

# A STUDY ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEACHERS' PERCEPTION OF PRINCIPAL'S LEADERSHIP STYLE AND TEACHERS' JOB SATISFACTION AT THE SELECTED BILINGUAL SCHOOL IN BANGKOK

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between teachers' perceptions of principal's leadership style and teachers' job satisfaction. The study also investigated the type of teachers' perceptions of principal leadership style and level of teacher's job satisfaction at the selected bilingual school in Bangkok. The purposive sampling was consisted on 68 foreign teachers working at the selected bilingual school in Bangkok. The instrument used to collect data contained three sections that were adapted from Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire [MLQ] short form and Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire [MSQ]. In this study, means, standard deviation and Pearson correlation were the statistical techniques applied in data analysis. Based on the results, the findings indicated that from the teachers' perception of principal's leadership style the principal uses transformational leadership style and the level of teacher's job satisfaction is neutral. According to the correlation analysis, there is a significant relationship between teachers' perception of principal's leadership style and teacher's job satisfaction at the selected bilingual school in Bangkok. A positive correlation was found between principal's leadership style and teachers' job satisfaction mean score;  $r = 0.686$ , Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level. The study recommended administrators of the selected bilingual school to use the study for further research. The study can provide the school with data for several purposes. Since no one has done any research on any one of the selected affiliated schools. It will help administrators be informed of existing problems happening and focus on their type of principal's leadership style. The study was able to help teachers to be able to express their feelings without standing out and it could help increase the level of teacher's job satisfaction. The selected bilingual school should focus on certain components of leadership style in order to raise the level of teacher's job satisfaction that could be beneficial for the school, teachers and students.

**Keywords:** Relationship, Teachers' Perception, Principal's Leadership Style, Teachers' Job Satisfaction, Intrinsic, Extrinsic, Bilingual School

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## Introduction

The success of organizations depends greatly on its human resource team. This should be supported for the best effectiveness. The leaders and followers play an important role in all organizations. Organizations need effective leadership and employees to achieve their objectives. As for leadership and employee job satisfaction, both are major factors influencing the effectiveness of an organization. (Kennerley, S.M. 1989). If something happens to one of these factors the organization can easily fall.

Leadership has been measured as one of the most important factors of an employees' job satisfaction. It widely influences employees' motivation and dedication. Poor leadership can lead to dissatisfaction of their employees causing the decrease of motivation and dedication. Many researches tried to define specific characteristics of effective schools. According to Goodlad (2004), he mentioned that the combination satisfaction of principal, teachers, students and parents creates a major indication of a school's quality and achievement. Researchers further noted that leadership affects overall teacher satisfaction and commitment as well as the basic skills achievement of students.

Teachers have a very important role in molding and educating the knowledgeable ability of children during the child's time in school as a student. The values and the knowledge that the teachers teach and encourage the students determine the future of the child and future of our country, as they say, are the citizens of tomorrow. Teachers may not be the only one responsible but they are there to try their best to develop the children into dependable citizens, no matter which level they are in, kindergarten, primary school, high school or even universities. Teacher job satisfaction is an important part in providing high quality care to children (Harris, 2008), if teachers are satisfied they will surely perform qualified outcomes. Instead if teachers turn out to become unhappy with teaching they are more possible to leave the education field (De Nobile & McCormick, 2008). Many researches stated that quality education depends greatly on the quality of the teaching staff and students receive the best knowledge in education from teachers who are well trained and satisfied with their jobs (Harris, 2008).

Studies focusing on leadership in schools today is not like in the past. School principal leadership changed significantly over the span of the 20th Century expanding to meet the increased pressures and demands of the job. The standard change from school manager to school leader has forced next-generation school principals to create and maintain a slight balance between managing effectively, leading instructionally, and developing all school stakeholders as shared partners and leaders in the learning process (Institute for Educational Leadership, 2000). Principal leadership style is one concept of the role of the principal that should be closely surveyed in order to help all teachers learn to adjust to the increased responsibility levels with the objective of supporting high teacher job satisfaction levels.

