

## A STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEACHERS' SELF-DIRECTED LEADERSHIP AND THEIR JOB SATISFACTION IN A PRIVATE SCHOOL IN AYUTTHAYA

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**Abstract:** This study aimed to identify the relationship between teachers' self-directed leadership and their job satisfaction in the selected private school in Ayutthaya, Thailand. This study was conducted in a selected private school in the school year of 2019-2020. This study utilized the Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire (RSLQ) developed from Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, and the teachers' job satisfaction questionnaire based on Herzberg's Motivation-hygiene Theory. The questionnaires were translated into Thai language and distributed to 63 full-time teachers in the selected school with 100% return rate. Descriptive Statistics Mean and standard deviation, and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient were used to analyze the collected data. The results of this study showed that the levels of teachers' self-directed leadership and teachers' job satisfaction in this selected school were "High". Moreover, this study also found there was a significant relationship between teachers' self-directed leadership and their job satisfaction in the selected school in Ayutthaya.

**Keywords:** Self-directed Leadership; Teacher's Job Satisfaction

### Introduction

In schools, teachers were playing crucial roles in various educational activities, especially in the teaching and learning process. Their perception towards the self-directed leadership in the schools may also affect the effectiveness of the teaching and learning as well as the school management work. As Masood, Burns & Backhouse (2006) pointed, leadership is not only an essential part of organizations but also one of the most researchable areas in educational perspectives. In the organizations, employees' self-directed

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leadership is considered as a strategic tool of improving employees' capabilities to derive future benefits.

According to Manz and Neck (2004), self-leadership was the process that human beings use specific behavioral and cognitive strategies to control personal behaviors, furthermore, to affect and lead people's self-control studied self-leadership. Over the past 20 years or, teacher's self-leadership had gained a lot of attention, more scholars start to focus on it, and had carried out a lot of systematic studies on self-directed leadership.

Self-directed leadership can be described as a cognitive strategy that can improve the efficiency of an activity; it is a normative model which is a combination of cognitive and behavioral strategies, and self-promotion through these strategies, as Paul (2012) stated in his study, which is becoming a crucial concern as the focus of human resource development for many organizations.

Self-directed leadership can be described as a cognitive strategy that can improve the efficiency of an activity; it is a normative model which is a combination of cognitive and behavioral strategies, and self-promotion through these strategies, as Paul (2012) stated in his study, which is becoming a crucial concern as the focus of human resource development for many organizations.

In the 21st century, the complex educational environment demands the teachers to participate in decision-making, take initiative, and developing their own leadership (Michelle, 2018). Therefore, to study and develop teachers' self-leadership is an important part for human resource management and school development, as teachers are a prime mover of classroom reform (Gamoran et al., 2003).

Job satisfaction was another factor that may greatly influence the success of any organization, whether that is a school or bank. Although there are a number of factors that contribute to organizational performance, job satisfaction has been shown to have a significant influence upon this (Danica, 2016). Organizational performance does depend greatly on job satisfaction.

Chen and Silverthorne (2008) commented that teacher's job satisfaction was related to their feelings, attitudes and their individual preferences of the work. Marzano (2003) believed that teacher was one of the key elements in educational institutions success as their performance directly affected the

student's achievement, and high-quality teachers can produce attractive learning outcomes in the school.

Recent years, more and more studies are talking about the challenges in Thai public schools, especially in terms of the quality teachers and their professional development (Johnson, 2012). There are many reasons behind the different challenges for teachers, such as an overloaded administrative work, relationship with colleagues, lack of support, and not having enough opportunity for professional training (Geraldine, 2017).

The selected school is located at Ayutthaya province in Thailand. Compared with the Bangkok area in which has many international schools and foreign teachers, the Ayutthaya province is less developed in terms of education business. This selected school contained diverse students and many foreign teachers. Teachers from different countries are working together here in the school, but no previous study has been conducted on either teachers' self-direct leadership or their job satisfaction.

The researcher of this study had interviewed the principal and administrator group, they stated this school is expanding, they have a growing group of teachers who are from different countries, and they are aware that the teachers' job satisfaction is important for remaining qualified teachers. The school principal is highly interested in their teachers' job satisfaction and their self-leadership, as he believed teachers' self-directed leadership and their job satisfaction are very important in an organization. Since the school has an increasing number of students in this district, the principal is also willing to pay more attention to the teachers' self-directed leadership and find the level of teachers' job satisfaction in the selected school. He looks forward to the research outcomes, which should benefit the school leaders, teachers and students.

