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## **Developing a Model for Enhancing Leadership Characteristics of Thai Salesian Students**

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### **Abstract**

Leadership involves inspiring, influencing, and directing people to work together to achieve goals and objectives. Student leaders need to enhance their leadership characteristics to help them be better and thrive in the future. Relatively, students are trained to develop their holistic growth with the mission and uniqueness of the Salesian Society Foundation of Thailand. Therefore, this study aimed in developing a model to enhance Thai Salesian students' characteristics. The study was conducted in all five schools under the Salesian Society Foundation of Thailand with a sample size of 351 students. The research applied qualitative and quantitative methods designed with qualitative data from the literature resources to create questionnaires and experts' qualitative interview data to triangle data in developing a model with activities enhancing characteristics. The findings resulted in seven leadership characteristics of Thai Salesian students: commitment, communication, inspiration, morality, teamwork, service mind, and vision. Based on the questionnaire to find the needs for improvement priority index, the study disclosed that among Thai Salesian students, leadership characteristics that needed priority improvement were ranked as follows: (1) teamwork, (2) commitment, (3) inspiration, (4) vision, (5) service mind, (6) communication, and (7) morality. As a result, the four leadership characteristics that need to be developed are teamwork, commitment, inspiration, and vision.

**Keywords:** leadership characteristics, Salesian preventive system, Thai Salesian students, leadership model, transformational leadership theory, and social learning theory

## Introduction

Imagine the possibilities if an educational setting could shape and prepare their students to become leaders for society. The proper training method can allow educational institutions and society to grow and support governments to improve the lives of their citizens. Schools can thrive with effective leadership or crumble when their organizations' leadership is weak and unethical (Li & Kim, 2021). Leadership is frequently discussed in many fields studied for an extended time because society views it as an essential feature of everyday institutions. Some researchers explain leadership from the business management perspective, whereas others attempt to explain leadership by discussing the expected leader's characteristics, attitudes, and behaviors (Komives et al., 2013; Thongpan et al., 2019). Understanding the various perceptions of leadership becomes essential when discussing leadership characteristics. However, much of the research on leadership, particularly in education, has been based on the perspectives of those in positions of authority, such as teachers, administrators, and other educators or at the adult level. In contrast, studies on student leadership development appear to be rarer (Doowa et al., 2023).

The mission of Salesian Education is to remain faithful to Don Bosco's education concept, which emphasizes the lives and needs of the children, the teenagers, and the young who will be good Christians and honest citizens of tomorrow. The Salesians are conscious of their duty to inspire the young during the crucial stages of their life, mutually sharing responsibility with commitment and hope. Hence, the Salesian schools are dedicated to educating the person and society based on Don Bosco's preventive system's involvement, pedagogy, and values.

Connection to understanding and responding to students' specific developmental characteristics in culturally appropriate and sustainable ways is thus a core concept of education (Bishop & Harrison, 2021). Throughout early childhood, students experience rapid changes, develop ideas, and form attitudes and social deeds that lay the basis for adulthood during a different era of human growth and improvement between childhood and adolescence (Williamson & Blackburn, 2019). Although students share essential developmental characteristics, supporting them at this stage in their lives necessitates respecting their shared attitudes and acknowledging that everyone experiences childhood differently. Failure to do so leads to an essentialized view of student development, eventually leading to a dichotomy between normal and abnormal and what is typical and unusual (Brinegar et al., 2019).

As a result, aside from preparing students to be better future leaders, it has been demonstrated that developing student leadership characteristics can benefit students as it can benefit future society. Moreover, students who join in leadership development activities in educational institutions are revealed to have increased a wide range of skills and opportunities that they can apply in their daily lives, from compassion to problem-solving. Therefore, school boards, principals, faculty, and parents must prioritize student leadership development.

From the importance mentioned above, the researcher has an interest in the study of the leadership characteristics of students and then proposes a new leadership model in the context of the Salesian Society Foundation in Thailand, in which the results can be used as a guide to developing a student's leadership as an individual growth as a primary force in the future national development.

### **Research Objectives**

1. To explore the leadership characteristics of Thai Salesian students in schools under the Salesian Society Foundation.
2. To identify Thai Salesian students' desired and current leadership characteristics in schools under the Salesian Society Foundation.
3. To develop a leadership model that enhances Thai Salesian students in schools under the Salesian Society Foundation.
4. To verify the leadership model enhancing Thai Salesian students in school under the Salesian.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study aims to develop a leadership model for Thai Salesian students in schools under the Salesian Society Foundation of Thailand using three main components: transformational leadership theory, Salesian preventive system, and social learning theory. Hence the stakeholders would be able to gain benefits as follows:

Firstly, the model to enhance leadership characteristics of Thai Salesian students in schools under the Salesian Society Foundation of Thailand would provide meaningful indicators to understand better the desired and current leadership characteristics status of students and the areas that need to be enhanced. Furthermore, the seven leadership characteristics would provide a holistic aspect of what should be focused on through the model and activities.

