



CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The researcher searched and compiled morale-related documents and studies and used them as guideline for this research which focused on work morale of public health personnel at health centers in Krabi province. Here are topics presented in the following order;

- 2.1 Organization structure, roles and responsibilities and manpower of the health center
- 2.2 Work morale concepts and theories
- 2.3 Building and assessing work morale
- 2.4 Concepts about motivation
- 2.5 Related studies

2.1 Organization structure, roles and responsibilities and manpower of the health center

Health center is the health provider at the end of the service line which is closest to local people in the rural area and it is a link between communities and health services provided by the state. The health center has a mission to serve people in the rural area with integrated public health services; namely, health promotion, treatments, disease control and prevention, rehabilitation and care for the disabled. In addition, the health center has responsibilities in training and promoting the

implementation of primary health care and community development (Chuchaisangrat, 1996).

Public health personnel working at the health center or staff members of the health center have responsibilities in providing health services for people residing in their responsible area and the health centers are established with aims to promote good health and better quality of life among people. Services at the health center are integrated, including treatments, health promotion, prevention and rehabilitation in order to address the local health problems and manage resources appropriately and efficiently for public health service arrangements. In addition, it can raise awareness of people to understand the importance of improving their own health problems. The Office of Permanent Secretary under the Ministry of Public Health finalized a job description of district public health personnel, based on roles and responsibilities of the health center, to determine the manpower size in the manpower planning round 3 as follows;

1. Integrated public health services for people in the responsible area which include health promotion, treatments and care for the disabled, disease control and prevention, rehabilitation and support for other services.
2. Supportive services for primary health care and life quality improvement
3. Administration
4. Technical services

The Act Amending Ministry, Sub-Ministry and Department B.E. 2545 has required all departments at all levels to revise or change their roles, missions and responsibilities. In addition, since the Universal Health Coverage Project (30-baht Scheme Project) has been announced, service providers at all levels including health

centers must take on additional roles, missions and responsibilities. Addressing public health problems needs well-rounded technical knowledge in various aspects and the workload is increasing at times in accordance with additional responsibilities. Nowadays, structure, authorities, missions and responsibilities of the health center have been more complicated than before and here are the latest updates;

2.1.1 Government organization structure

Referring to the Act Amending Ministry, Sub-Ministry and Department B.E. 2545 and Ministerial Regulation on Authorities and Responsibilities of Government Agencies under Jurisdiction of the Office of Public Health Permanent Secretary in the section of regional administration, the health center is under supervision of the District Health Office and the Public Health Administrative Officer Level 6 is the Chief of the health center (currently the level changes to level 7 in accordance to the Public Health Ministry's criteria)

2.2.2 Responsibilities

- Develop health action plans covering all districts or areas under responsibility
- Implement and coordinate with all districts or areas under responsibility on public health issues
- Provide good quality health services in the districts or areas under responsibility
- Enforce medical and public health laws and regulations for the protection of consumer's health and disease control

- Collaborate with or support the implementation of other agencies as assigned

2.2.3 Manpower of the health center; below are job positions in the health center.

- Chief of the Health Center (Public Health Administrative Officer): level 6 or 7
- Public Health Technical Officer: level 3-5 or 6 (academic) or 7 (academic)
- Registered Nurse: level 3-5 or 6 (academic) or 7 (professional)
- Community Public Health Officer: level 2-4 or 5 or 6
- Dental Health Officer: level 2-4 or 5

In addition, personnel at the health center have other important responsibilities; such as, coordination with other relevant agencies like local authorities, the private sector or project implementation in response to urgent policies at both the district and provincial levels as well as emergency policies from the government; such as, the 30-baht Health Care Scheme Project, Healthy Thailand Project, etc. As a result, the workload of the health center does not balance with its approved manpower size which entitles the health center to employ, in principle, 5 people but in practice, on average, there are only 3 staff working in each center.

