

# A DEVELOPMENT MODEL OF ADMINISTRATORS' LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES FOR EFFECTIVE JOB PERFORMANCE IN PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

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**Abstract:** The main purpose of this study was to develop the model of administrators' leadership competencies for effective job performance in private higher education institutions. The five domains of Spencer & Spencer (1993) leadership competencies and the four domains of Thai Higher Education missions were used as theoretical framework for the study. This study was conducted with both quantitative and qualitative methods. The data was gathered from 351 lecturers from 7 private higher education institutions in Bangkok, Thailand. The questionnaire with 5 rating scales was used to collecting the data. Content analysis was used to analysis of qualitative data, descriptive statistics was applied through frequency, mean, and standard deviation to determine the current practice and desirable administrators' leadership competencies for effective job performance, paired Samples t-test was computed to assess the gap analysis between the current practice and desirable administrators' leadership competencies in order to find out the priority improvement and superior required for effective job performance in private higher education institutions. The resulted from the average mean showed that there was significant difference between current and desirable leadership competencies of administrators in private higher education institutions. The research findings revealed that there were 26 leadership competencies were superior for effective job performance existed and 24 leadership competencies superior needed to development and develop the model for administrators.

**Keywords:** Leadership, Competencies, Administrators, Private Higher Education.

## Introduction

The world today has been rapidly changing. The impact of the change could be felt through social, political and economic structures and processes which have surfaced from this global restructuring. One critical issue that has derived from all of these reorganization processes is the central role of knowledge, education and learning for the success of the Global Information Society (GIS) and global information economy. Knowledge has become an increasingly important factor of production and has also played a vital role in the Higher Education Institution (HEI).

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In recent years, Thai higher education of both public and private administrators and at any levels of management had faced with radical changes as aforementioned. Under the particular circumstances, many higher education institutions exert their efforts to professionally develop themselves to meet the requirements of the Organization of Higher Education Commission (OHEC) standards and quality, yet there are many institutions, especially private higher educations failed to achieve the goal.

The goals of Thai higher educational institution are to promote quality and to be a globally competitive education as a whole. Administrators who are truly responsible for the quality of education at all levels should develop their leadership competencies for the purpose of attaining the goals as well as the effective job performance to accomplish the institutions' missions at both national and institutional level in four major dimensions of missions, namely teaching and learning, conducting research studies, providing academic services to the society, and lastly preservation Thai arts and culture. Hence, in response of these needs, the researcher is interested in studying the desirable administrators' leadership competencies required for effective job performance and a development of a model of administrators' leadership competencies for effective job performance in selected PHEIs.

### **Research Objectives**

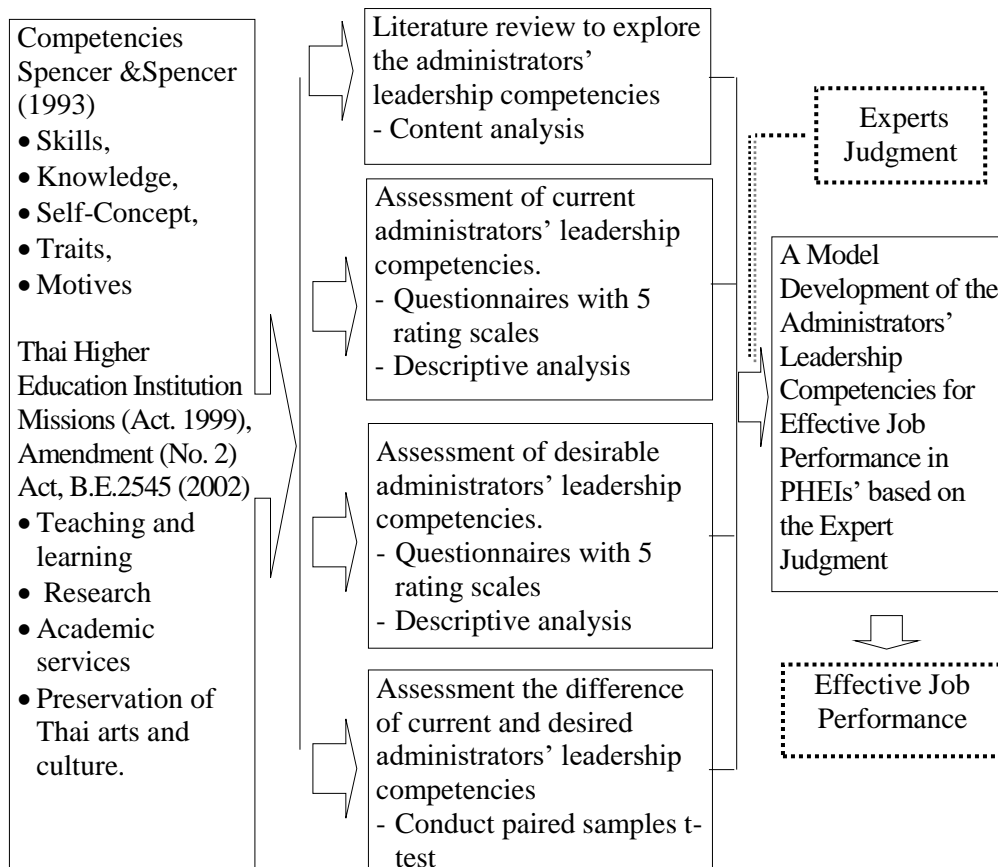
There are five objectives:

