

LEADERSHIP PRACTICES IN HIGHER EDUCATION
IN MONGOLIA

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore leadership practices exercised by higher education leaders in Mongolia from the perspective of American leadership concepts. The study was based on leaders' practices. That is, the study examined how higher education leaders conduct themselves as administrators and how their leadership practices are perceived by their subordinates.

This study differed from most of the related research on higher education in three ways. First, this study focused on leaders in higher education institutions in a transitional country of Asia. Second, previous related studies primarily concentrated on leaders from one sector (public v. private) or one type of post-secondary institution (two-year, four-year, and research universities and colleges). This study encompassed samples from both public and private higher education institutions representing different types of schools (universities, specialized institutions, and professional schools). Third, this study employed both forms of the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) instrument: LPI-Self and LPI-Observer. All leaders (Rectors, Deans, and Department Heads) completed an LPI-Self on themselves and all leaders were evaluated by all levels of followers at the institution including faculty members.

The sample consisted of 20 Rectors, 20 Deans, 40 Department Heads, and 200 faculty members from 10 public and 10 private higher education institutions. The LPI-Self and the LPI-Observer instruments were translated into Mongolian and distributed to participants along with a short demographic survey.

Data analysis procedures included: (1) creating individual profiles of self scores and observers scores for each leader using LPI scoring software; (2) producing a spreadsheet of demographic information and LPI data for statistical analysis using SPSS; (3) and, the actual analysis through t-tests, analyses of variance, and multiple comparison techniques.

The results revealed that no group of higher education leaders in Mongolia were rated as high in terms of their practices even by their own self-assessment. Overall, the ratings on all five

leadership practices of higher education leaders in Mongolia were lower than those of college and university leaders in the United States. Additionally, the ratings of followers on the practices of their leaders were significantly lower than self-ratings of the leaders themselves in a number of areas. One possible explanation for the findings might be the fact that leaders in higher education institutions in Mongolia are learning about leadership practices by trial and error during the country's transition from a socialist system to a democratic system.

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