



# A STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE DIRECTOR'S SERVANT LEADERSHIP AND JOB SATISFACTION WITH CAREER MOTIVATION AT PRAHARUTHAI CONVENT SCHOOL, BANGKOK, THAILAND

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## ABSTRACT

The relationship between principal leadership, job satisfaction, and career motivation of teachers is a complex and interconnected one. Effective principal leadership and job satisfaction can have direct and indirect impacts on career motivation. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to determine whether there was a significant relationship between teachers' perceptions of the director's servant leadership and job satisfaction with career motivation at Praharuthai Convent School, Bangkok, Thailand. The study was conducted during the academic year 2022-2023. There were 136 full-time Thai teachers who participated in the study. The relationship among the three variables were analyzed by using the multiple correlation coefficient. The researcher used three instruments to measure each variable. The Servant Leadership Questionnaire was used to measure perceptions of the principal's servant leadership. The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) measured teachers' job satisfaction and teachers' career motivation was measured by the Multidimensional Work Motivation Scale (MWMS). The findings showed that all the three variables were at a high level. Teachers' perceptions of the director's servant leadership averaged 4.03 out of 5.00, teachers' job satisfaction averaged 4.29 out of 5.00 and career motivation levels were 3.92 out of 5.00. Calculation of the multiple correlation coefficient of teachers' perceptions of the director's servant leadership and job satisfaction found that they were significantly and strongly correlated, ( $r = .61, p < .001$ ) at a significance level of .05. Teachers' job satisfaction was significant and strongly correlated with their career motivation ( $r = .72, p < .001$ ), at a significance level of .05. Results supported the initial study hypothesis that there was a significant relationship among the three variables at Praharuthai Convent School, Bangkok.

**KEYWORDS:** *Servant Leadership, Job Satisfaction, Career Motivation*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Leadership in the school context is important as it plays a role in shaping the educational experiences of students and other stakeholders in the school community. Leaders are involved in shaping the vision and mission of the school and providing a clear sense of purpose. Leaders also establish and maintain school culture which can enhance the learning environment. Leaders also provide direction for the teachers and foster a culture of continuous learning (Day et al., 2020). The leadership style of school administrators is important as it impacts teachers' job satisfaction. As Reed (2005) mentioned, leadership strengthens the competence and productivity of management and sustainable behavior. The same can be said of school leadership. Understanding the importance and impact a director or school administrator has on organizational success is critical. School administrators' leadership behaviors shape and influence teachers' experiences and work. Leadership behaviors have been studied and found to be related to teachers' self-efficacy, job performance, organizational commitment, motivation, and overall job satisfaction (Baptiste, 2019).

Effective school leadership needs to address a variety of teacher related problems that may affect their job satisfaction and consequently their career motivation. Teachers have a variety of responsibilities. They are required to teach, use educational technology, improve the quality of their teaching with professional development, and complete various other administrative tasks. This causes them to be overloaded with work responsibilities and

the possible consequences are demotivation and lowered job satisfaction (Noom-ura, 2013). Additionally, some studies have linked high turnover rates in Thai teachers to leadership or lack thereof (Sribayak et al., 2018; Promchart & Potipiroon, 2020).

According to Kulophas and Hallinger (2019), Thai school principals need to demonstrate capabilities to lead school teachers in change. The majority of school principals are mostly trained to be figureheads and managers. Thus, the leadership quality of Thai school principals may be affected by lack of experience, on-the-job training, and little opportunity to develop new knowledge or professional skills. More effective types of school leadership is needed for sustainable education reform (Piyaman & Hallinger, 2017). According to Bier (2021), servant leadership is a suitable style of leadership in the Catholic context and servant leadership practices can effectively influence school improvement. Therefore, teacher issues, coupled with the potential problems of school leadership, present issues that need additional study. Therefore, this study addresses the relationships between servant leadership and teachers' job satisfaction and work motivation at a convent school to contribute to the knowledge of these variables on school improvement.

## 2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The following research objectives are explored in this study

1. To determine the level of teachers' perceptions of the director's servant leadership at Praharuthai Convent School, Bangkok, Thailand.
2. To determine the level of teachers' perceptions of their job satisfaction at Praharuthai Convent School, Bangkok, Thailand.
3. To determine the level of teachers' perceptions of their career motivation at Praharuthai Convent School, Bangkok, Thailand.
4. To determine whether there is a significant relationship between teachers' perception of the director's servant leadership and job satisfaction with career motivation at Praharuthai Convent School, Bangkok, Thailand.