Secondly, researchers can build further knowledge and theories on the present research findings. At the same time, school leaders can use the present model as a guideline to enhance leadership characteristics in their educational institutions.

Finally, the findings of this study may stimulate future researchers to apply the developed model to a broader range of situations, such as other Catholic and non-Catholic.

### **Literature Review**

The primary purpose of this chapter is to introduce the educational context to review significant theories. The previous studies related to this study's major and sub-variables are as follows: transformational leadership theory, Salesian preventive system, and social learning theory.

#### **Transformational Leadership Theory**

The term "transformational leadership" was first used in a political context in the work of James MacGregor Burns (1978), in which transformative leaders strive to enlighten their people by emphasizing noble ideals like humankind, harmony, fairness, freedom, and equality. Relatively, the transformational leadership model bolsters followers' sense of self. Leaders probe for what drives their followers and work to meet their goals as a group to achieve transformational change and raise the collective consciousness. Thus, leadership is the process by which leaders and followers individually or together mobilize motivated individuals and valuable resources in the setting of diverse rivalries and confrontations to achieve goals. Furthermore, Crowne (2019) explain that transformational leadership as leaders motivating and

inspiring their followers while developing their leadership abilities based on the four concepts below:

### ***Idealized Influence***

The characteristics of being an idealized influence are shown by a leader who expresses leadership with shared vision and values can fluent the concept to win followers' trust. On the other hand, the followers respect their leaders as influential (Franklin et al., 2017; Northouse, 2019). Because transformational leaders with idealized Influence are admired, trusted, and respected, they frequently serve as role models. Therefore, to achieve the idealized influence of the leader, transformational leaders usually need to sacrifice part of their interests for followers, meaning the leaders take the initiative to take risks and always choose to face difficulties and challenges together with followers or even stand in front of followers to meet all.

### ***Inspirational Motivation***

The inspiration motivational leaders can motivate and inspire their followers. According to Avolio (2011), these leaders are fluent in shared goals and a common understanding of what is proper and essential in simple ways. As a result, such leaders try to clearly explain the group's goals and how to achieve them via communication. Hence inspirational leaders awaken team spirit and boost enthusiasm and optimism among their followers by setting shared goals and visions for the team. In summary, inspirational motivation inspires leaders to think, meet other high-level needs, and motivate others to work.

### ***Intellectual Stimulation***

Intellectual leaders support their followers to think outside of the box, in which followers often are encouraged to ask questions and challenge ideas to find new solutions to old problems (Northouse, 2019; Wagude & Ndiritu, 2015). As a result, followers are encouraged to a level where they can question their beliefs, imaginations, and values and are challenged to solve problems independently. Therefore, intellectual stimulation refers to leaders breaking the rules to solve problems, encouraging followers to be bold and creative, and stimulating different thinking in organizations.

### ***Individual Consideration***

The considerable leader endeavors to comprehend personal worries and growth; therefore, individual team members are treated differently to help them reach their full potential by giving individual tasks to achieve individual development. They are encouraged and provided with opportunities and cultures created to help achieve the goal. Hence, leaders provide a supportive atmosphere to listen and meet individual needs to develop followers' potential (Avolio, 2011; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Northouse, 2019). As a result, such leaders attempt to realign individual desires with the group's mission.

### **Salesian Preventive System**

Don Bosco, an Italian Catholic priest, and the founder of the religious order under the Society of St. Francis de Sales, invented the Salesian preventive system. According to Gonsalves (2012), this educational concept is meant to encourage the holistic development of young people, particularly those from low-income households, and has been applied in 8,996 educational organizations in 131 countries, both formally and informally.

As a result, the Salesian preventive system's purpose of Don Bosco's education goal was to educate young people to be honest citizens and good Christians by focusing on human growth via various practical tactics (Salesians of Don Bosco, 2014). Hence, the Salesian preventive system involves entire support and commitment from instructors who are constantly there for the student (Gonsalves, 2011). The concept of the Salesian preventive system is built on the three pillars as follows:

### ***Reason***

The concept of reason serves to moderate generosity because it guides the techniques and deeds of loving childhood and religion in which love is insufficient. He further contended that while love is motivated by a desire for good, it is the only reason that can define what that good is. Furthermore, the reason in the mind of Don Bosco was considered the faculty and power of reasoning or the act and the fruit of reasoning, which is present in every act of reasoning, conceptualization, and judgment, according to Yoon (2020).

Hence, reason indicates common sense, prudence, understanding, naturalness, and moderation are some of the qualities of reason in the Salesian preventive system. Reason has the critical function of convincing the students to follow truth and good in accordance with their intellectual needs and situation. As a result, reasoning refers to a student who loves to be a lifelong learner by thinking critically, solving problems creatively, communicating, and collaborating proficiently based on evidence and reasons.

### ***Religion***

Christian ideals inspire the Salesian preventive system and focus on Christian morality and the greater good. Furthermore, the work of Don Bosco held the view that holiness is the sum of one's perfection. Freedom and love are the responses that allow people to grow in holiness and wholeness due to God's love for them. Therefore, education aims to shape young people into responsible, conscientious Christians who exercise their agency.

