

The Effect of Recreation Model for Enhancing Leadership of Recreation Leaders

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Abstract. Apart from knowledge and basic skills, leadership is an essential element to advancing professional recreation leaders in conducting recreational activities. Therefore, this experimental study aimed to examine the effect of recreation model for enhancing leadership of recreation leaders. Using one-group pretest-posttest design and purposive sampling, the data were collected from 50 participants. The dependent t-test, frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were applied to investigate the differences between the mean scores from the pre- and post- recreation leadership self-assessment test. The results revealed that the recreation model enhanced 1) relationship for unity and self-awareness, 2) self-discipline and emotion management, 3) team building, 4) problem solving, 5) experience and counseling, and 6) professional ethics. There was a significant difference between the mean scores from the pre- (2.99) and post- (4.77) test at the significant level of .05. Consequently, recreation leaders improved their leadership after the implementation of the recreation model.

Keywords: Recreation Model, Leadership, Recreation Leader

1 Introduction

In Thailand's strategic plan for 2018 – 2037, the potential development of human resources has been focused with the emphasis on enhancing and upgrading citizens of all ages in all dimensions to be quality humans for effective national development. The plan covers current human resources problems, life-long development, learning development for 21st century changes, and standard of living for personal development. Sports and recreation are tools to enhance citizens' standard of living for personal development. Personal development for human resources in sports and recreation is among the strategic plans to accommodate sport and recreation industry growth. Hence, the development starts from staff's knowledge and skills to innovation advancement in sport and recreation industry. [1]

Recreation leaders are crucial human resources in recreation. Not only they possess skills in recreation and management but also ability to suggest recreation activities to individuals or groups based on their interests and for their satisfaction. Furthermore, recreation leaders perform

as project managers organizing activities and training the facilitators in recreation. Therefore, recreation leaders are required to learn and be trained for the skills particular for recreation leaders for the ultimate benefit of the recreation activity participants. [2] This is well aligned with the recreation operational plan policy phase 3 (2020 – 2022) which states recreation professional network with well-trained recreation leaders and new generation of professional recreation leaders. Also, it can expand to student development in institution in various levels. [3]

In the fast-changing era, the way of living has currently shifted is information and digital based society. The recreation activities in new forms are necessary for recreation leaders to select techniques and methods as well as to have leadership skills to conduct or facilitate the activities. Thus, leadership plays a vital role in recreation management to develop and enhance interpersonal relationship, strategic planning [4], decision making, planning, problem solving, and evaluation. These are desirable characteristics of visionary and creative recreation leaders. [5] Correspondingly, leadership requires skills, experience and personal development to achieve the goal of each organization and to create new knowledge. [6] Plus, recreation leaders need to have the ability or skills to motivate, encourage, guide, and support individuals or groups to follow the activity instructions and achieve the goal. [7]

Since training program is learning procedure with clear steps and methods that serve program objectives, Yukl proposed a leadership development model using training program with the following procedures: [8]

1. Clear learning objectives
2. Clear meaningful content
3. Appropriate sequencing of content
4. Appropriate mix of training methods
5. Opportunity for active practice
6. Relevant timely feedback
7. Enhancement of trainee self-confidence
8. Appropriate follow-up activities [9]

Based on Dubrin, the leadership development procedure was categorized into five methods including 1) self-awareness, 2) self-discipline, 3) learning, 4) experience, and 5) counseling. This procedure is the guidelines for leadership development from hands-on experience during training programs which can build up skills and enhance potential for desirable recreation leaders. [10]

Consequently, to be consistent with the national strategic plan for 2018 – 2037 and the recreation operational plan policy phase 3 (2020 – 2022), the researcher was interested in investigating and developing the recreation model for enhancing leadership of recreation leaders. With the aim to develop human resources in recreation field, leadership training is essential for recreation leaders in their roles and potential especially in various recreation activities.

Objective: To examine the effect of recreation model for enhancing leadership of recreation leaders.

2 Methodology

2.1 Sampling Method

Using the purposive sampling, 50 participants were selected for this experimental study to examine the effect of recreation model for enhancing leadership of recreation leaders including government officers, heads of departments related to recreation, and recreation leaders countrywide.

The procedures in the recreation model were designed as follows:

1. The recreation leadership self-assessment test was verified by five experts using Item Objective Congruence (IOC) analysis with the IOC between 0.60 – 1.00 representing that this instrument was well qualified.
2. The activities were conducted following the recreation model for enhancing recreation leaders during a three-day-two-night model.
3. For the pretest, the participants were asked to take the recreation leadership self-assessment test before they participated in the model.
4. The participants participated in the activities following the recreation model for enhancing recreation leaders.
5. After the activities following the recreation model for enhancing recreation leaders, the participants were to take the recreation leadership self-assessment test as the posttest.
6. The data were collected and analyzed.

