

# EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND THE QUALIFICATIONS OF BEING A TEACHER IN THE DIGITAL AGE: A CASE STUDY OF THE CENTRAL REGION OF THAILAND

Sengsavanh Silichantho<sup>1</sup>

Manutdon Jaroenphuwadon<sup>2</sup>

Received 21 May 2021

Revised 14 June 2021

Accepted 18 June 2021

## Abstract

This qualitative research is intended to study the purposes of the development of educational institutions and suitable qualifications for teachers in the digital age. Research instrument was a semi-structured questionnaire which was used for depth interviews. The study samples were 20 education administrators from 10 educational institutions under the Ministry of Education in Thailand. The data was collected until it was saturated. The results indicated that the educational institutions want to develop learners to achieve three characteristics as follows: 1) Intelligence, mind, and healthy body; 2) Good citizenship, self-sufficiency, and responsibility; and 3) Social and environmental development. In addition, the result also indicated that the characteristics of teachers in the digital age consisted of four points of view as follows: 1) The teachers in the digital age must be a person with knowledge of what to teach and experience; therefore, teachers in the digital age cannot teach according to the textbook only. 2) The teachers must have good internet and computer skills because all knowledge of the current era is about the internet and computer. 3) The teachers must be able to communicate in English. and 4) The teachers must be a person with morality and ethics, being ashamed of sin and act as a good role model for their students and society.

**Keywords:** Intelligence, Self-Sufficient, Morality and Ethics

---

<sup>1</sup> Doctor of Philosophy Program in Education, Universal Ministries of The King's College.  
4283 Express Lane Suite 109-504 Sarasota, Florida, 34238 United States of America. E-mail: Silichantho.Sen@gmail.com  
<sup>2</sup> Professor, Universal Ministries of The King's College. 4283 Express Lane Suite 109-504 Sarasota, Florida, 34238  
United States of America. E-mail: Kunpomat@gmail.com

## **Introduction.**

Education is a process that develops people to become qualified human beings with full potential. There is a balanced development of intelligence, mind, body, and society in order to strengthen the country's economic and social development and growth. Education is the process of transferring and learning knowledge in order to create and develop people in terms of knowledge, ideas, as well as morality, and ethics in order to be able to live happily in society. It is able to respond to the direction of economic and social development of the nation in which country focuses on human development through education. For Thailand, it is a developing country and there are quite a lot of problems with manpower to meet the economic and social development policy. This is due to the system and method of educational management that cannot equally create and distribute opportunities. Particularly, when Thailand is in the era of industrial age and the advancement of the learning society in the 21st century, the management of Thai education system is quite challenging (Chakaphisit, 2007).

Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board (2017) revealed that there are three forms of education that can provide services to the target population thoroughly: education in a targeted system, methods of conducting studies for the duration of the study and measurement and evaluation which is a definite condition of graduation. Non-formal education is an education that is flexible in setting goals, patterns, methods of educational management. Duration of study measurement and evaluation of the contents of the curriculum must be appropriate in accordance with the problems and needs of each individual group. Informal education is a show that allows learners to study by themselves according to their interests, potential, readiness, and opportunities by studying from individuals, experiences, society, environment, media, or other sources of knowledge. Being serious to national development is the focus on promoting a more enriching life-long education. This is because the provision of education in the school system alone is not sufficient to fully meet the learning needs of the people. Therefore, it is necessary to organize non-formal education and informal education, which is flexible, able to meet the needs of the people more diverse and comprehensive. Especially in the present time, there are social, economic, and political changes as well as rapid technological advancement. Hence, there is a need to create new methods in the management of non-formal education and informal education by making learning something close and easy to seek from the public. People live a healthy life; they must be trained. Human beings who train themselves or have learned, thus changing and making the world change greatly. Education is very important to the development of the country. Especially in the globalization in which the world is changing rapidly. People in the nation need to be educated in a variety of ways. To achieve a balanced development of intelligence, mind, body, and to be able to live happily in society. The management of non-formal education and informal education is consistent with the way of life of the people in society, which will lead to the solidification of the sustainable community and the progress of the country as a civilized country (Teachers and Educational Personnel Council Act, 2003).