2.2 Work morale concepts and theories

Although morale is abstract, it is the subject which has been widely investigated for a long time, especially by the management of numerous organizations because morale can affect productivity, cooperation, enthusiasm, discipline, success

of the organization, relationship between staff and chief and between supervisor and subordinate as well as clients and communities. In addition, morale can influence determination and willingness of the staff to improve quality of work and their organization.

2.2.1 Definition of morale

Several scholars have proposed the following definitions of morale;

Raktham (1979) defines morale as a state which everyone in the group understand the objective of the group work or a situation which they share some common objectives. In addition, the group members are confident of the success and cooperative. They also fight together to the best of their ability against obstacles and attempt to achieve goals which have been set earlier.

Awakul (1993) defines morale as a feeling or attitude of individuals towards work situations. It is of the interest of the individuals as a group to focus on their work tirelessly in order to achieve objectives which have been earlier set by the group.

Hirantok (1988) gives a definition of morale as a mental and emotional state which can affect one's concentration at work. Such effect can influence individuals and objectives of the organization. So, morale can be classified into 2 types; one is individual moral and the other is group morale. These two are interconnected and inseparable. If any organization has a high level of group morale, it also has a high level of individual morale. Likewise, if there is low group morale, there is always low individual morale as well.

Kossen & Collage (1975 as referred in Rojroongsak, 2002) defined morale as an employee attitude towards overall implementation of the organization or several work-related factors; such as, supervision, colleagues and payments.

Based on these aforementioned definitions, it can be concluded that morale is a mental state and feeling of employees which can be influenced and affected by external factors or work conditions in the organization. Employees may have certain reactions which are their work behaviors in response to the factors and conditions and it will have a direct effect towards their work performances.

2.2.2 Importance of work morale

Despite of the fact that morale is abstract and difficult to measure, it can be felt and observed and it is important for executives to learn about employee morale because it is one of crucial factors leading to success or failure of the organization. David (1951) provides inputs which highlight the importance of work morale in the organization as follows;

1. Morale can bring about collaboration among employees to achieve the organization's goals.
2. Morale can make employees feel loyal to the organization.
3. Morale can encourage disciplines among employees, so they follow rules and regulations of the organization.
4. Morale can strengthen and help the organization to go through difficult times.
5. Morale can make employees better understand the organization.
6. Morale can make employees feel more confident in the organization which they are working for.

7. Morale can encourage employees to become more creative and initiate new activities.

Similarly, Flippo (1971) also reiterates the importance of morale that if employees have good work morale, it is likely that there will be fruitful collaboration among the employees to achieve the organization's goals and they feel loyal and belong to the group and the organization. Moreover, the employees will support the enforcement of rules and regulations in controlling employee behaviors and work performances, maintaining their disciplines and good morale with one another in the organization and within their team, and also fostering good understanding among staff on the organization's policies and goals. Additionally, good morale can support and encourage employees to become creative in the organization's activities and at the same time strengthen their faith in the organization.

According to the above definitions, it can be seen that employee morale is very crucial for the mission or goal accomplishments. Hence, all of the organizations have to maintain high work morale of their employees at all times.

2.2.3 Factors or elements influencing work morale

Several academicians have studied factors or elements which affect work morale and the researcher have selected the followings which are relevant to this study for the literature review;

Hirantok (1988) suggests 6 factors which affect morale;

1. Relationship between supervisor and subordinate: If the supervisor has good relationships with the subordinate and they understand each other, the working atmosphere will be lively and the subordinate will have good morale. However, if the supervisor exercises his power like a boss with absolute authority and does not have

any interpersonal relationship with the subordinate, it is likely that the subordinate will experience poor morale.

2. Job assignment; If the task is given to an employee who is incapable of performing the task properly due to lack of expertise, inappropriate personality or limited knowledge and competency, the employee will be upset and dissatisfied and it will drastically hurt his/her morale. But if the task is given to the right person whose knowledge and skills suit the job, that person will happily perform the task and feel satisfied and this leads to the occurrence of work morale.

