organizations in schools under Roi Et Primary Educational Service Area Office 3 was rated at a high level. The highest average aspect was Positive relationships with colleagues. The desired state was rated at the highest level. The highest average aspect was Employee happiness. The necessary needs for development, ranked from highest to lowest, were Leadership, Employee happiness, Work environment, and Positive relationships with colleagues. 2. The developed guidelines for school administration towards a happy organization included four key aspects as follows: 1) Work environment, 2) Employee happiness, 3) Leadership, and 4) Positive relationships with colleagues, totaling 28 guidelines. The evaluation indicated that the suitability and feasibility of the guidelines were at the highest level.

Keywords: Guidelines, Happy Organization, School Administration, Primary Education

1. Introduction

In the rapidly evolving global landscape, both external and internal transformations have significantly influenced the future direction of national development. As a response, the Thai government has formulated appropriate development strategies under the 13th National Economic and Social Development Plan (2023–2027). One of the key strategies outlined in this plan is the development of a high-performance workforce by enhancing knowledge and competencies while simultaneously fostering a positive work culture, organizational values, and an enabling environment that allows quality personnel to perform at their full potential and work with "happiness" (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council, 2022). Moreover, the Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) developed the twenty-year national strategic plan for public health (2017-2036) which aims to achieve the goal of healthier people, happier health care workers, and sustainable health system. This national strategic plan includes four strategies of excellence of the Ministry of Public Health including 1) Promotion, Prevention and Protection (PP&P) Excellence; 2) Service Excellence; 3) People Excellence; and 4) Governance Excellence. (The Ministry of Public Health, 2022) The success of these strategic implementations largely depends on people within the organizations, who are invaluable human resources essential to achieve organizational goals. In particular, People Excellence strategy aims to develop a competent and motivated healthcare workforce, empower individuals to take care of their own health as well as to work happily in the workplace. Hence, promoting a happy organization is crucial to enhance the quality of life for workers, which will have positive impacts on the organization, employees' families, communities, and society as a whole.

A "happy organization" or "healthy workplace" has been designated as a key goal for promoting organizational well-being under the support of ThaiHealth Promotion Foundation (ThaiHealth) that encouraged organizations to focus on enhancing quality of life for workers. It emphasizes holistic well-being across four dimensions — physical health, mental health, intellectual health, and social well-being — which leads to happiness at work. Creating such happiness in the workplace requires systematic management, beginning with the leader of organizations sets policies that promote health and well-being. (ThaiHealth Promotion Foundation, 2024). Focusing on "happiness" in human resource development is of great importance. Although happiness is partially a personal matter, it is also something that organizations must intentionally manage, as the majority of people's daily lives are spent in the workplace. The leaders must recognize that investing in people will ultimately benefit the organization.

A happy organization is essential in educational institutions, where administrators play a highly influential role in fostering such an environment. Effective leadership can lead to a positive and joyful working atmosphere. Administrators should focus on what is working well, leverage organizational strengths, and maintain flexibility to enhance the organization's overall capacity. They should also promote collaboration and participation within the organization, enabling all members to engage with shared goals and fostering a sense of self-worth among workers. Moreover, it was found that the organizational structure within educational institutions significantly impacts workers' satisfaction. Administrators should clearly define workers' roles and responsibilities, delegate authority, and allow autonomy in decision-making. This empowers personnel to manage their work while maintaining alignment with the organization's goals (Murphy & Louis, 2019). Such autonomy fosters a sense of ownership and satisfaction among team members. Furthermore, a supportive organizational environment and culture along with positive leadership encourages collaboration, reduces stress, and ultimately leads to greater happiness across the organization.

From the performance report for the 2024 academic year of the Roi Et Primary Educational Service Area Office 3, it has been observed that some schools are facing shortages of teachers and staff, resulting in excessive workloads that hinder teachers from performing their teaching duties effectively. Nevertheless, Roi Et Primary Educational Service Area Office 3 has established policies and priorities for the academic years 2024–2025. The core principle is "Developing Good People, Creating a Happy Organization." The office emphasizes the development of personnel into virtuous individuals and the transformation of the organization into a happy workplace. "Happiness" in this context, is seen as a form of positive energy that makes life enjoyable, meaningful, and fulfilling. When an organization becomes a happy workplace, employees who experience happiness at work are more motivated to come to work each day and are more likely to find value in what they do. Ultimately, this leads to improved performance and more effective outcomes.

Given these challenges, this study aims to develop an evidence-based guideline for school administration that promotes 'happy organizations' within the Roi Et Primary Educational Service Area Office 3. Such a guideline is expected to contribute to effective and sustainable educational development.

