EFFECTS OF PARTICIPATIVE LEADERSHIP ON TEACHER JOB SATISFACTION

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Abstract

The rate of teacher turnover has been increasing throughout the globe with teacher dissatisfaction as its main cause. The one factor that has underpinned teacher dissatisfaction is the lack of their participation in school wide decisions. The purpose of this study was to examine if a relationship existed between participative decision-making processes and teacher job satisfaction through the use of a quantitative cross-sectional survey research design. A total of 113 teachers from three private international schools in Bangkok, Thailand, participated in the study that was administered either electronically or onsite. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were employed through the aid of statistical software, and hypotheses were established to answer two research questions. The results of the study showed a significant extent in the practice of participative leadership, as perceived by school teachers, and an extremely high level of importance was placed on the relationship between the practice of participative leadership and teacher job satisfaction in private schools in Bangkok, Thailand.

Key Words: Participative leadership, School leadership, Teacher Attrition, Teacher Job Satisfaction, Teacher Surveys, Teacher Turnover

บทคัดย่อ

อัตราการเปลี่ยนผู้สอนของครูมีผลต่อการเปลี่ยนผู้สอนในบางสถาบันที่สูง โดยมีสาเหตุหลักมาจากความไม่พอใจในงานที่ทำ หนึ่งในตัวแปรที่โดดเด่นซึ่งสร้างให้เกิดความไม่พอใจในงานของครูคือการขาดความมีส่วนร่วมในการตัดสินใจในเรื่องที่กระทบต่อโอกาสโดยรวม วัตถุประสงค์ของงานนี้คือเพื่อที่จะศึกษาว่ามีความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างการมีส่วนร่วมในการกระบวนการตัดสินใจกับความพอใจในงานของครูแขอมหรือไม่ โดยการศึกษานี้จะใช้วิธีการทวิวิทยาโดยใช้แบบสอบถามข้อมูลปริมาณ (quantitative cross-sectional survey research) ในการศึกษาครั้งนี้มีครูจำนวน 113 ท่านจากโรงเรียนนานาชาติเอกชนที่มีอยู่ในกรุงเทพ ประเทศไทย โดยเข้าร่วมทั้งผู้สอนเด็กอินเตอร์นัท หรือ จน สถานศึกษาโดยตรง มีการนำหลักสถิติทั้งในมิติเชิงพรรณนาและมิติเชิงยั่งยืน (descriptive and inferential) มาใช้ตัวเลข และมีการคำนวณสมบัติเพื่อวัดถึงความมีอิทธิพลและความมีอิทธิพลของตัวแปรที่สำคัญเพื่อวัดความสัมพันธ์ที่มีระหว่างความพอใจในงานของครูกับวิธีการบริหารงานแบบมีส่วนร่วมในการตัดสินใจ ในโรงเรียนภาคเอกชนในจังหวัดกรุงเทพ ประเทศไทย

ค่าขั้นต่ำ: ภาวะผู้นำแบบมีส่วนร่วม, ภาวะผู้นำในโรงเรียน, อัตราการลาออกของครู, ความพอใจในงานของครู, การสำรวจครู, การสอบถามครู

INTRODUCTION

This study was designed to examine the effects of participative leadership on teacher satisfaction in private international schools in Bangkok, Thailand. The problems of teacher turnover and teacher retention have worsened in recent years, with teacher turnover rates rising as high as between 16% and 20% (Hanushek, Kain, & Rivkin, 2004; Kopkowski, 2008; Luekens, Lyter, & Fox, 2004). This situation has created not only an urgent national crisis issue that needs to be addressed, but also a challenge for schools to retain teachers (Coley, 2009; Darling-Hammond,
LITERATURE REVIEW

Teachers are significant to the education of students and are considered the backbone of schools (Kocabas, 2009; "Understanding and Reducing Teacher Turnover", 2008). Many of these teachers are however, leaving their schools and the teaching profession with continual turnover rates as a result of teacher attrition and teacher job dissatisfaction (Boyd, Crossman, Hamilton, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2009; Exstrom, 2009; Ingersoll, 2001; Liu & Ramsey, 2008; Xu & Shen, 2007). The present teacher turnover rate is at approximately 20% annually (Dillon, 2009) and this turnover in the field of education is higher compared to any other profession (Liu & Ramsey, 2008; Thornton, Perreault, & Jennings, 2008).

Bogler (2001) mentioned that a teacher’s job satisfaction is affected by the principal’s leadership styles and decision-making strategies. Evidence in the literature show that the lack of the school administration’s collaboration and supportiveness, as well as low levels of teacher participation in decision-making activities, have played crucial roles in teacher job dissatisfaction and turnover (Birky, Shelton, & Headley, 2006; Boyd et al., 2009; Ingersoll, 2003; Mihans, 2008; Thornton et al., 2008; Turnbull, 2004).

