

The Role of Human Resource Management Practices in Promoting Good Governance in the Thai Civil Service

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Abstract

The main purpose of this study was to 1) examine the influence of human resource management practices on good governance in the Thai civil service 2) examine human resource management practices that relate to good governance in the Thai civil service, 3) understand the casual relationship that HRM practices have towards good governance of government agencies and 4) understand the mediation role of ethics management and ethical culture that pass the relationship from HRM practices to good governance in the Thai civil service. The instrument for data collection was a 59-item structured questionnaire modeled on a 5-point rating scale. Cronbach Alpha was used to determine the internal consistency of the questionnaire items. The reliability index of the instrument was 0.98. The Confirmatory Factor Analysis, path analysis with AMOS, and PROCESS Macro for testing the serial multiple mediators were used in this research. The model of relationship between casual factors and good governance in Thai civil service could be able to explain 74% of variance of good governance. The highest direct effect variables were ethical culture, followed by training and development and law and discipline and the direct effects sizes were 0.55, 0.29 and 0.16 respectively. Recruitment and selection and compensation and rewards revealed no association with good governance. Ethics management and ethical culture were found to significantly and partially mediate the relationship between the training and development to good governance and they also partially mediate the relationship of laws and discipline towards good governance in the Thai civil service.

Keywords: HRM Practices, Good Governance, Ethics Management, Ethical Culture, Path Analysis

Introduction

The government of Thailand has drawn up a 20-year national strategic plan to bring about people-centred national reform and to achieve the stable democracy and sustainable development. The Office of the Civil Service Commission (Thailand) has thus developed the 20 year-strategic planning to make Thai civil service be the first-choice civil service, focus on the decentralization of human resource management systems to government departments and encourage the quality of human resource management in civil service and promote the integrity and passion of being civil servant. Thus, it is apparent that the policy of civil service human resource management is a key mechanism that ensures good governance. The human resource practices play a significant role in encouraging the evolution and reform of the Thai civil service, as it promotes good governance. It can be said that civil service human resource practices are both the strategy and operation matter that increase the values and the concepts of transparency, accountability and improvement of civil servants, which reflect the

predominance of good governance. Thus, the most important question is the impact of human resource management practices in supporting good governance in the Thai civil service.

The role of HRM practices and their contributions to good governance

HRM practices can be considered to be both distinctive and correlated activities that focus on recruiting, engaging, retaining, and developing the human resources of an organization (Tangthong, Trimetsoontorn, & Rojniruntikul, 2014). HRM practices and policies in general are formulated on the basis of good governance. It is undeniable that their concepts, techniques and core values are related to the ethical characteristic of good governance. Public accountability has become an issue of major concern for public management because the public good is the ultimate goal of public administration. HRM practices deal with the integrity dimension of good governance in order to manage human resources and improve employees' beliefs and values (Djurkovic & Maric, 2010). It can be stated that employees' values should be related to the elements of good governance in order to maintain the sustainability of the organization (Huberts, Kaptein & Lasthuizen, 2007). Hence, HRM practices and all factors relating to employees can contribute to the corporate governance and civil service performance. The ethical values embodied in HRM practices can enhance the confidence of employees in performing their duties on the basis of the rule of law and ethics. It is obvious that the influence of HRM practices on ethical values can support good governance in the public sector. Many studies revealed that HRM practices are fundamental for enhancing good governance. The enterprises and organizations that practice HRM are more likely to have good governance characteristics that lead to organizational sustainability. In the public sector, HRM practices will be more effective when the core values of public administration become a common objective of all public employees. The HR managers can effectively influence all employees by being role model of good governance. HRM practices can definitively increase the performance and the competency of each employee in working more effectively while preserving the necessary ethical standards in the working environment.

HRM practices also emphasize the direction and regulation of civil servant behaviour in order to serve the needs of organizations. HRM practices in recruitment and selection, rewards and recognition, training, performance appraisal and maintenance of discipline structure the legal basis for government officials to serve the public interest. HRM practices aim at developing and enhancing corporate performance (Konzelmann, 2003). HRM also aims at improving relationships between groups of people in the workplace and categorizes the responsibilities of employees in fair treatment for all. The values of impartiality, legality, integrity, transparency, effectiveness, equality and justice which are the core values of public officials are well recognized by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The rules and regulations related to HRM practices of civil servants have common functions which are the following (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2004): (1) the position based, (2) the career based, and (3) the department based.

These three systems remain unchanged though some countries have made an attempt to change the system according to New Public Management reform. Nevertheless, in these three functions, HRM core values and practices are transformed into the strategic human resource management that sustains the principles of good governance which can create public confidence that the government can efficiently manage the public interest for the well-being of the country. Therefore, HRM practices and policies have the characteristics of good governance that can bring about legitimacy and fairness including the responsiveness and efficiency of civil servants (Lavelle, 2006). HRM can facilitate the emergence of good governance by emphasizing three main pillars of organization which are: framework of

executive power, the broader area of performance evaluation, and the effective system of succession planning (Baker, 1999).

