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# Woman's Leadership Model and Roles Towards Thai Children and Youth Development

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## Abstract

The research on the Woman's Leadership Model and Roles Towards Thai Children and Youth Development has objectives to study: 1) the context of woman leadership in Thailand, 2) the roles of woman in the development of Thai children and youth in Thailand, and to discover 3) the woman leadership model in the development of children and youth in Thailand. This is a qualitative research in which the documentary study is based on academic journals and printed as well as electronic data. The in-depth interview was conducted with 12 individuals. These key-informants are purposively selected and are well-verse in the topic of interest. Moreover, a focus group was conducted with 14 participants who were considered as experts and have had an involvement in the relevant topic of study. The obtain data were categorized and analyzed based on content analysis and verified under a triangulation method. The results showed that: 1) Thai society in the past never looked at woman with an eye of admiration, motherhood awareness, justice, or with equal rights and freedom as a human being. The reflection of woman's roles in the past should convince people in modern society to realize and better understand women's leadership and to be able to judge the leadership of women with an impartial mind. 2) The roles of woman in the development of Thai children and youth in Thailand include: (1) operation based on profession, (2) acceptance building in the operation as a profession, (3) proactive operation, (4) surveillance, campaign, no rebranding or repeated violence towards children, youth, and family, and (5) joint development of woman's leadership as a profession. And, 3) The woman leadership model in the development of children and youth in Thailand is called a universal goodness that comprises of cleanliness, orderliness, politeness, punctuality, and concentration.

**Keywords:** Woman leadership model, children and youth, development universal goodness

## 1. Introduction

In the past, Thai society was a society that forged Thai children in term of value designation in being successors of the areas of religion, culture, and tradition. Once these children reach their adulthood, they would become good citizen of the country. Children are like an apple of parents' eyes, members of the respective community, and are akin among themselves to whom they have to look after each other, being attentive as well as protective to each other. The beauty and value of Thai society in which a large number of Thai children are weathered and depleted, and, at the same time, are under the influence of new pattern of society that forges children with new behavior and spirit in the past following 20 years. This phenomenon has been increasingly intensified and can be observed in forms of problems regarding drugs, free sex, materialism, and behavioral and emotional violence. These problems remain a national agenda in which every sector in the society must cooperate and coordinate among each other in order to solve the problems. There is a need to build community power to become strengthened, having enough potentials to protect children and youth from those mentioned problems. This is to rest assure that children and youth would be developed to have a good health and mind, having a strong intellect and be able to grow and to become useful to the society.

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Children and youth are among the most crucial resources in the country both at the present and in the future. They are considered as a foundation towards administration, economic and social development, including as successors in intention, identity, and splendid culture that are heritage in arts and culture and they are considered as an important force of the country.

The quality development towards children and youth with potentiality, readiness in terms of physical, intellectual, emotional, moral and ethical perspectives, awareness, knowledgeability, and keeping pace with changes are expected to lead to the knowledge-based society with a beautiful mind, public consciousness, and being participative in the development of society and the country sustainably.

Somsak Amornsiriphong (2019) claimed that the social work and the development of children and youth in almost every country in the world has the same starting point that is the feelings of compassion and mercy toward those suffering people. Moreover, it is influenced by religious teaching from every religion in term of loving and caring for humanity. This makes human being come up with the ideas of helping other fellows who face with difficulties such as starvation, slavery, poverty, unemployment, and war. The primary assistance is always deals with the basic necessity in terms of food, clothing, shelter, and medicine which are necessary for living. For instance, in England there is a distribution of food, cloths, and an organization of accommodation for the poor. In America, there is an establishment of almshouse for children, sick people, and insane persons. In Thailand, there was an establishment of Sapa Una Lomdang (The Thai Red Cross Society) in B.E. 2436 (A.D. 1893) in providing the medical treatment, food, and clothing to injured soldiers from war.