1. To explore the leadership competencies of administrators for effective job performance in private higher education institutions.
2. To determine the current leadership competencies of administrators for effective job performance in private higher education institutions.
3. To determine the desirable leadership competency of administrators required for effective job performance in private higher education institutions.
4. To examine the difference between current administrators' leadership competencies and the desirable leadership competencies required for effective job performance in private higher education institutions.
5. To develop the model of administrators' leadership competencies for effective job performance in private higher education institutions.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework for this study was based the focal point of the theoretical framework of this study was based on Spencer & Spencer's (1993) competencies at work which comprising of Skills, Knowledge, Self-concept, Traits, and Motives. These competencies were linked to the Thai higher Education Administrative main missions including teaching and learning, research, academic services, and preservation of Thai arts and culture. Thus, the researcher employed both Spencer and Spencer's (1993) competencies and the four administration areas in Thai higher educations as a theoretical framework for this study. The researcher applied this theoretical framework as a primary source to design the conceptual framework for the study as the conceptual framework showed below.

## Conceptual Framework



**Figure 1: The Conceptual Framework of the Development Model of Administrators' Leadership Competencies for Effective Job Performance in Private Higher Education Institutions**

## Research Methodology

This study was conducted by employing both quantitative and qualitative methods. Therefore, the research designed of this study was a mixed method analysis.

### *Population and Sample*

The research population was faculty lecturers with 7 private higher education institutions in Bangkok. Sample size of 351 was found by using Krdjcie and Morgan (1970) table, while the representative private higher education institution were selected by the institution which meet the three criteria as follow: I- PHEIs provide graduate, doctoral, and postgraduate education levels, II- PHEIs enroll with more than ten thousand students in all level of services, III- PHEIs with more than 300 faculty lecturers.

### *Research process*

This study was conducted by employing both quantitative and qualitative methods. Therefore, the research designed of this study was a mixed method analysis. The research design has been categorized into four phases were as follows:

Phase I: To explore the leadership competencies of administrators for effective job performance in private higher education institutions. The research process comprising the identification of the source of qualitative data, the collection of qualitative data and the analysis of qualitative data to explore the leadership competencies of administrators for effective job performance in private higher education institutions. The structure of data collection has been designed to consist of two dimensions. The first dimension incorporated five domains of Spencer & Spencer's five leadership competencies. The second dimension was the four missions of Thai higher education institutions (THEIs). The integration and the grouping of the key words and phrases were used with the expectation to obtain the leadership competencies of administrators for effective job performance in private higher education institutions.