According to Vojtas (2022), Don Bosco connected holiness with wholeness in which individuals must respond to God's love in freedom and love in achieving holiness and wholeness, which becomes the purpose of education in inspiring students to be good Christians with personal liberty and accountability.

### ***Loving-Kindness***

Don Bosco's educational philosophy is based on the Italian concept of "amorevolezza," or kindness. This term describes subtle behaviors of kindness and consideration for others in the Salesian preventive system. In addition, kindness entails thoughtful gift-giving and dedication because after using the Salesian preventive system, teachers could communicate with their students in their native tongues.

As a result, the Salesian preventive system is geared toward both the educator's and the student's holistic growth and personal development (Biesmans, 2015).

## **Bandura's Social Learning Theory**

Bandura's (2004) social learning theory is the theoretical basis for behavior modeling in which observation and modeling are used to learn about human behavior. As a result, learning would only be possible if students people learned from their actions. He further contended that most human conduct is known through observing role models in which the model is the object of observation in observational learning, the observer is the subject of

observation, and modeling is the process of the model influencing the observer through the observer's observation activity (Bandura, 2004). Hence, human observational learning is an abstract and creative process rather than a mere replication of the model. The four steps of observational learning are as follows:

#### ***Attentional Process***

The method by which the observer concentrates his mental resources on the demonstration events is called the attention process. It determines what people choose to learn from a variety of fashion events and information. For example, transformational leadership's exceptional abilities and motivational behavior easily capture followers' attention.

#### ***Retentional Process***

Because the observation information gained during the attention stage is transient, it must be retained in memory via symbolic representation. The observational learning retention process is divided into three parts. The first step is to convert the model data into symbols. The second step represents the model information intellectually. Finally, after the model information has been decoded and transformed into symbols, it is often kept in memory using one of two methods: imaginal or verbal-conceptual representation. As a result, once the student has the model's attention, the following phrase demonstrates the behavior to be remembered (Devi et al., 2017).

#### ***Motor Reproductive Process***

During this process, the observer performs the cognitive representation of the model behavior, compares the feedback from the actual action to the suggestive idea, and then gradually changes the behavior based on the comparative information to match the behavior with the concept. As a result, this is a process of repeated matching and incremental adjustment until the behavior guided by cognitive representation is consistent with the idea of cognitive representation. However, long-term memory must be reinforced through rehearsal because it is not always accurate after coding and representation. Therefore, in improving student leadership characteristics, students can only be influenced by observing a model if they have no memory.

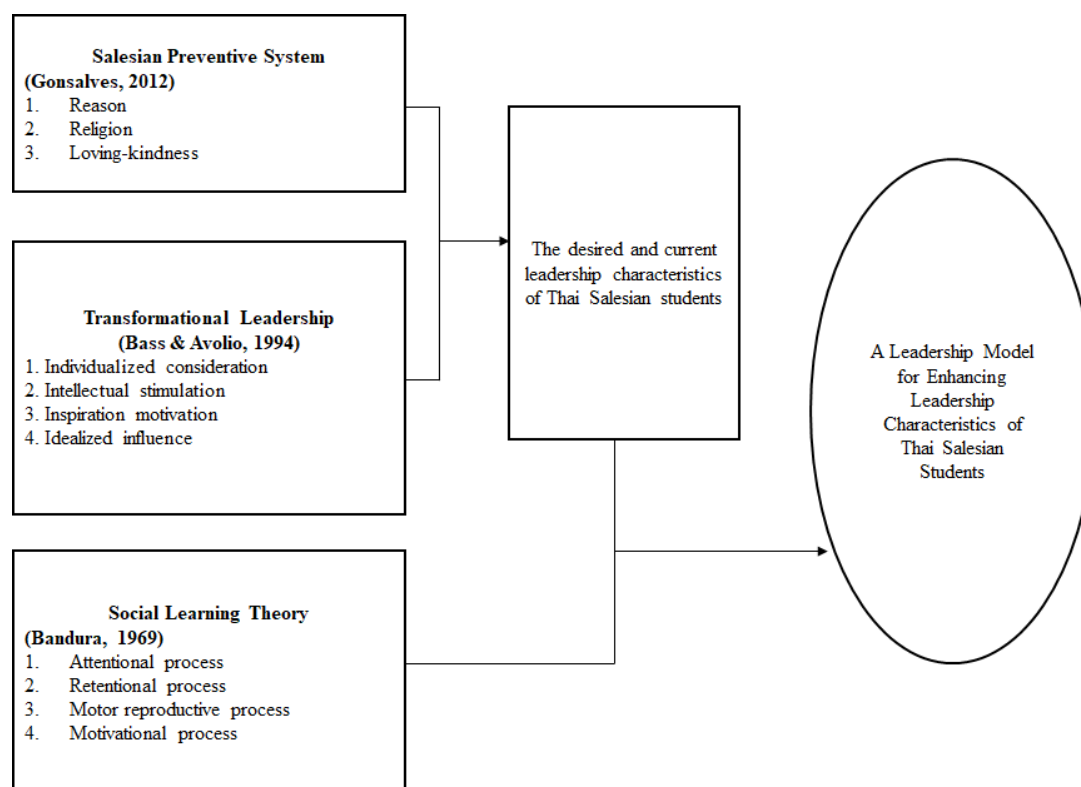
#### ***Motivational Process***

An observer may learn a model behavior through observation but may need to practice it. It is accomplished through the motivational process of observant learning. Only when positive behavioral cues do the observer swiftly transform the observed observational learning into action. This will become the incentive for the observer's conduct, especially when the observer's causation is evident; therefore, if the observer is interested in the model behavior and its results or believes they are valuable, the model behavior will be reproduced.

