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**Assessing the Instructional Leadership
of
Secondary School Principals in Thailand**

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In a recent speech Thailand's Prime Minister, Chuan Leekpai, concluded:

The big problem [in the Thai educational system] is the quality of education. Educational administrators must realize that when compulsory education is extended from six to nine years, the quality of education must not remain as it was before. Quality does not depend on budget. . . More important is the extent to which administrators are dedicated to improving quality. (Bangkok Post, 1992, p. 1)

During the past decade, educational policy has represented an important vehicle in the Thai government's effort to improve national economic performance. Recent reforms have included significant revisions in the state-controlled curriculum, efforts to decentralize educational decision-making, and the expansion of primary education. As the Prime Minister's comment suggests, these government-directed reforms have placed principals in a highly visible leadership role.

Despite this national charge given to educational administrators, policy implementation in Thailand has been handicapped by a limited knowledge base concerning how Thai principals exercise their role. Internationally, researchers have concluded that successful school improvement efforts are often associated with strong *instructional leadership* on the part of the school principal (Cheng, forthcoming; Hallinger, 1992; Heck, 1993; Lockheed & Levin, 1993; Murphy & Hallinger, 1992). While recent studies support the belief that Thailand's principals also play an important role in school improvement (Tsang & Wheeler, 1993; Wheeler, Raudenbusch, Kunarak, & Paigna, forthcoming), additional descriptive and analytical data are needed that focus specifically on how they carry out the instructional leader role.

Such a program of research will serve several purposes. Baseline information on the leadership role of principals in Thai schools will assist the nation's policymakers in understanding how to shape reforms for more effective implementation. This research could also prove valuable for training purposes. Training institutions in developing countries are often forced to rely on "imported" management development programs. While such programs can be

useful, the impact of training is likely to be enhanced when it takes into account data-based findings drawn from the local or national context. Finally, we believe that research on the leadership role of principals in Thailand will contribute to our understanding of school improvement processes in developing countries more generally (Hallinger, 1992; Hallinger & Murphy, 1992; Lockheed & Levin, 1993).

In this article, we present the results of a preliminary study of principal instructional leadership in Thailand. The data reported here addressed three goals. Our first goal was to develop a methodology that would provide reliable and valid data on the instructional leadership of Thai principals. Our second goal was to develop a descriptive profile of how Thai principals exercise their instructional leadership role. Third, we compared the results from this preliminary study of secondary school principals in Thailand to results obtained in the United States and Malaysia as a means of understanding the substantive results.

The first section of the article provides background on the organization of the educational system and the role of the principal in Thailand. In the second section, we discuss the methodology of the study and the instrumentation developed for this research. In the third section we present first the results concerning the measurement properties of the Thai form of our research instrument. Then we focus on the findings that pertain to the pattern of instructional leadership found in our sample of secondary school principals. We conclude by drawing implications for instructional leadership research and practice in Thailand.

The Educational System and Role of the Principal in Thailand

In this section of the paper we provide an overview of the Thai educational system. We focus on its structural elements as well as on the cultural norms that influence its operation. Then we describe the role of secondary school principals.

The Thai Educational System

In 1932, the first formal education plan was introduced in Thailand. It provided for four years of elementary education and 8 years of secondary education. An educational movement calling for six years of compulsory primary schooling, three years of lower secondary, and three

years of upper secondary education was introduced in the late 1970s. It was fully implemented in 1983 (Sudtilirdaroon, 1985).

Today Thailand is at a crossroads of economic and social change. As a consequence of rapid economic development, the nation's educational system is under considerable pressure to produce a more educated workforce. As alluded to earlier, this has resulted in a continuing expansion of compulsory education. The new system, which began implementation in 1993, will consist of nine years of compulsory primary education, three years of secondary education, and four years of post-secondary education.

The educational system in Thailand is divided into three levels: national, provincial, and local. The Ministry of Education plays the most important role in public education, as explained by the National Identity Office of the Prime Minister (1991):

The major government and private organizations which are directly involved in the development and implementation of education include the Ministry of Education, the National Education Commission, and the Ministry of University Affairs. They are entrusted with planning, administering, and coordinating the national education. Almost all formal and non-formal education is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education. . . The Office of the National Primary Education Commission handles the largest percentage (63.5%) of students in the overall educational system. The remainder are the responsibility of the Private Education Commission (PEC) and the Department of General Education. (p. 84)

The Ministry of Education is responsible for all types of education, arts, culture, and religious affairs. Curricula below the university level, nonformal education, preprimary education, most primary education, postsecondary programs in technical institutes, the Institute of Technology and Vocational Education, and teachers colleges all come under the purview of the Ministry of Education. The Teacher Civil Service Commission, under the Ministry's jurisdiction, oversees teaching personnel and certain classes of educational administrators.

Educational Administration and Development in Thailand

In Thailand, where education is provided mainly by the central government, administration of the educational system is both complex and fragmented. At least four government agencies are responsible for administration of the formal education system: the Office of the Prime Minister, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Education, Ministry of University Affairs. Moreover, the layers of government administrative bureaucracy overlap and extend all the way down to the local levels. The system is highly bureaucratic and top-heavy, which often causes impractical and inflexible administrative situations. These structural characteristics tend to create decision paralysis in which administrators are fearful of taking the initiative without explicit orders from above.

Education at the provincial and district levels remain under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education. At the provincial level, administrative authority is delegated to the governor. A provincial education officer in each province, appointed by the Ministry of Education, is responsible for managing education. The provincial educational office is expected to comply with directives from central agencies in providing services and in coordinating activities with other agencies at the provincial level.

Administrative authority at the district level is delegated to a district education officer. The district education officers, also appointed by the Ministry of Education, are responsible for educational administration within each district. The administrative pattern at this level is the same as that of the provincial educational office. Finally, schools are led by administrators referred to as principals, headmasters, or directors depending on level of school and years of experience. For the purposes of this paper, we use the term "principal" to refer to any of the above educational leaders at the school level.

Role of the principal. A variety of technical and political factors arising from the system's bureaucratic structure and from local community norms have an impact on the role of the principal. Principals of secondary public schools are assigned and appointed by the Ministry of

Education in the central administrative office. The promotion system--where one level acts as a stepping stone to another level--leads to continuously high turnover among principals.

