



**ปีที่ 29 ฉบับที่ 4**  
**ตุลาคม-ธันวาคม 2532**

**Vol. 29, No.4**  
**October-December 1989**

ปีที่ 29 ฉบับที่ 4

ตุลาคม - ธันวาคม 2532

ISSN 0125-3689

Vol.29 No.4

October - December 1989

# พัฒนบริหารศาสตร์

THAI JOURNAL OF DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

ฉบับพิเศษ 4

พฤศจิกายน 2540

---

---

Pranee Chitakornkijsil	259	Developing Managerial Skills for Women in Business
พาณิชรัตน์ ศิริพานิช และ อุปถัมภ์ สายแสงจันทร์	276	ปัจจัยที่มีผลต่อการตัดสินใจศึกษาต่อระดับปริญญาโท
สวัสดิ์ สุคนธ์รัมย์	288	จุดอ่อนของแผนพัฒนาฯ ฉบับที่ 6 ในการวิเคราะห์ปัญหา การบริหารราชการ

---

---

## Developing Managerial Skills for Women in Business

(Part one)

Pranee Chitakornkijsil<sup>\*</sup>

---

---

### 1. Introduction

As Thailand Advances in her economic development stages, policy makers have become increasingly concerned with women in development. Traditional issues have centered on women as constituting a major labour force that has been underutilized in the country's efforts towards productivity increase. An important fact to which insufficient attention has been paid is that quite a portion of women in Thailand do in fact participate fully in productive endeavors and contribute directly to the nation's development. Moreover, many have been leaders rather than followers, introducing major changes which have affected the operations of organization, and effectively managing the attendant processes of organizational change. The women manager is increasingly making her mark in management scene. She has a rightful place in the management of any type of business.

---

<sup>\*</sup> Associate Professor, School of Business Administration, National Institute of Development Administration.

This part has thirteen sections. Section one is the introduction of part one. Section two considers the competent of women in Thailand. Section three describes women's opportunities to participate in economic development. Section four explains the participation of women in labour market. Section five considers the attribution of career success. Section six examines perceived obstacle too career development. Section seven presents the women manager's management practices. Section eight shows the management style of women managers. Section nine examines problems encountered by working women. Section ten defines opportunities for assistance to women in development (WID). Section eleven is the summary of government policies and programs relevant to WID. Section twelve proposes advisory services for women before and during advanced vocational training. The final section is the summary of the part.

We will first of all say a few words about the competent of women in Thailand.

## 2. The Competent of Women in Thailand

In their study, Raviwongse et al. (1987), women employees are found to be as capable as men for work at the operative level. As for administrative work, although they are largely qualified they still lack confidence and some managerial skills. Most women employees' confidence seem to decrease when asked about their ability to supervise, to handle crisis, to tolerate pressure, and to initiate. However, most women employees in finance commerce tend to show more positive attitudes towards, these abilities. Most women consider themselves as having equal or more ability to coordinate than men. These findings suggest that women employees, therefore, need

further development in managerial skills rather than operative skills. (Raviwongse et al., 1987, p.49.)

Other studies on women include the study on managerial role of Thai Women which was undertaken by Bovorn Prapruet - dee et al., (1977). In their study, they find that (i) educational level is positively related to the leadership of women ; (ii) women who have less self - confidence are less likely to climb up to the managerial rank ; (iii) women, in their study, do not have need for power, thus, they are less likely to get to the managerial rank ; (iv) women are not attached to their professional career, hence, they are less likely to be successful as a manager, (v) women are less enthusiastic in their work, thus, they are less likely to become a manager, and (vi) the level of social acceptance of women as a manager or administrator is still low, therefore, they have fewer opportunities to climb up to the managerial levels.

For the moment, we will concentrate upon women's opportunities to participate in economic development.

### **3. Women's Opportunities to Participate in Economic Development**

Most Thai women, provided that they have the choice, will choose to have economic self-independence. Married women work for the social and economic betterment of the family and single women work because they need economic independence. Most educated or middle-class Thai women work to find fulfillment in the job after many years of investing in education.

The extent to which women can become an asset to the national development depends in large part on three main factors namely, women's own quality and

readiness, favourable societal norms and practices, and encouragement on the part of the employers. (Siengthai, S.; 1987).

Women may equip themselves for work through early education and training. Single women have an advantage of having the time for their own. Married women with family responsibilities will have to learn skills of time management. Work effectiveness in most cases depends on the individuals, not on the gender of the person (Raviwongse et al., 1987).

The most important factor enabling women's participation in economic development is the attitude of employers toward women employees. Employers can open or close doors for women's employment. They can encourage married women to remain in the work force and facilitate the re-entry of women into the labour force. Laws on women employees protection should be viewed as humanitarian and should not bar women from employment.