Phase II: To determine the current of leadership competencies and the desirable leadership competency of administrators for effective job performance in private higher education institutions. The research instrument consisting of three parts as the following information. Part I: Questionnaires about demographic information of faculty lecturers. Part II: Questionnaires for research objective two and three, to determine the current and desirable administrators' leadership competencies for effective job performance in PHEIs'. The questionnaires were consisted with 50 questions from the combination of 5 leadership competencies, includes skills, knowledge, self-concept, traits, motives and 4 missions of Thai higher education institution, comprising teaching and learning, research, academic services, and preservation of Thai arts and culture with 2 or 3 sub-variables of each competency. *Scale used in the questionnaire* created by using Likert scale type based on Brace (2004) with 5-point rating scale as follows:

5	Indicated	at the highest level
4	Indicated	at a high level
3	Indicated	at a moderate level
2	Indicated	at a low level
1	Indicated	at the lowest level

The criteria of scale interpretation were as follow:

Scale Score	Meaning
4.51 – 5.00	Very High
3.51 – 4.50	High
2.51 – 3.50	Moderate
1.51 – 2.50	Low
1.00 – 1.50	Very Low

Part III: There was an open –ended question subject to Linguistic Content Analysis that would see respondent opinion as a free response regarding the

administrators' leadership competencies development of private higher education Institutions.

#### *Validity of the Instruments*

In order to assess the content validity of the research instrument, the researcher established the validity of the research instruments with a panel of three experts in higher education institutions who held doctoral degree and work as education administration.

In order to validate content of the questionnaire items, the index of item-objective congruence (IOC) concept was used for evaluating the content validity (Rovinelli and Hambleton, 1977). This concept is a process that a group of content experts individually evaluates the list of items based on the degree which they can measure specific objective to verify the accuracy of the contents (Ronna C. Turner & Laurie Carlson, 2003). The index of item objective congruence (IOC) was calculated for each item by the formula below:

$$IOC = \frac{ER}{N}$$

Where :

IOC = Index of Item Objective Congruence

ER = Total score from experts

N = Number of experts

#### *Reliability*

The reliability of the questionnaire was established by conducting a pilot study with 30 participants from the faculty lecturers of Sripatham University, Kasem Budit University and St. Theresa College. The Cronbach's coefficient alpha was computed to determine the reliability of the questionnaire. Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha for all questionnaires was 0.717

Phase III: To determine the difference between current administrators' leadership competencies and the desirable leadership competencies require for effective job performance in private higher education institutions. The data from the outputs of previous stage were used as the input data for the research of this phase, the paired samples t-test was used to analyze the significant difference of each paired means of current administrators' leadership competencies and the desirable leadership competencies variables.

Phase IV: To develop the model of administrators' leadership competencies for effective job performance in private higher education institutions for objective 5. From Leadership Competencies theories review to create the framework for the studies in objective one, the results from the objectives two and three as a source of the data to determine the gap on objective 4, then the results from objective 4, the gap analysis between the current administrators' leadership competencies exiting and the desirable competencies found. The researcher used the leadership competencies selected to develop the model for administrators' in PHEIs' for effective job performance, based on the expert judgment.

### *Collection of Data*

For the objective 1, data collection was process comprising the identification of the source of qualitative data, the collection of qualitative data and the analysis of qualitative data to explore the leadership competencies of administrators for effective job performance in private higher education institutions. For objective 2 and 3, questionnaire was used in the data collection. The researcher wrote a formal letter to obtain permission from the dean of each faculty of 7 Private Higher Education Institutions in Bangkok, Thailand to distribute the questionnaires with official letter from the Dean of the Graduate of Education, Assumption University to collect the data from the faculty lecturers.

### *Data Analysis*

Data analysis, for the objective two, in order to determine the perceptions of faculty lecturers on the current practice of administrators' leadership competencies for effective job performance in PHEIs, the researcher used descriptive statistics which included mean and standard deviation to determine the current of administrators' leadership competencies of PHEIs and used the data for the objective four studies. For objective three, in order to analyze the desirable administrators' leadership competencies required for effective job performance in PHEIs, the researcher also applied descriptive statistics mean and standard deviation to determine the desirable administrators' leadership competencies required for effective job performance in PHEIs and used the data for the objective four studies.

### **Research Findings**

There were 100% respondents from 7 private higher education institutions, with 51 % of the participants female while 48 % male. The majority of participants were between the ages of 41-50 years old. The majority of participants 74.6 % were Thai while 25.4 % were Non- Thai. The majority of participants had master degree. The majority of participants reported their years of work with the current institutions for 1-5 years, and the majority of participants reported their years of work experience as a lecturer 6-10 year. Survey of current administrators' leadership competencies for effective job performance in private higher education the research revealed that:

Teaching and learning competencies, The respondents agreed that the first 3 ranks current administrators' leadership competencies for effective job performance in private higher education institutions included the first rank knowledge in curriculum management with the highest mean of 3.70, The second rank was ability to implement projects/ activities to support the curriculum development and the ability to implement projects/ activities to support the learning process with the mean of 3.65, and the third rank was enhancing professional qualities that lead to advanced academic standing with the mean of 3.64.