This feature tends to reduce the administrator's long-term commitment either to the local school or to the principalship. Principals ascend a career ladder that moves from smaller schools to larger schools, and then into other administrative positions in the bureaucracy. In practice, the criteria for promotion depend on seniority, passing required tests, and political connections. On-the-job performance appears to be a minor factor in determining advancement. This facet of the system's reward structure further reduces the willingness to take the political risks often associated with school improvement.

Thai principals today face more difficult tasks, of greater complexity and responsibility, than their predecessors. These expanded duties require more capable, talented, and skillful principals if a school is to be led effectively. Recent changes in Thai society are altering, both directly and indirectly, the role of the school principal.

In particular, the rapid social, political, and economic changes of the past decade have influenced the role of the principal. Today schools are larger and, consequently, principals are responsible for supervising more teachers and for coordinating a more complex and diverse curriculum. Communities served by the schools are also more diverse meaning that principals must respond to a wider variety of expectations.

Rapid economic development in Thailand has resulted in higher parental expectations for student achievement from a burgeoning middle class. Cultural changes associated with increased societal wealth has resulted in new tensions. Individuals, families and institutions are struggling to reconcile traditional moral and ethical values with the "Western" values being imported as the country becomes increasingly integrated into the world economy. Principals, as leaders of one of the social institutions responsible for cultural transmission, are at the center of this struggle. They report high levels of role ambiguity as they seek to reconcile traditional roles with new expectations for academically-oriented educational leadership (Department of Educational Administration, 1992).

A traditional role of the principal in Thailand, as in other countries (Tyack & Hansot, 1982), has been to mediate and interpret local community values as expressed in the school and its educational programs. As suggested earlier, the recent trend towards national development programs (e.g., a national curriculum) has increased system expectations for principals to accept responsibility for new educational leadership roles. The government now expects principals to assume a formal leadership role in the implementation of policy reforms as well as in the improvement of academic performance of students.

Elsewhere around the world this has been characterized as an *instructional leadership* role (Edmonds, 1979, 1982; Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; Leithwood et al., 1992; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982). This role encompasses those policies and practices of the principal and other school leaders which shape the instructional program and learning environment of the school, both for students and teachers (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985, 1987; Heck, Larsen, & Marcoulides, 1990; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982).

There is no a priori reason to expect instructional leadership to have been a salient feature -- normatively or empirically -- of the principal's role in Thailand previously. Yet, recent studies do suggest that some instructional leadership functions are important to successful school improvement in Thailand (Tsang & Wheeler, 1993; Wheeler et al., forthcoming) as well as in other developing countries (Little & Sivasithambaram, 1993; Lockheed & Levin, 1993). For example, Tsang and Wheeler (1993) studied the role of primary school principals in the implementation of national primary education reform during the 1980s. Their findings concerning the key implementation role played by principals echo results obtained by researchers in other countries.

[W]hat is done in response to these [reform] initiatives is up to the school. The principal, as the above examples suggest can influence the impact by affecting teacher participation in [school] cluster activities, by promoting building-level attention to issues raised by cluster interventions, and by encouraging the cluster to pursue policies congruent with teacher interests. The important role of the

principal in shaping the scope of the school's response (i.e., teachers on an individual basis or a collective, school-wide response) proved to be related in very specific ways to performance in the schools. . . (Tsang & Wheeler, 1993, p. 122)

These findings from research on school improvement support the importance of an instructional leadership role for Thai principals. While such research is useful, it was not explicitly designed to examine the leadership role of the principal. Consequently, it lacks the degree of specificity necessary for understanding how this role is enacted by principals. There is a need for additional research that focuses more specifically on the nature and impact of the instructional leadership role of principal in Thai schools.

The salience of principal instructional leadership has been established in studies of school effectiveness and school improvement conducted in a variety of countries (Edmonds, 1979; Leithwood et al., 1989; Heck et al., 1990; Rutter et al., 1979). While it is likely that the manner in which instructional leadership is exercised in Thai schools will differ in certain respects from other countries, this is a subject for empirical exploration. As we suggested at the outset, findings from a program of research on the instructional leadership role of principals will be of direct utility to those who are responsible for the preparation and development of educational administrators in Thailand. Next we briefly discuss the system of educational leadership development used in Thailand.

Educational leadership development in Thailand. Responsibility for the training of principals in Thailand resides primarily with a training unit in the Ministry of Education: the Institute for the Development of Educational Administrators (IDEA). A number of universities house educational administration departments, but these programs typically offer supplementary training for educational administrators through degree programs. While the degrees do factor into promotion in the official system, they are not directly relevant to entry-level positions (i.e., assistant principal, principal) in educational administration.

The IDEA was created with support from the World Bank in the early 1980s to assist in the preparation of educational administrators. The aims of the IDEA are, "educating, training, and developing educational administrators with new and up-to-date management knowledge, skills, attitudes, and techniques in education including imparting an understanding and cooperative attitude on official policies of the Ministry of Education and the country's administration" (IDEA, 1992).

It consists of a large central campus located outside the capital city, Bangkok, augmented by a network of 12 regional training centers spread throughout the country. The IDEA focuses on pre-promotional training. Administrators at other levels of the system also engage in pre-promotional training prior to movement through the system. Programs generally range in length from one week to three months (IDEA, 1992). Thus, all persons who would become educational administrators must attend the IDEA's instructional programs.

The training offered through the IDEA tends to focus on general management skills. Despite the policy reform focus of the past decade, relatively little attention in the training curriculum has been devoted either to school improvement implementation in general, or to instructional leadership in particular. This contrasts with international trends in principal development (Hallinger, 1992). Notably, it also contrasts with as well as with programs offered in some neighboring countries. For example, the training institution responsible for educational administrators in Malaysia, the National Institute for Educational Management, has actively incorporated instructional leadership and school effectiveness constructs into their curriculum. As Lockheed and Levin assert, "Because of the important role play by principals [in creating effective schools], providing training for them has been found to promote school improvement, as it has in Sri Lanka" (1993, p. 11).