## 3. LITERATURE REVIEW

### Servant Leadership

Servant Leadership was introduced in 1970 by Greenleaf. Servant leadership is a leadership philosophy that focuses on the concept that leaders should prioritize the needs and well-being of their followers. Research has shown that servant leadership positively affects teachers' job satisfaction and student achievement. The quality of leadership can influence teachers' motivation, engagement, and overall well-being. Servant leadership is a leadership approach that emphasizes the leader's role in serving others and prioritizing the needs of individuals or groups that they lead. When applied to schools, servant leadership can foster a positive school culture, enhance teacher morale and satisfaction, promote collaboration and teamwork, and improve student outcomes (Al-Mahdy et al., 2016). A servant leader shares power, establishes the needs of others into common values, helps people grow together, and generates the highest commitment to achieve common goals (Hai & Van, 2021). The model and characteristics of servant leadership were further extended by researchers such as Spears (2010), Nuru (2015), and Van Dierendock (2011). Striepe and O'Donoghue (2014) found servant leadership to be appropriate in the Catholic school context. Leaders at Catholic schools put into practice consistent with their beliefs which consisted of 'being called to serve,' 'leading as a community,' and 'building the capacity to serve'. The study found that servant leadership strongly connects to the Catholic faith. According to those practices, there were positive consequences such as helping students to achieve their personal best, helping staff feel valued and supporting them with their personal and professional issues, and preparing students to become citizens of the world by serving others, establishing and maintaining the relationships, establishing teamwork, establishing a common vision, and building the capacity to serve as a community by being present, modeling and inspiring and empowering people.

### Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

According to Herzberg (1987), two factors influence how people feel about their work: *motivator* and *hygiene* factors. Motivators or Satisfiers refer to the intrinsic factors related to the work, such as achievement, recognition, responsibility, advancement, or growth. When these factors are present, employees tend to be motivated and satisfied with their jobs. Hygiene factors, also known as dissatisfiers, refer to those factors that are not directly related to the work but to the work environment or conditions. They include organizational policy, supervision, and interpersonal relationships. When hygiene factors are seen as negative, this can lead to job dissatisfaction and unhappiness in employees. Improving hygiene factors can help lessen job dissatisfaction, but it may not improve job satisfaction as other factors may be involved. There are many aspects found to effect teachers' job satisfaction. As Crissi (2015) discovered in his study on the relationship between the principal's leadership style and teacher's job satisfaction in a selected bilingual school in Bangkok, leadership style is one factor that impacts employee job satisfaction. The level of job satisfaction was neutral except for some intrinsic satisfaction factors such as the

working conditions, the chance to work alone on the job, and the chance to tell people what to do. One extrinsic factor was dissatisfaction, which was how the principal handled the teachers.

### Self-determination Theory

To understand human motivation, Ryan and Deci (2000), classified motivation as intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation represents the highest level of motivation. It refers to individuals' inherent desire and drive to do something or pursue a goal. This drive is present because they find something enjoyable or satisfying and are not motivated by external rewards or pressures. Extrinsic motivation refers to motivation that comes from external factors or rewards. Individuals engage in an activity to obtain external rewards, avoid punishment, or meet external expectations. In order to increase self-esteem and achieve a personal goal, an individual may be extrinsically motivated. Kuanprasert and Phetsombat (2019) studied servant leadership and job motivation in a school in Thailand and found a positive relationship between school administrators' servant leadership and teachers' job motivation. The three highest individual characteristics of servant leadership found in the study were healing, awareness, and stewardship.

## 4. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This study aimed to identify the relationship between teachers' perception of the director's servant leadership style, job satisfaction, and career motivation at Praharuthai Convent School, Bangkok, Thailand. Figure 1 presents the conceptual framework of this study. The data source for the study was teachers at the selected school, who were surveyed to determine their perceptions of the level of the administrator's servant leadership, their levels of job satisfaction, and career motivation.