Thai society has long been considered leadership roles as an exclusive characteristic of a man. Women are just viewed as taking a supportive role or as an inspiration of a man to move forward against goals successfully. How many people would like to set a question or to have a doubt that, in reality, the said leadership is created by whom? Man or woman. Or both of them are helping and supporting each other to become a leader. Thunyatorn Boonapai and associates (2563) argued that the woman development under the equality stream between man and woman usually encounters with problems and obstacles as if this issue must be accepted by the public opinion. At present, the development of woman lies in the situation that is captured by the public eye and the myth in which the society feels about the sexual issues and feminism, especially on the issue of the process in providing a fair treatment against sex that is on a continuous basis. The trends towards woman development is a dynamic one where woman's organizations have expertise and deep understanding on the topic. At the same time, there is an extension of cooperation as a network in the mobilization for changes in political, economic, social, and cultural structure.

The Department of Women's Affairs and Family Development has prepared for an "Action Plan in Women's Development, Phase 1 (B.E. 2563-2565)" by applying and improving the criteria in women's development strategy B.E. 2560-2564 specified by the Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council with the retained content that has been approved by the cabinet on September 26, B.E. 2560 that has been announced as a master plan in women's development. On top of that, the Department of Women's Affairs and Family Development has added the appendix regarding an action plan derived from related governmental units in terms of project and various activity improvements as well as the extension of an operational timeline up until B.E. 2565. This is in relevance to the time-period designated in the national strategy for the reason that the said Action Plan in Women's Development, Phase 1 (B.E. 2563-2565) would be used as guidelines in the mobilization of status promotion and potential development of women in the next coming 3 years with high efficiency. Besides, this is also in relevance to guidelines in national

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development as specified in the national strategy (B.E. 2561-2580) in terms of development and enhancement of human resource potential and the building of opportunity and social equality, and also in accordance with a master plan under the national strategy regarding social power, grassroots economy, equality and social security, and the national economic and social development plan, issue 12, the 1<sup>st</sup> strategy: the strengthen and development of human capital potential, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> strategy: the upholding of justice, inequality reduction in the society. Hence, the Action Plan in Women's Development, Phase 1 (B.E. 2563-2565) is under the supervision of Policy and Strategy Committee in National Development Strategy of Women's Status (Department of Women's Affairs and Family Development, 2563).

Pierli, Murmura and Palazzi (2022) argued that the current political, economic and social scenario is characterized by continuous and rapid changes. Companies are therefore called to face a significant change, which requires the definition of policies and strategies strongly oriented toward sustainable development, becoming fundamental for long-term success and competitiveness. In this perspective, female leadership plays a key role. Over time, women have demonstrated the ability to successfully manage the challenges imposed by social dynamics and environmental change. Despite the growing number of studies on women as sustainable development leaders, there is still little empirical evidence on how women contribute to the companies' sustainable development.

Nowadays, people around the world enjoy equal rights. It can be seen that women have important roles in various operations and have increasingly become leaders in both public and private sector as a consequence from social equality in which women and men have the equal rights. Thus, in the present society, women are working to bring the bacon to the family. This makes the women having the same potential as men's. Or in some work, women can perform as good as men can whether they are at the family, community, society, or national level. There are lo lot of women who are knowledgeable and capable in holding many important positions. In the past, there were many women participated in the political roles and national administration, for instance, former the 1<sup>st</sup> lady of Argentina, Eva Peron, wife of General Juan Domingo Peron, the president of Argentina during B.E. 2489-2495, Indira Gandhi, a former prime minister of India, Sirimavo Bandaranaike Vidyalaya, former prime minister of Sri Lanka and the 1<sup>st</sup> woman prime minister of the world at B.E. 2503, and Angela Merkel, the prime minister of Germany. For our neighboring countries, there are dominant female leaders such as Aung San Suu Kyi of Myanmar, Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, the 14<sup>th</sup> president of the Philippines, Megawati Sukarnoputri, former president of Indonesia, including Yingluck Shinawatra, the 18<sup>th</sup> prime minister and the 1<sup>st</sup> female prime minister of Thailand. These are the solid proof that woman leaders have important roles in politics and national administration (Thanapat Chongmeesuk, 2013).