Participative Leadership

School leaders who practice participative leadership in their schools can help to increase teacher job satisfaction and teacher retention because participative leadership has been shown to increase teacher morale, productivity, commitment, trust, team spirit, and teacher efficacy (Drake & Roe, 2003; Lambert, 2003; Lovely, 2005; Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003; Zimmerman, 2006a, 2006b). The practice of participative leadership offers a variety of advantages, such as better decisions, improved working lives of teachers, and higher teacher motivation and satisfaction (Bogler, 2001; Drake & Roe, 2003; Leech & Fulton, 2008; Somech, 2005; VanSciver, 2007). Therefore, these factors have led to its widely known reputation as being the more advantageous leadership style compared to directive leadership (Somech, 2005). Moreover, participative leadership has been deemed the educational religion of the 21st century (Somech, 2005).

Drake and Roe (2003) stated that participative leadership has increased teachers’ productivity, resulted in improved teacher morale and job satisfaction, promoted trust, increased teamwork, and improved communication. Decisions that involve teachers have the tendency to offer higher quality, be more accepted by teachers, offer greater satisfaction, and increase the development of teachers’ decision-making skills (Drake & Roe, 2003; Yuki, 2006). Participatory leadership provides teachers with the opportunity to collaborate and participate in decision making in a climate of openness, thus creating a supportive culture of change (Graham, Wilson, Gerrick, Frass, & Heimann, 2002; Nieto, 2009). Evidence in the literature has indicated that encouraging teacher participation in decision making not only creates a positive school climate, but also results in increased teacher efficacy, which, in turn, increases student academic achievement, motivation, and self-efficacy (Lovely, 2005; Nir, 2002; Ranson, Farrell, Peim, & Smith, 2005; Sooksomchitra, 2004; Waters et al., 2003; Zimmerman, 2006a, 2006b). It was also noted that teachers who were involved in decision-making processes tended to work in high-performing schools (Carter, 2004).

When teachers are involved in the decision-making process, it creates a sense of ownership and commitment to decisions made, and this factor is partially responsible for the attainment of organizational goals (Bogler, 2001; Drake & Roe, 2003; Graham et al., 2002; Hulpia, Devos, & Van Keer, 2009; Leech & Fulton, 2008; Somech, 2005; VanSciver, 2007). Studies have also shown that the presence of partici-
paratory leadership promotes higher teacher commitment toward the organization, and this factor is positively related to increased organizational effectiveness (Dee, Henkin, & Singleton, 2006; Diosdado, 2008; DiPasola, 2005; Drake & Roe, 2003; Hulpia et al., 2009; Turnbull, 2004; Yukl, 2006).

Research has also shown that the amount of preferred teacher participation was higher than the actual participation (Turnbull, 2004). The literature indicates that teachers, particularly new ones, are open to participative decision making and want to be consulted in planning school-related issues, such as curriculum and staff development, and be involved in professional collaboration (Boyd et al., 2009; Coley, 2009; Turnbull, 2004).

Given the literature regarding participative leadership and teacher satisfaction, one theory stood out to serve as the theoretical framework for the study. The causal model of participative leadership offered by Yukl (2006) guided the process of integrating the study of participative leadership within the school system and the teachers’ levels of satisfaction with their jobs. The four potential benefits that have been identified in the model include “higher decision quality, higher decision acceptance by participants, more satisfaction with the decision process, and more development of decision skills” (Yukl, 2006, p. 86).

Teacher Job Satisfaction

Zembillas and Papanastasiou (2005) defined teacher job satisfaction as “the level of teacher satisfaction by matters related to these conditions: student achievement, decision-making ability, and self-growth” (p. 433). The factors that affect job satisfaction as identified by Crossman and Harris (2006) can be broadly categorized as “environmental (i.e., the job itself or the working environment), psychological (i.e., personality or behavior attitude), or demographic (i.e., age or gender)” (p. 30). Job satisfaction is crucial to any organization’s well-being because people who are satisfied with their jobs will continue to work in the organization, but those who are dissatisfied will either quit their jobs or create problems in the workplace in terms of bad behavior or shirking responsibilities (De Nobile & McCormick, 2005; Xu & Shen, 2007).

Shann (1998) stated, “Teacher job satisfaction is a predictor of teacher retention, a determinant of teacher commitment, and, in turn, a contributor to school effectiveness” (p. 67). Woods and Weasmer (2004) noted, “Teacher job satisfaction reduces attrition, enhances collegiality, improves job performance, and has an impact on student outcomes” (p. 118). It is, therefore, important to keep teachers satisfied because they are the backbone of the school (Kocabas, 2009). School leaders increase teacher job satisfaction when they are able to identify the factors that lead to job satisfaction and use the acquired knowledge to enhance teacher job satisfaction in their schools (Taylor, Martin, Hutchinson, & Jinks, 2007). Moreover, Yukl (2006) mentioned that an important factor in effective leadership is follower satisfaction, thus emphasizing the importance of keeping teachers satisfied to achieve effective school leadership.