In the following section, we will be looking in detail at the participation of women in labour market.

#### **4. The Participation of Women in Labour Market**

Currently, Thai women are participating more and more in the labour market. It is believed that the most influential factor motivating women to accept employment is the need to earn supplementary income for the family. Other factors cited include women's own physical and psychological needs. The change of work environment from home to the outside world where they can enjoy meeting friends has significant meaning for a number of women. Educated women especially will be reluctant to just stay home and be a housewife.

In summary, it has generally been evidenced that high percentage of women are participating in the labour force. Women have made much progress over time to gain their socio-economic role and status in the Thai society. Yet, it has been observed that most women are still underutilized; although many women in various sectors are now at the managerial level and demonstrate leadership in their organizations. Factors cited as contributing to women career advancement can be classified as internal factors or forces arise within themselves and external factors which include organizational constraints and culture, supportive system, societal culture, and so forth.

It is essential to understand the attribution of career success and perceived obstacle to career development.

## 5. The Attribution of Career Success

The women cited several reasons for their success. These were classified as: (1) reasons attributed to their own efforts and characteristics and (2) reasons attributed to external factors.

Among the first group of reasons, the most frequently cited by the corporate sample were hard work, perseverance, and determination (84%), personal values such as honesty and loyalty (67%), and natural talent and intellectual capabilities (58%). A little more than half of the sample also cited competence resulting from formal training as a reason behind their success. The proportion of senior and middle managers citing these reasons was similar.

Among the external factors, the most frequently cited by the corporate sample were contacts made through work (79%) and the support of a boss or mentor (68%). Work contacts seemed to be more important to the middle managers than to the

senior managers with 89% of the former citing this factors as against 69% of the latter. The proportion of senior and middle managers who cited the support of a boss or mentor was about the same – i.e., 69% and 68%, respectively. However, a larger proportion of senior managers (59%) attributed their success to chance or good luck than did middle managers (21%).

## 6. Perceived Obstacle to Career Development

Fifty-eight percent perceived obstacles to the progression of their careers. The proportion of senior and middle managers who affirmed that they saw blocks to their career development was about the same – 59% and 57%, respectively.

The majority (73%) said these obstacles arose from the work situation itself. For about an equal proportion of senior and middle managers in this group – 38% and 36%, respectively – sex discrimination in promotions was a major impediment. For 69% of the senior managers in particular, limited opportunities for advancement was a major block.

Obstacles relating to one's personal situation and characteristics and obstacles relating to external factors outside the work situation were, on the whole, not seen as posing major blocks to career development. This finding was interesting because it did not support the expectation that career women would perceive that their careers were impeded by the difficulty of having to undertake simultaneously the "multiple roles" of working woman, wife and mother. (Thailand Country Report in the research project on Women Managers in Business Organization, 1987, p.32-33).

In a later section is set out the woman manager's management practices.



## 7. The Woman Manager's Management Practices

Time is a direct input to the woman manager's management practices, and company business does exact a great toll on her working hours. She averages approximately 9.6 hours per day working on company business. Relegated to less than two hours each are activities related to the family, housework, education and recreation.

The Southeast Asian woman manager has a set of "constants" in her management practices, whether she comes from Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, or Thailand. Across countries, her management practices are highly consistent : in her own assessment, she possesses personal values that match with the values of the organization ; she actively cultivates a network of contacts, she uses a personalized approach to employees under her supervision although she insists on finishing a task even if it displeases others, and she works beyond regular office hours. (Women in Corporate Management, p.7).

The majority (89%) of the women said they tried to practice a more personal style of management by getting to know their subordinates as people more than merely as employees. This was also reflected, to a certain extent, in the preference of the majority (77%) for what can be referred to as "participative" management. Rather than give direct orders to their subordinates, they tried to influence them indirectly, allowing them to develop perhaps a certain degree of self-motivation in carrying out a task. The majority (61%) also said they would not insist on implementing an idea that was opposed by others. Sixty percent said they believed that they did not have to do things themselves to ensure that these be done correctly. Those who expressed a preference for delegation were mainly senior managers. The proportion of senior managers who said they believed that they did not have to do

jobs that they wanted done correctly themselves was 72% compared to 46% of middle managers.

There would seem to be a limit, however, to the extent to which these women managers would emphasize the personal and indirect approach to managing.

Sixty-one percent of the respondents said that they frequently had to work beyond regular business hours despite careful planning. In other areas, the majority (70%) expressed discomfort with decision making when they did not know all the relevant facts.

A great majority (93%) said they actively cultivated a network of useful contacts at work. A large proportion (82%) of them also said they believed that their personal values were congruent with the corporate values of their organization. (Thailand Country Report, *op. cit.*; p.35).

Now we are presenting the management style of women managers.