Therefore, the researcher is very interested in conducting a research on the Woman's Leadership Model and Roles Towards Thai Children and Youth Development in Thailand and want to find out: 1) the context of woman leadership in Thailand, 2) the roles of woman in the development of Thai children and youth in Thailand, and to discover 3) the woman leadership model in the development of children and youth in Thailand respectively.

## **2. Research Objectives**

The research on the Woman's Leadership Model and Roles Towards Thai Children and Youth Development has the following objectives of study:

- 1) To study the context of woman leadership in Thailand.
- 2) To explore the roles of woman in the development of Thai children and youth in Thailand.
- 3) To discover the woman leadership model in the development of children and youth in Thailand.

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### **3. Research Methodology**

The research is considered as a qualitative research. According to Boonmee Phunthai (2022), qualitative research is a process or method of study of phenomena in the society or of human behaviors in the society based on the existing milieu at such a moment in order to find the relationships of related phenomena or human behaviors with such an environment. This efforts are undertaken by using data pertinent to feelings, thought, interpretation, or various phenomenal definitions including values and individual's ideology that are related with the said phenomena. This type of research is considered as a long-term study and uses data analysis in term of interpretation and concludes the findings based on the deduction methodology.

The most common methods of data collection are document study, (non-) participant observations, semi-structured interviews and focus groups (Busetto, Wick, and Gumbinger, 2020). This study has utilized an in-depth interview with 12 key-informants to whom include local government officers, community leaders, scholars, and local people. An in-depth interview is a qualitative research technique that is used to conduct detailed interviews with a small number of participants. In contrast to other forms of qualitative research, researchers using an in-depth interviewing approach invest a significant amount of time with each participant employing a conversational format. Interview questions are primarily open-ended and lead to a discovery-oriented approach (Rutledge and Hogg, 2020). This particular research also conducted a focus group conversation with 14 participants who are intensively involved with a lot of experience in the development of Thai children and youth. These people are Buddhist monks, school administrators, women leader, president of local government organization, officers, as well as local individuals. The collected data are analyzed by using content analysis method, and then categorized into groups that relevant to the research objectives. Finally, the data are cross-check by using a triangulation method to increase the credibility and validity of research findings (Noble and Heale, 2019).

### **4. Research Findings**

The research on the Woman's Leadership Model and Roles Towards Thai Children and Youth Development has the findings based on the following research questions.

1) To study the context of woman leadership in Thailand.

In the past, Thai women have been made sluggish regarding the intellectual training and the search for knowledge. They have been forced not to have an interest in politics and have no confidence in themselves and their capacity. Women are lacking the courage in making various decision. These incidences happen as a result from the surrounding environment of women. Not only that the women have an inferior physical appearance than men, they also suffer from tradition, belief, values, and social stratification as determiners in classifying the women's characters, attitudes, nature, and behavior under the framework established and accepted by the society. Such conditions create a thrust and stimulation for Thai women at the present to rise up and fight for the elevation of status up to the same level of men. These can be seen from the various roles that represent the challenges encountered by the women to become leaders in contemporary society in various professions, say, to become a minister, a member of parliament, a prestigious senator, a provincial governor, entrepreneur of a large business firm, bank manager, as well as to get involve in local administration, shoulder to shoulder with men in the position of female village chief, female head of a village, or an executive position in a local government organization.

2) To explore the roles of woman in the development of Thai children and youth in Thailand.