Research competencies, The respondents agreed that the first 3 ranks of current administrator leadership competencies for effective job performance in private higher education institutions included ability in performing research that applied toward the benefit of the faculty work with the highest mean of 3.58, the second rank was knowledge in management system for research innovations of research with the mean

of 3.55, and the third rank was skill in development of systems to support the conduct research with the mean of 3.54.

Academic services competencies, The respondents agreed that the first 3 ranks of current highest current administrator leadership competencies for effective job performance in private higher education institutions included support academic professional service enters nationally with the highest mean of 3.68, the second rank was knowledge in academic service administration systems and understanding the responsibility of providing academic services to the society with the mean of 3.65, and the third rank was encouraging the faculty lecturer in developing skills in providing academic service with the mean of 3.64.

Preservation of Thai arts and culture competencies, The respondents agreed that the first 3 ranks current highest administrators' leadership competencies for effective job performance in private higher education institutions included the awareness of responsibility to Thai Society attitude towards arts & culture promotion works with the highest mean of 3.69, the second rank was a model for high moral ethics characteristics for faculty member to preserve arts and culture with the mean of 3.65, and the third rank was model for high moral ethics characteristics students to preserve arts and culture with the mean of 3.64.

In objective 3- to determine the desirable leadership competencies of administrators for effective job performance in private higher education institutions, found that all administrators' leadership competencies required for effective job performance were at the high level. The respondents agreed that the first 3 ranks of each major administrator leadership competencies presented were as follows.

Teaching and learning competencies, the first rank was knowledge in curriculum management with the highest mean of 3.70, The second rank was Ability to implement projects / activities to support the curriculum development and the ability to implement projects / activities to support the learning process with the mean of 3.65, and the third rank was enhancing professional qualities that lead to advanced academic standing with the mean of 3.64.

Research competencies, the first rank was ability in performing research that applied toward the benefit of the faculty work with the highest mean of 3.58, the second rank was knowledge in management system for research innovations of research with the mean of 3.55, and the third rank was skill in development of systems to support the conduct research with the mean of 3.54.

Academic services competencies, the first rank was the support academic professional service enters nationally with the highest mean of 3.68, the second rank was knowledge in academic service administration systems and understanding the responsibility of providing academic services to the society with the mean of 3.65, and the third rank was encouraging the faculty lecturer in developing skills in providing academic service with the mean of 3.64.

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In objective 4 - to examine the different between current administrators' Leadership competencies and the desirable leadership competencies for effective job performance in private higher education institutions, there were 24 administrators' leadership competencies are significant to develop the model for the effective job performance in PHEIs and to develop the model for the future studies as follows.

Teaching and learning competencies included; 1) Providing motivational services to the faculty achievements, 2) Encouraging faculty members incorporate all new technology, 3) Knowledge in curriculum development, 4) Developing the learning process to enhance student knowledge development, and 5) Knowledge in instructional process that emphasize on learner.

Research competencies included; 1) Promoting research for teaching development among full-time faculties, 2) Creating an environment that promotes increased quality of research, 3) Enhancing students' expertise in academic research, 4) Promote research for student learning development, 5) Enhancing faculty members' expertise in academic research, 6) Encouraging to provide grants for research innovations for the students, 7) promoting to increase budgetary provisions for conducting research, and 8) Encouraging to provide grants for research innovations for the faculty members.