2.2 Data Analysis

To analyze the effect of recreation model for enhancing leadership for recreation leaders, the dependent t-test, frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were applied to investigate the differences between the mean scores from the pre- and post- recreation leadership self-assessment test.

3 Results

The recreation model for enhancing leadership for recreation leaders were conducted with 50 participants including government officers, heads of departments related to recreation, and recreation leaders countrywide. The results were found that: The background demographics of the participants is shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Genders of the participants in recreation model for enhancing leadership

Gender	Number	Percentage
Male	19	38.00
Female	31	62.00
Total	50	100.00

Table 1 shows the genders of the participants including 31 females (62%) and 19 males (38%).

Table 2 Age ranges of the participants in recreation model for enhancing leadership

Age range	Number	Percentage
25 – 40 years	32	64.00
41 – 50 years	14	28.00
Above 50 years	4	8.00
Total	50	100.00

Table 2 indicates the age ranges of the participants. 32 of them (64%) were 25 – 40 years old, 14 of them (28%) were 41 – 50 years old, and only 4 of them (8%) were above 50 years old.

Table 3 Work experiences in recreation of the participants in recreation model for enhancing leadership

Work experience	Number	Percentage
Below 3 years	22	44.00
3 – 5 years	13	26.00
6 – 10 years	6	12.00
Above 10 years	7	14.00
Total	50	100.00

Table 3 demonstrates the work experiences of the participants. Most of the participants, 22 (44%) had work experience below three years. 13 participants (26%) had work experience of three to five years and 6 of them had work experience of six to ten years. Only 7 participants (14%) had experienced work in recreation for above 10 years.

2. The recreation leadership self-assessment pretest and posttest

Table 4 Pretest and posttest of leadership self-assessment of the participants in recreation model for enhancing leadership

Item	Pretest (n = 50)			Posttest (n = 50)		
	\bar{X}	S.D.	Level	\bar{X}	S.D.	Level
1. Self-awareness	2.86	0.63	Average	4.68	0.47	Strongly Agree
2. Self-discipline	2.98	0.74	Average	4.72	0.45	Strongly Agree
3. Emotional Management	2.68	0.74	Average	4.78	0.41	Strongly Agree

4.	Experience	3.02	0.82	Average	4.88	0.32	Strongly Agree
5.	Counseling	2.92	0.82	Average	4.64	0.48	Strongly Agree
6.	Problem Solving	2.94	0.68	Average	4.68	0.47	Strongly Agree
7.	Time Management	3.02	0.55	Average	4.70	0.46	Strongly Agree
8.	Strategic Planning	3.04	0.75	Average	4.48	0.37	Agree
9.	Teamwork	2.96	0.57	Average	4.94	0.23	Strongly Agree
10.	Professional Ethics	3.48	0.54	Average	4.92	0.27	Strongly Agree
	Total	2.99	0.68	Average	4.77	0.39	Strongly Agree

Table 4 depicts the leadership self-assessment overall pretest scores were average ($\bar{X} = 2.99$), while the overall posttest scores were at strongly agree ($\bar{X} = 4.77$). On one hand, considering each item, before participating in the recreation model for enhancing leadership, the participants had the self-assessment at average level. Among the ten items, the top three items for pretest were professional ethics ($\bar{X} = 3.48$), strategic planning ($\bar{X} = 3.04$), and experience ($\bar{X} = 3.02$). While the lowest score for pretest went to emotional management. On the other hand, after participating in the recreation model, the participants received the scores for self-assessment at strongly agree level. The top three items for posttest were teamwork ($\bar{X} = 4.94$), professional ethics ($\bar{X} = 4.92$), and experience ($\bar{X} = 4.88$). Only strategic planning obtained the mean score at agree level.