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From the study, the roles of woman in the development of Thai children and youth in Thailand include: (1) operation based on profession, (2) acceptance building in the operation as a profession, (3) proactive operation, (4) surveillance, campaign, no rebranding or repeated violence towards children, youth, and family, and (5) joint development of woman's leadership as a profession. The women's work operation is always undertaken in a professional manner. This means that the work can be handled in coordination with other related disciplines with a clarity of roles and a specific area of responsibility. The most important feature of a profession in term of an operation lies on knowledge and specific skills that cannot be replaced by other profession. Or they may be performed but not as good as being performed by a true owner of that profession. The building of acceptance in work operation as one of the important professions in Thai society. The creation of empirical work in terms of a prevention, protection, and development of Thai children and youth including the revelation of women's roles relevant to the genuine profession into the public. These roles are not just a passive role in terms of an assistance, giving, or distributing of goods to the fragile group of people but also include other roles starting from the operative level up to the policy level on social work and social welfare. However, these mentioned roles are not only directed toward children and youth but also toward every other established target. The proactive operations can be understood in forms of a prevention and promotion expressing in activities and/or projects that enhance quality of life in various perspectives that produce an impact on targeted children and youth carrying out in the respective community. The watch-out, campaign, the avoidance of branding, and repeated violence onto children and youth are handled with care and consideration in terms of human dignity and rights. The women-leaders must always behave themselves as a role-model in the society. The female leaders are enthusiastic in the search for knowledge. These tasks can be visualized and carried out in many dimensions such as academic work, research, as well as social work and social welfare. Finally, the female leaders must support each other in the development of woman's leadership in an integrated manner. This means the purposive operation towards very possible group of interest, in every possible methods and social procedures in accordance with acceptable standards both at the national and international level. These results are in the same direction of the work being done by World Bank (2011) on "Repeated Violence Threatens Development" that argued that political and criminal violence can have devastating effects on development in fragile states. To date; no low-income fragile or conflict-affected state has achieved a single Millennium Development Goal. Children in those countries are twice as likely to be undernourished and three times more likely to be out of school than children in other developing countries. Women are more likely to be subject to rape; trafficking and prostitution; and men face higher rates of morbidity and mortality. The risk of violence increases when stresses both internal and external—combine with weak institutions.

3) To discover the woman leadership model in the development of children and youth in Thailand.

The woman leadership model in the development of children and youth in Thailand is comprised of (1) cleanliness (2) orderliness (3) politeness (4) punctuality and (5) concentration or being known as a Universal Goodness or Global Merit 5. Universal Goodness or Global Merit 5 is a basic guidance for proper physical, verbal and mental conduct. In this respect, anyone who keeps practicing these 5 precepts can expect to experience happiness and also prosperity in life regardless of his or her gender, age, race, nationality, or religion or cult. The rational is that in practicing of a universal goodness, the practitioner will enjoy a bright and crystal-clear mind being known as a state of mind that is conducive to peace and happiness that lead to the success of work. These five aspects of universal goodness should be conscientiously incorporated into female leaders' daily work.

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The reason is that the five aspects of universal goodness is the foundation of every type of creative work and every level of goodness.

## **5. Research Discussion**

1. The study of the context of woman leadership in Thailand revealed that the roles of Thai women based on the previous legislation are understood of having the duty and responsibility but having no the rights as a man does. Thai women have a lower social status than the men's since women have no rights or roles towards politics, economy, and society. On top of that, Thai women are viewed just a sex object and an honest slave in the household. They were deprived from a proper education, as a result, they have no chance to express their intellectual ability in the economic, political, and social issues. However, the Thai archaic bureaucratic system requires every man to serve in government and/or war services on an annual basis for several months or even years. This incidence forces women to take whole compulsory responsibility in the household affairs. This may be one of the reasons that makes women equal to men or more than men de facto. If the men never return to the family, women have to act as leaders of the family in terms of production and avocation in the Thai agricultural society in the past. This discovery is in congruent with the report written by Tantiwiranond and Pandey (1987) in the book called "The Status and Role of Thai Women in the Pre-Modern Period: A Historical and Cultural Perspective" that says the contemporary popular media has often portrayed Thai women in fragmented images concentrating on two extreme strata of Thai society. It has popularized Thai women as either being unusually progressive and emancipated, by citing examples of successful urban female executives and business women, or being oppressed, victims of prostitution. The findings are also in conjunction with the discussion of PPTV Online (2564) who revealed that Thai women must encounter with various challenges throughout the history. But nowadays, women are important forces in propelling national economy and Thai women own businesses in country at about 23.7 percent. And finally, Siriyupa Rungreingsuk (2560) in her work entitled "Thai women are not inferior to anyone" pointed out that companies listed in S&P 500 report that they have 4.6 percent of women CEOs and these female CEOs are receiving lesser compensation than men's at about 11.5 percent.