The paucity of training in this domain in Thailand is due to a combination of factors. As is the case in many developing countries, scarce resources have limited the IDEA's ability to renew the training curriculum as new research findings, instructional innovations and government priorities emerge. Institute staff may lack the expertise, time, information or materials necessary

to develop new curricula. Complicating their task is the absence of locally grounded research on the leadership role of school principals. This reflects the more general problem of inadequate research and development capacity. The emerging policy emphasis on the principal's role in school improvement creates a challenge for training institutions charged with preparing educational administrators for this role.

Thus, several features -- a persisting governmental focus on educational policy reform, research findings on the school improvement role of principals in Thailand and abroad, the lack of content on this role in the principal training curriculum -- converge to support the salience of studying principal instructional leadership in Thailand. This study sought to this need by developing a methodology for collecting data on principal instructional leadership in Thailand. The procedures are described in the following section.

Research Design

Given this perceived need, our first goal in this research was to develop a methodology for collecting data on principal instructional leadership in Thai schools. We chose to develop a Thai form of the *Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale* (PIMRS; Hallinger, 1982, 1984a). This instrument had previously been used to collect data on principal instructional leadership in a variety of developed and developing countries. In this study we sought to assess its potential as a means for data collection on this role of the principal in Thailand.

We begin this section by providing background on the PIMRS instrument. We discuss its conceptualization of principal leadership, the construction of the instrument, and the measurement properties of the English language form. This is followed by a description of the procedures used to develop and test the measurement properties of the PIMRS - Thai Form.

Instrumentation: The Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale

The increasing salience of principal instructional leadership witnessed during the 1980's did not initially emerge from research on instructional leadership. Instead, it was inferred from studies that examined change implementation (Berman & McLaughlin, 1978; Hall, Hord, Huling, Rutherford, & Stiegelbauer, 1983), school effectiveness (Edmonds, 1979; Rutter et al.,

1979), and program improvement (Edmonds, 1982; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982). In fact, prior to 1980, there were no instruments available to researchers or practitioners for the purpose of measuring the instructional leadership construct. Consequently, there was a dearth of data internationally both on how principals exercised this role and on the impact of instructional leadership on school performance outcomes (Hallinger, 1992; Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982; Marsh, 1992; Murphy & Hallinger, 1992).

This changed during the 1980s with the development of several instruments designed to measure principal instructional leadership (see for example, Andrews, Soder, & Jacoby, 1986; Hallinger, 1982, 1984a; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1986; van de Grift, 1990; Villanova, Gauthier, Proctor, & Shoemaker, 1981). Given the development of the necessary research tools, investigators have subsequently generated a substantial body of research on principal instructional leadership (Leithwood et al., 1989, 1992). Of particular interest is the fact that studies of instructional leadership are being conducted in increasingly diverse contexts. These include the United States (Andrews et al., 1986; Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; Hallinger, Bickman, & Davis, 1990; Heck, Larsen, & Marcoloudies, 1990; Kroeze, 1984; Krug, 1986; O'Day, 1983), Australia (Caldwell, 1992); Hong Kong (Cheng, 1991, forthcoming); the Netherlands (van de Grift, 1990), Canada (Jones, 1987; Leithwood & Stager, 1986; Zywine, Stoll, Adam, Fullan, & Bennett, 1991), Singapore (Heck, 1993), and Malaysia (Saavedra, 1987).

This research in different cultural contexts has only begun to increase our understanding of how the exercise and impact of principal instructional leadership varies across societal contexts (see Hallinger & Murphy, 1992). This is a subject of importance for those interested in the portability of school improvement findings, programs, and practices (Murphy & Hallinger, 1992). Despite this encouraging development, we would also note with disappointment the relative scarcity of comparative research on principal leadership: studies that directly study and compare role enactment in two or more cultural contexts. While this was not our goal in the present study, we hope that the continued development of instrumentation for studying principal leadership that can be used across countries will stimulate more comparative research.

In the current study, we adapted the English language form of the PIMRS (Hallinger, 1984a) for use in Thailand. Since its initial development in 1982, the PIMRS has been used as a tool to measure instructional leadership by researchers and by practitioners interested in developing reliable, data-based assessments of elementary and secondary school principals (Hallinger & Murphy, 1987). Over 40 research studies using the PIMRS have been completed to date and over 100 additional studies are in progress. PIMRS studies are being conducted in both industrialized societies (e.g., United States, Netherlands, England, Australia, West Germany, Canada, South Africa) and developing countries (Philippines, Malaysia, Guam, Israel, Saudi Arabia).

The PIMRS: Conceptualization and development. The PIMRS assesses three dimensions of the instructional leadership construct: *Defining the School's Mission*, *Managing the Instructional Program*, and *Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate* (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). These dimensions are further delineated into 10 specific instructional leadership functions. Two functions, Framing the School's Goals and Communicating the School's Goals, comprise the dimension, *Defining the School's Mission*. *Managing the Instructional Program* incorporates three leadership functions: Supervising and Evaluating Instruction, Coordinating the Curriculum, Monitoring Student Progress. The third dimension, *Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate* includes several functions: Protecting Instructional Time, Promoting Professional Development, Maintaining High Visibility, Providing Incentives for Teachers, Providing Incentives for Learning.

The original form of the PIMRS (Hallinger, 1982) contained 11 subscales and 72 behaviorally anchored items.¹ Subsequent revision of the instrument reduced the instrument to 10 subscales and 50 items (Hallinger, 1984a, 1984b). For each item, the rater assesses the frequency with which the principal enacts a behavior or practice associated with that particular instructional leadership function. The item is rated on a Likert-type scale ranging from (1) almost never to (5) almost always (see Figure 1). The instrument is scored by calculating the mean for the items that comprise each subscale/job function. This results in a profile that yields data on perceptions of principal performance on each of the 10 instructional leadership functions.

Three parallel forms of the instrument have been developed and tested: a self-assessment form to be completed by the principal, a teacher form and a supervisor form. The items which comprise each form are identical; only the stems change to reflect the differing perspectives of the role groups. Studies have found significant differences in perceptions across role groups (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; Krug, 1986; O'Day, 1984). Validation studies in the United States indicate that the PIMRS form that solicits teachers' perceptions provides the most valid data of the three forms.

