# A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF TEACHERS' PERCEPTION TOWARDS PRINCIPAL'S LEADERSHIIP BEHAVIOR ACCORDING TO THEIR DEMOGRAPHICS AT PITAKA BUDDHIST MONASTIC EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE, SHAN STATE, UNION OF MYANMAR

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**Abstract:** This study attempted to demonstrate and compare the teachers' perception towards principal's leadership behavior according to their demographic profile at Pitaka Buddhist Monastic Educational Institute (PBMEI). The total participants were 54 monk-teachers involvement and distributed from Buddhist Institute in academic year of 2018. The revised two parts questionnaire were used as a research instrumental tool to meet the research objectives. Questionnaire part one was the demographic profile and the questionnaire part two was path-goal leadership behavior adopted by Indvik (1985). Four styles of path-goal leadership theory such as supportive, directive, participative, achievement-oriented was developed by House (1971) and used as a main theory framework to investigate the principal's leadership behavior. The data analysis used the frequency and percentage, mean and standard deviation, and One-way ANOVA. Regarding to the results found, principal perceived as neutral level of leadership style, neither reward nor intervention consistently related medium to principal behavior by teachers' perspective. Thus, this study confirmed that there were no statistically significant differences of teachers' perception towards principal's leadership behavior according to their demographics profile.

**Keywords:** Teachers' Perception, Principal's Leadership Behavior, Demographics

## Introduction

Buddhist Monastic Institute was a Buddhist educational organization where Buddhists showed a respect and worship in Asia. Buddhist monasteries are established not only for religious belief and practice but also to educate lay people as well as monks. In ancient Buddhist monastery also was an educational institute where the monks were educators (Wijebandara, 2013).

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The Buddhist education provided in a monastery, as a center of education, has different styles from a government school and a private school. Most of the principals are abbots, being a senior monk is respected by teachers and students who are monks and novices. Some institutes maintain that their study provides compelling evidence of the dramatic effects of principal's behavior on the reflective capacities of teachers.

The Pitaka Buddhist Monastic Educational Institute (PBMEI) included an educational institute as an educational center for Shan monks and novices. This institute located in Panglong province at Shan State of Myanmar. The supreme scholar monks of Shan State Sangha Council are responsible for controlling and supporting project and curriculum. According to Takashi Hashimoto (Takashi, 2011), the monastic education, it can be argued that the educational policy by the Myanmar government influences not only the Shan monastic education, but also serves to make Shan children literate. Although there are some arguments against it, but in others hands some students are getting successful through institutes and graduated in higher education.

The purpose of principal and teachers in Buddhist institutes was to maintain the Buddhist literature and tradition. Both Buddhist principal and teachers stand on the ethics to guide young generation not by the law but by just making students behavior modification. Usually, the principal adopts the educational system from Buddha's teaching to encourage students to be good persons. Kham-Ai and Asavisanu (2016) concluded that monastic education, although it may have certain particular traditional characteristics, should have as its aims, the enhancement of education for its students. Consequently, as it is still considered an important avenue for education, it follows that traditions of monastic education should be viewed through the lens of the modern educational theories and practices in order to improve the educational experience for all those involved (Kham-Aai & Asvisanu, 2016). Teachers have expertise in teaching and learning, but not managerial decision making. When teachers follow school-based terms, their attention and energies are deflected away from ensuring increased student learning (Lunenburg & Ornstien, 2008). It should help monk-students and novice-students develop self-esteem and self-awareness not only focusing on the next life but also on today's requirement.

**Research Objective**
The three objectives are:

1. To identify the demographic profile of the teachers according to age, current grade level, teaching experience, education background at the

Pitaka Buddhist Monastic Educational Institute, Shan State, Union of Myanmar.

2. To determine the teachers' perception of principal's leadership behavior at the Pitaka Buddhist Monastic Educational Institute, Shan State, Union of Myanmar.

3. To compare the differences in teachers' perceptions of principal's leadership behavior according to their demographics profile at the Pitaka Buddhist Monastic Educational Institute, Shan State, Union of Myanmar.

## Literature Review

A principal is ultimately responsible for almost everything that happens in the school (Sergionvanni, 1995). Studies of the principal's duties have been done many times before. Generally, all of them reiterate what is already known, principals spend most of their time on management detail. The sources such as National Professional Standard Board for Educational Administration, the American Association of School Administrators, and the literature dealing with leadership in the schools mention that the principal should be an educational leader (Drake & Roe, 2003).