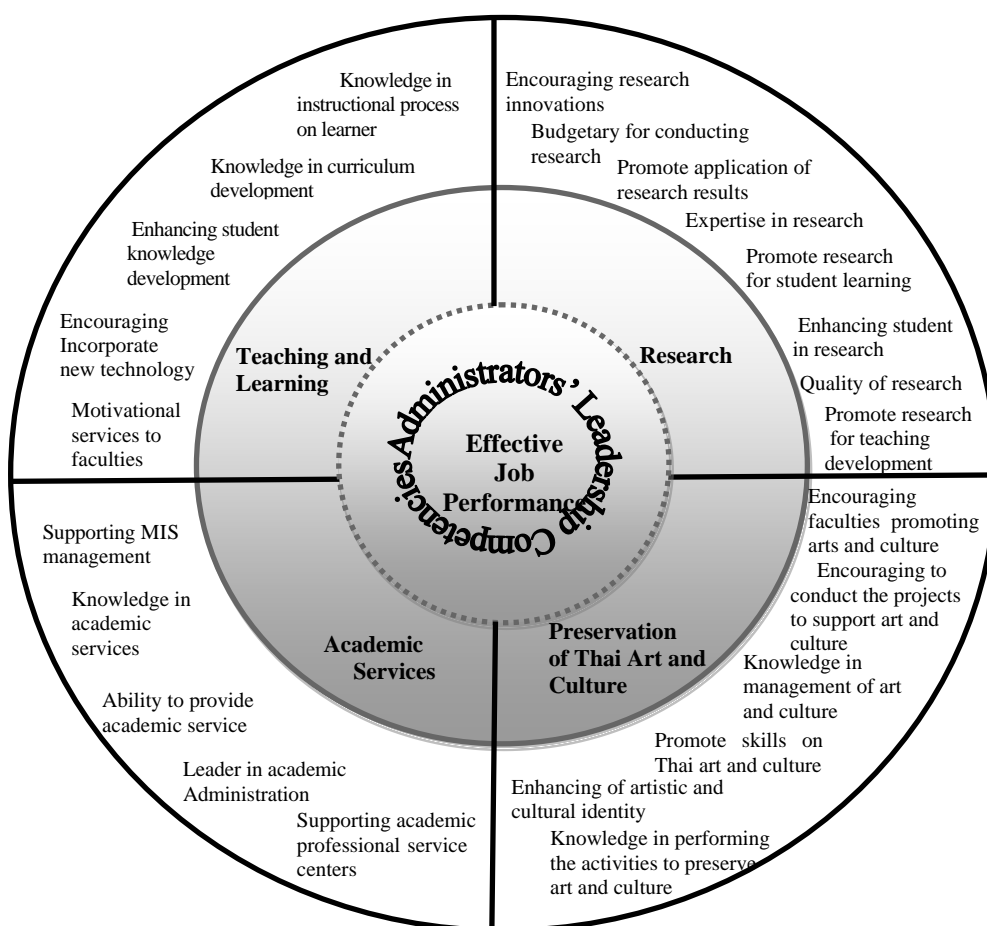
Academic services competencies included; 1) ability to provide academic service activities /projects responding to the need of the society, 2) knowledge in processing to provide academic services to the society and provide educational service for local development, 3) Provision of Management Information Systems (MIS) supportive of academic services management, 4) Demonstrating a recognition as a leader in academic administration, and 5) Support academic professional service centers internationally.

Preservation of Thai arts and culture competencies included; 1) Encouraging faculties promoting arts and culture, 2) Encourage conducting the projects to support arts and culture, 3) Knowledge in management of arts and culture, 4) Promote skills on Thai arts and culture, 5) Enhancing of artistic and cultural identity, and 6) Knowledge in performing the activities to preserve arts and culture as the model presented below.

### **The Model Validation**

In order to prove the applicability and possibility of the application of the model in the target private higher education institutions, the researcher proposed the model "A Development Model of Administrators' Leadership Competencies for Effective Job Performance in Private Higher Education Institutions" to the focus group experts. The comments, suggestions, and recommendations were applied pertaining to the correction and adjustment of the model. The focus group expert's comments, suggestions, and recommendations were collected through 2 channels: interviews and emails. The model had been analyzed and examined by the group of experts the model was remained with their comment in order to facilitate model and use this model at administrators for effectiveness job performance in private higher education in situations as the model showed below.





**Figure 2: A model of Administrators' Leadership Competencies for Effective Job Performance in Private Higher Education Institutions**

The model showed three layers of circles, inside circle refers to the administrators' leadership competencies with effective job performance. Next, the second layer refers to the four higher education missions which were included teaching and learning, research, academic service, and preserve arts and culture. The third layer refers to the completed product of the model in the sense of professional development provided for administrators which were included twenty-four competencies mentioned above.

