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Pepperdine University  
Graduate School of Education and Psychology

CHARACTERISTICS OF GLOBAL THAI LEADERS

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

by

William Vaughn

April, 2018

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DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

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## ABSTRACT

The global trade across multiple countries has greatly increased in the last few decades. Nationalist organizations are focusing on global trade (Rhinesmith, Williamson, Ehlen, & Maxwell, 1989). China and Japan are the driving forces in Asian global trade; but countries like Thailand are developing their global economies as well. The volume of western based leadership research benefits global businesses entering the U.S. market place compared to Japanese or Chinese culture. The lack of leadership research on Thailand creates challenges for large corporations wanting to outsource or manufacture in Thailand. Large multinational companies can enter Thailand but understanding how the culture affects all aspect of life there is crucial for success.

The purpose of this study was to determine the leadership characteristics of successful Thai leaders in their global organizations. This descriptive phenomenological study utilized 15 selected leaders who met the research criteria. The data were collected through semi-structured interviews. The interviews included ten open ended questions that followed the interview protocol. The results found two notable findings. The first is that the Thai leaders were benevolent in their leadership. This included their concern for subordinate's happiness and growth. Adaptability was the other finding. These Thai leaders were very adaptable with their work force having to adapt to the foreign workers, global challenges and changing business environment in Thailand. The study examined these two notable findings to identify what characteristics make a successful Thai leader in global business. Utilizing the data charts and the key findings may assist organizations which want to operate in Thailand.

## Chapter 1: Introduction

Global trade has become part of the business environment. Large corporations like Toyota, BMW, Hyundai, and Nissan are producing vehicles in the United States. China is a major manufacturing location for US companies. US companies like Apple have outsourced manufacturing to China. Global enterprise has dominated competitive behavior that competes beyond nationalist corporations looking for the new competitive markets (Rhinesmith, Williamson, Ehlen, & Maxwell, 1989). Corporations are going global to enter new markets that are emerging as global trade expands their ability to develop new markets. Western leadership has been studied for decades and the research has been used to develop business leaders.

According to Northouse (2013) “the following components are central to the phenomenon of leadership: Leadership is a process, it involves influence, occurs in groups, involves common goals” (p. 5). The western definition of leadership has changed; Northouse (2013) says it succinctly “Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal” (p. 5). This is the western style of leadership and the scholarly teachings that have shaped the understanding of leadership. Bass and Stogdill (1990) advise that leadership is a complex concept that has gone from king to a definition that is varied depending on the individual trying to define the concept. Furthermore their definition is complex and broad in scope:

Leadership has been conceived as the focus of group processes, as a matter of personality, as a matter of inducing compliance, as the exercise of influence, as particular behavior, as a form of persuasion, as a power relation, as an instrument to

achieve goals, as an effect of interaction, as a differentiated role, as initiation of structure, and as many combinations of these definitions.

(Bass & Stogdill, 1990, p. 11)

This definition is vague but underlies the complexity of trying to define leadership.

There are differences when applying leadership theories from western cultures to other cultures. In Japan, Takahashi, Ishikawa, and Kanai, (2012) advised that transformational leadership is not reasonable in practice for Japanese firms. There is limited research about transformational leadership in Japan. The culture also affects the use of transformational leadership in Japan. Research on the relationship of Japanese leaders and their use of transformational leadership has shown positive outcomes in western developed countries. The research is rare in countries like Thailand (Ariyabuddhiphongs & Kahn, 2017). Research about eastern leadership characteristics compared to western characteristics is very limited.

## **History**

Leadership in Thailand has been influencing cultural norms since the 13<sup>th</sup> century. According to Roongrerngsuke and Liefoghe (2012), kings were regarded as the protectors of society during wars and advisors to the Thai citizens in peacetime. Between the 14<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, a pattern of hierarchy developed in the society. The Thai word for this is *Phradet Phrakhun*, where the leader needs to be benevolent and autocratic as a leader. (Roongrerngsuke & Liefoghe, 2012). The Thai population was required to be faithful and follow the guidance of the king. Thailand has a king and he is revered throughout the country. The Thai people have followed their king for centuries. The king was the driving force that shaped the country's growth.

Buddhism has also played a role in guiding the country. According to the United Nations website, 94% of the population is Buddhist (United Nations, 2017). Understanding Buddhism is key to learning Thai leadership. There are ten principles that were highlighted from Buddha and these are called the Rajadhamma 10 in Thailand. These principles are: *Dana* (generosity), *Sila* (morality/ ethical behavior), *Parricaga* (unselfishness/ altruism), *Ajjava* (honesty/ integrity), *Maddava* (gentleness, avoiding arrogance), *Tapa* (self-restraint/ self-control), *Akkhoda* (free from hatred/ staying calm in confusing situations), *Avihimsa* (non-violence), *Khanti* (patience/ forgiveness), and *Avirodhana* (avoiding prejudice/fairness) (Roongrerngsuke & Liefoghe, 2012, pp. 22-23).

These principles were integrated into society by the king. These traits are the core of the Thai culture. The ideal personality consists of four states of consciousness; loving kindness, compassion, empathetic joy and neutrality when interacting with others (Roongrerngsuke & Liefoghe, 2012). Buddhism has guided the country's culture of harmony for centuries and that continues even today.

The country has cultural beliefs that limit open dialogue about leadership. One example is the word *Kengjai* which means showing respect for others and not hurting their feelings (Roongrerngsuke & Liefoghe, 2012). *Krengjai* limits the ability of workers to discuss leadership because the older leader has cultural authority as well as positional authority.

### **Thai Culture and Leadership**

Literature on leadership is constantly growing and new ideas are being added. Leadership development in Thailand has grown as foreign companies invest in manufacturing and other facilities there. Thailand also has a high proportion of female

managers in the workforce and extensive ethnic groups which can affect leadership.

“When entering leadership roles, Thai leaders need to hold on to the old traditions in order to have a mix of both effective Western practices and important Thai values” (Baczek, 2013, p. 9). An important dimension of leadership is emotional intelligence. Some leaders have learned from international exposure; working abroad or in training. Empathy also is one of the traits that work within the Thai culture (Baczek, 2013).

### **Thai Leaders**

Successful Thai leaders have to take into account the social systems, cultural beliefs, and values that have come from Buddhism, Hinduism, Chinese values, and western influences that have shaped the culture since the 1300s (Roongrerngsuke & Liefoghe, 2012). Thai leaders need to balance the traditional values of the culture with the changes that are occurring in current times. “Key western management practices such as the development of employee skills, knowledge management, and increasing technical and professional capabilities are common norms in modern Thai public and private organizations” (Pimpa, 2012, p. 36).

Thailand places the emphasis on long-term decisions over short-term decisions found in many western organizations. *Nam Jai* based on Karma translates to water from the heart. Expressed as acts of kindness to others without expecting anything in return (Roongrerngsuke & Liefoghe, 2012). *Morn Karn Klai* means looking ahead and Thai leaders’ strong ethics come from such traditional values (Pimpa, 2012). The language has a profound effect on leadership in the workplace.

Ford Motor Company, Honda, and Toyota are among a few of the large multinational companies that are manufacturing in Thailand. Their understanding of the effect of the Thai



culture on leadership will benefit their companies' successful endeavors in Thailand. The leadership in Thailand has a high proportion of women as managers (Selvarajah, Meyer, & Donovan, 2013). This difference also plays an important role when western businesses adapt their leadership styles. The culture and changes in today's leadership environment provide many challenges for future leaders.

### **Current Leadership Challenges**

Thailand has had difficulty with its leadership and this culminated into a military coup on May 22, 2014 (bangkokpost.com). This coup was brought on by a series of events. According to the Bangkok Post (2014), the initial struggles came when Thaksin Shinawata was ousted as prime minister of Thailand on September 19, 2006. He was ousted because of corruption, abuse of power and lack of integrity. This created major protests by the Red Shirts who supported the ousted prime minister and the Yellow Shirts who wanted him removed. According to the Bangkok Post (2014), the violence that surrounded the coup culminated in some deaths of Yellow Shirt protesters and that is when the military took control in 2014 (bangkokpost.com). This led to military rule until the new elections were held the next year. Television and radio were also put under restriction during the coup.

One year later, Yingluck Shinawatra was elected by popular vote to become the new prime minister. She ruled the country until 2013 and proposed legislation to allow her brother to be granted amnesty. He had a few policies that led to his being ousted as prime minister in 2006. This started a wave of protests by the Yellow Shirts (Upper and Middle class) against the Red Shirts who supported the prime minister. A series of violent confrontations ensued culminating into three Yellow Shirts being killed by shots fired into

their protest encampment. The military coup on May 22, 2014 declared martial law and the next the military coup occurred to abdicate Yingluck Shinwatra.

The military is promising elections after the one-year anniversary of King Bhumibol Adulyadej's passing and the country's mourning for him. The new king has spent a lot of his time in foreign countries and the question is whether that will affect his leadership style. His leadership style will guide the country into the elections the military has stated they will be held in late 2018. The Red Shirts and Yellow Shirts need to come together to create an environment of change for businesses to bring more manufacturing to Thailand. The political uncertainty makes it difficult to measure the business climate in Thailand. Corporations need to ascertain if the political environment is beneficial to them.

**Political unrest and the passing of the Thai King, Bhumibol Adulyadej.** The King ruled Thailand from 1927 to 2016. His passing created a tough time for his country. His son, Crown Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn is heir to the throne. He has been controversial as he has been married three times and individuals around him have been arrested for corruption. It should be mentioned that Lese Majeste law prevents any open discussion about the king or his heir. This law prevents any dissention towards the king and journalists and others have been thrown in jail for speaking out against him. The political unrest and passing of the King has created uncertainty in Thailand. Thai businesses need to have their leaders adapt to the changes and create an environment for international corporations to move to Thailand. The difficulty is adapting foreign leadership to the Thai culture.

## **Problem Statement**

The volume of current leadership research based on Thai leadership traits is very limited. The literature based on Asian leadership styles covers Japan and China in detail. However, Thailand is emerging as a manufacturing location for many large corporations such as Ford Motor Company and Toyota. Thailand has a deep cultural history that influences the work environment. Leadership has the challenge to adapt its style to local customs in order to achieve corporate goals (Steers, Sanchez-Runde, & Nardon, 2012). Companies must adapt to the local culture and remain globally competitive. Thailand has deep cultural values that affect how modern leadership can be applied.

There is limited research on characteristics of successful Thai leaders. Thai leadership characteristics that are influenced by international corporations and Thai cultural values that affect Thai leadership characteristics are also limited. According to Roongrerngsuke & Liefoghe, 2012, the older generation adapts western practices and adapts them to the Thai culture. The younger generations that are influenced by western cultural values are moving into mid-level leadership roles. The lack of literature of Thai leadership characteristics gives this study its focus. As Thailand emerges in Asia, the cultural changes will affect the leadership practices being used presently.

## **Purpose of the Study**

Thai leadership characteristics that develop employee and effective management skills are popular with management training and development. Less is known about how these practices are adapting to Thai culture (Pimpa, 2012). This study was designed to gain a better understanding of the relationship between Thai leadership and culture. This study focused on the successful leadership practices that the Thai leaders use. The purpose of the

study was to determine the leadership practices of successful Thai leaders. In addition, the study also aimed to determine how these leaders measure their success.

This study was guided by the following primary research questions:

Research Question 1: What strategies and practices do Thai leaders use in leading global organizations?

Research Question 2: What challenges do Thai leaders face in leading global organizations?

Research Question 3: How do Thai leaders define, measure, and track success in leading successful global organizations?

Research Question 4: What advice do Thai leaders have for others wanting to lead successful global organizations?

### **Significance of the Study**

The significance of the study lies in the contribution it makes in the area of western leadership styles and their adaptation into the Thai leadership culture. The limited research on Thai Leadership makes it difficult to gain insight on what successful leadership traits corporations should employ when looking to manufacture products or open offices in Thailand. International corporations can apply their understanding of western leadership to the findings in this research.

This research will benefit global organizations seeking to develop businesses within Thailand or doing business with Thailand. The changing global environment in manufacturing is benefiting Thailand as many large corporations open up businesses there. The findings of this research study will benefit both Thai and international companies and

the individuals who lead them. This will allow for better business practices for these organizations.

The research study will impact these groups:

- Current international corporations seeking to improve their relations with Thai leaders and their work force.
- The younger generations of Thai leaders who want to incorporate western leadership practices.
- Thai leaders who want to incorporate more western style practices but want to retain their cultural heritage.
- Thai professors who want research to incorporate western leadership into their curriculum that takes account of the Thai culture.
- The current political turmoil can adapt the information to create a positive culture for corporations wanting to manufacture in Thailand.

The goal of the study was to identify the Thai leadership traits that are adapted to western leadership models. These traits can benefit western leaders in their approach to doing business in Thailand. The current political environment and the new King can create an environment where businesses can change the current work environment.

### **Definition of Key Terms**

- *Bunkhun*: This Thai word means a moral obligation that supports interpersonal relationships; the stronger the obligations the better.
- *Mai Pen Rai*: It doesn't matter, it is okay, it is no big deal.
- *Global leadership*: an international alliance involving many different countries.

- *Krengjai*: This is being aware of other people's feelings and showing politeness, respect and consideration towards them.
- *Lese Majeste law*: The King shall be enthroned in a position of revered worship and shall not be violated. No person shall expose the King to any sort of accusation or action.
- *Metta*: Compassionate and loving kindness.
- *Morn Karn Klai*: Looking ahead (Pimpa, 2012).
- Thai. A native, descendant or inhabitant of Thailand.
- Thai leaders. Individual Thai managers, CEOs, or managers and supervisors who are in position to lead.

### **Limitations of the Study**

The following limitations were identified for this study.

1. The chosen Thai leaders had to speak English and it was assumed they were able to communicate their understanding of their leadership experiences. The language and cultural differences were also assumed to be understood by the chosen leaders during the interview.
2. The Thai leaders chosen for the interview would have common leadership experience with other Thai leaders with the same experience. Leaders would be selected from corporate leadership or private for profit businesses. Governmental employees including the military would not be chosen for this study.

3. The experience of the interviewer with the Thai culture would not influence or bias the leaders being interviewed. The familiarity of the Thai culture would be limited or masked from the interview subject to prevent a bias.
4. The 15 Thai leaders who would be interviewed would have their knowledge contribute to the limited body of knowledge in the current literature. The leaders chosen for the interview would be from a diverse group of businesses.
5. The sample group might not cover the majority of successful leadership traits of Thai leaders in business. The limited number of leaders interviewed and their geographical area limited the scope of leadership traits covered.
6. Cultural challenges such as conflict avoidance from the interview subject, denial of participation from the interview process. The culture could affect the answers that the principal investigator might miss.
7. The principle investigator does not speak Thai but would greet the interviewee with the proper Thai greeting.

## **Summary**

Thailand has deep rooted culture that affects leadership traits. Understanding the cultural past will benefit companies that want to do business in Thailand. According to the United Nations (U.N.), "Thailand is focusing on becoming a first world nation that can sustain long term growth" (United Nations, 2017, para. 1).

Thailand has undergone significant leadership changes since its King, Ranma 9, Bhumibol Adulyadej, passed away. The military still has control over the country. The

king's son, Ranma 10, Maha Vajiralongkorn Bodindradebayavarangkun will take over the country after his father's funeral in late October 2017.

To add further political unrest the former prime minister of Thailand, Yingluck Shinawatra is under trial for her rice subsidy that set prices to a minimum standard which cost the country billions of dollars. The trial outcome and the changing of the King in Thailand could create more turmoil in the country. This is putting more pressure on the country to expand its economy and continue economic growth. Thai leadership can create an environment to bring businesses to Thailand.

### **Organization of the Study**

This study is a qualitative study that is organized into five chapters. The first three chapters present the background and purpose for the study. The last two chapters will present the data, the data analysis, summary, recommendations, and the conclusions drawn from the study.

Chapter 1 introduces the research study and presents the problem, the research questions, the significance of the study, the limitations of the study, and the definition of the key terms used in the study.

Chapter 2 examines historical and current literature on the various elements of leadership. The literature review was used to develop an understanding of leadership and was then tied to the purpose of the study. The purpose of the study was to examine the successful traits of Thai leaders who have adapted both western and Thai leadership traits.

Chapter 3 deals with the process for collecting data and the methodology for the research study. The chapter examines how the data would be collected and securely



stored. This chapter also discusses the issues of protecting human subjects from possible harm the subjects could face because of their participation in the study.

Chapter 4 analyzes the gathered data. Also, the chapter discusses the findings of the study. This is done by looking, in turn, at the variables for each research question. The findings are displayed in both verbal and graphical forms.

Chapter 5 summarizes the study by drawing conclusions from the research findings. Also, limitations and suggestions for further research are outlined. The chapter makes suggestions for further research to enhance the knowledge in the field of leadership.

## **Chapter 2: Review of the Literature**

Thailand has been under monarchy rule since 1351 during the Ayutthayan period. The monarchy was the provider for the people and their protector. The leadership of Thailand has also been influenced by Buddhist values. The country has never been invaded or occupied by a foreign country. In the 18th century the King of Thailand sent out his family members to learn western culture. Foreign culture started to influence the Thai culture but after World War II the United States became a significant influence with its aid programs to help rebuild the country after the war.

This research paper is focused on Thailand and the leadership characteristics found in the leadership there. This study will look at the most widely used leadership theories and apply them to the ones used in Thailand. Leadership theories and Thai cultural norms are reviewed to determine inferences in cultural leadership practices in Thailand.

### **Leadership Changes in Thailand**

Understanding the concept of Thai leadership, the roles and responsibilities of leaders and followers, certainly requires an in-depth knowledge of how its social system, cultural beliefs, and values have been influenced by Hinduism and Brahmanism, Buddhism, Animism, Chinese values and Westernization from the thirteenth century until nowadays. (Roongrerngsuke & Liefoghe, 2012, p. 34)

Thai culture has had many influences that have affected and guided the current Thai leaders. The king is referred to as Pho Khun, which means father in Thai. (Roongrerngsuke & Liefoghe, 2012). According to Roongrerngsuke and Liefoghe (2012), "the leadership traits before western and foreign influences were individualist, self-reliant; yet still seeking support from clients or cliques, status-concerned, solo artist, more than team player,

relationship-oriented, more than task-oriented, peacemaker, and conflict-avoiding” (pp. 34-35).

Western influences started to have an effect on Thailand in 1782. The King sent out his court to learn other cultures. The modern era started in 1932 while Western influences really started in the 1950s with aid to help the newly formed Government (Roongrerngsuke & Liefoghe, 2012). These changes have helped develop more western leadership traits.

These leadership traits according to Roongrerngsuke, and Liefoghe (2012) are:

- Ego-oriented
- Democratic, participative
- Team player
- Task based, more than relationship-based
- Performance oriented, anti-favoritism
- Confrontational. (p. 35)

These traits had to merge with the Thai culture that is opposite of the western styles. According to Pimpa, (2012), Thai people have a high uncertainty avoidance characteristic. Thai society and management will not take risks if the outcomes or methods are uncertain. This is different than the above list but clearly shows the difficulty of applying western-based leadership theories without more research. The Thai culture is full of words that influence their societal and leadership values.

Thai language influences the leadership and society overall with words that define how they interact with each other. *Bunkhun*, a Thai word that means a moral obligation that supports interpersonal relationships, the stronger the obligations the better (Pimpa,

2012; Roongrerngsuke & Liefoghe, 2012). The lasting effect is that the person receiving the support will be waiting to pay back the person. *Krengjai* is the reluctance to impose on someone, to have empathy to the person from whom they are asking a favor. A worker might be reluctant to ask a superior for help is one application of this word.

(Roongrerngsuke & Liefoghe, 2012). These two words are conflicting in western culture. This application of culture conflicts with western influences.

The modernization of leadership in Thailand has many cultural influences that need to be addressed. According to Pimpa (2012), “Key western management practices such as the development of employee skills, knowledge management and increasing technical and professional capabilities are common norms in modern Thai public and private organizations” (p. 36).

Geert Hofstede did research on Thailand in the late 1960s. “He identified four dimensions on which national cultures differ, Power-Distance, Uncertainty Avoidance, Individualism-Collectivism, and Masculinity-Femininity” (Hallinger & Kantamara, 2010, p. 192).

- The high power distance characterizing Thai culture creates a high deference (*greng jai*) towards those of senior status in all social relationships. This implies that senior officials should be making decisions based on their authority (Hallinger & Kantamara, 2010).
- The collectivist facet in Thai culture shows that Thai people have a more *we* verses *I* in making changes. When making changes the social group will give guidance to the individual (Hallinger & Kantamara, 2010).

- The high-level of uncertainty avoidance means Thai people are strongly socialized to follow group rules (Hallinger & Kantamara, 2010).
- The feminine dimension places a high value on social relationships, to seek harmony and avoid conflict. High conflict avoidance reduces the effectiveness of change since conflict happens during change (Hallinger & Kantamara, 2010).

“Thailand has the lowest masculinity ranking among the Asian countries at 34 compared to the Asian average of 53 and world average of 50” (Pimpa, 2012, para. 3). The younger generations are more influenced by western culture and business practices but the avoidance of conflict and uncertainty remain in the culture (Pimpa, 2012).