The path-goal theory recognized four leadership behaviors to increase subordinates' motivation (Polston-Murdoch, 2013). The four path-goal leadership style that function to provide the structure and reward to subordinates are directive, supportive, participative, and achievement-oriented (House & Mitchell, 1974). Supportive leader payed high attention to the subordinates' needs and wellbeing (Alanazi, Ratyana, Alharthey, Khalafa & Raslia, 2013). This behavior makes work a pleasant environment for the followers by showing concern for them and by being friendly and is seen as respectful, caring, and approachable. Supportive leaders demonstrate respect for subordinates' well-being (House, 1971). According to Reardon, Reardon and Rowe (1998), a supportive leader can learn by observing outcomes and how others react to their decision. The supportive style is provided nurturance and is suitable when subordinates show a lack of confidence in ability to complete a task and little motivation

Directive leadership behavior was to give the subordinates task instructions. Hanson (2003) also describe that the leader gives structure to the work situation by establishing specific expectations for the subordinates, such as what, how, and when a task should be performed. Specific performance standards were maintained. The leadership behavior provided the psychological structure and it was authoritarian and dogmatic at subordinates'

characteristics, but for the task characteristics was unclear rule and complex. Leader defectiveness had a positive correlation with satisfaction and expectancies of subordinates who engaged in ambiguous tasks have a negative correlation with satisfaction and expectancies of subordinates engage clear task (House & Mitchell, 1975).

According to McShane and Von Glinow (2007), Participative leadership behaviors encouraged and facilitated subordinate involvement in decisions beyond their normal work activities. The leader consults with employees, asked for their suggestions, and takes these ideas into serious consideration before making a decision. Participative leadership relates to involving employees in decisions. A participative leader consists of inviting followers to share in the decision making. And he consults with followers, obtains their ideas and opinions, and integrates their suggestions into the decisions about how the group or organization will process (Northouse, 2016). Leader defectiveness has a positive correlation with satisfaction and expectancies of subordinates who are engaged in ambiguous tasks and has a negative correlation with satisfaction and expectancies of subordinates engaged in clear task. These findings were predicted by the theory and have been replicated in seven organizations (House & Mitchell, 2008).

Achievement-Oriented leadership behavior sets challenging goals, expects subordinates to perform at their highest level, continuously seeks improvement in performance and shows a high degree of confidence that the subordinates will assume responsibility, but forth effort and accomplish challenging goal (House & Mitchell, 1975). It is most effective seeks continuous improvement in professional work environments. In addition to expecting a lot from followers, achievement-oriented leaders show a high degree of confidence so that followers are capable of establishing and accomplishing challenging goals. Northous (2016), identified leader functions, performance motivation of subordinates will increase. Achievement-oriented leadership applies goal-setting theory as well as positive expectation in self-fulfilling prophecy (McShane & Von Glinow, 2017). When a situation provides a clearly structured task, strong group norms, and an established authority system, followers would find the paths to desired goals apparent and a leader would clarify goals or coach them in how to reach this goal. In addition to the task situation requiring leader involvement, it is considered with obstacles that anything in the work setting that gets in the way of followers or leader's responsibility in order to help the follower by removing obstacles and helping followers around them.

**Conceptual Framework**

This conceptual framework of this study was based on the Path-Goal theory of leadership behavior to utilize the teachers' perception of principal's leadership behavior.
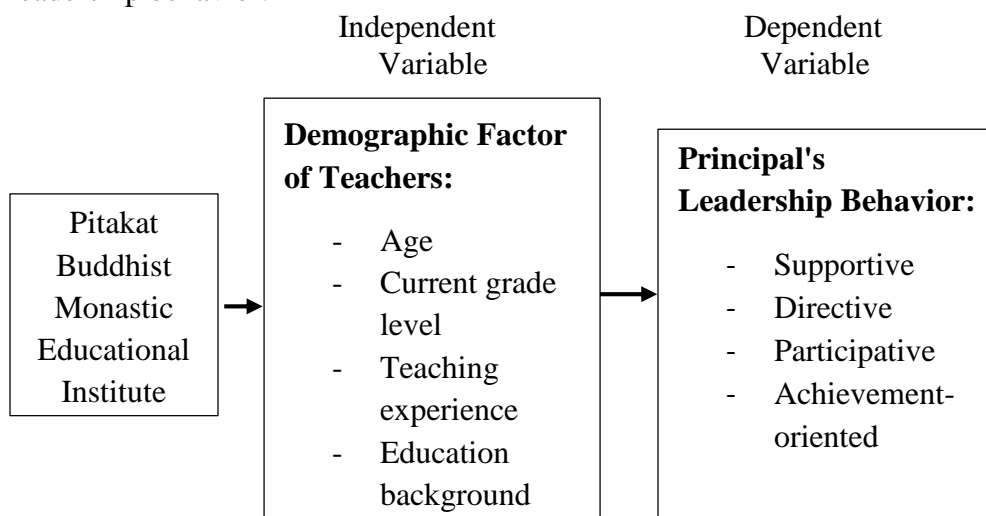


