

# A Needs Assessment of Self-development According to Teacher Professional Standards for Private School Teachers in Nakhon Pathom

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**Abstract:** The objectives of this research were 1) to assess and rank the priorities of needs for self-development according to Teacher Professional Standards of private school teachers in Nakhon Pathom Province; 2) to compare sample teachers' needs for self-development based on status factors. The sample, chosen through two-stage random sampling, was 412 teachers at a private school in Nakhon Pathom. The research tools were questionnaire. Data were analyzed by Mean, Standard Deviation and  $PNI_{Modified}$ . Major finding was: 1) The average overall ( $PNI_{Modified}$ ) of need for self-development according to Teacher Professional Standards of the sample teachers from a private school in Nakhon Pathom was 0.38. 2) Male teachers had a slightly higher perceived need for self-development according to Teacher Professional Standards than did female teachers. Single teachers had the highest perceived need for self-development according to Teacher Professional Standards. Teachers in most of the age groups had similar perceived need for self-development according to Teacher Professional Standards. Teachers with the highest level of prior education (bachelor's degree or master's degree) had a higher perceived need for self-development according to Teacher Professional Standards. Teachers with 6-10 years of teaching experience had the highest perceived need for self-development according to Teacher Professional Standards. Teachers with less than 5 years teaching experience, teachers with 11-15 years teaching experience and teachers with 16-20 years teaching experience.

**Keywords:** Teacher professional standards, Self-development, Private school

## Introduction

Professional self-development for teachers means activities to enhance skills, knowledge, expertise and other desired characteristics of good teachers (OECD, 2009). In Thailand, at present there are 3 school systems: formal education (within the system), extracurricular education (outside the system) and non-formal education (by choice). Formal education is normally provided through schools or educational institutions that are within the jurisdiction of the government, but it can also be provided by private-sector schools. The 2007 Private Schools Act defines private schools as “a private-sector place of study that provides education, either formal education or extra-curricular education, that is not a private-sector institution of higher education under the law on private-sector institutions of higher education.” So, a private school is an alternative place of study at the basic education or primary/secondary level.

The most important mechanism to drive educational quality in a private school is the teacher (OECD, 2009). One study by OECD (2009) found that, on average, teachers in government schools tend to spend more time on professional self-development than teachers in private-sector schools (but the difference was not statistically significant). It is interesting to look for approaches to let teachers in private schools regularly and continuously take advantage of opportunities for professional self-development. Self-development is an important factor for the future growth of the teaching professional (Ivaniuk et al., 2020).

Tiller (2006, cited in Postholm, 2012) wrote about a new wave in teacher learning and teachers' ability to learn, or their personal capacity to use their thinking process,

suggesting that independent self-learning should occur every day when a teacher is teaching. Each day they can gain experiences related to the thinking and learning process, and that will lead to the development of new knowledge and deeper understanding, which will build up their personal work performance capacity. Tiller emphasized that teachers should not be affixed to their existing experiences, but should add to their accumulated wisdom by paying attention to things in the present situation and at the same time keep making plans for action in the future. In a similar vein, Malm (2009) wrote that the increased diversity and complexity in post-modern era work places poses important challenges to teacher training and skill development. The role of today's teachers is very intense, and thus, their training should include not just objectives involving knowledge acquisition but also objectives to master facets of social understanding and the emotional aspects of human development. This is reflected in the official fourth edition (2019) of the Teachers Council of Thailand's Teacher Professional Standards, which state that teachers must have knowledge standards, professional experience standards and performance standards.

As members of the teaching profession, teachers at private schools must also participate in self-development as they strive to uphold all the standards set by the Teachers Council of Thailand. When determining the best approaches to self-development or capacity building, a good starting point is to ask the private school teachers themselves to evaluate the current status of their professional standards and identify which areas need improvement. One way to get this information is to perform needs assessment. Needs assessment is always the first step of the process of designing a teaching program or course of study that can help workers in any field improve their work performance (Rossett, 1987). Proper needs assessment should be a systematic planning process that can set a framework for decision-making or determine the exact work objectives so that development proceeds in the best possible manner. Needs assessment involves gathering information about the present situation of an organization or an individual and analysing the gap between what is and what should be. That gap represents the needs for improvement or what is lacking to make the organization or the individual more satisfactory. The next step in needs assessment is priority setting, or looking at all the needs for improvement that were identified and then ranking them in order of importance. This will help those in charge determine the specific objectives and decide on how best to begin training or capacity building or other development projects.