The development and supporting factors of good governance in the Thai civil service

The term of good governance was first officially represented by the World Bank in 1989 in the report Sub-Sahara: From Crisis to Sustainable Growth which means good administration of government mechanisms that can enhance economy and social development (Pongpaichit, 2001). The real purpose of good governance concepts and mechanisms is to fight against the corruption and raise the awareness in terms of bureaucratic and political corruption and efficiency of public administration. Thailand has shown many significant attempts in implementing good governance and improving public administration. After the economic crisis in 1997, Thailand has continuously put a lot of effort in creating good governance, combating corruption and improving social and economic development. The rewritten Constitution of Thailand in 1997 emphasized more on good governance mechanism by promoting the system of checks and balances of power by citizens and independent organizations. The State Administration Act in 2002 and the Royal Decree on Criteria and Procedures for Good Governance 2003 focused on the good governance and the efficiency of administration in both public and private sectors. Nowadays, under the administration of National Council of Peace and Order (NCPO), the mechanism of good governance is still maintained. The emphasis of the 12th National Economic and Social Development Plan, 2017-2021 and the 20-year national strategic plan is on the promotion of good governance and anti-corruption in the Thai public administration. Hence, good governance in the Thai civil service has become one of the key elements in preserving and improving the good and efficient functionality of public administration. Good governance in civil service usually means that the civil service needs to establish good standard of governance in order to operate works and serve the public with accountability, transparency, fairness, and participation (Nikomborirak, 2007). It is obvious that the Civil Service Act (2008) which aligned itself to the principles of good governance aims at the continuous development civil servants' proficiency and capability in order to effectively deliver services to public. It defines organizations and responsibilities, and accountabilities of civil servants with the principles of transparency and fairness. It includes and upholds the ethics of civil servants, creates merit protection mechanism, maintains the disciplinary and provides the complaints and appeal systems for Thai civil servants. From the evolution of good governance in Thai public administration, we can see that good governance required a number of factors to be truly and successfully implemented. To strengthening the good governance in the Thai civil service, good governance as law enforcement should be followed and it should support the participation of relevant stakeholders (Tipchareon, 2012). It should be noted that organizational and administrative factors can effectively support the implementation of good governance (Kalyanamitra, Tatilayapa, Mala, & Yaowanit, 2017). For civil servants, awareness and the quality of knowledge of the good governance can significantly improve the good governance mechanism of organization (Pedkhan & Chansilp, 2015). The factors which relate to the nature of jobs and the understanding of the importance of good governance principles are significantly related to the implementation of the good governance principles (Laesamran, Chunnapiya, & Rathachatranon, 2017). Thus, it can be seen that the supporting factors of good governance in the Thai civil service rely mostly on the systematic platform of organization development and human resource management in the Thai civil service.

The role of ethics management and ethical culture in an organization

According to Kaptein (1999), ethics management is viewed as the organization of ethics. Kaptein pointed out that ethics management means the systematic measures and activities that are mutually compatible and can be understandable by all members of organizations.

Ethics management is organized to response to certain objectives which can manage the conflicts and enhance the realization of the moral values of the organization. The organization of ethics can happen when the corporation realizes the expectations and interests of stakeholders. Ethics management can refer to the compliance with ethics that make employees distinguish what is right and what is wrong. Ethics management can be created to set up the rules, regulations and legal standards to be followed. Thus, control and supervision have become a significant approach in ethics management. It can be said that ethics management can bring about the reasoning of morality which is a result of having ethical standards in an organization. Ethics management can produce the code of conduct which can effectively motivate the moral conduct of employees. Public authorities should uphold the role of ethical exemplar to maintain the public trust (Snellman, 2015). Ethical decision making is one important approach in ethics management (Maesschalck, 2004). Ethics management can reflect the wider picture of the ethics of an organization. In recent decades, governments have made a distinct effort in establishing ethics management to fight against corruption and decrease misconducts in public sector (Menzel, 2006). It is important to distinguish the difference between ethics management and ethics of management. Ethics in management or management ethics (Chakraborty, 1995) are about the standards and procedures of ethics which are held by the management of an organization, for example, the use of power, the consideration of risks that may derive from certain procedures and the policies of the corporation. Whereas the emphasis of management ethics is the management system itself, ethics management focuses on the ethical dimension of things. In terms of ethical culture, it is obvious that ethical culture can only establish good governance in an organization when the concept of ethics is understood and shared by all members. It is not enough for ethical culture to apply only to the managerial sphere; ethical culture must ensure that the ethical conducts and standards are shared and held by all members of an organization. However, ethical leadership can play a significant role in transmitting ethical values to subordinates and all members of organizations. Ethical culture is transmitted by norms which can create behaviours. Ethical culture can be seen in codes of conducts, practices and norms that individuals shared within an organization. Organizational culture is a crucial factor that leads to the achievement of organizational goals (Ahmed & Shafiq, 2014). Ethical culture has a significant impact on ethical decision making and that ethical decision making can ultimately and directly affect the growth of organizations. It is incontestable that ethical culture which is a product of ethical values integrated in the behaviours of all organizations' members ranging from leaders to employees, can effectively sustain ethical climate in organization (Baquillas, 2018).