Moreover, the competencies which the private higher education institutions must consider in order to produce the administrators for effective job performance in the organization based the group of experts' comments. They were included; mission, vision, values, ethics, collaboration, planning, analysis, creative thinking, change management, human resources, adaptability, team leadership, academic leadership, relationship management, risk management, people development, strategic thinking, quality orientation, teamwork, drive for results, problem solving, instructional leadership, service orientation, entrepreneurial skills, and management.

## Discussion

The systems of Private Higher Education Institutions in Thailand are under the supervision of The Office of Higher Education Commission (OHEC), Ministry of Education and the private higher education institutions. In this regard, private higher education institutions providing education at degree level shall be allowed to function with freedom developing their own system of administration and management. They should have flexibility and academic freedom and shall be under supervision of their own council in accord with the Act on Private Higher Education Institutions. This represents the adjustment and development of organization-level quality of education which was the foundation and mechanism to drive university administrators at all levels to use this opportunity to show the full performance of their administration potentials.

The research's major objective was to identify the gap between current and desirable administrators' leadership competencies for effective job performance perceived by the lecturers. The findings showed the priority of improvement of administrator's leadership competencies included 5 teaching competencies, 8 research competencies, 5 academic services competencies and 6 competencies to preserve Thai arts and culture. The model of leadership competencies outcome from the research findings will be an asset added to the Thai Private Higher Education Institutions or others concerned institutions in developing the competencies of administrators in order to enhance the effectiveness of job performance and maximize competent performance in an organization. Furthermore, the model enables the human resource management to analyze their policy as well as provide meaningful information with respect to the descriptions of the characteristics needed to be followed by the administrators at all levels as well as enabling them with necessary skills to successfully implement the policy to enhance the effectiveness of employee performance.

These findings are in congruence with Vathanophas & Thai-ngam (2007) studied on Competency Requirements for Effective Job Performance in the Thai Public Sector, Mahidol University. According to him the model of competency possibility to organize has been categorized into motives, self-concept, knowledge, and skills or ability.

Motives include *Service-minded* which refers to a desire to help or serve others to meet their needs. *The main purpose of motives* is to discover and meet customers' or clients' needs, such as responding to customers' inquiries, requests or complaints, appropriately and taking actions to satisfy customers through offering them confidence in order to meet their needs and resolve problems. *The main purpose of Team leadership* is to assume a role as a team leader as well as encourage others to work together as a team. *Achievement Orientation* is an attempt to work well or to compete against a standard set by management. *Development can be brought among others through* supporting learning and development of subordinates through trainings, task-oriented instructions, directions, coaching and demonstrations, negative and positive feedback of work performance and behavior and proper allocation of task. *Information seeking* is a desire to know more about things, people or issues an effort to get more work-related information and miscellaneous useful information and potential opportunities of future use. According to Chansiri, (2008) study on "Core Competency of Public University Supporting-Line Administrators:

an analysis, Techniques of Development and Structure of The Program for Development”, the study found that the core competencies necessary for public university regarding line administrators consist of 5 aspects; team work, planning and management, leadership, creative thinking, and ethics. Spendlove (2007) conducted a research on “A Competencies for effective leadership in higher education” and investigated that the competencies of Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Rector, or Principal of a university. The studied attitudes were knowledge and behavior that were needed for effective leadership in higher education. Mitrani (1992) mentioned the need for competency and an importance of people in an organization. He further argued that there would be less emphasis on jobs as the building blocks of an organization but more stress should be focused on employees’ competence. If we consider people as the building blocks of an organization, then what they offer to the organization through their job would become more important. The main purpose of competency approach to selection and assessment was to analyze and measure individual differences for unique work-related parameters relevant to successful job performance (Bartram, 2004). Cummings and Worley (2001) similarly mentioned that organizations updated itself through the demand of new knowledge, skills and behavior from employees.