## Research Methodology

**Figure 1**

*Conceptual Framework of the Study*



This study proposes a new model to enhance the leadership characteristics of Thai Salesian students based on transformational leadership and the Salesian preventive system. Therefore, quantitative research is used to interpret numeric data, and qualitative research is used to analyze and detect the possible influences and connections between the variables and solve the research problems.

The literature sources were books, e-books, reports, research articles, and online publications. According to the variables, this study developed a questionnaire of leadership characteristics for Thai Salesian students. Thirty students from Salesian schools completed the reliability test of the questionnaire. The population was 3,093 students, and the sample size was 351 students, according to Krejcie and Morgan (1970). Furthermore, statistical analysis and advanced statistical methods were used in this study to analyze the data and obtain the research results. The  $PNI_{\text{modified}}$  formula was utilized to prioritize the leadership characteristics that need to be improved according to the mean value of  $PNI_{\text{modified}}$ .

To develop the leadership model, the researcher puts forward the leadership model through the model development process, which is divided into five steps. As the first and second steps, data collection and analysis have been completed in objectives one and two. The third step of the model development process is the purpose of objective three: to select the model components by breaking down other models or research required by the model and to adjust the model's parameters by analyzing the data. Hence, the data for the development model



were derived from objective two and the literature review; the data analysis method was keyword analysis. The literature review comes in two parts: the first part is literature related to transformational leadership theory, and the second part is the Salesian preventive system. The fourth step in the model development process is model validation, done in objective four. The fifth step in the model development process is model implementation; the researcher will conduct follow-up work if conditions permit.

## Results and Discussion

The main findings of this study are divided into four parts as follows.

### Research Objective One

To explore the leadership characteristics of Thai Salesian students in schools under the Salesian Society Foundation, this study identified seven leadership characteristics through a systematic literature review as follows: firstly, each mentioned keyword or phrase derived from the transformational and Salesian preventive system concept was recorded. Secondly, the keywords' meanings were analyzed, and words with similar implications were named a unified term. Thirdly, these words were selected and grouped into different categories according to the synthesized elements' meanings. Then, the results of the seven leadership characteristics included commitment, communication, inspiration, morality, teamwork, service mind, and vision. Table 1 summarizes the definition of the characteristics of the study.

**Table 1**

*Leadership Characteristics and its Definitions*

	Keyword	Sub-keyword	Description	Source
1	Commitment	- Planning - Feedback - Collaboration	A person who finds ways to improve things to succeed and achieve goals, introduces new ideas and develops them objectively, knows how to plan effectively and creatively, listens to opinions and criticism, and allows others to provide feedback and collaborate for the common purpose.	Avolio (2011), Northouse (2019), Braidó (1999)
2	Communication	- Reliable expression - Clear communication - Language adaption	A person who can communicate effectively, clearly, and with reliable expression, including linguistic, gesture, and language adaptations, can also perceive the changing world simultaneously.	Avolio (2011), Doowa et al. (2023), Braidó (1999), Gonsalves (2011)
3	Inspiration	-Empowerment - Acceptance -Understandable	A person who has an understanding of others and oneself and empower to develop behaviors that meet the requirements of acceptance, praise, and success, including being motivated to work with others	Avolio (2011), Doowa et al. (2023), Gonsalves (2012)

	<b>Keyword</b>	<b>Sub-keyword</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Source</b>
4	Morality	- Dignity - Ethics - Morality - Compassion	A person who demonstrates dignity, ethics, responsibility, and morality in life and their interactions with others, such as self-compassion and compassion for others, mission intolerance, and respect for their overall integrity.	Wu (2011), Doowa et al. (2023), Braido (1999)
5	Service Mind	- Supportive - Dedication - Sympathy	A person who dedicates oneself by giving time, energy, empathy, and sympathy to helping others, showing courage, and belonging is seen as a life mission of responsibility.	Gonsalves (2011), Doowa et al. (2023)
6	Teamwork	- Self-control - Accept difference - Respect	A person who attaches great importance to building good relationships. They can control their own emotions and can set work goals. They have a good ability to reach out to others. They understand and accept differences between individuals and treat others with respect.	Doowa et al. (2023), Gonsalves (2011)
7	Vision	- Challenge - Exchanging ideas - Reasonable	A person who sees the big picture as a leader and follower and defines destinations that link with their mission, values, and beliefs toward the desired goal; able to imagine the possibilities of what is probable to occur in the future and reconcile it with current realities. Those destinations must be clear, challenging, powerful, and feasible.	Avolio (2011), Doowa et al. (2023)