## Objectives

The research objectives were as follows:

1. To determine the teachers' perception of principal leadership style at the selected bilingual school.
2. To determine the teachers' job satisfaction at the selected bilingual school.

3. To determine the relationship between teachers' perception of principal leadership style and teachers' job satisfaction at the selected bilingual school.

## **Literature Review**

### *Leadership*

There has been many theories and definitions of leadership style and what makes a strong leader. Powell (as cited in Trott & Windsor, 1999) stated, "Leadership is described as the act of accomplishing more than the science of management says is possible" while Burns (2003) believed that "leadership is not only a descriptive term but a prescriptive one, embracing a moral, even a passionate, dimension". Leadership issues have always been a widely discussed topic. It had raised interest and attracted the attention of many historians, philosophers, researchers or scholars who wish to explore the true meaning of leadership (Bass, 1990). Burns (1978) also stated that leadership is one of the most observed and least understood phenomena on earth (Awan and Mahmood, 2010).

Leaders in any organization are expected to carry out tasks with limited resources to the maximum level in order to maintain the competitive edge and to sustain profitability position of the organization (Riaz and Haider, 2010). According to Kotter (1999), leadership is about setting a direction or developing a vision of the future together with the necessary strategies for producing the changes needed to achieve this vision. Another definition of leadership by Bennis and Nanus (1985) and Hamidifar (2010) is "Leadership is an influence relationship among leaders and followers to perform in such a way to reach a defined goal or goals". Leadership therefore is an important element for the success of an organization, regardless of its nature of activities, profit or charity orientated, private or government linked organizations.

### *Transformational Leadership*

Transformational leadership is a term coined by James McGregor Burns in 1978. Bass and Avolio took the concept of transformational leadership and did further extensive research on the concept. Bass(1997) said transformational leadership is, "the moving of followers beyond their self-interests for the good of the group, organization, or society by a transformational leader". The efforts of a transformational leader are not just focused on the task, but also engage followers by motivating them to higher levels of performance (Burns, 1978). Transformational leaders are those who stimulate and inspire followers to both achieve extraordinary outcomes and, in the process, develop their own leadership capacity. Transformational leaders help followers grow and develop into leaders by responding to individual followers' needs by empowering them and by aligning the objectives and goals of the individual followers, the leader, the group, and the larger organization. Evidence has accumulated to demonstrate that transformational leadership can move followers to exceed expected performance, as well as lead to high levels of follower satisfaction and commitment to the group and organization (Bass & Riggio 2006, p. 3).

Bass and Riggio (2006) listed and explained the components of transformational leadership: (a) individual consideration, (b) intellectual stimulation, (c) inspirational motivation, (d) idealized influence (attribute), and (e) idealized influence (behavior).

#### *Individual Consideration*

Transformational leaders pay special attention to followers' needs for achievement and growth, acting as mentors or coaches. Transformational leaders demonstrate individual consideration through effective listening and acceptance of employees' individual differences. Individualized consideration incorporates two-way communication and personal interaction with followers. Though followers are monitored when given a task to complete, they understand the intent is for support or additional direction (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

#### *Intellectual Stimulation*

When problems need to be solved, the transformational leader encourages new ideas and creative answers from followers. Instead of following old approaches to situations, the transformational leader who is intellectually stimulating engages followers to contribute in innovative and creative ways, such as questioning assumptions and reframing problems. Mutual respect is shown even when a follower makes a mistake or differs from the leader (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

#### *Idealized Influence (attribute and behavior)*

Transformational leaders are careful to model behavior that followers should emulate. Followers feel admiration, respect, and trust for their leader. They believe their leader exhibits high levels of persistence, commitment, determination, and possesses exceptional ability as a leader. Leaders who exhibit idealized influence cultivate follower admiration because they are consistent in ethical and moral behavior. The leader is not afraid to take risks and encourages followers to take risks as well. Followers feel their leader is worth following and there is a mutual sense of loyalty to one another (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

The transformational leadership model began to appear in educational literature in the 1980s because of the need for school systems to improve academic achievement, and the acknowledgement that leadership had influence on school effectiveness (Stewart, 2006).