Wongwanich(2005) defined self-development as a self-driven desire of an individual to develop their knowledge and abilities to a higher level to match the needs of their work unit or to improve their work results. The individual's need is the gap between what is and what should be. Professional self-development for teachers means activities to enhance skills, knowledge, expertise and other desired characteristics of good teachers (OECD, 2009). A study by OECD (2009) found that, on average, teachers in government schools tend to spend more time on professional self-development than teachers in private-sector schools (but the difference was not statistically significant). It is interesting to look for approaches to let teachers in private schools regularly and continuously take advantage of opportunities for professional self-development. When teachers participate in professional self-development or skill enhancement activities, it can be explained by motivation theories, which are about human behavior that is sparked by a personal need or desire to exhibit a certain behavior. A teacher may be motivated to model an expected behavior or desired form of work performance. Motivation theory can be applied to helps us identify the causal factors that best support professional self-development efforts by teachers.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1970) is based on the idea that every human being has needs that are prioritized or ranked in terms of relative importance. These intrinsic needs provide the motivation or incentive for people to take action to satisfy the different needs at each level in the hierarchy. If you look at it from the point of view of a teacher, the incentives of wage and salary are basic motivation to perform their work duties well and develop themselves so they can earn their salary. When a person has satisfied one level of need, then new needs arise at a higher level. Once one level is satisfied, it is no longer an incentive to spur further action. If you look at it under Alderfer's concepts, you could say teacher have a need for self-development for their continued existence and survival at the school where they work, and they have a need for relatedness with their co-workers, or sense of belonging at the workplace. As for growth, they have a need to feel respected, they want to advance in their careers and they want a feeling of success that comes from using their knowledge and skills. Similarly, if you consider Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1959), or the Motivator-Hygiene Theory, you can see that at the work place a teacher who seeks job satisfaction will be motivated by environmental factors that stimulate a desire to develop oneself and improve job performance to reach goals. At the same time, a teacher will try to avoid certain undesirable circumstances at the work place that would lead to dissatisfaction.

As for research about teacher self-development, OECD (2020) reported that continuous learning related to their work is very important for teachers so that they can expand the body of knowledge and gain deeper understanding. It is also important for teachers to continue to do research and to acquire new teaching tools and practice using them to help meet the needs of their students, which change over time. Serin (2017) noted that teacher development cannot take place by itself, but requires assistance from others in the form of knowledge and experience in both teaching and learning. Herman (2019) did some research focused on teacher self-development in the development of the teaching profession, and concluded self-development for teachers is a concept that is still necessary. The educational institution or place of work is the first and primary place for self-development to occur. Teachers can participate in self-development by taking courses, which is normally their preferred method of choice, or they can alternatively develop themselves by reading books, textbooks, academic articles and Internet resources, and sometimes professional development workshops at the school where they teach or elsewhere. The data in the article showed that more than half of the teachers surveyed preferred self-development as a group activity, followed by through reading books or through the internet. This is consistent with the work of Doghonadze (2016), who studied ways to reform or revolutionize teachers to raise the quality of education and concluded that many things are needed to achieve efficiency in teach self-development, including practice organized by the employer, the work unit, or a teacher organization, and self-driven development efforts by the teachers themselves.

## **Research methodology**

This research was an assessment of the needs/demand for self-development of private school teachers in Nakhon Pathom Province, by taking a survey about sample teachers' perceptions of the difference between the current situation (what is) and their expectations (what should be) about quality enhancement according to Teacher Professional Standards in the fields of knowledge standards, professional experience standards and performance standards.