### **Leadership Theories**

Leadership theories are prevalent in western culture and the number of them is significant. Leadership theories that are not based on western research are not as well studied. The intent of this study is to discuss a few of the prolific western leadership theories as they pertain to the Thai leadership styles. These styles will include trait theory, style theory, transformational leadership, transactional leadership, situational leadership and servant leadership. According to Yukl (2002), leadership has had many definitions over the years and has changed as time and the need to define it. “Leadership is culturally contingent. That is, views of the importance and value of leadership vary across cultures” (Northouse, 2013, p. 5). Now more than ever, an understanding of foreign leadership styles and how they align with the western styles is needed. Thailand is emerging as a major manufacture in Southern Asia. This study will address the western styles of leadership and then explore the applications of western theories to leadership in Thailand.

**Trait theory.** “The trait perspective suggests that certain individuals have special innate or inborn characteristics or qualities that make them leaders, and that it is these qualities that differentiate them from non-leaders” (Northouse, 2013, p. 7). These characteristics include physical factors such as height, intelligence and personality. This was one of the first approaches to study leadership and according to Yukl (2002); the goal was to find the traits that guaranteed a successful leader. “If the leader is endowed with superior qualities that differentiate him from his followers, it should be possible to identify these qualities” (Bass & Stodgill, 1990, p. 38).

“Hundreds of trait studies were conducted during the 1930s and 1940s to discover these elusive qualities, but this massive research effort failed to find any traits that would guarantee leadership success” (Yukl, 2002, p. 12). Trait theory fell out of favor until Lord, de Vader, and Alliger (1986) analyzed the data from Mann and Stogdill. They found that the data were less positive than their re-analysis of the data from Stogdill and Mann. Mann reported the median ranking score was .38 for intelligence and .24 for masculinity-femininity. Lord, et al. (1986) advised, “corrections to attenuation raised values to .52 for intelligence and .34 for masculinity-femininity and .21 for adjustment” (p. 34). The conclusion based on the data is that negative evaluations from the trait theory show personality traits can be linked to leadership effectiveness.

According to Northouse (2013),

The trait theory is alive and well. It began with an emphasis on identifying the qualities of great person, shifted to include the impact of situations on leadership, and, currently, has shifted back to reemphasize the critical role of traits in effective leadership processes. (p. 211)

Trait theory has strengths and criticisms that are important to know when applying the theory. Perceptions of leaders are part of the strengths of the trait theory. Leaders take control of situations and followers look up to them to make the right decisions. Evidence shows traits do matter according to Kirkpatrick and Locke (1991). Strengths of leaders are their drive, desire for high achievement, ambition to get ahead, a lot of energy, and tenacity are five traits that emphasize the strengths of the trait theory according to Kirkpatrick and Locke (1991). These traits benefit a leader regardless of the situation.

Northouse (2013) advises that one of its strengths is that trait theory focuses on the traits that make a leader and not the situation that would require certain traits. Having certain traits is an advantage for individuals with them; traits like desire to lead, self-confidence, honesty and integrity are a few of these traits. (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991). These traits provide an advantage when looking for emerging leaders. Businesses can use these traits to hire prospective leaders and two traits can be taught, knowledge of the industry and technical knowledge. (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991). The use of the trait theory when selecting leaders has advantages but also has limitations.

Trait theory has limitations that reduce the theory's effectiveness. One is that the list is not definitive with the exact traits that are effective for all leaders. (Northouse, 2013). Leadership traits that work well in the U.S. are not as effective in Thailand. Culture has an effect on the traits that work. According to Northouse (2013) other weaknesses include how these traits affect the outcomes and how individual are trained to develop the traits that are missing. These traits are useful in selecting individuals for effective leadership traits in business.

**Style theory.** Style theory, according to Northouse (2013), defines style approach as an emphasis on the behavior of leaders; that is, how they act and what they do with their subordinates in various situations. Northouse (2013) advises that research studying the styles approach found that leadership is composed of two basic behaviors. These are task and relationship behaviors with task behaviors focusing on reaching goals and relationship behaviors focusing on the interactions of subordinates among themselves and with leadership. According to Yukl (2002), there are three types of leadership behaviors. The first is task-oriented behavior, where managers do not work on the same things as their subordinates. Leaders are focused on tasks that increase productivity like scheduling and forecasting work. The second behavior, according to Yukl (2002), is relationship-oriented behavior that focuses on being supportive and helpful. This can include showing appreciation for employees, developing trust, showing concern for employees and helping with career advancement. Yukl (2002) added a third behavior not included in Northouse (2013) that is participative behaviors. Examples of this would include having the group make decisions, open communications, and to facilitate conflict resolutions.

In the 1940s and 1950s, two studies were conducted that looked into leadership behaviors, one was at Michigan State and the other was at Ohio State. These studies were small group studies, observing the leader's behavior as it impacted these small groups (Cartwright & Zander, 1968; Likert, 1961). According to Yukl (2002) the Ohio state study focused on categories that are relevant to leadership. The Michigan state study identified "relationships among leader behavior, group processes and measures of group performance" (Yukl, 2002, p. 52). Bowers and Seashore (1966) further developed the studies into four behaviors that are essential for leadership. These are:



- Support – behavior that enhances someone else’s personal worth and importance.
- Interaction facilitation – Behaviors that encourage members of the group to develop close, mutually satisfying relationships.
- Goal emphasis – behavior that stimulates an enthusiasm for meeting the group’s goal or achieving excellent performance.
- Work facilitation – behavior that helps achieve goal attainment by such activities as scheduling, coordination, planning and by providing resources such as tools, materials and technical knowledge. (p. 404)

According to Bowers and Seashore (1966), each of these concepts also appears in the Ohio State and Michigan state studies. The study also points out that the leadership using the models may come from informal leadership within the group. Effectiveness of the group can be enhanced by this but does not limit the need for a designated leader. Bowers and Seashore (1966) concluded that the characteristics are predictive for successful leaders and different aspects of performance of peers are associated with each characteristic are important when using this approach.

Northouse (2013) advises that the strengths of the theory are looking at the behaviors of leaders and outcomes from them, the early studies were substantiated with other research, leaders need to be task and relationship builders in their leadership styles and leaders can learn about how their message is received and make changes to enhance their effectiveness. Northouse (2013) concluded that the weaknesses of the theory are that the styles are not directly related to performance outcomes, similar to trait theory, there is

also not a universal style that is effective universally, and that it points toward high task and high relationship oriented behaviors are always the most effective.

**Transformational leadership.** “One of the most current and popular approaches to leadership that has been the focus of much research since the early 1980s is the transformational approach” (Northouse, 2013, p. 185). Northouse goes further, stating “transformational leadership is concerned with emotions, values, ethics, standards and long-term goals including assessing follower’s motives, satisfying their needs and treating them as full human beings” (Northouse, 2013, p. 185).

According to Bass, transformational leadership refers to the leader moving the follower beyond immediate self-interests through idealized influence (charisma). It elevates the follower’s level of maturity and ideals as well as concerns for achievement, self-actualization, and the well-being of others, the organization, and society (Bass, 2010). Yukl (2002) adds that, “transforming leadership appeals to the moral values of followers in an attempt to raise their consciousness about ethical issues and to mobilize their energy and resources to reform institutions” (p. 241).

Burns (1978) was the first to look at the relationship between leadership and fellowship and the commonalities between them. This included transactional and transformational leadership and how they coexist. Essentially, Burns advised: that effective leaders need to have an understanding of what motivates their followers. “Individualized consideration is displayed when leaders pay attention to the development needs of followers and support and coach the development of their followers” (Bass, 2010, p. 11). The leader is taking care of the employee’s self-interests as a means to enhance overall work performance. With transactional leadership, followers have more loyalty, are

more trusting, and have more respect for the leader than was originally expected (Yukl, 2002). This allows risk taking by followers and allows for personal growth according to (Avolio & Bass, 2002).

Transformational behaviors according to Northouse (2013) and Yukl (2002) are idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration.

***Idealized influence.*** Idealized influence can be described as the emotional part of leadership where leaders act as positive role models with high ethical and moral standards that are respected and emulated by their followers (Northouse, 2013). This leads to followers focusing on the vision and goals instead of self-focused goals. “At the highest level of morality are selfless ideal causes to which leaders and followers may dedicate themselves” (Bass, 2010, p. 12).

***Inspirational motivation.*** According to Northouse (2013), inspirational motivation is associated with leaders who create a vision through clear communication, shared vision, and outcomes that inspire followers to become more committed to the organizational goals. Transformational leaders inspire motivation through focusing on advancing subordinates and utilizing positive leadership. Clear visions and outcomes enhance the motivation process that is part of transformational leadership.

***Intellectual stimulation.*** Intellectual stimulation as described by Northouse is “Leadership that stimulates followers to be creative and innovative and to challenge their own beliefs and values as well as those of the leader and the organization” (Northouse, 2013, p. 193). Leadership that uses transformational leadership techniques challenge subordinates to enhance their work performance and personal development. Stimulating

the subordinates is part of this process and enhances to transformational changes to the organization and the individual.

***Individualized consideration.*** Individualized consideration is “representative of leaders who provide a supportive climate in which they listen carefully to the individual needs of the followers (Northouse, 2013, p. 193). The individualized development of subordinates encourages growth within the organization and enhances their personal growth. Management walking around talking to each employee is a good example of this in action.

Subordinates whose leaders employ the transformational leadership approach are more engaged and have higher results. The subordinates share the vision of the leader for the organization and can work together to achieve the goals of the leadership. Trust in the leader enhances transformational leadership effectiveness. Transformational leadership has much strength according to Northouse (2013). These are:

- It has been the focal point for large body of leadership research since its introduction in the 1970s.
- Leadership will be seen as being in the forefront of positive changes and growth for the organization.
- The leaders and followers are actively involved in the organization. The followers have needs are addressed and motivates them to achieve more for themselves and the organization. (p. 201)

Some detractors find transformational leadership to have some weaknesses in certain areas. Northouse (2013) describes these as:

- The exact parameters of transformational leadership are hard to define and the four influencers are overlapping
- The instrument to test transformational leadership has been challenged for its validity. (pp. 202-203)

Transformational leadership is seen as leadership traits not behaviors. This is not a valid argument as transformational leadership uses positive behaviors to create changes within the organization. The leader can also be seen as creating the vision and directing the subordinates. This is also not valid, as transformational leaders need to develop subordinates to promote the positive outcomes for the individual and the organization.

**Transactional leadership.** Bass (2010) defines transactional leadership as “the exchange relationship between leader and follower to meet their own self-interests” (p. 10). This is a contingency-based reward system that rewards behavior of certain pre-determined criteria are met. Transactional leadership differs from transformational leadership in that it does not focus on individual needs or personal development of subordinates (Northouse, 2013). Yukl (2002) adds, “transactional leadership involves an exchange process that may result in follower compliance with leader requests but is not likely to generate enthusiasm and commitment to task objectives” (p. 253).

Two leadership behaviors that are linked to transactional leadership (Avolio & Bass, 2002; Northouse, 2013; Yukl, 2002) are the contingent reward and management by exception. Contingent reward, according to Northouse (2003), is the reward that is based on expected performance by the subordinate. Subordinates might agree to complete a certain set of tasks or workload to achieve a raise or advancement. Management-by-

exception, according to Northouse (2013), is leadership that uses negative reinforcement to achieve results. This can be micro-management from a supervisor to correct mistakes; this is the active management by exception (Yukl, 2002). Passive management by exception would include a manager giving a subordinate a poor evaluation on his job performance or one who waits until performance has fallen to address the problem. These two traits are opposite of transformational leadership and reduce performance from subordinates.

**Situational leadership.** Situational leadership or theory, according to Bass and Stogdill (1990), is that situational demands are the guiding factor to determine who will come out and become the leader. The leader is a product of the event or situation that created an opportunity not a trait. According to Bass and Stogdill (1990), this theory is favored in the United States where leadership is developed not born. The situational approach highlights contextual factors that influence the leadership process that can include: past and present skill sets of followers, type of work performed, and the environment (Yukl, 2002).

Directive and supportive dimensions in situational leadership need to be applied during different situations (Northouse, 2013). Military leadership during peacetime operates under different leadership than during times of war. The stresses of war can ruin the military career of some leaders and develop careers of leaders like General Norman Schwarzkopf. Peacetime military uses a more supportive dimension and directive as situations arise. Two different situations where the same leader needs to use the situation to dictate what style is required to achieve the mission goals. According to Northouse (2013), the situational leadership model was developed by Blanchard, Zigarmi, & Zigarmi

(1985), based on the original model developed by Hersey and Blanchard (1969). The model has directive and supportive behaviors. Directive behaviors set goals for the followers to complete, define expectations, and job assignments usually in one-way communications style. The supportive behavior is a two-way process allowing followers to participate in the processes by adding or giving input to solve problems, support the group employee, and participate in the work processes. The behavior of the leader is based on the follower's position in the model.

Leadership styles can be classified into four distinct categories of directive and supportive behaviors (Northouse, 2013). The leadership categories for the model are:

- Coaching style - High directive and high supportive behavior
- Directing style – High directive and low supportive behavior
- Supporting style – High supportive and low directive behavior
- Delegating Style – Low supportive and low directive behavior. (Northouse, 2013, p. 100)

These styles are impacted by the follower's skill level and competence. This changes over time and the leader needs to adapt to the style that fits the situation (Northouse, 2013).

Coaching style is characterized by the leader's use of clear communication and direction utilizing encouragement and also getting input from the followers. The leader has the final decisions while maintaining a supportive behavior (Northouse, 2013). Directing style, which is characterized by the use of a more in depth set of instructions for the followers is about the work goals. Support is minimized and the leader acts more in a supervisory capacity (Northouse, 2013). The supportive style is characterized by the leader giving the followers less direction to achieve their tasks. This style relies on the leader to

guide the followers through listening, using praise, and giving feedback (Northouse, 2013). The delegating style is characterized by the leader giving less direction and support to the followers and by giving more autonomy for them to make decisions. The followers are more autonomous to complete the tasks with the leader participating only as needed (Northouse, 2013).

**Servant leadership.** According to Yukl (2002), Robert Greenleaf proposed the concept of servant leadership where the leader's responsibility is to service the followers' needs. The leader develops an understanding of the followers to develop them through nurturing and empowering them. Northouse (2013) calls it "a paradox in that the approach runs counter to common sense" (p, 219). The leader must enable the followers and not govern them and social responsibility is paramount for the organization. (Yukl, 2002)

Ten characteristics that define and are key to servant leadership, according to Spears and Lawrence (2002), are:

- Listening – communicating is two-way with the leader listening first, being receptive and acknowledge and validate the viewpoint of the follower.
- Empathy – putting himself or herself in position of the follower to better understand their position.
- Healing – to have concern about the welfare of the followers. Emotional issues are part of the healing process a servant leader help with.
- Awareness – attunement to the work environment by the leader and their effect on it. This is self- awareness in the emotional intelligence model.
- Persuasion – influencing the followers to complete tasks without coercion.



- Conceptualization – the ability to create a vision with the followers that is clear and enables the followers understand the goals of the organization.
- Foresight – the ability to use past experiences, present to predict the future of the organization. What have they done, what are they doing and how does this affect the future of the organization.
- Stewardship – taking responsibility to ensure they are responsible for their leadership decisions. These decisions are made for the greater good of the followers and organization.
- Commitment to the growth people – places an emphasis on each followers uniqueness and develops a career plan for with them
- Building community – developing a sense of community with the followers and organization where they can feel safe and grow within this environment.

(p. 34)

“Servant leadership works best when leaders are altruistic and have a strong motivation and deep-seated interest in helping others” (Northouse, 2013, p. 233).

### **Decision Making**

“Important decisions in organizations typically require the support and authorization of many different people at different levels of management and in different sub units of the organization” (Yukl, 2002, p. 25). Leadership faces challenges daily to make decisions and leadership style will dictate how they are made. According to Yukl (2002), “a lot of the decisions managers make daily are process oriented and have low risk solutions that will benefit most of their followers”(p. 26). “Simple contexts are characterized by stability and clear cause-and-effect relationships that are easily

discernable by everyone. Often, the right answer is self-evident by everyone” (Snowden & Boone, 2007, p. 4). The majority of decisions according to Yukl (2002) and Snowden and Boone (2007), are simple matters that make sense for the manager and followers.

Decision making becomes more complicated when more parties are involved such as organizational change, and creating new products or services. Decision making is considered a process. Leaders who are successful view decision making as a process and not an event that is singular in nature (Garvin & Roberto, 2001). Tannenbaum and Schmidt (1958) point out that behavior and the situation have an impact on the outcomes of decisions.

**Decision making styles.** Decision-making, according to Tannenbaum and Schmidt (1958), is viewed in terms of a series of behaviors. There are several behaviors a leader might use when making a decision based on the circumstances. These are:

- The manager makes the decision and announces it.
- The manager “sells” the decision.
- The manager presents ideas, invites questions.
- The manager present a tentative decision subject to change
- The manager presents the problem, gets suggestions, and then makes the decision.
- The manager defines the limits and requests the group to make a decision.
- The manager permits the group to make decision within prescribed limits.

(pp. 97-98)

These behaviors are common among the various groups of leaders. Successful leaders understand these behaviors and that certain forces shape them (Tannenbaum &

Schmidt, 1958). These forces are (a) found in leaders, (b) found in subordinates, and (c) found in situations. The forces found in leaders are (a) their value system, (b) confidence in subordinates, (c) personal leadership inclinations, and (d) personal feelings of security in certain situations (Tannenbaum & Schmidt, 1958, p. 99). Tannenbaum and Schmidt (1958) further add that

leaders bring these and other highly personal variables to each situation they face.

If they can see them as forces which, consciously or unconsciously influence their behavior, they can better understand what makes them prefer to act in a given way.

(p. 99).

Culture adds another variable that has influence on leadership decision-making. The leader needs to make decisions that are aligned with the company's goals and works within the society in which the company operates. Other approaches are effective as well.

Snowden and Boone (2007) use the Cynfin Framework "which allows the executives to see things from new viewpoints, assimilate complex concepts, and address real world problems and opportunities" (p. 1). The Cynfin Framework sorts the issues facing the leaders into five contexts defined by the nature of the relationship between cause and effect. Four of these simple, complicated, complex and chaotic, require leaders to diagnose situations and to act in contextually appropriate ways. The fifth, disorder, applies when it is unclear which of the other four contexts is predominant (Snowden & Boone, 2007).

These contexts require awareness from the leader to know what actions are required for the appropriate situation. What is important is the order in which the leader uses the Framework. The simple context is "characterized by stability and clear cause and effect relationships that are easily discernable by everyone. Often the right answer is self-evident

and undisputed” (Snowden & Boone, 2007, p. 2) when dealing in the domain of best practices, the context of the realm is in the “known knowns” (p. 2) this style uses the command and control style effectively.

Complicated context is the domain of experts which “may contain multiple right answers, and though there is a clear relationships between cause and effect, not everyone can see it” (Snowden & Boone, 2007, p. 3). This is the realm of the “known unknowns” (Snowden & Boone, 2007, p. 3) decisions in this realm can take time and require expertise to find solutions. The complex content, “unknown unknowns” (Snowden & Boone, 2007, p. 6) is the domain of emergence and “instead of attempting to impose a course of action, leaders must patiently allow the path forward to reveal itself” (Snowden & Boone, 2007, p. 6). This complexity is different and “leaders who try and impose order in a complex context will fail but those who set the stage, step back a bit, allow patterns to emerge, and determine which ones are desirable” (Snowden & Boone, 2007, p. 6). Complex style requires patience and understanding of the issues to allow the leader to stay the course as the answers come to light.

The last domain is the chaotic context that is in the rapid response domain. This is the realm of “unknowables” (Snowden & Boone, 2007, p. 6). “Searching for the right answers would be pointless: the relationships between cause and effect are impossible to determine because they shift constantly and no manageable patterns exist – only turbulence” (Snowden & Boone, 2007, p. 6). Leaders need to “discover patterns and stanch the bleeding” (Snowden & Boone, 2007, p. 6) and this again requires patience and an understanding of the processes to be able to discover the patterns. “truly adept leaders

know not only how to identify the context they're working in but also how to change their behaviors to match" (Snowden & Boone, 2007, p. 6).

Four leadership styles from Brousseau, Driver, Hourihan, and Larsson (2006) add to the model above. The four styles are decisive, flexible, hierarchic, and integrative. Decisive is direct, efficient and comes across as task oriented decision making style. Fast paced decisions keep the processes moving along to make deadlines. Flexible is still focused on fast paced decisions but the manager can adapt their decisions to make changes mid process to keep things moving. This style comes across as social and responsive. (Brousseau et al., 2006). Hierarchic style requires a lot of information and discussion among decision makers. This style does not rush into the decision and comes across as highly intellectual. The last style is integrative and uses a lot of information but does not use the single best solution to the problem thinking. The manager will look at all the big picture when making decisions and use many different ideas to create a solution and this comes across as highly participative.

Managers tend to have their leadership style transform over time and the ones that adapt have better chances to advance their careers. Furthermore, our data show that in both the public and the private modes, decision styles tend to cluster early in the management hierarchy. Somewhere between the manager and director levels, executives find that approaches that used to work are no longer so effective. (Brousseau et al., 2006, p. 111)

Managers who adapt their styles as they advance up the management ladder, according to the article, need to become more adaptive in their style to have the integrative style benefits them the most.

## **Leadership Practices in Asia**

Leadership practices in Asian cultures around Thailand are important to understand what influences they provide Thai leaders. Japan has different leadership practices which are affected by the culture. According to Fukushige and Spicer (2007), Japanese leaders socialize after work with their subordinates. This allows them to better understand each other. The subordinates also stay in the office until the leader leaves. This creates issues with their subordinates who are finished with work but cannot leave until the leader does. Furthermore, Fukushige and Spicer (2007) suggest that a more direct approach to giving directions leads to a reduced amount of overtime. Protective leadership along with gender equality was a preferred practice in their findings.