In terms of educational leadership, Mulford (2008) suggested that transformational leadership is a more powerful way of thinking about educational leadership than other approaches such as instructional leadership, "because it leads to an investigation of all workplace conditions that contribute to all school outcomes, not just instructional strategies." The confluence of the transformational leadership style on teacher job satisfaction and efficacy shows potential for providing a more satisfied and committed staff of teachers within the school.

#### *Transactional Leadership*

The successful leadership and management of any school must take into account the leadership style of the principal. A prominent style of leadership is transactional leadership. James McGregor Burns is credited for his seminal work on transactional

leadership by publishing an extensive work on political leaders in 1978 entitled *Leadership* (Hay, 2006). Burns explained that transactional leaders focus on the leader-follower relationship through the exchange of rewards and punishments with followers for services rendered or not completed (Hay, 2006; Staker, n.d).

Research shows that reward and punishment are effective motivators in the lives of individuals. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs provides further research-based evidence to these concepts (Russell, 2008). Many organizations believe that reward and punishment are effective sources of motivation for followers to experience. When the follower does what is desired or goes over and above what is required, compensation is provided. If the follower fails to complete the required goal or work, punishment or withholding of the reward occurs (Hay, 2006). Bass (1997) expressed that transactional leadership is a matter of contingent reinforcement of followers by the leader. The workers acknowledge the leader's authority based on the promise of remuneration for a job well done.

The transactional leadership style is often termed a more traditional form of leadership that follows a structure of leader-follower relationship based on the fulfillment of contractual obligations (Brymer & Gray, 2006; Kurland et al., 2010). The two components of transactional leadership include: (a) Contingent reward, and (b) Management by exception (active).

#### *Contingent Reward*

Contingent reward leadership is an exchange between the follower and the leader, which is both active and positive. The reward is given to a follower based on a previously agreed upon task, and when completed satisfactorily, ends. As long as both leader and follower are happy with the agreed upon arrangement, the relationship will continue and satisfactory completion of tasks will be rewarded (Byer & Gray, 2006).

#### *Management by Exception (active)*

When a leader is managing by exception in the active form, the followers are given clear standards, expectations, and measures for monitoring and assessment at the start of the task or work. The leader actively provides the follower with instruction, oversight, and supervision in order to provide corrective action quickly in an attempt to arrest any deviation from performance expectations and standards (Byer & Gray, 2006).

#### *Job Satisfaction*

Tillman and Tillman (2008) identified job satisfaction as the like or dislike of the job in response to pay, promotion, recognition or other factors deemed important by the worker. Spector (1994) defined job satisfaction as how people feel about their job and the different facets of their job. Though these definitions vary in some aspects of the content, most would agree that job satisfaction is an emotional response to one's job, either in part or as a whole.

Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman, (1959) provided valuable information concerning the factors influencing job satisfaction from their seminal study of 203 accountants and engineers in Pittsburgh. Herzberg et al., (1959) proposed two domains of motivations. Herzberg (1974) explained in the two-factor theory or

hygiene-motivation theory that there are certain variables within a person's job that motivate him/her toward job satisfaction, while there are another totally different set of variables within the job experience that motivates the worker toward job dissatisfaction.

Five intrinsic factors strongly influencing job satisfaction are labeled motivators, and 11 extrinsic factors contributing to job dissatisfaction are labeled hygiene factors (Williams & Lankford, 2003). According to Herzberg's hygiene-motivation theory, factors leading to job dissatisfaction are based on the hygiene extrinsic factors such as supervision, interpersonal relationships, salary, job security, and working conditions. Factors leading to teacher job satisfaction are the motivator intrinsic factors such as achievement, responsibility, growth, advancement, and recognition (Herzberg, 1974, 1987; Jones, 1997).

In explaining the factors influencing job satisfaction, Herzberg et al., (1959) posited that there must be both positive motivators and positive hygiene factors present in order to obtain the level of job satisfaction and performance desired. In light of Herzberg's theory, it is imperative that the leadership of the school takes into account both intrinsic and extrinsic factors in order to cultivate job satisfaction, which in turn may possibly lead to higher levels of teacher success in the classroom.