Table 5 Mean difference of pretest and posttest of leadership self-assessment of the participants in recreation model for enhancing leadership

Item	Pretest (n = 50) \bar{X}	Posttest (n = 50) \bar{X}	M.D.	Level
1. Self-awareness	2.86	4.68	1.82	Very high
2. Self-discipline	2.98	4.72	1.74	High
3. Emotional Management	2.68	4.78	2.10	Very high
4. Experience	3.02	4.88	1.86	Very high
5. Counseling	2.92	4.64	1.72	High
6. Problem Solving	2.94	4.68	1.74	High
7. Time Management	3.02	4.70	1.68	High
8. Strategic Planning	3.04	4.48	1.44	Moderate
9. Teamwork	2.96	4.94	1.98	Very high
10. Professional Ethics	3.48	4.92	1.44	Moderate
Total	2.99	4.77	1.78	Very high

In addition, Table 5 represents the mean scores compared between pretest and posttest and revealed that the top items reflecting massive improvement on self-assessment were emotional management (M.D. = 2.10), teamwork (M.D. = 1.98), and experience (M.D. = 1.86),

respectively. In contrast, the mean difference for professional ethics was moderate. However, the overall mean difference between the pretest and posttest was very high (M.D. = 1.78).

Table 6 The comparison of the recreation leadership self-assessment pretest and posttest

	n	\bar{X}	S.D.	M.D.	df	t	p
Pretest	50	2.99	0.68	1.78	48	25.35	.00
Posttest	50	4.77	0.39				

The results from Table 6 illustrates that the posttest mean score ($\bar{X} = 4.77$) of the recreation leadership self-assessment was higher than the pretest mean score ($\bar{X} = 2.99$). The mean difference of the test was 1.78 and the t-value was 25.35. It is apparent that there was a significant difference between the pretest and posttest mean scores of the recreation leadership self-assessment test at a significant level at the .05 level.

4 Discussion

According to the results from the paired sample t-test, participants' leadership significantly improved ($p < .05$), and the posttest mean score ($\bar{X} = 4.77$) of the recreation leadership self-assessment which was higher than the pretest mean score ($\bar{X} = 2.99$). It indicated that the recreation model for enhancing recreation leaders could enhance the leadership of the participants after they participated in the model proving from the recreation leadership self-assessment pretest and posttest. The findings were congruent with Dubrin's leadership development with the five methods including 1) self-awareness, 2) self-discipline, 3) learning, 4) experience, and 5) counseling. [10] Moreover, they were in line with leadership development model using training program proposed by Yukl. The model comprised clear learning objectives and meaningful content with appropriate sequencing. It also consisted of appropriate mix of training methods and opportunity for active practice. Plus, relevant timely feedback, enhancement of trainee self-confidence, and appropriate follow-up activities were involved in the procedure. [9] Furthermore, Pairin supported that among a variety of training methods, it depended on the organizer or facilitator, given the right procedure can help achieve the goal of the training. [11]

The results also coincided with Mekkayai's development leadership training program for Kasetsart University activity leaders which found that, after the training and during the follow-up, the participants gained more knowledge on service leadership and posed positive attitude towards service leadership. [12] Additionally, the findings were similar to Thongkeaw which studied the effect of the outdoor recreation program for enhancing leadership of tourism youth volunteers and resulted that after 8-week program, the experimental group significantly augmented leadership in all aspects at the .05 level. [13]

Interestingly, the recreation leadership from self-assessment pre and post test of the participants increased at various aspects. Due to the comparison between the pretest and posttest, it emphasized that this recreation model could enhance the leadership of recreation leaders. While

the overall mean difference of the test was 1.78, the major improvement was illustrated in the aspects of emotional management (M.D. = 2.10), teamwork (M.D. = 1.98), and experience (M.D. = 1.86). In contrast, the mean difference for professional ethics was moderate showing mediocre improvement in this dimension when compared to the others. The reasons why the participants gained leadership in different aspects might come from various factors especially their background experiences.

The implication from the results is illustrated from the background demographics of the participants which could be elaborated in the following points. The participants of different genders and ages possess different personality and characteristics. They responded toward the activities in the model differently. There might also be other factors affecting the results based on different backgrounds. It matched with the explanation by Bootprasert that individuals would advance their potential differently based on their work or training experience as lifelong learning depending on each individual's interests. [14]

This study focused mainly on the result of recreation leadership, yet the results shown along were quite attractive to study further in each aspect of leadership. Although the study attained some significant success in raising recreation leaders' leadership, there are also evitable limitations. The study had been conducted with a small number of subjects (50 participants) and for three days, the results from this study would be supported better if it were repeated with more participants. Also, it would be better if the researcher could expand the study in depth for each aspect of recreation leadership.

5 Conclusion

The recreation model is obviously beneficial because it can enhance leadership of recreation leaders. Each model may be various in terms of the implementation and skills focused, but the crucial part of the recreation model is activities for developing the participants' ultimate potential in becoming efficient recreation leaders. The guidelines in the model could serve the purpose of enhancing leadership and be applied to enhance leadership of recreation leaders. The recreation leaders training should be emphasized as they are keypersons in developing human resources which is the foundation for the society.

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