Having considered the above circumstances of reform in the basic educational system, the researcher was inspired to conduct this study.

### **Objectives**

1. To identify the level of teachers' self-directed leadership in this selected private school in Ayutthaya.
2. To identify the level of teachers' job satisfaction in the private school in Ayutthaya.
3. To determine the relationship between teachers' self-directed leadership and their job satisfaction in the selected private school in Ayutthaya.

### **Significance of the Study**

There was no previous research at the selected private school of Ayutthaya regarding this topic. The Results of this study benefited the selected school leaders, teachers and students. It will also benefit other schools and the future research related to this topic. The research results were beneficial to the selected school and school leaders, teachers. The findings will assist the school leaders of the selected school aware that teachers since self-directed leadership can be applied to a series of interpersonal communication, it is paradoxical that enhancing self-directed leadership skills should become a basic emphasis of formal leadership development programs.

The study outcomes also help the schoolteachers better understand and acknowledge the teachers' self-directed leadership, enhance their self-directed leadership skills and promote the complement of their working tasks. The teachers may then be able to learn from this study and improve their self-directed leadership capabilities in ways that would help increase teachers' level of job satisfaction. The results were to help teachers prepare for their future job by the means of improving their self-directed leadership skills.

The students of the selected school may get benefit from the teachers. Through the improvement of the teachers' self-directed leadership capabilities and job satisfaction, the teachers' preparation in their educational activities may be improved, students will gain benefits from these changes.

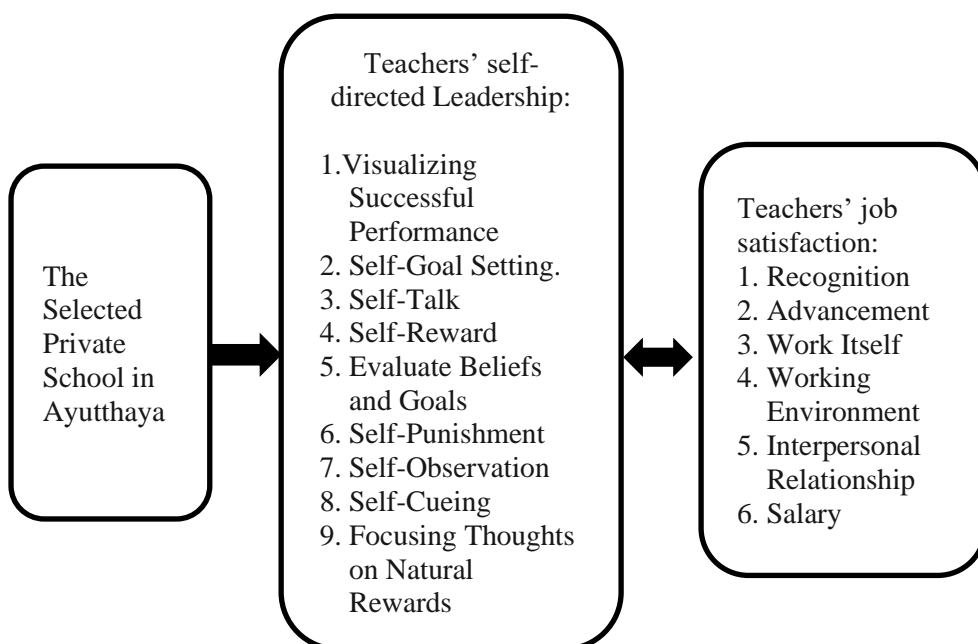
The findings of this study may be valuable for the future researchers and private schools and international schools, since the selected school recruits some international teachers, their opinion will be references for the future studies.

### **Literature Review**

In this chapter the researcher reviewed a range of related literature in line with the themes found in this research. The researcher review literatures related to self-directed leadership and teachers' job satisfactions in the following parts: Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1986) as the main theory for teachers' s self-directed leadership, Herzberg's Motivation- Hygiene Theory (1959) as the main theory for job satisfaction, Concept of Self-directed Leadership, Self-Leadership and Self-Regulation, Other Theories Related to Self-Directed Leadership Teachers' Job Satisfaction included "Self-Regulation Theory ", "Abraham Maslow's Need of Hierarchy Theory". Additionally, "Previous Study on Self- Directed Leadership and Teachers' Job Satisfaction", "Background of the Selected Private School in Ayutthaya of Thailand" were also included.