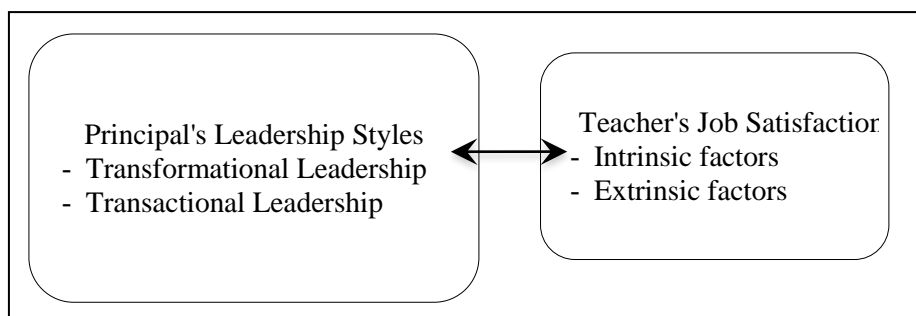
#### *Principal Leadership and Teacher Job Satisfaction*

According to Nguni et al. (2006), empirical studies in most work environments including education have shown that leadership greatly influences the job satisfaction of employees. Current studies have shown that a principal's leadership style can have an effect on the satisfaction of school teachers (Grayson & Alvarez, 2008; Hulpia et al., 2009). When included in the decision-making process, having more independence in their classes, and having supportive effective principal leadership, teachers tend to be more satisfied (Hulpia et al., 2009; Tillman & Tillman, 2008). These findings provide support for the possibility that principals may have a direct or indirect effect on the satisfaction of their teachers (Hulpia et al., 2009; Shatzer, 2009; Tillman & Tillman, 2008). Barnett, Marsh and Craven (2003) noted higher levels of teacher job satisfaction when the principal was perceived as caring for them as individuals and was present when an important issue was presented.

#### **Conceptual Framework**

For the purpose of the research study, leadership styles were conceptualized as possibly being related to job satisfaction. These concepts were studied to determine the teachers' perception of principal's leadership style at the selected school, determine the teachers' job satisfaction at the selected school and determine the relationship between teachers' perception of principal leadership and teachers' job satisfaction at the selected school. The conceptual framework for the study is shown in Figure 1.

(See Figure 1 on the next page)



**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of The Study**

## **Method/Procedure**

### *Population and Sample*

The population of the selected bilingual school consists of 70 foreign teachers. Purposive sampling has been applied; in this regard all foreign teachers were selected as a target (70) to answer the questionnaire.

### *Research Instrument*

A questionnaire was conducted to use as research for the study. The questionnaire includes a total of 42 questions divided in three sections: the first section contains 6 items on the demographic information of the teachers of the selected Bilingual School. The second section contains 18 items on leadership style and the third section contains 18 items on teacher job satisfaction. The leadership style questions in section two were adapted from Avolio and Bass' (1997) Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ). The MLQ consists of 45 Likert-type items that contain eight leadership components including five transformational leadership style dimensions and three transactional leadership style dimensions. In addition to the leadership styles, it also contains three outcome scales that included extra effort, effectiveness, and satisfaction of leadership behavior. Items are on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 0 (not at all) to 4 (frequently, if not always). Each of the leadership style components consists of four items, and scores for each of the eight scales are considered to be the average scores for the items in each scale. Transformational leadership style scores were computed by averaging all of the scores from the items contained in the following scales: idealized influence (attributed), idealized influence (behavior), inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Transactional leadership style scores were computed by averaging all scores from items contained in the following scales: contingent reward, management-by-exception.

The MLQ survey uses a 5-point Likert scale:

- (0) Not at all
- (1) Once in a while
- (2) Sometimes
- (3) Fairly often

(4) Frequently, if not always.