## 8. The Management Style of Women Managers

The women managers described their style of management as “participative” - one which would require harmonious interpersonal relationships with subordinates and peers. The women managers also reflected a basic trust in the people they worked with -- many reported they preferred to delegate and were confident that others could do the job correctly.

Thus, they initiated activities which were not directly task-oriented. These helped strengthen the women managers rapport, specifically with their subordinates. Likewise, the women managers used such mechanisms as motivational tools.

Many of the women filled in gaps in their work procedures, and modified them or came up with innovations in their managerial style. This helped them to detect

areas for improvement, and to institute the necessary changes. (Thailand Country Report, op.cit.; p.41).

In the following section, problems encountered by working women are explored in detail.

## **9. Problems Encountered by Working Women :**

Problems encountered by working women have been cited as (i) lack of job opportunity and job security, (ii) work discrimination ; (iii) less chance for promotions and (iv) family disharmony (Raviwongse et al., 1987).

In their study, Raviwongse et al., (1987) also suggest problems regarding programmes and activities as quoted from women employees in industrial sector. These include (i) work opportunity (ii) working conditions, (iii) personal and family problems, (iv) deficiency in law enforcement ; and (v) family responsibility. It has been found that the Thai women employee's work role has been confined to jobs that require traditional skills and precision and those considered in the past to be exclusive for women. Most of them are unskilled and therefore have to work at the lowest level. Very few women are promoted to supervisory level. With respect to personal and family problems, it has been found that women who stay single may need advice and counsel and have to take good care of themselves to avoid being victims of sexual harassment. While those married women seem to face with role conflict of dual responsibilities. When asked about work -related attitudes, most women employees, indicate a moderate degree of job satisfaction and satisfaction with co-workers and supervisors. Women in their study believe that they are as competent as men, but cite physical abilities as a constraint to their work effectiveness.

For the moment, we will concentrate upon opportunities for assistance to women in development (WID).

## **10. Opportunities for Assistance to WID**

The following opportunities for assistance to increase women's involvement in development activities have been identified by the Thai Government or by major donors.

### **10.1 Agricultural Research and Extension**

Because women are an intrinsic part of the farming and food systems, assistance is needed to increase the number of women in agricultural extension, research and administration. This is to ensure that all parts of the crop or animal husbandry cycle and all aspects of the farming system are understood and reached by the government's agricultural development programs.

### **10.2 Credit**

The primary interest of Thai women in income raising activities has been documented. Women are traditionally important in marketing and small enterprises. In recent years they have proved their ability in modern commerce. Schemes are needed to supply credit to women. The recent arrangement between the Bangkok Bank and the Association for the Promotion of Women's Businesses in Thailand is an example worth examining.

### 10.3 Education

There is a high discrepancy between school attendance in rural urban areas. This is caused not only by greater rural poverty but also by the disparity in the provision of school facilities. Village boys are often able to take advantage of education offered by the local temple which is not available to girls. Assistance to texpand the school system in isolated rural area, especially to make education above the fourth grade more accessible, would benefit women and girls.

### 10.4 Vocational Training

It has been shown that women want vocational training to assist them to earn additional income. The Department of Community Development has had programs to teach income raising skills to women. Support is needed to extend skills improvement programs especially in agricultural technology. (Asian Development Bank, 1986; p.10-11).

More frequently, women lack the requesite grounding for more advanced training. There are not many who are able to take advantage of a real vocational in-service training: they should preferably be young. Single or without any family burdens, should have a good standard of education should have completed some basic training and should have been employed in the company for several year at least.

Little progress has been made in the review of training programmes for women.

Very few women have undergone specialized training periods for the industries which design and produce new technologies. As a result, there are virtually no women on the design side although they are the main end-users (Spaak, A.; 1983, p.70).

### **10.5 Off-Farm Employment**

The drift to the cities in Thailand is cause for concern but particularly because of its concentration in Bangkok. Regional development has been promoted by the Thai government. Efforts have been made, with some success, to boost regional universities and technical school and industries. This kind of development can promote off-farm employment for rural people, both women and men.

### **10.6 Involvement of Women in Projects**

Thai women are employed or operate businesses in almost all economic sectors. It is most important, therefore, that international donors examine women's customary roles in whatever project is planned, whether it be in the provision of new agricultural technology, provision of credit to business or construction work. This should be done to ensure that the assistance goes to the women as well as men who are working in that area, and that women are not excluded from the benefits from development projects.

In the following section, we will be looking in the summary of government policies and programs relevant to WID.

## **11. Summary of Government Policies and Programs Relevant to WID**

Women's development appeared as part of national planning for the first time in the Fourth Development Plan (1977-1981). This plan noted that boys had greater educational opportunities than girls and that women were discriminated against in employment, in advancement and wages. A number of remedial measures were

proposed : out-of-school education and training, especially in rural areas, equality of employment conditions in government service and law reform and enforcement.