[Insert Figure 1 About Here]

It should be emphasized here that a *high* score on a particular job function does not necessarily indicate *effective* performance, only *active* leadership in that area. Principals who obtain high rating on a given leadership function are perceived as engaging more frequently in instructional leadership behaviors and practices associated with principals in effective schools. The PIMRS ratings do not measure the *quality* of principal instructional leadership. Nor do they address the *thinking* that underlies the exercise of the specified leadership behaviors, potentially important information for understanding how and why behaviors are enacted in context (see Hallinger, Leithwood, & Murphy, forthcoming; Leithwood et al., 1992). Such assessments are best generated through supplementary observations and interviews (Hallinger & Murphy, 1987).

Thus, the data generated by the PIMRS is best used to highlight trends or patterns in the instructional leadership of principals. For individual principals these data can be used to identify relative emphasis given to different facets of the instructional leadership role. When data the principal's self-assessment is compared with data obtained from other role groups (e.g., teachers' and the principal's perceptions), this can be useful for problem-solving or goal-setting. When data for a number of principals are aggregated across an administrative unit (e.g., school district or cluster), the resulting profile will again highlight areas of relative activity in

different aspects of the principals' instructional leadership role. This can be used for needs assessment, program evaluation, policy analysis, or research (Hallinger & Murphy, 1987).

Measurement properties of the PIMRS, English language form. The original validation study found that the PIMRS met high standards of reliability (Hallinger, 1982). All ten subscales exceeded .80 using Cronbach's test of internal consistency. Subsequent studies have generally substituted Ebel's (1951) test for calculating inter-rater reliability for Cronbach's formula. This test provides a more accurate test of reliability for ratings aggregated from a set of schools where respondents within schools (e.g., teachers) are rating a feature of the school, e.g., the principal). These studies have affirmed this initial finding of high reliability in both elementary and secondary schools (Hallinger, 1984a; Jones, 1987; Leitner, 1989).

Studies of the PIMRS' validity have tended to focus primarily on establishing, face, content and construct validity. The general pattern of findings has affirmed the validity of the instrument, though there is significant intercorrelation among a number of the subscales. Examinations of external validity have compared data collected by the PIMRS with comparable data collected from alternative research methods such as observation, interview and document analysis. The results generally support the conclusion that the PIMRS teacher form yields valid data.

Adaptation of the PIMRS for Research in Thailand

There have been several prior adaptations of the PIMRS for use in non-Western cultures. To date, the PIMRS has been translated into Spanish, Hebrew, Malay, German, and Arabic. This study represented the first attempt to develop a version that could be used for data collection in Thailand. Our goal in the current study was to translate and assess the current English language version of the PIMRS (1984a) in Thailand.

Translation of the PIMRS was conducted independently by three Thai educators who are fluent in English. The resulting PIMRS - Thai Form was used in the research.

Setting and sample. This study was conducted in Chiang Mai, the second most populous city in Thailand. Chiang Mai is located in the northern part of the country. Ten public secondary

schools were selected for this study. They were located in similar socioeconomic neighborhoods that can be described generally as comprised of middle-class families.

Ten secondary school principals and the teachers from each of their schools constituted the sample for the study. All ten of the principals had led their schools for a minimum of two years. The participating teachers had similarly served under their principals for at least two years. We wanted to ensure that teachers had spent a sufficient period of time with their principal to be able to make valid assessments of their instructional leadership behavior, a necessary condition when using behaviorally anchored rating scales (Latham & Wexley, 1981).

Confidentiality and subject anonymity were maintained for teachers and principals. No identifying information was collected on the teacher form of the PIMRS other than the name of school and the teacher's number of years of experience working with the principal. No teacher questionnaires were shown directly to the school principal.

Data analysis. Two separate sets of procedures were followed in analyzing the data from this study. First, we tested the reliability and validity of the Thai Form of the PIMRS in order to establish that the instrument met acceptable standards for our research. We discuss the procedures in the following section.

Following a determination of the instrument's measurement properties, we constructed instructional leadership profiles for each of the 10 participating principals. These profiles portrayed the mean scores across the 10 subscales as perceived first by the principal and then by the teachers. Thus, do indicate the potential of cross-cultural research for furthering our understanding school leadership research, policy and practice. Thus we were able to compare the self-perceptions of the principals with the perceptions of their teachers. Next we developed group profiles by aggregating the principal and teacher data. In addition to the descriptive presentation of results, we used a dependent t-test to determine the extent of agreement between teachers' and principals' perceptions of the principals' instructional leadership.

Following this analysis, we drew on the results of two earlier studies that used the PIMRS to investigate the instructional leadership of secondary schools principals. These studies were

conducted in Malaysia (Saavedra, 1987) and in the United States (Pratley, 1992). Descriptive statistics from these studies were compared with the results obtained from the Thai sample in order to provide a context for understanding the meaning of the Thai results. Simple comparisons of mean scores and rank ordering of subscales was used to compare patterns in the Thai data with the findings in Malaysia and the U.S. Lack of necessary statistics in the other data precluded statistical analysis of the significance of differences found in the data across the three countries.

Results

In this section we focus first on the reliability and validity of the PIMRS - Thai Form. Then we examine the pattern of instructional leadership obtained from this sample of principals.

Measurement Properties of the PIMRS - Thai Form

Reliability was tested through an analysis of the inter-rater reliability of teachers' responses (Ebel, 1951). We set a minimum standard of .60 for each of the subscales and conducted a one-way analysis of variance, ANOVA, across the 10 sample schools. In this analysis, teachers' responses within schools were treated as the units of analysis so the average score that a teacher assigned the principal on that subscale was treated as the dependent variable. Ebel's formula for testing inter-rater reliability was used to determine the reliability coefficient for each subscale (Ebel, 1951):

$$r_x = \frac{M_x - M}{M_x}$$

where: r_x is the reliability,

M_x is the between-groups variance, and

M is the within-group variance.

All 10 subscales exceeded .90 (see Table 1), thereby meeting our standard and indicating a high degree of reliability for the teacher form of the instrument. These results are quite consistent with results obtained with the English language form of the PIMRS.

The purpose of instrument validation is to ensure that the scale measures the construct that it purports to measure. Without meeting acceptable standards of validity, a test can yield results that lead to incorrect conclusions and inappropriate decisions or recommendations. In this study, we focused on two types of validity: face validity and construct validity.

