



Strategies for Empowering Teachers in Educational Institutions under the Phetchabun Primary Educational Service Area Office 3

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Abstract

This study aimed to (1) examine the priority needs for teacher empowerment enhancement in schools and to analyze the internal environment of schools under the Phetchabun Primary Educational Service Area Office 3. (2) analyze the external environment influencing teacher empowerment in schools under the same jurisdiction and (3) develop and validate strategies for teacher empowerment in schools under the Phetchabun Primary Educational Service Area Office 3. The research methodology consisted of a needs assessment of teacher empowerment enhancement in schools under the Phetchabun Primary Educational Service Area Office 3. The sample comprised 320 participants. A questionnaire with a reliability coefficient of 0.808 was used as the research instrument. The quantitative data were analyzed, and the Modified Priority Needs Index ($PNI_{modified}$) was employed to identify the strengths and weaknesses of teacher empowerment enhancement. Subsequently, semi-structured interviews were conducted with five experts, and the qualitative data were analyzed using content analysis to identify opportunities and threats. Based on the findings, draft strategies and implementation guidelines were developed through SWOT analysis. Finally, the appropriateness of the proposed strategies was validated through a focus group discussion involving five experts.

The findings indicated that (1) the overall Priority Needs Index ($PNI_{modified}$) for teacher empowerment was 0.208. Among the dimensions, participation in work, recognition, and respect for decision-making yielded the highest PNI, reflecting key areas of weakness (five indicators). In contrast, teamwork yielded the lowest $PNI_{modified}$, indicating a relative strength (nine indicators). (2) The external environmental analysis identified 17 opportunities and 14 threats affecting teacher empowerment in

schools under the Phetchabun Primary Educational Service Area Office 3. (3) The proposed teacher empowerment strategies comprised six strategies with 18 implementation guidelines.

Keywords: Strategies, Environmental Analysis, Teacher Empowerment

Introduction

In recent years, countries worldwide have faced rapid and profound economic and social volatility. This context has underscored the need to prioritize people as the core of human capital for enhancing national competitiveness and ensuring social sustainability. In Thailand, a systematic direction for human development has been articulated through the National Strategy in 2018-2037, particularly the pillar on human resource development and strengthening. This strategy emphasizes the development of people across the life course to be morally grounded, competent, and of high quality, with essential 21st century skills. It also advances reform of learning processes that responds to change by emphasizing knowledge integration, technology utilization, reflective practice through hands-on learning, and self-regulated learning (Office of the Education Council, 2024). This direction aligns with the 13th National Economic and Social Development Plan, which specifies Milestone 12 enhancing a high competency workforce and lifelong learning by focusing on developing learners' competencies necessary for learning, living, and working in a modern world (Office of the Education Council, 2024).

Empirical evidence on student achievement further reflects persistent challenges in the basic education system. National O-NET results from academic years 2017-2024 indicate that, across multiple grade levels, average scores in many subjects remain below the 50% benchmark. In academic year 2024, some grade levels showed that no subject met the benchmark. (National Institute of Educational Testing Service, 2024). Similarly, Thailand's PISA results for 2009-2022 have consistently remained below the OECD average in every assessment cycle (Institute for the Promotion of Teaching Science and Technology, 2023). Accordingly, policy recommendations have emphasized continuous teacher development, particularly strengthening teacher professionalism (teacher spirit) and enhancing instructional capacity to promote 21st century skills (Office of the Education Council, 2024).

Within the domain of teacher development, the concept of teacher empowerment is regarded as a process through which school leaders provide support and delegate authority and responsibilities while creating a conducive working environment that fosters staff members' confidence, autonomy, self-worth, and professional competence. Such empowerment is expected to translate into progressive behavioral outcomes and improved performance (Satsom, 2024). This perspective is consistent with

Thailand's legal and policy directions that prioritize mechanisms for producing, screening, and developing teachers who possess strong professional identity and genuine capability (Office of the Education Council, 2024).

