

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 BACKGROUND & RATIONALE**

Social behavior is constructed in a particular context and is connected to values and beliefs. People perceive things differently, even perceptions of the same phenomenon. Moreover, cultural experiences have made significant difference in their behaviors particularly in a business body or organization. Ignoring or mishandling cultural differences can mean inability to retain or motivate employees. When successfully managed, it can lead to innovative business practices and better learning within an organization. Because a culture is a complex system, cultural studies need a systematic approach (Hofstede, 1980). Hofstede (1980) argues that people carry “mental programs” which are developed and reinforced through their experiences, and these “mental programs” contain a component of national culture. Gender difference can also imply distinction in mental programs. Inequality in men and women in their performance ability seems to be a crucial issue globally these days. The Global Gender Gap Report 2006 measures the size of the gender gap in four critical areas of inequality between men and women. Thailand is ranked the 40<sup>th</sup> of 115 countries and Thailand's overall gender gap score is 0.683. The score is ranged from 0 to 1, 0 means inequality and 1 means equality (Hausmann, Tyson, Zahidi, 2006). It looks that the gender gap in Thailand is not so serious; meaning the gap of inequality of men and women is not far apart. Women, to some extent, in such as education or business work are accepted well in society.

Recent events around the world have brought international attention to gender issues. Gender stereotypes are a set of shared beliefs and majority agreements which describe differences between men and women in their attitudes, values, interests, psychological traits, social relations and occupations (Golombok & Fivush, 1994). The gender stereotypes around the world are rather stable and are related to interesting and important psychological characteristics. Men are generally viewed as active, strong, critical and adult-like, with psychological needs such as dominance, autonomy, aggression, exhibition, achievement and endurance. Women are generally viewed as

passive, weak, nurturing and adaptive with psychological needs such as abasement, deference, nurturance, affiliation and the quality of family life (Forster, 2005).

Many studies challenge the findings of gender differences in the workplace. During the last twenty years, there have been big changes in Gender- and Leadership related perceptions. In the study of Kruse and Wintermantel in 1986, they confirmed the gender stereotypes of the time. Woman and leadership did not go together. From Koch, Luft, and Kruse, 2005, the replication of the 1986 study of Kruse and Wintermantel, they found a considerable progressive change – more gender equal. The main cluster now consists of the concepts leadership, manager and business woman, combining apart the purely gender-related concepts man and woman. There is considerable evidence for a shift to more gender egalitarian representations among men as well as women (Koch, Luft, and Kruse, 2005).

Supposing the gender stereotype is reasonable in characterizing employees' preferences for job attributes and therefore it does actually provide useful information for designing compensation plans. Men should value earnings, challenge, advancement, freedom, recognition, training and use of skills more highly than do women, because these factors satisfy the masculine stereotypical needs of economic success, autonomy and achievement. In comparison, women should value positive interpersonal relationships, the physical environment, security, fringe benefits and family-related factors more highly than do men, because they fulfill the stereotypically feminine needs of family, social affiliation and quality of family life. The effects of gender on the importance of work-related goals and the preference for management styles will be investigated to identify the important characteristics, the motivating aspects and gender connections in the organization setting. This information is important especially to the managers and human resource managers who need to understand and appreciate organization culture and the influence of gender on organization practices.

The Faculty of Medicine, Siriraj Hospital, Mahidol University, is the leading organization in medical education, service and research in Southeast Asia. It has been established since 1888 and internationalized step by step. Siriraj organization is classified as a professional organization because of the necessity of high skilled personnel and high standard of care. At present, there are over 2.5 million out-patient

visits, 80,000 in-patient admissions a year and 2,500 in-patient bed capacities. Employees number around 11,000; of this 70% are women and 30% are men (Faculty of Medicine, Siriraj Hospital, Mahidol University, Annual Report, 2006). According to public and traditional organization, the management style is mainly under bureaucratic style. The improvement of communication in the bureaucratic system is conducting many cross functional teams or committees to shorten the process of decision and create the horizontal connection and communication. Therefore it is interesting to evaluate the Siriraj organization culture which has a high proportion of female employees. Quite a few researches have been conducted in this organization to study the effect of gender on work related goals or the preference of management styles in previous decades.

## **1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEMS**

### **1.2.1 Statement of the Problems**

The study was conducted to answer the research questions which were main questions and related questions.