Face validity refers to the degree to which the items that comprise the instrument are meaningful to Thai educators as measures of the desired constructs. In this study four Thai educators familiar with the principal's role were given a list of the 50 items that comprise the PIMRS - Thai Form. The items were presented in random order. The educators were asked to sort them into the 10 subscales. For each item, an agreement rate of 3 out of 4 was sought in terms of sorting by subscale.

In all, 31 of 50 items on the Thai version of the PIMRS met or exceeded the standard of 80% agreement in terms of assignment to subscale. The subscales Frames Goals, Communicates Goals, Coordinates Curriculum, Provides Incentives for Teachers, and Provides Incentives for Students met with 80% or better agreement among the raters. Four of the other subscales fell below the desired criterion of 80% agreement. Part of the difficulty appeared to be due to the terminology used for the subscale names which were adjusted subsequently. While the same test was not replicated with principals, discussions with principals during the study suggested that the meaning of the items and subscale constructs were meaningful to them.

Construct validity concerns the extent to which a test is able to differentiate among the performance of subjects on the desired criterion. We assessed construct validity in two ways. First, we used a one-way analysis of variance, ANOVA, to determine the ability of the PIMRS to differentiate among the teachers' perceptions of the instructional leadership behavior of the principals being rated. We compared the variance in teacher ratings of principals within schools with the variance in teacher ratings across schools on each of the subscales. When the variation in teachers' ratings between-schools is significantly greater than the variation in teachers' ratings within-schools, it indicates that an instrument can be considered a valid measure of performance. The standard sought in this study was a .01 level of significance.

For each subscale, the results indicate a significantly higher variation in the ratings by teachers between-schools than within-schools. Statistical significance exceeded our standard of .01 level for each of the 10 subscales. This evidence suggests that the PIMRS-Thai Form possesses a high degree of construct validity.

[Insert Table 1 about here]

A second test of construct validity compared the intercorrelation between pairs of subscales with each subscale's reliability coefficient. When the intercorrelation between subscales is lower than the subscale reliability coefficients, it suggests that the subscales are measuring distinguishable constructs (Latham & Wexley, 1981) .

While the results indicate substantial intercorrelation among the various subscales, none of the subscale intercorrelations is as large as the subscale reliability coefficients. This indicates that the items within each subscale are more closely related to each other than to items in the other subscales. A reasonable degree of intercorrelation among subscales on the instrument is to be expected since the instructional leadership functions -- particularly those found within the same dimension -- are conceptually related. Again, the results here were consistent with studies that used the English language version of the PIMRS.

In summary, the results of this analysis indicate that the subscales on the PIMRS - Thai Form are likely to provide reliable and valid measures of instructional leadership performance among Thai secondary school principals. All 10 subscales surpassed .90 on the test of inter-rater reliability. Furthermore, although results for face validity were mixed, tests of the PIMRSÆ construct validity indicate that the instrument is able to discriminate quite well among principals. In short, the PIMRS-Thai Form seems to be measuring the intended construct. These findings are consistent with previous studies of the reliability and validity of the English form of the PIMRS (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; Jones, 1987; Krug, 1986; Leitner, 1989; O'Day, 1983).

Patterns of Instructional Leadership in Thailand

After ensuring that results obtained with this new form of the PIMRS met acceptable standards of reliability and validity, we developed instructional leadership profiles of the participating principals both as individuals and as a group. This provided a portrait of how these Thai secondary school principals exercised instructional leadership. In this report we focus solely on the profile of the secondary school principals as a group. The group profile is displayed in Table 2.

[Insert Table 2 Here]

The first notable finding concerning the group profile is the consistent difference in the perceptions of teachers and principals concerning the level of instructional leadership exercised by the principals. On every subscale, the principalsÆ perceive themselves as exercising more active instructional leadership than is perceived by their teachers. The differences are statistically significant at the .05 level using a two-tailed t-test.

This finding of significant differences between the perceptions of the teachers and principals is consistent with prior research (e.g., Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; OÆDay, 1983). Earlier studies have concluded that teachersÆ perceptions are more accurate when compared with alternative sources of perceptions on the principalÆs instructional leadership (e.g., self-perceptions or supervisor ratings). This finding supports the prior recommendation to utilize the teacher form of the instrument when seeking high levels of reliability and validity (i.e., for research or personnel evaluation).

It is interesting to note that although the teachersÆ and principalsÆ ratings differed significantly with respect to the numerical values of the ratings on the subscales (i.e., the degree of instructional leadership activity), strikingly similar profiles of instructional leadership are obtained on the two sets of ratings (see Table 2). That is, although the principals consistently rated themselves higher than did their teachers, the pattern of ratings across the 10 leadership functions was almost the same. Thus, if we review how the teachersÆ and principalsÆ ranked

the degree of emphasis given to the different instructional leadership functions there is a high level of agreement.

This finding suggests that the scores accurately reflect the relative degree of focus given to the different instructional leadership functions exercised by the principals. Highly ranked functions such as Provides Incentives for Learning probably do represent areas of *relative* strength in terms of the principals' instructional leadership. Similarly we can fairly confident that the functions on which the principals received low rankings, such as Maintain High Visibility, do in fact receive less attention from the principals despite the discrepancy in the perceptions of just how actively engaged the principals are in this leadership function.

The second feature we would note in the data is the relatively low scores obtained by the principals across the 10 subscales (see Table 2). Drawing on the teachers' ratings, five of the aggregated subscale means fell between 3.0 and 3.5: Provides Incentives for Learning, Protects Instructional Time, Frames School Goals, Promotes Professional Development, Communicates School Goals. The highest aggregated score achieved among the principals on a subscale was a mean of 3.42 on the function, Provides Incentives for Learning. Five of the 10 subscales fell within the low to moderate level of ratings (2.00 - 3.00): Supervises and Evaluates Instruction, Coordinates Curriculum, Monitors Student Progress, Maintains High Visibility, and Provides Incentives for Teachers. In general, these scores are quite low when compared with the results of other studies. We will return to this point shortly.

When analyzed in terms of the three instructional leadership dimensions, the principals scored highest on the dimension, *Defining the School's Mission*. It is, however, notable that even on this dimension the scores did not exceed the moderate range of instructional leadership activity. The lowest level of instructional leadership activity was found in the dimension, *Managing the Instructional Program* where all of the aggregated teacher ratings fell below 3.00.

