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Research Article

Leadership Characteristics with Potential for Added Value Management by Integrating Relevant Features from Modernized Leadership of Vocational School Administrators

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Abstract

As current social and technological developments cause increasingly rapid change, it is more important than ever that institutional administrators implement leadership practices that add value to their organizations and ensure competitiveness in the digital era. For the vocational colleges which shape students to contribute to society's economy as part of its workforce, the study of leadership characteristics can potentially create added value through management by integrating the V4 concept, called Happiness Value, into the leadership of executives. The research aimed to determine and examine these characteristics for modernized leadership of private education institutions using the Delphi method and the results of the study show that leaders have the ability to maximize value, in addition to institutional integrity and sustainability, through management integrating the Happiness Value concept, with five important leadership features being: 1) potential for ideas and creativity, 2) work processes, 3) interpersonal relationships, 4) communication and 5) information systems technology.

Keywords: human relations, leadership, sustainable development, value creation, work processes

1. Introduction

In today's world, global and local advances are fast-paced and along with economic, social, political, environmental, internal and external changes directly affect institutions in how they adapt to survive in the modern context. Whether an institution withers or strives depends on its leadership and human resource development. In terms of educational institutions, be it at the basic, vocational or higher education level, all need effective and multidimensional leadership education that is both practical and moral to make educational institutions ready to produce graduates both knowledgeable and ethical to ensure the quality of the labor market. Unfortunately, private vocational education institutes in Thailand are lacking in the leadership needed to steer them to be

both effective and competitive. There are over 900 public and private vocational schools in Thailand and enrollment, along with the quality of graduates, is in a state of decline. The Thai government has continuously endeavored to reform the country's educational system. To meet the needs of today's labor market, developing the leadership characteristics of school administrators is essential. The quality of vocational education in Thailand, as indicated by the results of the third round of vocational accreditation (2011-2015) by the Office of Education Standards and Quality Assessment under the Office of the Private Education Commission, is at a low standard. Of the 364 private vocational education institutions in Thailand, only 15 received high-level certifications, and 205 certified at a satisfactory level. 39.5% failed to gain accreditation. One factor directly affecting the quality of education is leadership, specifically the characteristics of school administrators and how they manage their staff and institutions.

At present in the private sector of vocational studies, there is a demand for executives possessing effective and moral leadership skills who can add value to their institutions in a variety of dimensions, but especially in creating a "happiness value" for all participants and learners, wherein they are motivated by their positive attachment to the institution and not just by monetary compensation or personal gain. For many schools, this type of institutional culture is a coveted goal and will facilitate readiness for the development of students to have knowledge and to exercise morality, thereby improving the quality of the labor market.

2. Objective

The objective of this research was to study and synthesize the characteristics of potential leaders that are needed for value-added management and integrating their conceptual relationship into key features to determine a modernized leadership style for administrators of private vocational schools.

3. Conceptual Framework
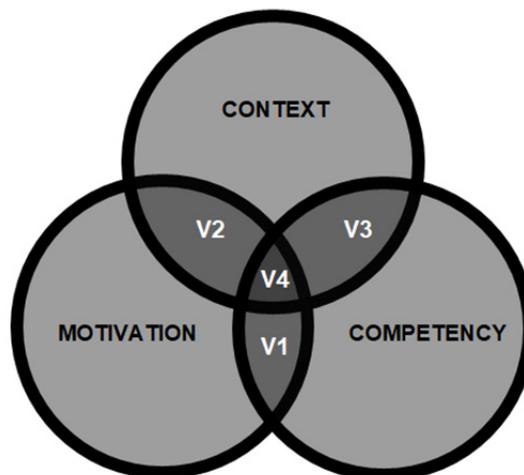
Figure 1. Conceptual framework for the research

Figure 1 illustrates the interconnected relationship among competency (administrators' skills and the ability to manage), motivation (administrators' ability to inspire and influence) and context (internally the introduction of information technology and externally dealing with factors such as globalization and changes in economic, social, political, legal, and environmental conditions). Creating added value in V1 is linked to competency and motivation. Creating added value in V2 is

linked to motivation and context. Creating added value in V3 is linked to context and competency. Finally, creating added value in V4 in this stage involves the integration of competency and motivation within the context. This is the conceptual framework for this study of characteristics of leadership with value-added potential from management with the integration of relative features, most notably happiness value, for administrators of private vocational schools. Mosley, Pietri and Megginson (1996) concluded that leadership can be divided into 4 theoretical areas: 1) Trait Theories, 2) Behavioral Theories, 3) Situational Contingency Leadership Theories, and 4) Transformational Leadership Theories. New Leadership approaches were also introduced in the mid-1980s (Bass & Bass, 2008). This research looks into the synthesis of these leadership concepts and their relationship to each other as shown in the three circles in Figure 1, which illustrates areas with potential for added value in management.