The impact of ethics management and ethical culture on good governance in the Thai civil service

Ethics management concepts which aim at promoting good governance mechanisms of the Thai civil service are concretely illustrated in the Constitutions of Thailand, in the Civil Service Acts and in the regulations and the disciplinary measures of each government agency. For the purpose of increasing the ethical standards of Thai civil servants, the Civil Service Committee of Thailand promulgated the Regulations on Ethics of the Civil Servants in 1994. The Code of Professional Ethics for the Civil Service was later promulgated in 2009 and became effective in 2010. Following the main principles of professional ethics indicated in the Code, Thai civil servants must respect and uphold the professional standard of morality, integrity, honesty, loyalty and devote themselves to perform their duty for the public interest which is prior than their personal gain. They must serve the public courteously, justly and must avoid discrimination. They must provide an openness of information for the public and focus on the outcome of their works, maintain the high standard, effectiveness, quality, and transparency of their duties (Code of Professional Ethics for the Civil Service, 2009). The

transitory provision of the Code also prescribes that each government agency shall establish an ethical control section and ethics committee. The vast majority of the civil servants acknowledged the provisions of the Code diffused to civil servants, and they were encouraged to comply with the Code. However, the implementation faced some obstacles such as breaches, misconducts, and the readiness of ethical assessment of the government agencies (Chokprajakchat & Sumretphol, 2017). According to the title 76 of Thai Constitution (2017), the government shall create the ethical standards for government agencies so that those standards can be applied as principles to determine the codes of ethics for civil servants in each agency. Thus, the Office of the Civil Service Commission was assigned to collaborate with other central organizations in personal management in order to establish a single ethical standard for all categories of government official. The proposed bill of ethical standards is currently on legislative process. All these attempts can concretely lead to the emphasis in creating ethical culture which can effectively strengthen the good governance mechanism in the Thai civil service. It is evident that ethical values in ethics management system can create ethical culture in Thai civil service. The ethical culture affects thus the management structure and system in the Thai civil service. Human Resource Management which focuses on ethics has become one of factors affecting the desirable ethical characteristics of Thai civil servants (Tangwattanatum, Tiasutthikul, & Pailin, 2015). A culture of integrity is cultivated in the Thai civil service through the laws, regulations, punishment systems and disciplinary procedures and prosecution (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2018). Since ethical culture in the Thai civil service is transmitted by norms, laws and regulations have thus emphasized the fundamental ethical values of civil service. The common understanding of civil service ethical values was consolidated by promoting ethical training, setting up ethics audit and ethics committee in government agencies and enhancing the ethical leadership of executives. The policy which put an emphasis on the civil service ethics has become an effective tool in promoting the perception of good governance. However, the challenge remains in the deep entrenched organizational culture such as patronage system, nepotism, conservative values in closed organization that could obstruct good governance practices (OECD, 2018).

Research questions

- 1) What are the relationships between human resource practices and good governance in the Thai civil service?
- 2) What are the underlying mechanisms that explain these relationships?
- 3) How ethics management and ethical culture can mediate the relationship between HRM practices and good governance in the Thai civil service?

Research objectives

The research study is aimed at analysing human resource management practices in enhancing the good governance of governmental agencies in Thailand. In this study, “Good Governance” is considered to be the government’s capacity to take care of its responsibilities in an effective, transparent, accountable, responsible, and just manner. The research study has following objectives:

- 1) To examine what HRM practices relate to the good governance of government agencies.
- 2) To understand the casual relationship that HRM practices have towards the good governance of government agencies.
- 3) To understand the mediation role of ethics management and ethical culture in establishing the relationship between HRM practices and good governance.

Research methodology

Sample

The population of this study will be based on a proportionate stratified random sampling. The proportionate stratified random sampling involves dividing the entire population into homogeneous groups which are called strata. Random samples are then selected from each stratum. In this research, one stratum means one ministry. The sampling size is 400 persons. It is determined by the table of Krejcie and Morgan (1970). Thus, a total of 600 copies of questionnaires of this study were distributed to civil servants from 20 ministries. According to the latest census of civil servants in the Thai civil service (in fiscal year 2017), the overall number of civil servants is 382,655 (Office of the Civil Service Commission [OCSC], 2017).

Instrument

Multiple-choice questions and 5-point scale questionnaires were used in the survey because they allow the respondents to represent their options consistently (Zainudin, 2010). Moreover, a 5-point Linkert scale is an ordered scale that allows respondents to choose the items that are aligned with their attitudes and behaviours. A 5-point scale can efficiently represent the intensity, frequency and quantity so it is appropriate to the measurement of variables in this study.

Data Collection

As the study targeted on civil servants in different government agencies, when the questionnaires were validated, the researcher asked for formal authorization to send all questionnaires manually and electronically to the sampling groups who are civil servants. All the responses are anonymous.

Data analysis

The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) program was employed to analyse the collected primary data through questionnaires. Descriptive and inferential statistical instruments will be employed. The statistical methods used in this study were:

1. The characteristics of the respondents were described by descriptive statistics.
2. The hypotheses of the relationship between independent variables (HRM practices) and good governance in the Thai civil service were tested by using path analysis in AMOS 17.0.
3. The Confirmatory Factor Analysis was used to evaluate the validity of each construct
4. The Macro PROCESS was used to test causal relationship model with two mediators.

Research results

The assessment of the hypothesized model focuses on answering the research's hypotheses. According to the previous researches and related literature, the researcher hypothesized that recruitment and selection, compensation and rewards, training and development and law and discipline have positive direct impact on good governance. Ethics management and ethical culture can mediate the relationship between law and discipline and good governance and between training and development and good governance. Thus, an input path diagram which illustrates the hypothesized relationships was constructed. The data was analyzed using path analysis in AMOS 17.0. Recruitment and selection, compensation and rewards, training and development and laws and discipline are exogenous variables whereas ethics management and ethical culture are mediating variables. The model was examined. Then, non-statistically significant paths were deleted to get the final and the most parsimonious model.