Ensuring teacher job satisfaction is extremely important because it has a direct impact on future generations, as research has shown the positive effects that happy teachers have on improved education (Adams, 2010). It is crucial for teachers to be satisfied in their teaching jobs because the attitude not only directly affects, but has a positive increase on, teachers’ commitment to the school, their mental and physical health, overall well-being, and, most importantly, their performance (Caprara, Barbaranelli, Borgogni, & Steca, 2003; Judge, Thoresen, Bono, & Patton, 2001). Research studies have also revealed that teachers who are satisfied in their jobs demonstrate lower levels of burnout, anxiety, and stress, and exhibit higher levels of motivated behavior (Brouwers & Tomic, 2000; Caprara, Barbaranelli, Steca, & Malone, 2006; Caprara et al., 2003).

Teacher Job Dissatisfaction and Teacher Turnover

Schools have been compared to revolving doors for teachers because the average national teacher turnover rate is currently at 17%, with an estimated one third of all new teachers who leave the profession after 3 years, and 50% leave within 5 years (Allen, 2005; Brooks-Young, 2007; Hanushek et al., 2004; Ingersoll, 2003; Kopkowski, 2008; Liu & Ramsey, 2008).

Job dissatisfaction has been closely associated with absenteeism, turnover, lower job commitment, and occupational stress (De Nobile & McCormick,
leadership and the extent to which it had been practiced by school leaders. The researcher also sought to find out if a relationship existed between the practice of participative leadership and teacher job satisfaction. This was made possible by answering the following two research questions:

1. To what degree is the practice of participative leadership perceived by school teachers in private schools in Bangkok, Thailand?

2. To what extent does participative leadership contribute to teacher job satisfaction in private schools in Bangkok, Thailand?

Participants

The total number of respondents who were engaged in this research study included 113 school teachers from three participating private ISAT-member K-12 international schools in Bangkok, Thailand. Invitations to participate in the study were made to 18 K-12 international schools in Bangkok, Thailand, and only three expressed their interest in participating. The sample population of 113 school teachers was derived from school teachers working in these three schools who were willing to participate, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, race, working experience, subject area, and the level at which they were responsible.

METHODOLOGY

Instruments

A quantitative research design was chosen for this research study using closed-ended questions, through a modified survey instrument, entitled School Leadership Evaluation and Teacher Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (see Appendix A). This survey was compiled from two different published sources with modifications made to suit the study: (a) the job satisfaction and retention survey form (Perrachione, Petersen, & Rosser, 2008) and (b) the public school teachers questionnaire called Schools and Staffing Survey (U.S. Department of Education, 1993).
The survey consisted of three sections with 19 closed-ended questions containing both categorical and ordinal (i.e., continuous) responses. Section A of the survey addressed Research Question 1 (To what degree is the practice of participative leadership perceived by school teachers in private schools in Bangkok, Thailand?). Section B addressed Research Question 2 (To what extent does participative leadership contribute to teacher job satisfaction in private schools in Bangkok, Thailand?). The responses in the first two sections were rated on a 6-point Likert scale that ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Section C of the survey outlined the teachers’ demographic information and contained categorical responses.

**Focus-group interview.** To increase the reliability and validity of the questionnaires, a focus-group interview in survey research was conducted at an international kindergarten. The function of a focus group is to “answer the questions on the instrument, and record their comments on the instrument” (Creswell, 2008, p. 396).

**Pilot testing.** After the instrument was revised, based on recommendations for improvement from the focus-group session, pilot testing was administered both on site and online.

## Procedure

In this procedure, quantitative, numbered data were collected through the use of questionnaires.

Participating schools were provided with two options as to how they wished to participate. The first option was through a researcher-facilitated, paper self-administered questionnaire session conducted during a school faculty meeting at their convenience or through electronic questionnaires. Two of the three schools had opted for the onsite paper self-administered survey while one of the three schools chose to do an electronic online questionnaire with Survey Monkey as the software program used.

## Analysis

The researcher was responsible for data management; therefore, the validity involved in data compilation was high. The completed questionnaires, both paper and electronic, were reviewed and separated into two piles of data (e.g., completely filled questionnaires and questionnaires with missing data). In order to ensure the lowest percentage of missing data, the use of focus groups and pilot testing helped to spot and eradicate confusing question formats, bad instructions, bad response choices, and any other problematic issues that arose. The researcher also solved the problem of missing data by including a response choice that allowed participants to indicate that they did not know or that the item did not apply as a technique to obtain full questionnaire response.