The first circle to consider is that of competencies, which accounts for the development of human resources, their knowledge, and skills to work effectively. The research utilized the concept of Hongladarom & Wachiramatee (2015), which stated that ethics was the most important element in leadership. Ethical capital is one of the 8Ks, the others being human capital, intellectual capital, happiness capital, social capital, sustainability capital, information technology capital and intellectual capital. This is consistent with the new leadership theory of Chongvisal (2013) which stated that leadership includes service to others. The researcher also analyzed and utilized concepts of Greenleaf (2002), which posit that key leadership features include listening to others, understanding others, appreciating others, motivating and encouraging others, recognizing, persuading and influencing others, creating an overview, as well as having foresight, commitment, dedication, development, and community building. For spiritual leadership, Chongvisal's research (2013) also identified as notable traits motivation, attention and goodwill toward others, morality in work, the ability to think strategically, the building of social consciousness, and openness to accept truths. For authentic leadership, the research analyzed the concepts of Avolio, Walumbwa, & Weber (2009), which included as key elements self-awareness, moral self-regulation, relational transparency, and balanced processes.

The second circle represents motivation. While personnel may have knowledge, skills and adequate workplaces, they must also be encouraged, have a sense of satisfaction, good attitudes and willingness to work. Therefore, the motivation of personnel is necessary. The research analyzed the theories of Hongladarom (2012) and the 5Ks of creativity capital, knowledge capital, innovation capital, emotional capital, and cultural capital. In line with the findings of Avolio, Walumbwa, & Weber (2009), cross-cultural leadership is one of the modernized leadership components. This research also utilized concepts and theories of Grisham (2006), which include the following elements in leadership: trust, attention, change, authority, communication, and conflict management.

The final circle accounts for context and considers outside forces such as changes in globalization, economics, politics, law, and so on, and also internal forces including significantly the effect of introducing information technology systems into the organization to perform tasks. The integration of technology into organizational processes aligns modern leadership with the information technology capital component of Hongladarom's 8Ks. This is in line with the findings of Avolio, Walumbwa, & Weber (2009), which corroborates that technological leadership is one of the elements of modernized leadership. The research studied a variety of research on technological leadership and utilized the concepts of Boonchan (2011), which stated the need for technological vision, technological competence, professional development in technology, and technology integration in modernized leadership.

4. Methodology

This research studied and synthesized leadership characteristics that give modernized leaders the potential to generate added value for their organizations through their management, with the integration of V4 into V1 + V2 + V3 based on the conceptual framework of the research as the main feature of modernized leadership for administrators of private vocational schools. Results were determined using the Delphi Technique.

4.1 Population and Sample

The sample group consisted of 20 qualified managers of vocational schools in both the private and government sector under the Office of the Vocational Education Commission of the Thai Ministry of Education. Each participant was a knowledgeable and experienced individual recognized in the field of education in Thailand. Of the sample, 9 had over 10 years of experience as a vocational school administrator, 4 were former school directors specializing in vocational education leadership, 3 were instructors who teach in the field of leadership or related subjects, with significant research conducted in that area, and 4 were specialists in leadership training.

4.2 Research Tools and Data Analysis

The instruments used for data collection were questionnaires that explored the potential leadership characteristics of value-added management with the integration of V4 into V1 + V2 + V3 based on the conceptual framework of the research as the main feature of modernized leadership for administrators of private vocational schools, given in 3 rounds.

The first round utilized an open-ended questionnaire to obtain the results pertaining to modernized leadership qualifications based on the conceptual framework of the research. This first open-ended questionnaire was given to the 20 individuals in the sample group along with interviews at their convenience to determine which leadership characteristics having the potential to generate added value from management should be included and also to determine the IOC value of the research. This stage was conducted by a board of 5 experts in vocational education administration, with the open-ended questionnaire consistent to the research objective and conceptual framework. For the second round, a subsequent questionnaire was then sent to the 20 respondents to generate rating scales after the first questionnaire was used to synthesize the characteristics of modernized leaders.