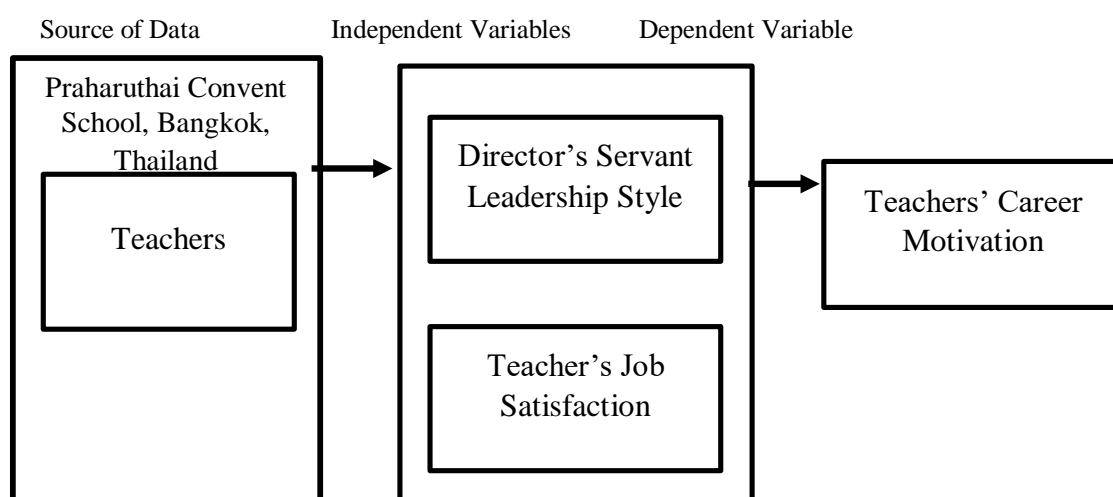


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

## 5. METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

A quantitative, correlational research design was used to determine the relationship between teachers' perceptions of the director's servant leadership and job satisfaction with their career motivation at the target school. Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to quantify the strength and direction of the linear relationship between a combination of the director's servant leadership and teachers' job satisfaction and teachers' career motivation. For research Objective One, means and standard deviation were calculated to determine the levels of the teachers' perceptions of the director's servant leadership as measured by the Servant Leadership Questionnaire. For research Objective Two, means and standard deviation were calculated to determine the levels of teachers' job satisfaction as measured by the short form of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ). For research Objective Three, means and standard deviation were calculated to determine the levels of teachers' career motivation as measured by the Multidimensional Work Motivation Scale. For research Objective Four, a correlational analysis was done to determine the relationship between teachers' perceptions of the director's servant leadership and job satisfaction with their career motivation at Praharuthai Convent School, Bangkok, Thailand.

**Population and Sample**

The study population consisted of Thai teachers at Phraharuthai Convent School in the academic year 2022-2023. The total number of teachers in the study was 136 full-time Thai teachers. The method of total population sampling was used.

**6. FINDINGS**

**Demographic Profile of the Respondents**

The demographic profiles of the full-time Thai teachers who participated in the study are collected, analyzed, and summarized in the following tables. Table 11 shows the gender distribution of the teachers who participated in the study. It shows that most teachers were female at 76.5%, and male teachers at 23.5%. Table 1 shows the gender distribution.

Table 1  
*Frequency and Percentage of Teachers' Gender Distribution (n=136)*

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	32	23.5
Female	104	76.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100</b>

The age distribution of the participants in the research. The majority of teachers were 50 years old and above (41.9%, then 37 to 42 years old at 22.1%, 43 to 49 years old at 17.6%, followed by 24 to 30 years old at 11.0%, and the least is 31 to 36 years old at 7.4%. Table 2 shows the age distribution.

Table 2  
*Frequency and Percentage of Teachers' Age Range (n=136)*

Age Range	Number	Percentage
24 – 30	15	11.0
31 – 36	10	7.4
37 – 42	30	22.1
43 – 49	24	17.6
50 above	57	41.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 3 shows the educational levels of the teacher participants in the research. The majority of respondents held a bachelor degree.

Table 3  
*Frequency and Percentage of Teachers' Educational Level (n=136)*

Educational Level	Number	Percentage
Vocational Training	0	0
Bachelor's Degree	94	69.1
Master's Degree	41	30.1
Doctor's Degree	1	0.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100</b>

**Findings for Objective One**

Table 4 presents the overall mean score and standard deviation of the first research objective, teachers' perception of the director's servant leadership style. The total mean score of this table was 4.03 with a .435 standard deviation. Therefore, teachers' perception of the director's servant leadership style can be interpreted as high.