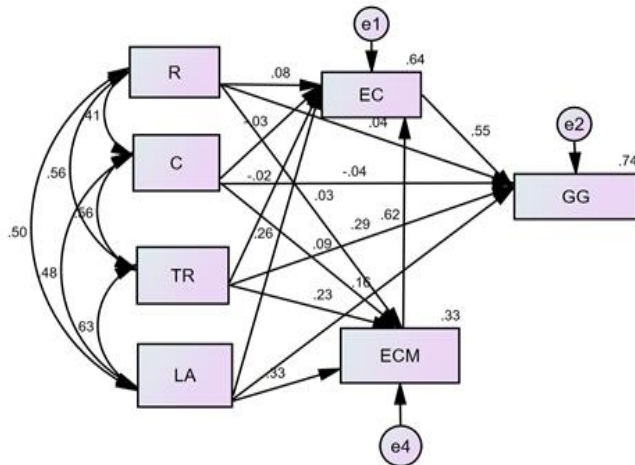


Figure 1 Graphic display of the estimated path analysis model including non-significant parameter estimates

Note: R=Recruitment and Selection, C=Compensation and Rewards, TR= Training and Development

LA= Law and Discipline, EC= Ethical culture, ECM = Ethics management and GG =Good Governance

Chi-square = 1.153, Chi-square/df = 1.153, df = 1, p = .283, GFI = .999, RMSEA = .019

In an attempt to find the most parsimonious model, the non-significant paths were removed. Then, the path model which included only significant path coefficients was established as the following figure:

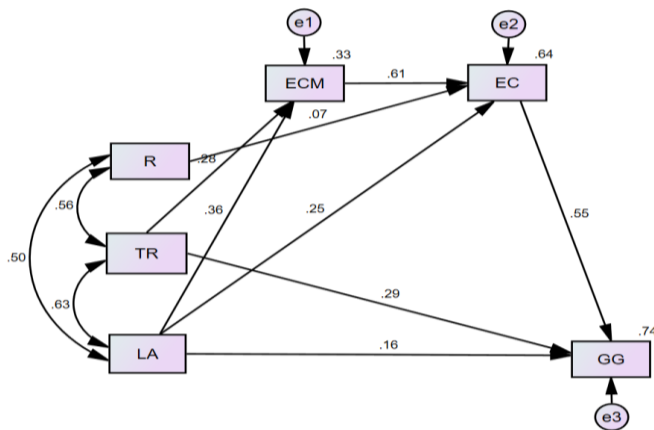


Figure 2 Graphic display of the estimated path analysis of the model which includes only significant parameter estimates at $p < 0.05$ Chi-square = 2.930, Chi-square/df = .732, df = 4, P = .570, GFI = .998, RMSEA = .000

Table 1 Bootstrapped standardized estimates and confidence intervals (95%) for the indirect, direct, and total effects of variables

Outcome variables	Effects	Recruitment and Selection (R)	Training and Development (TR)	Law and Discipline (LA)	Ethics Management (ECM)	Ethical Culture (EC)
		Estimate (95% of bias-corrected CI Lower, Upper)	Estimate (95% of bias-corrected CI Lower, Upper)	Estimate (95% of bias-corrected CI Lower, Upper)	Estimate (95% of bias-corrected CI Lower, Upper)	Estimate (95% of bias-corrected CI Lower, Upper)
Good Governance (GG)	Direct Effect	.000	.289** (.221, .361)	.162** (.095, .233)	.000	.552** (.474,.629)
	Indirect Effect	.039 p = 0.69 (-.003, .088)	.256** (.055, .138)	.256** (.198, .322)	.336** (.268, .407)	.000
	Total Effect	.039 p = 0.69 (-.003, .088)	.535** (.309, .451)	.418** (.329, .497)	.336** (.268, .407)	.552** (.474,.629)
Ethics Management (ECM)	Direct Effect	.000	.276** (.169,.376)	.355** (.243,.446)	-	.000
	Indirect Effect	.000	.000	.000	-	.000
	Total Effect	.000	.276** (.169,.376)	.355** (.243,.446)	-	.000
Ethical culture (EC)	Direct Effect	.070 p = 0.84 (-.011, .156)	.000	.247** (.164, .334)	.608** (.522,.673)	-
	Indirect Effect	.000	.168** (.098, .240)	.215** (.152, .279)	.000	-
	Total Effect	.070 p = 0.84 (-.011, .156)	.168** (.098, .240)	.462** (.365, .551)	.608 (.522,.673)	-

The model which included only significant paths (figure 2) has a good fit with the empirical data ($\chi^2/df = .732$, $p = .570$; AGFI=0.987; CFI= 1.000; SRMR=.003; RMSEA=.000). In order to test mediation relationships, to get the most parsimonious and final model and to assess direct, indirect and total effects, bias-corrected bootstrapping with 1000 random sample replacements is used to estimate the model parameters (Shrout and Bolger, 2002). The results in Table 1 shows that recruitment and selection do not have indirect effect on good governance as the upper and the lower bounds of 95 % of bias-corrected CI contain zero (-.003-.088), the indirect effect is considered insignificant ($p = 0.69$). The results also revealed that recruitment and selection have no direct effect on ethical culture as the upper and the lower bounds 95 % of bias-corrected CI contain zero (-.011-.156), the direct effect is thus insignificant ($p = 0.84$).