In Thailand, education management in the past was a type of non-formal education and informal education. Before establishing a school in the reign of King Chulalongkorn and educational management has evolved. It has been modified and reformed to universal compliance. As for the provision of most non-formal education in the school system, it follows other lifestyles and styles that did not define a clear name until 1940 has been organized in education for adults outside of school age. Later, the government action required to have an agency responsible for this matter directly called Adult Education Division and changed to the Non-Formal Education Department in the following order, the management of education at all stages has always put the importance of education in the country's development. The Promotion of Non-Formal Education and Informal Education Act 2008 has given importance to education for national development. As defined in the note that, there should be a law to promote and support the systematic and continuous management of non-formal education and informal education. There are effective education management and management to give people the opportunity to learn and able to develop the quality of their life according to their potential. It is a learning and wisdom society. This will result in the development of manpower and the nation to progress further (Isaah, 2019).

Our country has no plans and mechanism for the production of manpower to meet the needs of the country, while graduates in some fields are overwhelming in jobs. It is often found that, in the recruitment of certain positions, tens of thousands of applicants compete for jobs with just a few ten rates. But, some disciplines lack manpower especially in the industrial sector and in the medical field. It is needed that half of the vocational students to study these disciplines. Therefore, there will be enough manpower to develop the country's industry. In fact, it was found that only 27% of vocational students are enrolled, including those who did not study in the vocational field, but went to study in vocational colleges as well, such as administrative fields. This means all students who study in vocational education cannot be counted as the technicians in the future. Accordingly, there are about the problems related to the mismatch of the numbers of human power from education system and the numbers of the human power needed in the industrial sectors (Teachers and Educational Personnel Council Act, 2003).

In conclusion, education is very important to the development of the country because education is a tool for improving the quality of people. Accordingly, the researcher has seen these problems and it is interesting to study the methods to produce students at the education institute as well as to study the characteristics of teachers in this new era that can be used to effectively produce students, to achieve the goals.

### **Research Objectives.**

To study the purpose of developing students of the educational institute in the new era.

To study the qualifications of teachers in the digital age in the dimensions of the administrator of an educational institution.

## Benefits

The researcher wants to know the results of the research. To bring the results of research to be used to guide planning to prevent problems that may arise in other countries. Especially in the country of researcher and to want to bring the results of this

## Literature Review

For the research on this subject to be successful and achieve the objectives. The researcher has studied documents, principles and concepts related to education. The details can be described as follows.

## Ethical Theory

Ethics concerns not what we *do*, but what we *ought* to do, whereas theories can be identified as formal (and ideally coherent and justified) statements that explain a certain matter (Stogdill, 2004). Ethical theories are thus formal statements about what we ought to do, when faced with an ethical dilemma. For example, is it wrong to tell a lie, even if people thereby avoid making somebody sad? Or what if people, by harming one individual, can avoid ten people being harmed; should people in such cases choose the lesser evil? In trying to answer such questions, it becomes clear that one of the central issues in ethics is whether people should focus on the consequences or the nature of actions. In the following, there are three most influential approaches related to ethics.

As mentioned previously, there are generally three philosophical approaches (Cronbach, 1970).

Utilitarian Ethics	Deontological Ethics	Virtue Ethics
<b>definition</b> ----- the greatest good for the greatest number of people	the idea that people should be treated with dignity and respect	considering what virtues make a good public relations professionals
<b>application</b> ----- making a decision based on what will benefit the majority	identifying one's duty and acting accordingly	making a decision in light of those favored virtues
<b>pros &amp; cons</b> ----- <b>Con:</b> decision-makers are forced to guess the outcome of their choice <b>Con:</b> harming a minority and benefitting a majority doesn't build mutually beneficial relationships <b>Con:</b> it is not always possible to predict the outcome of a decision	<b>Con:</b> there may be disagreement about the principles involved in the decision <b>Con:</b> the possibility of making a "right" choice with bad consequence <b>Con:</b> the possibility of a conflict in duties <b>Pros:</b> strongest model for applied public relations ethics	<b>Con:</b> misses the importance obligations to client and publics <b>Con:</b> the possibility of a conflict in virtues