**Figure 1:** *Conceptual Framework*

**Method**

*Research Instrument*

To meet this research finding, researcher provided a questionnaire to identify the data from 54 respondents and employed as a primary research instrument. The questionnaire was comprised and designed into two parts to hand out data collection. The parts one was teachers' demographic profile and part two was based on part-goal theory of leadership behavior addressed four components of supportive, directive, participative, and achievement-oriented to determine the teachers' perception towards principal's behavior in the Pitaka Buddhist Monastic Educational Institute.

This part questionnaire designed into 20 statements for each behaviors of path-goal theory of leadership which was adopted by Indvik (1985). In addition to the questionnaires, the researcher has commonly used multiple instruments to study Path-Goal theory of leadership behavior that measure the task structure and follower satisfaction. In previous study, the corresponding value was used as five-point of scale and the ranging from 5 to 1 with interpretation. The validity and reliability of path-goal was tested using Cronbach's alpha to appraise as an instrument. As the analysis results indicated that the questionnaire had strong reliability according to overall of four styles for path-goal theory scored .73.

*Population*
The target population was the full-time teachers from the Pitaka Buddhist Monastic Educational Institute (PBMEI) Shan State, Union of Myanmar. There were a total 56 teachers were hand out the questionnaire and 54 teachers returned. This 54 population was referenced from the name list of monk teachers at the Pitaka Buddhist Monastic Educational Institute in the academic year of 2018. The total number of teachers were a target population as a main target group of this study and all of these teachers would be the participants of the research.

**Findings**
The findings of this study emphasized on the three-primary objective.
*Research Objective One*
Table 1 presented the teachers' age who are currently teaching in PBMEI. All of the respondents (96.4%) specified their age at the time of the survey. The results revealed that among 54 full-time teachers, 26 of the teachers (48.1%) were at the age of 20 years and below, 20 teachers (37.0%) were at the age of 21 to 30 years old, and the percentage of full-time teachers at the age of 31 years old and above.
Table 1: *The Number of Teachers' Age at PBMEI*

| Age | Number | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| 20 years below | 26 | 48.1 |
| 21-30 years | 20 | 37.0 |
| 31 years above | 8 | 14.8 |
| Total | 54 | 96.4 |

Table 2 presented the current grade level according to the teachers' response to question 2 of the survey. All 54 respondents (96.4%) from the institute responded to the question. The results showed that of the 54 full time teachers, 25 of them or 46.3% were teaching Mula level to Dutiya level. Twenty-four teachers (44.4%) were teaching from grade Tatiya level to Chatutha level and 5 teachers (9.3%) were teaching Pancama level to Chattha level.
Table 2: *The Number of Current Grade Level Teachers Taught at PBMEI*

| Current Grade Level | Number | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Mula level - Dutiya level (level 1-3) | 25 | 46.3 |
| Tatiya level - Chatutha level (level 4-5) | 24 | 44.4 |
| Pancama level - Chattha level (level 6-7) | 5 | 9.3 |
| Total | 54 | 96.4 |

The results in Table 3, shown below, revealed the teaching experience of the full-time teachers at PBMEI. Again, all respondents (96.4%) answered the survey question. The data shown that 22 teachers (40.7%) had 3 or fewer

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years teaching, 16 of them (29.6%) had 4 to 6 years teaching, 13 (24.1%) had 7 to 10 years' experience, and 3 of them (5.6%) 11 to 30 years teaching experience.

| Year of Teaching Experience | Number | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| 3 years below | 22 | 40.7 |
| 4-6 years | 16 | 29.6 |
| 7-10 years | 13 | 24.1 |
| 11-30 years | 3 | 5.6 |
| Total | 54 | 96.4 |

Table 3: *The Number of Teachers Teaching Experience at PBMEI*

The results in Table 4 shown below, indicated the education level that teachers attained. All 54 teachers (96.4%) responded to question 4 in the questionnaire and revealed their education background. The results showed that 22 teachers (40.7%) were below Tatiya level, 10 of them (18.5%) attained Pathama Kyi level (Government), 5 of them (9.3%) attained Chattha level (Panglong), 1 of them (1.9%) attained Dhammacariya (Government), and the last 1 of them (1.9%) attained Dhammacariya (Panglong).