3. Work conditions; Environments at work can have a significant influence over the employee's physical and mental aspects and can encourage or discourage their morale. So, the conditions in the office should be designed, furnished and maintained properly; such as, work stations are clean and tidy, there is enough light, not too much noise and the temperature in the office is not too high, etc. With the good work conditions, employees will feel at ease and undisturbed and as a result, their morale will be at the high level. But if the work conditions are messy and dirty, they will not feel comfortable to work in such conditions.

4. Performance appraisal systems; such as, job promotion, salary increase, support for staff in taking up higher level posts. Without systematic rules and regulations, the performance appraisal systems will negatively affect morale the most.

5. Opportunity for staff to express opinions and the supervisor's openness for inputs from the subordinate; Generally, there are conflicts or problems among colleagues or between employees and management in any organization; such as, poor work conditions, inappropriate job assignments, biased supervision and governance, etc. All of these problems should be handled by giving the employees opportunities to

express their opinions and this is called “Grievance Procedure”. If the employees cannot speak up their opinions or if they do but their supervisors do not listen to them, they will feel frustrated and upset and ultimately become discouraged.

6. Reward and punishment; Employees with good work performances must be recognized and rewarded. Support for the job promotion, salary increase, verbal compliments or special gifts are the examples of the reward which can motivate the employees. On the other hand, for those who violate rules and regulations or have some malpractices, they should be appropriately punished in the strict and fair manners in order to maintain rules and regulations of the group and foster group unity. In addition, this is also one of the methods to build and maintain employee morale.

Likewise, Davis (1967) proposed that there are 6 factors which can affect morale;

1. Characteristics, manners and roles of the supervisor with the subordinate; because the supervisor plays an important role like a bridge in connecting the organization with employees so that they have good understandings about each other. As a result, the relationship between the supervisor and the subordinate is very important in raising morale in the workplace.

2. Job satisfaction; if employees are assigned a task, their work performance will be much better if they are happy with the task.

3. Satisfaction with the organization’s goals and main policies, collaboration with other co-workers and peers, organization management as well as efficient work systems; All of these are crucial because if all of the staff members or

the majority of them understand these issues, they will fully devote their time for work and their work morale will be greatly improved.

4. Proper work conditions; such as, having good ventilation and enough light and the availability of equipment and facilities in a sufficient manner for the work operation.

5. Rewards and job promotion can motivate employees to become enthusiastic and work harder with confidence. So, these can be useful in building and improving work morale of the staff.

6. Mental and physical health of the employee; Physical and mental health can always change simply due to the employee him/herself or other factors; such as, problems with family members or colleagues. These factors can greatly influence work performances because when people have mental or physical health problems, they usually do not fully devote their time to achieve good work results.

Besides the aforementioned factors, several scholars have conducted similar research studies on morale; such as, Gilmer (1987) who summarizes a list of the following 10 factors which can influence morale;

1. Security; such as, job security and work safety
2. Opportunity for advancement; such as, possibilities to get a job promotion based on knowledge and work competency
3. Company and management; such as, satisfaction with the organization including the reputation and the organization's management
4. Wage; such as, daily or monthly wages and overtime payment

5. Intrinsic aspects of the job refer to the relevance between job assignment and the staff's knowledge, work competency and expertise. This factor can build and improve employee morale.

6. Supervision; It can influence the employee satisfaction and can be a reason for the staff resignation or request for a transfer to other organizations which have better supervisory systems.

7. Social aspects of the job; If employees have a good time working with other colleagues, it means that they are satisfied with their work

8. Communication; It is very important in the planning, organization management, personnel management, analysis, control and supervision, and coordination as well as performance appraisal. All of these activities require good communication.

9. Work conditions; such as, appropriate level of sound, color, light and good ventilation.

10. Benefits; such as, pension in case of unemployment and other services, social welfares, accommodation, etc.

It is obvious that these aforementioned concepts about factors and elements affecting work morale are similar. So, in this study which focuses on work morale of public health personnel at the health center, the researcher has selected the following 7 factors which can influence work morale; income sufficiency, opportunity for advancement, relationships with the supervisor, relationships with peers, intrinsic aspects of the job, job satisfaction and work conditions.