### Conceptual Framework

This study intends to determine the teachers' self-directed leadership and the level of the teachers' job satisfaction in the selected private school in Ayutthaya. The researcher's intention is to determine whether there is a relationship between these two variables. This is abstracted in the conceptual framework shown in Figure 1. In the left box shows the teachers' self-directed leadership, using Bandura's Social Cognitive Learning Theory (1986), in the right-side box shows the teachers' level of job satisfaction, using Herzberg's Motivation Theory (1959).



**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**

### Research Method/Procedure

This study is a quantitative relationship study to determine the relationship between teachers' perception towards self-directed leadership and teachers' job satisfaction at the selected private school in Ayutthaya in the academic year 2019-2020. The Self-directed leadership questionnaire was used Houghton and Neck's (2002) Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire (RSLQ), Job satisfaction questionnaire was used Mai's (2013) questionnaire.

All the participants in this study were 63 full-time teachers that worked at the selected private school in Ayutthaya, Thailand in the school year of 2019-2020.

## Findings/Results

### *Research Objective One*

Research objective one was to identify the level of teachers' self-directed leadership in this selected private school in Ayutthaya. The research questionnaire utilized the Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire (RSLQ) which was in a total number of 31 questions to identify the level of teachers' self-directed leadership in the selected school. A five- point Likert scale (5= Strongly agree, 4=Agree, 3= Neutral, 2= Disagree, 1= Strongly Disagree) was used to identify the level. For objective one, the researcher uses Means and Standard Deviations to analyze the data for each item.

Table 1. *The Summary of Teachers' Self-directed Leadership in the Selected Private School in Ayutthaya (n=63)*

Self- directed Leadership Factors	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Visualizing Successful Performance	3.69	.65	High
Self- Goal Setting	3.84	.63	High
Self-Talk	3.49	1.12	Moderate
Self-Reward	3.78	.79	High
Evaluate Beliefs and Goals	3.67	.67	High
Self-Punishment	3.56	.66	High
Self- Observations	3.76	.55	High
Self- Cueing	3.74	.84	High
Focusing Thoughts on a Natural Reward	3.74	.53	High
Total	3.70	.71	High

Table 1 demonstrates the overall mean score, standard deviation and the interpretation levels for the teachers' self-directed leadership in the selected school. The total mean score for the teachers' self-directed leadership was 3.70 in the range of 3.51-4.50. This result was in the high interpretation level.

### *Research Objective Two*

The research objective two of this study was to identify the level of teachers' job satisfaction in the selected private school in Ayutthaya. For the objective two, the questionnaire adopted from Mai (2013). The interpretation for this questionnaire was 5=Very high, 4=High, 3= Moderate, 2= Low, 1=Very low.

Table 2: *Summary of Teachers' Job Satisfaction in the Selected Private School in Ayutthaya(n=63)*

Motivation Factors	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Recognition	4.01	.70	High
Work Itself	4.11	.64	High

Motivation Factors	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Advancement	3.85	.72	High
Total	3.99	.72	High
Hygiene Factors	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Interpersonal Relationship	3.99	.62	High
Salary	3.31	.78	Moderate
Working Conditions	3.79	.77	High
Total	3.70	.72	High
Total Job Satisfaction	3.85	.72	High

Table 2 demonstrates the overall summary of 63 full-time teachers' job satisfaction level in the selected private school for the school year of 2019-2020. The total mean score for the teachers' job satisfaction in the high interpretation level with the score 3.85, which was in the range of 3.51-4.50.

### *Research Objective Three*

Research objective three for this study was to determine the relationship between teachers' self-directed leadership and their job satisfaction in the selected private school in Ayutthaya.

Table 3: *The Correlation between Teachers' Self-Directed Leadership and Their Job Satisfaction in the Selected School in Ayutthaya (n= 63)*

	Correlation Test	Job Satisfaction	Conclusion
Teachers' Self-Directed Leadership and their Job Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.428**	There is a significant relationship between the two variables
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3 shows the relationship between teachers' self-directed leadership and their job satisfaction in the selected school in Ayutthaya. The Pearson Correlation was .428\*\* and the Sig. was .001 which was smaller than .05 which meant that the relationship between teachers' self-directed leadership and their job satisfaction in the selected school was moderately positive. This research result means that there is a significant relationship between teachers' self-directed leadership and their job satisfaction in the selected school in Ayutthaya.