**Figure 1** The different types of ethics.

## Utilitarian Ethics

The first ethical system in normative ethics, utilitarianism, is often equated with the concept of "the greatest good for the greatest number." The idea is that ethical decisions are made based on the consequences of the action, which is why it is also sometimes called consequentialism (Aristotle, 2000;

Boydell, 1985). Interestingly, Curtin, Gallicano and Matthew found that, when faced with ethical situations in public relations, “Millennials will use utilitarian reasoning to avoid confrontation and achieve consensus.” The attraction of this ethical perspective may lie in the fact that it appears to be a way to weigh out the impact of behavior and determine the greatest good for the greatest number. While this idea initially may seem appealing, particularly with a field that has a core duty to the public, it does not provide a solid ethical framework for decision-making. There are three main concerns that seem to arise when public relations professionals rely on utilitarian ethics to make decisions.

First, rather than looking at the choice or action itself, decision-makers are forced to guess the potential outcomes of their choice in order to determine what is ethical. Grundig believes this is a faulty line of reasoning when he suggested that: “We believe, in contrast, the public relations should be based on a worldview that incorporates ethics into the process of public relations rather than on a view that debates the ethics of its outcomes.” In other words, ethics should be about the decision-making process, not just the outcome, which cannot be guaranteed (Stogdill, 2004).

Second, utilitarian ethics also “presents questions of conflict with regard to which segment of society should be considered most important” in weighing the “good” or outcome. In other words, if a solution drastically harms a minority group, would it be ethical if the majority benefited from that decision? This seems to contradict the goal of public relations to build mutually beneficial relationships, regardless of the number of people in a particular stakeholder group (Boydell, 1985; Aristotle, 2000).

The third objection is that it is not always possible to predict the outcome of an action. Bowen points out that “consequences are too unpredictable to be an accurate measure of the ethics of a situation.” In other words, consequences of actions can be highly volatile or impossible, even, to predict. Using outcomes as a measurement of ethics will not, therefore, provide an accurate way for professionals to measure whether decisions are ethical. Professionals must be able to evaluate decisions and choices with concrete ethical guidelines instead of hoping that certain outcomes will result in them having made an ethical choice. Many scholars in public relations identify these issues, as well as others, as evidence that utilitarianism, sometimes called consequentialism due to the concept relying on the consequence of a decision, is not as strong of a fit for public relations professional ethics.

### **Deontological Ethics**

The second prominent concept, deontological ethics, is associated with the father of modern deontology, Immanuel Kant. He was known for the ‘Categorical Imperative’ that looks for transcendent principles that apply to all humans. The idea is that “human beings should be treated with dignity and respect because they have rights.” Put another way, it could be argued that in deontological ethics “people have a duty to respect other people’s rights and treat them accordingly.” The core concept behind this is that there are objective obligations, or duties, that are required of all people. When faced with an ethical situation, then, the process is simply one of identifying one’s duty and making the appropriate decision. The challenges to this perspective, however, include 1) conflicts that arise when

there is not an agreement about the principals involved in the decision; 2) the implications of making a “right” choice that has bad consequences; and 3) what decisions should be made when duties conflict. These challenges are ones that should be considered when relying on this as an ethical system (Stogdill, 2004).

However, despite these concerns, many have found that deontology provides the strongest model for applied public relations ethics. Bowen, for example, suggests that “deontology is based on the moral autonomy of the individual, similar to the autonomy and freedom from encroachment that public relations seek to be considered excellent. That ideological consistency gives the theory posed here a solid theoretical foundation with the practice of public relations as well as a normative theory function.” Similarly, Fitzpatrick and Gauthier suggest, “practitioners need some basis on which to judge the rightness of the decisions they make every day. They need ethical principles derived from the fundamental values that define their work as a public relations professional.” A key thought in this concept is the assumption that there needs to be some objective morals that professionals rely on in order to determine ethical behavior.