## Research Objective Two

To understand the desired and current leadership characteristics of Thai Salesian

**Table 2**

*Descriptive of Demographics*

<b>Demographics</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>School</b>	<b>(n=351)</b>	
Saint Dominic School	48	13.68
Huahin Vittayalai School	79	22.51
Saengthong Vittaya School	98	27.92
Don Bosco Udon School	52	14.81
Sarasit Phithayalai School	74	21.08
<b>Grade</b>	<b>(n=351)</b>	
Grade 10	119	33.91
Grade 11	117	33.33
Grade 12	115	32.76
<b>Gender</b>	<b>(n=351)</b>	

Demographics	Frequency	Percentage
Male	284	80.91
Female	67	19.09
<b>Years of attending the Salesian school</b>	<b>(n=351)</b>	
1-3 years	52	14.82
4-6 years	70	19.94
7-9 years	154	43.87
10-12 years	75	21.37

Table 2 illustrates the frequency and percentage of Grades 10 to 12 students' demographics in five schools under the Salesian Society Foundation of Thailand. As seen in Table 2, the respondents from Saengthong Vittaya School showed the highest percentage of 27.92, followed by the percentage of 22.51 from Huahin Vittayalai School, then the percentage of 21.08 in Sarasit Phithayalai School, and the percentage of 14.81 from Don Bosco Udon School, lastly the percentage of 13.68 from saint Dominic School respectively. In terms of grade, students from all five schools participated, 119 from Grade 10 (33.91 percent), Grade 11 with 117 (33.33 percent), and 115 from Grade 12 (32.76 percent) subsequently.

Regarding gender, there are significantly more males than males participating in the questionnaire, among which 284 males (80.19 percent) and 67 females (19.09 percent). Nonetheless, 154 students (43.87 percent) attended in seven to nine years; the Salesian school was higher than the other three groups, which are one to three years, four to six years, and 10 to 12 years, respectively, based on the data collected.

The second part of the questionnaire measures the leadership characteristics of Thai Salesian students, including 35 questions on seven leadership characteristics. The researcher analyzed this through Mean and Standard Deviation, as revealed in Table 3.

**Table 3**

*Summary of the Results from Desired and Current Leadership Characteristics of Thai Salesian Students (n= 351)*

Item Description	Desired			Current		
	$\bar{X}$	<i>S.D.</i>	Interpretation	$\bar{X}$	<i>SD</i>	Interpretation
1. Commitment	3.56	.577	High	2.87	.777	Moderate
2. Communication	3.54	.566	High	2.94	.764	Moderate
3. Inspiration	3.52	.572	High	2.87	.761	Moderate
4. Morality	3.58	.575	High	3.11	.787	Moderate
5. Teamwork	3.58	.575	High	2.80	.845	Moderate
6. Service mind	3.58	.583	High	2.95	.808	Moderate
7. Vision	3.53	.558	High	2.88	.743	Moderate
Overall	3.56	.572	High	2.92	.776	Moderate

Note: Norman (2010)

Table 3 shows the highest mean scores in terms of desired leadership characteristics of Thai Salesian students at  $\bar{X}$ = 3.58 for Morality, Teamwork, and Service mind with the standard deviation (*S.D.*) of .575, .575, and .583, respectively, while revealing the lowest mean Score in Inspiration with the mean scores of  $\bar{X}$  = 3.52 with the standard deviation (*S.D.*) of .572. Therefore, the mean score of desired leadership characteristics is  $\bar{X}$ = 3.56, and the standard

deviation (*S.D.*) of .572, which falls within the range of a high level. Furthermore, Inspiration is the least desired leadership characteristic, with a mean score ( $\bar{X}$ ) of 3.52 with a standard deviation (*S.D.*) of .572.

Regarding the current leadership characteristics, Table 18 further reveals that Morality has the highest mean score ( $\bar{X}$ ) at 3.11 with a standard deviation (*S.D.*) of .787. At the same time, Teamwork obtains the lowest mean score ( $\bar{X}$ ) of 2.80 with a standard deviation (*S.D.*) of .845. Notably, both Morality and Teamwork fell within the range of moderate regardless of the level of mean scores.

In addition, Teamwork is the only variable that obtains the highest mean scores ( $\bar{X}$ ) at 3.58, (*S.D.* = .575), in the desired level with a high range, yet obtains the lowest level at the current level for leadership characteristics with the mean scores ( $\bar{X}$ ) of 2.80, (*S.D.* = .845) in a moderate range. Lastly, Morality shows to be one variable with the highest mean scores ( $\bar{X}$ ) at the desired level of 3.58 (*S.D.* = .575) in the high range. On the other hand, it discloses the highest mean score ( $\bar{X}$ ) of 3.11, (*S.D.* = .787) in the moderate range.

In order to find out the leadership characteristics that need to be prioritized, the results are computed through the  $PNI_{modified}$  formula, as shown in Table 4.