After data was compiled from the second questionnaire, the median, mean, and quartile range were analyzed and then used to formulate the third questionnaire for the final round. This third questionnaire was similar to the second but would also indicate the median score and display the position for responses. The results of the second round of questionnaire responses along with this third questionnaire were sent back to the 20 original respondents to review and either confirm or amend their responses.

5. Results

The results gathered from the questionnaires using the base statistics with standard deviation equal to 5 showed no significant differences in the responses regarding each issue. The average and interquartile range were used for analysis of the research, with results as follows:

Table 1. Mean scores and interquartile ranges of leadership features for value creation through management

#	Leadership Characteristics with Potential for Adding Value Through Management	average	interquartile range
1. Potential for Ideas & Creativity			
1.1	has skills in analysis, synthesis, and logic	4.70	(0.75)
1.2	has holistic vision, encourages quality and drives good citizenship	4.65	(1.00)
1.3	is ethical, adheres to the Sufficiency Economy and tries to benefit all parties	4.80	(0.00)
1.4	creates strength through ideas and solves problems systemically	4.45	(1.00)
1.5	has positive initiative, focuses on participation	4.75	(0.00)
1.6	plans for staff and student happiness in work and learning	4.60	(1.00)
1.7	integrated thinking to produce results that add value	4.75	(0.00)
1.8	can set action plans and policies to follow vision and accomplish goals	4.75	(0.75)
2. Work Processes			
2.1	is virtuous in practice	4.60	(1.00)
2.2	can implement plans with good governance for compliance and sustainability	4.65	(1.00)

#	Leadership Characteristics with Potential for Adding Value Through Management	average	interquartile range
2.3	is systemic and transparent, utilizing PDCA for continuous improvement	4.65	(1.00)
2.4	is proactive, fast-acting and responsible	4.70	(0.75)
2.5	encourages learning by doing (problem-based learning, situational learning)	4.70	(0.00)
2.6	uses strategies to develop all by understanding, accessing, and developing	4.60	(1.00)
2.7	encourages knowledgeability, self-efficacy, and sustainability	4.70	(1.00)
2.8	evaluates effectiveness confidentially, focus on research and development	4.55	(1.00)
3. Interpersonal Relationships			
3.1	ready to listen, counsel and support	4.80	(0.00)
3.2	encourages morality, kindness, generosity, understanding	4.70	(0.75)
3.3	promotes Dharma in practices, is self-conscious	4.55	(1.00)
3.4	is persuasive and allows for differences of opinion	4.75	(0.75)
3.5	promotes various methods of individual development	4.75	(1.00)
3.6	creates partnerships to form networks to deal with change	4.65	(1.00)
4. Communication			
4.1	is skillful in both internal and external communication	4.70	(0.00)
4.2	promotes use of information technology & social media	4.70	(0.75)
4.3	uses communication to foster good attitudes and sustainable collaboration	4.65	(0.75)
4.4	has screening and verification system for accurate communication	4.65	(1.00)
4.5	freely exchanges information, both positive and negative, for development	4.80	(1.00)
5. Information Systems Technology			
5.1	promotes correct use of technology in teachers, students and staff	4.75	(0.00)
5.2	uses technology as tool in information gathering, usage and storage	4.80	(0.00)
5.3	makes technology accessible and attractive to develop staff and student skills	4.75	(0.75)
5.4	integrates information to facilitate workflow	4.75	(0.00)
5.5	sees worth and takes advantage of evaluations and enhancements	4.70	(0.75)

Source: Calculations based on data from questionnaire results using Delphi method

From Table 1, the mean and interquartile range for the potential of value creation in leadership can be identified through the integration of the relevant components following data gathered from the three rounds of questionnaires.

For the potential for ideas and creativity, based on the average values, ethics and morality, adherence to Thailand's sufficiency economy and creating a "win-win" scenario benefitting all parties ranked highest as desired characteristics for modernized leadership. This is followed by important features such as having creativity and initiative to solve problems and encouragement of participation, the ability to integrate ideas to achieve added-value and being able to set action plans and policies to follow a vision and accomplish goals. Planning for staff and student happiness in work and learning had the lowest average. When considering the interquartile range, having holistic vision, encouraging quality and driving good citizenship, creating strength through ideas, solving problems systemically and planning for staff and student happiness in work and learning had the widest range while adherence to Thailand's sufficiency economy and creating a "win-win" scenario benefitting all parties, having creativity and initiative to solve problems, encouragement of participation, and having integrated thinking to produce results that add value had the narrowest range.