According to Steers et al. (2012), Japanese leaders are expected to create beneficial relationships where both the leader and the subordinate have matching destinies. Chinese leaders are supposed to cultivate relationships with subordinates to show concern towards them and their personal lives. Steers et al. (2012) also went on to add Malaysian leaders; they have humility, are unassertive and distinguished. These leadership practices are based in cultural values of the respective country. Changes in the global environment are affecting leadership practices. Selvarajah et al. (2013) found that younger managers from China are breaking from the collectivist management approach and are more focused on their personal advancement. They also are less likely to follow their cultural norms of Confucian philosophy when dealing with their subordinates.

These differences in culture and the modern changes to leadership across Asia are creating challenges for leadership practices in Thailand. Selvarajah et al. (2013) advise that an understanding of the Thai culture is necessary to be an effective global leader in

Thailand. The monarchy and the Buddhist religion have strong influences on the cultures and leadership practices. Avoidance of personal conflict and the influence of other cultures create leadership challenges.

### **An Inventory of Cultural Norms in Thailand**

- Thailand is a monarchy and Thai people revere their king.
- Thailand is about 95% Buddhist of the Theravada branch.
- Smiling and being polite are Thai customs.
- They avoid uncomfortable situations.
- Personal space is important and an elder should never be touched on his head.
- Elders have reverence in the Thai culture, they are treated with respect and younger individuals show respect and should not use your fingers to point at them.
- Greeting people is with closed hands in a prayer like motion.
- Shoes are left outside and slippers or flip flops are used outside in the backyard.

These cultural norms are practiced throughout Thailand and localized norms are not represented. These norms should be followed when in Thailand and will earn respect toward the person using them. Respect toward Thai elders and never disrespecting the monarchy are vital in Thailand.

### **Leadership Frameworks**

Leadership styles differ per individual and that creates a need for a variety of frameworks to apply the different leadership styles. A common theme in leadership frameworks includes leaders taking accountability for their actions and some level of emotional intelligence. According to Goleman (2000), "Effective leaders use a variety of

approaches, they combine a myriad of frameworks, styles, behaviors and ideas that can be used effectively as needed given distinct situations. Although difficult to implement, mastery (which can be learned) yields significant outcomes” (p. 81). Leadership research about how emotional intelligence effects the leader’s ability has increased in the last decade. “A significant body of research has been building over the past two decades that has found these emotional intelligence abilities to be associated with a range of important work-related behaviors” (Clarke, 2010, p. 5). The need for leaders to adapt and become competitive in the global marketplace aligns with need for leaders to develop their employees instead of directing them.

### **The Three Imperatives**

The Three Imperatives framework breaks down management into three distinct areas. The manager needs to be willing to make personal changes to become more effective (Hill & Lineback, 2011). These three imperatives are: managing yourself, the network, and the team. According to Hill and Lineback (2011), working on the self-development is the start of the process by understanding what challenges face the manager internally, taking this understanding and realize personal change is imperative and that this journey most managers fail to complete. This framework has similarities in emotional intelligence where self-awareness, motivation skills and self-regulation are part of the development process (Goleman,2000). The changes that are required using the three imperatives are transformational and, according to Hill and Lineback (2011), are similar to large events in life like marriage, graduating college or having a child. This transition develops management and leadership skills to lead team to higher performance. The



ability to influence their subordinates to achieve the goals of the business increases with the manager's development if the manager continues the journey (Hill & Lineback, 2011).

Years of experience do not create a great manager and the culture of the business can create roadblocks that limit the manager's learning. Seniority, old boy network, and limited hours and training are a few corporate cultures that limit manager's growth. According to Hill and Lineback (2011), years of management do not make a manager effective. The managers need to be aware of their personal strengths and weaknesses and work to continually develop themselves. This is why "corporations have a wide array of mastery among managers" (Hill & Lineback, 2011, p. 7). The statement: "The work of managers seems so fragmented, improvisational, and superficial because it embodies a panoply of paradoxes' contains contradictory elements but is true none the less" (Hill & Lineback, 2011, p.16). The paradoxes are:

- You are responsible for what others do.
- To focus on the work, you must focus on people doing the work.
- You must both develop your people and evaluate them.
- You must make your group a cohesive team without losing sight of the individuals in it.
- To manage your group, you must manage the larger context beyond your group.
- You must focus on today and tomorrow.
- You must execute and innovate.
- You must sometimes do harm in order to do a greater good.

(Hill & Lineback, 2011, pp, 16-20)

Each of these paradoxes has an effect on the leadership styles of the manager that creates their unique management style. Each is important to understanding how and why they affect a leader's styles.

**You are responsible for what others do.** Managers are accountable for the performance for themselves as well as their team. Being responsible for others actions creates stress for a manager. “Being responsible for others is flawed” as Hill and Lineback (2011, p.16) point out but to be successful the manager needs to work with subordinates. Treating the subordinate as an important part of the business process that has similarities of employee engagement as mentioned in Drive by Pink (2009).

**To focus on the work, you must focus on people doing the work.** Managers, for the most part, think that they manage the work and that is their main focus but influencing their team to get the work done needs to become their main focus (Hill & Lineback, 2011). Directing their team by giving orders about what needs to be accomplished and use of negative feedback will reduce their team’s effectiveness. Pink (2009) advises that purpose and praise are the most effective ways to create the teamwork that is the focus of this paradox.

**You must both develop your people and evaluate them.** The managers are the leaders of the group and develop their team to become productive. They are also the ones in most corporations that have to evaluate their team at least once a year. According to Hill and Lineback (2011), the manager has to be able to develop a team member and also be able to judge them even if that means to let them go. This paradox is very challenging to a manager that has invested time and emotion into that employee. Corporations that have human resources can alleviate some of the issues but the manager still has to deal with the

individual through the process of reprimanding the employee and ultimately firing the individual if that is the end result.

**You must make your group a cohesive team without losing sight of the individual.** A group of workers under a manager are not necessarily a team. A team need to work together within their individual strengths and weaknesses. “A team needs to be diverse as well-members must bring different competencies, experiences, mind-sets, and individual interests-if the team is to be innovative” (Hill & Lineback, 2011, p. 18). The team can be developed using purpose towards the team’s goals as mentioned by Pink (2009). Giving the team a sense of purpose will focus them on the goals of the team and how each individual team member benefits the teams overall.

**To manage your group, you must manage the larger context beyond your group.** The manager’s team accomplishments play on the larger picture of the organization. The manager’s teamwork needs to align with the larger goals of the organization. A manager needs to look outside of his team to ensure these questions and more are answered. Hill and Lineback (2011) advise that “managers need to challenge or influence their superiors beyond their own area” (p. 127) and managers should not be limited in their areas of influence to their direct team and follow orders from above without considering the bigger picture.

**You must focus on today and tomorrow.** Time and resources are limited and the manager needs to allocate them as needed. Hill and Lineback (2011) advise that tradeoffs are inevitable but a manager that is successful will work to develop the future as well as keep the performance up short term. The determination of the use of resources might be influenced from outside the manager’s team. The greater good of the organization might

take precedence but as mentioned in the last paradox a manager needs to be able to challenge their superiors.

**You must execute and innovate.** A manager needs to complete his tasks and also be able to make changes that will benefit his team in the long-term. A manager needs to be the one producing the change to create innovation but also the person who keeps the process efficient. “We believe that leading and managing are the equally essential and actually work together” (Hill & Lineback, 2011, p. 19). The manager wears the same hat when making changes in the processes of the team as well as making changes in team members. A manager needs to keep the moral and innovation within the team as changes are being made.

**You must sometimes do harm in order to do a greater good.** Managers constantly face decisions that can affect the team atmosphere in positive and negative ways. Reduction of employees, cutting the budget of the team, and being able to promote a few of the team can be some of the difficult choices a manager has to make (Hill & Lineback, 2011). The manager has to decide what tradeoffs are the best for the team and this can also be influenced by the organizational needs. Managers need to develop strategies to mitigate most of the negative effects on the team to keep up performance and morale.

Applying these paradoxes to a manager’s individual style will help him to enhance his management effectiveness. According to Hill and Lineback (2011), the paradoxes will be encountered daily by a boss and they point out that: there is never a full resolution to all of the paradoxes, judgement from the manager is the best course of action, the paradoxes are why managers have a stressful work environment and why managers are necessary, and why managers take years to develop and require practice to succeed.

Using the Eight Paradoxes, a breakdown of the three imperatives can provide the foundation to create successful managers.

- Managing yourself starts with self-awareness part of the three imperatives. “What you think and feel, the beliefs and values that drive your actions, matter to the people you must influence” (Hill & Lineback, 2011, p. 33). The Eight Paradoxes are filled with influencers that a manager needs to work with and self-awareness is key to success as a manager.
- Managing your networks is the political side of the three imperatives. The manager is forced to work within the politics of the organization as well as in his team. “Everything you do requires the cooperation of others, some of whom you formally control but most of whom you don’t” (Hill & Lineback, 2011, p. 77). Understanding the politics within the organization benefits the manager’s performance in the organization.
- Managing your team is the individual management within the team dynamic. This imperative when done effectively uses the team to influence individuals to create cohesive team (Hill & Lineback, 2011). Managers should spend less time on individuals and work on the collective of the team that produces the greater good for everyone.

The Three Imperatives are a framework to develop managers understanding of themselves and their team’s needs. The Eight Paradoxes are used as tools for the managers to develop their understanding of the daily stresses each they can face and how to address them. The manager is ultimately responsible for his development and, as Hill and Lineback (2011) advise, many managers fail to complete their development.

## **Emotional Intelligence and Leadership Styles**

Leadership styles vary and Goleman (2000) conducted research and found, “Six distinctive leadership styles, each springing from different components of emotional intelligence” (p. 78). Leaders do not use any one style and, to be really effective, leaders need to adapt the style to the situation. Each style is adapted by the leader to effectively handle the situation and uses the various components of emotional intelligence. The styles allow the leaders to adapt to situations and not stay single focused for the issues at hand (Goleman, 2000). Understanding the relational dynamics within the workforce is crucial for emotional intelligence to be effective. Five fundamentals of Emotional leadership compared to the six leadership styles. The six leadership styles are:

- Coercive leaders – The coercive leader demands immediate compliance.
- Authoritative leaders – the authoritative leader mobilizes people towards a vision.
- Affiliative leader – the affiliative leader creates emotional bond and harmony.
- Democratic leaders – the democratic leader builds consensus through participation.
- Pacesetter leaders – the pacesetter leader expects excellence and self-directing.
- Coaching leaders – the coaching leader develops people for the future.

(Goleman, 2000 p. 80)

The fundamental capabilities of emotional intelligence are:

- Self-awareness – Emotional awareness, recognizing one’s emotions and their effects, accurate self-assessment, knowing one’s strengths and limits and

self-confidence, a strong sense of one's self-worth and capabilities.

- Self-regulation – managing one's internal states, impulses and resources including: self-control, trustworthiness, conscientiousness, adaptability and innovation which are one's ability to adapt to novel ideas, approaches and new information.
- Motivation, emotional tendencies that guide or facilitate reaching goals includes: Achievement drive, commitment, initiative, and optimism.

Social competence: determines how we handle relationships.

- Empathy, awareness of others feelings, needs and concerns includes: Understanding others, developing others, service orientation, leveraging diversity and political awareness.
- Social skills, adeptness at including desirable responses in others includes: influence, communication, conflict management, leadership, change catalyst, building bonds, collaboration and cooperation, and team capabilities.

(Goleman, 2000, pp. 26-27)

Leadership success with the six styles is dependent on the leader's personal and social competencies. "The late David McClelland, a noted Harvard University psychologist, found that leaders with strengths in a critical mass of six or more emotional intelligence competencies were far more effective than peers who lacked such strengths" (Goleman, 2000, p. 83). Mastery is achieved when the leader can switch between the styles seamlessly in any situation.

The climate in the sphere of influence is one of the factors that determine the success for the leader. Six key factors measure the organizational climate:

- Flexibility - how free employees feel to innovate unencumbered by red tape.
- Responsibility – the level of responsibility a person feels to the organization.
- Standards that people set – the sense of accuracy about performance feedback.
- Rewards – the aptness of rewards.
- Clarity – the clarity employees have about the mission and vision.
- Commitment – the level of commitment to a common purpose.

(Goleman, 2000, p. 81)

The literature research determined that these six styles of leadership have an impact on the climate of the organization. There is a connection between the fiscal results and the influence each style has on the climate of the organization. Four of these styles have been found to be effective even though the leaders can use all six (Goleman, 2000). Flexibility is the key for the leader to achieve the best results when using this framework. The four styles that achieved the greatest results are authoritative, democratic, affiliative, and coaching. These yield the greatest results and leaders adapting all four exert the highest impact on the research (Goleman, 2000). The key is the leader's ability to be seamless when integrating all the styles. Complete understanding of these four styles is key. This framework does not rely on checklists but the leader's personal awareness. This awareness relies on the leader being able to process each situation and determine which style will achieve the best results.

The average leader does not have all six of these styles or even four of them; one or two is normal according to Goleman (2000). According to Goleman (2000), leaders who want to be successful need to develop the styles in which they are weak. Using the



framework will help them identify these areas and understand what makes a great leader. Leadership is constantly changing and each generation provided new challenges. Emotional Intelligence provides a framework for leaders who are willing to adapt their styles to keep up with these changes.

### **Emotional Intelligence in Thai Culture**

The Department of Mental Health in Thailand created the Thai Emotional Intelligence Screening (TEIST) which is a test for ages 12-60. The reason for the development of the test was to assist Western methods in understanding the complex and feminine Thai society. The TEIST consists of three categories which are virtue, competence and happiness (Sucaromana, 2011). In the Thai context, virtue deals with self and social awareness, competence is self-regulation and relationship management and happiness relates to self-efficacy, self-acceptance and the ability to regulate one's emotions. These were modified during the third phase of the development of the improved TEIST (Sucaromana, 2011). The TEIST from the Department Of Mental Health in Thailand, like most studies, did not report on validity and reliability (Sucaromana, 2011). Sucaromana proposed a study to determine the validity and reliability of the TEIST instrument. Three questions were proposed:

1. What is the reliability and validity of the Thai Emotional Intelligence Screening Test?
2. How TEIST might be improved.
3. How well does the improved version of the TEIST measure the Emotional intelligence of Thai student compared to the Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS)? (Sucaromana, 2011, p. 20)

The enhancement of the TEIST will add to the limited research of emotional intelligence in the Thai culture. The WLEIS is another test that is a short, simple, practical and psychometrically sound measure of emotional intelligence (Sucaromana, 2011). The goal is to develop another tool that looks at emotional intelligence that is geared to better understand how Thai culture and western leadership theories align.

The author conducted numerous tests to increase the validity and reliability of the instrument. Each succession produced greater results and the fifth go around produced the changes in the actual wording of the instrument (Sucaromana, 2011). The improved TEIST gained positive reliabilities and construct validity. This improvement provides a short and easy to use public-domain and self-report measure of emotional intelligence. With the improvement, the TEIST compares to the WLEIS in reliability and validity (Sucaromana, 2011, p. 218). This improvement of the TEIST will benefit companies looking to compare Thai culture to western leadership understanding. Prior studies discuss emotional intelligence but this study created a direct cultural link.

### **Western Leadership Theories in Thai Research**

Global leaders have to adapt their leadership to local circumstances. “There is an innumerable amount of literature written on leadership but come up with answers that pertain to the local leadership” (Steers et al., 2012, p. 479). According to Steers et al, the volume of leadership material written in business is vast and covers a large amount of western leadership theories. These theories are based on western beliefs, values and cultures that do not take into account the leadership processes that vary across geographic regions. The approach needs to be modified to adapt the theories to local culture.

“Transformational leaders are often seen as being too abstract while transactional leaders

are sometimes seen as being too mercenary and both are criticized for being too manipulative” (Steers et al, 2012, p. 480). These western theories are criticized by successful leaders in Japan. This country has a high masculinity rate as mentioned in prior research and the western theories do not work well there.

“Thai employees prefer either an autocratic or paternalistic manager, while fewer would prefer a consultative manager” (Limsila & Ogunlana, 2007, p. 173). Management that understands this can adapt its style to be more effective. According to Limsila and Ogunlana (2007), Thai subordinates are working hard to develop their work competence and they require more work motivation. “Transformational leadership style has significant relationships with work quality, work quantity and creativity in problem solving of subordinates” (Limsila & Ogunlana, 2007, p.180). Transformational leadership is mentioned in many leadership articles about Thailand. Research from Michie and Zumitzan (2012) on tire firms in Thailand found that Transformational leadership is used in successful firms. According to Michie and Zumitzan (2012), the more energetic and effective managers use observation and collaboration as part of their leadership methods. Developing an environment with clear goals and creating an innovative work environment separates their success from the other less successful tire firms.

According to a study done by Yukongdi (2010), the Thai people prefer a more democratic leadership style. Transformational leadership style is the one used most and preferred by the Thai employees in the research. Transactional leadership was also used often by managers but transformational leadership produced the best outcomes. The article mentions Hofstede (1980) for the cultural dimensions as listed above but the mention of Thailand not being occupied by foreigners adds to the cultural impact of

leadership in Thailand. Being a predominately Buddhist country where your actions in this life predicts your standing in the next life has created a passive culture. The current Thai management research, according to Yukongdi (2010), advises that western leadership practices such as transformational leadership will not be effective due to the passive nature of the Thai people that places a cultural emphasis on the group. Yukongdi (2010) found that consultative management and consultative management styles were preferred depending on the work environment. These findings were different from those of the Thai scholars Kumbanaruk, Komin, and Tansuvan who advised that participative managers would be ineffective in Thailand (Yukongdi, 2010). These findings are significant due to the limited research available for companies that transformational leadership and Emotional Intelligence processes are effective in Thailand. According to Bass (1997), autocratic and directive transformational leadership will be more effective than democratic and participative in Asia. Thai culture with their conflict avoidance and high femininity benefits from the directive approach from their leaders and Bass (1997) refers to Asian societies as a collectivist society.

“When entering leadership roles, Thai leaders need to hold on to the old traditions in order to mix both effective Western practices and important Thai values” (Baczek, 2013, p. 9). Baczek goes on to describe effective leadership dimensions in Thailand that are necessary to become a successful leader. Creativity is the first one and transformational leadership creates an environment for this. The long standing monarchical culture, cultural definitions such as *Krengjai* and firms with long histories are barriers to creativity’s success in Thailand (Baczek, 2013). Leadership is aware of the challenges within the culture and creating openness will benefit the transition to a creative work force. Setting goals and

high standards are the second successful dimension Thai leaders need to adapt. Thai leaders that set these high standards keep the organization motivated and focused. These goals can be short term and long term oriented. Success is driven by the organization reaching for the goals even if the goals are not reached (Baczek, 2013).

The last dimension is emotional intelligence. The application of emotional intelligence gives the leader insight into the worker's skill sets and limitations. Empathy gives leaders insight into their employees as many of the Thai businesses are family owned. Treating their employees like family is common in Thailand (Baczek, 2013). One extra dimension added was work place diversity in Thailand. The Chinese and the Japanese own large businesses in Thailand and the work force comes from the neighboring countries. This is where creativity can benefit the leader to work within these cultures. The collectivist society can hinder growth and success of a company and the three dimensions will create an environment for creativity and success in Thai organizations. Pimpa (2012) adds that "Key Western management practices such as development of employees skills, knowledge management, and increasing technical and professional capabilities are common norms in modern Thai public and private organizations" (p. 36).

Conflict avoidance affects the entire culture and businesses need to adapt their management culture. Swierczek and Onishi (2002) researched Japanese managers and their Thai subordinates to analyze how the Japanese are adapting their management styles. The Japanese are using a mix of Western and Japanese approaches, they are adapting the practices to the location and the adaptation of different conflict management styles (2002). The authors also point out that most of the change have been in the 1990s and the economic downturn in the late 1990s. This downturn created an environment where the

Japanese companies took a long-term look at the businesses in Thailand (Swierczek & Onishi, 2002).

Five areas are identified that create conflicts between the Japanese managers and their subordinates.

- Power distance: The first source is the Japanese managers treat their staff like they are family but over time the managers treat their staff with less respect. The Thai workers want more distance from managers and respect (Swierczek & Onishi, 2002).
- Individualism: The Japanese manager's want to the Thai subordinates to solve problems in groups and also give more input into the groups function. The Thais prefer to work on problems individually and have the hierarchy of groups assigned by the managers.
- Masculinity: The Thai culture, femininity, looks at work as a way to live and the Japanese, masculinity, looks to live in order to go to work.
- Uncertainty avoidance: The Japanese prefer work to have a rigid set of rules. The Thai subordinates prefer to have these rules more flexible and adaptable to each situation.
- Long-term orientation: The Japanese will make three year plans for their company and the Thai subordinates are resistant to these long term plans. The Thai employees do not look for lifetime employment as they feel it is inflexible for them. seniority is also another form on inflexibility that The Thai employees find less appealing than the Japanese.

There are other conflict issues the authors point out. Thai managers will seldom criticize their subordinates and the Japanese will use disciplinary actions (Swierczek & Onishi, 2002). This last conflict issue creates long-term discord between the management and the workers. “more management development and cross cultural training programs to promote mutual understandings, better communication, valid consensus decision-making and participation are needed” (Swierczek & Onishi, 2002, p. 208).

