

The Rising Income and Promoting a Participatory Career to Reduce Inequality in the Aging Society

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Abstract

Inequality in the society is a major issue which is addressed by previous studies. However, phenomenon of inequality in aging society is not well documented by previous studies. Therefore, this study is attempted to examine the inequality reduction in aging society of Thailand through income and participatory career improvement. Data collection is made through survey questionnaire by using a cross-sectional research design. Population of the study is the aging society in Thailand. Results of the study are obtained by using Partial Least Square (PLS). It is found that, inequality can be managed through increase in income and participatory career improvement. Both the factors, increase in income and participatory career improvement has the potential to reduce inequality in aging society. Increase in income and participatory career improvement can promote career satisfaction which causes to decrease inequality.

Keywords: Inequality, income, participatory career improvement, career satisfaction, aging society Thailand.

I. INTRODUCTION

Inequality refers to the phenomenon of unequal and/or unjust distribution of resources (Ogharanduku, Jackson, & Paterson, 2021; Shams, Haleem, & Javaid, 2020; Sharafi et al., 2021) and opportunities among members of a given society. The problem of unequal distribution of resources among the individuals as well as society is one of the major issues among several nations (Bing, Pettit, & Slavinski, 2022). This issue leaves to the violence in the society and increases the level of dissatisfaction which always has major consequences for the societies as well as nations. Previous studies have conducted the phenomena of unequal distribution (Du & King, 2022), still it is one of the major issues

which required to discuss by the academicians as well as practitioners. Inequality in the resources and various opportunities to the individual has effect on overall society development.

The unequal distribution of resources as well as opportunities is widely discussed in the literature (Chudnovsky & Peeters, 2021; Smith, Nelson, Trygstad, & Banilower, 2013) and it has several types, however the current study discussed inequality among the aging societies. The aging society required to fulfill various rights by the society as well as nation. The individuals in old age must have a satisfactory level in any position. The position may include the society, government as well as any organization. However, it was one of the issues

in the society as well as organizations that inequality exist. The existing of inequality causes to decrease in the satisfaction level of people with old age. These people with lot of experience in their lives as well as jobs always remain the asset of the society, however it is needed to promote the equality through resources as well as opportunities among the societies. According to the previous studies, inequality is a bigger challenge in the societies which is needed to address the most importantly the inequality among the aging society is needed to address. The old age people also have the right to avail equal opportunities as well as resources in a society. However, due to the limitations as well as various other issues the inequality exist among the aging society. In this way the current study considered the inequality among the aging society of Thailand. Along with the other nations, Thailand is one of the countries having several issues related to the inequality (Coxhead, 2018; Lopez-Sintas, Lamberti, & Sukphan, 2020) among aging society but still it is one of the issues which is needed to highlight. Thailand is among the most unequal countries as shown in Figure 1.



Figure 1. *The world's most unequal countries*

Inequality in the aging society is based on several factors (Hussein et al., 2018), however, the current study considered most important factor which include income as well as participatory career improvement. Income inequality is existed among various other ages of people; however, it is also existed among the old age people. In several parts of the world the

people in old age cannot enjoy equal rights, equal resources as well as other opportunities. To avail a satisfactory career, it is important to have significant increase in income level with the increase in expenses. Furthermore, this society must have significant presentation in various organizations as well as in the society. Because the experience of aging society in any field including jobs as well as society is most important to resolve various problems. Therefore, increase in income and the right to participate is most important for aging society which increase the career satisfaction and causes to decrease inequality. The inequality can be reduced by promoting income as well as participatory career improvement in the aging society.

Therefore, the objective of the current study is to examine the effect of income increased and participatory career improvement to reduce inequality in Thailand. In addition to these two important factors, the current study also introduced career satisfaction between these factors and inequality reduction. Because career satisfaction is needed which can be achieved with the help of increase in income and participatory career improvement which lead to the inequality reduction in aging society. Despite the investigation of several studies on inequality (Campos-Serna, Ronda-Pérez, Artazcoz, Moen, & Benavides, 2013; Li et al., 2018), the inequality in aging society is less discussed by the literature. To address this literature, gap the current study considered increase in income, participatory carrier improvement, career satisfaction and inequality reduction in the aging society.

2. Literature Review

The inequality include; income inequality, gender gap, health care inequality, and social class. There are wide diversities of economic inequality, most particularly measured using the distribution of income as well as the distribution of wealth. Also, economic inequality among different countries or states, there are significant kinds of economic inequality between diverse groups of people.