2.3 Building and assessing work morale

2.3.1 Improving work morale

Boosting work morale is important and the organization's executives should make it the top priority because to motivate employees to work to their fullest capacity to achieve success which is the organization's goals, it is necessary to make them feel motivated and have high work morale. Employee morale and the organization's productivity are usually correlated. In other words, it means that if work morale is high, productivity increases. Numerous scholars have proposed a number of methods to raise work morale; such as, Kasemsin (1983) who explores improvement of work morale and here is the summary of the findings;

1. Building positive work attitudes

Work attitudes refer to feelings or emotions which lead to an agreement or disagreement to take actions towards individuals, groups, situations or values. So, building positive attitudes is the first important step which should be promoted among personnel in the organization.

2. Developing standard procedures and tools in measuring work achievements; such as, conducting a performance appraisal, etc.

The reliable procedures can prevent biases and gossips which lead to the decrease of work morale in the organization.

3. Salary and wages

Salary and wages are necessary and can raise positive work morale. However, if employee morale is poor because of other factors, salary or wage increase alone cannot improve work morale.

4. Job satisfaction

As work morale comes from job satisfaction, if employees are given a task which allows them to utilize their knowledge and capacities, they will be satisfied with their work. So, in assigning tasks, the supervisor should ensure that the employee is satisfied with the tasks to ensure efficient work performances and effective results.

5. Unity

There are several social groups in the organization; such as, a group of employees who are interested in hobbies and a person can join any specific group because s/he wants to be a part of the group and wants to be accepted. Even though s/he is probably not very interested in his/her own work, s/he may have positive work morale if s/he is accepted by peers and this can have effects on morale of the organization.

6. Relationships between the supervisor and the subordinate

To improve employee morale, the relationships between the supervisor and the subordinate must be based on mutual respect. The supervisor must seek techniques to motivate his/her staff members to initiate work by themselves and the supervisor should not be too fussy. If a problem arises, the supervisor should be open and available for discussions. The supervisor also should be merciful and protective of his/her staff and occasionally give them some freedom to work independently. Moreover, the supervisor should be self-confident and arrange good benefits for staff members, etc.

The followings are recommendations by Rakthum (1979) about work morale improvement;

1. Building and instilling of job satisfaction values within employees, so they love their job and become enthusiastic. To inspire employees, the supervisor has to act as a role model and show them that s/he is satisfied and loves the job. In addition, the supervisor has to convince them that the job is of the highest importance and if s/he feels exhausted, despair or discouraged, s/he should not show it; otherwise the majority of the employees will imitate such behaviors.

2. Praising employees who have good performances but the supervisor must ensure that it is done appropriately, reasonably and with sincerity. The supervisor should not praise employees too frequently; otherwise his/her compliment does not matter anymore.

3. Caring and being intimately acquainted with employees by greeting and asking about their life. Such actions will encourage them and let them know that their supervisor care for them or does not leave them alone.

4. Giving employees opportunities for advancement, so they can build and secure their professional career path and also make progress to high-level posts which offer better payments. If employees have a secured job with good possibilities for career advancement, it will motivate them to become more self-confident.

5. Create supportive and appropriate work conditions for employees; such as, desks, work stations, ventilation and fringe benefits. These are very necessary because, employees can work more efficiently in pleasant work environments.

6. Provide opportunities for employees to voice their opinions for work improvement and to be involved as a part of the success. Some employees may have good and useful ideas for work improvement and they should be rewarded or praised as a good example and this will also boost morale of other employees.