Table 4: *The Number of Teachers' Education Background at PBMEI*

| Education Background | Number | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Tatiya (below) | 22 | 40.7 |
| Pathama Kyi level (Government) | 10 | 18.5 |
| Chattha level (Panglong) | 15 | 27.8 |
| Dhammacariya (Government) | 5 | 9.3 |
| Dhammacraiya (Panglong) | 1 | 1.9 |
| Bachelor's degree | 1 | 1.9 |
| Total | 54 | 96.4 |

*Research Objective Two*
In addition to Table 5, the overall of teachers' perception towards principal's leadership behavior indicated that the average score for supportive leadership was 3.04 in the five-point Likert scale again falling in the 2.51-3.50 or neutral interpretation. Similarly, scores for the directive leadership behavior was 3.16 in the range of 2.51-3.50, slightly higher than the supportive leadership behavior but still within the neutral interpretation. Scores for participative leadership behavior was 3.07 in the same range of 2.51-3.50, and achievement-oriented leadership behavior was 3.33 in the range of 2.51-3.50. Among four teachers' perception towards principal's leadership behavior, the highest range of overall rating was 3.33 on achievement-oriented leadership behavior and the lowest was 3.04 on supportive leadership behavior. Finally,

these findings showed as 3.13 for this study average mean score and interpreted the neutral level.

Table 5: *The Overall of the Teachers' Perception towards Principal's Leadership Behavior*

| Teacher's perception towards Principal's Leadership Behavior | Mean | S.D. | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| Achievement-oriented leadership behavior | 3.33 | 1.09 | Neutral |
| Directive leadership behavior | 3.16 | .578 | Neutral |
| Participative leadership behavior | 3.07 | .485 | Neutral |
| Supportive leadership behavior | 3.04 | .489 | Neutral |
| Overall | 3.15 | .385 | Neutral |

*Research Objective Three*

Table 6 showed the comparison of Teachers' Perception towards Principal's Leadership Behavior according to teachers' age. The findings of the data analysis emphasized on the One-way ANOVA test value was .056, which was larger than the .05 level of significance value. Therefore, this result was interpreted that there is no statistically significant difference of teachers' perception towards principal's leadership behavior according to their demographic profile at Pitaka Buddhist Monastic Educational Institute.

Table 6: *Comparison of Teachers' Perception towards Principal's Leadership Behavior According to Teachers' Age*

| Age | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Between Groups | .841 | 2 | .420 | 3.044 | .056 |
| Within Groups | 7.045 | 51 | .138 | | |
| Total | 7.886 | 53 | | | |

In addition, Table 7 demonstrated the comparison of the teachers' perception towards the principal's leadership behavior according to current grade level. One-way ANOVA was indicated to analyze significant value and the result utilized .461 which was more than .05 level of significance. The analysis clearly shows that the grade level that teachers were teaching does not make a statistically significant difference among their perception of the principal.

Table 7: *Comparison of Teachers' Perception towards Principal Leadership Behavior According to the Grade Level Teachers Taught*

| Grade Level | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Between Groups | .236 | 2 | .118 | .785 | .461 |
| Within Groups | 7.651 | 51 | .150 | | |
| Total | 7.886 | 53 | | | |

Table 8 illustrated the comparison of teachers' perception towards principal's leadership behavior according to teachers' teaching experience. The results showed that the significant value was .526 which is more than the .05 level of significance. Therefore, there is no statistically significant difference between teachers' perception toward their principal's leadership behavior when considering teaching experience.

Table 8: *Comparison of Teachers' Perception towards Principal's Leadership Behavior According Teachers' Teaching Experience*

| Teaching Experience | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Between Groups | .341 | 3 | .114 | .753 | .526 |
| Within Groups | 7.545 | 50 | .151 | | |
| Total | 7.886 | 53 | | | |

The Table 9 showed the comparison of teachers' perception towards principal's leadership behavior according to teachers' education background. The data analysis results indicated the significant value was .254 which was more than .05 the significant level. The results indicate there was no statistically significant difference of teachers' perception toward principal's leadership behavior when considering education background.