The inequality has influential role among the society and it has effect on the nations. The inequality such as inequality related to the income, the gender inequality along with various other inequalities such as related to the resource's inequality and the unequal distribution of resources as well as opportunities create a major difference among the societies. It is important to address these inequalities with the help of research studies as the problems affect negatively on overall society which is needed to address in the

practice and various solutions must be provided. In this way the current study developed a framework to reduce the inequality among aging societies. The framework developed in the current study is shown in Figure 2 which is developed by considering the literature gaps. The study considered several relationships which were not considered by the previous with the help of increase in income, participatory career development, career satisfaction and inequality reduction.

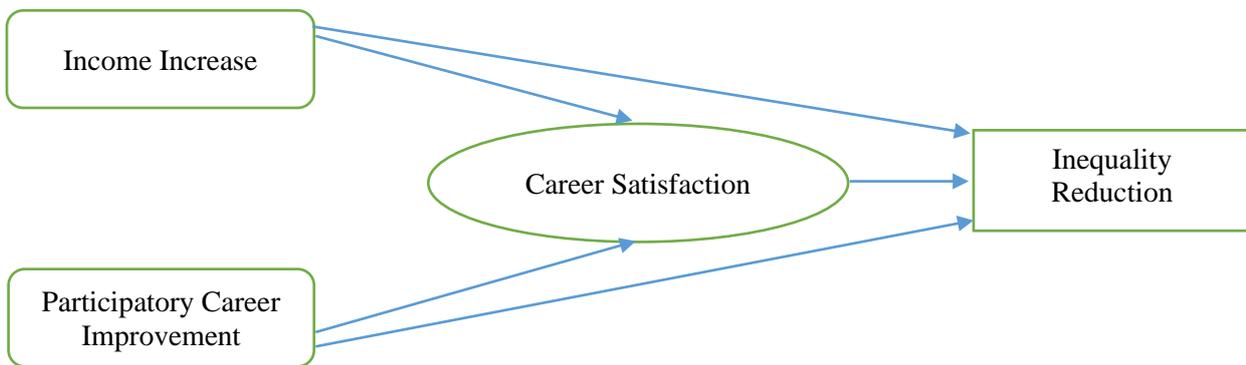


Figure 2. Theoretical framework of the study

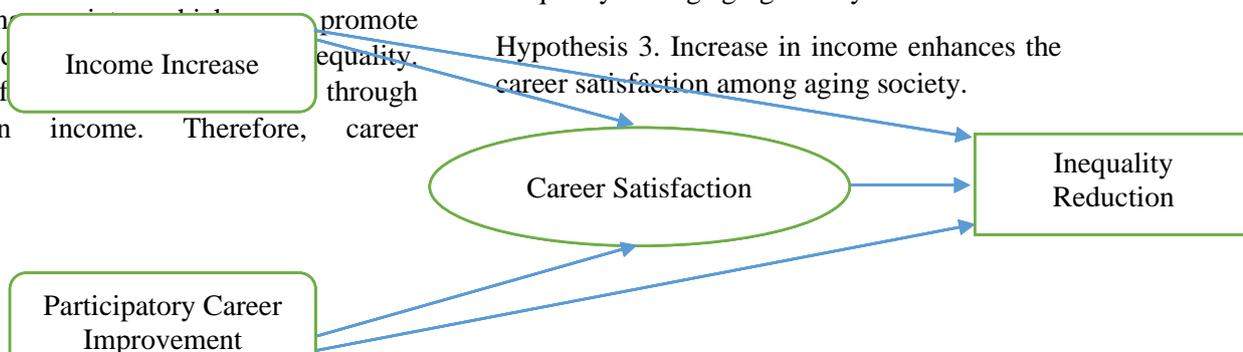
The problem of income inequality is a major concern of societies as well as nations (Patel et al., 2018). The income inequality is based on the unequal distribution of wealth among the people. In Thailand, this issue is very common as the wealth is not equally distributed among the families as well as individuals. This problem is also most common in aging societies. The old age people must have their rights and sufficient income to meet their expenses, however, income inequality leads to various problems. And important relationship between the increase or decrease in income along with inequality has role in society. Inequality exists in the society; however, income inequality is most common (Oronce, Scannell, Kawachi, & Tsugawa, 2020) which can be managed by increasing the level of income. The current study proposes that career satisfaction is one of the important elements among aging societies. Career satisfaction promotes equality by increasing income. Therefore, career

satisfaction is playing a mediating role between increase in income and inequality reduction. As reported in previous studies that career satisfaction has influential role among the individuals. A better level of career satisfaction achievement has the potential to promote equality among the society. Most importantly in the aging society the satisfaction must have a certain level. Therefore, the current study proposed career satisfaction as an influential factor to reduce inequality. According to this study, increase in income can lead to the career satisfaction which further causes to decrease in inequality. In this way the current study proposed following hypotheses;

Hypothesis 1. Career satisfaction reduces the inequality among aging society.