The study population was teachers working at private schools in Nakhon Pathom Province, Thailand, in the 2021 academic year. The sample population size was determined by the Krejcie & Morgan (1970) formula at confidence level 95% or deviation level 5%. Two-stage random sampling was used to find the samples. In the first stage (schools) a private school was chosen by simple random sampling, and in the second stage (teachers), 412 teachers were chosen by simple random sampling. The data collection tools consisted of a questionnaire. The parts of the questionnaire that were to assess needs/demand for self-development and to classify questionnaire respondents by factors that may affect self-development of teachers at a private school in Nakhon Pathom were in the form of a 5-level rating scale and in single-response format. There were 45 questions to evaluate the current situation, or what is, in terms of teachers' perceptions of their present standards of knowledge, professional experience, and performance. Content validity testing showed that the content validity scores were between 0.67- 1.00, which passed the criteria set by the researcher, and the reliability scores of the questionnaire questions were 0.98. Needs assessment entails an analysis of the present situation, or what is, compared to the desired status, or what should be. In this case, the analysis was about the professional self-development of teachers in a private school in Nakhon Pathom based on the Teacher Professional Standards outlined by the Teachers Council of Thailand. We ranked the differences in mean scores of what is and what should be using the Modified Priority Index ( $PNI_{Modified}$ ).

## Research results

### Part 1 Results of needs assessment and priority ranking of the needs for self-development according to Teacher Professional Standards of private school teachers in Nakhon Pathom

Overall, for the current status, or “what is,” the sample teachers gave the opinion that they had a high need for self-development according to Teacher Professional Standards. The mean score overall was 3.63 and standard deviation was 0.61. Broken down into the three areas of standards, they had the highest need for performance standard development (mean score 3.67) followed by knowledge standard development and professional experience standard development (mean scores 3.63 and 3.26, respectively).

Considering the modified priority needs index ( $PNI_{Modified}$ ) scores for self-development according to Teacher Professional Standards, the overall mean value was 0.38. Broken down into the three areas of standards, the highest ( $PNI_{Modified}$ ) score was 0.53 for professional experience standards, followed by 0.38 and 0.36 for knowledge standards and performance standards, respectively (Table 1).

Table 1 Basic statistics and modified priority need index for self-development according to Teacher Professional Standards of private school teachers in Nakhon Pathom

Item	Area assessed	Results			$PNI_M$	Rank
		M	SD	indication		
1	Knowledge standards	3.63	0.63	high	0.38	2
2	Professional experience standards	3.26	1.17	medium	0.53	1
3	Performance standards	3.67	0.63	high	0.36	3
	Total	3.63	0.61	high	0.38	

Note:  $PNI_M$  means “modified priority needs index” using the  $PNI_{Modified}$  formula

## Part 2 Comparison of modified priority needs index values of teachers' perceived needs for self-development according to Teacher Professional Standards divided by status