According to score interpretation, the score for each factor is determined by summing three specified items on the questionnaire and calculated using the score range:

High = 12 - 9

Moderate = 8 - 5

Low = 4 - 0

The job satisfaction questions in section three were adapted from Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ). The short-form version of the MSQ utilized in this study consists of 18 Likert-type items that measured the feelings of the employee with respect to different aspects of job satisfaction. Factor analysis of the 18 items revealed that the MSQ consists of three scales: intrinsic satisfaction, extrinsic satisfaction, and general satisfaction (Weiss et al., 1967). Each item contained within the MSQ is presented on a five-point scale ranging from *very dissatisfied* to *very satisfied* and scored based on weighted response choices ranging from 1 (*very dissatisfied*) to 5 (*very satisfied*). Responses were scored 1 through 5, and scale scores were determined by summing the weights for the responses chosen for the items in the intrinsic, extrinsic, and general satisfaction scales. MSQ scores are interpreted based on percentile scores for each scale obtained from the most appropriate norm group for the individual in the normative data tables provided within the manual for the MSQ. A percentile score of 75 or higher would typically represent a high level of job satisfaction while a percentile score of 25 would indicate a lower degree of satisfaction (Weiss et al., 1967).

The MSQ survey uses a 5-point Likert scale:

(1) Very Dissatisfied

(2) Dissatisfied

(3) Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied

(4) Satisfied

(5) Very Satisfied

As for demographic sections the items were based on the demographic data age, gender and length of work in current position. The reliability of the survey data was calculated by Cronbach's Alpha and the value of Cronbach's Alpha of the survey was .979 at 18 items.

The data collection was done at the second week of June, 2013. Of a total of 70 questionnaires distributed, 68 useable questionnaires were returned, representing an overall return rate of 97.14%. The collected data were encoded and statistically analyzed by using the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) software. For the first and second research objective, mean and standard deviation was used as the descriptive statistics method. Last for research objective three, Pearson Products Moment Correlation Analysis was used to determine the relationship.

## Findings/Results

### *Demographic Information*

Of 68 respondents, most of them were female at 73.5% or 50 people; and another 26.5% or 18 people were male. Their ages were ranging from 21 years old to more than 40 years old. There were 24 people or 35.3% that were between the ages of 31 –



40 years old; another 24 people or 35.3% were more than 40 years old; and 18 people or 26.5% were between 21 – 30 years old. There were 2 people or 2.9% denying disclosing their ages. Based on the respondents' teaching level, most of them at 38 people or 55.9% were mainly teaching in primary level (Grade 1-6); 26 people or 38.2% were mainly teaching at kindergarten level; 2 people or 2.9% were mainly teaching at nursery level; and the remaining 2 people or 2.9% were mainly teaching in special areas. All respondents at 68 people or 100% were having the education level of Bachelor's degree. Their teaching experience was ranging from 1 to more than 10 years. Of which, most of them at 34 people or 50% were having the teaching experience of 1 - 5 years; 26 people or 38.2% were having the teaching experience of more than 10 years; and the rest 8 people or 11.8% were having teaching experience of 6 - 10 years, respectively. Focusing on their length of teaching for the selected school, the majority of them at 44 people or 64.7% had been teaching for 1 to 5 years; and another 24 people or 35.3% had been teaching for 6 to 10 years.

### *Leadership*

According to the table 1, it answered the research objective one which identifies the principal's leadership style at the selected bilingual school. Transformational Leadership, there are four dimensions, including idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. The overall idealized influence was considered as moderate from the mean of 1.35 and the standard deviation of 0.99. The overall inspirational motivation was considered as moderate from the mean of 1.71 and the standard deviation of 0.98. The overall intellectual stimulation was considered as moderate from the mean of 1.50 and the standard deviation of 0.95. The overall individualized consideration was considered as moderate from the mean of 1.78 and the standard deviation of 0.98. Transactional Leadership, there are two dimensions of transactional leadership, including contingent reward and management by exception. The overall contingent reward was considered as moderate from the mean of 1.44 and the std. deviation of 0.92. The overall management-by-exception was considered as moderate from the mean of 1.62 and the std. deviation of 0.888.