**Table 4**

*The Priority Needs Index ( $PNI_{modified}$ ) of Desired and Current Leadership Characteristics of Thai Salesian Students (n= 351)*

Item Description	Mean score ( $\bar{X}$ )		$PNI_{modified}$ (I-D)/D	Ranking
	Desired (I)	Current (D)		
Teamwork	3.58	2.80	.279	1
Commitment	3.56	2.87	.245	2
Inspiration	3.52	2.87	.228	3
Vision	3.53	2.88	.226	4
Service mind	3.58	2.95	.214	5
Communication	3.54	2.94	.210	6
Morality	3.58	3.11	.156	7
Overall	3.56	2.92	.223	

Note: Wongwanich and Wiratchai (2005).

Table 4 revealed the comparison table between the desired and current level of leadership characteristics to identify the needs improvement gap. It further ranks the priority that needs improvement to enhance leadership characteristics as follows: 1) teamwork, 2) commitment, 3) inspiration, 4) vision, 5) service mind, 6) communication, and 7) morality. In addition, Table 4 shows the mean of  $PNI_{modified}$  value at .223 of Thai Salesian students' leadership characteristics. According to the ranking, teamwork has a  $PNI_{modified}$  value of .279, commitment has a  $PNI_{modified}$  value of .245, inspiration has a  $PNI_{modified}$  value of .228, and vision has a  $PNI_{modified}$  value of .226. These four leadership characteristics have an average higher than the mean of  $PNI_{modified}$  value overall, indicating a difference between the desired level and current level of these Thai Salesian students in terms of leadership characteristics. The enhancement of these leadership characteristics should be prioritized. Therefore, the four leadership characteristics are weaknesses and needs for improvement.

In addition, morality has the PNI<sub>modified</sub> value of .156, communication has the PNI<sub>modified</sub> value of .210, and service mind has the PNI<sub>modified</sub> value of .214. These three student leadership characteristics are average lower than the mean of the PNI<sub>modified</sub> value overall, indicating that these three leadership characteristics are strengths that can maintain good practice.

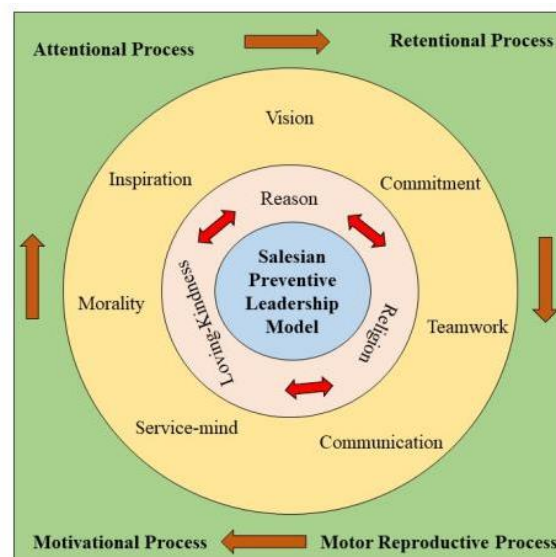
### Research Objective Three

Research objective two shows that to bridge these weaknesses and further develop the four leadership characteristics, the researcher designed and developed a leadership model. Therefore, in the model development process, the researcher interviewed 15 experts who have worked in educational institutions with semi-structured interview, which took around 30 to 60 minutes and was divided into four main parts with sub-questions.

The first part of the interview focused on the expert's opinions regarding leadership characteristics. The second part of the interview questions was to determine how the experts could help enhance Thai Salesian students reasonably as an educator in the educational setting. The third part involved interviewing the experts to evaluate if the seven leadership characteristics align with the Salesian concept. The last part was to ask the experts to provide some suggestions regarding activities to enhance the leadership characteristics of Thai Salesian students. With the data collected from the interview questions, the researcher could link with Research Objective 1 and 2 of developing the model. As a result, the researcher proposed a draft model of leadership characteristics of Thai Salesian students, as shown in Figure 1.

**Figure 2**

*Draft of the Model for Enhancing Leadership Characteristics of Thai Salesian Students*



### Research Objective Four

After the model draft was proposed, the model development process was evaluated by 15 experts to complete its verification. The 15 experts are educators who have a function and are used to tasks in the Basic Education and Catholic context. Five experts held doctoral

degrees, nine experts with master's degrees with 13 – 40 years, and one with a bachelor's degree of 40 years of professional experience in education in the Salesian Society Foundation of Thailand.

Expert validation is carried out from four aspects: model context, data source, model process, and model concept diagram. According to the feedback from the experts, the revision opinions are sorted.

### ***Context Evaluation***

This step involves the leadership characteristics development of Thai Salesian students under the Salesian Society Foundation of Thailand.

#### **1. For Leadership Characteristics of Thai Salesian Students**

a. Students have insufficient opportunities for leadership and lack relevant activities. Therefore, consideration needs to be given to student leadership characteristics to participate in leadership development activities.

b. Guidance of teachers has a significant impact on the development of student leadership characteristics development, while extracurricular practice activity is an essential means.

c. Thai Salesian students must understand and recognize the importance of leadership characteristics as a good citizen. Hence, the leadership characteristics of Thai Salesian students need to be enhanced.