7. Give more opportunities or develop impartial systems for employees in filing complaints. Many employees have positive work morale and are working hard but sometimes their morale is going down when they have problems but cannot file complaints. So, to maintain good morale of the staff in the organization, a person should be appointed specifically to take complaints. If it is within his/her authorities to fix the problem, it should be done immediately. But if it is beyond his/her authorities, it should be explained to the employees, so they understand it. The complaint filing system should be set up with clear procedures and regulations.

Arjinkamajarn (1991) provides similar recommendations about raising work morale as follows;

1. Provide job security for employees.
2. Maintain pleasant work environments
3. Support staff participation and sense of ownerships
4. Encourage staff participation in developing the organization's policies
5. Promote self-respect, acceptance of one's self and status, respect one another and teamwork spirits
6. Act impartially and treat everyone equally
7. Maintain good relationships with other staff members in the organization

Teeyao (1993) proposes the following 4 techniques to build work morale;

1. Management; Executives must systematically and impartially manage tasks and they must have leadership skills. In addition, executives at all levels should be competent and interact positively with their subordinates.

2. Organization structures should be horizontal to allow employees to utilize their personal capacities.

3. Collaboration among staff members can initiate good relationships, team spirits and make them feel they are valued and really matter to the organization.

4. Handle conflicts; Conflicts are common in any organization and they waste time and cause expenses and damages among staff members. However, conflicts can also be advantageous as they allow the management staff to handle some problems in time before they go out of hand and cause more problems. In addition, in the conflict situation, the management can assign qualified persons to be in charge of solving the conflicts and ensure such problems will not occur again. This can be a way to boost morale if it is done appropriately.

Referring to the aforementioned studies, it is obvious that morale is very crucial and can motivate staff members to work more efficiently. There are various techniques to build and improve employee morale but it depends on individuals, how to motivate staff members and the organization administration.

2.3.2 Assessing work morale

As mentioned earlier, morale is abstract, so to assess the opinion, attitude and morale of an individual or a group of people can be conducted through several methods. Analyzing behaviors can be done by various means and tools and then results can be interpreted. Many scholars have proposed the following methods in measuring and assessing morale of personnel in the organization;

Jucius (1962 as referred in Kuntichok, 1986) suggests 4 techniques to measure or assess the level of employee morale as follows;

1. Observing

It is the easiest and most convenient method. Executives or chiefs have to observe attitudes or opinions of their subordinates.

2. Interviewing

This method allows executives or supervisors to closely meet with subordinates and they can learn about problems from their subordinates. In addition, they can ask their subordinates about their points of view, etc.

3. Questionnaire

Questionnaire is one of the most popular methods. Copies of the questionnaire are sent to each of the staff members in the organization and after getting the copies back, the next step is to analyze the data.

4. Record keeping

Record keeping is the compilation of statistical records in relation to work performances and quality of work by individuals, divisions in the monthly or annual period, etc.

Kasemsin (1983) proposes several methods which can be applied as a tool to measure and assess morale;

1. Consistency and productivity

If the organization's productivity drastically drops or remains poor for an extended period of time, it is the sign that something is wrong in the work process. It could be poor morale of the staff, so it is the management duty to find out whether the low productivity is related to the poor morale.

2. Taking leave or inactiveness

Positive work morale can be observed through enthusiasm and determination. Taking leave or absence from work, if frequently, can affect productivity. Reasons for the leave or the absence can reflect the actual level of employee morale.

3. Resignation or job changing

Although the organization arranges fringe benefits and pleasant work environments or offers fair and competitive salary rates, the fact that some employees still want to resign or move on to working for other organizations can be an indicator of the level of employee morale which can be implied that something wrong happens. If the organization offers competitive incentive packages for staff members, it is interesting to find out causes of the poor morale and seek ways to improve it.

4. Complaints or anonymous letters

If the number of complaints and anonymous letters increases, it shows that there are some problems in the organization and it is an indicator of work morale.

5. Questionnaire

If the questionnaire is sent out at the appropriate period of time, it can be used as a tool to assess the level of employee morale but it also depends on techniques and formulation of questions in the questionnaire. Despite of high expenses for the implementation, results of this method have proved to be financially worthwhile.