Hypothesis 2. Increase in income reduces the inequality among aging society.

Hypothesis 3. Increase in income enhances the career satisfaction among aging society.



Hypothesis 4. Career satisfaction mediates the relationship between increase in income and inequality reduction among aging society.

Another important element which has influential role in inequality reduction is participatory career improvement. The participatory career (Hasebrook et al., 2017) also has role to reduce or increase the inequality among the societies. Particularly, it has influence on aging society in relation to the problem of inequality. The participation of aging society in various matters can manage various problems through decision making. The better experience of aging society can helpful to overcome various challenges in the society as well as in the organizations. Participatory career improvement has significant role in career satisfaction. Therefore, career satisfaction (Onyishi, Enwereuzor, Ogbonna, Ugwu, & Amazue, 2019; Oubibi, Fute, Xiao, Sun, & Zhou, 2022) can be improved with the help of participatory career improvement which can further increase the reduction in inequality. The mediation effect of career satisfaction is investigated between participatory career improvement and in equality reduction. This mediation effect is highlighted with the help of the recommendations of previous studies. To introduce career satisfaction as mediating variable, the current study followed the instructions of barren and Baron and Kenny (1986). It important to have a significant relationship between independence variable and dependent variable. The significant relationship is also required between independent variable and mediating variable, mediating variable and dependent variable. The literature highlighted that all the three relationships are significant. Therefore, this study study purposed that;

Hypothesis 5. Participatory career improvement reduces the inequality among aging society.

Hypothesis 6. Participatory career improvement enhances the career satisfaction among aging society.

Hypothesis 7. Career satisfaction mediates the relationship between participatory career

improvement and inequality reduction among aging society.

3. Research Methodology

Previous studies have addressed inequality with the help of different techniques. Various studies addressed inequality with the help of secondary data. Number of studies carried out research on inequality by using quantitative research approach. The availability of data on inequality statistics is important. It is very rare that any study discussed this phenomenon with the help of primary data by using inequality. In this way by considering the gap in the literature as well as by following the statistical data availability on inequality in Thailand the current study decided to use quantitative research in which primary data is used to examine the relationship between income increase, participatory career improvement, career satisfaction and inequality reduction. Items are used to measure inequality reduction. The design of survey questionnaire is based on previous studies and already revealed scale items were used by the current study to develop the study scale. In this way the current study also measured increase in income as well as participatory career improvement by using primary data along with career satisfaction. All the scales are used on 5-Likert scale as it is one of the best suitable data collection instruments which help to collect the views and opinion of the people related to a certain phenomenon.

Questionnaire design is based on three major sections in which the first section is based on the general information of the respondents. The second section of the questionnaire was based on the scale items related to the dependent variable; inequality reduction. Furthermore, the third section of the current study was based on the scale items related to the career satisfaction. Furthermore, the independence variables namely income increase and participatory career improvement is based on the section four of the study. Furthermore, this study considered 300 sample size and these questionnaires were distributed among the aging society of Thailand. Simple random sampling was used to

distribute the questionnaires among the individuals. From total distributed questionnaires, the study received 151 responses and total 150 valid questionnaires were used in data analysis. Therefore, the response rate of the current study was 50%.

After the data collection, the data entered in the excel sheet. Data screening was used before

analysis to examine the relationship between variables. While entry in the sheet, the study carried out data analysis in which errors were observed. This study majorly focused on various errors in the data and all the errors were removed before to carry forward the current study for data analysis. Finally, the data statistics of clean data are given and Table 1.