2. The roles of woman in the development of Thai children and youth in Thailand include: (1) operation based on profession, (2) acceptance building in the operation as a profession, (3) proactive operation, (4) surveillance, campaign, no rebranding or repeated violence towards children, youth, and family, and (5) joint development of woman's leadership as a profession. These findings are reflected with the work of Narumon Samutta, Pakpoom Intawong, and Saran Wongkhamchan (2552) on "Guidelines to Develop Potential of Children and Youths, Wangsaipoon Sub-district, Wangsaipoon District, Pichit Province" that summaries guidelines in the development of children and youth in 4 main areas that are: (1) health and protection issues, (2) intellectual and work ability issues, (3) emotional and responsibility issues, and (4) participation in the community and society issues. It is also in the same direction with The Rockefeller Foundation (2021) in "Women in Leadership: Why It Matters" which summarizes that (1) women in leadership offer uniquely important mentorship, (2) women in leadership have a positive impact on workplace policies, and (3) it is especially important for women starting their careers to have women in leadership positions as role models. The research undertaken by Thunyatorn Boonapai, Pakwipa Bodhisri, and Sommai Jamkrajang (2563) on "Trends of Women Leadership Role for Social Development" also concluded that the contextual roles of women include social issue, cultural issue, and environmental issue.

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3. The woman leadership model in the development of children and youth in Thailand is comprised of (1) cleanliness (2) orderliness (3) politeness (4) punctuality and (5) concentration or being known as a Universal Goodness or Global Merit 5. This results are relevant to work of Replicon (2022) on “Unique Skills And Attributes Make Women Fantastic Leaders” that claims gender shouldn’t determine an individual’s leadership abilities, instead, organizations must assess leadership potential by evaluating individual strengths and personality traits and also describes a women leadership model comprising of 17 issues as follows: value of work-life balance, more inclusive, more empathetic, encourage free thinking, focus on teamwork, good at multitasking, motivated by challenges, strong communicators, dream big, handle crisis situations well, can wear many hats, keep their ego in-check, have high emotional intelligence, flexible, leading by example, make their jobs look effortless, and defy the odds. It is also in the same line with the study of Krieger (2020) on “How to Be a Successful Woman Leader in a Male-Driven Industry” in which she proposed a set of woman’s skills including: don’t compromise who you are, use your natural talents wisely, and value your employees, and also mentioned that women are snagging more jobs and working their way up the corporate ladder. Though not well known, there are actually many advantages to being a successful woman leader in the biotech industry. For example, women often possess a certain set of skills that most men don’t, and they are often the ones that make a great leader. Moreover, the research undertaken by Thunyatorn Boonapai, Pakwipa Bodhisri, and Sommai Jamkrajang (2563) on “Trends of Women Leadership Role for Social Development” pointed out that the trends of woman leadership roles for social development are: (1) the strengthening of power of volunteer, (2) the strengthening of feminism, (3) the strengthening of Thai identity, (4) the strengthening of reconciliation, and (5) the strengthening of resource conservation.

## **6. Conclusion/Suggestion**

In our days, women have been gaining more and more space in organizations where they did not have the opportunity before, playing a relevant and respected role in relation to men’s work in the growth of the economically active population. But they still encounter many challenges and difficulties that persist to this day in relation to women knowing how to deal with home, and family but still focus on their growth at work while still celebrating all achievements achieved. Women are ready to have leadership roles in the future whether it is in social, economic cultural, political or environmental perspective.

Women usually do not pay attention about the organizational politics and management, they just know how to be good leaders because they have competence, emotional balance, ability to improvise and self-determination which is what has proven to be fundamental to good leadership, reason, why the world has now more female leaders than the past, has seen. The woman leadership model in the development of children and youth in Thailand is comprised of (1) cleanliness (2) orderliness (3) politeness (4) punctuality and (5) concentration or being known as a Universal Goodness. These five aspects of universal goodness is the foundation of every type of creative work and every level of goodness. Besides, there should be a study upon the co-culture of man and woman working together in order to analyze on equality, justice, and appropriateness in the development of the society.

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