6. Interview

Direct conversations allow immediate responses and the interview, though time consuming and rather expensive, is easier for the data interpretation. If

the interviewer has good interviewing skills and techniques, using the interview method will be very useful and advantageous.

In this study, the researcher has selected the questionnaire method to collect data on work morale of public health staff at health centers in Krabi province. Once the data collection is complete, the researcher will proceed with the data analysis.

2.4 Concepts of motivation

Motivation is very important for staff performances because if they are well motivated, their morale will be at the high level. Numerous academicians have explained that there are several human behaviors which can be capitalized to build motivation in response to various needs of people. Here are some concepts and theories of motivation;

2.4.1 Motivation theory

Need Hierarchy Theory

Maslow (1961) develops the widely known motivation theory which proposes basic assumptions about human behaviors as follows;

1. Humans have endless needs. Once a need is met, they seek to satisfy other needs and this is the continuous process.
2. Satisfied needs do not longer influence behavior. Only unsatisfied needs can motivate behavior.
3. Human needs are arranged in a hierarchy of importance. The higher needs emerge immediately only after the lower needs have been satisfied.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs consists of five levels as follows;

1. Physiological needs

2. Safety needs
3. Social needs
4. Esteem needs
5. Self-actualization

Two – Factor Theory or Motivation – Hygiene Theory

Herzberg's Two-Factor or Motivation-Hygiene is one of popular theories among executives. It explores factors which lead to employee satisfaction and dissatisfaction at work. Herzberg et al. (1959) develops this theory based on data collected from interviews with approximately 200 engineers and accountants working in factories in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, the United States to investigate causes of satisfaction and dissatisfaction at work and also to prove Herzberg's theory that humans have 2 types of desire;

1. Desire to get rid of physical sufferings; such as, hunger, physical illness and dangers from natural disasters, etc.
2. Desire for mental happiness; such as, success in work and gaining social acceptance and opportunity for advancement, etc.

Herzberg's study demonstrates that several factors can influence satisfaction and dissatisfaction at work of individuals and Herzberg suggests 2 independent factors; motivators and hygiene factors.

1. Motivators are factors which cause satisfaction and are directly related to internal motivation which comes from work and a part of work (job content). The following motivators can influence motivation and improve work performances;

- 1.1 Achievement is the work completion and professional success of individuals. The individuals have abilities to solve problems and know how to prevent

them from arising. In addition, they utilize certain capacities which yield good results to their work and they will be pleased and proud of the achievement. This factor is very important for work performances.

1.2 Recognition is to gain acceptance and respect from supervisors, colleagues, peers and staff members in the organization or general people. Recognition can be in forms of praising, rewards, or job promotions which will make employees proud of themselves.

1.3 The work itself is the nature of work if it is interesting and challenging or if it requires creativity for innovations. It will make staff members satisfied with their work.

1.4 Responsibility is an opportunity given by the supervisor to his/her subordinates to independently perform a specific task without being monitored by the supervisor. Staff members may be assigned to work on a new task and granted full authority and it will make them satisfied.

1.5 Advancement is the status improvement or job promotion of employees in the organization, salary increase or opportunity to pursue higher education to enhance knowledge and professional skills for future advancement.

2. Hygiene factors are related to work environments. Although they do not directly affect employee productivity, pleasant work conditions can facilitate their performances and reduce the possibilities of staff resignation. If work environments are poor or in the worst case, they do not even exist, employee morale will decrease and job dissatisfaction will definitely occur. However, pleasant work environments alone do not always lead to job satisfaction as they can just ensure that job dissatisfaction will not occur. The followings are hygiene factors;

2.1 Salary is the payment in an appropriate amount for the satisfaction of employees.

2.2 Company policy and administration is the management and work procedures of the organization; such as, transfer of authority to personnel in completing tasks, internal communication, unclear work allocation, poor governance or inefficient management.