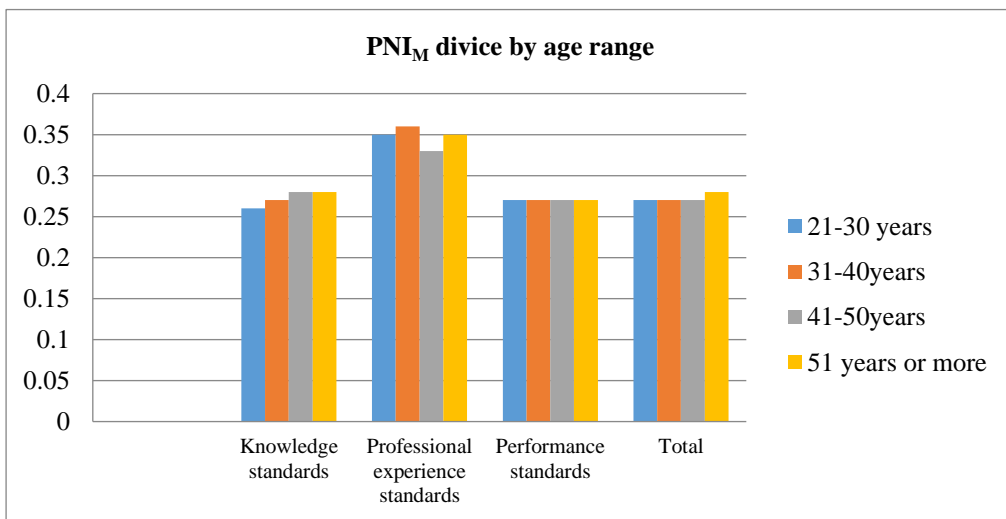
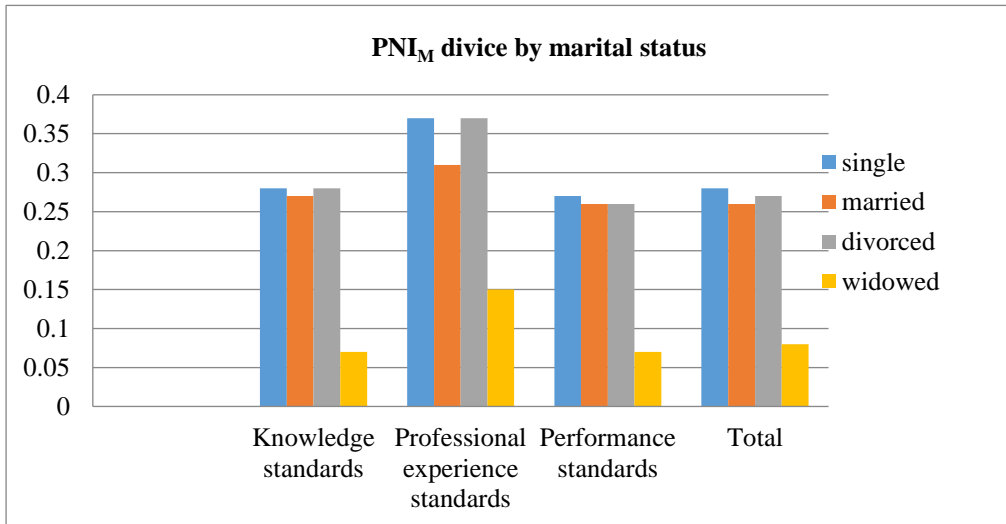
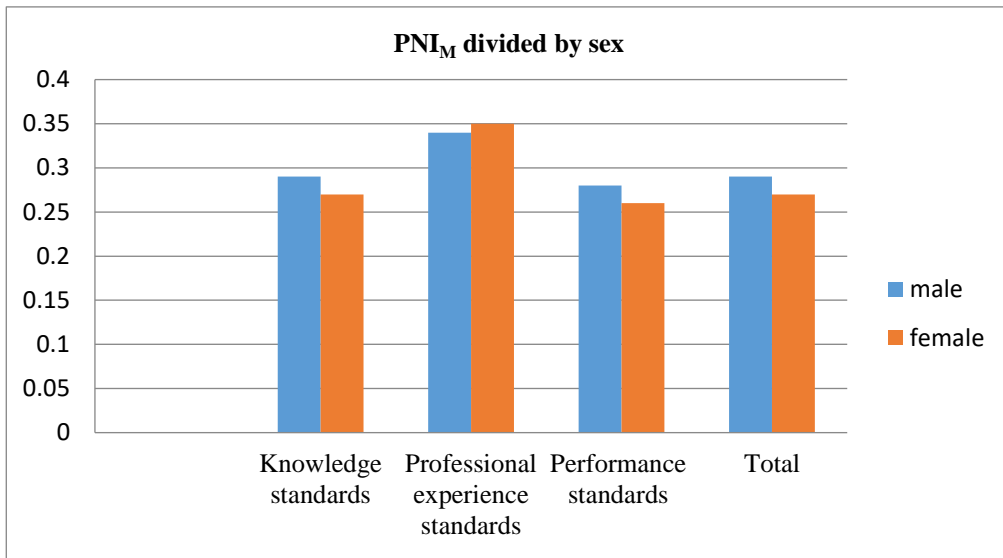
Male teachers had a slightly higher perceived need for self-development according to Teacher Professional Standards than did female teachers (0.29 for males versus 0.27 for females). Single teachers had the highest perceived need for self-development according to Teacher Professional Standards at 0.28, compared to divorced, married and widowed teachers (0.27, 0.26 and 0.08, respectively). Teachers in most of the age groups had similar perceived need for self-development according to Teacher Professional Standards at 0.27, with the exception of the 51 and over age group, which had a slightly higher perceived need (0.28). Teachers with the highest level of prior education (bachelor's degree or master's degree) had a higher perceived need for self-development according to Teacher Professional Standards (0.27) compared to teachers whose educational level was lower than bachelor's degree (0.25). Teachers with 6-10 years of teaching experience had the highest perceived need for self-development according to Teacher Professional Standards at 0.29, followed by teachers with 21 years or over of teaching experience (0.28), and teachers with less than 5 years teaching experience, teachers with 11-15 years teaching experience and teachers with 16-20 years teaching experience (0.27 for all three experience brackets). As for work position, teachers who were heads of their subject areas had slightly higher perceived need for self-development according to Teacher Professional Standards than ordinary teachers (0.28 versus 0.27). See details in Table 2 and Figure 1.