### **Summary**

There are many different leadership styles, theories, and methodologies. These theories and methodologies have different approaches to creating positive outcomes for their use. Some theories are simple and others have a complex set of rules to use. Great Man theory is a basic leadership theory that places the emphasis on one great man who used their personality, intelligence or other traits to change history. This theory can be applied within the monarchy of Thailand where the King is the one who guides and protects the citizens. The Great Man theory limits the understanding that leadership and management have subordinates in the modern work environment. A better understanding of modern theories and their applications in Thailand benefits organizations working or thinking of working in Thailand. Asia has been the hub of manufacturing starting with Japan then China and now Vietnam and Thailand are becoming the new place to do business.

The first difficulty in doing business in Thailand is the culture is very different from the other Asian countries. Femininity in the Thai culture creates challenges for companies trying to adapt their organizational cultures. Social relationships are highly valued and group harmony is part of the definition of femininity (Hallinger & Kantamara, 2010).

Conflict avoidance within the Thai culture creates challenges for leadership and managers working towards the company's goals. To better understand the reason for conflict avoidance requires a better understanding of the Thai culture. The country is mostly Buddhist and has had a monarchy since the 1300s. *Bunghun*, a Thai word that means a moral obligation that supports interpersonal relationships, the stronger the obligations the better (Pimpa, 2012; Roongrerngsuke & Liefoghe, 2012). This word emphasizes the Thai culture and the importance they place on harmony within the culture. *Kreng jai* is the reluctance to impose on someone, to have empathy to the person from whom they are asking a favor. A worker might be reluctant to ask a superior for help is one application of this word (Roongrerngsuke & Liefoghe, 2012). These two words are important for leadership to understand when working with Thai subordinates.

The culture has looked for the King to give guidance and protection. This has led to a country where a clear hierarchy is important for organizations. Respect for senior members of society is also important to realize. The Thai culture began to have western influence in 1782 when the King sent out his court to learn the foreign cultures (Roongrerngsuke & Liefoghe, 2012). The country has also never had a foreign invasion that would have indoctrinated another culture. The culture and femininity creates challenges for foreign organizations working in Thailand. Western leadership practices that are effective in Thailand will need to take into account the preferences the Thai people and their culture will adapt to.

Western leadership theories are numerous with different methods and applications. These theories focus on individuals, subordinates, overall organization and many other areas of business. These theories have passed the Great Man theory to create simplified or



complex methods for leaders and managers. One of the first approaches to study leadership was the trait approach (Northouse, 2013). This approach looked at the traits, features such as Height, Intelligence, charisma that created a great leader. The problem with traits that define a leader is that no one trait is universal in leadership. The styles approach also looks into attributes a leader uses to find success. These styles range from tough managers who limit their team's resources to one that develops team work. This theory also struggles to find universal traits.

The Three Imperatives framework “summarizes the essence of what you must do to fulfill your responsibility as a manager” (Hill & Lineback, 2011, p. 27) and go on to advice that the imperatives are “fundamental levers of influence” (Hill & Lineback, 2011, p. 27). These levers transcend work and benefit the leader throughout their sphere of influence. The focus of the Three Imperatives is the journey which many leaders start but few complete. Leadership requires a transformation and personal experience to create a new set of skills.

Emotional intelligence uses personal and social competencies to develop the leader. Understanding of the competencies like empathy develops the leaders understanding of their subordinates. Self-awareness and regulation are used to guide the leader in managing their personal traits. “We’re being judged by a new yard-stick: not just by how smart we are, or by our training and expertise, but also by how well we handle ourselves and each other” (Goleman, 2000, p. 3). The Thai Mental Health Department created a test (TEIST) to develop a better understanding of western leadership methods and the complex feminine Thai culture by using Emotional Intelligence. This test was designed to give western leaders an instrument to compare the two cultures. Sucaromana (2011) enhanced the

TEIST to increase the tests validity and reliability. Sucaromana (2011) found that the test was used for research by Thai scholars but the validity and reliability need to be improved. The result of the research and revisions of the test improved its validity and reliability. The new improved version aligns better with the Thai culture and the Western leadership methods.

Leadership theories that align with the Thai culture were covered. These included servant, situational, transformational and transactional leadership. These leadership traits are covered in much of the literature researched for this paper. However, transformational leadership is mentioned the most as the one that aligns with the Thai culture and effective western leadership methods. "Transformational leadership is the process whereby a person engages with others and creates a connection that raises the level of motivation and morality in both the leader and the follower" (Northouse, 2013, p.187). This theory aligns with the collectivist Thai culture that is more feminine than other Asian countries. Yukongdi (2010) researched the use of transformational leadership and found that the Thai people preferred a more democratic transformational leader to other styles of management. Transformational leadership also works with the conflict avoidance that is prevalent within the culture. Leadership needs to have creativity in Thailand and managers are adapting Western leadership styles to their cultural heritage. The adaptability of transformational leadership and the focus of the follower's benefits all involved.

The lack of research that applies Western leadership theories and methods is needed. Transformational leadership was the most mentioned but often it was quoted without applying it to the research. Japanese firms are adapting their leadership to the

Thai culture but are experiencing some difficulty. The TEIST that was modified can benefit organizations in Thailand or are thinking about developing business in Thailand. The feminine society is different from most other countries and needs further studies to provide more information on the effects on Western leadership practices. Yukongdi (2010) and Sucaromana (2011) researched transformational leadership and Emotional intelligence. These two articles stood out among the research as further adding to the leadership body of knowledge for western leadership practices in Thailand. The increased development of manufacturing, agriculture and exports of seafood will create a need for more research.

## **Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology**

### **Introduction**

This qualitative study was designed to determine leadership traits of successful Thai leaders. The purpose of the study was to determine what common strategies and practices Thai leaders use, and what were the challenges they face. Understanding how the successful Thai leaders measure success and the recommendations they have for other leaders in Thailand was also to be determined.

The literature review on successful Thai leaders generated a limited supply of information. Literature was also limited in scope about the influence of western leadership practices in Thailand. This research sought to examine the current and past research to provide a foundation for the study. The limited research available lent itself to qualitative approach.

This chapter provides the methodology for this study. The nature of the study, questions used for the interviews, along with the methodology being identified are presented in this chapter. The design of the research, including: how participants would be selected, what were the data sources, plans for Institutional Research Board (IRB), and how the data would be collected are discussed. Interviewing the 15 chosen Thai business leaders had a protocol that included: how the subjects would be identified, what techniques would be used, the instrument and the validity and reliability of the instrument. The last part includes a personal statement from the researcher about personal bias on the subject, what data analysis techniques would be used and the procedures that would be followed.

## **Re-statement of Research Questions**

A qualitative approach was used for this study. The research questions below were used to direct the researcher to the major points uncovered during the analysis phase.

Research Question 1: What strategies and practices do Thai leaders use in leading global organizations?

Research Question 2: What challenges do Thai leaders face in leading global organizations?

Research Question 3: How do Thai leaders define, measure, and track success in leading successful global organizations?

Research Question 4: What advice do Thai leaders have for others wanting to lead successful global organizations?

## **Nature of the Study**

The number of studies on Thai leadership is limited. The studies found are industry specific in relationship to a certain ethnic culture. The literature available looks at Thai leadership in foreign companies in Thailand or Thai subordinate traits based on the culture. This study investigated the Thai leadership traits of successful Thai individuals in Thailand across the private sector. This study used a qualitative approach to address the research questions that were proposed.

This study examined the leadership traits used by Thai leaders in their leadership roles. The use of a descriptive qualitative research has been defined by Denzin and Lincoln as cited in Creswell (2013) as follows:

Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world.

Qualitative research consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make

the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. (p. 44)

Creswell (2013) further added nine common characteristics of qualitative research:

(1) natural setting, (2) researcher is the key instrument, (3) research involves using multiple methods, (4) complex reasoning through inductive and deductive logic, (5) Participants meaning and perspectives, (6) emergent design, (7) , the , (8) is situated within the context or setting of the participants location, (9) presents a complex holistic picture. (pp. 45-47)

Qualitative research is used for a study being conducted when: “(1) there is limited information on the target group, (2) complex detail is needed, (3) to understand the context or settings the participants address their studied issues, (4) to develop theories when partial or inadequate theories exist” (p. 48).

The lack of research available for successful Thai leadership traits made qualitative research the best choice for this study. Addressing the above points about qualitative research allowed this research to delve deeper into the successful traits without the limitations of a questionnaire. The nine characteristics of Creswell (2013) aligned with the research problem.

The first characteristic was to interview the successful Thai leader in their natural work environment. The second was the researcher's understanding of the Thai culture based on personal experience with the culture. The third, the interviews data would generate data that were based on experiences and personal knowledge from the Thai leaders. The fourth, the analyzation of the data using deductive and inductive logic. The fifth, the analysis of the participant's meanings and perspectives. The sixth, the analysis generated a theme for the survey. The seventh, the researcher was aware of the need to reflect on the interview where both parties' biases would lend themselves to the data. The eight, used a holistic approach to the interview process, and the ninth presents a holistic picture.

The phenomenological approach was used to analyze the data. The phenomenological approach allowed the researcher to use several individuals that have the same lived experience to study the common phenomenon (Miller & Salkind, 2002). "The empirical phenomenological approach involves a return to experience in order to obtain comprehensive descriptions that provide the basis for a reflective structural analysis that portrays the essences of the experience" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 13).

Giorgi (1997) identified four key features to the phenomenological approach. The first, the total lived experience or consciousness of the individual being interviewed is an avoidable part of the process. Consciousness adds to the experience of the phenomenon and embraced. Second, experience is given a more precise meaning identifying intuition as the source to provide meaning of the phenomena. Third, phenomenon defined inside phenomenology is the given experience of the person being interviewed. Fourth,

intentionality is consciousness of the phenomenon, the presented phenomena is taken as it is presented.

## **Research Design**

**Participant selection.** The choice of interview subjects was based on a sampling to achieve purposeful sampling of Thai leaders. The background of the principal investigator is 34 years of observing and leading businesses. An understanding of the differences in Thai leadership traits based on research and known individuals in business in Thailand will add to the body of knowledge when selecting the individuals for the study. Public companies and the business organizations were contacted to select the individuals to be interviewed. The list of choosing individual leaders within these groups followed the list below:

### A. Statement for criteria for inclusion/exclusion

#### Inclusion:

- . The potential Thai leader must speaking English.
- . This is a characteristic of a Thai global leader, being fluent in multiple languages.
- . Thai leaders who lead global organizations and are fluent in English do not fully represent the broader population of leaders who might for example speak French or Chinese.

#### Exclusion:

Non-English speaking Thai leaders.

### B. Application of the criteria to narrow the inclusion/exclusion list:



- . The Rotary club in Thailand would be the first contact for the research. An e-mail was sent to the current president to ask permission to have them send out a request e-mail for potential interview candidates or their permission to use their list of members.
  - . The second was to contact the <http://www.yunuscenter.ait.asia/> through e-mails to request their help to locate potential Thai leaders.
  - . A Thai leader who is considered a potential candidate had his contact information confirmed using the company's website or public database.
  - . The Thai leader who is a candidate employs 10 or more employees; this was verified using the company's website or public database.
- C. Statement of criteria for maximum variation
- . The list of potential candidates was further reduced to ensure the candidates represented the largest perspective of candidates possible. Including but not limited to:
    - i. Both genders being represented.
    - ii. Different life and management experiences.
    - iii. Varied ages
    - iv. Lengths of leadership in business.
- D. Snowball sampling: this was used as a last resort.
- . The final list of participants was fewer than 20 people, if those are narrowed down to less than the 15 required who participated in the interview process, the investigator asked the interviewee to identify other noted Thai leaders who would be eligible and were willing to participate in the study.

**Unit of analysis.** The unit of analysis for this study was a Thai leader of a global organization with exception of those in the government sector. The age range was individuals who were between 33 and 60 years old.

The investigator e-mailed the Institutional Review Board (IRB), the approved recruitment script (see Appendix A) to seek approval of the selected Thai leaders to participate or not in the interview process. A reminder e-mail was sent out to non-responding Thai leaders (see Appendix B).

**Sources of data.** The interviews were semi-organized to gather the data. The questions were developed by the investigator and analyzed for reliability and validity. The reliability and validity were conducted by a panel of experts and the dissertation committee. The interview was captured on multiple voice recorders to prevent data loss or a malfunction during the interview process.

**Protection of human subjects.** Title 45, Part 46 of the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations for the protection of human subjects governs the principal investigator as well as the guidelines set forth by Pepperdine University. This is to ensure the IRB process is upheld. A formal letter and e-mail along with the consent to participate in the interview process were sent to each participant (see Appendix A and Appendix C). The consent form included the purpose of the study, the understanding that the participants information would not be released, the study was voluntary, audio recording would be used as the main capture of the interview process, as well as the investigators contact information.

The Thai leaders selected would not be pressured into participating in the interview process and could withdraw from the process at any time. All information of the Thai leader and the audio would remain confidential and would be locked in a secure location.

The electronic files would be stored with the investigator being the only one who knows the password. Hard copies of the Thai leaders' responses will be stored in a locked and secured location and will be destroyed after three years. Identifiers would not be used for the Thai leaders and their responses and would remain confidential. IRB approval for a waiver or the alteration of the informed consent was not required for the study. The participants did not receive a benefit from the participating in the study.

### **Data Collection**

The process started with an e-mail to the selected Thai leaders. The interviews took place in Thailand and were arranged before the investigator flew to Thailand. The IRB approved contact e-mail (see Appendix A) was utilized to contact the Thai leaders. After the Thai leader agreed to be interviewed appointments were set up. The location for the interviews was Bangkok, Thailand. The participants not able to meet face to face were interviewed through online video chatting. These 15 interviews were conducted in December 2017. Two weeks before the interviewer flew to Thailand a conformation e-mail and/or a brief phone call was made to confirm the meeting.

The interviewer arrived in Thailand a week before the interviews to reduce jet lag and prepare for the interviews. On the meeting dates the interviewer ensured his arrival 30 minutes ahead of the interview process to prepare for the interview. Upon the start of the interview the investigator reviewed the purpose of the study and sought permission to audio tape the interview. The interview questions (see Appendix C) were asked to initiate the interview process and follow up questions were used when clarification of information was needed. The use of echolalia ensured the interviewer was focused on the Thai leader's answers. The data collection timeframe was during the month of December, 2017.

## **Interview Techniques**

Echolalia was used during the interview process. Echolalia is a listening technique that the interviewer teaches and applies to businesses he consults. The technique prevents the interviewer from forming opinions until after the question has been fully answered. This process clears the interviewer's preconceived ideas that might come from each question. Nonverbal strategies will be used and will include tone, body languages, posture and gestures that will include Gestures specific to the Thai culture.

## **Interview Protocol**

The protocol interview process was reviewed, approved and then was finalized by the committee (see Appendix E and Appendix F). The investigator conducted the interviews using the following procedures:

- The Thai leaders identified using purposeful sampling discussed earlier in the paper.
- The locations were chosen by the participants.
- Thai leaders were given the interview time and date and the location they chose at least one month prior to the interview.
- Face to face interviews was the preferred interview process.
- 30 minutes prior to the interview the investigator arrived for the interview.
- The investigator introduced himself to the Thai leader and reviewed the interview protocol.
- The Thai leader was informed that a transcript of the interview would be made available for review, to make changes, and then to approve the transcript.
- The Thai leader was again informed of the use of audio recordings.

- The questions to be used were made available to the Thai leaders prior to the interview process.
- The interview was conducted professionally to ensure the participants were comfortable and were treated with respect.

**Instrument.** The data were gathered during the interviews by using the questions that were designed by the investigator (see Appendix E and Appendix F).

The interview questions were asked in order maintaining consistency throughout the 15 interviews. Recordings from each interview were electronically transcribed. This allowed for the investigator to further analyze the data.

### **Validity and Reliability**

Qualitative research uses observations and interviews to obtain data on a phenomenon. Researchers utilize their field notes to find deep meaning from their data. The research needs to be validated and the instruments used need to be tested for reliability. LeCompte and Goetz (1982) identify four measurements to ensure reliability and validity for data collection.

- Internal validity – scientific measurements and observations are measured to what degree do the questions represent realism of the topic.
- External validity – how the measurements and observations compare against other groups.
- Reliability – can the study be repeated and obtain the same results.
- Objectivity – how close does the researchers results match the actual reality of the studied subjects.

**Prima facie validity.** Data collection for this study required a set of interview questions. Thirteen questions were created using the literature review. According to Patten and Bruce (2009), upon creating an instrument, it needs to be determined if the tool measures the desired outcome. Is the tool understandable to the reader, is it clear and seems valid on reading it.

**Peer review validity.** This is the next process to check validity of a research instrument. A table was developed (see Appendix D) to align the research questions with interview questions. Two committee members were identified; they were two doctoral students who have completed courses in qualitative research. The committee members are also using qualitative research techniques for their research. A table was developed (see Appendix D) to align the research questions with interview questions. Each question had the option to "Keep as stated," "Delete it," or "Modify as suggested" with space to advise changes. The committee members advised that the survey questions were to be kept as stated (see Appendix D).

**Pilot interview.** A pilot interview was conducted with a Thai leader who has a graduate degree from a university in the United States. This person is an expert in global enterprises and runs a successful global Thai organization in Thailand. His fluency in English was helpful in adding clarity to the wording and to ensure the research questions would be understood by other Thai leaders. The questions were analyzed with a few questions as to the meaning of the questions. This was explained to ensure the questions would be understood and the end result was no changes were needed to the interview questions.

**Expert review validity.** Three professors were used to add their experience to the reliability and validity of the instrument. The committee reviewed and modified the survey including changing the research questions to align it to the focus of the research.

Research Question 1 was changed from “What strategies and practices do Thai leaders use in leading their organization?” to “What strategies and practices do Thai leaders use in leading global organization?”

Research Question 2 was changed from “What challenges did they find in their leadership style?” to “What challenges do Thai leaders face in leading global organizations?”

Research Question 3 was changed from “How do they define, measure, and track their success?” to “How do Thai leaders define, measure, and track their success in leading global organizations?”

Research Question 4 was changed from “What advice do they have for other Thai leaders wanting to lead successful organizations?” to “What advice do they have for other Thai leaders wanting to lead successful global organizations?”

The committee also changed the interview questions to align them with the changes.

**Interview questions.**

Interview Question 1 is now: “Describe your leadership practices.” Changed from “Please describe your leadership style.”

Interview Question 2 is now: “What techniques and strategies do you employ?”

Changed from “What techniques/ strategies or philosophies have you employed that you have found successful?”

Interview Question 3 is now: “What philosophies have influenced you?” Changed from “What are your leadership strengths and how do they help you?”

Interview Question 4 aligns with Research Question 1 and is now: “What are your leadership strengths and how do they help you?” Changed from “What are some of your challenges you have faced in leading your business?”

Interview Question 5 is now: “What difficulties do you face in leading your business?” Changed from “How did you overcome or deal with the challenge?”

Interview Question 6 is now Follow up question: “Have you encountered difficulties in dealing with cultural, political, socio-economical and Thai norms?” Changed from “Does the Thai culture make it easier or at times more difficult to overcome the challenges you mentioned?”

Interview Question 7 is now: “How did you overcome these difficulties?” Changed from “How did you overcome or deal with the challenge?” This was Interview Question 5.

Interview Question 8 is now: “What does success mean to you?” Changed from “Describe your criteria for success?” This was the prior Interview Question 7.

Interview Question 9 is now: “How do you define, track and measure that success?” This was changed from Interview Question 8: “How do you analyze your short-term success?” or “How do you track your success daily, weekly or monthly?” And Interview Question 9: “How do you analyze your success, what methods do you use?”

Interview Question 10 is now: “What lessons have you learned that you want to share with other Thai leaders in leading global organization?”



Follow up question was: “Have you encountered difficulties in dealing with cultural, political, socio-economical, and Thai norms?” Changed from: “What advice would you give Thai leaders wanting to lead organizations?”

Interview Question 11 is now: “Knowing what you know now, would you have done anything differently?” Changed from: “Is there anything else you want to share about your experiences in leadership?”

### **Statement of Personal Bias**

Creswell and Miller (2000) advise the investigators statement of personal bias adds to the validity study. This allows the reader to understand the investigators assumptions, beliefs and personal biases, and the subject. The investigator states the following personal biases:

1. Work experience includes over twenty five years working in businesses in management, leadership, and small business ownership. This experience defines personal beliefs on what makes successful leadership.
2. Education has also defined leadership preferences including a B.S. degree in Business Management and a Master’s degree in Leadership and Management. Through the education process and the doctoral program personal beliefs have changed about what makes successful leadership.
3. Mentorship program to gain insight on what makes a successful leader with application in increasing employee performance and increasing margins.
4. Ownership and consulting for four years with individuals and businesses to increase margins in businesses. Personal leadership coaching with individuals to increase their leadership skills.

## **Epoche**

Personal beliefs and biases and feelings need to be set aside and Creswell (2013) advised that bracketing or epoche is the process of setting these biases aside. In order for the research to be as unbiased as possible, it is crucial for the researcher to identify these biases. Moustakes (1994) advised that setting aside these biases as far as humanely possible is the process of epoche or bracketing. This is necessary to avoid biases that affect the research outcomes. Creswell (2013) advises the use of a journal to identify when these biases occur during the research. The journal will allow the researcher to advise the user of the research of any biases that could have affected the research. The researcher has over 17 years of experience within the Thai community and does not speak the language, this and an understanding of some of the cultural challenges will be journaled or bracketed to identify any possible bias.