In the context of the Phetchabun Primary Educational Service Area Office 3, O-NET results in academic year 2024 for Grade 6 indicated that Thai language met the 50% benchmark, whereas mathematics, science, and English remained below the benchmark. At Grade 9, no subject met the 50% benchmark. As a result, the agency has articulated strategies to develop the competencies of teachers, school administrators, and educational personnel to enhance instructional quality and improve learner outcomes in a tangible manner (Phetchabun Primary Educational Service Area Office 3, 2025). Previous studies have proposed various components, approaches, and models for developing the competencies of teachers, school administrators, and educational personnel, as well as for enhancing teacher empowerment across multiple dimensions. However, research that directly integrates needs assessment, analysis of the internal and external environments of schools, and the synthesis of findings into strategic recommendations through focus group discussion for application specifically within the context of the Phetchabun Primary Educational Service Area Office 3 remains limited. Therefore, the researcher recognized the need to investigate strategies for teacher empowerment enhancement in schools under the Phetchabun Primary Educational Service Area Office 3 by examining priority needs, analyzing the internal and external environments, and constructing as well as validating strategies for teacher empowerment enhancement. The study aimed to generate empirically grounded strategic recommendations that are aligned with the local context and can be implemented in practice to improve educational institutions.

Research objectives

1. To examine the priority needs for teacher empowerment enhancement and analyze the internal environment of schools under the Phetchabun Primary Educational Service Area Office 3.
2. To analyze the external environment influencing teacher empowerment in schools under the Phetchabun Primary Educational Service Area Office 3.
3. To develop and validate teacher empowerment strategies for schools under the Phetchabun Primary Educational Service Area Office 3.

Conceptual framework

In this study on strategies for teacher empowerment in schools under the Phetchabun Primary Educational Service Area Office 3, the researcher integrated concepts of the strategic planning process, priority needs assessment, internal environmental analysis based on priority needs, and external environmental analysis. Subsequently, strategic issues were formulated through a SWOT matrix analysis. These strategic issues were then aligned with the conceptual framework of teacher empowerment in schools proposed by Jantachooto et al. (2024), Thonglert (2020), Seaaer et al. (2023), Singha et al. (2023), Buakeaw et al. (2024), Jongklaiklang and Siribannapitak (2014), Thongdam et al. (2023), Teppin and Paengthai (2020) and Suangpho and Asvaraksha (2024) as the principal conceptual framework of the present study.