Table 2  $PNI_{Modified}$  values of perceived need for self-development according to Teacher Professional Standards of private school teachers in Nakhon Pathom divided by sex, marital status, age range, highest level of education, years of work experience and work position

Item	$PNI_{Modified}$			
	$PNI_M$ male	$PNI_M$ female		
Sex				
Knowledge standards	0.29	0.27		
Professional experience standards	0.34	0.35		
Performance standards	0.28	0.26		
Total	0.29	0.27		
Marital status	$PNI_M$ single	$PNI_M$ married	$PNI_M$ divorced	$PNI_M$ widowed
Knowledge standards	0.28	0.27	0.28	0.07
Professional experience standards	0.37	0.31	0.37	0.15
Performance standards	0.27	0.26	0.26	0.07
Total	0.28	0.26	0.27	0.08
Age range	$PNI_M$ 21-30 years	$PNI_M$ 31-40years	$PNI_M$ 41-50years	$PNI_M$ 51 years or more
Knowledge standards	0.26	0.27	0.28	0.28
Professional experience standards	0.35	0.36	0.33	0.35
Performance standards	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27
Total	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.28

Table 2 Continue

Item	PNI <sub>Modified</sub>				
	PNI <sub>M</sub> lower than bachelor's degree	PNI <sub>M</sub> bachelor's degree	PNI <sub>M</sub> master's degree		
Highest level of education					
Knowledge standards	0.24	0.28	0.28		
Professional experience standards	0.20	0.34	0.34		
Performance standards	0.28	0.27	0.27		
Total	0.25	0.27	0.27		
Work experience	PNI <sub>M</sub> <5 years	PNI <sub>M</sub> 6 – 10 years	PNI <sub>M</sub> 11 – 15years	PNI <sub>M</sub> 16 –20 years	PNI <sub>M</sub> 21 years or more
Knowledge standards	0.27	0.28	0.27	0.27	0.28
Professional experience standards	0.36	0.38	0.34	0.32	0.35
Performance standards	0.26	0.29	0.27	0.26	0.26
Total	0.27	0.29	0.27	0.27	0.28
Work position	PNI <sub>M</sub> teacher	PNI <sub>M</sub> group head			
Knowledge standards	0.27	0.28			
Professional experience standards	0.35	0.35			
Performance standards	0.27	0.28			
Total	0.27	0.28			
Highest level of education	PNI <sub>M</sub> lower than bachelor's degree	PNI <sub>M</sub> bachelor's degree	PNI <sub>M</sub> master's degree		
Knowledge standards	0.24	0.28	0.28		
Professional experience standards	0.20	0.34	0.34		
Performance standards	0.28	0.27	0.27		
Total	0.25	0.27	0.27		
Work experience	PNI <sub>M</sub> <5 years	PNI <sub>M</sub> 6 – 10 years	PNI <sub>M</sub> 11 – 15years	PNI <sub>M</sub> 16 –20 years	PNI <sub>M</sub> 21 years or more
Knowledge standards	0.27	0.28	0.27	0.27	0.28
Professional experience standards	0.36	0.38	0.34	0.32	0.35
Performance standards	0.26	0.29	0.27	0.26	0.26
Total	0.27	0.29	0.27	0.27	0.28
Work position	PNI <sub>M</sub> teacher	PNI <sub>M</sub> group head			
Knowledge standards	0.27	0.28			
Professional experience standards	0.35	0.35			
Performance standards	0.27	0.28			
Total	0.27	0.28			