For work processes, based on average values, it was found that being proactive, fast-acting and responsible for the best work, being virtuous in practice, being systemic and transparent, utilizing PDCA for continuous improvement, encouraging learning by doing (problem-based learning, situational learning) and support for the development of teachers, staff and learners to attain valuable results for self and organizational sustainability had the highest average and confidential evaluation of effectiveness, focus on research and development along with 360-degree evaluation throughout the organization, and focus on research and development for continuous sustainability had the lowest mean score. When considering the interquartile range, it was found that being virtuous in practice, having the ability to implement plans with good governance for

compliance and sustainability, being systemic and transparent, utilizing PDCA for continuous improvement, usage of strategies to develop all through understanding, accessing, and developing, encouragement of knowledgeability, self-efficacy and sustainability, confidential evaluation of effectiveness and focus on research and development for sustainability had the widest range and leads the learning process. Areas of learning by doing, problem-based learning and situational learning, had the narrowest range.

For interpersonal relationships, based on the average values, readiness to listen, counsel and support had the highest average, followed by being persuasive and allowing for differences of opinion, promotion of various methods of individual development, encouragement of morality, kindness, generosity, and understanding, promotion of Dharma in practices, and being self-conscious. When considering the interquartile value, promotion of various methods of individual development and creation of partnerships to form networks to deal with change had the widest range and being ready to listen, counsel and support had the narrowest range.

For communication, based on the average values, the ability to freely exchange information both positive and negative for development had the highest average, followed by being skillful in both internal and external communication both one-way and two-way, promotion of the use of information technology and social media, and using communication to foster good attitudes and sustainable collaboration. Having a screening and verification system for accurate communication had the lowest average. When considering the interquartile value, it was found that having a screening and verification system for accurate communication and the free exchange of information both positive and negative for institutional development had the widest range and being skillful in both internal and external communication both one way and two way had the narrowest range.

For information systems technology, based on the average values, using technology as a tool in information gathering, usage and storage had the highest average, followed by the promotion of correct use of technology in teachers, students and staff, making technology accessible and attractive to develop staff and student skills, and integration of information to facilitate workflow. Recognition of information systems technology's worth and taking advantage of evaluations and enhancements had the lowest average. When considering the interquartile value, making technology accessible and attractive to develop staff and student skills and taking advantage of evaluations and enhancements had the widest range while the promotion of correct use of technology in teachers, students and staff, using technology as a tool in information gathering, usage and storage, and integration of information to facilitate workflow had the narrowest range.

6. Discussion

The research synthesized result findings using the Delphi method and conducted further statistical analysis using average values instead of the standard and interquartile range in analyzing the results of the third round of questionnaire where the clear significance of each of the issues was evident. The analysis shows the highest and lowest average values with an interquartile range from wide to narrow. However, the analysis did not reveal significant differences between the importance of each of the features, with the mean being 5 for each. There are five main areas of characteristics of leadership with potential for added value management by integrating relevant features from modernized leadership of administrators in private vocational education institutes, with statistical significance from high to low. Because they have the same median, all the characteristics are deemed significant.

For the potential for ideas and creativity, there are 7 characteristics: 1. adherence to Thailand's sufficiency economy and creating a "win-win" scenario benefitting all parties, 2. having positive initiative, being able to solve problems and engagement in creative thinking, 3. integration of ideas to achieve added value, 4. having the ability to set action plans and policies to follow vision and accomplish goals, 6. having skills in analysis, synthesis and logic, and 7. planning for staff and student happiness in work and learning.

For work processes, there are 8 characteristics: 1. being proactive, fast acting and responsible, 2. learning by doing, including problem-based, situational-based, and professional learning, 3. encouragement of knowledgeability, self-efficacy, and sustainability, 4. being systemic

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and transparent, utilizing PDCA for continuous improvement, 5. ability to implement plans with good governance for compliance and sustainability, 6. being virtuous in practice, 7. being able to use strategies to develop all by understanding, accessing, and developing, and 8. confidential evaluation of effectiveness, with a focus on research and development.