Table 4  
*Overall Result of Teachers' Perception Toward Director's Servant Leadership Style (n=136)*

Servant Leadership dimensions	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Empowerment	4.53	.498	Very High
Accountability	4.55	.565	Very High
Standing back	4.31	.702	High
Humility	4.28	.638	High
Authenticity	3.68	.856	High
Courage	3.44	.953	Moderate

Forgiveness	2.81	.968	Moderate
Stewardship	4.66	.485	Very High
<b>Overall</b>	<b>4.03</b>	<b>.435</b>	<b>High</b>

**Findings for Objective Two**

Research Objective Two was to determine the levels of teachers' job satisfaction at the target school. The mean scores for intrinsic and extrinsic satisfaction were 4.38 and 4.08 respectively. These mean scores were interpreted at a high level. The mean for overall job satisfaction was 4.29, which was also high. Table 5 shows the results.

Table 5

*Summary of Means and Standard Deviations of Teachers' Perception of Their Job Satisfaction*

Items Questions	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Intrinsic Satisfaction	4.38	.534	High
Extrinsic Satisfaction	4.08	.687	High
<b>Overall</b>	<b>4.29</b>	<b>.553</b>	<b>High</b>

**Findings for Objective Three**

For teachers' perceptions of their career motivation, the total mean score was 4.42 with SD of .504. Therefore, teachers' perceptions of their career motivation can be interpreted as at a high level. Table 6 shows the results.

Table 6

*Summary of Means and Standard Deviation of Teachers' Perception of Their Career Motivation*

Career Motivation dimensions	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Extrinsic regulation	3.92	.687	High
Introjected regulation	4.55	.634	Very High
Identified regulation	4.70	.527	Very High
Intrinsic regulation	4.52	.663	Very High
<b>Overall</b>	<b>4.42</b>	<b>.504</b>	<b>High</b>

**Findings for Objective Four**

The fourth objective of the research was to determine whether there was a significant relationship between teachers' perception of the director's servant leadership and teachers' job satisfaction with their career motivation at the target school. Table 7 shows the bivariate correlations between teachers' perception of the director's servant leadership and teachers' job satisfaction with their career motivation at the target school. The bivariate correlations between teachers' perception of the director's servant leadership was significant, positively, and strongly correlated with teachers' job satisfaction ( $r = .61, p < .001$ ) at a significance level of .05., the teachers' perception of the director's servant leadership significantly, positively, and moderately strongly correlated with teachers' career motivation ( $r = .50, p < .001$ ), at a significance level of .05. And teachers' job satisfaction was significant, positively, and strongly correlated with their career motivation ( $r = .72, p < .001$ ), at a significance level of .05.

Table 7

*Bivariate Correlations Between Teachers' Perception toward Director's Servant Leadership and Teachers' Job Satisfaction with their Career Motivation (n=136)*

Variables	1	2	3
1. Director's servant leadership	-	-	-
2. Teachers' job satisfaction	.61** (.000)	-	-
3. Teachers' career motivation	.50** (.000)	.72** (.000)	-

*Note.* \* denotes a statistically significant relationship (statistically significant level at  $p=.05$ , two-tailed). P-values are presented in parentheses below the correlation coefficients.

A significant correlation between the two independent variables (servant leadership and job satisfaction) and the dependent variable (career motivation) was found where  $R = .72, F(2,133) = 77.76, p < .001$ . The multiple correlation coefficient obtained indicates that the two independent variables (director's servant leadership and teachers' job satisfaction) account for 53.9% of the variance of the dependent variable (teachers' career motivation),  $R^2 = .54$ . This means that there is a significant relationship between teachers' perceptions of the director's servant



leadership and teachers' job satisfaction with their career motivation at a significant level of .05. Therefore, the research hypothesis was accepted, and null hypothesis was rejected. Table 8 shows the results.