## **Summary**

This chapter provided the methodology for this study. The nature of the study, questions used for the interviews, along with the methodology being identified were presented in this chapter. The design of the research, including: how participants would be selected, what were the data sources, plans for Institutional Research Board (IRB), and how the data would be collected were discussed. The instrument and the validity and reliability of the instrument were discussed. The chapter included a personal statement from the researcher about personal bias on the subject, what data analysis techniques would be used and the procedures that would be followed.

## Chapter 4: Findings

The purpose of this study was to identify the best practices of Thai leaders who run global businesses. The limited research made it difficult to narrow the research questions and expectations from the interviews. What characteristics do Thai leaders use and what influenced their practices? How does the culture affect their leadership style and business? These were a few of the questions that lead to the development of the research questions and their subsequent interview questions. In order to complete this task, the study sought to ask the following four research questions:

Research Question 1: What strategies and practices do Thai leaders use in leading their global organizations?

Research Question 2: What challenges do Thai leaders face in leading their global organizations?

Research Question 3: How do Thai leaders define, measure, and track their success in global organizations?

Research Question 4: What advice do Thai leaders have for others wanting to lead a successful global Organization?

In order to answer these questions, ten questions with two follow up questions were developed as the interview protocol. Each of these questions was directly related to one of the main research questions. The interview protocol used an interrater and validity procedure to validate the protocol. The process produces these questions for the study:

1. Please describe your leadership practice.
2. What techniques/ strategies do you employ?
3. What philosophies have influenced you?

4. What are your leadership strengths and how do you use them?
5. What difficulties do you face in leading your business?

Follow up question: Have you encountered difficulties in dealing with cultural, political, socio-economical and Thai norms?

6. How did you overcome these difficulties?
7. What does success mean to you?
8. How do you define, track, and measure that success?
9. What lessons have you learned that you would share with other Thai leaders in leading global organizations?

Follow up question: Have you encountered difficulties in dealing with cultural, political, socio-economical and Thai norms?

10. Knowing what you know now, would you have done anything differently?

The interview participants were asked to provide their answers to the ten questions. The follow up questions were asked to ensure the participants could add more insight for the questions. The focus was to find the best leadership practices that Thai leaders use running their global businesses. This chapter will provide a portrayal of the participants keeping in mind the IRB protocol to protect their identity. The data collection process will be assessed, and a description of the data analysis process will also be covered. The inter-rated review process that was used to validate the data analysis will also be reviewed. The analysis of the data collected from the ten interview questions will be examined.

### **Participants**

The number of participants was fifteen,  $n = 15$ , that were chosen to give the cross section of participants for the study. Eight of the fifteen were women; 53% of the

participants and men accounted for 7 or 47% of the population of the study. Three of the surveyed had a doctoral or PhD degrees, 4 had a master's or equivalent degree and the rest had at least a bachelor's degree (see Table 1). 15 participants were chosen to try and reach saturation. The interview process reached saturation at 12 interviewees but continued with fifteen. The pilot interview also aligned with the 15 interview subjects.

Table 1

*Interview Participant Details*

| Participant | Degrees Earned                | Gender | Date Interviewed |
|-------------|-------------------------------|--------|------------------|
| P1          | MBA                           | M      | Dec 7, 2017      |
| P2          | PhD                           | F      | Dec 8, 2017      |
| P3          | BA in Hotel management        | F      | Dec 11, 2017     |
| P4          | MBA                           | F      | Dec 11, 2019     |
| P5          | BS in Accounting              | F      | Dec 12, 2017     |
| P6          | Law, JD                       | M      | Dec 12, 2017     |
| P7          | BA in Management              | F      | Dec 14, 2017     |
| P8          | PhD                           | M      | Dec 15, 2017     |
| P9          | MBA                           | F      | Dec 18, 2017     |
| P10         | BA in Accounting              | F      | Dec 18, 2017     |
| P11         | PhD                           | M      | Dec 19, 2017     |
| P12         | Master's Degree               | F      | Dec 19, 2017     |
| P13         | BA in Management              | F      | Dec 20, 2017     |
| P14         | BS in Business Administration | M      | Dec 21, 2017     |
| P15         | BA in Accounting              | M      | Dec 21, 2017     |

The ages ranged from 26 to 72 with participants working for the financial sector, manufacturing, education, large international corporations, or their own international business. The interview dates started on December 7, 2017 in Bangkok Thailand and the last interview was concluded on December 21, 2017 in Bangkok Thailand.

## Data Collection

The collection of data required reaching out to an organization that had access to publicly available members. The Rotary in Thailand was contacted in the Thai language to ensure the list being requested for possible interviewees was understood to prevent any misunderstandings. The contact provided a prior member that was able to receive an e-mail from the researcher with the interview questions, the consent form and contact information. A list of requirements for participants was sent as well to insure participants met the criteria for inclusion. The contact also spoke English fluently and provided support for the process. The contact preferred to contact individual participants to ensure the person understood the process and was comfortable meeting the researcher. This was due to the Thai cultural norms. The IRB approved e-mail was sent to each possible interviewee. E-mails were sent out in November 2017 to prepare for the researcher's arrival in December 2017.

The process had initial difficulty due to culture reasons, primarily *greng jai*. "The high power distance characterizing Thai culture creates a high deference (*greng jai*) towards those of senior status in all social relationships. This implies that senior officials should be making decisions based on their authority (Hallinger & Kantamara, 2010). The prospective participants would say yes to the person and advise me that they did not want to participate. This was the second time the Thai culture affected the interview process.

The e-mails were sent out and the participants who initially agreed to participate were placed on the December interview calendar. The first two were the initial participants that agreed to the interview process. The interviewees were given a printout of the questions and the informed consent to ensure they were comfortable with the

process and the IRB protocols were clearly followed (see Appendix G). The interviewees were also advised that their participation was not mandatory and, if they were uncomfortable at any time, the interview process would be stopped. This was important with the language of the interview being their second or more language that the interviewee spoke. The interview only started after the interviewee asked their questions about the process and many wanted to make sure they met the research criteria. This was done to ensure the interviewee was comfortable with the process and his or her comfort with the researcher asking the questions. Each interview was set up to be completed within the hour with the shortest being 16 minutes and the longest at just over 40 minutes. This time does not include the pre-interview questions that many interviewees had and also the discussion of the consent form as well as their consent for the interviews.

### **Data Analysis**

The interviews were analyzed using the coding method. According to Creswell (2013), coding is the process of combining the text into small categories or themes based on the data from the interviews. The data collected for this research started out as interviews that were recorded. These audio recordings were analyzed by the researcher multiple times to identify areas that might be affected by personal biases. Personal biases were bracketed to ensure the data analysis was not affected. This follows the research in Chapter 3 that talks about the need of researchers to identify and share personal biases to the readers to ensure their understanding of the researcher's views.

The data analysis included transcribing key words into a spreadsheet per question. Each subject had his or her own column for each question which had its own tab. This allowed each question to have an individual tab to allow the researcher to compare the key

phrases. Each question was processed and coded for key phrases or responses that provided insight for the question. This process was repeated three times per individual question to ensure the best coding results. This produced themes for each individual question. These themes were sorted from the highest to lowest frequency. The next step was to use inter-rater review process to validate the data.

### **Inter-rater Review Process**

Two doctoral individuals were used who had already graduated from the organizational leadership program at Pepperdine University. These two graduates have experience with similar research methods and data analysis and had training in qualitative research. Copies of the researchers Excel spreadsheets were sent to both of the reviewers. The spreadsheet only had numbers and was completely devoid of identifiers of the interviewees. A copy of the questions was also provided to assist the viewers with understanding the responses. They were asked to:

- Review the responses based on the question, and the grouping of the themes.
- Review and provide feedback on the descriptor words for each of the themes.

The process requires a consensus of the researcher and the two reviewers. The two reviewers were given the first four interview questions and the first research question. To review along with the coding results for the four questions. A discussion ensued about the results of the coding and the themes I chose. A brief discussion about the Thai culture was necessary to ensure the themes I chose aligned to the culture. Empathy was discussed as themes from question 1 and 4. Based on further discussion the theme for question 4 was changed to flexibility. This aligns better with the identifiers that were obtained from the interviews. The two reviewers agreed to this change. The process continued for the next



three research questions and the interview questions. The reviewers had suggestions but not on the same themes. The themes were left unchanged for the final 6 questions.

### **Data Display**

The research questions and their corresponding interview questions is how the data were presented and organized. Common themes were placed on a frequency chart to provide a visual analysis of the data. To ensure the confidentiality of the interviewee, direct quotes were identified to the chart. The list has been altered so interviews are not in sequential order to further protect the identities of the interviewees. The language of English being the second language or more can make these quotes seem incomplete; this is not miscommunicating the quote.

### **Research Question 1**

Research question 1 asked: What strategies and practices do Thai leaders use in leading their organizations? Four interview questions were asked to provide insight to the research question. The questions that relate to research question1 are:

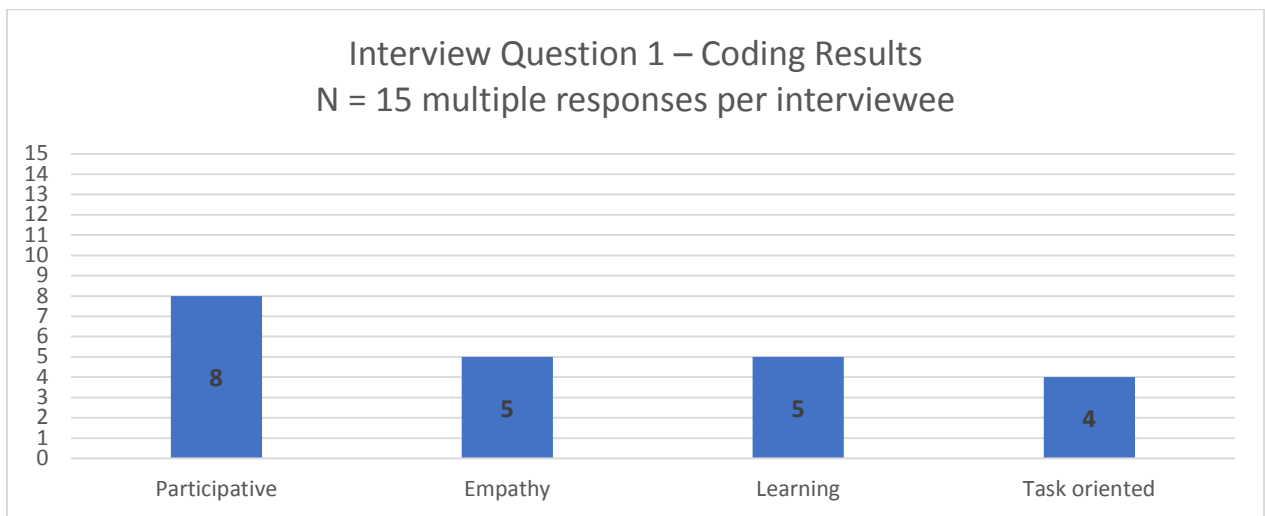
1. Please describe your leadership practice.
2. What techniques/ Strategies or philosophies have you employed that you have found successful?
3. What philosophies have influenced you?
4. What are your leadership strengths and how do you use them?

These questions were analyzed to provide the common themes that identify the overall responses to research question 1.

**Interview question 1.** Please describe your leadership practice.

The analysis of all the respondents to interview question 1 identified 38 key words that were then grouped into 4 main themes. The themes that developed were participative, empathy, learning, and task oriented (see Figure 1).

**Participative.** This theme presented itself as the most popular leadership style. The interviewees has 38 total responses to this question and this theme was identified directly or in-directly by 8 or 53% of the interviewees. Individual interviewees might have more than 1 identifier that matches this theme. The label of participative includes lead through example, collaborative, use work experience to guide their team and coaching. One example from P1 advised “As a woman using experiences and showing them to do the work is the most effective” (P1).



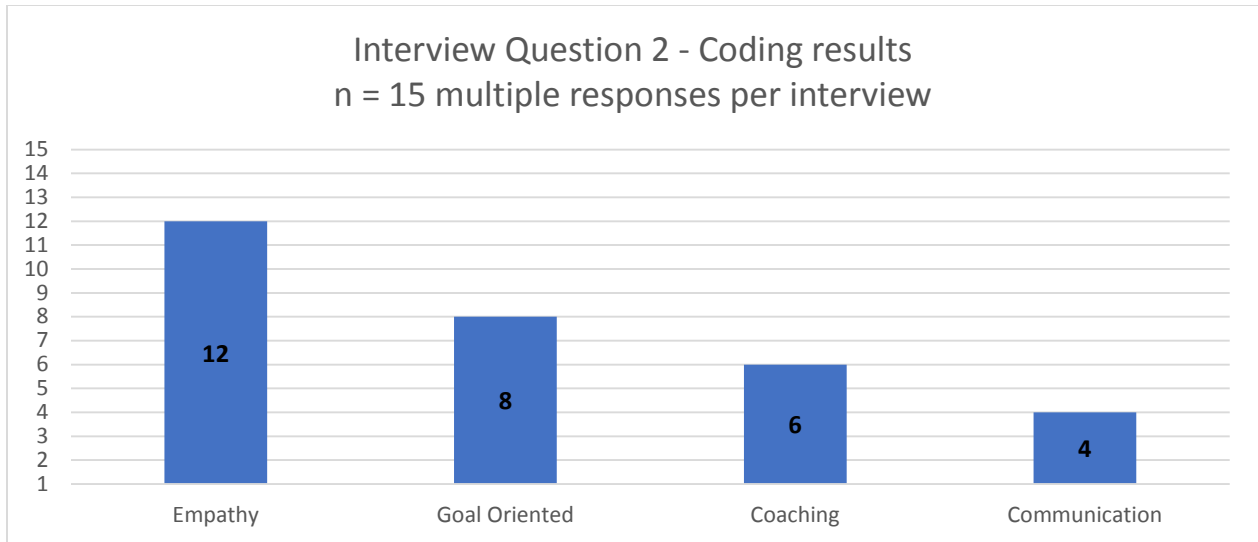
*Figure 1.* Themes from interview question 1. Participative was the biggest theme identified by the interviewees with empathy and learning being second with task oriented being the last theme. The data are presented in decreasing order of frequency to add a visual element to the data. The numbers for each theme represent each time directly or indirectly the interviewees made a statement that fell into the respective category.

**Empathy.** Tied for second place at 5 interviewees or 33% of the group directly or indirectly relating their answers to empathy. This label includes: nurture, care about others, family oriented, and make others happy. Empathy was expressed by P 11, “I have an open door policy, I ask employees how they are doing personally and at work. I learn about their background and work with them at work” (P 11).

**Learning.** This was also tied for second in responses at 33% with the group directly or indirectly relating their answers to learning. Learning was used to describe the leader’s willingness to change. This label includes, openness, adaptive, and compromising, which meant to the interviewee let the employee do what they feel works and learn how they think. An example from P 12 “I learn my staff’s work habits, personal history and change my leadership based in this information” (P 12)

**Task-oriented.** This was the last theme to present itself. It was directly or indirectly related to the interviewees’ responses. This theme at 26% included, direct guidance of employees, assertive with tasks, and results oriented. According to P 4 “Being direct is hard in the Thai culture, using tasks and wording it less aggressively is difficult for me, but it makes it easier to assign tasks to get results. (P 4)

**Interview question 2.** What techniques/strategies do you employ? This question had 30 individual identifiers. These were then analyzed and four common themes developed as follows: empathy, goal-oriented, coaching, and communication (see Figure 2).



*Figure 2.* Themes from interview question 2. Empathy was the biggest theme identified by the interviewees with Goal oriented, coaching and communication being the last theme. The data is presented in decreasing order of frequency to add a visual element to the data. The numbers for each theme represent each time directly or indirectly the interviewees made a statement that fell into the respective category.

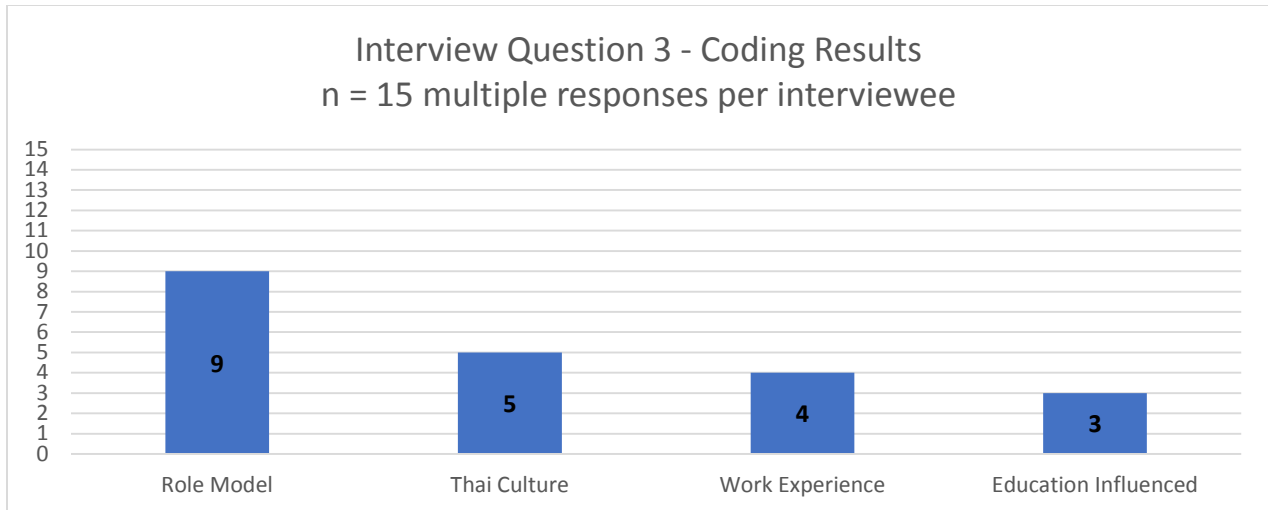
**Empathy.** This theme presented itself as the single largest response whether directly or indirectly by the interviewees. That means 80% are using empathy as a technique or strategy in their leadership practices. This label included: allow mistakes, family culture, self-awareness, non-confrontational, sincerity, and transparency. The Thai culture of *bunghun* as discussed in Chapter 1, means a moral obligation that supports interpersonal relationships; the stronger the obligations the better, was found throughout the interview process. This aligns with 80% of the interviewees using empathy as a technique or strategy as part of their leadership practice. Participant P 5 advised “It is important to share real information with the employees, be honest and open with them, talk like brother and sister” (P 5)

**Goal-oriented.** The second theme that appeared was goal-oriented. This was 53% of the interviewees' techniques or strategies that were directly or indirectly used by the interviewees with some of them using it more than once as an identifier for their techniques or strategies for leadership. This label includes, direct tasks, planning, clear goals, clear direction, and set objectives. During the interview, P 15 advised "I am more results oriented, I am clear with my goals and how do we get there. We make a solid plan, it can be flexible but we need to keep on track." (P 15)

**Coaching.** This theme appeared in in 40% of the interviewees responses. The identifier was used indirectly or directly by 6 out of 15 interviewees. Coaching also plays a role in Thai culture that is affected by *bunkuhn*. Other identifiers were: trainer, development, rotation of employees and individual coaching. An example by P 2 advised "I want my employees to progress and learn something every day. The business is a learning organization through seminars or meetings. I encourage them to be part of the team and their opinions are important for the team" (P 2)

**Communication.** This theme accounted for 27% of the identifiers and was either directly or indirectly used by the interviewees. Other terms used were openness, flexible communication, and e-mail. An example of communication came from P 8, "I change my communication style, I walk a lot around the office and I am available to my employees" (P 8).

**Interview question 3.** What philosophies have influenced you? This question had 25 individual identifiers. These were then coded into four themes: role model, Thai culture, work experience and education influenced (see Figure 3).



*Figure 3.* Themes from interview question 3. The philosophies that have influenced the interviewees. Role model was the first response with Thai culture, work experience and educational influence being the last theme. The data is presented in decreasing order of frequency to add a visual element to the data. The numbers for each theme represent each time directly or indirectly the interviewees made a statement that fell into the respective category.

**Role model.** This theme presented itself as the single most popular theme. The theme accounted for 60% of the interview responses that were either directly or indirectly given. The label also included, chairman, individual celebrities or leaders, The King of Thailand, chairman, family, and current or prior bosses. Interviewee P 9 advised “I learned a lot from my first boss in my career path. My boss was people oriented and solidified my personal belief I belong in my field” (P 9).

**Thai culture.** The second theme for this question accounted for 33% of the interview responses either directly or indirectly with their responses. Included in this label are: Kings teaching, positive thinking and cultural affect from growing up in Thailand.