For human relations, there are 6 characteristics: 1. readiness to listen, counsel and support, 2. persuasiveness and allowance for differences of opinion, 3. encouragement of morality, kindness, generosity, understanding, 4. creation of partnerships to form networks to deal with change, 5. self-consciousness and promotion of Dharma in practices, and 6. promotion of various methods of individual development.

For communication, there are 5 characteristics: 1. having free exchange of both positive and negative information for development, 2. being skilled in both one-way and two-way communication, 3. promotion of the use of information technology and social media, 4. use of communication to foster good attitudes and sustainable collaboration, and 5. having a screening and verification system for accurate communication.

For information systems technology, there are 5 features: 1. usage of technology as a tool in information gathering, usage and storage, 2. promotion of correct use of technology in teachers, students and staff, 3. making technology accessible and attractive to develop staff and student skills, 4. integration of information to facilitate workflow, and 5. recognition of technology systems' worth and taking advantage of evaluations and enhancements.

The five areas mentioned above were determined from the research results and encompass important features in management that give leadership the potential to create added value by integrating these interrelated elements to generate "Happiness Value", which is an integral attribute for modernized leadership.

From the findings, desirable leaders must possess morals, ethics, intelligence, creativity, and act innovatively and sustainably. It is most important for modernized leaders to lead by developing both morals and ethics in their workers and to be provided with long-term management training to focus on the creation of added value for the organization. Leadership involves many interrelated aspects, such as service leadership, spiritual leadership, cross-cultural leadership and technological leadership (Avolio, Walumbwa, & Weber, 2009) and the findings of this research show that modernized leadership must be multi-dimensional, in line with the research of Noparootjinda (2010) which concluded that leaders must have vision, adaptability, professionalism and ethics and offer leadership that is individualized, inspirational and forward-looking especially in terms of technology integration. "Happiness Value" and job satisfaction are very important factors in organizational and human resource management which greatly affects the individual. It acts as motivation for the workforce and encourages its performance to be more effective and positively impactful to the work environment in order to account for happiness (Sintanapanya, 2014) Administrators, instructors, and students together work in the fullest capacity and most importantly for vocational schools the output is graduates who were taught and positively affected by teachers who work happily. This is the result of factors that affect the happiness of teachers in the areas of work environment, administrative leadership, compensation, work characteristics and interpersonal relationships. Leadership is important in creating a happiness value in organizations and key factors are being intellectually capable, adaptable, using knowledge, skills, and experience to reach goals, having initiative, being tolerant, and possessing emotional stability. Leaders' mental intelligence enhances an organization's interpersonal relationships, influencing interaction among colleagues, increasing satisfaction, fostering a healthy working environment and providing adequate welfare to increase the happiness value in work, which inspires greater commitment to the organization (Panyapinitnukul, 2012). Happiness can be created in many ways and the public can benefit from policies that aim to promote good health, family bonds, quality experiences in the community, in work and in life. Therefore, governing bodies need to realize that happiness is valuable and set policies accordingly (Senasu, 2016). Happiness is of great value to the functioning and sustainable prosperity of society and can be measured either one condition at a time or through interconnected elements. It is intrinsically linked to the cultural values that inform the process of arriving at a positive assessment and represents the desirable experiences which inform one's conception of a full and meaningful life. (Walker & Kavedžija, 2015).

7. Conclusion

In conclusion, for characteristics of leadership with potential for added value management by integrating relevant features from modernized leadership of administrators from the research framework, V4 is the happiness value, which is a key part of the leadership style for modernized leaders. It is the cornerstone of individual happiness that will result in a happy, functional and productive organization and can be achieved from the promotion of quality and morality. Of utmost importance is ensuring the quality of student achievement and good citizenship. In terms of vocational schools, administrators should be dedicated to the creation of happiness in the five main areas of leadership and apply these skills and practices according to each situation, building relationships at all levels with a focus on achievement, decisiveness, and responsibility. By implementing the principle of "understanding, accessing, developing" at every opportunity and monitoring effectiveness, leaders can help organizations prosper by developing teachers, personnel and learners to be adept at utilizing technology in teaching and learning and ensuring organizational sustainability.

8. Recommendation

The results of this research should be applied to further experimental studies pertaining to modernized leadership, management and happiness value within actual educational and work environments for further development and application to bolster student, teacher, and staff happiness and organizational productivity and sustainability.

9. Acknowledgments

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