Training and development have direct effect (CI = .221-.361) and indirect effect (CI = .055-.138) on good governance as the bootstrap CIs are above zero. The results from table 5.1.6 also indicate that training and development have direct effect (CI = .169-.376) on ethics management and indirect effect (CI = .098-.240) on ethical culture. Law and discipline have positive direct effect (CI = .095 -.233) and indirect effects (CI = .198-.332) on good

governance. The results reveal that law and discipline have direct effect (CI = .169-.376) on ethics management. In terms of relationship towards ethical culture, law and discipline have direct effect (CI = .164-.334) and indirect effect (CI = .365-.551) on ethical culture. Ethical management has indirect effect (CI = .268-.407) on good governance and direct effect (CI = .522-.673) on ethical culture whereas ethical culture has direct effect (CI = .474-.129) on good governance.

The serial multiple mediation model

In order to test the multiple mediation effect of ethics management and ethical culture, the casual chain model was established to evaluate whether ethics management and ethical culture mediate the relationship between training and development and good governance.

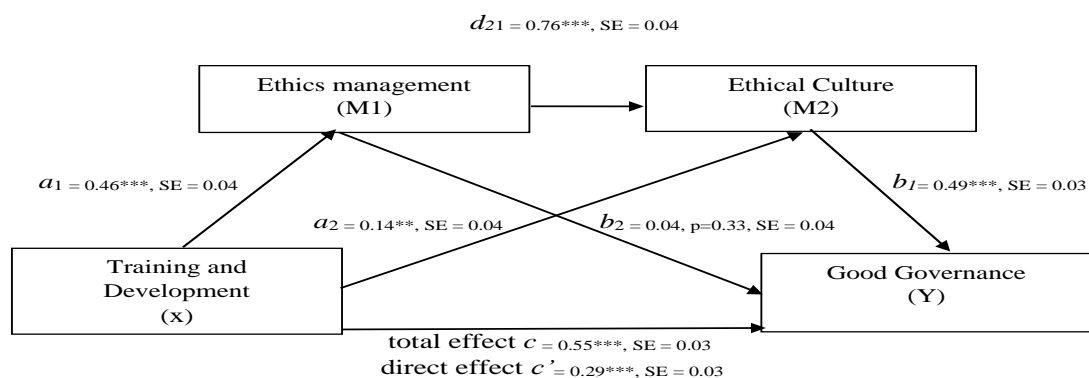


Figure 3 Path diagram illustrating direct effects and causal paths linking Training and Development with Good Governance (use macro PROCESS model 6)

Table 2 Path coefficients and indirect effects for mediation model

	Path coefficients			Completely standardized Indirect effects		
	to Ethics management	to Ethical culture	to Good Governance	Estimate (Effect)	SE	Bias-Corrected Bootstrap 95% Confidence Interval (lower bound and upper bound)
Training and Development (TR)	0.46***	0.14**	0.29***			
Ethics management (ECM)		0.76***	0.04			
Ethical Culture (EC)			0.49***			
TR -> ECM -> GG				.02	.03	-.02, .07
TR -> EC -> GG				.08	.03	.03, .13
TR -> ECM -> EC -> GG				.20	.03	.15, .25

Note. ***p < .001, **p < .01, *p < .05

From figure 3, training and development served as the first (or independent) variable, while ethics management and ethical culture are the mediators in that order. Good governance is dependent variable. In this mediation model, the partial mediation happens because the total indirect effect is significantly greater than zero, or that c', direct effect, (coefficient = 0.29, P<0.001) is significantly less than c, total effect, (coefficient = 0.55, P<0.001). Thus, the indirect effect of training and development on good governance was partially mediated by ethical management and ethical culture. The total indirect effect of training and development towards good governance through ethics management (M1) and ethical culture (M2) is

statistically significant (coefficient = 0.20, 95% CI = 0.15-0.25). Thus, ethics management and ethical culture can partially mediate the relationship between training and development and good governance.

It is interesting to note that ethical culture alone can mediate the relationship between training and development and good governance (TR -> EC -> GG) because the indirect effect is statistically significant (coefficient = 0.08, 95% CI = .03-.13). Meanwhile, the indirect effect of training and development on good governance through ethics management (TR -> ECM -> GG) is statistically insignificant as 95% CI include zero (-.02-.07).

The path diagram (Figure 3) and the path coefficients and indirect effects for mediation model (Table 2) revealed that ethics management (M1) and ethical culture (M2) mediate the relationship between training and development and good governance as the bootstrap CIs of indirect effect do not contain zero (CI = .15-.25). This means the indirect effect of training and development on good governance through ethics management (M1) and ethical culture (M2) is statistically significant. The result confirmed that there was a subsequent mediation of the ethics management and ethical culture between training and development and good governance. Though ethics management did not have a significant direct impact on good governance, but rather it is enhanced by high levels of training and development and ethical culture which in turn lead to higher level of good governance. In the mediation model (Figure 3), we can see that the most of effect happens in the model when the path of relationship starts from training and development to ethics management to ethical culture and to good governance (TR -> ECM -> EC -> GG).

To test whether ethics management and ethical culture can mediate the relationship between law and discipline and good governance and how law and discipline are linked to good governance, serial mediation model was used to test the proposed multiple mediation model.