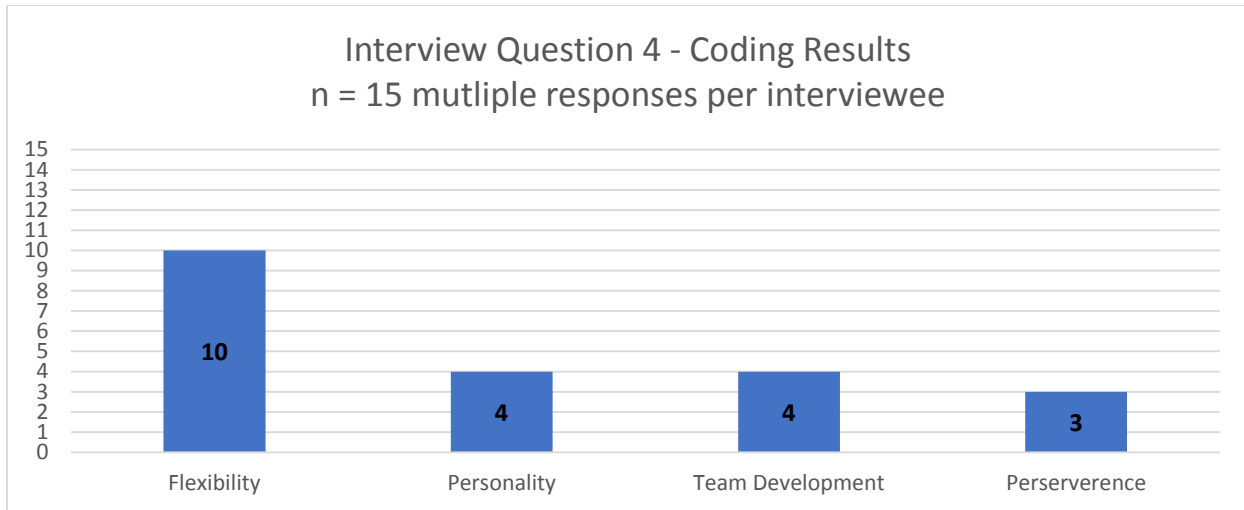
Interviewee P 1 advised “The Thai culture leads the manager to create loyalty to the workplace, treat the employees fairly” (P 1, personal communication, December, 2017).

**Work experience.** This theme placed third with 26% of the interviewees directly or indirectly responding with work experience as one of their philosophies. Other labels included, past jobs, show commitment to work, results oriented, and execution of work. During the interview, P 4 advised “applying past work experience to current issues gives me guidance in leadership” (P 4).

**Educational influences.** This theme had 20% of the interview responses either directly or indirectly. Other labels included: reading, college courses, and mentoring. Interview P 14 explained “I read books and take some parts that are useful and apply them to me leadership practices” (P 14)

**Interview question 4.** What are your leadership strengths and how do you use them? This question had 26 identifiers that were developed into 4 themes. These themes are flexibility, personality, team development, and perseverance (see Figure 4).

**Flexibility.** This theme developed with 10 interviewees or 66% of the population directly or indirectly responding with flexibility in their response. Other labels included, adaptive, open minded, fair, laid back, and adaptive. The Thai saying “Mai Pen Rai: It doesn’t matter, it is okay, and it is no big deal.” came up in almost every interview. The researcher was advised by the interviewees that Thai employees use these phrases to avoid conflict and managers need to be flexible at times. Interview P 12 advises “Flexibility is my strength; I can manage flexibility within my team and manage expectations by being flexible” (P 12).



*Figure 4.* Themes from interview question 4. The interviewees’ strengths and their application are shown on this chart. Flexibility, personality, Team Development and perseverance are listed in descending order of frequency. The numbers for each theme represent each time directly or indirectly the interviewees made a statement that fell into the respective category.

**Personality.** This theme accounted for 26% or 4 of the interviewees’ identifiers that directly or indirectly recorded personality as part of the interview process. Other labels included respectful, ability to work with others and respectful. This theme is based on the individual interviewee’s perception that his or her individual personality adds positive results to his or her leadership style. Interviewee P 11 advised “My personality, I am always relaxed, laid back; the employees do not feel like I am the boss, pushy. In Thai culture the boss and employees do not interact” (P 11).

**Team development.** This theme also accounted for 26% or 4 of the interviewees that were directly or indirectly recorded team development as part of the interview process. Other labels included, challenge the team, develop the culture, and team focus. Interviewee P 13 advised “The business culture is one of team development. When we go



into another country, we develop teamwork within the countries culture and blend it with ours. We use the local workforce” (P 13)

**Perseverance.** This theme accounted for 4 or 20% of the interviewees who directly or indirectly recorded perseverance as part of their interview process. Other labels include consistence and good discipline. Interview P 3 advised “Dealing with and not letting decade’s worth of issues allowed me to carry on the legacy of the business. Inner strength taught me by my family allowed me to keep focused on the end goal“(P 3).

**Summary of research question 1.** Research question one sought to identify what strategies and practices do Thai leaders use in leading their global organizations. A total of four interview questions were utilized to inform research question one.

A total of fifteen themes were identified by coding beliefs, answers, and key phrases that were given during the interview process. These themes listed by question included: participative, empathy, learning, and task oriented for question one, empathy, goal-oriented, coaching and communication for question two, role model, Thai culture, work experience and education influenced for question three and for question four, flexibility, personality, team development and perseverance. The Thai culture played a significant role for all leaders interviewed, if it was *bunghun*, *Mai Pen Rai*, or the influence of the King. The culture could represent a strong point in their leadership style but with *Mai Pen Rai* it could be a barrier to increased work performance.

## **Research Question 2**

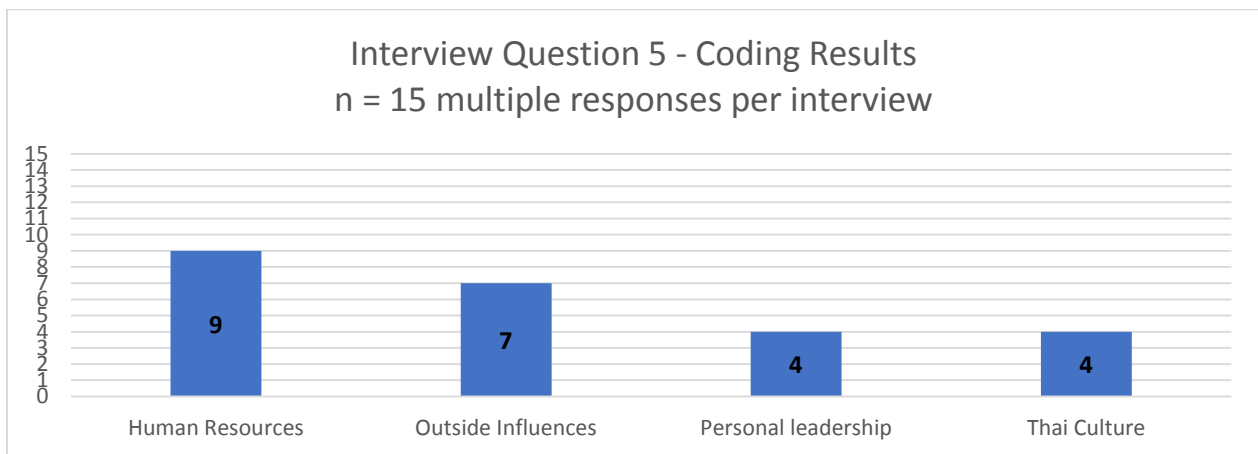
Research question 2 asked, “What challenges do Thai leaders face in leading their global organizations?” A total of two interview questions were asked to provide insight to research question 2. The two questions relating to research question two are:

Question 5: What difficulties do you face in leading your business?

Question 6: How did you overcome these difficulties?

These questions were analyzed to provide the common themes that identify the overall responses to research question 2.

**Interview question 5.** What difficulties do you face in leading your business? The analysis of all responses for question 5 produced 28 identifiers. These identifiers were grouped into four themes that include in descending frequency are, human resources, outside influences, personal leadership and Thai culture (see Figure 5).



*Figure 5.* Themes from interview question 5. Difficulties leaders are facing running their global business. Human resources, outside influences, personal leadership and Thai culture are listed in descending frequency. The numbers for each theme represent each time directly or indirectly the interviewees made a statement that fell into the respective category.

**Human resources.** This theme accounted to 9 responses or 60% of the replies that were directly or indirectly recorded during the interviews. The label of human resources included people management, multicultural workforce, personalities of staff, age gap, Gen X, Y and seniority. The interviewees advised the issue was a multicultural workforce that makes it difficult to find good employees. Interviewee P 6 advised “Understanding the different multicultural staff, adapting to the Thai culture is very difficult. Teaching the employees to learn and adapt to Thai culture creates issues for human resources” (P 6).

**Outside influences.** This theme accounted for 7 responses or 46% of the replies that were directly or indirectly recorded during the interview process. The label of outside influences include, external competition, customers’ expectations, closing of locations due to online services, uncertainty of the world financial stability, tough economy and political environment. Interviewee P 1 advised

Our staff is very smart in their position and have the ability to influence or be influenced by outside sources. This power needs to be respected and sometimes I need to bring in their power. Sometimes I relocate the employee if necessary. (P 1)

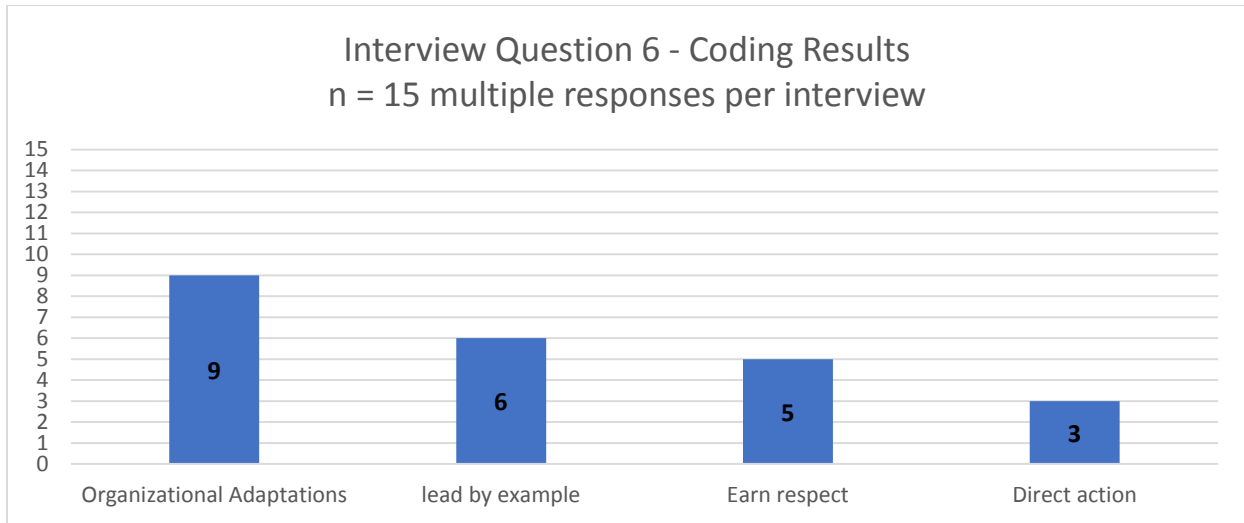
**Personal leadership.** This theme accounted for 4 responses or 26% of the replies that were directly or indirectly recorded during the interview process. The personal leadership label includes, need to adapt, new positions, new teams, new company, and self-awareness. Personal leadership was mentioned by the interviewees that felt their leadership needed developing or by taking new positions to learn more skills. Interviewee P 14 advised

I work on my leadership to create a positive work environment; I use Emotional Quotient for me, which means good stuff has a high ego that allows the team to work together. I develop my leadership to work with Emotional Quotient. (P 14)

**Thai culture.** This theme accounted for 4 responses as well or 26% of the replies that were direct or indirectly recorded during the interview process. The Thai culture includes the influences of *bunghun*, *Mai Pen Rai*, *Krenjai* and Buddhism and plays a significant role in leadership styles but was surprisingly not the most popular theme. Labels for the Thai culture include, work ethics, strategy based on culture, and easy come easy go (Mai Pen Rai). Interviewee P 4 advised

The Thai employees are not attracted to my industry especially the Gen X workers because they are not interested in working full time. Thai employees in general are looking for exciting places to work and old institutions like mine are not attractive to them. (P 4)

**Interview question 6.** How did you overcome these difficulties? The analysis of all responses for question 6 produced 24 identifiers. These identifiers were grouped into four themes that include in descending frequency are organizational adaptations, lead by example, earn respect, and direct action (see Figure 6).



*Figure 6.* Themes from interview question 6. Overcoming difficulties the leaders are facing. Organizational adaptations, lead by example, earn respect and direct action are listed in descending frequency. The numbers for each theme represent each time directly or indirectly the interviewees made a statement that fell into the respective category.

**Organizational adaptations.** This theme accounted for 9 indirect or direct responses or 60% of the replies that were recorded during the interview process. The label for organizational adaptations includes team work, team solutions, alliances, flexible, adaptive culture, and change management. Interviewee P 9 advised

I use the big picture with market intel, facts, and perseverance to get buy in from the team. This informs the group and allows them to buy in or recommend suggestions so the organization can adapt to the needs of the business. (P 9)

**Lead by example.** This theme accounted for 6 or 40% of the direct or indirect responses that were recorded during the interview process. Other labels include allow mistakes, educate why we are doing this, supportive, and keep talking to ensure the staff knows you are keeping your word. Interviewee P 5 advised “I lead by example through hard work. I show I can do anything, I have the competency to do anything” (P 5).

**Earn respect.** This theme accounted for 5 or 33% of the direct or indirect responses recorded during the interview process. Other labels include hard work, perseverance, persistence, and making tough decisions for the company. Interviewee 7 advised “I need to adapt my leadership to earn respect from my team. I have to be the problem solver for them and fight for them if it is the right thing to do.” (P 5)

**Direct action.** This theme accounted for 3 or 20% of the direct or indirect responses recorded during the interview process. Other labels include deliver bad news, make direct responses to employees, and use fact based leadership. Interviewee P 4 advised “It is very hard to say “no” in Thai culture. I was advised we needed someone in this organization who can deliver the bad news. It is very difficult to deliver” (P 4).

**Summary of research question 2.** Research question two sought to identify what challenges do Thai leaders face in leading their global organizations. A total of four interview questions were utilized to inform on research question one.

A total of eight themes were identified by coding beliefs, answers, and key phrases that were given during the interview process. These themes listed by question included: human resources, outside influences, personal leadership and Thai culture, organizational adaptations, lead by example, earn respect and direct action. The workforce in Thailand comes from Laos and Burma primarily as many of my interviewees advised me. The Thai workers have a low unemployment rate and are also less inclined to work long hours and this is a challenge many of the leaders face.

### **Research Question 3**

Research question 3 asked, “How do Thai leaders define, measure, and track their success in global organizations?” A total of two interview questions were asked to provide

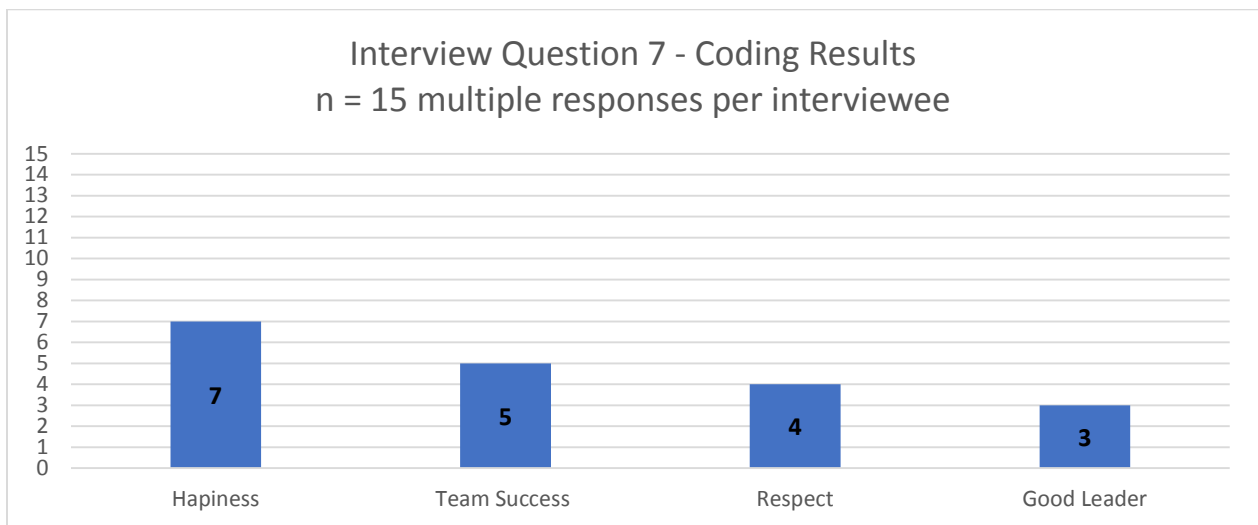
insight to research question 3. The two questions relating to research question two are:

Question 7: What does success mean to you?

Question 8: How do you define, track and measure that success?

These questions were analyzed to provide the common themes that identify the overall responses to research question 3.

**Interview question 7.** What does success mean to you? The analysis of all responses for question 7 produced 27 identifiers. These identifiers were grouped into four themes that include in descending frequency are happiness, success with employees, respect and be a good leader (see Figure 7).



*Figure 7.* Themes from interview question 7. What does success mean to the interviewee?

Happiness, team success, respect and being a good leader are listed in descending frequency. The numbers for each theme represent each time directly or indirectly the interviewees made a statement that fell into the respective category.

**Happiness.** This theme accounted for 7 indirect or direct responses or 46% of the replies that were recorded during the interview process. Other labels include self-awareness, feelings, good life, sleeping peacefully, quality of life, still happy at work and

happy life. Interviewee P 3 advised “When I get a home cooked meal from my mom. I can sleep peacefully at night. I can share a good life with my friends” (P 3).

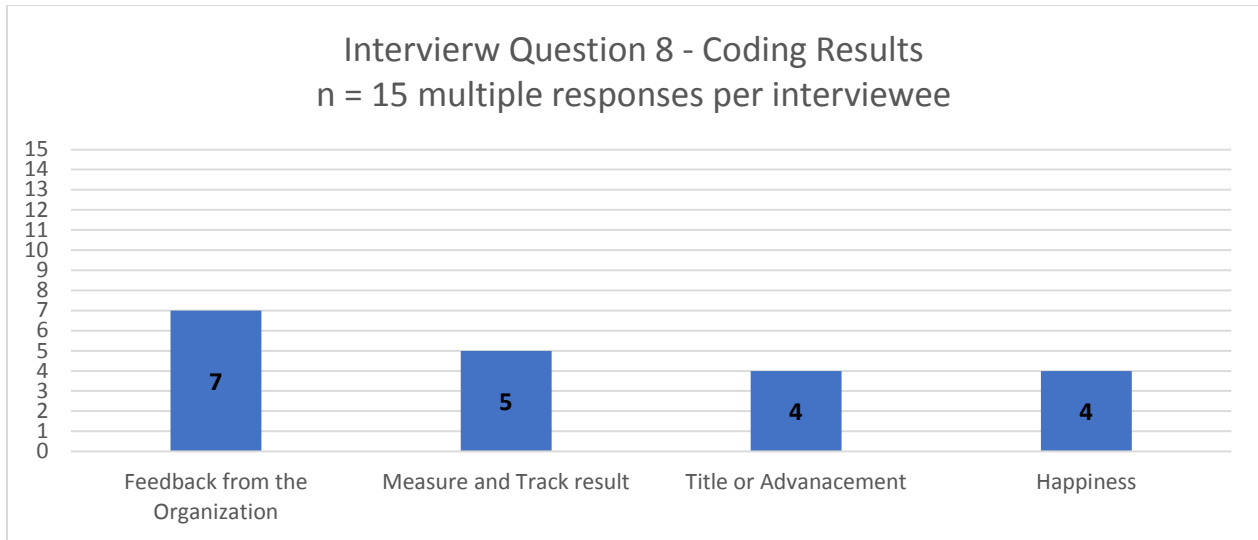
**Team success.** This theme accounted for 5 indirect or direct responses or 33% of the replies that were recorded during the interviews. Other labels include, happy staff, everyone happy, and employees do good work. Interviewee P 2 advised “I would not measure it by numbers; I would measure it by feelings. I would measure by my staff being happy” (P 2).

**Respect.** This theme accounted for 4 indirect or direct responses or 26% of the replies that were recorded during the interviews. Other labels include good feedback from the team, organizational respect and title (advancements). Interviewee P 1 advised “as I have earned respect from my staff, earn respect from the outside of the organization and being a role model” (P 1).

**Good leader.** This theme accounted for 3 indirect or direct responses or 20% of the replies that were recorded during the interviews. Other labels include role model and be a man of value to my employees. Interviewee P 5 advised “to be a good leader for the company is when we get a profit and have happy workers” (P 5).

**Interview question 8.** How do you define, track and measure that success? The analysis of all responses for question 8 produced 21 identifiers. These identifiers were grouped into four themes that include in descending frequency are feedback from the organization, measure and track results, title or advancements, and happiness (see Figure 8).





*Figure 8.* Themes from interview question 8. How is success defined, tracked or measured. Feedback from the organization, measure and track results, title or advancement and happiness are listed in descending frequency. The numbers for each theme represent each time directly or indirectly the interviewees made a statement that fell into the respective category.

**Feedback from the organization.** This theme accounted for 7 indirect or direct responses or 46% of the replies that were recorded during the interview process. Other labels include, loyal employees, opinion from peers, manager feedback, team assessment, frequent 1 on 1 feedback, surveys, and 360 degree feedbacks. Interviewee P 6 advised “a 360 degree survey or manager quality feedback is used and subordinates have to feedback their opinions to me” (P 6).

**Measure and track results.** This theme accounted for 5 indirect or direct responses or 33% of the replies that were recorded during the interview process. Other labels include, bottom line, specific target, 10% profit each year, and track work success.

Interviewee P 4 advised “Achievement is proved through measurement or tracking the contributions of the team to the business” (P 4).

**Title or advancements.** This theme accounted for 4 indirect or direct responses or 26% of the replies that were recorded during the interview process. Other labels include promotion or job advancement. Interviewee P 15 advised “I moved up fast in my past jobs, from the lowest employee to where I am now. I was moved into seniority positions at an early age” (P 16).