Table 8

*Multiple Correlation Between Teachers' Perception toward Director's Servant Leadership and Teachers' Job Satisfaction with their Career Motivation (n=136)*

Variables	R	R <sup>2</sup>	dfs		F	p
			Total	Residual		
Independent						
1. Director's servant leadership	.72	.54	2	133	77.76	<.001
2. Teachers' job satisfaction						
Dependent						
Teachers' career motivation						

## 7. DISCUSSION

Various studies of servant leadership in both faith-based and non-faith-based schools in Thailand have been conducted (Nuchso et al., 2016; Sirisooksilp et al., 2016; Phongpanphaengpanga, 2018; Punnachet et al., 2021). This indicates that servant leadership is a type of leadership that has been associated with schools and education and is seen as particularly relevant for faith-based schools as elements of servant leadership align with faith-based values and principles, especially those of the Catholic church. Several of the studies focus on Catholic schools in particular. An example of this was Sirisooksilp's et al. (2016) study of servant leadership in Catholic schools in Nakhon Rachasima Diocese, where respondents reported high levels of servant leadership which were shown to be related to school quality. The perception of the high levels of the director's servant leadership that was found from this study, is therefore, not a surprise and in line with previous studies that tend to associate servant leadership with Catholic schools in the context of Thailand. The majority of Catholic school leaders or principals, are themselves members of the Catholic church who are clerics and therefore, place a high priority in service, both to God and to others. The model of servant leadership has a natural fit and appeal to these school leaders as they strive to align their leadership principles with their faith and nurture and empower others while at the same time showing humility, forgiveness and acting as stewards of the schools they lead. This was previously confirmed by Striepe and O'Donoghue (2014), who claimed that servant leadership was an overarching guide and appropriate type of leadership for the Catholic school context. Findings of high levels of servant leadership in schools in other contexts are also confirmed. Larasati et al., (2022) and Malingkas et al., (2018) in their studies of schools in Indonesia also found high levels of servant leadership and positive effects of servant leadership related to school performance, teacher performance, teacher willingness and professional development.

Overall, the levels of teachers' job satisfaction at Praharuthai Convent School, was found to be high, in both intrinsic and extrinsic aspects. In this study, intrinsic aspects of job satisfaction were slightly higher than extrinsic. Intrinsic aspects are related to the internal factors and personal experiences of the teacher and contribute to their sense of fulfillment and contentment as a teacher. Some aspects of intrinsic satisfaction that were reported as very high in this study had to do with how teachers felt about having the chance to do things for others, how they felt that their teaching jobs were in line with their personal values and morals and feelings of accomplishment from their work as a teacher. Another aspect of intrinsic satisfaction reported by teachers was related to how they viewed their leader or supervisor in terms of their capabilities and relationships. These perceptions are in line with other studies that have found that leaders or principals and their leadership styles, especially servant leadership style, have an effect on teachers' job satisfaction (Cerit, 2009; Al-Mahdy et al., 2016; Braly, 2016; von Fischer & De Jong, 2017). The findings from these studies have confirmed that there is a relationship between servant leadership and teacher job satisfaction in various contexts. Servant leaders create a supportive and nurturing work environment, empower teachers by giving them autonomy, promote a collaborative culture, provide opportunities for professional development and growth and give recognition and appreciation.

Correlations were found between both servant leadership and job satisfaction with career motivation. These findings have also been confirmed in similar studies. In Kuanprasert and Phetsombat's (2019) study of servant leadership and job motivation at a Catholic school, they found that servant leadership and job motivation were high at the school and that servant leadership had a positive correlation with the job motivation. Georgolopoulos et al., (2018) studied servant leadership and teacher job satisfaction and found strong positive relationships between the application of servant leadership by school principals and teacher job satisfaction in the context of Greece. An interesting finding from this study was that many principals in the study were actually applying the principles of servant leadership in their everyday school management but did not realize it was 'servant leadership'. Overall,

the study showed that the principles of servant leadership, especially those that allow teachers to be respected and recognized, contributed to high levels of job satisfaction.

## 8. RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations aim to provide guidance and practical suggestions for the continued high levels of servant leadership, job satisfaction and career motivation that have been found from the study.

### Policy Recommendations

Policy recommendations suggested here are aimed at continuous improvement of servant leadership, job satisfaction, and career motivation at the school or organizational level.

*Improving Servant Leadership*-As had been mentioned previously, various studies conducted in the context of Catholic schools have pointed to servant leadership as the effective leadership style that is appropriate for the Catholic school context. School improvement has long been a topic of interest and related to that, school leadership and its relationship to school improvement. According to Bier (2021) new approaches to school leadership are needed and that leadership needs to be of a type that is more supportive, prioritizes ethical decision-making, the building of community, and the development of all stakeholders in the school. Cultivating servant leadership can be as simple as reminding oneself of the characteristics of servant leadership. According to Autry (2007), being aware of five basic 'ways of being': authentic, vulnerable, accepting, present, and useful, are five basic ways to live and work that can help one to have an attitude of service, and thus be a good servant leader. If servant leadership principals are what the school believes in for everyone, not only the principal, then the school can adopt a policy of reminding school stakeholders that this is one of the values that the school holds by discussing in as a recurring theme in teacher meetings, promoting it through the school's website, promoting servant leadership on campus, in public spaces and in classrooms and even promoting the development of servant leadership in students.