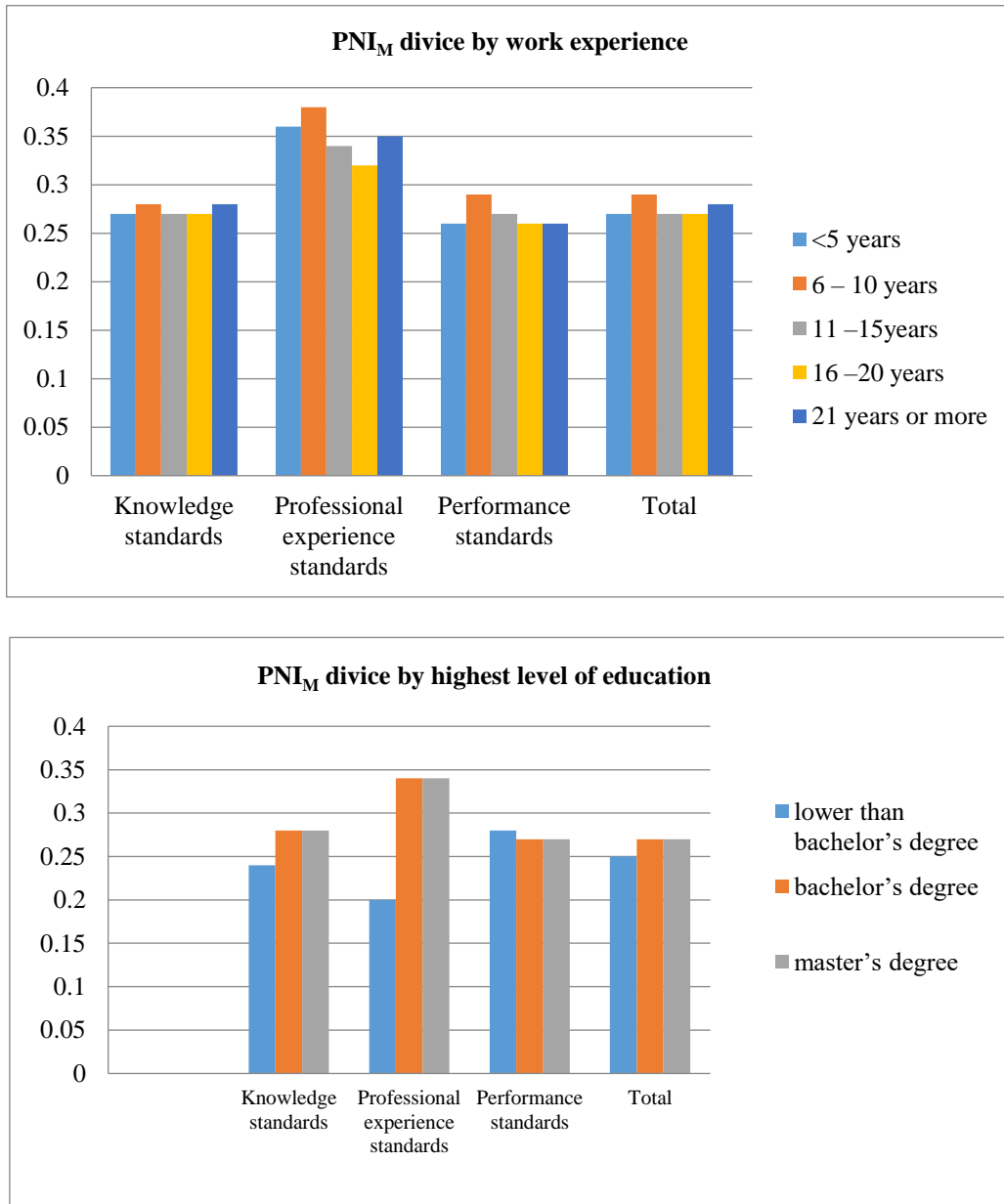


Figure 1. PNI<sub>Modified</sub> values of perceived need for self-development according to Teacher Professional Standards of private school teachers in Nakhon Pathom divided by sex, marital status, age range, highest level of education, years of work experience and work position

