

# **ADMINISTRATIVE SKILLS OF ADMINISTRATORS IN THE 21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY: A CASE STUDY FROM INNER MONGOLIA AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE**

Chuhao YU<sup>1</sup> and Jiranat PHUMSAWATKAMJORN<sup>2\*</sup>

1 Faculty of International Program, Thongsook College, Thailand;  
Chuhao.thongsookcollege@gmail.com

2 Faculty of Social and Educational Sciences, Thongsook College, Thailand;  
Jiranat.p@gmail.com (Corresponding Author)

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## **ABSTRACT**

This research aims (1) to study the level of administrative skills of administrators in the 21<sup>st</sup> century from the perception of teachers and academic support staff in Inner Mongolia Agricultural University vocational and technical college and (2) to compare the administrative skills of administrators in the 21<sup>st</sup> century from the level of perception of teachers and academic support staff in Inner Mongolia Agricultural University vocational and technical college classified by gender, age, education level, working experience, and working status. The population used in this study were teachers and academic support staff at Inner Mongolia Agricultural University Vocational and Technical College, using a questionnaire to collect data from a sample of 245 people. Data were analyzed by frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, and the hypothesis was tested using a t-test and an F-test. The results showed that most respondents had a high level of opinion on the administrative skills of administrators. And the hypothesis test showed that demographic factors such as gender, age, and work status differed. This resulted in a statistically significant difference in the perception of administrative skills of administrators at a level of 0.05.

**Keywords:** Administrative, Skills, Administrators

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## INTRODUCTION

The world in the 21st century has transformed from the industrial age to the information age, using knowledge as a key engine to drive the economy and develop innovative technology to increase competitiveness in both industries and the lifestyles of people in modern society (Ungureanu, 2019). In the lives of people in modern society, a diverse environment in political dimensions exists; as a result, opportunities and threats arise, which must adapt to rapidly changing circumstances (Di Chiro, 2008), according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. It states that a person has the knowledge, skills, and experience to cope with constant changes and adapt himself only to the situation that has arisen to be successful. Unskilled and low-paying jobs will overwhelm those who don't try to learn new sciences. Thus, the skills of the 21st century became necessary for citizens who wanted to survive in today's world (Prensky, 2016).

Since 1998, the Chinese government has drawn up an action plan to strengthen the country's education system to prepare for the 21st century, with the realization that science and education are at the heart of the country's modernization. President Jiang Zemin said, "China's international strength and competitiveness will be achieved by developing and innovating in science, technology, knowledge, and education, reflecting the importance of education, which Beijing has set as the country's top strategy." The Action Scheme for Invigorating Education Towards the 21st Century is a model for the country's educational development in the 21st century. The government's actions are in order and in line with the changing times. It highlighted key issues that need to be addressed: Establishing a nine-year compulsory education system across the country and reducing the illiteracy rate of Chinese citizens. Childhood and middle age also seek to gradually develop the education system in rural areas and various economic areas (Li, Zhi-Hua, Jia-Qin, & Min, 2000).

Therefore, school administrators are the ones who play a critical role in the management of education that will lead the school to become the organization of future learning by allowing learners to develop their potential based on their interests and aptitudes. Education management will be successful depending on the school's management. A broad vision, foresight, high striving, commitment to success, continuous development of knowledge and abilities, and high-performance leadership with the knowledge, skills, and attributes required for school administrators to manage their work successfully, always developing and empowering, are required.

Competent school administrators will be knowledgeable and easily understood individuals with the skills and ability to liberally apply the sciences, which trends or outcomes of competence will positively affect school administrators' management skills in the twenty-first century, an important attribute of school administrators. Therefore, it is essential for school administrators to continuously develop skills in school management and self-management to ensure effective management. Multiple scholars have provided perspectives on skills for school administrators in the 21st century, such as Hoyle, English, and Steffy (1998); Huber (2004); Sulaiman and Ismail (2020), who concluded that the 21st-century administrative skills of school administrators, where academics share the same opinions, are at least five of the following: (1) Life and work skills; (2) transnational social and cultural skills; (3) creative and self-centered skills; (4) information, media, and technology skills; and (5) leadership skills and responsibilities. Therefore, the researcher selected five variables for this study.

The researcher is interested in studying the administrative skills of administrators in the 21st century: A case study from Inner Mongolia Agricultural University Vocational and Technical College. This research aims to study the level of administrative skills of administrators in the 21st century from the perception of teachers and academic support staff in Inner Mongolia Agricultural University Vocational and Technical College and to compare the administrative skills of administrators in the 21st century from the level of perception of teachers and

academic support staff in Inner Mongolia Agricultural University Vocational and Technical College classified by gender, age, education level, working experience, and working status.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Concept of school administrator

Runcharoen (2014) says that school administrators refer to persons whose duties are defined by a systematic approach involving various businesses to achieve the goals achieved and who are assigned to perform duties in the position of a school administrator, whose role is as a leader, able to control and supervise the management operations within the school to achieve the plan and policies effectively (Schafer, 2009). School administrators with knowledgeable executive abilities and skills in corporate management agencies or educational institutions have the skills to set clear policies, goals, and working methods. They can manage work efficiently and effectively by applying the art and science of strategies or principles for maximum administration (Bose, 2012).