2.3 Supervision is knowledge and competency of the executive in management, governance or prejudice in relation to administration. It also includes the intention or unintention of the executive in giving advice or assigning some responsibilities to his/her subordinates.

2.4 Work conditions are physical environments of the workplace which are appropriate and supportive for staff members to perform their work; such as, location, light, noise and air ventilation as well as facilities and equipment tools and workload.

2.5 Job security refers to the individual's feeling towards the security of the job; such as, time duration of the job or employment or organizational stability.

2.6 Relationships with supervision refer to pleasant interactions between the supervisor and the subordinate and also include informal meetings and discussions to foster good relationships, friendships, honesty and learning opportunities for the supervisor about work procedures from the subordinate, support and assistance, willingness to listen to recommendations from the subordinate and trust in the subordinate.

2.7 Relationships with peers refer to informal meetings and conversations, friendships, assistances within the group and a sense of teamwork.

After the motivation theory review, it can be summarized that in principle, the theory explains human needs in various aspects and if a need is satisfied, it can be a factor to motivate a person to work hard to the fullest of his/her ability. So, the executive of the organization should apply this theory to make staff members satisfied and have good work morale. It will also result in an increase of productivity or more success as planned in achieving the organization's goals.

2.5 Related studies

A great number of studies on work morale are conducted by researchers with various occupational backgrounds; such as, policemen, nurses, teachers, educational administrator, and government officers in several agencies. The researcher would like to present some of the studies in this section;

Hadsiri (1994) studies morale of personnel at Mental Health Institute of Public Health Ministry using the questionnaire designed by the research team as the tool. The research populations are doctors, dentists, pharmacists, social workers, psychologists, technical nurses, registered nurses, assistants to patients, workers, totaling 983 people. It is found that morale of the employees is at the moderate level and the psychologists lead the others with the highest mean score. In addition, relationships with peers and supervisors are the two factors influencing the moral which are rated the highest. On the other hand, fringe benefits, sex, age, job posts, years of working and salary are not statistically significantly related to morale at 0.05. Moreover, results show that morale is invariant to job position, years of working, sex and the R2 value score for the morale level is 0.15 for all of the variances ($R^2=0.15$).

Thongton (1994) examines morale of permanent employees of Prince of Songkla University and results reveal that their morale is at the high level and different personal factors of the employees; namely, sex, age, marital status, years of working, salary and types of organization, do not cause any differences in terms of the level of morale. However, differences in the employee's education background could change the work morale level.

Phobukdee (1995) investigates the morale, moral support and motivation of 340 teachers under the jurisdiction of the Department of General Education in Lopburi Province in 8 aspects; namely, governance and supervision, work conditions, relationship with peers, payment, opportunity for advancement, opportunity to utilize knowledge and capacity, job satisfaction and professional honor. The questionnaire is used to collect data and results show that morale of the teachers in almost all of these aspects are at the moderate level except in opportunity to utilize knowledge and capacity and job satisfaction which are rated at the high level for morale, moral support and motivation. In addition, professional honors are rated at the very high level.

Sanguansuk (1998) examines the morale and effectiveness of police cadets' performances in the Royal Police Cadet Academy. This research study is conducted with randomly selected 172 cadets and uses the questionnaire for data collection. It is found that their morale is at the moderate level and their differences in social backgrounds; namely, sex, age, salary, years of serving in the public sector, job responsibilities, education and years of working yield differences in terms of work morale at the statistical significant level of 0.05. Additionally, for those with high work morale, statistical results predict that their performance would be highly

effective. However, it is not possible to make any prediction on the effectiveness of those with low work morale whether their performance would turn out to be effective or not. Moreover, the results predict that cadets who have high morale on job satisfaction, job security and gained high level of acceptance would perform work in the highly effective manner at the statistical significant level of 0.05.