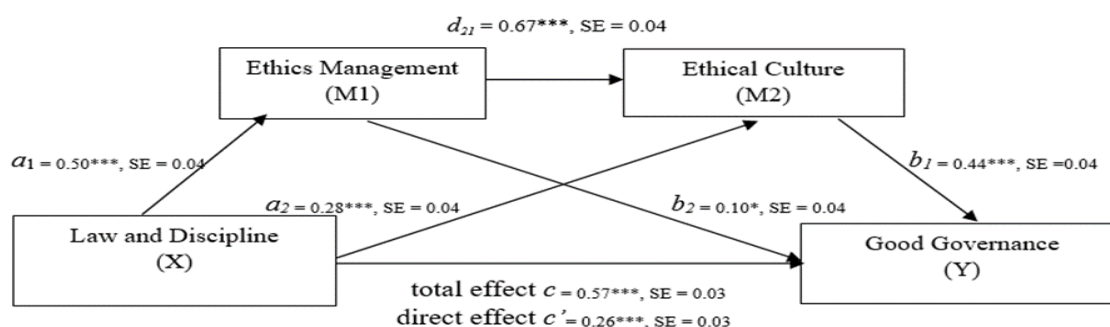


Figure 4 Path diagram illustrating direct effects and causal paths linking law and discipline with good governance (use macro PROCESS model 6)

Table 3 Path coefficients and indirect effects for mediation model

	Path coefficients			Completely standardized Indirect effects		
	to Ethics management	to Ethical culture	to Good Governance	Estimate	SE	Bias-Corrected Bootstrap 95% Confidence Interval (lower bound and upper bound)
Law and Discipline (LA)	0.50***	0.28***	0.26***			
Ethics management (ECM)		0.67***	0.10*			
Ethical Culture (EC)			0.44***			
LA -> ECM -> GG				.05	.03	-.003, .109
LA -> EC -> GG				.15	.03	.10, .20
LA -> ECM -> EC -> GG				.17	.02	.13, .21

Note. ***p < .001, **p < .01, *p < .05

From the results in Figure 4 and Table 3, it is evident that ethics management and ethical culture partially mediate the relationship between the law and discipline and good governance because the bootstrap CI is above zero (coefficient = 0.17, 95% CI = 0.13-0.21). The total indirect effect law and discipline towards good governance through ethics management (M1) and ethical culture (M2) is statistically significant. In this mediation model (Figure 4), the partial mediation occurs because total indirect effect is significantly greater than zero, or that c' , direct effect, (coefficient = 0.26, $P < 0.001$) is significantly less than c , total effect, (coefficient = 0.57, $P < 0.001$). Therefore, the indirect effect of law and discipline on good governance was partially mediated by ethical management and ethical culture.

From the results, it is interesting to see that ethical culture alone can mediate the relationship between law and discipline and good governance (LA -> EC -> GG) because the indirect effect is statistically significant (coefficient = .15, 95% CI = .10-.20). The indirect effect of law and discipline towards good governance through ethics management (LA -> ECM -> GG) is statistically insignificant as 95% CI include zero (-.003-.109). The ethics management alone cannot mediate the relationship from laws and discipline towards good governance. However, the size of effect of their serial multiple mediation (LA -> ECM -> EC -> GG) was found to be stronger than a separate single mediation of ethical culture (LA -> EC -> GG).

Conclusion and Discussion

1) From this study, the results do not support a relationship between recruitment and selection and good governance in the Thai civil service. The path model and the confidence intervals revealed that recruitment and selection do not appear to have direct nor indirect effect on good governance. This finding contributes to the evidence showing a lack of association between recruitment and selection and good governance in Thai government agencies. However, the literature showed that merit-based recruitment in general benefits and boosts up good governance (Egeberg, Gornitzka, & Trondal, 2017). Many parts of literature showed that recruitment and selection practices can affect either positively or negatively towards the effective administration of an organization. It has been revealed that the public administration that adopted the merit-based recruitment practices caused less corruption than those that do not practices the recruitment and selection with the merit-based manner (Dahlström, Victor, & Jan, 2012).

It is clear that recruitment and selection principles of the Thai civil service have intrinsic foundation for conducting recruitment and selection tasks with fairness, equity, transparency, and standardization, which have become the key principles for recruitment in Thai civil service. Nevertheless, it should be emphasized that in the real context and in the real practices

of HRM in the Thai civil service, there are many other factors that affect good governance. Though the recruitment and selection are grounded and have merit-based principles as a core value of practice as mentioned earlier, it is undeniable that the recruitment policy of a government organization is also determined by the nature of the work and the environment of industry in which each government agency operates. Rohitarachoon and Hossain (2012) reported that recruitment and selection of the public employees at the Thai local level administration are functioned to conceal the inefficient procedures that take place in reality. The local-patronage system and nepotism are rooted and underpinned the Thai local administration in the area of human resource management. There are hence various internal and external factors that affect the recruitment and selections policy of the various organizations (Mankikar, 2014). Though recruitment and selection procedures in the Thai civil service have tools and instruments that can predict some kinds and levels of behaviour, they can only predict the behavioral tendencies. Values of workforce can change over time and management culture can create an environment in which unethical behavior can develop. The reason that recruitment and selection practices do not relate to good governance can be explained by many other factors, thus the holistic view of HRM approaches need to be considered and further study in this area needs to be undertaken. From the organizational and institutional perspective, the administrative culture which government agencies practice can affect their actual recruitment behaviour. In addition, it is observed that a non-meritocratic administrative culture can lead to the bad governance. Thus, there is a need to emphasize more on the merit-based recruitment mechanism to identify challenges and to develop strategies of recruitment and selection that can influence good governance.