2. Research Methodology

This research used a mixed-methods approach, conducted in two phases as follows:

2.1. Phase One

The study of current conditions, desired conditions, and necessary needs for school administration towards a happy organization in schools under Roi Et Primary Educational Service Area Office 3.

2.1.1. Population and Sample

The population consisted of 1,671 participants, including school administrators and teachers from schools under Roi Et Primary Educational Service Area Office 3.

The sample consisted of 314 participants, including school administrators and teachers from schools under the same area. It was determined using Krejcie & Morgan Formula (Krejcie and Morgan, 1970), stratified random sampling categorized by school size, small, medium, and large. Within each stratum, simple random sampling was conducted based on school size to select the sample as specified.

2.1.2. Research Instruments

The questionnaire consisted of 2 sections. Part 1 consisted of general information about position and school size, presented in the form of a checklist. Part 2 was a questionnaire concerning the current and desired conditions of being a happy organization in schools under Roi Et Primary Educational Service Area Office 3 by using a five-point rating scale based on Likert's concept.

2.1.3. Instrument Quality Assessment and Data Collection

The criteria and procedures for constructing a rating scale questionnaire were thoroughly examined. Based on this understanding, the research conceptual framework was used as a foundation for drafting the questionnaire items. The drafted questionnaire was submitted to the thesis advisor for a thorough review to identify and rectify any flaws or ambiguities in the question items.

The revised questionnaire was submitted to five experts to assess the content validity using the Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) method. The IOC for each item was calculated using the formula $IOC = R/N$, where R denotes the total score assigned by the experts and N represents the number of experts. An IOC value of 0.50 or higher was deemed acceptable, as it indicates an adequate level of expert agreement regarding the relevance and clarity of the item.

The instrument was tried out with a group of 30 participants who were a non-sample group, consisting of 3 school administrators and 27 teachers. The discrimination values for the current condition ranged from 0.34 to 0.85, and for the desired condition from 0.49 to 0.88. All 39 items met the quality criteria.

The overall reliability coefficients (Cronbach's Alpha) were 0.98 for the current condition questionnaire and 0.98 for the desired condition questionnaire, both statistically significant at the .05 level. Data were collected from 314 sample participants using Google Forms.

The Necessary needs assessment was performed by comparing the current and desired conditions. The Priority Needs Index (PNI_{modified}) was calculated to identify and rank the priority elements for improvement.

2.1.4. Data Analysis and Statistical Methods Used in the Study

Microsoft Excel was used to evaluate the quality of the research instruments and to perform data analysis. This included the calculation of the Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC), Cronbach's alpha coefficient, and the Priority Needs Index Modified (PNI_{modified}).

2.2. Phase Two

The development of school administrative guidelines for promoting Happy Organizations in schools under Roi Et Primary Educational Service Area Office 3.

2.2.1. Population and Sample

The interview participants including school administrators and teachers were chosen from three model schools recognized for their best practices using purposive sampling technique. The suitability and feasibility of the guidelines were assessed by 5 experts. These experts were selected using purposive sampling based on specific qualifications.

2.2.2. Instruments

The semi-structured interview was designed to collect information on the development of school administrative guidelines for promoting Happy Organizations in schools. The interview questions were reviewed for accuracy and appropriateness with an advisor before being used in interviews with administrators and teachers. It consisted of 2 sections. Section 1 consisted of general information of the interviewees. Section 2 consisted of opinions about guidelines for promoting Happy Organizations in schools. The assessment of suitability and feasibility form consisted of two sections. Section 1 was general information about the assessor. Section 2 was the assessment of suitability and feasibility of the guidelines.

2.2.3. Instrument Quality Assessment and Data Collection

The interviewees including School administrators and teachers were selected from three schools recognized as best practice models. The criteria for selecting these model schools were as follows:

1. Schools that have received a rating of "very good" or higher in the fourth round of external quality assessments conducted by the Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment (ONESQA)
2. Schools that have been awarded the Royal School Award;
3. Schools that have received the national-level OBEC Awards for Excellence in School Administration from the Office of the Basic Education Commission (OBEC).

2.2.4. Data Analysis and Statistical Methods Used in the Study

The assessment of suitability and feasibility of the guideline data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, which included percentage, mean, and standard deviation.

3. Ethical Approval

This research application has been reviewed and approved by the Ethics Committee for Research Involving Human Subjects, Maharakham University, Thailand. (Approval number: 219-127/2025). All participants gave informed consent, and their privacy rights were strictly observed. The data are available upon reasonable request from the corresponding number.

4. Research Findings

The researcher conducted the data analysis in two phases.

