

## DEVELOPMENT OF A LEADERSHIP MODEL FOR ISLAMIC SCHOOL LEADERS IN THAILAND

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**Abstract:** This study focuses on establishing an effective leadership model for Islamic schools in Thailand as Islamic students in general place lower on National standardized testing than others. As a school leader plays the key role of the school success and the improvement of the students' achievement, a proper leadership model for Islamic schools should be developed to enhance their quality and students' achievement. Therefore, there is a need to generate a leadership model for leader in Islamic schools. Effective leadership in Islamic school involves the cooperation of Islamic values and principles in leadership practices and behaviors. Also, educational leadership theories and research in Western perspectives is essential in order to gain and retain the good standards. Theories and concepts from Western and Islamic perspectives should be taking into the consideration

An overarching question for this study is "What elements will comprise an effective leadership model for Islamic school leaders in Thailand?" The objectives of research are: 1. To examine the specific dimensions of effective educational leadership in Islamic perspective 2. To examine the specific dimensions of effective educational leadership in Western theories and research. 3. To ascertain the specific dimensions of leadership found to be the most prominent in the most effective Islamic schools in Thailand. 4. To determine the specific dimensions of leadership found to be the most practice by Islamic school leaders in Thailand. 5. To develop and validate a leadership model for Islamic school leaders in Thailand.

In this research, Leadership practice inventory questionnaires were distributed to all 297 Islamic school directors in Thailand and 209 completed questionnaires were used in the analysis of data by using Statistic Package. When the collected data interpretation and data analysis were achieved, the researcher used these findings and the elements from documentary research as the grounds for developing a leadership model for Islamic schools in Thailand. The proposed model are developed and confirmed by a committee of experts using the connoisseurship model.

**Keywords:** A Leadership Model, Islamic School,

Islamic School Leaders

### Background of the Study

Islamic Schools in Thailand has been raised in number since the day that Thai government promoted the establishment of Islamic Private Schools to replace Pondok schools with the purpose of enhancing their efficiency and quality (Uma, Vanitsuppavong and Churngchow, 2009). As a result, the school curriculum has been changed from offering solely religious education to integrating non – Quran subjects such as science and math, as well as the teaching of foreign languages such as Arabic language and English language into the curriculum which is under the supervision of the Ministry of Education (Imam Reza, 2011).

Although, Islamic schools have been supported financially from the government, the schools still do not function well. Additionally, it has been found that the school leadership practices have not yet been developed which caused the problems in school administration and lead to failure of student achievement. A research by Rajapat Yala University (2003) states that the student achievements of the Islamic schools are unsatisfactory due to their poor management system, curriculum and instruction. More importantly, the school leaders have been found that they lacked of leadership skills.

According to Wae-u-seng, Vanitsuppavong, Narongraksakhet, Yisunsong, Baka (2009), the change from catering Pondok curriculum, which is open and unrestricted, to utilizing a modern education with standards and benchmarks produced a hard time for those school leaders. This is a major reason that caused some Islamic Private Schools to fail from being accredited by the office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment. It appears that the problems above have resulted in low academic achievement of Islamic school students as the National Standardized Testing of academic year 2010 shows that students from Islamic schools in the South have been placed in the lowest ranks (Ramkaew, 2010). Moreover, it has been found that a number of students from Islamic Schools who entered the universities often leave before graduating because of their weakness in foundation subjects (Boonphikam, 2008).

It is clear that educational leadership is considered the vital factor for moving schools towards excellence as Saleh (2005, p. 16) states that "A positive and healthy leadership in any educational organization is crucial in creating a successful educational system..." The relationship between a good educational leader and a successful school has been pointed out in by many scholars. They all agreed and concluded in the same way that the effectiveness and efficiency of the leadership

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