Table 9: *Comparison of Teachers' Perception towards Principal's Leadership Behavior According to Teachers Education Background*

| Education Background | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Between Groups | .981 | 5 | .196 | 1.364 | .254 |
| Within Groups | 6.905 | 48 | .144 | | |
| Total | 7.886 | 53 | | | |

**Discussion**

The analysis of data from the teachers' perception indicated that teachers estimated their principal's leadership behavior high in all areas of leadership. The results were not harmonious atmosphere with the findings of this study. According to previous study by Indvik (1987) path-goal theory had emerged

largely intact from the meta-analysis but the supportive, directive, participative leadership behavior's impact was moderated as well as present study. The results in this study according to the demographic profiles such as teachers' age, current grade level, teaching experience, and education background was specifically analyzed from data provided by the respondents.

Majority PBMEI teachers largely identify within the younger ages lowest grade level. Horner, Murray and Rushton (1989) explained that age related decrements in teaching quality and both specific and general rated teaching effectiveness declines as teachers age. In addition to the findings, teachers taught lower grade level more than high grade level with less teaching experience. According to Adesina, Raimi, Bolaji, Adesina (2016) discussion, the less experience teachers had less acquaintance with teaching intricacies, they might lack exposure, ideologies and strategies in teaching-learning activities. The more experienced teachers had everything on their side, exposure, acquaintances, ideologies, and strategies that enhanced their productive. Livingston (2016), teachers need a strong foundation of initial teacher education which linking the education background. As this finding, teachers selected few high degrees of their education background. Almost of them hold only the certificates from Buddhist education. If the PBMEI had more students and less teachers holding the high degree, the institute might increase an unstable condition and effectiveness.

Furthermore, when the demographics measured with teachers' perception towards principal's leadership behavior according to their demographic profile at PBMEI institute. The data analysis from PBMEI demonstrated that principal rated themselves high mean score in all areas which was inconsistent with the results. These results of the current study were not consistent with the findings of statistical significance. From perspective of teachers at PBMEI, there were no statistically significant difference between any of the components of principal's leadership behavior and teachers' demographic factor.

This was consistent of with the finding of Goudarzi (1996) who indicated that there was no significant difference between principals from public school and private school in terms of effectiveness of leadership behaviors. From perspective of current teachers, the present research accepted null hypothesis and rejected research hypothesis when there was no significant difference among two comparisons. One of the possible reasons was because all of the principal, teachers and students were Buddhist monk following the Buddhist concepts and providing only Buddhist education. Within the principal behavior correlation matrix was disagreement and ineffectiveness institute and

principal as holding expectation. Even though the scores monks-teachers conveyed to the principal's leadership behaviors of were less, the score were at an acceptable satisfactory in medium range of interpretation.

The overall of each average mean score in four styles of leadership indicated an effective principal although it was a neutral interpretation. Teachers evaluated the principal with total high average score (3.13) ranging from five scales analysis. The principal was moderately effective in utilizing effective skills in achievement-oriented. This domain achievement-oriented was the highest score and principal more effective achievement for institute. The problem with this current study was lack of available data over a behavior of four styles of leadership. Teachers rating were not systematically acquired and Mehdinezhad and Sardarzahi (2016) who reported that teachers can worked and cooperated with principal in information exchange and resolving the issue related to planning and provided educational program to students. Moreover, the component of the supportive leadership behavior score was perceived to be an average of 3.04 which ranged the lowest mean score and were in moderately interpretation in four styles of leadership. Teachers rating was consistent because the monk-principal behaved in the simple way with mixed religious style and education system. The principal was perceived as committed to behavioral improvement and was aware and knowledgeable of present research about leadership behavior. Davis (1992) indicated that teachers perceived the behavior of supporting teachers as directly associated with the principal because he empowered teacher to work for the improvement of the school.

The other previous study from Quinn (2002), the principal received strong instructional leaders and embraced high score with most effective medium to students' achievement. The results showed that a correlation matrix was development and the total disengagement had a significant negative correlation with instructional leadership factor at medium effective. In schools where teachers described their principal as less skillful on the leadership factors.

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