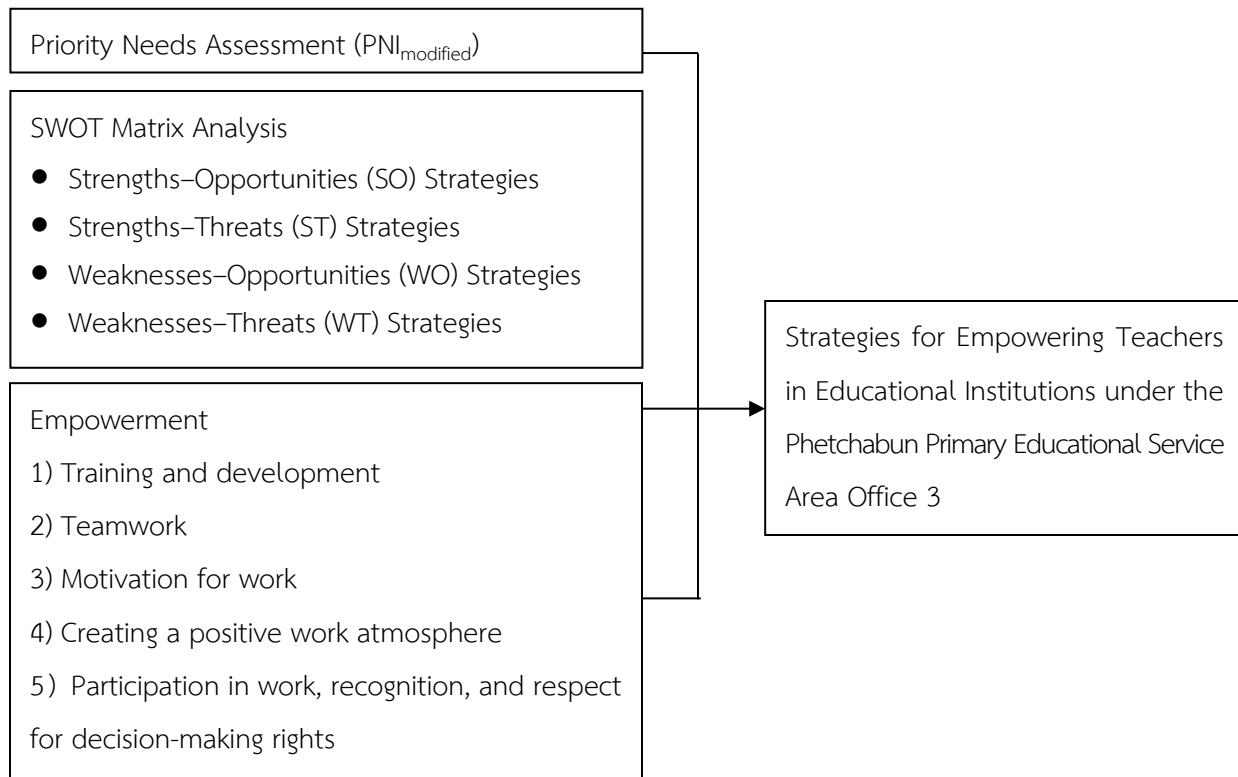


Figure 1 Conceptual framework

Methodology

Phase 1 Priority needs assessment and internal environmental analysis of teacher empowerment in schools under the Phetchabun Primary Educational Service Area Office 3

Phase 1.1: Priority needs assessment of teacher empowerment

Phase 1.1 The researcher investigated the current and desired conditions of teacher empowerment in schools under the Phetchabun Primary Educational Service Area Office 3.

Sample

The population consisted of 1,811 teachers and school administrators under the Phetchabun Primary Educational Service Area Office 3 during the 2025 academic year.

The sample comprised 320 teachers and school administrators from schools under the Phetchabun Primary Educational Service Area Office 3 during the 2025 academic year. Stratified sampling was employed, using school districts within the jurisdiction as strata. to classify teachers and administrators.

Instrument

The researcher employed a questionnaire on the priority needs for teacher empowerment enhancement in schools under the Phetchabun Primary Educational Service Area Office 3 as the data collection instrument. The content validity of the questionnaire was examined by experts through the Index of Item–Objective Congruence (IOC), and all items yielded an IOC value of 1.00. In addition, the reliability analysis indicated that the questionnaire yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.808.

Data collection

The researcher collected data both in person and via online channels. A total of 320 questionnaires were returned, representing a 100% response rate, and all were used for data analysis.

Data analysis

Questionnaire data were analyzed using frequency, percentage, mean (M), and standard deviation (SD). Priority needs were computed using the modified Priority Needs Index (PNI_{modified}) following the approach proposed by Wongwanich (2015, p. 279). The resulting PNI_{modified} values were rank-ordered to determine the priority needs for teacher empowerment in schools under the Phetchabun Primary Educational Service Area Office 3.

Phase 1.2 Internal environmental analysis

In Phase 1.2, the PNI_{modified} results obtained in Phase 1.1 were used to analyze the internal environment by categorizing factors into strengths and weaknesses. The researcher divided PNI_{modified} values into two groups by computing the midpoint between the maximum and minimum PNI_{modified} values (i.e., $(\max PNI_{\text{modified}} + \min PNI_{\text{modified}})/2$). Indicators with PNI_{modified} values less than or equal to this midpoint were classified as strengths, whereas indicators with PNI_{modified} values greater than the midpoint were classified as weaknesses.