In formulating the Fifth Five Year Plan 1982-1986 the Government identified women as one of the special target groups to be addressed by the Plan. The Plan then identified particular target groups of women to receive benefits, mainly in vocational training, education and health. Vocational training was to be given to 5.6 m women between the ages of 12 and 44. Targets were set for enrollment of women from pre-school to university. "disease prevention services" were to 40% of women.

These plans certainly reflect the concerns of women's groups and organizations but many of the recommendations and targets have not been implemented.

A Long Term Women's Development Plan (1982-2001) was also prepared. It was supposed to be used as a basis for the preparation of subsequent five year development plans. It was, of course, more farreaching and ambitious and offered an array of indicators to measure women's development which the Fifth Five Year Plan lacked. (Asian Development Bank, 1986, p.8).

In a later section is set out advisory services for women before and during advanced vocational training.

## **12. Advisory Services for Women Before and During Advanced Vocational Training**

12.1 The reintegration and further training of women who have either been unemployed for a long time or who have not held a job because they were working in the home and family necessitate special advisory services.

Advisory services for adult women are generally even more inadequate than those provided for girls as the advice is generally given by overworked advisers who have no knowledge of the special problems of women torn between family and career.

Special and thorough advisory services for women seeking work given by specially trained and informed advisers are rare and to date provided by private schemes or as experimental projects.

12.2 Women who wish to take a job after a long time away from work are generally even less well-informed about the situation on the job market than are girls at the end of their schooling. Effective advisory services should thus give women an overview of possible areas of work and opportunities for further education and promotion and at the same time draw attention to the conflict of roles for women caught between career and family and offer possible solutions.

12.3 Advisory services should not be geared as in the past to short-term or out-moded trends on the job market which force women into the less-skilled and lower paid "typical" jobs; they must promote access into qualified fields with prospects.

12.4 The particular difficulties of women, especially in technical jobs in industry, must be taken into account in the preparatory advice given and the essential supportive advice during training.

(a) There must be a motivation phase to inform both women and undertakings and the general public that women in men's jobs are a social and economic necessity and must be accepted as a matter of course.



(b) It is necessary to remedy educational shortcomings (basic skills such as spelling, style, arithmetic and mathematics) not to fill the gaps in women's knowledge but also to accustom women to a learning and working environment with which they are unfamiliar because of the length of time during which they have not worked.

(c) It is important to ensure the psychological stability of women to give them self-confidence, self-awareness and independence. The demands on their time from both career and family, conflicts of role, lack of sympathy from the spouse and possible guilt feelings regarding children must be counteracted by sociological measures.

12.5 Accompanying and supportive advisory services must also be provided following training in the search for a job and during the performance of a job, to overcome resistance when starting a job and carrying it out. (Alemann, M. Van; 11 November 1983; p.12-13).

Future programming missions of training are the following:-

- identify any new development projects that are likely to need special analysis regarding women's involvement and prepare a note about these needs; and
- identify technical assistance needs regarding WID components in future projects and the possibility of developing separate WID projects where this would make a significant contribution to the country's development. (Asian Development Bank, 1986; p.13).

### 13. Summary

A concern for women in development has been included in Thailand's national development plans since 1977 and several ministries have programs in this area. Women in Thailand have a very high level of economic participation in many sectors and it is therefore necessary to take this into account when planning development projects. (ibid).

## Bibliography

- Alemann, M. Von; **Vocational Training for Women in Europe**, European Parliament, 11 November 1983.
- Asian Development Bank (Country Department); **Women in Development : Thailand, Philippines**, August 1986.
- Asian Institute of Management, **Thailand Country Report**, prepared by the Staff of the Research Project on Women Managers in Business Organizations of Southeast Asia, 1987.
- Asian Institute of Management: **Women in Corporate Management : Getting to Know the Women Managers of Southeast Asia**, 1987.
- Bovorn Prapruet-dee and al; **Thai Women : The Role of Managerial Leader**, Faculty of Political Sciences, Ramkhamhang University, 1979.
- Raviwongse, Vichitr et al.; **Strengthening of Employers' Initiatives in Favour of a Better Integration of Women in Economic and Social Development : A Country Report on Thailand**, prepared for the ILO/ECOT Regional Seminar on Strengthening Employers Contribution to Women's Role in the Economy, Thailand : Chiangmai, 28-30 April, 1987.
- Siengthai, S.; **A Research Proposal on Factors Contributing to the Success of Women in the Entrepreneurial Sector and the Government and Non- Government Sectors**, Graduate School of Business Administration, NIDA, May 1987.
- Spaak, A.; **New Technology and the Employment of Women**, European Parliament; July, 1983.