## Discussion

### *Teachers' Perceptions towards Self-directed Leadership*

According to the data analysis, the total mean score for teachers' self-directed leadership in the selected school was 3.70, which was in the *High* interpretation level. This result indicated the respondents' perceptions towards self-directed leadership was at a high level, which meant the level of teachers' self-directed leadership in the selected private school was high. The high level of teachers self-directed leadership might promote their job satisfaction, such as a positive feeling in their work or work environments and relationship with their colleagues.

Houghton and Neck (2002) stated that positive tasks and activities in the classrooms could promote a more positive working environment, furthermore, lead to a higher level of personal performance in their work. According to the high level of teachers' perceptions towards self-directed leadership and job satisfaction, the positive attitude for self-directed leadership might promote teachers' job satisfaction.

Firstly, among these nine factors of teachers' self-directed leadership, the highest mean score was found in the factor *self- goal setting*, which was 3.84, in the range of 3.51-4.50, this result meant that the teachers in this selected school had high level perceptions towards establishing specific goals in their work or had goals in their mind, they might intend to think about the goal to achieve in the future. *Self-goal setting* was an essential part for teachers' working, other researchers also studied in this component and got some similar results.

Mouratidis (2015) stated that the strategy for goal setting was a valuable tool for formulating motivation on job, the setting of main goal can promote the task finishing process, by the way promote self – esteem, at the end feedback to the individual on task. Overall, this self-goal setting process has a positive influence on the self- regulation process. For the current researchers' findings, the teachers in the selected school had a high level of perceptions on supposition of objectives in their jobs to encourage and guide themselves, these behaviors will promote the other taches in self- directed leadership and also in their jobs. Carver and Scheier (1998) also suggested that setting difficult and specific goals rather than easy and vague goals, this may promote the employees to perform better.

Secondly, the lowest mean score was 3.49 in the factor of self-talk, this result was in the Moderate interpretation level. Therefore, the teachers in the selected performed well in self-directed leadership skills except the component self-talk was in the Moderate interpretation level.



Meanwhile mental imaging strategy and self-talk have a positive influence on applying self-regulation which was a potential part for achieving an objective. When facing challenges and difficulties, positive self-talk and mental imagery strategies can promote optimism or an opportunistic mindset, it also can lead to greater persistence (Manz and Neck, 1991). Teachers used to carry out a self-talk when they are facing problems might give themselves confidence and strengthen their belief in finishing the particular task in the selected school.

From a comprehensive prospect, these nine components for teachers' self-directed leadership were all in moderate to high level. If listing the components from high to low based on the mean score were as following: self-goal setting (3.84), self-reward (3.78), self-observation (3.76), self-cueing and focusing thoughts on natural reward (3.74), visualizing successful performance (3.69), evaluate beliefs and assumptions (3.67), self-punishment (3.56), self-talk (3.49). Teachers in this selected school hold positive attitude towards self-directed leadership in their job, hopefully this attitude can promote their motivation and job satisfaction in their positions.

#### *Teachers' Job satisfaction in the Selected School*

To identify the teachers' perception of job satisfaction, the teachers in the selected school were requested to give their view on motivation factors, which was *recognition, job itself* and *advancement*. The hygiene factor, *interpersonal relationship, salary, working conditions*.

The total mean score for the teachers' job satisfaction in the selected school was 3.85, which means the teachers' job satisfaction in the selected school was in the high level, this result means the teachers were hold a positive attitude toward their positions in the selected school. Among these six components for teachers' job satisfaction in the selected school, the factor *work itself* got the highest mean score of 4.11, this score indicated that the teachers were in a high level of satisfaction depends on their assigned works. The factor *salary* got the mean score of 3.31 which was in the moderate level, this score meant the teachers hold a moderate level of perception towards their own salary.

*Work itself* referred to the teachers' perception towards their motivation in present position. As employees, they desired their supervisors will support their work. Luthans (1992) discussed that employees would feel satisfied with interesting and changing tasks, or a job that provided them with status. This study also finds the teachers were hold a positive attitude towards their own job, this factor may increase their motivation and job satisfaction.

*Salary* for the teachers in the selected school was in the moderate interpretation level, which meant the teachers' perception towards their salary was at a moderate level. Compared with the other factors that affect teachers' job satisfaction got a high level of perception, teachers' salary was at a moderate level. Teachers Salary can be used to support their family and daily use; it was the basic need of human beings. For the selected school, it was located in the Ayutthaya province in Thailand, the economy for this area was developed slower than the Bangkok area. Students for the selected school were from the local area, which meant the incomes for the families were not in the high level. The school fee is also at a low level, according to the school principal, some students cannot even make the payment on time.