The relatively higher scores obtained on the dimension, *Defining the School's Mission*, are not unexpected. Although Thai society and schools are in the midst of a period of rapid change, Thai schools still operate with a fairly coherent culturally defined mission which is reinforced by

a strong central government bureaucracy. Although some of the goal-setting practices assessed by the PIMRS instrument may be uncommon in Thailand, it would not be surprising to find that teachers and principals agree on the basic aims and priorities of their schools.

Similarly, the generally lower scores on the dimension, *Managing the Instructional Program*, reflect the culture of Thai school administration. Thai secondary school administrators tend to view themselves first and foremost as administrators, rather than as instructional leaders. There are few incentives in the formal system of advancement for Thai principals to focus on instructional development. This is further underscored in the content of their training. An analysis of the training provided through the central administrative training institute reveals a clear emphasis on managerial functions and relatively little attention to instructional and curriculum leadership.

These findings suggest that this set of secondary school principals in Thailand are not actively engaged in the type of instructional leadership assessed by the PIMRS. While the PIMRS has not been normed, these scores fall in the low to moderate range of instructional leadership activity when compared with scores obtained in other studies. In the next section we examine these findings in light of results obtained from secondary school principals in studies conducted in the United States and Malaysia.

Comparison of Findings among Thailand, Malaysia and the United States

Thus far we have concentrated on reporting the results from our survey of instructional leadership as exercised by a sample of secondary school principals in northern Thailand. Although these results must be viewed as a preliminary and tentative portrait of instructional leadership among Thai principals, we were interested in examining how the pattern of instructional leadership found in Thailand compared with findings from studies that used the PIMRS in other countries.

In this section, we compare the pattern of instructional leadership obtained in Thailand with the profiles from two other studies, in the U.S. (Pratley, 1992) and Malaysia (Saavedra, 1987). In exploring the results from the three countries, we focus on the degree to which principals in

each of the countries emphasize the various instructional leadership functions assessed by the PIMRS. As with our own results, finding from the American and Malaysian studies must be viewed as tentative since they were not large-scale research projects. We will return to the limitations of this analysis in our concluding discussion.

Pratley (1992) investigated the instructional leadership of middle level principals in Michigan. He used the PIMRS to examine the extent to which the principals were involved in instructional leadership. His descriptive study included comparisons of the principals' self-perceptions and the teachers' perceptions of the instructional management behavior of the principals. He used both quantitative and qualitative methods (interview, observation, PIMRS questionnaire, and document analysis) in his study. The sample for this study consisted of 76 principals and 420 teachers.

[Insert Table 3 here]

Pratley's findings demonstrated the following patterns (see Table 3). The three highest rated subscales, using the teachers' ratings, were: 1) Provides Incentives for Learning with a mean of 3.81, 2) Promotes Professional Development with a mean of 3.72, Protects Instructional Time with a mean of 3.61. The three lowest rated subscales in the Pratley study were: 8) Monitors Student Progress with a mean of 3.29, 9) Maintains High Visibility with a mean of 3.30, 10) Coordinates Curriculum with a mean of 3.32.

Saavedra (1987) used teacher and principal PIMRS ratings to study the frequency of practice of instructional management behaviors of secondary school administrators (i.e., principals) in Iligan City, Malaysia. He also studied the variation in the frequency of practice of principals' instructional leadership when compared with variables such as gender, age, experience, and educational attainment. Saavedra's descriptive and quantitative investigation included comparison of 18 principals' self-perceptions and 200 teachers' perceptions of the principals' instructional management activities.

Saavedra's findings demonstrated the following patterns discussed in light of findings. The three highest rated subscales among the Malaysian principals were: Provides Incentives for Learning with a mean of 3.58, Communicates School Goals with a mean of 3.55, and Frames School Goals with a mean of 3.54. The three lowest rated subscales among the Malaysian principals were Maintains High Visibility with a mean of 3.13, Provides Incentives for Teachers with a mean of 3.18, and Monitors Student Progress with a mean of 3.22.

The three highest and three lowest rated subscales across the three countries were relatively consistent. The highest rated subscale in all three studies was Provides Incentives for Learning. The second highest ratings were received by Protects Instructional Time in Thailand, Promotes Professional Development in the U.S., and Communicates School Goals in Malaysia. The third highest ratings were for Frames School Goals (in Thailand and Malaysia) and Protects Instructional Time (in the U.S.).

The lowest rated subscales were Maintains High Visibility (in Thailand and Malaysia) and Monitors Student Progress (in the U.S.). The second lowest ratings went to Supervises and Evaluates Instruction (Thailand), Maintains High Visibility (U.S.), and Provides Incentives for Teachers (Malaysia). The third lowest ratings were received by Monitors Student Progress (Thailand and Malaysia) and Coordinates Curriculum (U.S.).

Three findings emerge from this initial attempt to compare the instructional leadership of secondary school principals across three different countries. First is the similarity concerning which functions receive most and least emphasis from the principals. Despite the fact that the absolute value of the ratings differs across the scales in the three countries, the rankings afforded to the various instructional leadership functions are remarkably consistent. This finding is surprising given the very different cultural contexts for educational leadership in the three countries.

Second, we find that the lowest ranked functions for the principals in all three countries tend to fall in the dimension, *Managing the Instructional Program*. This dimension consists of three subscales: Supervising and Evaluating Instruction, Coordinating the Curriculum, Monitoring

student Progress. While the American and Malaysian principals consistently received higher ratings than their Thai counterparts in this dimension, they too appear to give less emphasis to these instructional leadership functions in their daily practice than to functions in the other instructional leadership dimensions.

The third finding of interest is that among the three countries the Thai principals consistently received the lowest overall mean ratings on the ten subscales ($\underline{M} = 2.98$). As is apparent in Table 3, the low grand mean did not occur because of very low and very high scores on selected subscales. On every one of the ten subscales, the mean score of the sample of Thai principals was lower than the scores of the Malaysian and American principals (using the teachers' ratings). Principals in Malaysia ranked second ($\underline{M} = 3.38$) and principals in the U.S. ranked first ($\underline{M} = 3.47$). This finding suggests that this set of Thai secondary school principals can be considered to be less active as instructional leaders when compared with principals who participated in the studies in the U.S. and Malaysia. We discuss the meaning of these results further in the concluding section of the article.