The results from 113 questionnaires were used in presenting the findings of this study and in data analysis. These questionnaires contained no missing data, as only fully completed questionnaires were used in the research study. Questionnaires containing missing data were eliminated from the study for reliability and validity purposes. Survey Monkey, which was used to administer the electronic surveys, contained a special software feature that could export the information into a statistical software format; therefore, no manual data entry was required for electronic surveys.

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was the statistical software used to analyze the data, and both descriptive and inferential statistics were used in data analysis. The analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to address Research Question 1 with the use of the results from the 10 items in Section A of the questionnaire. The chi-square test was used to address the second research question and involved the data from Section B of the questionnaire.

In answering Research Question 1 (To what degree is the practice of participative leadership perceived by school teachers in private schools in Bangkok, Thailand?) and Research Question 2 (To what extent does participative leadership contribute to teacher job satisfaction in private schools in Bangkok, Thailand?), the variables were derived from the questionnaire. The first set of independent variables included single-item scores of the demographic information of the participating teacher containing categorical responses. Independent variables found in Section C of the questionnaire included the following: gender, ethnic background, age, number of years at the present school, the highest degree earned, and the teaching school level. The dependent variables were the summed scores with continuous responses.
of Section B of the questionnaire. The assigned numerical values for the items in Sections A and B corresponded to the perceptions of the teachers’ responses to each item that ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

RESULTS OF THE FINDINGS

Teachers’ Profiles

The raw data was gathered from three schools that involved 113 teachers in the evaluation of five school leaders. According to the teacher profile findings, the number of females (59.3%) exceeded the males (40.7%). This finding is typical of schools in which more female teachers are employed than male teachers because the teaching profession has been cited as a female-friendly profession. The age range of teachers that formed the largest representation was between 30 and 39 years old (44.2%), followed by those aged 29 or lower (23%), 40 to 49 years old (21.2%), and, to a small degree, teachers between 50 and 59 years old (11.5%). It was interesting to note that most of the participating teachers had been teaching for less than 10 years. Up to 39.8% of the teachers had been teaching from 0 to 4 years, and 37.2% had been teaching for 5 to 9 years. In fact, the findings indicated that the percentage of the number of teachers decreased as the number of years of teaching increased. The highest level of education of the participating teachers was truly astounding, as more than half (53.1%) held master’s degrees and 37.2% held bachelor’s degrees. Most of them taught in elementary school (33.6%), followed by middle school (24.8%), high school (22.1%), and a combination of schools (18.6%).

Data Analysis of Research Question 1

The descriptive and inferential statistics were used with the aid of statistical software to answer the first research question (To what degree is the practice of participative leadership perceived by school teachers in private schools in Bangkok, Thailand?). Section A of the questionnaire included 10 closed-ended items that were used to examine the amount of participative leadership practiced by the school leader, as perceived by the teachers.

The discussion focuses first on the data obtained from descriptive statistics (e.g., the mean and frequency or mode) as found in Table 1. In the analysis of the means of each questionnaire item, Item 1 (The school leader’s behavior toward me is supportive and encouraging) resulted in the highest mean of 3.8053 (76.1%). The next highest scoring item was Item 6 (The school leader lets us know what is expected), with an overall mean of 3.7434.

Item 7 (I can freely express my opinions and ideas to school leaders) received the third highest score. This item was directly related to how approachable school leaders were to school teachers and represented a significant factor that contributes to the practice of participative leadership. The overall mean for this item was 3.7257.

The item that scored the fourth highest was Item 5 (I am evaluated fairly in this school), with an overall mean of 3.6637. For Item 4 (I am recognized for a job well done by the school leader), the overall mean was 3.5664 (71.3%). A trusting and collaborative school climate is essential to any successful school and leadership, and Item 9 addressed this concern (I feel that my school leader promotes a trusting and collaborative school climate). The overall mean for this item was 3.5133 (70.3%).

A leader’s participative leadership style can be indicated by the amount of power and authority that he or she gives to the teachers, which was addressed in Item 10 (My school leader gives me the power and authority to make decisions). The overall mean for this item was ranked as seventh of the 10 items in Section A, at 3.5044 (70.1%).

Although school leaders have appeared to move from autocratic leadership styles to more democratic or participative styles, the mean responses to Item 8 (I feel that my school leader is democratic) represented eighth in the ranking of all 10 items on the questionnaire ($M = 3.4867$).

The mean responses to Item 3 (The school leader knows what kind of school he or she wants and has communicated it to me) ranked the second lowest of the 10 items ($M = 3.4071$).