### ***Data Evaluation***

This step involves the data sources of questionnaires and interviews supporting the development of the model, which is summarized as follows.

#### **1. For the data in quantitative research**

a. Thai Salesian student is representative but not universal.

#### **2. For the data in qualitative research**

b. The sources of the data are reasonable.

### ***Process Evaluation***

This step involves evaluating the model's components; the researcher sends the draft model, explanation, and model validation form to 15 experts by hand or online, depending on the preferable of each expert. All of the 15 experts have functioned or used to function in Basic Education schools for more than ten years. 13 experts have been working in institutions of the Salesian Society Foundation of Thailand for 13-40 years; one of them has been functioning in the Department of Assessment and Evaluation for 25 years, and the rest 12 experts have functioned as school director, school executive teams. . The comments and suggestions are summarized as presented in Table 5.

**Table 5**

*Leadership Characteristics Model Approval (n= 15)*

<b>Experts</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Expert 1	The color and design of the model need to be adjusted; the overall elements are acceptable. Rename the activities' titles.
Expert 2	No comments
Expert 3	Reason, Religion, and Loving-Kindness should be bolded in the model. Add the references or links to materials used in the activities.

Experts	Comments
Expert 4	If possible, add materials from news or trends in the activities, asides from the Catholic context; not all students are Catholic.
Expert 5	Well-planning and concept for the activities
Expert 6	Suitable activities for the Salesian community
Expert 7	No comments
Expert 8	Activities are suitable for Basic Education; no further comments.
Expert 9	No comments
Expert 10	No comments
Expert 11	Modified all the leadership characteristics to nouns or adjectives
Expert 12	No comments
Expert 13	Valuable activities for our Salesian schools
Expert 14	The proposed model and activities are reasonable. All brief descriptions of attention process, retentional process, motor reproductive process, and motivational process in the model. It follows SMART concepts of measurement, which is acceptable.
Expert 15	No comments

### Model Evaluation

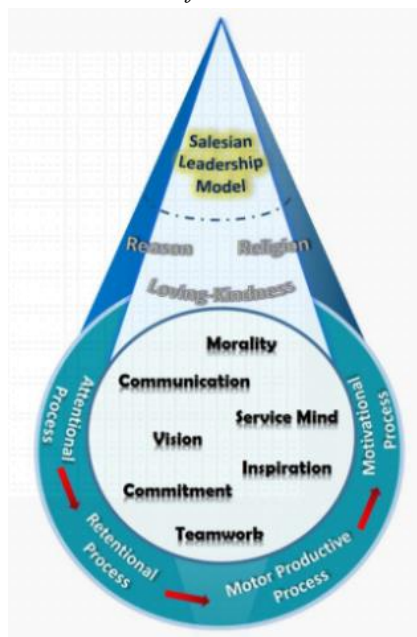
This involves the overall Evaluation of the Model concept diagram and content, summarized as follows.

1. For the Model diagram.
  - a. The diagram of the circle is intuitive.
2. For the Logical of the Model.

a. The four processes should provide in student leadership development in Thai Salesian students, so it is suggested to place the four processes on the outer layer, followed by the leadership characteristics, then the three concepts of the Salesian preventive system. Furthermore, it should be presentable. Hence, the researcher has adjusted to these suggestions, then the final model of leadership characteristics of Thai Salesian students is shown in Figure 2.

**Figure 3**

*Final Model for Enhancing Leadership Characteristics of Thai Salesian Students*



## Conclusion and Recommendations

According to the literature review, the researcher found seven leadership characteristics for the study. The leadership characteristics included commitment, communication, inspiration, morality, teamwork, service mind, and vision. After distributing the questionnaire to the five Basic Education schools under the Salesian Society Foundation of Thailand, each leadership characteristic was ranked according to the result of the priority index among the seven leadership characteristics. Then, the analysis identified the new order results among Thai Salesian students as follows: morality (PNI<sub>modified</sub> of .156), communication (PNI<sub>modified</sub> of .210), service mind (PNI<sub>modified</sub> of .214), inspiration (PNI<sub>modified</sub> of .228), vision (PNI<sub>modified</sub> of .226), commitment (PNI<sub>modified</sub> of .245), and teamwork (PNI<sub>modified</sub> of .279) respectively. The leadership characteristics ranked first indicated the highest strength, which matched the results regarding morality among Thai Salesian students under the Salesian Society Foundation of Thailand. The data further suggested that assertiveness and solidarity fall within high strength, while the other four leadership characteristics belong to the weaknesses.