Phase one: Analysis of the current conditions, desired conditions, and necessary needs for school administration towards a happy organization in schools under Roi Et Primary Educational Service Area Office 3.

The research findings revealed the current conditions, desired conditions, and necessary needs for school administration towards a happy organization in schools under Roi Et Primary Educational Service Area Office 3. The results are presented in Table 1 as follows:

Table 1. Mean, Standard Deviation, Priority Needs Index Modified (PNI_{modified}), and Ranking of Priority Needs for School Administration towards a Happy Organization in Schools under Roi Et Primary Educational Service Area Office 3.

Component of a Happy Organization	Current Conditions			Desired Conditions			Priority Needs	
	\bar{x}	S.D.	Level	\bar{x}	S.D.	Level	PNI _{modified}	Ranking
1. Work environment	3.88	0.94	High	4.76	0.43	Highest	0.227	3
2. Employee happiness	3.86	0.93	High	4.77	0.42	Highest	0.236	2
3. Leadership	3.79	0.90	High	4.70	0.46	Highest	0.240	1
4. Positive relationships with colleagues	3.89	0.94	High	4.68	0.47	Highest	0.203	4
Total	3.86	0.93	High	4.73	0.45	Highest		

According to Table 1, current conditions were rated high ($\bar{x} = 3.86$). When considering each component individually, all were also at a high level. The component with highest mean score was Positive relationships with colleagues ($\bar{x} = 3.89$), followed by Work environment ($\bar{x} = 3.88$), Employee happiness ($\bar{x} = 3.86$), and Leadership ($\bar{x} = 3.79$). Desired conditions were at the highest level ($\bar{x} = 4.73$). When considering each component individually, all were also at highest level. The component with the highest mean score was Employee happiness ($\bar{x} = 4.77$), followed by Work environment ($\bar{x} = 4.76$), Leadership ($\bar{x} = 4.76$), and Positive relationships with colleagues ($\bar{x} = 4.68$).

The Priority Needs Index (PNI_{modified}) of happy organization in schools, ranked from the highest to the lowest, are as follows: Leadership (PNI_{modified} = 0.240), Employee happiness (PNI_{modified} = 0.236), Work environment (PNI_{modified} = 0.227), and Positive relationships with colleagues (PNI_{modified} = 0.203). This suggests that leadership identified as the greatest area of need.

This study will critically examine several fundamental ideas and frameworks related to happy organizations or healthy workplaces. Burton (2010) claimed that World Health Organization (WHO) defines a healthy workplace as a place where everyone works together to achieve an agreed vision for the health and well-being of workers and the surrounding community. It provides all members of the workforce with physical, psychological, social and organizational conditions that protect and promote health and safety. It enables managers and workers to increase control over their own health and to improve it, and to become more energetic, positive and contented. Thai Health Promotion Foundation (2024) defined that A "Happy Organization" is an environment that fosters overall well-being for employees, encompassing physical, mental, and social aspects of their lives. It's a workplace that promotes a balance between individual, family, organizational, and societal happiness. This is achieved through various initiatives and programs that focus on physical health, mental well-being, and building strong relationships within and outside the workplace.

From the result of the Priority Needs Index (PNI_{modified}) of happy organization in schools under Roi Et Primary Educational Service Area Office 3, the most critical component of a happy organization that needs to be further developed is leadership. School administrators have demonstrated effective management capabilities and have been able to drive their schools toward becoming happy organizations. However, for sustainable development of schools as happy organizations, administrators should exhibit leadership, self-confidence, and decisiveness in their administrative roles. They should possess vision, flexibility, and the ability to adapt to changing circumstances. Additionally, they should prioritize building relationships and fostering community engagement with the school, serve as role models, adopt participatory management principles, promote a culture of teamwork, and motivate school personnel to work to their full potential toward shared goals.

Lowe (2020) argued that leadership is important in promoting happy organization especially inclusive approach to leadership. Everyone in an organization has the potential to participate in a leadership role. Every employee can demonstrate leadership through their day-to-day relationships by the values-based behaviors that are both explicit and implicit in the culture of a healthy organization. These behaviors contribute to vibrant and inspiring workplace. Apaipakdi (2020) stated that in order to become a happy organization, it must begin with the "administrator or leader," who should possess leadership qualities, have a clear vision, understand techniques for driving progress, apply strategies toward success, and manage the organization with good governance.

Phase two: Analysis of the development of school administrative guidelines for promoting Happy Organizations in schools under Roi Et Primary Educational Service Area Office 3.