### **Virtue Ethics**

Finally, a third and growing area of philosophical reasoning with ethics is known as virtue ethics, one that has gained more attention in public relations scholarship in recent years. This philosophy stems from Aristotle and is based on the virtues of the person making a decision. The consideration in virtue ethics is essentially “what makes a good person,” or, for the purpose of this discussion, “what makes a good public relations professional?” Virtue ethics require the decision-maker to understand what virtues are good for public relations and then decisions are made in light of those particular virtues. For example, if the virtue of honesty is the of utmost importance to a good public relations professional, then all decisions should be made ethically to ensure honesty is preserved (Stogdill, 2004). While this theory is growing in popularity, there are several objections that can be made. First, in terms of the public relations profession, the focus on virtues of the professional themselves seems to miss the importance and role of obligations to clients and publics. The industry is not simply about what public relations people do themselves, but ultimately the impact to society. Additionally, it also can face the same obstacle as deontological ethics when having conflicting virtues. If there is a virtue of loyalty to a client and honesty to the public, what happens when they conflict? To which one should a professional defer?

These three theories of ethics (utilitarian ethics, deontological ethics, virtue ethics) form the foundation of normative ethics conversations. It is important, however, that public relations professionals also understand how to apply these concepts to the actual practice of the profession. Ethical discussion that focuses on how a professional makes decision, known as applied ethics, are heavily influenced by the role or purpose of the profession within society.

### **Education Institute Principle**

An educational institution is a place where people of different ages gain an education, including preschools, childcare, primary-elementary schools, secondary-high schools, and universities. They provide a large variety of learning environments and learning spaces. (Boydell, 1985).

An educational institution refers to an administrative unit with a principal or other head, which has teachers and other personnel in its service (role of employers), and which is liable to keep books and compile other documentation, in which students are registered, whose activities are regulated by a legal act or decree, which follows a national curriculum, and which is financed and controlled by a public authority. An educational institution does not refer to a school building or facility. A new educational institution is established, an educational institution is abolished or merged with another educational institution at the decision of the organizer of education (maintainer of the educational institution) or a public authority (Stogdill, 2004).

### **Research Methodology**

This research is qualitative. It was done by in-depth interviews with 20 educational institutes' top executives from a total of 10 educational institutes in the central region of Thailand. The interviewee must be an educational institution administrator who is willing and willing to provide useful information in the research. And must be an executive who has been involved with the administration of an educational institution for at least three years. And who is happy to cooperate in terms of academic interviews. Interview questions are semi-structured questions. The researcher conducts interviews with the researcher himself until all 20 people are taped and transcribed to analyse the data in a form called content analysis, and then analysed it out as frequency and percentage.

#### **Research Process**

1. Researcher conducted research studies, theories and principles.
2. The researcher coordinated to meet with the administrators of the educational institution.
3. The researcher explained the principles and reasons for the research to request assistance in requesting information in conducting research.
4. The researcher made an appointment with the management to ask for in-depth interviews with individual executives.
5. Researcher conducted interviews and records information.
6. The researcher took the information obtained from the interview.
7. Summary of findings was mentioned.
8. Confirmation of findings was conducted with information provider.

## Research Result

Personal Information.

**Table 1** Personal information

	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Aging</b>		
41-45	2	10
46-50	4	20
51-55	14	70
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	13	65
Female	7	35
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Education</b>		
Bachelor	2	10
Master	18	90
Doctorate	-	
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Management Experience</b>		
3-5	4	20
6-10	16	80
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 2** The aims of education institute form the executive's opinion

No	Items	Agree	Percentage
1	Develop learners in the field of intelligence, mind and healthy	20	100
2	Produce people to be good citizens of the country, self-sufficient, greater responsibility towards the public than personal.	20	100
3	Able to develop career for learners, social and environmental development.	20	100
<b>Total</b>		<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>

From individual interviews, the executives gave 100 percent of the same opinion and agreed in all three terms that. This is the main purpose of the school side that we want it to be.