Furthermore, according to the research results, when all seven leadership characteristics are considered, the desired leadership characteristics of Thai Salesian students are at a high level, while all of the current leadership characteristics are at a moderate level. Notably, only the leadership characteristics in terms of morality were obtained to have the highest mean scores at 3.58 with a standard deviation (*S.D.*) of .575 for the desired level and the highest mean scores at 3.11 with a standard deviation (*S.D.*) of .787 for the current level. Contradictory teamwork was revealed to have the highest mean score at 3.58 (*S.D.* = .575), in the desired level with a high range, yet obtains the lowest level at the current level for leadership characteristics with the mean scores of 2.80 (*S.D.* = .845) in a moderate range. Relatively, teamwork is the weakest among the seven leadership characteristics that need to be developed with the results of PNI<sub>modified</sub> at .214.

Based on the findings of the four research objectives, the leadership model for enhancing the leadership characteristics of Thai Salesian students is presented. By paying attention, all four activities involve observing the good leadership characteristics of others, especially Don Bosco, Saint Dominic Savio, and Margarita, who are well-known in the Salesian Society Foundation of Thailand. Then, the goal of the second process is retention; the activities at this level emphasize recalling the good characteristics that students have observed and consider to be a role model. After the retentional process, the motor productive process occurs for duplicating the action of the role model being observed. Lastly, students work on motivating a model in the motivational process. Relatively, these activities are designed for students to observe well-known persons in the context of the Salesian Society Foundation as a way for students to understand the culture of schools.

## Discussion

The findings showed that the most important leadership characteristics that should be brought to enhance students, according to the findings, are morality, communication, and service mind, respectively. It is seen that the concepts of morality, communication, and service minds are also among the leadership characteristics that can be seen in students in different settings in the literature (Doowa et al., 2023; Gonsalves, 2012; Sherif, 2019; Yu & Mhunpiew, 2022).



Upon the finding the result, morality is the highest strength of Thai Salesian students under the Salesian Society of Thailand. To provide students with leadership characteristics of morality is considered significant in different studies, like the findings in the present study (Braido, 1999; Wu, 2011). This can be said that Thai Salesian leader who obtains moral leadership characteristics is a leader in both towards themselves and towards the whole. They consistently present characteristics of dignity, patience, integrity, and compassion. This is supported by the current study, wherein the respondents from the five schools mostly favored *I work with diligent and patience*. Hence, this can be implied that the Thai Salesian students hold morality as their strongest strength. The possible reason can be because they have chances to observe a role model surround them who show to have morality such as teachers or school administrators since the Salesian preventive system emphasizes on being good Christian and honest citizen based on reason, religion, and loving-kindness.

Another strength of Thai Salesian student in terms of leadership characteristics is communication. To be able to communicate clearly and effectively with reliable expression, try to carefully listen and understand others, and be able to take considerations together are among the important leadership characteristics. Hence, the Thai Salesian leader is a person who can express their thoughts clearly, deliver communication in various ways, and adapt language usage appropriately. These are the characteristics that require a leader and must be enhanced in students. Doowa et al. (2023) mentioned that education is lifelong learning; students officially start to learn from kindergarten until university level. Therefore, communication is one of the critical leadership characteristics to develop. Furthermore, stated that effective communication is strongly linked to success. As a result, if the students lack effective communication, it can affect the quality of their performances.

Based on the administered questionnaire, the results reveal that service mind is among strong leadership characteristics that should be brought to Thai Salesian students. The Thai Salesian leader obtains leadership characteristics of service mind understands the importance of treating people with kindness and respect, all aspects of helping communities. Furthermore, a service mind is a necessary and valuable characteristic at all levels, especially since it can be developed to produce a strong result for a good impact in a broad range.

Secondly, the study found four series of activities that can enhance the leadership characteristics of Thai Salesian students in terms of teamwork, commitment, inspiration, and vision. The activity of student leadership characteristics is a vital learning component within educational experiences. Therefore, this study considers student leadership characteristics as factors that positively impact student development; the results show the desired and the current student leadership characteristics and identify the student leadership characteristics that need to be prioritized. In the model, the study tried to enhance the student leadership characteristics through extra activities by following the four processes of the social learning model. Students learn behaviors by modeling influential people, such as parents, teachers, friends, and neighbors. Furthermore, the students in Salesian schools could behave from the experiences of teachers and friends. This interaction grounded could result in their characteristics, either negative or positive.

Additionally, the Salesian preventive system must be a foundation to develop the student leadership characteristics of Thai Salesian students. In order to enhance the leadership characteristics of Thai Salesian students, all the Salesian schools follow the three cores of the Salesian preventive system: reason, religion, and loving-kindness (Yoon, 2020). Therefore, these values were exerted through the activities in this study. According to the research findings, the literature review also confirms the four leadership activities. Moreover, after collecting the

model approval form, the study also confirmed that activities were representative of the Salesian context in Thailand.

### Recommendations

This study provides a new leadership model for enhancing leadership characteristics of Thai Salesian students under the Salesian Society Foundation of Thailand. Future research might interest the same study by surveying different groups such as non-Catholic schools to enlarge the scope of the study and offer more data for elaborating common initiatives for leadership characteristics development.

For more credibility and further value on the study, future research could assess teachers' teaching methods in enhancing student leadership characteristics, by adding questions pertaining to the Salesian concept or more particular terms due to education situation nowadays was quite challenging and complicated than before.

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