Phase 2 External environmental analysis of teacher empowerment in schools under the Phetchabun Primary Educational Service Area Office 3

Key informants

The key informants consisted of five experts selected through purposive sampling. These individuals were involved in school administration and were selected on the basis of their positions and professional experience. They were classified into three groups as follows

1) one Director of the Teacher and Educational Personnel Development Group under the Phetchabun Primary Educational Service Area Office 3, with at least five years of experience in the position

2) one Director of the Supervision, Monitoring, and Evaluation of Educational Provision Group under the Phetchabun Primary Educational Service Area Office 3, with at least five years of experience in the position

3) three school administrators from schools under the Phetchabun Primary Educational Service Area Office 3, each with at least five years of experience in the position.

Instrument

The researcher collected data from the key informants through semi-structured interviews. The interview questions were formulated to identify opportunities and threats in accordance with the STEP analysis framework.

Data collection

The researcher collected data through interviews with five experts. Appointments were scheduled in advance to request their participation in the study. The interviews were conducted in two formats: face-to-face interviews and interviews via other communication channels, such as telephone or online meeting platforms. The interviews were carried out based on the issues specified in the interview protocol at the Phetchabun Primary Educational Service Area Office 3 during 16–24 October 2025.

Data analysis

Interview data were analyzed using content analysis to derive themes representing opportunities and threats affecting teacher empowerment in schools within the Phetchabun Primary Educational Service Area Office 3.

Phase 3 Strategy development and validation for teacher empowerment in schools under the Phetchabun Primary Educational Service Area Office 3

Phase 3.1 Strategy drafting

The researcher a draft of teacher empowerment strategies by applying the TOWS matrix to generate strategies, along with corresponding implementation approaches and operational guidelines.

Phase 3.2 Strategy validation

The researcher submitted the drafted strategies for validation of their appropriateness by a panel of educational experts. A total of five experts were selected through purposive sampling and participated in a focus group discussion to assess the suitability of the proposed strategies. The experts were drawn from three groups

- 1) two experts in educational administration, comprising educational administrators and supervisors from the Phetchabun Primary Educational Service Area Office 3
- 2) two experts who were school administrators from schools under the Phetchabun Primary Educational Service Area Office 3
- 3) one university lecturer from the Department of Educational Administration, Research, and Innovation Development, Naresuan University.

Research results

1. Priority needs for teacher empowerment and internal environmental analysis in schools under the Phetchabun Primary Educational Service Area Office 3

Table 1 Mean, standard deviation, current conditions, desirable conditions, and the modified priority needs index of teacher empowerment enhancement in schools under the Phetchabun Primary Educational Service Area Office 3 (overall).

Components of teacher empowerment enhancement	current conditions			desirable conditions			PNI _{modified}	Priority ranking
	M	SD	Results	M	SD	Results		
1. Training and development	3.52	0.61	High	4.23	0.62	High	0.202	4
2. Teamwork	3.63	0.64	High	4.35	0.61	High	0.198	5
3. Motivation for work	3.69	0.64	High	4.44	0.58	High	0.203	3
4. Creation of a positive atmosphere	3.63	0.70	High	4.42	0.60	High	0.218	2
5. Participation in work, recognition, and respect for decision-making rights	3.62	0.70	High	4.42	0.59	High	0.221	1
รวม	3.62	0.66	High	4.37	0.61	High	0.208	

Based on Table 1, the priority needs assessment indicated that the overall modified Priority Needs Index (PNI_{modified}) was 0.208. By dimension, participation in work with recognition and respect for decision making demonstrated the highest priority need ($PNI_{\text{modified}} = 0.221$), whereas teamwork demonstrated the lowest priority need ($PNI_{\text{modified}} = 0.198$)

Based on the classification of empowerment dimensions as internal strengths and weaknesses, the dimension with the lowest PNI_{modified} , namely teamwork, was identified as a strength, whereas the dimension with the highest PNI_{modified} , namely participation in work with recognition and respect for decision making was identified as a weakness.

