

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

High interest in the roles of women has caused the researcher to observe how business today has increasingly received a great contribution from women compared to in the past.

The increasing number of women entering management as well as the problems some women face in their efforts to be hired as managers or promoted up to management positions have prompted the researcher to find out the attitudes toward women managers.

Having been working with a female boss at Carpets International Thailand Public Company Limited (C.I.T.) for 2 years, the researcher has noted some conflicts between the co-workers and the boss. Interestingly, although the co-workers are both men and women, the number of conflicts occurred more with women co-workers. This phenomenon has aroused the researcher's curiosity to find out why woman employees tend to have more conflicts with female managers while many past studies have claimed that men have more conflicts with their female bosses. Many texts and research say that men are biased against female managers; the researcher, on the other hand thinks that female subordinates' attitudes toward leaders of the same sex are even more negative.

From personal experience which is also supported by Lewis & Slade (1994), it was revealed that the negative attitude does not only happen with the opposite sex. Female employees themselves seem to hold strong beliefs that female bosses are not as effective as male bosses while many male subordinates accept female bosses as being as effective in carrying out the work as male leaders.

At Carpets International Thailand Public Company Limited (C.I.T.), the number of female employees has increased from 33 percent to 41 percent from 2002 to 2005 (C.I.T HR as of September 2005). Nevertheless, not many women are given management positions. The majority of woman workers are at the "daily-paid" level. From the total of

15 Departments of C.I.T., only 6 Departments are led by women, and these sectors are typically associated with women, for example, HR and Accounting.

This is the reason for the researcher to find out what the barriers to the success are. To begin with, it is necessary to know what attitude the employees have towards female managers.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The study is aimed to find out what kinds of attitudes subordinates have toward their female bosses.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To analyze the background information of the subordinates who have a certain attitude towards their female managers.
2. To find out the attitudes of the subordinates toward the work management of female bosses.

1.4 DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

Definitions of the terms of this study are given in the following table:

Table 1. Definitions of Terms

Concept	Conceptual definition	Operational definition	Indicator
Attitude	The psychological tendency which is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor.	Feeling of like/dislike to bosses	Likert scales: - Strongly agree - Agree - Nutral - Disgree - Strongly disagree
Subordinate	A person who works under someone's supervision.	Employee who has lower position and have to work under supervision of a female boss	Male or Female employee
Employee	An individual employed by an employer	An employee who works for Carpets International Thailand, in 6 selected female led Departments.	Male or Female
Age	The length of time in which a person lives.	The number of years since an employee was born according to the calendar year.	Under 20 21-35 36-50 51 up
Educational level	The highest education accomplished by an individual.	The highest education accomplished by an employee.	High school College Bachelor degree Master degree Professional degree
Sex	The fact of being male or female	Male or female employees working at C.I.T.	Male or Female employees

1.5 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Population:

The total number of employees at CIT is 1, 215. The six selected Departments consist of 225 employees. 150 subordinates from the following Departments led by female leaders were asked to answer the questionnaires:

- Overseas Purchasing Department – Mrs. Vipaporn S., Manager
- Domestic Purchasing Department – Ms. Sukanya C., Manager
- HR Department – Mrs. Kulapapa N., HR Manager (Plant)
- Dyeing Department – Mrs. Chongkolnee., Dyeing Department Manager
- Accounting Department – Mrs. Suchada, Accounting Department Manager
- Sales Department – Mrs. Pranom W., District Sales Manager

Collection of data:

The questionnaires were given to employees at C.I.T. whose bosses are women. The data were collected from the middle of December 2005 to January 20, 2006. Then, they were analyzed and interpreted.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Benefits of the research:

1.6.1 By conducting this research, the researcher hopes to provide a basis for future research on the effectiveness of female leaders through the adaptation of leadership styles to suit each subordinate's working style as well as through the training courses whereby gender stereotypes are not to be focused on. The research is aimed to give an insight into the struggle of female leaders breaking the invisible barrier, and that they deserve the same treats as do their male colleagues.

1.6.2 It is also hoped that this research will provide some thoughts for female managers whether they have to adjust their leadership styles in order to be more effective with subordinates whose attitudes are negative towards female bosses. Moreover, this research will provide guidelines for HR in shaping the culture for new employees by means of facilitating a more positive attitude and perception toward female leaders, hence equalizing the role of men and women in today's business operations. Because the human resource section plays the biggest role in recruiting staff of all levels, it is necessary that they in the first place hold no bias against any particular gender. And, this role in return, can help create a better position for females in a so called "equal" world.

1.6.3 Additionally, this research may trigger some ideas among educators in providing training and/or programs on working diversity and gender equity to undergraduates as they are potential employees and leaders of the new era. On the other hand, the research findings are expected to help prepare the potential employees who want to climb up the managerial ladder so that they will be effective leaders.

1.7 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

In order to give a detailed presentation of this study, the researcher has divided it into five chapters. Introductory remarks which are statements of the problems, objectives of the study, significance of the study, scope of the study, and definitions of terms are in chapter one.

Chapter two reviews the related concepts and related research studies. This includes concepts of attitude, management and leadership, knowledge, fairness, and human relation skills.

Chapter three focuses on the methods of this study, its data collection and interpretation methodologies. That is, a description of research subjects, instruments for data collection, procedures, and analysis methods are described in this chapter.

Chapter four illustrates the analysis of data collected from the questionnaires.

Chapter five gives a summary of the study, discussions, conclusions, and recommendations for further studies.