Conclusion

Concerns for educational productivity have dominated policy debates in industrialized countries over the past decade. Such concerns are achieving equal salience in the newly industrialized countries which are seeking to develop a citizenry who can contribute both to economic development and to the growth of democratic institutions. In response, countries such as Thailand are placing greater emphasis on improvement of their educational systems. One strategy involves shifting increasing levels of responsibility to school leaders, especially principals, for leading local school improvement efforts.

While research in Western societies has found that principal leadership is a necessary, albeit insufficient, condition for school improvement, there remains a paucity of research on how principals provide instructional leadership in developing countries. As in other developing countries, policymakers in Thailand are interested in determining the nature and impact of principal leadership on school performance and student learning. Yet a necessary precondition to

exploring the effects of principal leadership is the development of reliable measures of critical areas of job performance. Similar concerns for better research on principal leadership have been enunciated in the areas of policy implementation and principal training.

Our study sought to address this need by translating the PIMRS, an instrument designed to assess principal instructional leadership, into Thai. The PIMRS was administered to the principals and teachers in 10 secondary schools in Northern Thailand. Findings from this initial study indicate that the PIMRS-Thai Form appears to provide data on the instructional leadership of secondary school principals that meet or exceed common standards of reliability and validity. Researchers and practitioners interested in assessing principal instructional leadership in Thai schools can proceed to use the PIMRS-Thai Form with a reasonable degree of confidence that it will yield accurate information on job performance in this domain. Researchers in Thailand will, however, need to replicate or augment the reliability and validity tests used in this study until such time that a sufficient data-base has been developed on the instrument performance in a broader representation of Thai schools.

In addition, important further adaptation of the instrument remains to be done. While the PIMRS - Thai Form may provide valid data on the instructional leadership features that it seeks to measure, additional research is needed to determine other important functions of the principal's instructional leadership role in Thailand. The result of such research may involve the addition of new items to current PIMRS subscales or possibly adding new subscales to capture instructional leadership functions unique to Thai schooling. For example, in Thailand the principal must be able to forge satisfactory linkages between the school and local religious (Buddhist) institutions which play an important non-formal education role. We hope that future descriptive investigations of instructional leadership in Thai schools will add to our understanding of how this role is exercised by principals and inform continued refinement of this instrument.

The second goal of this paper was to explore the pattern of instructional leadership found among this sample of secondary school principals. Comparable data on the instructional leadership of Thai

principals has not been previously available at either the primary or secondary level. Consistent with past studies, the principals in this study tended to rate themselves higher in their self-assessments than did their teachers (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; O'Æ Day, 1983). Current and past data suggest that greater credence be given to the teacher assessments than to principals' self-reports.

With this in mind, the results consistently suggest that this sample of secondary school principals from northern Thailand do not exercise active instructional leadership in the domains measured by the PIMRS. Assessments of secondary school principals using the PIMRS in the United States (Haack, 1991, Pratley, 1992), Malaysia (Saavedra, 1987), and Canada (Jones, 1987) have all yielded consistently higher scores across the subscales compared with this Thai sample.

Although as a group the Thai principals consistently scored in the low to moderate range of frequency of instructional leadership on the 10 subscales of the PIMRS, it should be noted that there was also statistically significant variation among the principals in their scores. The significant variation found among the principals in their instructional leadership performance points towards future studies that should examine the effects of instructional leadership among Thai principals. With the development of a Thai Form of the PIMRS, it will be possible to investigate how specific features of principal leadership in Thailand relate to school effectiveness and improvement.

A natural question arising from this finding is to what extent are these scores representative of Thai secondary school principals? While we cannot generalize to all Thai secondary school principals from this sample, some speculation concerning the direction of the results is possible. Chiang Mai is the second largest city in Thailand. As such its secondary schools tend to be larger than those found elsewhere in Thailand, with the exception of Bangkok. Given the Thai system of promotion, this means that the principals of Chiang Mai's secondary schools are more experienced and have received more training than their counterparts in most parts of the country. Moreover, the student population of these schools is comprised of a higher proportion of middle

class families. We believe that these parents have concomitantly higher expectations for their childrens' educational achievement than in many other regions of Thailand, particularly the rural areas. These personal and community factors lead us to expect higher levels of instructional leadership from this group of principals than from secondary school principals in general in Thailand.

Alternatively, the literature on principal instructional leadership suggests that it becomes increasingly difficult to exercise instructional leadership as school size increases. Additional layers of staff, larger numbers of students and personnel, and increased programmatic responsibilities often distance principals in large schools from the curricular and classroom processes associated with instructional leadership. While this explanation is consistent with the overall pattern of instructional leadership found in these schools, it is not supported by other the data from the study. In fact, the three highest ranked principals in terms of their overall instructional leadership scores were from the largest schools in our sample.

The degree to which the scores from this sample are representative of the instructional leadership exercised by secondary school principals in Thailand cannot be resolved at this time. This is a question for future research in Thailand. However, if our hypothesis is borne out, it would confirm that instructional leadership is not a domain currently emphasized by Thai principals at the secondary level.

Finally, the study further examined the instructional leadership of the Thai principals with data collected in studies using the PIMRS in Malaysia and the United States. As noted already the level of instructional leadership exercised by the Thai principals as consistently lower than that of their counterparts in the U.S. and Malaysian studies. Interestingly, however, we did find that similar instructional leadership functions emerged as relative areas of strength and weakness in the three countries. Functions falling in the dimension, *Managing the Instructional Program*, tended to receive the least emphasis from the principals who participated in all three of the studies. Functions concerned with school climate and school mission received greater emphasis from the principals in the view of their teachers.

This finding would not surprise some observers of educational administration who have noted the numerous ways in which the school as an organization constrains principals from engaging in the close management of instructional processes (Cuban, 1988; March, 1978; Murphy, Hallinger, Lotto, & Miller, 1987). It may be that the lower scores in this dimension in all three studies reflects a basic fact of educational administration: that climate development and mission building represent more viable paths for principals in the exercise instructional leadership. Alternatively, when viewed from the perspective of school effectiveness research, it might be argued that insufficient training has been given in instructional management and inadequate policy pressure has been applied to schools for us to realistically expect higher scores in this domain.