**Happiness.** This theme accounted for 4 indirect or direct responses or 26% of the replies that were recorded during the interview process. Other labels include enjoy life and good friends. Interviewee P 14 advised “What exactly do you want in life, I used to have nice cars, I had it all but I wasn’t happy. But now I want to do what I enjoy” (P 14).

**Summary of research question 3.** Research question three sought to identify what strategies and practices do Thai leaders use in leading their global organizations. A total of two interview questions were utilized to inform on research question one.

A total of eight themes were identified by coding beliefs, answers and key phrases that were given during the interview process. These themes listed by question are happiness, success with employees, respect and be a good leader, feedback from the organization, measure and track results, title or advancements, and happiness. Happiness and being a good boss stand out as two of the themes that added to the Thai cultural values used by these leaders.

#### **Research Question 4**

Research Question 4 asked, “What advice do Thai leaders have for others wanting to lead a successful global Organization?” A total of two interview questions were asked to

provide insight to research question 4. The two questions relating to research question two are:

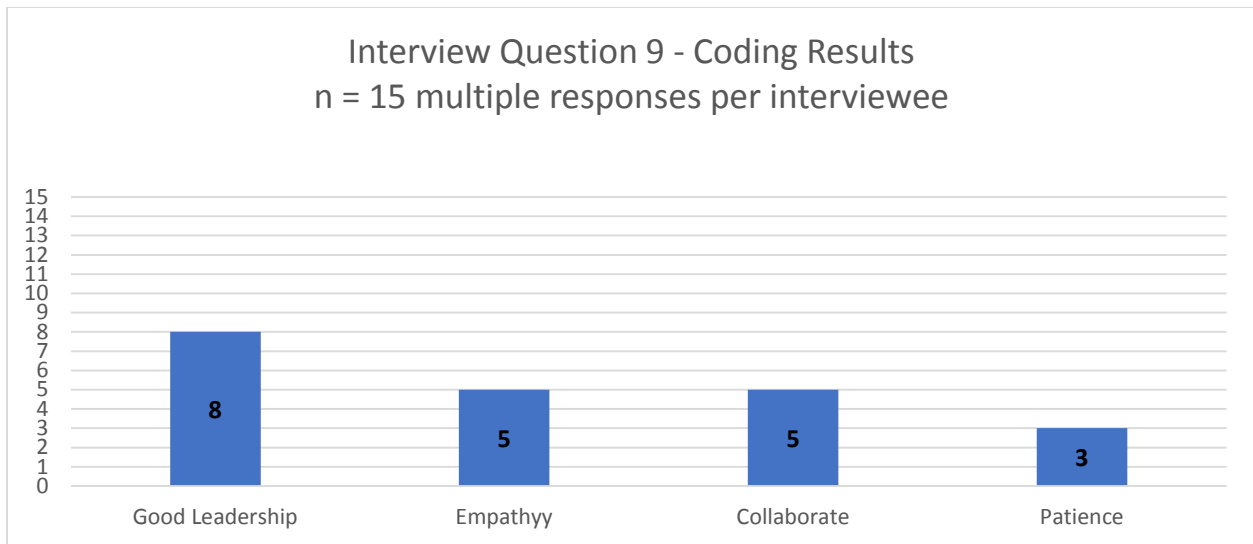
Question 9: What lessons have you learned that you would share with other Thai leaders in leading global organizations?

Question 10: Knowing what you know now, would you have done anything differently?

These questions were analyzed to provide the common themes that identify the overall responses to research question 4.

**Interview question 9.** What lessons have you learned that you would share with other Thai leaders in leading global organizations? The analysis of all responses for question 9 produced 27 identifiers. These identifiers were grouped into four themes that include in descending frequency are good leadership, empathy, collaborate and patience (see Figure 9).

**Good leadership.** This theme accounted for 8 indirect or direct responses or 53% of the replies that were recorded during the interview process. Other labels include, find loyal employees, improve communication, good governance, highlight success, and make better decisions. Interviewee P 10 advised “Good governance it is the heart of the organization. Leaders should follow this plan” (P 10).



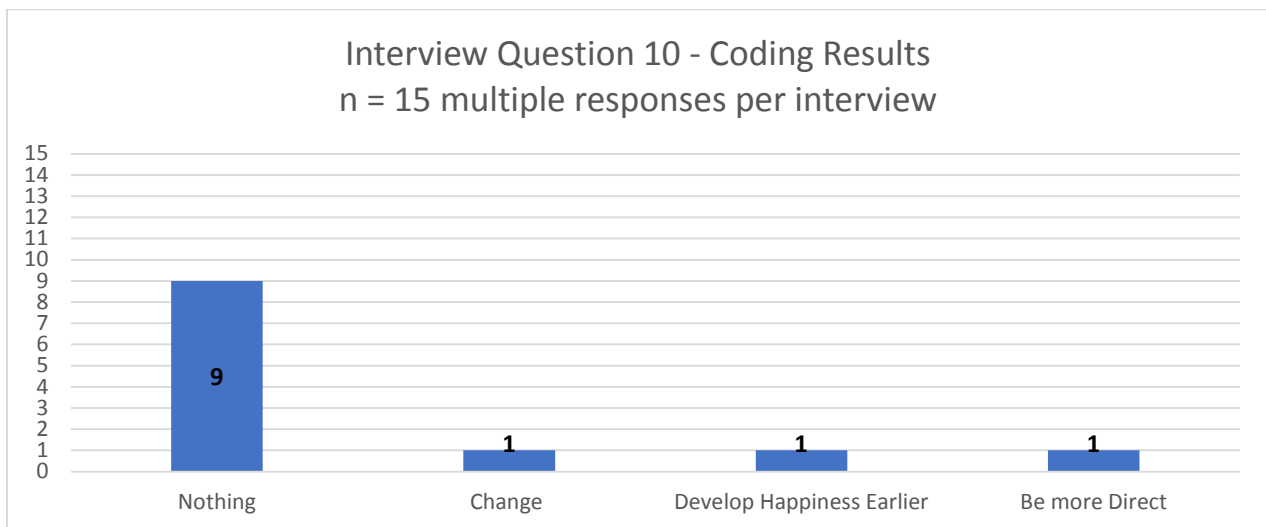
*Figure 9.* Themes from interview question 9. Lessons learned that would benefit other leaders. Good leadership, Empathy, collaborate and patience are listed in descending frequency. The numbers for each theme represent each time directly or indirectly the interviewees made a statement that fell into the respective category.

**Empathy.** This theme accounted for 5 indirect or direct responses or 33% of the replies that were recorded during the interview process. Other labels include, sincere, success is inside you, believe in their team and do not focus on the mistakes. Interviewee P 7 advised “Different people have different styles, put themselves in their situation. If you want them to do something putting yourself in their position makes it easier to get them to participate in the direction you want them to go” (P 7).

**Collaborate.** This theme accounted for 5 indirect or direct responses or 33% of the replies that were recorded during the interview process. Other labels include, give everyone a chance, share practices, mentor program and individual coaching. Interviewee P 13 advised “don’t come as a boss but as a colleague to get collaboration. Ask for different ideas from everyone to work together” (P 13).

**Patience.** This theme accounted for 3 indirect or direct responses or 20% of the replies that were recorded during the interview process. Other labels include take time and slow down. Interviewee P 1 advised “Success takes time, advancing quickly takes extra work to understand your staff. Advancements take time to develop leadership styles” (P 1).

**Interview Question 10.** Knowing what you know now, would you have done anything differently? The analysis of all responses for question 10 produced 27 identifiers. These identifiers were grouped into four themes that include in descending frequency are nothing, change, develop happiness earlier and be more direct (see Figure 10).



*Figure 10.* Themes from interview question 10. Would you do anything differently. Nothing, Change, Develop Happiness earlier and be more direct are listed in descending frequency. The numbers for each theme represent each time directly or indirectly the interviewees made a statement that fell into the respective category.

**Nothing.** This theme accounted for nine indirect or direct responses (60%) that were recorded during the interview process. There are no other labels for this identifier. P 2 advised “I think this is the best thing we can do now, our path is chosen” (P 2).

**Change.** This theme came from 1 interview and was directly used and accounted for 6% of the replies that were recorded during the interview process. Interviewee P 13 advised “I would change with the business and environmental changes faster” (P 13).

**Develop happiness earlier.** This theme came from one interview and was directly used and accounted for 6% of the replies that were recorded during the interview process. Interviewee P 3 advised “I would develop happiness at the start and would have not focused on the stress” (P 3).

**Be more direct.** This theme came from one interview and was directly used and accounted for 6% of the replies that were recorded during the interview process. Interviewee P1 advised “I would be more direct or aggressive and go to the boss more. I would go for more job advancements” (P 1).

**Summary of research question 4.** Research question four sought to identify what advice do Thai leaders have for others wanting to lead a successful global organization. A total of two interview questions were utilized to inform on research question one.

A total of eight themes were identified by coding beliefs, answers and key phrases that were given during the interview process. These themes listed by question included good leadership, empathy, collaborate and patience, nothing, change, develop happiness earlier and be more direct. The Thai culture is mostly Buddhist and reincarnation is part of the religion so the nothing answer makes sense.

## **Summary**

The purpose this study was to identify of Thai leaders who run global businesses. To complete this study, 15 Thai leaders in the private businesses were recruited to become

interview participants for this study. All the participants were asked ten semi-structured questions to inform on the following research questions.

Research Question 1: What strategies and practices do Thai leaders use in leading their global organizations?

Research Question 2: What challenges do Thai leaders face in leading their global organizations?

Research Question 3: How do Thai leaders define, measure, and track their success in global organizations?

Research Question 4: What advice do Thai leaders have for others wanting to lead a successful global Organization?

The data obtained from this study were collected through 15 semi-structured interviews. These interviews collected data that were coded and validated with the assistance of two interrater, Pepperdine graduates from the organizational leadership program. Data analysis was conducted employing the phenomenological approach explained in Chapter 3. Data analysis produced 40 themes. Table 2 provides a summary of all the themes developed through the data analysis process. Chapter V presents a discussion of themes, implications, recommendations and conclusion of the study.

Table 2

*Summary of All Themes*

| RQ 1. Strategies and Practices | RQ 2. Challenges Thai Leaders Face | RQ 3. Define, Track and Measure Success | RQ 4. Advice for Other Thai Leaders |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| Participative                  | Human resources                    | Happiness (2)                           | Good Leadership                     |
| Empathy (2)                    | Outside Influences                 | Success with employees                  | Empathy                             |
| Learning                       | Personal Leadership                | Respect                                 | Collaborate                         |
| Task Oriented                  | Thai Culture                       | Be a good leader                        | Patience                            |
| Goal-Oriented                  | Organizational Adaptations         | Feedback from the organization          | Nothing                             |
| Coaching                       | Lead by Example                    | Measure and track results               | (continues)<br>Change               |
| Communication                  | Earn respect                       | Title or Advancements                   | Develop happiness earlier           |
| Role model                     | Direct action                      |   | Be more direct                      |
| Thai Culture                   |                                    |   |                                     |
| Work experience                |                                    |   |                                     |
| Education Influenced           |                                    |   |                                     |
| Flexibility                    |                                    |   |                                     |
| Personality                    |                                    |   |                                     |
| Team Development               |                                    |   |                                     |
| Perseverance                   |                                    |   |                                     |

*Note:* This table displays a summary of all the themes originated through the data analysis process.



## **Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations**

The lack literature that is based on Thai leadership characteristics made for difficult research. This lack of information made the research questions and interview questions more difficult to develop. Thai business writings are limited and the research for the study relied on studies that included additional external cultures. Japanese managers leading businesses in Thailand is an example of the literature found during the research process. Another example is how do *bunghun* or *Krengai* as noted by Roongrerngsuke and Liefoghe (2012) affect the leadership culture. How did the language affect the leadership characteristics of the Thai leaders interviewed and did they overcome cultural obstacles to become successful? Western leadership theories do not delve into the language and cultural effects on leadership.

These challenges were part of the development of the research questions and the interview questions. According to Pimpa (2012), Thai leaders incorporated western style leadership traits such as development of employee skill, knowledge management, and increasing technical and professional capabilities. Will the Thai leadership characteristics be similar to western styles or different? The interview process looked to gain insight into the leadership characteristics used by these successful Thai leaders. Did the leaders adapt their styles or stick with traditional styles found in the research?

### **Summary of the Study**

The purpose the study was to determine the successful leadership characteristics of Thai leaders who are running global organizations; utilizing the literature review to direct the creation of the four research questions. This led to 10 open ended questions and two follow questions to answer the four research questions. This study was designed to be a

qualitative study the employed a phenomenological approach. According to Creswell (2012), individuals who have lived an experience and share meaning with other individuals who have also experienced the same experience and their study is the phenomenological approach.

The study identified three ways to find participants who met the study's requirements. The requirements were Thai business leaders who ran a global organization. The first was to contact an international organization and the Rotary Club was selected. The next step was to contact a university in Thailand through a professor from Pepperdine University who works virtually with them and the last step would be to obtain a recommendation from interviewees upon completion of their interview. The participants were required to speak English due to the researcher's limited understanding of basic Thai words. The participants were selected for maximum variation, male and female and also with an age range between 33 and 60. The survey restrictions were for private or public businesses and not governmental organizations.

Data collection was accomplished through semi-structured interviews with 15 participants. Ten open ended questions with two additional follow up questions were designed to answer the four research questions. These ten questions and two follow up questions were developed and validated through an interrater and validity method. The reliability and validity of the data collection instrument, the ten questions and two follow up questions was attained through a three step process. These steps were (a) prima facie validity, (b) peer-review validity, and (c) expert review. To ensure the data were collected for further review, audio recording equipment was used at the interviews and then transcribed to a notebook and then to Excel. The data were analyzed for key words and

coded to determine common themes for each question. The codes and themes needed validation, and this was completed through the interrater review procedure. The process of interrater review produced the need to change empathy listed for two themes, question one and four. Question four's theme changed from empathy to flexibility as reported in Chapter 4. The addition of bar charts was added to add a visual component to the study. The bar charts summarized and displayed the key themes, viewpoints, and recorded directly or indirectly recoded response.

### **Discussion of the Findings**

The findings of this study are intended to identify the characteristics of successful Thai leaders who are running their global businesses. The finding and themes that came from the interview processes will be provided in the following section. In order to determine if the study results agree, negate, or add to the existing body of knowledge the study findings were compared to the existing literature.

**Results for research question one.** Research question one asked, what strategies and practices do Thai leaders use in leading their global organizations? To identify strategies and practices used by Thai leaders, an analysis of the response and themes resulting from the coding process was required. These produced the following five areas:

- Thai leaders emphasized participative or collaborative leadership style that is effective for their multicultural staff.
- Empathy was a leadership style and technique used by Thai leaders to adapt to the Thai culture and international cultures.
- Thai leaders are influenced by role models including the King Bhumibol Adulyadej.

- The Thai culture has influenced Thai leaders and their leadership practices in the global environment.
- The ability to be flexible in their global work environment was a key strategic advantage.

**Discussion of research question one.** The results to research question one indicate that the Thai culture benefitted their leadership style. According to Roongrernsuke and Liefoghe (2012), the Thai leader is moving towards a more democratic, participative, and team-oriented leader. The Thai culture has long embraced foreign influences and the interview results align with participative or collaborative styles preferred by the majority of Thai leaders interviewed. *Bunkhun* which is prevalent in Thai society was also one of the main focus points of the Thai leaders who were interviewed. This familial phrase can cause problems for the Thai leaders but the culture is always respected. The Thai leaders advised that *bunkhun* limits the leaders ability to reprimand employees. Flexibility and empathy are strategies and strengths used by them. Thailand has a multicultural work force and the Thai leaders face many challenges such as language barriers and cultural norms that affect workplace. Burma was indicated by the Thai leaders as the main resource for foreign help but that was not the only culture mentioned.

Western countries and Asian countries were mentioned because of the conflicts these cultures can create. The Thai leaders would act as role models and lead by example to guide their multicultural workforce. One Thai leader explained American staff tends to be more assertive and expect more from work and these workers need more attention to teach them about the Thai culture. Roongrernsuke and Liefoghe (2012) advise that Thai leaders take into account cultural norms, religious influences, and outside cultural

influences that have shaped the country since the 1300s. The Thai leaders in this study were all college graduates and some had work experience internationally before leading their organizations.

The Thai leaders were able to adapt their styles to the global work environment and achieve their success. The main theme from these leaders was their understanding of their worker's needs and what is needed to create the best work environment. The leaders realize the challenges created by their multi-cultural workforce and global environment. The findings from the study suggest that Thai leaders need to be able to work in a multicultural work environment and maintain flexibility due to the changing work environment. The results from research question one lends itself to aligning with the current body of knowledge.

**Results for research question two.** Research question two asked: What challenges do Thai leaders face in leading their global organizations? To identify strategies and practices used by Thai leaders, an analysis of the response and themes resulting from the coding process was required. These produced the following three areas:

- Developing good human resources for the workplace that included the different generations and multicultural workforce is an important is required for a successful global organization.
- Outside influences inside Thailand, from different countries and the advances of technology are challenges facing Thai leaders.
- Creating an environment for their organizations to adapt the outside and inside influences.

**Discussion of research question two.** The findings to the research indicate that the global workforce and environment have created challenges for the Thai leaders interviewed. Human resource issues younger generations entering the workforce, different cultures and personalities are creating challenges for the Thai leaders. *Bunghun* again plays a role within these organizations. The implication of *bunghun* means employers have difficulty reprimanding and challenging employees to work harder. According to Pimpa (2012), little is known or understood of how Thai leaders are developing employee and effective management skills. The Thai leaders were adapting many different skills when dealing with the human resource problem. The younger generations X and Y were creating special challenges to the Thai leaders. Work ethics, lack of desire to work, lack of motivation, and working with the older generations are posing challenges to the Thai leaders. Thai leaders in established industries were finding challenges with the younger generations wanting to apply and work for them.

Outside influences can come from inside Thailand but many challenges are from the outside as well. The military coup in 2014 has created political unrest in Thailand and the passing of King Bhumibol Adulyadej in 2016 is creating uncertainty for the business environment. The global economy has price fluctuations, new competition, and a change in shopping preferences that are forcing businesses to close brick and mortar locations. The Thai leaders are adapting to these changes while balancing the human resource challenges. Steer, Sanchez-Runde, and Nardon (2012) advise leadership has the challenge of adapting its style to local customs to achieve their goals. The Thai leaders are overcoming these difficulties.

Organizational adaptations are key to the success of these organizations in the global environment. The Thai leaders are using team collaboration, an adaptive culture and alliances to overcome their challenges. The younger generations are more influenced by western culture and business practices but the avoidance of conflict and uncertainty remain in the culture (Pimpa, 2012). The Thai leaders are creating work environments where teamwork and flexibility to adapt to the changing global environment. This is different from the high-power distance characterizing Thai culture which creates a high deference (*greng jai*) towards those of senior status in all social relationships. This implies that senior officials should be making decisions based on their authority (Hallinger & Kantamara, 2010). This research surmises the leader makes all the decisions and the employees follow. This study summarized from the 1960s shows the contrasting changes in leadership in Thailand.

The opposite was discovered through the interview process. The Thai leaders advised that letting their subordinates make mistakes, understand and help find solutions for the challenges the organizations face, and creating a teamwork environment are benefiting their successful organizations. The study aligns with the current research about Thai leadership and adds to the body knowledge. According to Pimpa (2012), “Key western management practices such as the development of employee skills, knowledge management and increasing technical and professional capabilities are common norms in modern Thai public and private organizations” (p. 36). This was found during the interview process as subordinate happiness, ability and need to advance in their working career was mentioned by all the Thai leaders. The Thai leaders used empathy to gain insights into what their subordinates need to achieve their organizations goals.

**Results for research question three.** Research question three asked, how do Thai leaders define, measure, and track their success in global organizations? Identifying what is success and what is success to Thai leaders required an analysis of the response and themes resulting from the coding process. These produced the following three areas:

- Thai leaders emphasized a different definition of success and that was personal and team happiness.
- Successful with employees that included a happy staff and team development to achieve their goals.
- Tracking their success came from the organizational goals, feedback from their teams and managers.

**Discussion of research question three.** The findings to the research indicate that western measures of success, a nice house, cars, and other material are not the same in Thailand. Happiness was the number one answer from the Thai leaders. According to the United Nations website, 94% of the population is Buddhist (United Nations, 2017). Buddhism includes gentleness, patience, forgiveness and altruism to name a few of the key points (Roongrerngsuke & Liefoghe, 2012). Happiness was mentioned for the Thai leader as well as their desire to make their subordinates happy. Happiness included enjoying a good life, sleeping peacefully, enjoying coming to work and everyone being happy at work. Material items such as cars, a nice house and even watches were mentioned but not as drivers for their definition of success.

The Thai culture played a key for the leaders focusing on happiness as an indicator for success. The guidance of the King Bhumibol Adulyadej and his teaching was a large influence. “Thai employees prefer either an autocratic or paternalistic manager, while



fewer would prefer a consultative manager” (Limsila & Ogunlana, 2007, p. 173). This paternalism and even *bunghun* is why Thai leaders are focused on their team’s happiness. The Thai cultures effect on the work environment cannot be underestimated. The familial feelings toward the employees are not found in western organizations like it is in the Thai workforce. Respect for elders and leaders is a key part of the culture that was prevalent during the interviews. A few of the Thai leaders tracked their success through budgetary or tracking results from the organization’s goals.