2. External environmental analysis of teacher empowerment under Phetchabun Primary Educational Service Area Office 3

The findings from the analysis of the external environment, obtained through semi-structured interviews, were analyzed using content analysis to identify opportunities and threats. The interview results can be summarized as follows

Table 2 Summary of the interview findings on the external environment of teacher empowerment enhancement in schools under the Phetchabun Primary Educational Service Area Office 3, based on interviews with five experts.

External Environment	Summary of Interview Findings on the External Environment
Opportunities (O)	
Social and Cultural Factors	1. Promoting collaboration among local communities and agencies to play active roles in school development.
	2. Gaining trust and acceptance from parents and local communities.
	3. Ensuring equity among students through academic support and counseling services.
Technological Factors	1. Utilizing AI as a key driver for improving educational quality.
Economic Factors	1. Financial support from government and local communities.
	2. Curriculum development aligned with emerging occupations.
	3. Support for schools from communities and parents.
	4. Economic stability and budget security for teacher development.
Political and Legal Factors	1. School policies for student care and support.

External Environment	Summary of Interview Findings on the External Environment
	2. Teacher development policies based on professional teacher systems. 3. Budget allocation for digital skills development. 4. Educational projects such as quality schools, sufficiency schools, and teacher and administrator capacity development initiatives. 5. Government educational policies and support from educational agencies. 6. Decentralization policies in school administration. 7. Budgetary support for teacher development projects.
Threats (T)	
Social and Cultural Factors	1. School boards participating in school evaluation and involvement in school development. 2. High expectations from parents and communities. 3. Limited community understanding of new learning approaches. 4. Many children live with their grandparents. 5. Declining birth rates and student migration to large cities for schooling. 6. Limited opportunities and platforms for showcasing student achievements.
Technological Factors	1. Some students use mobile phones or computers excessively.
Economic Factors	1. High living costs and economic uncertainty, resulting in reduced household income for many families.
Political and Legal Factors	1. Educational policies tend to emphasize implementation and monitoring of centrally mandated policies. 2. Lack of autonomy in formulating school-level policies. 3. Frequent policy changes and turnover of high-level educational administrators. 4. Policies that are not aligned with the school context. 5. Strict educational policies and regulations. 6. Lack of clarity in administration.

3. Results of strategy formulation for teacher empowerment enhancement in schools under the Phetchabun Primary Educational Service Area Office 3

The strategies for teacher empowerment enhancement in schools under the Phetchabun Primary Educational Service Area Office 3 comprised 6 strategies and 18 implementation guidelines. The details are presented as follows.

Strategies	Implementation Guidelines
1. Continuous professional development for teachers	1.1 Systematically implement Professional Learning Communities (PLC) to enhance instructional practices.
	1.2 Support teachers' individual competency development needs in accordance with their roles, responsibilities, and work contexts.
	1.3 Encourage teachers to participate in external forums and competitions to enhance work motivation.
	1.4 Utilize performance outcomes as information for teachers' internal professional development within schools.
2. Promotion of digital competencies and the use of AI to enhance learning management quality and scale up best practices	2.1 Develop teachers' digital competencies and their ability to apply AI in learning management.
	2.2 Provide forums for knowledge sharing and lesson-learned exchanges regarding the use of digital innovation and AI in learning management.
	2.3 Encourage teachers to create and develop instructional innovations.
	2.4 Support the adaptation and expansion of best practices in teaching and learning.
3. Development of a positive performance evaluation and feedback system	3.1 Promote constructive and positive performance reflection processes to strengthen motivation and professional pride.
	3.2 Develop systems and tools for teacher performance evaluation with an emphasis on monitoring progress and development.
4. Enhancement of school administration through	4.1 Encourage participation in selecting digital platforms, information systems, digital tools, or automated systems for school administration.