Thepma (1999) investigates the level of morale and morale-related factors of 266 teachers participating in the agricultural education reform for life project, in the Northeastern College of Agriculture and Technology. This research uses the questionnaire to collect data and results showed that overall their morale is at the high level and different personal factors; namely, sex, age, education background, work experience as teacher and work responsibilities do not cause any differences in the morale level. Moreover, it is found that relationships within the organization and individual characteristics are significantly correlated with the morale level of the teachers at 0.01.

Phiansathaporn (2001) studies work moral of school executives and teachers under the jurisdiction of the Foundation of the Church of Christ in Thailand. The research populations are 312 school executives and teachers and the study uses the questionnaire to collect data. Results demonstrate that their work morale is at the high level and overall there is no difference in terms of work morale.

Teuthai (2002) explores relationships between morale and quality of work performances of personnel in education institutes: case study of teachers under the jurisdiction of the Office of Prachinburi Provincial Primary Education. The research populations are 335 government teachers and questionnaire is used for data collection. Findings reveal that overall, work morale of the teachers categorized by sex, age,

education background and work experience is not different and teachers working in different school size experience different morale level. Statistically, there are significant differences of the morale level between teachers in the small sized schools and those in the medium or large sized schools at 0.05. In addition, no significant difference is found for the quality of teacher's work performances categorized by sex, age, educational background, work experiences and school size. Lastly, work morale of the teachers is positively significantly correlated with quality of work performances at 0.05 and the correlation coefficient score is 0.478.

Khanasuk et al. (2003) conduct a case study on work morale of Chakkraphong Hospital, Prachinburi province among 190 permanent government officers, permanent and temporary employees. The study uses the questionnaire for the data collection and key findings show that permanent government officers and permanent and temporary employees with different income level, post level and personality, are significantly different in terms of morale level at 0.05. In addition, work morale-related factors; namely, opportunity for advancement, relationship with peers, characteristics and roles of executives, work environments and participation in the administration can significantly influence work morale at 0.05.

Netsrithong & Chotibun (2005) conduct a study of effects of the violent crises in 3 Southern-most provinces towards health service management and morale of public health personnel. This research recruits 458 public health staff at health centers and used the questionnaire for data collection. Findings in regard of effects in their work due to the violence are as follows; 89.9% of the respondents feel unsafe, 80.3% are worried about the safety of their family members, 68.5% reply that it affected their daily lifestyle, 67.6% think security measures implemented by the government were

inadequate, 66.4% view that it took too much time to receive per diems, payments and benefits, 36.1% are proud to serve as public health personnel and 35.7% say that vehicles, equipment and facilities in the health setting were not enough. In addition, the overall score of the work morale is at the good level. Relationship with peers come up first with the highest mean score, followed by gaining acceptance and payments and benefits, safety security and opportunity for advancement are the aspects with the lowest mean score.

Pao-Ngon (2005) studies factors related to work morale of public health officers who work in Health Center Region 9. The sample consisted of 350 public health officers. Data were collected through mailed questionnaires. The results were as public health officers evaluated their work morale of being at moderate level. Gender, age, tenure, income per month had no significant correlation with work morale. Certificate of Nursing Science and Bachelor of Nursing Science, job security, job satisfaction, interpersonal relationship, achievement, recognition and advancement had significantly positive correlation with work morale at 0.001. Tenure in health center had significantly positive correlation with work morale at 0.01. Graduation with Bachelor of Public Health or another Bachelor of Public Health and Certificate of Public Health had negative correlation with work morale.

Based on the aforementioned studies, most of the studies agree that work morale is very important for the success of the organization. In addition, the findings of the studies reveal that usually the level of morale was in the medium level and elements or factors influencing the high or low morale were similar, depending on differences of the nature of work in each organization, situations and other contexts. So, in this study, the researcher has selected the following personal factors and work

morale-related factors to develop a conceptual framework to improve work morale of public health personnel at health centers;

Personal factors are gender, age, marital status, highest education level, job position, job status, job post by line of work, work experience, and monthly household income.

Work morale related factors are household economic status, opportunity for advancement, relationship with supervisor, work competency, job satisfaction, supervision, and work conditions.