

LEADERSHIP PRACTICES IN HIGHER EDUCATION  
IN MONGOLIA

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Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the  
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy  
in  
Educational Administration

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April 19, 2000  
Blacksburg, Virginia

Keywords: Leadership, Leadership Practices, Higher Education, Mongolian Higher Education

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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.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to offer sincere gratitude to members of my Advisory Committee: to Dr. Steve Parson for his mentoring relationships and support throughout this study; to Dr. Joan Hirt for her generous intellectual help, consistent encouragement, and enormous time commitment; to Dr. Jimmie Fortune for his constructive guidance with respect to the research methodology and research design through his inspiring classes and individualized assignments; to Dr. Patrick Carlton for his thoughtful advice on leadership studies and practices; and to Dr. Delwyn Dyer for his warm hearted assistance in every way during my study in the doctoral program.

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to Dr. James Kouzes and Dr. Barry Posner, Santa Clara University, CA for their kind permission to use their Leadership Practices Inventory instrument in this study and the software and workbooks specially designed for the instrument that they provided me.

Special thanks is extended to the Fulbright Foundation and the Institute of International Education whose sponsorship made it possible to do doctoral study at the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. Graduate study at one of the great American universities enabled me to acquire new knowledge in the field of my academic interest and gave me the rare opportunity to have a firsthand experience in the American culture and to become acquainted with people of this great nation. This study under the auspices of the Fulbright Program was very rewarding for me and also for my family.

Deep appreciation is extended to Dr. David Alexander, the Department Head, faculty members, and staff at the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies for their support and consideration. Appreciation is expressed to Drs. Don Creamer, Steve Janosik, John Muffo, and Terry Wildman for their inspiring classes that energized me and gave new insights for future thoughts and actions. Thanks to colleagues, the doctoral students with whom I had an opportunity to study, for their friendship and assistance.

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