However, Wu (2015) conducted that high salary could be both a motivation factor and also provided recognition to the employees, furthermore, strengthening self-esteem and acting as a satisfaction. According to the research results from the teachers, increasing salary was necessary for remaining teachers and promote the teachers' motivation. From the school leaders' aspect, they need to find some solutions to increase teachers' income.

Between the motivation factors and Hygiene factors, the motivation factors mean score was 3.99 higher than the hygiene factors 3.85. The Motivation Factors of the teachers was in the range of 3.51 to 4.50, it meant the teachers' job satisfaction towards the motivation factors was at a high level. The reason contributed to high levels of motivation factors might be positive recognition and recommendation for their task form the school leaders or their group leaders.

The Hygiene factors involved three demonstrations which were *Interpersonal Relationship*, *Salary*, *Working Conditions*. The total mean score for the teachers' perception towards hygiene factors was 3.70, this score was in the high level. Based on this result, the teachers had a high level of job satisfaction on hygiene factors, the teachers had a positive relationship with their colleagues, and were satisfied with their working environment.

According to the data for this study, the teachers' perceptions towards motivation factors were higher than the hygiene factors, the teachers in the selected school were more satisfied with their motivation factors rather than the hygiene factors. However, the hygiene factors which included interpersonal relationships, salary, and working environment are also very crucial to the teachers' job satisfaction. When a teacher has a high-level sense of belonging to the community or has a close relationship with colleagues and administrator, they will feel happy to finish a task with other teachers and their

subordinates. On the contrary, the relationship among teachers and the relationship between teachers and administrators were not good, it might affect the communication in their work or reduce the collaborations. The mean score for the factor salary from the participants in the selected school was lower than other factors, so the school leaders should pay more attention to this factor and find some solutions. The environment for the teachers was kept on improving by the previous years, but limited by the school financially, it was not at a very high level. Overall, the school leaders can pay more attention with the teacher's hygiene factor, especially salary to promote the teachers' motivation in their work.

In short, there was no previous study on teachers' self-directed leadership and their job satisfaction in the selected private school in Ayutthaya, however teachers are playing a very important role in school activities, and an increasing number of studies paying attention to teachers' role and leadership styles in modern education. It was a global trend to enhance teachers' leadership skills and job satisfaction.

#### *The Relationship between Teachers' Self-Directed Leadership and their Job Satisfaction*

According to the teachers' self-directed leadership and job satisfaction data, the Pearson Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to analyze all variables and factors, the Pearson Moment Correlation Coefficient between teachers' self-directed leadership and their job satisfaction got .001 significant level. Based on this result, the researcher found that there was a significant relationship between teachers' self-directed leadership and their job satisfaction in the selected school. The result showed that the Pearson Correlation was .428, this result meant that the relationship between teachers' self-directed leadership and their job satisfaction was moderately positive.

Pearson product moment correlation coefficient was used to identify the relationship between teachers' self-directed leadership and their job satisfaction for this study. The study result regarded as a significance of .001, it was less than .50. The researcher found that there was a significant relationship between teachers' self-directed leadership and their job satisfaction at the selected school in Ayutthaya.

The Pearson correlation was .428, this score meant the relationship between teachers' self-directed leadership and job satisfaction was in a moderately positive level in the selected school. In the selected school, self-directed leadership and teachers' job satisfaction were regarded as important for the schoolteachers and leaders.

Robbins and Judge (2009) presented that specific training for self-directed leadership can help to strengthen employee's self-responsibility and self-determination, then promote to increase employee's motivation. Marco, Pierre and Silvia (2012) showed that self-directed leadership had high significance in relation to employees' professional development, and also promoted individual's career planning. The improvement of teachers' self-directed leadership skills has a positive influence in teachers' professional development and also can promote teachers' motivation in work, as a result, it also can improve teachers' job satisfaction.

To sum up the discussions of the research results, the teachers hold a positive perception towards self-directed leadership, while some factors were in the moderate interpretation level. School administrators and leaders are suggested to pay more attention to teachers' self-directed leadership science. It will affect teachers' job satisfaction. According to the results of the current study, teachers in the selected school are doing well in self-directed leadership but they still have room to improvement in some self-directed leadership skills.

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