**Table 3** The qualification of teachers in digital age from the executive's opinion

No	Items	Agree	Percentage
1	Having expertise and experience in the subject taught	20	100
2	Having skills and knowledge of using the Internet and computers	20	100
3	Having a very good command of English communication	20	100
4	Having morality and ethics of being a teacher	20	100
<b>Total</b>		20	100

Table 2 shows that 20 executives agree with 100 percent that teachers' qualifications in this digital age must be qualified. All four.

### Discussion and Recommendation

Related to the study of the aims of education institute from the executive's opinion, the management team commented that schools should have a mission to produce students who are equipped with consciousness, knowledge, ability, and good mind. In addition, the students should also be the good people of the country, responsible for both oneself and the public and environment. These objectives are what the country's educational institutions must give priority to and considers the corporate missions which its result was in line with Smith (2004) saying that educational management in the year 2000 aimed to develop students to have three characteristics: professional, social, and environmental development. For these reasons, students must learn to adapt themselves to the real world. Real learning is a sufficiently comprehensive combination of general knowledge to get along with some subjects in depth. It also requires practice in various learning methods to guide life-long education. Learning for action is the learning that is not only for professional expertise but for coping with different situations, whether they are formal or informal.

Learning to be together by teaching them to understand others and to realize that humans are dependent on each other. Conducting projects together and learning how to resolve conflicts peacefully can improve their personality. In the management of education, the reasoning as well as skills in communicating with others are required since it can provide opportunities for everyone to study throughout their lives. For this reason, teachers are therefore very important to educate the students in the education reformation era. There is a need to use tactics to turn the crisis into opportunities to acquire good teachers with modern ideals. It is consistent with Van Miller (1965) and Greenfield (1991) saying that studies tend to focus on development of "human resources" to know and increase skills to work to earn money for life staying. There are many dimensions of mental, emotional, cultural, and emotional needs to be considered. In addition, this includes acceptance from others in society as well. However, there is not only a need on economic issue, but there is a need on education issue, which is the most important investment in human development to become smart citizens: mentally, emotionally, and socially. Education management reforms the approach to create a complete human being in following

ways. Firstly, it promotes internal motivation for youth and adults to love reading. Secondly, it focuses on the development of the learner's social and emotional intelligence or abilities, along with the intellectual or professional knowledge/skills that will be applied in the study. It is important to work in the real world. Teaching and learning should use a collaborative learning approach that can train people to learn to work together as a team, help each other's. Thirdly, it opens the opportunity for the children and youth to play, to exercise, and to do activities that they enjoy such as art and culture activities as well as to learn to develop themselves in many areas. Fourthly, it changes the method of assessments or examination without emphasizing the memorization and ranking of students in the classroom. A good assessment should measure the learning development of each learner (self-development) rather than compete with the others. The results should be evaluated by focusing on the ability to think, analyze, synthesize, capture important issues and others instead of memorizing information and should consider the development of learners based on emotional intelligence and social intelligence such as development of personalities, habits, values with maturity, positive thinking, and creativity.

Related to the study of qualifications of teachers in the digital age, educational administrators agreed that who will become a teacher in this era must be a person with knowledge and abilities in all four areas: experience, computer skills and knowledge, English communication, and morality and ethics. Firstly, the teacher must be a person with knowledge and expertise in the subject being taught. They also have to be experienced in applying the principles to the practice of teaching matters. Secondly, the teacher in this era must be able to use computers and the Internet because these are important in the digital world. All information including new academic knowledge is packed into computers and available on the Internet. If the teachers can use computers and the Internet effectively, they can use them to research new knowledge easily. Thirdly, English is very necessary. When teachers can read and speak English, they can open the door to global sources of knowledge because all the up-to-date information is recorded in English as an international language. In addition, if the teacher does not know the English language, they will face with slow self-development and are unable to keep pace with the changing world. Fourthly, the person who will become a teacher must have ethical principles, being able to clearly distinguish the goodness and the badness. A person who wants to be a teacher should behave well, being a role model for society. This is in line with Nanthachai (2011) and Smith (2004) mentioning that the teachers have to be open-minded and adaptable to the new technology since the 2000s. According to the viewpoint of Udom (2015) and Aristotle, (2000), the future teachers should be a part of leading society. In international level, Thai teachers must be good at communication with other languages, computer literacy, and ideas, especially in the age of advanced technology. Teachers must have a consciousness of being a teacher; otherwise, there is nothing better than what a computer has. Indeed, thinking skills increase the value of the content and distinguish information.