Feedback from the organization through surveys from the team, frequent one on ones with subordinates, and low turnover of employees is part of the measurement tools Thai leaders used. According to Hallinger and Kantmara (2010), Thailand has a high feminine dimension to its culture that places a high value on social relationships that seek harmony. The Thai leaders advised that feedback from their staff was a significant part of measure of success. Measuring success also entailed the organization’s ability to meet or exceed the yearly goals. This success was important but it was part of the happiness and overall success of the team. Measuring success through titles or advancements was not the primary driver for the Thai leaders interviewed. The happiness theme was a notable finding in the study.

**Results for research question four.** Research question four asked: What advice do Thai leaders have for others wanting to lead a successful global organization? Identifying the advice from the Thai leaders required an analysis of the response and themes resulting from the coding process. These produced the following three areas:

- Good leadership practices are required for leading a successful global organization.

- Lead your organization through empathy and develop collaboration with your teams.
- Patience as a leader for career advancement will benefit your learning experiences.

**Discussion of research question four.** Good leadership is vital for creating and running a successful global organization. Good governance one Thai leader used repeatedly surmised many of the other leaders' advice for future Thai leaders. These included no corruption in the organization, transparency within the leadership structure, make better decisions for the team and organization, and improve your communication. This includes leading the organization with empathy as part of your leadership style. The Thai culture is a paternalistic society and understanding employees, empathy in western culture aids in developing a successful global business. Collaborating within the team and organization is part of good governance.

The modern era started in 1932 while Western influences really started in the 1950s with aid to help the newly formed Government (Roongrerngsuke & Liefoghe, 2012). The western influences as well as other cultural influences are part the good governance. Flexibility, giving your subordinates a chance to succeed, keep learning, and do not focus on the mistakes was also part of the good governance points the Thai leaders shared. Patience in your journey was mentioned for younger Thai leaders wanted to advance in large global organizations. The Thai leaders advised that learning the present position before advancing benefits the organization and the individual as well.

## **Implications of the Study**

The aim of the study was to find the successful traits of Thai leaders who are running global businesses. Thailand is an influential country in the Asian region and also becoming influential in the world with their global organizations. Large organizations are locating manufacturing facilities in Thailand and it is a hub of business in Asia. The leadership characteristics of successful Thai leaders found in this study can benefit organizations looking to do business in Thailand or with Thai organizations. Universities teaching international business can use the study to add to their curriculum and for areas of further research. Thai universities and organizations can look at the results of the study and further develop the leadership characteristics for future Thai leaders. As a result of this study, key characteristics were identified that Thai leaders used to run successful global business.

The first characteristic is benevolence. The Thai leaders used an empathic leadership style that included participatory and collaboration as part of their leadership characteristics. The Thai leaders were proactive with their teams and organization to ensure the success the subordinates and organization. Leading by example, being adaptive, and letting employees make mistakes. The Thai leaders were willing to let subordinates develop and grow to benefit them and the organization.

This was also part of the culture that is very benevolent to their employees. Benevolence was mentioned as part of the organizational cultures the Thai leader identified as their leadership style and strategies used to develop the teams and organization. Transparency, adaptability, open minded and fairness are also characteristics found in the Thai leaders. The Thai leaders' desire for happiness with their

subordinates and themselves also points to the benevolence of the Thai leaders. Focus on organizational goals was the focus of these leaders but was driven through their benevolence and participatory leadership characteristics.

The Buddhist religion discussed in Chapter 1 that included honesty, ethical behavior, and gentleness as part of the religion aligns with benevolence as a main characteristic of the Thai leaders interviewed for the study. *Bunghun* and *krengjai* were terms introduced in Chapter 1 that also align with benevolence as a characteristic of the Thai Leaders interviewed for the study. These terms are a moral obligation towards interpersonal relationships and being aware of other people's feeling and showing consideration to them. The study has identified these key words from Chapter 1 that were independently uncovered during the interview process.

The second characteristic is adaptability to the changing global business environment. Looking at the identifiers from the interview, coaching, development, collaboration, and learning are a few identifiers that account for adaptability being the second characteristic. Thai leaders are adapting their Thai cultural values to modern leadership challenges. These challenges include internal issues such as, human resource issues from Gen X and Y, a large part of the workforce coming from foreign countries and the challenges faced by being a global organization.

Thai leadership characteristics were transformational while adhering to traditional Thai values. Thai leaders are faced with challenges from the traditional Thai culture while taking on the global business environment. This challenge of utilizing the old culture and adapting new leadership characteristics was discussed in Chapter 1. "When entering leadership roles, Thai leaders need to hold on to the old traditions in order to have a mix of

both effective Western practices and important Thai values” (Baczek, 2013, p. 9). This quote from Chapter 1 summarizes the challenges Thai leaders face in the global market.

Adaptability in the work environment was expressed by the Thai leaders discussing techniques and strategies when implementing their leadership styles. Leadership strengths included the Thai leaders’ ability to work with the cultural diverse organization and the need to adapt organizational goals on a global level. The Thai leaders did not use the western equivalent leadership styles definitions during the interview processes. Their fluency in English would suggest their reading and developing of western leadership styles and many of the leaders have read popular leadership books by western leaders.

These two characteristics are the main themes that were present in the study. These are not limits or the only characteristics from this study. In Chapter 1 this paraphrases the idea that successful Thai leaders have to take into account the social systems, cultural beliefs, and values that have come from Buddhism, Hinduism, Chinese values, and western influences that have shaped the culture since the 1300s (Roongrerngsuke & Liefoghe, 2012) was used. In hindsight, using this paraphrase was appropriate for the results of the study. The Thai leaders have adapted their characteristics as needed to run their successful global organizations.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

The purpose of the study was to ascertain the characteristics of Thai leaders who run global organizations. In the process of the interviews and ultimately answering the reason for the study, other questions have arisen. These researchers can benefit from a qualitative study to reach more Thai leaders that speak only Thai and were excluded from

this study. These questions can contribute to the existing body on knowledge by conducting studies on the following:

1. What characteristics do Thai leaders use in the governmental sector? Does the culture have the same effect on leadership styles or is it similar to western governmental leadership? This comparison adds to or solidifies the current leadership characteristics from this study.
2. A wider study to determine what characteristics are found across more Thai organizations that are international, national or local. What affects their leadership characteristics? Are the same characteristics for global leadership beneficial for other organizations?
3. A study that encompassed hundreds or thousands of Thai leaders to refine the characteristics of Thai leaders. This survey was limited to 15 Thai leaders who spoke English. How do traditional Thai leaders lead and what characteristics are effective for them? This study would benefit universities and global organizations wanting to develop relationship with Thai businesses.

The effect Thai culture has on the leadership and business environment cannot be understated. The use of *bunghun* affected the leaders' ability to discipline or engage employees in an open dialogue about increasing workload. The Thai leaders advised me that talking to a subordinate directly in western organizations was frowned upon in Thailand. *Mai Pen Rai*, easy does it also detracts from the leader's ability to enhance work performance. The *easy does it* mentality is prevalent in the familial culture. Adding *krengjai*, supporting a moral obligation to support interpersonal relationships adds

another layer of difficulty the Thai leaders are facing. Organizations on a global level need to adapt with the fast changing global marketplace. The Thai leaders interviewed were adapting characteristics that would benefit the organization and their subordinates. This adaptation during the research phase of the study was not evident. The Thai culture is a conflict avoiding culture as discovered during the research for the study and substantiated during the interview process. The successful Thai leaders were navigating between the deep cultural values and the need to change with the global markets.

The Thai leaders were very gracious in participating in the study. The language differences were a challenge for many of them as direct translation of characteristics are not available. The Thai leaders wanted to ensure their information would be of value for the interview process and add value to the study. Their interviews added much more value than the results given here. Thai leaders showed the same benevolence to me as they do to their subordinates. I was very grateful for their time and insight not only into their characteristics used for their leadership but also how they compared to the governmental sector. This was not part of my study but very insightful for possible further research.

International travel and research can be challenging at best. I do not speak the language of business in Thai. I would like to read Thai leadership characteristics from the books written in Thai. The few translated or written in English were enough to send me on the journey. I look forward to reading other research on Thai characteristics as Thailand becomes more and more important in the Asian region. Future leaders looking into the Asian market would benefit from looking at Thailand. Bangkok is a very cultural diverse city that is amazing to visit.

## **Final Thoughts**

The Thai culture creates roadblocks for the Thai leaders. This issue was prevalent in the interviews. During two of the interview processes I worked with the Thai leaders to change their focus with their subordinates. We used a process to engage their subordinates about the inner working of the business and what they needed to do to ensure the company was successful. The process starts with the teaching them about the requirements of their position to ensure their work output is aligned with their positional requirements. The next step is to educate the employees on the overall financial needs of the organization such as monthly rent, payroll, salaries, or even profit on goods sold. The information is then translated into the need for their positions to produce specific outputs. One sold goods and the price of the sale of the good was reduced with labor inputs, cost of the goods, office costs, rent, and other items.

This process was designed to take out the personalities and focus on the importance of the needs of the company. The process was immediately launched at one company with immediate success. The employees increased their productivity and reduced timewasting processes. The use of a process board was necessary to ensure the employees are working on the needs of the organization. These two processes created a work environment that respects the Thai culture and increases the performance of the employees.



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## APPENDIX A

### Recruitment Script

Hello. My name is Bill Vaughn. I am a doctoral student in the Organizational Leadership doctoral program at Pepperdine University's Graduate School of Education and Psychology in California. As part of fulfilling my degree requirements, I am conducting a study on characteristics Of Thai leaders who lead global organizations.

I came across your name through \_\_\_\_\_. You (\_\_\_\_\_) have been carefully selected to participate in my study. Participation in the study is voluntary and confidentiality will be maintained throughout the study. Participation involves a no longer than 60 minutes interview. Questions asked in the interview and an informed consent form will be sent to you in advance of the interview. Your participation in this study will be extremely valuable to characteristics of successful Thai leaders who run global organizations .

I would like to ask if you would be willing to be interviewed as part of this study.

Bill Vaughn

Pepperdine University

Graduate School of Education and Psychology

Status: Doctoral Candidate

## APPENDIX B

### Reminder E-Mail to Participants

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

Recently, I sent you a request to participate in a voluntary study on characteristics of Thai leaders in their Global Organization. Participation involves a no longer than 60 minutes interview. Questions asked in the interview and an informed consent form will be sent to you in advance of the interview. Your participation in this study will be extremely valuable to characteristics of successful Thai leaders who run global organizations. If you consent to participate in the study, I will confirm a date and time for the interview and e-mail you the consent form and interview questions.

Thank you for your participation in this important study.

Sincerely,

Bill Vaughn

## APPENDIX C

### Informed Consent

#### **INFORMED CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH ACTIVITIES**

#### **CHARACTERISTICS OF GLOBAL THAI LEADERS**

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by (Bill Vaughn and Farzin Madjidi, Ed.D at Pepperdine University, because you are

- A Thai person who is leading a global Organization
- You are employed in the private sector
- You speak English

Your participation is voluntary. You should read the information below, and ask questions about anything that you do not understand, before deciding whether to participate. Please take as much time as you need to read the consent form. You may also decide to discuss participation with your family or friends. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to sign this form. You will also be given a copy of this form for you records.

#### **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

There is limited research on characteristics of successful Thai leaders. Thai leadership characteristics that are influenced by international corporations and Thai cultural values that affects Thai leadership characteristics is also limited. This study is to consider the successful characteristics Thai leaders use in their global business. What challenges they are facing and the solutions used to overcome them. The Thai culture is very prevalent in leadership articles and that will affect leadership characteristics. The study will identify how it affects or has affected their leadership characteristics. The resulting research will provide a model for further studies of successful leadership characteristics of Thai leaders.

#### **STUDY PROCEDURES**

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to...

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to participate in an interview lasting no longer than 60 minutes.

#### **Audio-recording**

I also ask that we may make an audio recording of the interview. If you agree to such recording, the audio file will be destroyed within 3 weeks of recording, during which it will be transcribed. Transcription will take place by the member of the research team who conducts the actual interview. Under no circumstances will the recording be released to a third party.

## **Interview protocol**

The following interview protocol will be used: the following questions will be asked:

Icebreaker: Tell me a little bit about your career

Question 1: Describe your leadership practices?

Question 2: What techniques and strategies do you employ?

Question 3: What philosophies have influenced you?

Question 4: What are your leadership strengths and how do they help you?

Question 5: What difficulties do you face in leading your business?

Question 6: Follow-up questions: Have you encountered difficulties in dealing with cultural, political, socio-economical and Thai norms?

Question 7: How did you overcome these difficulties?

Question 8: What does success mean to you?

Question 9: How do you define, track and measure that success?

Question 10: What lessons have you learned that you want to share with other Thai leaders in leading global organizations?

Follow ups: have you encountered difficulties in dealing with cultural, political, socio-economical and Thai norms?

Question 11: Knowing what you know now would you have done anything differently?

## **POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS**

The potential and foreseeable risks associated with participation in this study might be a pressure on the research participants' time.

## **POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY**

While there are no direct benefits to the study participants, there are several anticipated benefits to society which include:

1. The Thai society will be able to use the results to benefit the society at large.



2. The finding will focus on the characteristic of successful Thai leaders to inform scholars and practitioners about these characteristics.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

I will keep your records for this study *confidential* as far as permitted by law. However, if I am required to do so by law, I may be required to disclose information collected about you. Examples of the types of issues that would require me to break confidentiality are if you tell me about instances of child abuse and elder abuse. Pepperdine's University's Human Subjects Protection Program (HSPP) may also access the data collected. The HSPP occasionally reviews and monitors research studies to protect the rights and welfare of research subjects.

The data will be stored on a password protected computer in the principal investigators place of residence. The data will be stored for a minimum of three years. The data collected will be coded, de-identified, identifiable, transcribed and not directly linked to the individual research participant. The data will not be released to any third party.

### **PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL**

Your participation is voluntary. Your refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study.

### **ALTERNATIVES TO FULL PARTICIPATION**

The alternative to participation in the study is not participating or completing only the items which you feel comfortable.

### **EMERGENCY CARE AND COMPENSATION FOR INJURY**

If you are injured as a direct result of research procedures you will receive medical treatment; however, you or your insurance will be responsible for the cost. Pepperdine University does not provide any monetary compensation for injury

### **INVESTIGATOR'S CONTACT INFORMATION**

I understand that the investigator is willing to answer any inquiries I may have concerning the research herein described. I understand that I may contact Dr. Farzin Madjidi at [fmadjidi@pepperdine.edu](mailto:fmadjidi@pepperdine.edu) if I have any other questions or concerns about this research.

## **RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT – IRB CONTACT INFORMATION**

If you have questions, concerns or complaints about your rights as a research participant or research in general please contact Dr. Judy Ho, Chairperson of the Graduate & Professional Schools Institutional Review Board at Pepperdine University 6100 Center Drive Suite 500 Los Angeles, CA 90045, 310-568-5753 or [gpsirb@pepperdine.edu](mailto:gpsirb@pepperdine.edu).

APPENDIX D

Peer Reviewer Form

Dear Reviewer:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my research study. The table below is designed to ensure that may research questions for the study are properly addressed with corresponding interview questions

In the table below, please review each research question and the corresponding interview questions. For each interview question, consider how well the interview question addresses the research question. If the interview question is directly relevant to the research question, please mark "Keep as stated." If the interview question is irrelevant to the research question, please mark "Delete it." Finally, if the interview question can be modified to best fit with the research question, please suggest your modifications in the space provided. You may also recommend additional interview questions you deem necessary.

Once you have completed your analysis, please return the completed form to me via e-mail to [william.vaughn@pepperdine.edu](mailto:william.vaughn@pepperdine.edu). Thank you again for your participation.

| <b>Research Question</b> | <b>Corresponding Interview Question</b>  |
|--------------------------|--|
| RQ1: Placeholder         | Placeholder<br><br>a. The question is directly relevant to Research question - <b>Keep as stated</b><br>b. The question is irrelevant to research question – <b>Delete it</b><br>c. The question should be <b>modified as suggested:</b><br><br>_____<br>_____ |

| Research Question       | Corresponding Interview Question  |
|-------------------------|---|
|                         | <p>I recommend adding the following interview questions:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>   |
| <p>RQ2: Placeholder</p> | <p>Placeholder</p> <p>a. The question is directly relevant to Research question - <b>Keep as stated</b></p> <p>b. The question is irrelevant to research question – <b>Delete it</b></p> <p>c. The question should be <b>modified as suggested:</b></p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>I recommend adding the following interview questions:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> |
| <p>RQ3: Placeholder</p> | <p>Placeholder</p>  |
| <p>RQ4: Placeholder</p> | <p>Placeholder</p>  |

## APPENDIX E

### Research and Matching Interview Questions

| Research Questions  | Interview Questions  |
|---|--|
| <p>Research Question 1: What strategies and practices do Thai leaders use in leading their organizations?</p> | <p>Question 1: Please describe your leadership practice?</p> <p>Question 2: What techniques/ strategies or philosophies have you employed that you have found successful?</p> <p>Question 3: What are your leadership strengths and how do they help you?</p>  |
| <p>Research Question 2: What challenges did they find in their leadership practices?</p>                      | <p>Question 4: What are some of your challenges you have faced in leading your business?</p> <p>Possible follow up question will address: Cultural, political, socio-economical and Thai norms.</p> <p>Question 5: How did you overcome or deal with the challenge?</p> <p>Question 6: Does the Thai culture make it easier or at times more difficult to overcome the challenges you mentioned?</p> |
| <p>Research Question 3: How do they define, measure and track their success?</p>                              | <p>Question 7: Describe your criteria for success?</p> <p>Question 8: How do you analyze your short-term success? or How do you track your success daily, weekly or monthly?</p> <p>Question 9: How do you analyze your success, what methods do you use?</p> <p>Question 10: What influences your measure of success?</p>   |
| <p>Question 4: What advice do they have for other Thai leaders wanting to lead a successful organization?</p> | <p>Question 11: What advice would you give Thai leaders wanting to lead organizations?</p> <p>Question 12: What recommendations would you have for Americans who want to open business in Thailand?</p> <p>Question 13: Is there anything else you want to share about your experiences in leadership?</p>   |

## APPENDIX F

### Revised Research and Matching Interview Questions

| Research Questions   | Interview Questions  |
|--|--|
| <p>Research Question 1: What strategies and practices do Thai leaders use in leading their global organizations?</p>     | <p>Question 1: Describe your leadership practices?<br/>                     Question 2: What techniques and strategies do you employ?<br/>                     Question 3: What philosophies have influenced you?<br/>                     Question 4: What are your leadership strengths and how do they help you?</p>  |
| <p>Research Question 2: What challenges do Thai face in leading their global organizations?</p>                          | <p>Question 5: What difficulties do you face in leading your business?<br/>                     Question 6: Follow-up questions: Have you encountered difficulties in dealing with cultural, political, socio-economical and Thai norms?<br/>                     Question 7: How did you overcome these difficulties?</p>   |
| <p>Research Question 3: How do Thai leaders define, measure and track their success in leading global organizations?</p> | <p>Question 8: What does success mean to you?<br/>                     Question 9: How do you define, track and measure that success?</p>  |
| <p>Question 4: What advice do Thai leaders have for others wanting to lead a successful global organization?</p>         | <p>Question 10: What lessons have you learned that you want to share with other Thai leaders in leading global organizations?<br/>                     Follow ups: have you encountered difficulties in dealing with cultural, political, socio-economical and Thai norms?<br/>                     Question 11: Knowing what you know now would you have done anything differently?</p> |

## APPENDIX G

### IRB Approval



Pepperdine University  
24255 Pacific Coast Highway  
Malibu, CA 90263  
TEL: 310-506-4000

#### NOTICE OF APPROVAL FOR HUMAN RESEARCH

Date: November 10, 2017

Protocol Investigator Name: William Vaughn

Protocol #: 17-09-611

Project Title: Successful Thai Leadership Characteristics

School: Graduate School of Education and Psychology

Dear William Vaughn:

Thank you for submitting your application for exempt review to Pepperdine University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). We appreciate the work you have done on your proposal. The IRB has reviewed your submitted IRB application and all ancillary materials. Upon review, the IRB has determined that the above entitled project meets the requirements for exemption under the federal regulations 45 CFR 46.101 that govern the protections of human subjects.

Your research must be conducted according to the proposal that was submitted to the IRB. If changes to the approved protocol occur, a revised protocol must be reviewed and approved by the IRB before implementation. For any proposed changes in your research protocol, please submit an amendment to the IRB. Since your study falls under exemption, there is no requirement for continuing IRB review of your project. Please be aware that changes to your protocol may prevent the research from qualifying for exemption from 45 CFR 46.101 and require submission of a new IRB application or other materials to the IRB.

A goal of the IRB is to prevent negative occurrences during any research study. However, despite the best intent, unforeseen circumstances or events may arise during the research. If an unexpected situation or adverse event happens during your investigation, please notify the IRB as soon as possible. We will ask for a complete written explanation of the event and your written response. Other actions also may be required depending on the nature of the event. Details regarding the timeframe in which adverse events must be reported to the IRB and documenting the adverse event can be found in the *Pepperdine University Protection of Human Participants in Research: Policies and Procedures Manual* at [community.pepperdine.edu/irb](http://community.pepperdine.edu/irb).

Please refer to the protocol number denoted above in all communication or correspondence related to your application and this approval. Should you have additional questions or require clarification of the contents of this letter, please contact the IRB Office. On behalf of the IRB, I wish you success in this scholarly pursuit.

Sincerely,

Judy Ho, Ph.D., IRB Chair

cc: Dr. Lee Kats, Vice Provost for Research and Strategic Initiatives