The importance of teacher participation in school decisions cannot be stressed enough, and the literature has provided the many positive benefits of this practice. However, it was surprising to learn that Item
Table 1: Means for Section A: Teacher’s Perception of School Leadership Style

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The school leader’s behavior towards me is supportive and encouraging.</td>
<td>3.8053</td>
<td>76.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I participate in making most of the important educational decisions in this school.</td>
<td>2.9027</td>
<td>58.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The school leader knows what kind of school he/she wants and has communicated it to me.</td>
<td>3.4071</td>
<td>68.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I am recognized for a job well done by the school leader.</td>
<td>3.5664</td>
<td>71.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I am evaluated fairly in this school.</td>
<td>3.6637</td>
<td>73.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The school leader lets teachers know what is expected.</td>
<td>3.7454</td>
<td>74.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I can freely voice my opinions and ideas to the school leader.</td>
<td>3.7257</td>
<td>74.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I feel that my school leader is democratic.</td>
<td>3.4867</td>
<td>69.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I feel that my school leader promotes a trusting and collaborative school climate.</td>
<td>3.5133</td>
<td>70.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. My school leader gives me the power and authority to make decisions.</td>
<td>3.5044</td>
<td>70.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>35.3187</strong></td>
<td><strong>70.6%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Averaged Mean</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.5319</strong></td>
<td><strong>70.6%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. (I participate in making most of the important decisions in this school) had the lowest mean of all 10 items in Section A. The lowest overall mean was 2.9027; A summary of the means of all 10 items of Section A indicates that the overall mean was 3.5319. (Table 1)

The ANOVA served as the inferential statistical tool to answer the first research question with the aid of two statistical hypotheses. The null hypothesis stated that there is no significant degree in the practice of participative leadership as perceived by school teachers in private schools in Bangkok, Thailand. The alternative hypothesis stated that there is a significant degree in the practice of participative leadership as perceived by school teachers in private schools in Bangkok, Thailand. The findings from the ANOVA show the output results for all items in Section A. At α = 0.05, the ANOVA findings indicated that p < .05 (Table 2); therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Upon further analysis of all 10 items, there was a clear indication in each of the items that (a) the means differed significantly, (b) the between-group variances were much larger than the within-group variances, and (c) the F test value was significantly greater than 1 in every item. The final result of the p value of each item was also less than 0.05 (i.e., the original chosen value of α). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted, meaning that there is a significant degree in the practice of participative leadership as perceived by school teachers in private schools in Bangkok, Thailand (Bluman, 2010).

In summary, the findings from the ANOVA indicated that there is a significant degree in the practice of participative leadership as perceived by school teachers in private schools in Bangkok, Thailand. The degree of this practice was discussed with the assistance of the two descriptive statistical tools of mean and frequency or mode.

Data Analysis of Research Question 2

The second research question (To what extent does participative leadership contribute to teacher job satisfaction in private schools in Bangkok, Thailand?) was answered through both descriptive and inferential statistics. The three closed-ended items from Section B of the questionnaire were used to answer this question. The three items focused on the importance that teachers placed on the relationship between participative leadership and the satisfaction they received in their teaching jobs. The analysis of the data for the second research question commences with the findings obtained from the two descriptive statistical tools (e.g., mean and frequency or mode) and is followed by the chi-square test, which was the inferential statistical tool used in answering the research question.

For Item 11 (There is a significant link between my school leader’s leadership style and my job satisfaction), the overall mean was 3.7876 (75.8%). A closer examination of the findings from the frequency for this item indicated that 67.2% of the teachers agreed, 23.9% were neutral, and 7.9% disagreed. These findings indicate that most of the teachers saw a significant link between their school leaders’ leadership style and their job satisfaction.