## Discussion

1. The finding that private school teachers in Nakhon Pathom had the highest modified priority needs index ( PNI<sub>Modified</sub>) score for self-development under Teacher Professional Standards in the area of professional experience standards compared to knowledge standards and performance standards might be because the sample teachers in this study, like in most private schools, comprised both people who had graduated with a degree in the field of teaching or education and had acquired their certificates after passing



teacher training and accumulating classroom hours during their education, and also some people who had graduated from other fields and had gotten a teaching job without previously logging hours of practice teaching. This second group might be studying more to upgrade their credentials while they work, and they definitely are in need of more practice teaching and professional experience. It is not surprising that they gave higher priority to that area of standards. This finding is consistent with the work of Faikhumtda & Rodraengkha (2005), who wrote that professional experience or practice teaching is at the very heart of teacher training because it prepares a student teacher to be a good teacher in the future by letting them really learn how to manage a classroom. In addition, Oschmann, Ophoff & Thiel (2021) suggested that practical work experience is so important for teacher training that all university students in education programs should build up their capacities through evidence-based practice first while they're still in university before getting actual classroom practice.

2. The reason that the (PNI<sub>Modified</sub>) score for work performance standards was lower than those for professional experience standards and knowledge standards might be because teachers have already been thoroughly indoctrinated throughout their training about the importance of teachers' duties, the spirit of teaching, morals and ethics of good teacher conduct, educational management and how to build good relationships with parents and community members, so they are well versed with what is expected and they can take it for granted that all of these work performance standards are essential and cannot be neglected. Similarly, Gilman (2005) wrote that the ethical code of the teaching profession is an important guideline for actions that can help the people who follow it develop themselves in every aspect. When they follow it, they will act in a way that is consistent with the expectations of society at large. The teacher's code of ethics can act as a compass to help individuals decide what to do and what not to do in situations when there are many options and alternatives to choose from. It is a mechanism that protects against dishonesty and misconduct. It protects everyone in the profession from various threats. It is also a filter that screens out people who should not be in the teaching profession. That is why the teachers' code of ethics is necessary foundation. Likewise, Korkko, Kyro-Ammala, & Turunen (2016) also wrote that ethical behavior by teachers is very important because they are models of good behavior for society and that is why the teaching profession has a good reputation.

## Conclusion

1. The average overall ( PNI<sub>Modified</sub>) of need for self-development according to Teacher Professional Standards of the sample teachers from a private school in Nakhon Pathom was 0.38.

2. Male teachers had a slightly higher perceived need for self-development according to Teacher Professional Standards than did female teachers. Single teachers had the highest perceived need for self-development according to Teacher Professional Standards. Teachers in most of the age groups had similar perceived need for self-development according to Teacher Professional Standards. Teachers with the highest level of prior education (bachelor's degree or master's degree) had a higher perceived need for self-development according to Teacher Professional Standards. Teachers with 6-10 years of teaching experience had the highest perceived need for self-development according to Teacher Professional Standards. Teachers with less than 5 years teaching experience, teachers with 11-15 years teaching experience and teachers with 16-20 years teaching

experience. The recommendation are 1) Agencies involved in teacher training should adopt self-development guidelines based on Teacher Professional Standards to formulate teacher production policies, ensuring that teachers achieve a standardized level of professional knowledge and experience and 2) There should be a study of factors affecting the success in self-development of private teachers.

## Conflict of Interest

This study was reviewed and approved by the institutional ethics committee of Silpakorn University. The patients/participants provided written informed consent to participate in the study.

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