The Priority Needs Index (PNI_{modified}) was analyzed from the current and desired conditions of Happy Organizations. Key components with significant needs were identified across four dimensions. These issues were used to construct an interview protocol, the findings of which were employed in the development of school administrative guidelines for promoting Happy Organizations in schools under Roi Et Primary Educational Service Area Office 3.

The participants of an interview were three school administrators and three teachers, totaling six participants, from three schools recognized for their best practices. The results were synthesized and are presented in Table 2 as follows:

Table 2: Synthesis of the Development of School Administrative Guidelines for Promoting Happy Organizations in Schools under Roi Et Primary Educational Service Area Office 3.

Component Analysis	Best Practice Study	Synthesized Guidelines
<p><u>Work Environment</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Schools provide a pleasant and conducive working atmosphere. 2. The environment in schools is clean and organized. 3. Schools have appropriate safety measures. 4. Green or relaxation areas are adequate and suitable for staff needs. 5. Schools have a positive work culture that encourages participation and values staff opinions. 6. A work culture enhances staff happiness at work. 7. school administrators play an important role in promoting a healthy and happy work environment. 8. There are facilities in school such as office equipment and staff rooms. 	<p><u>Work Environment</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain a clean, safe, and supportive environment including buildings, classrooms, and restrooms. 2. Conduct regular safety inspections. 3. Provide rest areas and facilities that promote relaxation and mental health. 4. Beautify the landscape with trees and flowers to reduce stress and foster creativity. 5. Provide appropriate resources and quality teaching materials with sufficient budget. 6. Promote a friendly and collaborative work culture. 7. Organize regular team-building activities to strengthen unity. 	<p><u>Work Environment</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a clean, safe, and supportive physical environment. 2. Create a beautiful and shady landscape for a relaxing atmosphere. 3. Manage workspaces and facilities such as staff rooms, coffee corners, and quality equipment. 4. Build a positive organizational culture that promotes unity and open communication. 5. school administrators play an important role in supporting resources and creating readiness for staff.
<p><u>Employee happiness</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Good physical health for effective performance. 2. Positive mental health and relaxation at work. 3. Activities to relieve stress such as reading, exercising, traveling, watching movies, or listening to music. 4. Balanced work-life schedule. 5. Supportive and warm family. 6. Meaningful work that contributes to institutional goals. 7. Job satisfaction and a positive attitude toward work. 8. Satisfaction with administrators' management. 9. Satisfaction with compensation and benefits. 10. Satisfaction with career growth opportunities. 11. Demonstrates a continuous interest in acquiring knowledge from new learning sources for self-development. 12. Participation in training, further education, or study visits for self-development and. 	<p><u>Employee happiness</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Care for service recipients (students, parents, community), which in turn brings happiness to workers. 2. Manage the school in a friendly manner with a relaxed, flexible atmosphere and have Performance Agreement. 3. Praise, motivate, and encourage teachers to feel valued. 4. Allow teachers to participate in decision-making and meaningful work. 5. Promote mental health through open conversations, family-style counseling, mental health checks, and training. 6. Support continuous self-development and further education for career growth. 7. Support teachers in achieving a good quality of life; allow extra income opportunities and debt relief. 8. Allocate reasonable workloads so teachers can care for family and personal life. 	<p><u>Employee happiness</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promote physical health via exercise programs and annual checkups. 2. Support relaxing environments and stress-relieving activities such as reading, exercising, or listening to music. 3. Promote mental health with counseling and psychological training. 4. Support work-life balance with appropriate workload allocation. 5. Regular encouragement and motivation. 6. Involve teachers in important planning and decisions. 7. Encourage personnel to seek new knowledge, participate in training, pursue further education, or engage in study visits to enhance their potential and advance in their careers. 8. Create job satisfaction and motivation by emphasizing their role in institutional success.
<p><u>Leadership</u></p>	<p><u>Leadership</u></p>	<p><u>Leadership</u></p>