For Item 12 (I feel that it is important for my school leader to practice participative leadership), the overall mean was amazingly the highest of all three items, at 4.2743 (85.5%). Regarding the frequency of agreement, 91.1% of all teachers agreed that it was impor-
**Table 2: Analysis of Variance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Sum of squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question 1: The school leader’s behavior toward me is supportive and encouraging.</td>
<td>Between groups</td>
<td>23.874</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.892</td>
<td>11.092</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Within groups</td>
<td>117.933</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>1.072</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>141.717</td>
<td>112</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 2: I participate in making most of the important decisions in this school.</td>
<td>Between groups</td>
<td>11.294</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.647</td>
<td>3.684</td>
<td>0.028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Within groups</td>
<td>168.635</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>1.533</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>179.929</td>
<td>112</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 3: The school leader knows what kind of school he/she wants and has communicated it to me.</td>
<td>Between groups</td>
<td>27.710</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13.855</td>
<td>13.910</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Within groups</td>
<td>109.564</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>0.996</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>137.274</td>
<td>112</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 4: I am recognized for a job well done by the school leader.</td>
<td>Between groups</td>
<td>30.044</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15.022</td>
<td>12.939</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Within groups</td>
<td>127.708</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>1.161</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>157.752</td>
<td>112</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 5: I am evaluated fairly in this school.</td>
<td>Between groups</td>
<td>15.572</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.876</td>
<td>7.133</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Within groups</td>
<td>121.469</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>1.014</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>137.221</td>
<td>112</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Question 6: The school leader lets us know what is expected.</td>
<td>Between groups</td>
<td>28.374</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14.187</td>
<td>16.396</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Within groups</td>
<td>95.183</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>0.865</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>123.558</td>
<td>112</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 7: I can freely voice my opinions and ideas to the school leader.</td>
<td>Between groups</td>
<td>11.868</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.934</td>
<td>4.577</td>
<td>0.012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Within groups</td>
<td>142.627</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>1.297</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>154.496</td>
<td>112</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 8: I feel that my school leader is democratic.</td>
<td>Between groups</td>
<td>21.998</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10.999</td>
<td>8.628</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Within groups</td>
<td>140.232</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>1.275</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>162.230</td>
<td>112</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 9: I feel that my school leader promotes a trusting and collaborative school environment.</td>
<td>Between groups</td>
<td>26.196</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13.098</td>
<td>10.289</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Within groups</td>
<td>140.034</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>1.273</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>166.230</td>
<td>112</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 10: My school leader gives me the power and authority to make decisions.</td>
<td>Between groups</td>
<td>10.557</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.279</td>
<td>4.409</td>
<td>0.014</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Within groups</td>
<td>131.690</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>1.197</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>142.248</td>
<td>112</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Total of all questions: 0.006 (0.00)
tant for their school leaders to practice participative leadership. This finding demonstrates that most of the teachers believed that it was important for their school leaders to practice participative leadership.

The last item to be discussed, Item 13 (I feel that if the school leader practices participative leadership, it will increase the satisfaction I receive from my job), was a direct question for Research Question 2 with a twist to it; it was assumed that participative leadership would contribute to the existing satisfaction that teachers received in their jobs. The overall mean for this item was relatively high and scored as the second highest item in Section B at 4.2301 (84.6%).

These findings suggest that increased teacher job satisfaction occurs when school leaders practice participative leadership. The frequencies indicated that 84.9% of all teachers were in agreement that their job satisfaction would increase if their school leaders would practice participative leadership. The overall mean of Items 11, 12, and 13 was 4.0973 (81.9%), which is a relatively high percentage (Table 3). It can be concluded from the findings that there is a great significance in the practice of participative to teacher job satisfaction.

The chi-square test resulted in \( p = 0.000 \) for each of the three items (Table 4) and all the items combined, which is lower than the established level of significance at 0.05. A null hypothesis is said to be rejected when \( p < 0.05 \). Because the results indicated that \( p = 0.000 \), the null hypothesis (There is no significant contribution of participative leadership to teacher job satisfaction in private schools in Bangkok, Thailand) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis (There is a significant contribution of participative leadership to teacher job satisfaction in private schools in Bangkok, Thailand) is accepted (Cooper & Schindler, 2011). It can be concluded that participative leadership contributes to teacher job satisfaction in private schools in Bangkok, Thailand.

In summary, the findings from the chi-square test indicated that there is a significant contribution of participative leadership to teacher job satisfaction in private schools in Bangkok, Thailand. The extent of this contribution was highly significant at 81.9% (i.e., percentage of the mean for all schools), and the level of significance of participative leadership to teacher job satisfaction was similar across all three schools, thus indicating the relevancy of the findings.

**CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, the findings from the ANOVA indicated that the practice of participative leadership, as perceived by school teachers in private schools in Bangkok, Thailand, was discovered to be at a signifi-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 11: There is a significant link between my school leader’s leadership style and my job satisfaction</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>113</td>
<td>3.7876</td>
<td>1.07281</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 12: I feel that it is important for my school leader to practice participative leadership</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>4.2743</td>
<td>0.80454</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 13: I feel that if the school leader practices participative leadership, it will increase the satisfaction I receive from my job</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>4.2301</td>
<td>0.74413</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Averaged Mean | 4.0973 |**Table 3: Descriptive Findings for Section B**

| Question 11: There is a significant link between my school leader’s leadership style and my job satisfaction | 0.8808a | 5 | 0.000 |
| Question 12: I feel that it is important for my school leader to practice participative leadership | 180.044a | 58.858b | 3 |
| Question 13: I feel that if the school leader practices participative leadership, it will increase the satisfaction I receive from my job | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 |
| Chi-Square df Asymp. Sig. (p) | 5 | 3 |
| a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 18.8.
| b. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 18.8.
cant degree. The chi-square test reported the existence of a significant contribution of participative leadership to teacher job satisfaction in private schools in Bangkok, Thailand. This finding was further supported by an overwhelmingly positive response by teachers about the importance they placed on the practice of participative leadership to their satisfaction in their jobs. In merging the data analysis from both Research Questions 1 and 2, it was obvious that the degree of participative leadership practiced did not match the need, as indicated by school teachers.