**Table 1: Descriptive Results of Transformation and Transactional Leadership**

	Mean	S.D.	Level
Idealized Influence	1.35	0.99	Moderate
Inspirational Motivation	1.71	0.98	Moderate
Intellectual Stimulation	1.50	0.95	Moderate
Individualized Consideration	1.78	0.98	Moderate
Transformational Leadership	1.58	0.90	Sometimes
Contingent Reward	1.44	0.92	Moderate
Management-by-exception	1.62	0.89	Moderate
Transactional Leadership	1.53	0.84	Sometimes

The total mean of transformational leaders received a higher mean score 1.58 compared to the mean score of transactional leadership 1.53. Based on the research findings stated that transformational leadership can be used for explaining the principal's leadership style at the selected bilingual school but still the mean was not far from transactional leadership showing that the principal of the selected school was actually not heavier in performing only on leadership style at all.

### *Job Satisfaction*

According to Job Satisfaction, there are two dimensions of job satisfaction, including intrinsic satisfaction, and extrinsic satisfaction. From table 2, intrinsic satisfaction had the mean score 3.47 and standard deviation of 0.67 with the level of satisfied and extrinsic satisfaction had the mean score 2.53 and std. deviation of 0.99 with the level of neutral. According to research question 2 the level of satisfaction of the teachers of the selected bilingual school was at the level of neutral with the mean of 3.19 and standard deviation of 0.75.

**Table 2: Descriptive Results of Intrinsic and Extrinsic Satisfaction**

	Mean	S.D.	Level
Intrinsic Satisfaction	3.47	0.67	Sat
Extrinsic Satisfaction	2.53	0.99	Neutral
All Satisfaction	3.19	0.75	Neutral

### *Relationship Between Principal's Leadership Style and Teacher's Job Satisfaction*

The researcher sought to determine the degree to which the two variables (principal leadership style and teacher job satisfaction) consistently varied in the same direction (positive) or in an opposite directions (negative), a Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis was utilized. The Pearson Correlation analysis also sought to determine the degree to which principal leadership style and teacher job satisfaction are related, as represented by the strength of the correlation coefficient ( $r$ ). The results of analysis are shown in table 3.

**Table 3: Pearson Correlation: Principal Leadership Styles and Teacher Job Satisfaction**

	Mean	S.D.	Pearson Correlation	Sig.
All Leadership Styles	1.56	0.86	.686**	0.000
All Satisfaction	3.19	0.75		

The table states that principal leadership styles, meaning transformational and transactional leadership style has the mean of 1.56 and standard deviation of 0.86 and teacher's job satisfaction, meaning intrinsic and extrinsic factors has the mean of 3.19 and std. deviation of 0.75. The results, represented in Table 3, showed a significant positive relationship between principals' leadership style and teacher's job satisfaction mean scores ( $r = 0.686$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

## Discussion

The findings found out that the principal's leadership style at the selected school actually was not higher on one certain leadership style but the findings showed that the teachers' perception of principal leadership style was more transformational than transactional. The level of teachers' job satisfaction was also neutral showing that the teachers were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with their job. The finding also proved that there is a relationship between principal's leadership style and teacher's job satisfaction that significantly affected that the employee's job satisfaction in the case of foreign teachers in the selected bilingual school.

Over all, the finding proved that there is a positive relationship between principal leadership style and teacher job satisfaction, which showed that the suggestion of Bass & Riggio (2006) which indicated that transformational leaders are those who stimulate and inspire followers to both achieve extraordinary outcomes and, in the process, develop their own leadership capacity. They help followers grow and develop into leaders by responding to individual followers' needs by empowering them and by aligning the objectives and goals of the individual followers, the leader, the group, and the larger organization. As a result, transformational leadership can move followers to exceed expected performance, as well as lead to high levels of follower satisfaction and commitment to the group and organization. Specifically, Bogler (2001) and Nguni et al. (2006) noted a positive correlation between transformational and transactional leadership styles and teacher job satisfaction. The results of the Korkmaz (2007) study, on the other hand, revealed that transformational leadership played a more important role than transactional leadership in positively affecting teacher job satisfaction. Therefore, it can be concluded that the leadership style of the school principal does indeed seem to affect teacher job satisfaction.

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