Component Analysis	Best Practice Study	Synthesized Guidelines
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. School administrators show self-confidence in management. 2. School administrators are able to motivate staff to work willingly and purposefully. 3. School administrators encourage staff to participate in important decisions. 4. School administrators promote teamwork and mutual support. 5. School administrators empower personnel with the autonomy needed to perform their duties to the best of their abilities. 6. School administrators are flexible and adaptable to change. 7. School administrators inspire and empower staff consistently. 8. Administrators recognize the importance of building relationships and fostering community involvement with the school. 9. Administrators are capable of motivating the team to promote positive interactions among personnel. 10. Administrators can clearly and effectively set goals and objectives in collaboration with staff. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate trustworthy character, fairness, and evaluate based on real performance. 2. Be proactive, decisive, and ready to face challenges; continuously self-develop. 3. Allow staff input on all levels of decision-making to foster ownership and empowerment. 4. Promote teamwork with shared vision and clear communication of goals. 5. Serve as a role model and coach; empower teachers to lead within their roles. 6. Communicate sincerely and transparently to build trust and resolve issues harmoniously. 7. Encourage community collaboration and shared goals. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have confidence in management, possessing a trustworthy personality, and a strong commitment to fairness. 2. Inspire and encourage staff through consistent recognition. 3. Act as a positive role model who motivates personnel to reach their full potential and strive toward common objectives. 4. Practice participatory management by involving personnel in thinking, doing, and decision-making, fostering a sense of organizational ownership. 5. Foster team culture with shared goals. 6. Communicate openly, clearly, and effectively. 7. Listen to feedback and concerns from personnel. 8. Build community networks and partnerships.
<p><u>Positive relationships with colleagues</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A workplace atmosphere that supports good coworker relationships. 2. Receive help from coworkers during work challenges. 3. Coworkers listen to opinions and suggestions. 4. Collaborate effectively with colleagues. 5. Recognition of abilities by peers. 6. Acceptance of differing opinions. 7. Opportunities to co-plan and decide together. 8. Team cooperation to achieve school goals. 9. Acceptance of individual differences and talents. 	<p><u>Positive relationships with colleagues</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Organize social activities such as lunch gatherings and informal meetups to strengthen relationships. 2. Create regular collaboration opportunities through shared projects. 3. Encourage teamwork and a respectful work culture. 4. Ensure clear and direct communication; exchange and respect ideas. 5. Assign clear responsibilities and respect each other's decisions. 6. Foster a supportive culture that values and accepts differences. 7. Celebrate successes and encourage each other through school channels (e.g., 	<p><u>Positive relationships with colleagues</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create a friendly work atmosphere. 2. Organize activities that build trust and unity within the organization. 3. Promote teamwork and mutual support. 4. Respect roles and avoid interference while allowing leadership in responsibilities. 5. Communicate clearly, directly, and respectfully. 6. Embrace differing views and capabilities of colleagues. 7. Support and praise colleagues for their achievements or efforts.

Component Analysis	Best Practice Study	Synthesized Guidelines
	Facebook, Line). 8. Engage teachers in planning, decision-making, and shared achievements.	

Based on table 2, the study examined the key components and investigated best practices, which were then synthesized into guidelines for school administration toward becoming a happy organization. The synthesized guidelines for school administration toward a happy organization in schools under Roi Et Primary Educational Service Area Office 3 consist of four key dimensions. A total of 28 practical guidelines were formulated.

Table 3. Mean and Standard Deviation of the Suitability and Feasibility Level of School Administrative Guidelines for Promoting Happy Organizations in Schools under Roi Et Primary Educational Service Area Office 3

guidelines Component	Suitability			Feasibility		
	\bar{x}	S.D.	Level	\bar{x}	S.D.	Level
1. Work environment	5.00	0.00	Highest	4.88	0.33	Highest
2. Employee happiness	4.95	0.22	Highest	4.83	0.38	Highest
3. Leadership	5.00	0.00	Highest	4.95	0.22	Highest
4. Positive relationships with colleagues	4.94	0.24	Highest	4.77	0.43	Highest
Total	4.97	0.17	Highest	4.86	0.35	Highest

According to table 3, the overall and specific aspect evaluations of suitability and feasibility were at the highest level. These findings suggest that the developed guidelines can serve as a practical framework for school administrators to promote school administration toward becoming a happy organization. Such implementation is expected to raise awareness and foster positive changes in attitudes in various dimensions, including the work environment, employee happiness, leadership, and positive relationships with colleagues.

5. Conclusion

The study found that the current condition of happy organization in schools under Roi Et Primary Educational Service Area Office 3 was at a high level, while the desired condition was at the highest level. Based on the Priority Needs Index, the critical areas requiring development ranked from the highest to the lowest were Leadership, Employee happiness, Work environment, and Positive relationships with colleagues. In response, the findings from priority needs were used as a framework for interviewing school administrators and teachers to develop effective guidelines. The developed guidelines for school administration toward a happy organization consisted of four key dimensions: 1) Work environment 2) Employee happiness 3) Leadership 4) Positive relationships with colleagues. A total of 28 practical guidelines were formulated. The evaluation results revealed that the developed guidelines were rated at the highest level in terms of both suitability and feasibility. School administrators can apply these guidelines to develop their schools into happy organizations by clearly defining a vision or goal for school administration that emphasizes happiness within the organization. This clarity will help prepare the organization for change and guide it toward sustainable growth.

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