**Linkage to Relevant Research and Implications of Findings**

The overall findings of the study indicated that, although school leaders practiced participative leadership in private schools in Bangkok, Thailand, the level of practice was at much lower levels than the higher preferred levels. The lower amounts of participative leadership practiced by these school leaders was in line with literature that mentioned that the actual levels of participative leadership practiced by school leaders were at much lower levels than desired by teachers (Turnbull, 2004).

Despite the lower than desired levels of participative leadership practiced, this finding was an indication that attempts had been made to move from the traditional autocratic style to a more participative leadership style (Birky et al., 2006; Kowalski, 2003). This finding is especially necessary because leadership plays a significant role in the success or failure of any organization, including schools (Zahra, 2003), as excellent schools have been reputed to be led by excellent leaders (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003). Therefore, it is crucial that leaders practice good and effective school leadership because the success of schools is highly dependent on it (Leech & Fulton, 2008; Lim & Daft, 2004; Lussier & Achua, 2007).

International schools worldwide have reported that high rates of teacher turnover as a result of teacher job dissatisfaction represent an expensive and time-consuming staffing problem each year (Odland & Ruzicka, 2009). With globalization, international school networking, and international school fairs, teachers have greater access to new schools if they are dissatisfied at their current place of work. Moreover, this situation has worsened with the increasing number of international schools all over the world, thus opening more doors for dissatisfied teachers to move from one school to another. Therefore, school leaders should make greater efforts in the right direction by increasing teacher job satisfaction through the increased usage of participative leadership in their schools. The findings from this research study and past research studies have indicated the high level of significance of participative leadership attached toward teacher job satisfaction.

In conclusion, the findings obtained from this research study conducted in the developing country of Thailand can serve as a contribution to the minimal amount of existing literature available on international schools operating in developing countries. The finding on the importance of participative leadership to teacher job satisfaction will be a useful addition to similar research findings on this topic.

**Limitations of the Study**

A few limitations to this research study might have had negative impacts on the reported findings. As the study was limited to only three private international schools with varying school sizes and teacher participation levels, the outcome resulted in the uneven weighing in the computation of the overall results. A total of 18 private international schools in Bangkok, Thailand, had been approached but only three had decided to participate.

Another limitation involved the time at which the questionnaire was administered. Because it was administered toward the end of the school year due to the approval process of the study, the level of participation was not as high as desired because some teachers were either too busy to participate or simply disinterested. Another limitation was the low response rate from electronic survey administration, but this outcome was in line with what Bourque and Fielder (2003) had stated regarding the low response rate as the only drawback of electronic surveys.

Another possible limitation that may have led to inaccurate findings would be the inaccurate answers that the respondents provided when expressing their opinions and evaluations (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 2007). Some questionnaires with missing data had items left unanswered in Section C, probably because teachers feared that they would identified. Moreover, the
uncertainty of the confidentiality of the survey might have also caused some respondents to be untruthful about their responses.

Recommendations for Further Research

The current research study was one worth examining. It was interesting to note the differences in the responses from the different schools that participated in the study, even though only three schools were involved in the study. The researcher would like to recommends that future research be conducted to include more schools, schools of the same size, and a bigger sample size.

With reference to timing, it is highly recommended that future research studies be conducted at least 2 to 3 months prior to the end of the school year so that teachers would be more willing to participate, as they would not be too occupied with end-of-the-year activities. Because the response rate was relatively low in the administration of electronic surveys, further researchers are encouraged to conduct self-administered surveys instead of electronic ones to ensure higher response rates.

Items for future studies could involve including questions that pertain to factors contributing to teacher job satisfaction and finding out the ranking of participative leadership as an important factor to teacher job satisfaction when compared to other factors. It would also be interesting to include a questionnaire for school leaders to find out if they practice leadership and if their responses would match their teachers’ evaluation of their leadership styles. Another factor that could be incorporated for further study is if participative leadership has an effect on teacher retention.

References


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Zahra, S. (2003). The practice of management: Re-

**About the Author:**

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APPENDIX A

Questionnaire

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. To increase the validity and reliability of this questionnaire, please answer ALL QUESTIONS.
2. Please note that the terms school administration, school leader, and principal will be used interchangeably.
3. Please CIRCLE only one answer for each question that is located as a number on the RIGHT hand side of your selected answer.