Strategies	Implementation Guidelines
digital systems and artificial intelligence	4.2 Foster understanding of work system improvement and ensure continuous monitoring. 4.3 Apply artificial intelligence to data analysis and administrative decision-making support.
5. Building school identity and proactive communication with parents and communities	5.1 Establish school identity and define directions for school development. 5.2 Publicize and disseminate the school's strengths and achievements, while monitoring and evaluating outcomes and using the results for continuous improvement. 5.3 Develop and improve communication, public relations, and information service models to ensure accuracy, clarity, promptness, and user-friendliness, while promoting participation from parents and communities.
6. Effective budget and risk management	6.1 Develop a budget risk management plan by specifying preventive, control, and corrective measures, and integrate the plan into the school action plan and budget administration process. 6.2 Support the implementation of the budget risk management plan through monitoring, auditing, evaluation, and review in order to continuously improve and refine the plan in accordance with the school context and changing circumstances.

Conclusion

1. Priority needs for teacher empowerment in schools under the Phetchabun Primary Educational Service Area Office 3

The findings from the priority needs assessment indicate that the dimension with the highest priority need was participation in work with recognition and respect for decision-making rights, which was therefore interpreted as a key weakness. This suggests that teachers most strongly require empowerment through participatory mechanisms, particularly involvement in decision-making processes, professional recognition, and having a legitimate voice in matters directly related to their work. This interpretation is consistent with the concept of empowerment proposed by Conger and Kanungo (1988), who argued that genuine empowerment occurs when individuals perceive that they

have influence, voice, and control over decisions related to their tasks and responsibilities. These conditions closely reflect the needs expressed by teachers in this context. By contrast, the dimension with the lowest priority need was teamwork, which was interpreted as a strength. This suggests that teachers already possess adequate skills and experience in collaborative work, supported by an organizational culture that encourages collegial collaboration and peer support. This finding is consistent with Luitel (2024), who reported that collegiality through helping, sharing, and learning together serves as a strategic pathway for professional development and strengthens both teachers' confidence and their sense of empowerment. Taken together, these findings suggest that teamwork can serve as a foundational asset supporting the development of other empowerment dimensions, particularly participatory decision-making.

2. External environmental analysis of teacher empowerment

The external environmental analysis indicates that available opportunities particularly those arising from community partnerships, technology, and government policy can serve as enabling conditions for teacher empowerment. These opportunities expand participation, increase access to capacity development, and strengthen resource support. If schools are able to systematically connect these opportunities with an open management system that protects professional autonomy and provides continuous support, teacher empowerment can be strengthened in a coherent and sustainable manner, thereby contributing to improvements in educational quality. Conversely, the identified threats reflect contextual constraints stemming from family and community conditions, economic pressures, and policy centralization. Although community and parental roles appear to be increasing, the prevailing forms of participation may not yet support teacher empowerment in a substantive way. For example, school board participation may remain insufficiently continuous in monitoring and developmental functions, while some parents and community members may not fully understand contemporary learning approaches. This situation may lead to high expectations for student achievement without corresponding forms of constructive support, thereby generating pressure on teachers and schools rather than enabling collaborative improvement. These conditions highlight the importance of proactive communication, shared understanding, and partnership design that reduces burdens on teachers while strengthening mutual accountability for learner outcomes.

3. Strategies for empowering teachers in educational institutions under the Phetchabun Primary Educational Service Area Office 3 revealed key issues for discussion, as follows.

Strategy 1 Continuous professional development toward teacher professionalism

This strategy comprises four implementation guidelines and emphasizes the systematic and continuous enhancement of teacher competencies to enable high-quality instruction. It aligns with 21st century learning reforms that emphasize learner-centered approaches. This finding is consistent with the study by Chomsavai, Sathapornphojana, and Chaloeuwates (2020), which identified four major administrative strategies for empowerment in educational institutions: excellence-oriented school administration, administrator empowerment, participatory administration involving multiple stakeholders, and the professional development of teachers and personnel in terms of capacity and quality.