#### **Main Problems**

1 Were there any differences between the importance scores of work-related goals of male employees and the importance scores of work-related goals of female employees according to 21 items? These items were as follows:

- 1 Time for personal activities
- 2 Challenge work
- 3 Little job stress
- 4 Physical working conditions
- 5 Relationships with manager
- 6 Job security
- 7 Freedom (Work autonomy)
- 8 Co-operation
- 9 Be consulted
- 10 Contribution to the success of company
- 11 Opportunity for high earnings
- 12 Desirable living area

- 13 Opportunity for advancement
- 14 Job variety
- 15 Company
- 16 Opportunity to help others
- 17 Clear requirements
- 18 Fringe benefits
- 19 Use of skills and abilities
- 20 Recognition
- 21 Training opportunities

2 Were there any differences between the preference for management styles of males and the preference for management styles of females? Management styles were classified into 4 types: authoritarian, mentor, consultative and collaborative style.

#### **Related Problems**

- 1 What were the characteristics of the importance of work-related goals?
- 2 What were the characteristics in preference and perception for management styles?

This research's hypotheses for the main problems were:

1 The importance scores of work-related goals of male employees would be different from the importance scores of work-related goals of female employees according to each item:

- 1 Time for personal activities
- 2 Challenge work
- 3 Little job stress
- 4 Physical working conditions
- 5 Relationships with manager
- 6 Job security
- 7 Freedom (Work autonomy)
- 8 Co-operation
- 9 Be consulted

- 10 Contribution to the success of company
- 11 Opportunity for high earnings
- 12 Desirable living area
- 13 Opportunity for advancement
- 14 Job variety
- 15 Company
- 16 Opportunity to help others
- 17 Clear requirements
- 18 Fringe benefits
- 19 Use of skills and abilities
- 20 Recognition
- 21 Training opportunities

2 The preference for management styles of males would be different from the preference for management styles of females. Management styles were classified into 4 types which were:

- 1 Authoritarian
- 2 Mentor
- 3 Consultative
- 4 Collaborative

### **1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

#### **1.3.1 Main objectives**

- 1 To compare the importance of work-related goals by gender
- 2 To compare the preference for management styles by gender

#### **1.3.2 Sub objectives**

- 1 To investigate the importance of work-related goals
- 2 To investigate preference and perception for management styles

## 1.4 DEFINITION OF TERMS

Definitions of the terms of this study are as follows:

**1.4.1 Gender** refers to sex and is classified into male and female.

**1.4.2 Sex** refers to the biological and physiological differences between men and women, the most obvious being anatomical differences in their reproductive systems.

**1.4.3 Work-related goals** refers to characteristics that employees value in their work or workplace, like advancement, responsibility, earnings, training, a friendly atmosphere, position, security, physical conditions, a positive relationship with their supervisor, cooperation with colleagues. They are characteristics required to manage effectively in the organizations.

**1.4.4 Management** is the process of working with and through people to achieve objectives by means of effective decision making and coordination of available resources.

**1.4.5 Culture** generally refers to the total pattern of values, ideas, beliefs, customs, practices institutional, objects and artifacts, etc, which make a society distinct. National culture refers to the “collective programming of mind” or “the software of the mind” which distinguishes the members of one human group from another (Hofstede, 1984).

## 1.5 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The subjects of the study were employees of the Faculty of Medicine Siriraj Hospital, Mahidol University.

## 1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The result is important especially to managers and human resource managers who need to understand and appreciate organization culture and the influence of gender on organization practices. The results will be useful for personnel planning, career development and compensation and benefit design in an organizational setting.

## **1.7 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY**

This explorative study of gender-specific effects at work in Siriraj Hospital is divided into five chapters.

Chapter one provides a brief introduction, background and rationale of the study, statement of the problems and research hypotheses. The objectives and scope of the study are also stated. Terms are defined. The significance of the study is mentioned. The organization of the study is also outlined.

Chapter two contains a review of related literature concerning cultural dimensions by Hofstede, the Global Gender Gap Report (2006), previous similar studies and Siriraj's organizational profile.

Chapter three provides the methodology of the study, starting from design, the target population, the subjects enrolled for the survey, questionnaire design and methods used for gathering information, and data analysis is presented.

Chapter four shows the results of the study. The results are displayed according to general information of the respondents, the comparison of the importance of working related goals by gender, and the comparison of the preference and the perception of management styles by gender.

Chapter five includes a summary of the study, a summary of the findings, discussion, limitations of the study, conclusions and recommendations for future research.