Table 1. *Data Statistics*

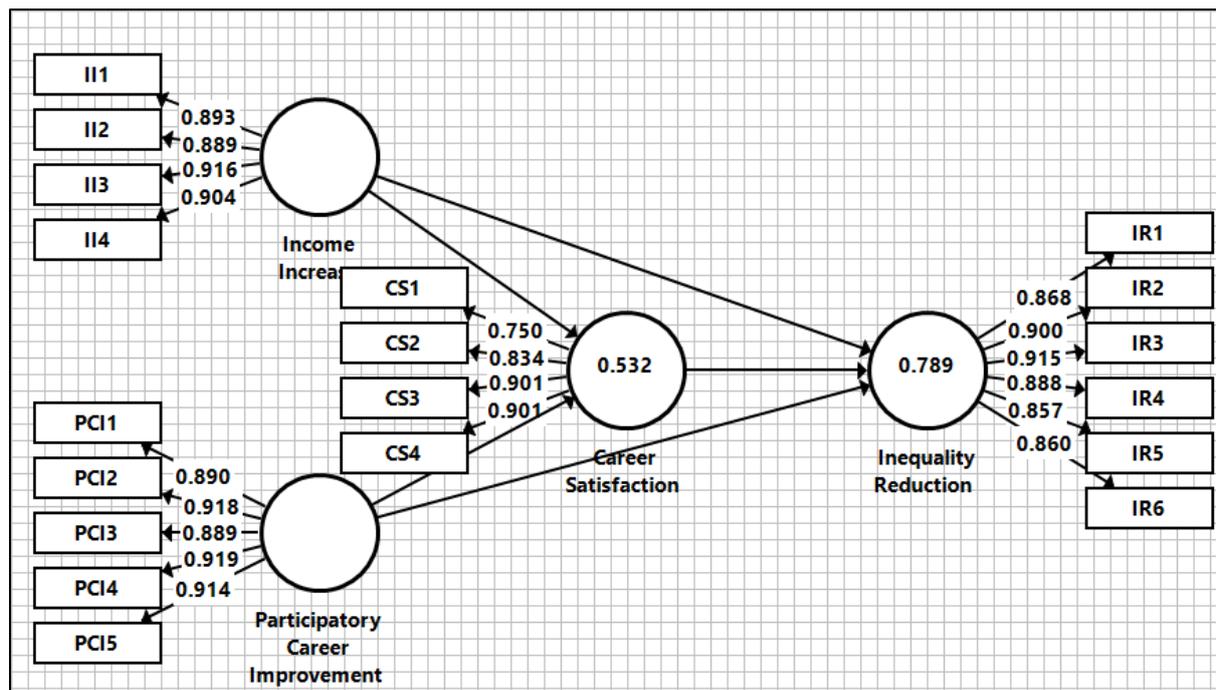
	No.	Missing	Mean	Median	Min	Max	SD	Kurtosis	Skewness
II1	1	0	3.111	3	1	7	1.438	-0.675	0.062
II2	2	0	3.246	3	1	7	1.758	-0.382	0.541
II3	3	0	3.373	3	1	7	1.632	-0.208	0.401
II4	4	0	3.333	3	1	7	1.746	-0.616	0.292
PCI1	5	0	3.262	3	1	7	1.658	-0.952	0.04
PCI2	6	0	3.413	3	1	7	1.809	-0.568	0.383
PCI3	7	0	3.317	3	1	7	1.833	-0.372	0.632
PCI4	8	0	3.349	3	1	7	1.879	-0.814	0.326
PCI5	9	0	3.286	3	1	7	1.777	-0.272	0.573
CS1	10	0	3.429	3	1	7	1.806	-0.58	0.379
CS2	11	0	2.96	3	1	7	1.428	0.41	0.783
CS3	12	0	3.032	3	1	7	1.357	1.231	0.965
CS4	13	0	3.071	3	1	7	1.334	1.115	0.882
IR1	14	0	2.897	3	1	7	1.227	0.135	0.434
IR2	15	0	2.849	3	1	7	1.267	0.168	0.502
IR3	16	0	2.992	3	1	7	1.354	-0.017	0.481
IR4	17	0	2.944	3	1	7	1.197	0.653	0.614
IR5	18	0	2.865	3	1	7	1.281	-0.047	0.394
IR6	19	0	3.016	3	1	7	1.374	0.419	0.658

Note: CS = Career Satisfaction; II = Income Increase; IR = Inequality Reduction; PCI = Participatory Career Improvement

4. Findings

Despite the availability of several data analysis techniques in the literature and recommended by previous studies the current study used partial least square (PLS) to analyse the data in which structural equation modelling (SEM) is used which is most popular in social sciences research (Hair et al., 2021; Hair Jr et al., 2021). Although income inequality as well as inequality in various other aspects is considered in the literature by using several data analysis

techniques, however PLS is not very common in this type of study. This study contributes to the literature by using PLS which is most suitable to examine the relationship between variables. In this way, the current study used measurement model to examine the reliability as well as validity. Figure 2 shows the measurement model in which factor loading is given. All the factor loadings are above 0.5 which is minimum level considered in the current study. Therefore, all the variables along with the sale items are retained in the current study and proceeded for the further analysis.