2) The result showed no association between compensation and rewards and good governance in the Thai civil service. Though the compensation and rewards in the Thai civil service are based on equity and fairness, it depends to what extent compensation and rewards can make civil servants perceive the values of fairness and equity that can promote good governance in a workplace. Thus, the effectiveness of compensation and rewards in promoting good governance needs to be assessed. The reason that compensation and rewards do not reveal an association with good governance components in the Thai civil service may be due to the fact that the pay management and pay structure are still lack of or did not sufficiently compose of the motivational factors that can support good governance aspects. According to agency theory, the remuneration and incentives can effectively contribute to greater overall performance of employees in an organization by paying on the basis of team. Making each employee a principal who monitors other employees' performance can lead to improvement of overall performance (Levine & Tyson, 1990). Similarly, the equity theory also suggested that in teamwork if one's work effort is lower than other members of the work group but he still receives the same remuneration, one would be encouraged and pressured to put more effort. The equity can increase firm performance which can finally lead to good governance of an organization. The remuneration and incentives should be able to satisfy needs of employees so that the payment can motivate them to better perform the job. Compensation and rewards can effectively improve employee work performance and increase organizational productivity by encouraging employees to perform productively (Latham, 2007). Gunkel (2006) found that when the compensation is based on a real performance, then the employee is likely to perform better. Perhaps the most important of all, civil service salaries must reflect an adequate standard of living, both to minimize individuals' temptation to corruption, to maximize the civil service's ability and to attract and retain talented employees who can make a contribution to public service. Performance must be taken into account in setting pay, benefits, or incentive levels, but must be based on actual performance. However, the best compensation strategy rests, of course, on its fit with other human resource activities and with the purpose and values of organization.

3) The study revealed that training and development have positive significant relationship on good governance. Training and development in the Thai civil service is an essential element for developing civil servants' knowledge, skills and abilities so that they might become better qualified to perform the duties of their present jobs and advance to more responsible positions. Training and development can also improve productivity, effectiveness and efficiency of government service by development and better utilization of talents, abilities and potential of civil servants. Rohan and Madhumita (2012) also found that employees who are trained on decision making, teamwork, problem-solving and interpersonal relations can effectively improve their performance and beneficially impact the level of growth and efficiency of organization.

The contribution that training and development have towards good governance in the Thai civil service can be seen in the HRM policies related to the capacity building of civil servants.

The principal objective of a training and development division in each government agency is to ensure the availability of a skilled and willing of workforce. In the Thai civil service, it is clear that training and development have been used as a function to develop productivity and work plans for the public service. This result is in line with the results of studies of Usha (2014), Ekaterini and Constantinos-Vasilios (2009) which found the impact of training and development programmes on employee's efficiency and productivity. Training and development in the Thai civil service are also used as a method of communicating organizational goals to civil servants. Thus, training and development increase not only employees' productivity but also government agencies' productivity which can effectively enhance the good governance mechanism.

4) Law and discipline have positive direct effects on good governance in Thai civil service. From the results of this study, it can be observed that the HRM practices that can contribute directly to the dimensions of good governance lie in the rules, regulations and disciplinary approaches. HRM can thus contribute to creating good governance in the civil service by generally or specifically aligning itself with the characteristics of good governance which is the rule of law. Many research findings recognized that effective use of human resources regulations and rules is the first step in ensuring respect for the principles of good governance. Oyewunmi, Kenneth and Olaleke (2017) found a significant relationship between functional disciplinary and grievance structure and the corporate governance practices in Nigeria's downstream petroleum sector. Therefore, we can observe that the dimensions of modern and effective laws and disciplinary systems are a cornerstone in building good governance.

In the Thai civil service, an open and transparent HRM policy, responsive to citizens' needs and respectful of the rule of law can contribute to the long-term sustainability of an organization.

Law and discipline are thus considered as an effective tool to prevent misconduct and create ethical behaviour of employees. Laws that define the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders in the civil service and focus on disciplinary maintenance allow the civil service to improve its culture and values in more ethical ways in accordance with their codes of conduct and professional ethics. HRM policies in the Thai civil service are subject to many legislation, regulations and authorities. Thus, legal and disciplinary issue which fills almost all aspects of human capital management contributes significantly to sustain good governance climate in the Thai civil service.

5) Based on the findings from the serial-multiple mediation tested in this research, the serial-multiple mediation of ethics management and ethical culture were found statistically significant in the relationship of training and development with good governance in the Thai civil service. Vuuren and Eiselen (2006) found that training and development can effectively

enhance ethics management competence of organizational members. The results in this study are consistent with the study of Guerci, Radaelli, Siletti, Cirella and Shani (2015) which found that HRM practices that aim at the ability-enhancing or opportunity enhancing for example training and development, employee engagement, employee relations, can maintain ethical climate of an organization. In opposition, motivation-enhancing HRM practices such as performance management and compensation are related to the egoistic climate. Thus, we can see that training and development can lead to ethics management mechanism and to ethical culture in organization which can ultimately bring about good governance of organization. It is because training and development is a process which transfers values and knowledge to employees. It is equipping employers to translate those values and knowledge into practice with a view to enhancing the organization's effectiveness and productivity.