Strategy 2 Strengthen digital competence and AI utilization to enhance instructional quality and scale up best practices

This strategy includes four implementation guidelines aimed at developing teachers' digital competencies and promoting the effective use of artificial intelligence (AI). Through these capabilities, teachers can design more effective learning experiences, reduce limitations related to time and resources, and develop instructional innovations that better respond to learners' needs. This finding aligns with the study by Khositpimanwech and Piamphuachana (2019), which suggested that school administrators should provide appropriate facilities to support teaching and learning and promote teachers' professional development in technology. Such support enables teachers to apply technological knowledge and skills effectively within the organization.

Strategy 3 Develop a positive performance appraisal and feedback system

This strategy consists of two implementation guidelines and focuses on developmental assessment and supportive reflection. The evaluation system is designed to provide constructive feedback that helps teachers clearly identify their strengths and areas for improvement, leading to improvements in classroom teaching and learning practices. This finding is consistent with the study by Poochomsri and Phuseerit (2020), which identified performance monitoring and developmental feedback through internal supervision as an important empowerment process. The study emphasized the importance of monitoring performance to identify outcomes, problems, and obstacles through collegial and supportive supervision. Continuous follow-up consultation through chat programs or social media platforms was also recommended to enable teachers to seek advice throughout the implementation period.

Strategy 4 Enhance school management through digital systems and artificial intelligence

This strategy comprises three implementation guidelines aimed at improving administrative efficiency through digital technologies and artificial intelligence. The approach seeks to reduce teachers' repetitive workloads and enhance the quality of data-driven decision-making. Ultimately, this enables

teachers to devote more time and motivation to teaching and learning activities and student development. This finding is consistent with Jintraruk and Unkong (2025), who emphasized the importance of providing teachers with opportunities for professional development and access to up-to-date educational information for student development. Administrative support in facilitating access to academic databases, journals, and research tools enables teachers to develop modern curricula and instructional methods aligned with students' needs.

Strategy 5 Build school identity and proactively communicate with parents and communities

This strategy consists of three implementation guidelines and emphasizes collaboration among stakeholders to support effective teaching and learning management and student development. Establishing a distinctive school identity can foster a sense of ownership among teachers, students, parents, and community members. Proactive communication helps reduce gaps in understanding, strengthen confidence, and build mutual trust. This finding is consistent with Chomsavai, Sathapornphojana, and Chaloeuwates (2020), who suggested that empowering teachers in the 21st century requires effective communication skills. Teachers should be able to communicate effectively with colleagues, parents, and community members to promote mutual understanding and support collaborative work in a sustainable manner.

Strategy 6 Manage budgets and risks effectively

This strategy includes two implementation guidelines aimed at enhancing cost-effectiveness and strengthening support systems for teaching and learning. It emphasizes the systematic alignment of school budgets, resources, and risk management with student quality objectives. Such an approach reduces fragmented resource utilization and strengthens schools' capacity to anticipate, prevent, and respond to risks that may affect teaching and learning quality. This finding is consistent with Karapakdee and Ruphan (2024), who suggested that school administrators should allocate budgets and manage resources according to project plans while considering necessity and appropriateness to effectively support teaching and learning management.

Recommendations

Recommendations for practical implementation

Schools should integrate the six strategies into the official school action plans and establish clear goals, key performance indicators (KPIs), and responsible personnel to ensure continuity and sustainable implementation. In particular, the strategies should be translated into concrete programs and projects with clearly defined implementation details, including activities, operational procedures,

timelines, budgets, required resources, and critical success factors. Such an approach will facilitate systematic monitoring and evaluation, enabling progress to be tracked in a measurable and verifiable manner.

Recommendations for further research

Future research should employ experimental designs to examine the effectiveness of implementing the proposed strategies in real educational settings. Outcome measures should be assessed at both the teacher and student levels. At the teacher level, evaluation should encompass all dimensions of teacher empowerment to provide a comprehensive assessment and ensure alignment with educational goals at both the school and service-area levels.

Further studies should also investigate factors influencing teacher empowerment in order to better understand the conditions for successful implementation as well as the constraints encountered in authentic contexts. Such evidence would support the development of context-sensitive support measures for schools with different levels of readiness and would enhance the scalability and effectiveness of strategy dissemination.

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