Note: CS = Career Satisfaction; II = Income Increase; IR = Inequality Reduction; PCI = Participatory Career Improvement

Figure 3. *Measurement Model*

Table 2. *Factor Loadings*

Variables	Items	Loadings	Alpha	CR	AVE
Career Satisfaction	CS1	0.75	0.868	0.911	0.72
	CS2	0.834			
	CS3	0.901			
	CS4	0.901			
Income Increase	II1	0.893	0.922	0.945	0.811
	II2	0.889			
	II3	0.916			
	II4	0.904			
Inequality Reduction	IR1	0.868	0.942	0.954	0.777
	IR2	0.9			
	IR3	0.915			
	IR4	0.888			
	IR5	0.857			
	IR6	0.86			
Participatory Career Improvement	PCI1	0.89	0.945	0.958	0.821
	PCI2	0.918			
	PCI3	0.889			
	PCI4	0.919			
	PCI5	0.914			

Note: CS = Career Satisfaction; II = Income Increase; IR = Inequality Reduction; PCI = Participatory Career Improvement

Moreover, after the examination of factor loading, the current study preferred to examine

reliability with the help of composite reliability (CR) and convergent validity with the help of

average variance extracted (AVE). Table 2 indicated the factor loading along with composite reliability which above 0.7 for all the variables. In addition to this AVE is used and the minimum level is 0.5. It is found that all the variables namely; career satisfaction, income increase, inequality reduction and participatory career improvement has AVE above 0.5 which confirmed the convergent validity. Additionally, it is important to address discriminant validity which is given and Table 3 of the current study and achieved by using cross loading. Furthermore, the current study also addressed discriminant validity by confirming through AVE.

Table 3. *Cross-Loadings*

	Career Satisfaction	Income Increase	Inequality Reduction	Participatory Career Improvement
CS1	0.85	0.82	0.597	0.847
CS2	0.834	0.496	0.798	0.438
CS3	0.901	0.581	0.807	0.555
CS4	0.901	0.554	0.797	0.506
II1	0.652	0.893	0.591	0.831
II2	0.647	0.889	0.584	0.81
II3	0.677	0.916	0.574	0.849
II4	0.641	0.904	0.541	0.851
IR1	0.772	0.541	0.868	0.51
IR2	0.792	0.594	0.9	0.544
IR3	0.763	0.557	0.915	0.517
IR4	0.809	0.618	0.888	0.56
IR5	0.784	0.61	0.857	0.558
IR6	0.757	0.437	0.86	0.392

Table 4. *Direct Effect Results*

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Career Satisfaction -> Inequality Reduction	-0.905	-0.901	0.041	21.824	0
Income Increase -> Career Satisfaction	0.576	0.57	0.167	3.46	0
Income Increase -> Inequality Reduction	-0.156	-0.146	0.035	4.44	0
Participatory Career Improvement -> Career Satisfaction	0.162	0.174	0.05	3.22	0
Participatory Career Improvement -> Inequality Reduction	-0.192	-0.175	0.106	1.812	0.036

The current study not only address the direct effect, however, the indirect effect of carrier satisfaction is also considered by the current study which is shown in Table 5. First, indirect effect of career satisfaction is considered between income increase and inequality

PCI1	0.585	0.825	0.487	0.89
PCI2	0.621	0.838	0.504	0.918
PCI3	0.631	0.841	0.537	0.889
PCI4	0.632	0.882	0.541	0.919
PCI5	0.682	0.817	0.569	0.914

Note: CS = Career Satisfaction; II = Income Increase; IR = Inequality Reduction; PCI = Participatory Career Improvement

Table 4 shows the effect of variables on inequality reduction. PLS structural model is used in which bootstrapping is carried out (Ali, Rasoolimanesh, Sarstedt, Ringle, & Ryu, 2018; Hair et al., 2021; Purwanto & Sudargini, 2021). In this process of data analysis technique, this study considered 1.64 the minimum level to accept the hypothesis. Furthermore, this study also examined the beta value to examine the direction of the relationship between variables. In this part of data analysis, the current study examined the role of income increase and careers satisfaction in inequality reduction. Furthermore, the role of participatory career development is examined in relation to the career satisfaction and inequality. Finally, the current study introduced the relationship between career satisfaction and inequality reduction. All these relationships are reported in Table 4 in which the values are above 1.64 which indicated that all the hypotheses are supported. It is evident from the results that increase in income has important contribution to career satisfaction and to reduce the inequality in Thailand.

reduction. This mediation effect is significant which shows that career satisfaction transfers the positive role of income increases on inequality reduction. Furthermore, this study considered the second mediation effect between participatory career improvement and

inequality reduction. It is found that this mediation effect has t-value 0.949 which is not

acceptable. Therefore, this indirect effect is rejected.

