

**LEADERSHIP STYLES OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS IN
COLOMBO DISTRICT SRI LANKA**



**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF EDUCATION
(EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT)
FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
MAHIDOL UNIVERSITY
2009**

COPY RIGHT OF MAHIDOL UNIVERSITY

**LEADERSHIP STYLES OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS IN COLOMBO DISTRICT
SRI LANKA**

DUMINA DHARSHANI LELLUPITIYA 5037968 SHEM/M

M.Ed. (EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT)

THESIS ADVISORY COMMITTEE: WEE RAWANG, Ed.D., NARANAN
SURIYAMANEE, Ed.D., ARISARA LEKSANSERN, Ed.D.**ABSTRACT**

The purposes of the study were to investigate the overall leadership styles of school principals in the Colombo district in Sri Lanka and to compare the leadership styles of the principals in relation to age, gender, educational level, length of principalship, marital status, management training and type of school. The leadership contingency model questionnaire of Fred Fiedler (1967) was used to measure the leadership styles. The research sample was 202 school principals in the Colombo district. Both descriptive statistical analyses (frequency, percentage, means, and standard deviation) and inferential statistical analyses (t- tests and One Way ANOVA) were used to analyze the data. Post hoc multiple comparison tests were also conducted to identify significant differences between all possible pairs of values of a factor variable. The hypotheses were tested by using the confidence level of 0.05.

The findings indicated that the leadership style of the school principals, assessed by the Least Preferred Co-worker (LPC), was relationship motivated. Most of the school principals were considered as leaders with moderate Situational Control. In terms of the Situational Control scores, the majority of principals were considered as having midlevel Leader Member Relations, high Task Structure, and high Position Power. When the leadership styles were put together with Situational Control, most of the school principals were interpreted as leaders who were considerate, open to suggestions and who had effective group performance.

The findings from this study suggest that the school principals who are in service and those who aspire to be principals should be professionally developed by in-service and pre-service courses on Educational Leadership to improve their managerial skills and leadership tasks in order to perform the new role defined by the school based management which empowers the school.

**KEY WORDS: SCHOOL PRINCIPALS/LEADERSHIP/ LEADERSHIP STYLES/
COLOMBO DISTRICT**

126 pages