Example:

Question: I am working in a K-12 International School in Bangkok, Thailand.
True ............................................... 1
False ............................................... 2
Don’t know/doesn’t apply ....................... 3

Section A: Teacher’s Perception of School Leadership Style

1. The school administration’s behavior toward me is supportive and encouraging.
   Strongly Agree ................................... 5
   Agree ............................................. 4
   Neutral .......................................... 3
   Disagree ......................................... 2
   Strongly Disagree .............................. 1
   Don’t know or doesn’t apply .................. 0
2. I participate in making most of the important educational decisions in this school.
   Strongly Agree ................................... 5
   Agree ............................................. 4
   Neutral .......................................... 3
   Disagree ......................................... 2
   Strongly Disagree .............................. 1
   Don’t know or doesn’t apply .................. 0
3. The principal knows what kind of school he/she wants and has communicated it to me.
   Strongly Agree ................................... 5
   Agree ............................................. 4
   Neutral .......................................... 3
   Disagree ......................................... 2
   Strongly Disagree .............................. 1
   Don’t know or doesn’t apply .................. 0
4. I am recognized for a job well done by the school leader.
   Strongly Agree ................................... 5
   Agree ............................................. 4
   Neutral .......................................... 3
   Disagree ......................................... 2
   Strongly Disagree .............................. 1
   Don’t know or doesn’t apply .................. 0
5. I am evaluated fairly in this school.
   Strongly Agree ................................... 5
   Agree ............................................. 4
   Neutral .......................................... 3
   Disagree ......................................... 2
   Strongly Disagree .............................. 1
   Don’t know or doesn’t apply .................. 0
6. The principal lets teachers know what is expected.
   Strongly Agree ................................... 5
   Agree ............................................. 4
   Neutral .......................................... 3
   Disagree ......................................... 2
   Strongly Disagree .............................. 1
   Don’t know or doesn’t apply .................. 0
7. I can freely voice my opinions and ideas to the school leader.
   Strongly Agree ................................... 5
   Agree ............................................. 4
   Neutral .......................................... 3
   Disagree ......................................... 2
   Strongly Disagree .............................. 1
   Don’t know or doesn’t apply .................. 0
8. I feel that my school leader is democratic.
   Strongly Agree ................................... 5
   Agree ............................................. 4
   Neutral .......................................... 3
   Disagree ......................................... 2
   Strongly Disagree .............................. 1
   Don’t know or doesn’t apply .................. 0
9. I feel that my school leader promotes a trusting and collaborative school climate.
   Strongly Agree ................................... 5
Section B: The Importance of Participative Leadership to Teacher Job Satisfaction

Definition of Term: Participative leadership is practiced by leaders who consult with their employees about decisions by asking for their inputs, encouraging them to participate in decision making, and by establishing a collaborative relationship with them (Lim & Daft, 2004)

11. There is a significant link between my school leader’s leadership style and my job satisfaction.
   Strongly Agree ........................................5
   Agree ...................................................4
   Neutral ..................................................3
   Disagree ...............................................2
   Strongly Disagree ....................................1
   Don’t know or doesn’t apply .........................0

12. I feel that it is important for my school leader(s) to practice participative leadership.
   Strongly Agree ........................................5
   Agree ...................................................4
   Neutral ..................................................3
   Disagree ...............................................2
   Strongly Disagree ....................................1
   Don’t know or doesn’t apply .........................0

13. I feel that if the school leader practices participative leadership, it will increase the satisfaction I receive from my job.
   Strongly Agree ........................................5
   Agree ...................................................4
   Neutral ..................................................3
   Disagree ...............................................2
   Strongly Disagree ....................................1

Section C: Teacher’s Profile

14. What is your gender?
   Male .....................................................1
   Female ..................................................2

15. What is your ethnic background?
   Thai .....................................................1
   African American (Black) ..........................2
   Caucasian (White) .................................3
   Asian or Pacific Islander ..........................4
   Hispanic .............................................5
   Other ..................................................6

16. What is your age?
   29 or lower ..........................................1
   30-39 ..................................................2
   40-49 ..................................................3
   50-59 ..................................................4
   60 or higher .........................................5

17. How many years have you been working at your present school?
   0-4 .....................................................1
   5-9 ....................................................2
   10-14 ..................................................3
   15-19 ..................................................4
   20 or more ..........................................5

18. What is the highest degree you earned?
   Bachelor’s degree ...................................1
   Educational Specialist or professional diploma .2
   Master’s degree ....................................3
   Doctoral degree ....................................4
   Other ..................................................5

19. Which school level are you teaching in?
   Elementary (K-Grade 5 or Reception to Year 6) ..................1
   Middle School (Grades 6-8 or Years 7-9) ..................2
   High School (Grades 9-12 or Years 10-13) ............3
   A combination of school levels .......................4
   Don’t know or doesn’t apply .........................5

Your supportive participation is greatly appreciated. Thank you!