Table 5. Indirect Effect Results

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Income Increase -> Career Satisfaction -> Inequality Reduction	0.522	0.514	0.15	3.484	0
Participatory Career Improvement -> Career Satisfaction -> Inequality Reduction	0.147	0.157	0.155	0.949	0.172

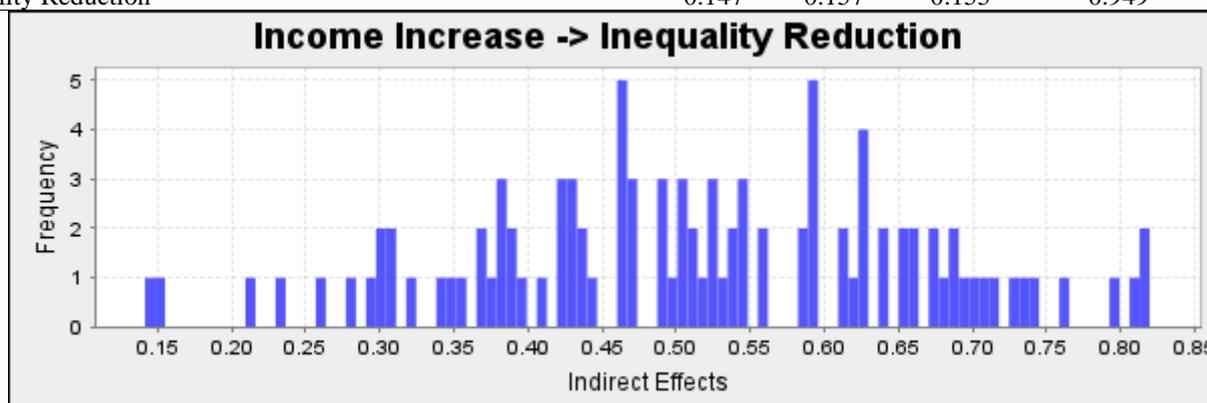


Figure 5. Indirect Effect Histogram between Income Increase and Inequality Reduction

The indirect effect histogram of career satisfaction is provided in Figure 5. In addition to this, the current study also considered the r-squared value of inequality reduction which is 0.789. This effect is strong which indicated that all the variables are expected to bring 78.9% change in inequality reduction as dependent variable.

5. Conclusion

The current study examined the relationship between increase in income, participatory career improvement, career satisfaction and inequality reduction in the aging society of Thailand. This study purposed five direct effects and one indirect effect based on career satisfaction. Results of the study highlighted that increase in income has the potential to decrease inequality. As increase in income has negative effect on inequality in the ageing society. Furthermore, increase in income has positive effect on career satisfaction. Majorly the increase in income of aging society can increase the career satisfaction which further causes to decrease inequality. Therefore, to reduce inequality in aging society, it is important to increase the income of that

society. Furthermore, the participatory career improvement has influential role along with increase in income. Results of the study highlighted that the participatory career improvement has the potential to increase career satisfaction. It also has a direct effect on inequality reduction. As hypotheses results shows that participatory career improvement has negative effect on inequality reduction. Therefore, along with the increase in income the participatory career improvement also promotes career satisfaction which further causes to increase equality in the ageing society.

6. Implications of the Study

The relationship between increase in income, participatory career improvement, career satisfaction and inequality reduction are not considered in previous studies. Several studies show the inequality among the society; however, it is not addressed in relation to the aging society. Most importantly, the inequality reduction phenomena among the ageing societies of Thailand is not addressed by previous studies, therefore, this relationship has central importance for the literature as well as

practice. In addition to this, inequality among the society is addressed through quantitative as well as qualitative data analysis techniques. While using quantitative research, several studies use secondary data. However, the current study contributes to the literature by examining this relationship with the help of primary data and a survey is carried out. Therefore, the current study is important for the practice to promote equality among the society with the help of the results of the current study. As the current study results recommended that income of aging society should be increased to reduce the inequality. Furthermore, it is also recommended that participatory career improvement should also be focused to promote career satisfaction which may lead to equality among the societies.

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