Our research and experience in the United States and Canada indicate that instructional leadership only emerged as a leadership priority over the past decade. Moreover, we have noted that training for educational administrators in this domain only gained currency *after* policymakers legitimated its importance in national commissions and state policies (Hallinger, 1992; Murphy, 1990). As mentioned earlier there has been relatively little emphasis in the training programs offered to the Thai principals in either effective schools processes or instructional leadership functions, especially when compared with the North American and Malaysian contexts.

These questions must remain unanswered at this time. The substantive findings from this study can only suggest tentative directions with respect to leadership functions in Thailand. Although only a preliminary study, we hope that this effort will stimulate additional research in Thailand and perhaps begin to refocus policy and training discussions on the issue of instructional leadership. We also believe that the findings suggest the potential of cross-cultural research for furthering our understanding school leadership research, policy and practice. across countries. We hope that the trend towards internationalization witnessed throughout society is mirrored by an increase in systematic cross-cultural investigations in the domain of school leadership and improvement.

Figure 1

Sample PIMRS Rating Subscale: Teacher Form

To what extent does your principal. . . ?

I. FRAME THE SCHOOL GOALS

	Almost Never			Almost	
Always					
1. Develop a focused set of annual school-wide goals	1	2	3	4	5
2. Frame the school's goals in terms of staff responsibilities for meeting them	1	2	3	4	5
3. Use needs assessment or other systematic methods to secure staff input on goal development	1	2	3	4	5
4. Use data on student academic performance when developing the school's academic goals	1	2	3	4	5
5. Develop goals that are easily translated into classroom objectives by teachers	1	2	3	4	5

From PIMRS - Teacher Form1.3 (Hallinger, 1984a), p. 2

Table 1

Thai PIMRS Construct Validity: Analysis of Variance by Subscale

Subscale	F value	Significance
Frames Goals	22.63*	.0000
Communicates Goals	20.99*	.0000
Supervision and Instruction	14.69*	.0000
Coordinates Curriculum	18.99*	.0000
Monitors Progress	18.04*	.0000
Protects Instructional Time	10.35*	.0000
Maintains High Visibility	15.88*	.0000
Provides Incentives for Teachers	16.74*	.0000
Professional Development	14.80*	.0000
Provides Incentives for Learning	21.98*	.0000

* $p < .01$.

Table 2

Comparison of Teachers' and Principals' PIMRS Subscale Ratings in Thailand

Subscale	Teachers		Principals		Difference	Mean Difference	t-test Est	p
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD				
Rank Frames Goals	3.14 (3)**	.977	4.06 (5)	.712	-.910	2.94	.003*	
Communicates Goals	3.07 (5)	.989	4.18 (3)	.696	-1.104	3.52	.000*	
Supervises Instruction	2.77 (9)	.984	3.76 (8)	.572	-.990	3.17	.002*	
Coordinates Curriculum	2.92 (6)	.968	3.88 (6)	.725	-.959	3.12	.002*	
Monitors Student Progress	2.88 (8)	.994	3.70 (9)	.501	-.820	2.61	.009*	
Protects Instructional Time	3.15 (2)	.964	3.86 (7)	.766	-.707	2.31	.021*	
Maintains High Visibility	2.45 (10)	.968	3.06 (10)	.534	-.605	1.97	.049*	
Incentives for Teachers	2.91 (7)	1.098	4.26 (2)	.654	-1.34	3.87	.000*	
Professional Development	3.08 (4)	.999	4.08 (4)	.620	-.995	3.14	.002*	
Incentives for Learning	3.42 (1)	1.057	4.46 (1)	.582	-1.040	3.10	.002*	

Teacher $N = 774$; Principal $N = 10$.

* $p < .05$, two-tailed

** Numbers in parentheses represent the subscale rankings for teacher and principal samples.

Table 3
Comparison of Principal Profiles by Teachers' Mean Ratings and Rankings:
Thailand, U.S., and Malaysia

Subscale	Thailand	U.S.	Malaysia
Frames School Goals	3.15 3	3.49 4	3.54 3
Communicates School Goals	3.08 5	3.36 7	3.55 2
Supervises Instruction	2.77 9	3.38 6	3.29 6
Coordinates Curriculum	2.92 6	3.32 8	3.48 5
Monitors Student Progress	2.89 8	3.29 10	3.22 8
Protects Instructional Time	3.15 2	3.61 3	3.28 7
Maintains High Visibility	2.45 10	3.30 9	3.13 10
Incentives for Teachers	2.91 7	3.43 5	3.18 9
Professional Development	3.08 4	3.72 2	3.51 4
Incentives for Learning	3.42 1	3.81 1	3.58 1
Total	2.98	3.47	3.38

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Abstract

While research in Western societies has found that principal leadership is usually a necessary condition for school improvement, there remains a dearth of research on how principals provide instructional leadership in developing countries. This study sought to address this need by adapting the PIMRS (Hallinger, 1984a), an instrument designed to assess principal instructional leadership. The PIMRS was translated and administered to 10 secondary school principals in Northern Thailand. Findings from this initial study indicate that the PIMRS-Thai Form appears to provide data on the instructional leadership of secondary school principals that meet or exceed common research standards of reliability and validity. Researchers and practitioners interested in assessing principal instructional leadership in Thai schools can proceed to use the PIMRS-Thai Form with a reasonable degree of confidence that it will yield accurate information on job performance in this domain.

Consistent with past studies, the principals in this study tended to rate themselves higher in their self-assessments than did their teachers (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; O'Æ Day, 1983). Current and past data suggest that greater credence be given to the teacher assessments. With this in mind, the results indicate that this sample of secondary school principals from northern Thailand exercised a low to moderate level of instructional leadership activity among this group of Thai secondary school principals. Assessments of secondary school principals using the PIMRS in the United States (Haack, 1991), Malaysia (Saavedra, 1987), Canada (Jones, 1987) have all yielded significantly higher scores when compared with this Thai sample.

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¹. See Hallinger (1982) and Latham and Wexley (1981) for discussions of behaviorally anchored rating scales and their development.