Accordingly, this research can be summed up into four points as follows: First, the teacher in the digital age must be a person with knowledge of what to teach, both academic knowledge and real experience. Therefore, teachers in the digital age, they cannot teach according to the text only, they

must be able to share experiences and have real cases for students to see real images other than textbooks. The second feature is that the teacher must have good internet and computer skills or knowledge because the knowledge of the current era came into the computer period, which every teacher will be able to develop themselves continuously. The third qualification of the teacher should be able to communicate in English. Lastly, the teachers in the digital age must be a person with morality and ethics.

## **Recommendations**

### **Recommendations from the study**

From the study, the recommendation can be made as follows: Firstly, the related organization should focus on developing the teachers to have expertise and experience in the taught subjects. Secondly, the related organization should set the activities or training program increase teacher skills and knowledge regarding Internet and computers. Thirdly, all teachers should be developed to increase the English communication skill which it is necessary for teaching skill in 21<sup>st</sup> century. Lastly, all teachers should be cultivated to have morality and ethics of being a teacher. These finally can then lead to produce the learners with intelligence, mindfulness, healthy, responsibility, self-sufficient as well as good citizenship of the country.

### **Recommendations for future research**

This study has limitations. Firstly, the study was aimed at studying about qualification of teachers in digital age which lack consideration on which factors can have positive effects on creating appropriate teaching qualification. Therefore, the future research should explore and investigate the possible factors affecting good teaching qualifications for digital age. Secondly, the study empathized on using qualitative research approach by using in-depth interview. Therefore, the future research can employ quantitative research to investigate the findings from this study. Lastly, this study used limited data analysis techniques. Therefore, the other techniques which include the delphi technique as for instance.

## **Reference**

- Aristotle. (2000). *Nicomachean ethics*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Boydell, T. (1985). *Management self-development: A guide for managers, organizations and institution*. Geneva: International Labor Office.
- Chakaphisut, S. (2007). *Community and participation in education management* (Edition No. 2). Bangkok: Institute National Development Administration.
- Cronbach, L. J. (1970). *Essentials of Psychological Test* (4<sup>th</sup> ed). New York: Harper Collins.
- Greenfield. (1991). *Development International Education Programs*. San Francisco: Jossy – Bass.

- Isaah, N. M. (2019). Role of the administrators in the development of moral schools. According to teachers' opinions Under the Office of Private Education in the three southern border provinces. *Academic conference the 20th National Graduate Research Works* (p.1928-1937). Khon Kaen: Khon Kaen University.
- Nanthachai, S. (2011). *Professional ethics for educational administrators*. Bangkok: Sam Charoenpanit Press (Bangkok).
- Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board. (2017). *12th National Economic and Social Development Plan (2017-2021)*. Bangkok: Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board.
- Smith. H. B. (2004). Description of effective and ineffective behavior of school principals. *Dissertation Abstract International*. 35.
- Stogdill. R. M. (2004). *Handbook of leadership: A survey of theory and research*. New York: The Free.
- Teachers and Educational Personnel Council Act. (2003). *Royal Gazette Volume 120, Part 52 Kor*. (24 May 2003).
- Udom, P. (2015). *Being Teacher*. Songkhla: Faculty of Education. Thaksin University.
- Van Miller. (1965). *The Public Administration of American School*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company.