*Improving Job Satisfaction*-Improvement of the job satisfaction of teachers involves looking at the various factors that affect teacher satisfaction in schools and finding ways to improve them. Crisci et al., (2019), found the following factors that affected teacher satisfaction: communication, involvement, leadership, school climate, structure and job satisfaction. According to this study, school administrators can improve teacher job satisfaction by emphasizing the professional satisfaction of teachers by providing information seminars and orientations (especially to new teachers), mentor programs, continuous training and support that focuses on teaching with less administrative disruptions. As teacher job satisfaction involves both intrinsic and extrinsic aspects, of which the researcher is unable to discuss in entirety, recommendations for improving job satisfaction here will focus on improving school climate, which is seen as a policy/strategic aspect which can not only positively affect teacher job satisfaction, but also affect other areas of the school also. A positive and healthy school climate can contribute to positive outcomes for teachers and staff, leading to higher job satisfaction. School climate is the overall atmosphere, culture, and social environment of the school. When school climate is improved, teachers are more likely to experience higher job satisfaction. Healthier school climates have been shown to reduce teacher turnover and reduce teacher stress (Ingersoll et al., 2018; Collie et al., 2012). Vanlone et al., (2019) proposed eight steps for improving school climate, 1) establishing a leadership team, 2) defining the school's vision, 3) operationalizing the vision, 4) identifying data sources needed to measure progress, 5) selecting evidence-based practices, 6) developing systems to support teachers and provide training and coaching, 7) regularly collect, monitor and share information, 8) refine the plans regularly. Darling-Hammond and DePaoli (2020), also suggest some ways to improve school climate, and thus teacher job satisfaction that focus on the following areas: 1) Reduction of overall school or class size-this will allow teachers and students to get to know each other better, work more closely together, and build communities 2) Establish advisory systems where teachers can regularly meet with small groups of student, to advise, advocate, and support academic, social and emotional development, 3) Improved classroom design and management by allowing students voice and agency, consideration in developing the rules and norms, and creation of a collaborative environment where responsibility is shared by teachers and students alike, 4) Reduced class sizes so teachers can have more time and ability to get to know their students' academic, social and emotional needs.

*Improving Career Motivation*-The career motivation of teachers can be influenced by various factors which include both external and internal factors. These factors can impact teachers' professional satisfaction, commitment, and sense of purpose. As the previous section has already proposed some recommendations to influence job satisfaction, mainly through improving school climate, this section will focus on improving teachers' career satisfaction by focusing on professional development. Professional development provides teachers with the tools, knowledge, and opportunities to improve and excel in their careers. When they engage in professional development, teachers can understand and meet students' needs, keep updated with their capabilities and foster a

sense of competency and growth. By investing in professional development, schools are not only benefitting the teachers, but benefitting the school itself. According to Lee (2005), a successful professional development program has the following features: 1) Use of multiple strategies-this means that different models of staff development should be used, which can include training, individual-guided development, and observation and assessment. By adopting different strategies, teachers can choose those strategies that work best for them, 2) Organizational feature- means having a variety of delivery methods including traditional methods such as seminars and trainings or different methods such as study groups, networking, mentoring, and coaching, 3) Longer duration-means increasing the length of time over which the professional development activity takes place to ensure that teachers understand and get to put into practice what they have learned, 4) Building teacher communities-by forming learning communities, teachers can share and integrate what they have learned with others. The communities help teachers keep up their enthusiasm and motivation, 5) Matching purpose and strategies-means ensuring that teachers build knowledge based on the kinds of learning they are expected to practice with their students. Teachers should also create new instructional materials as one of the activities in their professional development to translate theory into practice, and finally, teachers should reflect, do action research, discuss case studies and organize study groups to talk about what they have learned.

Future researchers may want to consider a mixed-methods approach that involves qualitative aspects such as interviews or observations to provide a more holistic view of the variables and their relationships. Cross-cultural studies may also be suggested where future researchers can investigate servant leadership, job satisfaction, and career motivation across different cultural or regional contexts.

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