

TITLE: Demographic Influences on the Leadership Practices of Chief Faculty Officers During the Period of Reform

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OBJECTIVE: The purpose of this study was to examine the leadership practices of chief faculty officers in Thailand during a period of mandated organizational change, to identify possible personal variables, and provide the first study of the LPI with Asian respondents.

METHODOLOGY: Data were collected from a representative sample of 190 chief faculty officers from 13 faculties (departments) at Kasetsart University (Bangkok, Thailand). The response rate was 69 percent (N=132). Respondents completed a slightly modified version of the LPI, formatted with a seven-point Likert scale (strongly disagree to strong disagree). The LPI was in English, as all respondents are required to be fluent in English. The typical respondent was between 46-55 years of age (65%). There were 68 men and 64 women among the respondents. Forty-five percent of the respondents had graduate degrees and the majority had post-graduate degrees (55%). Most of the respondents were associate deans and department heads/chairs (61%), with another third serving as deputy deans, and the remaining seven percent as deans.

KEY FINDINGS: there were no significant differences on the LPI by respondent age or by years of experience. For educational level, those with post-graduate degrees had significantly higher LPI scores than those with graduate degrees. Analysis by gender revealed that women scored higher on Challenging, Enabling and Encouraging than did their male counterparts. Analysis by current job position or organizational level revealed that the higher the position, the more the administrators saw themselves as engaging in the leadership practices of Challenging, Inspiring, Modeling, and Encouraging.

In this study, reliability coefficients (Chronbach's Alpha) ranged between .78 for Challenging to .91 for Encouraging. The author notes that "since this was the first time that the LPI was utilized to collect data with a Thai sample, it is important to highlight the high reliability estimates of the measurement applied....indicates that the scale is more than adequate in terms of internal consistency of measurement" (p. 86). Factor analysis, for a five-factor solution, revealed an explained variance of 72.75 percent.