### **Implications**

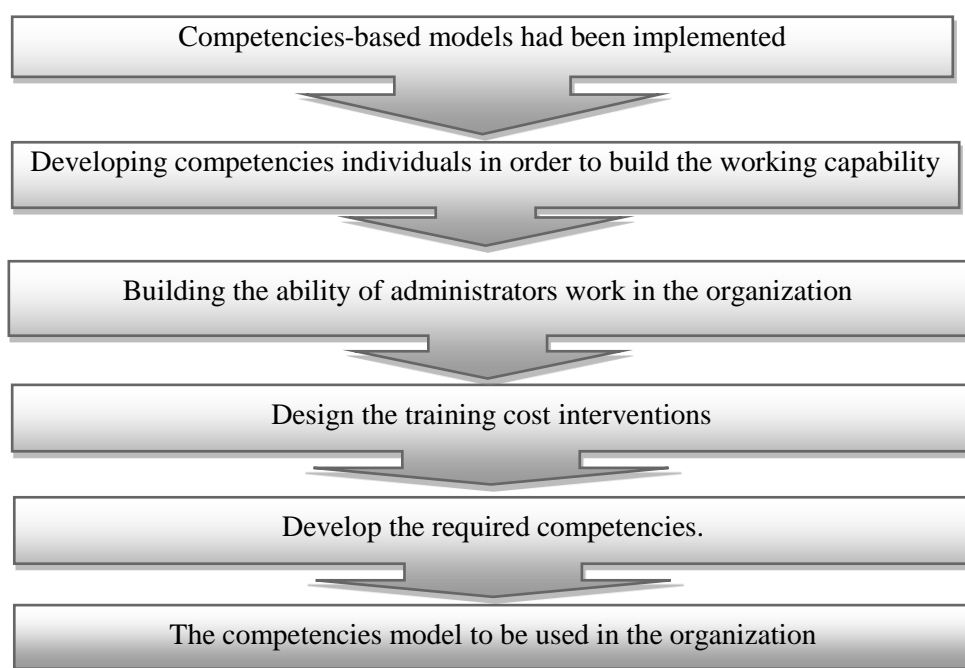
The result of this study finding confirms the literature, which suggests there is a need for implementing of leadership competencies for administrator in private higher education institutions. The competencies under the twenty-four items are recommended to apply in the private higher education administration framework. Therefore, in order to cope up with drastic changes, the educators need to develop their leadership competencies to meet the challenges of global requirements as well as the requirement of the requirements of the Organization of Higher Education Commission (OHEC) standards and quality. Administrators who are truly responsible for the quality of education at all levels should develop their leadership competencies for the purpose of attaining the goals as well as the effective job performance to accomplish the institutions’ missions at both national and institutional level in four major dimensions of missions, namely teaching and learning, conducting research studies, providing academic services to the society, and lastly preservation Thai arts and culture. In order to achieve the required mentioned above, the continued in profession development (CPD) must be concerned.

### **Recommendations**

The researcher recommended that human resource management department of the institutions should identify competency lists above into manpower planning for future recruitment. In addition, the following recommendations and suggestions would provide further support into this research to be more effective and practical. For administrators in institutions in Thailand, the competencies in the model are important since they are leaders, they should know the “What and How” which many administrators do not know since we are all living in a globalized world, the researcher recommend that besides preserving arts and culture, leaders should also possess the skills of integrating arts and culture and promoting culture of unity as

well. The inclusion of competencies in job description includes a list of job responsibilities and the results of job tasks to be more sufficient to ensure success. Accurate and clearly stated skill competencies for a position encourage job incumbents to work more effectively (Tas et al., 1996). This study provides a competency model made of a list of competencies required for each and every administrator position. Thus, an effective job description of an administrator must incorporate other required competencies.

The findings of this study demonstrated that twenty-six leadership competencies were required in this position and suggested that twenty-four leadership competencies were needed to be continued in profession development (CPD) course. It is recommended that it be implemented in a development plan. The following figure portrayed the process in developing the administrator competencies for the organization.



**Figure 3: Administrators' Competencies Development Processes**

Apart from training and development, model of leadership competencies can be applied for several reasons such as selection, performance management, compensation generation, career development, succession planning and management of information systems (Spencer & Spencer, 1993).

Finally, the model can be used to find out important competencies needed to be developed by employees to improve performance in their current jobs or to prepare them for other jobs through promotion or job rotation. This model can also be used to assess and measure current administrators' competencies to determine where the differences exist that can be reduced through Individual Training and Development Plans (IDPs).

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