It is evident that training and development can create good governance by implementing ethical values at the individual and organizational levels. Othman and Rahman (2014) found that ethical leadership is crucial in the construction of good governance practices. Such findings emphasized that ethical dimension significantly relate to good governance. Brown (1995) also indicates that on-the-job training is playing a significant contribution in creating and sustaining ethical culture and climate in an organization. It is observed in many studies that training is one of important factors that can institutionalize ethics frameworks in organizations (Carroll & Buchholtz, 2006; Phillip, 2003). Hence, training and development in the Thai civil service can thus create better ethical framework and improve ethical behaviour of civil servants which can enhance and maintain good governance.

6) From the results of serial-multiple mediation models, ethics management and ethical culture mediate relationship between law and discipline and good governance. It is evident that laws and disciplinary system can support and promote ethical behavior (Amundsen & Pinto de Andrade, 2009). Laws and discipline dealing with civil servants can guide responsibilities, accountabilities and behaviors of civil servants who must have moral concepts which are grounded in obligations and duties. Laws and disciplinary rules are thus considered to be an ethical instrument which helps develop ethical culture that create more ethical workplace. In other words, laws, regulations and disciplinary rules can strengthen good governance in civil service by enhancing ethical conduct and behaviour of civil servants. In this study, it is important to note that law and disciplinary rules in Thai government agencies relate to ethics management and ethical culture because they create normative behaviour of civil servants. Laws and disciplinary can thus shape the normative behaviors of workforce. Sims (2003) found that an ethical climate can promote an ethical culture through the normative behavior of employees in the workplace. Thus, ethical culture can ultimately enhance good governance aspects of organization. Huhtala, Feldt, Lämsä, Mauno, and Kinnunen (2011) found that the ethical organizational culture has an influence on the work commitment of managers. It is also interesting to see that the European Union (EU) applied ethics management principles by adopting many ethics instruments such as codes of conducts, standard, regulations, training, dilemma training and disciplinary rules for decreasing corruption and promoting good governance (Demmke & Moilanen, 2011).

However, in both serial mediation models, no indirect effect of ethics management was found for the association of training and development and good governance. No indirect effect of ethics management was found for the association of law and discipline and good governance. These results are consistent with previous research reporting that even though there are formal ethics programmes, written standards of conduct, which are a dimension of ethics management, they will not prevent corporate misconduct or support good governance mechanism if they are not embedded in a wider organisational ethical culture (Ethics Resource Center [ERC], 2005). As a consequence, law abiding and existence of disciplinary rules does not guarantee ethical behaviour of employees. These results are consistent with

previous research of Webley and Werner (2008) which emphasized that creating codes of ethics and ethics policy are necessary but not sufficient. Even though there are code of ethics, ethics programmes which are instruments of ethics management in a workplace, they will not reduce corporate misconducts or support good governance mechanism if they are not well-designed, not be driven with ethical leadership and not be incorporated in ethical culture at all levels of organization. Overall, it is evident that ethical culture is the variable that has the strongest relationship with good governance.

From this study, it can be observed that organizational culture of the Thai civil service plays a significant role in sustaining and promoting good governance. Kanlayanamitra, Tatiyalapa, Mala and Yaowanit (2018) found that organizational culture which is one of important components of administrative factors can contribute significantly in creating good governance practice in the local administrative organization in the central region of Thailand. Thus, HRM practices that intend to maintain the climate of good governance in the Thai civil service should be able to encourage the ethical corporate culture. HRM practices in the Thai civil service should also sustain ethical culture which makes workforce contributes positively to the long-term goals of the organisation. In order to achieve good governance, it requires thus effective HRM practices that can incorporate ethics into the level of behaviour of Thai civil servants. It is challenging to build up the ethical behaviors, awareness, integrity values and culture by functions of training and development. Code of conducts or even laws and disciplinary rules can be one of the most effective tools to establish the climate of good governance in the Thai civil service.

In the public sector, ethics is understood in terms of virtuous, value-based behaviour because public administration is a moral activity grounded in obligations, duties, and moral principles (Lawton 2005) aimed to strengthen public trust and enhance ethical conduct.

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Limitations and Suggestions for Further Study

There are many other HRM practices that may need to be explored and studied about their relationship towards good governance in Thai civil service, such as performance appraisal, promotion, career management, or even the holistic approaches of HRM functions and practices, to find more effective relationship. Another limitation of this study was the perspective adopted. This study has been first and foremost limited to the study of two mediators which are ethics management and ethical culture. This can thus also be seen as a limiting factor in this study.

Moreover, this study listed the determinants of HRM practices, its implementation and organizations in the context of the Thai civil service which is different from other types of organizations. Therefore, the results could be inapplicable to other types of organizations. The culture, the core value and the perception of civil servants in Thai civil service context is different from the nature of other kinds of organization. That's the reason why, the further study should be the study of the roles of HRM practices in enhancing good governance in different nature of organization and various organizational cultures, and then we can conduct the comparative study in order to get specific explanation of relationship between HRM practices and perceptions of good governance in different categories of organizations.

Secondly, the other dimensions of Human Resource Development (HRD) are suggested to be included in further study as the concept of good governance can be abundantly and effectively explained by the HRD practices. Ultimately, the aim of this research is to study

casual relationships between HRM practices and good governance in the context of the Thai civil service. However, the further study could be done in the form an experimental research by using HRM practices in this research that contribute to the good governance to build up new practices or activities that can improve or reinforce strategic HRM in workplace.

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