### Concept and theory of the 21st century administrative skills of administrators

Kaume-Mwinzi (2016) stated that they work in schools and universities. They oversee administrative tasks in educational institutions by ensuring that the organization runs according to the expected rules and regulations. From the point of view of the various scholars mentioned above, the researcher has taken the elements of management skills from Thai academics from 2010-2019 to analyze the joint components by selecting the elements that the scholars see the same. It is a component of management skills in the 21st century as follows (Joyne, Rossignoli, & Amonoo-Kuofi, 2019):

- 1) Life and work skills refer to people who must apply their knowledge to work as instructed by the teacher, and the disciple must completely change himself to prepare people to go to work that uses knowledge.
- 2) Social skills and cross-cultural skills refer to communication understanding, whether it is verbal communication or effective writing, in various formats and contexts, especially in analyzing, accessing, integrating, evaluating, and producing data in various formats and media.
- 3) Creative and independent skills refer to creativity and enthusiasm, intellectual development, application, communication, commenting on others, and being open to and interacting with new and diverse aspects.
- 4) Information, media, and technology skills refer to how school administrators must be aware of them and try to provide, develop, and apply them to develop the quality of learners, including teachers, educational personnel, students, and those involved in the school context, to create awareness, knowledge, and understanding, as well as computer skills.
- 5) Leadership skills and responsibility refer to interpersonal skills and problem-solving skills to lead others towards goals, empowering others to work together to achieve success, and responsibility for others acting responsibly with the common good in mind. These skills will be essential.

### Research Hypothesis

- 1) Teachers and academic support staff of different genders have different perceptions of the administrative skills of administrators in the 21st century in Inner Mongolia Agricultural University Vocational and Technical College differently.
- 2) Teachers and academic support staff of different ages have different perceptions of the administrative skills of administrators in the 21st century in Inner Mongolia Agricultural University Vocational and Technical College differently.
- 3) Teachers and academic support staff with different education levels have different perceptions of the administrative skills of administrators in the 21st century in Inner Mongolia Agricultural University Vocational and Technical College differently.

4) Teachers and academic support staff with different working experiences have different perceptions of the administrative skills of administrators in the 21st century in Inner Mongolia Agricultural University Vocational and Technical College differently.

5) Teachers and academic support staff with different working statuses have different perceptions of the administrative skills of administrators in the 21st century in Inner Mongolia Agricultural University Vocational and Technical College differently.

### Conceptual Framework

#### Independent variables

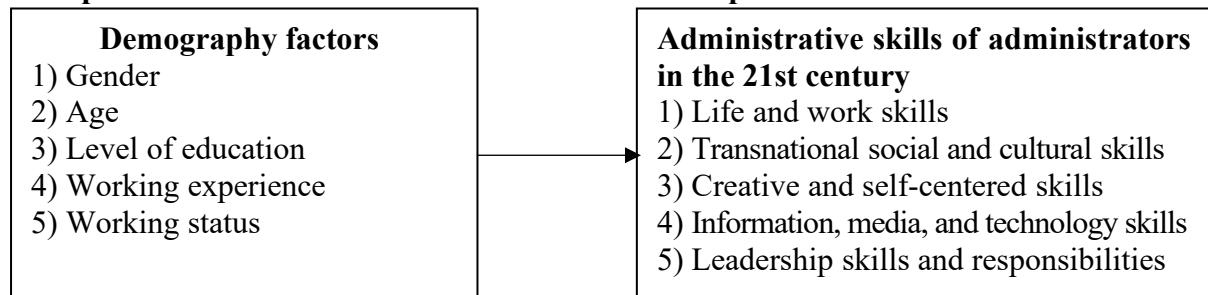


Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The population in this study included 632 teachers and academic support staff from Inner Mongolia Agricultural University Vocational and Technical College, with 551 teachers and 81 academic support staff participating. The sample in this study was 245 teachers and academic support staff in Inner Mongolia Agricultural University Vocational and Technical College. It was obtained by determining the sample size using the Taro Yamane (1973) formula. Perform stratified random sampling and classify the samples into 213 teachers and 32 academic support staff.

The instrument used for data collection in this research was a questionnaire divided into 3 parts, including (1) the information about demography factors of teachers and academic support staff, which were gender, age, level of education, working experience, and working status, (2) the level of perception of teachers and academic support staff on administrative skills of administrators in the 21st century in Inner Mongolia Agricultural University vocational and technical college and (3) suggestions.

Data analysis includes frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. And statistics were used to test the hypothesis, including the t-test and the F-test.

## RESULT

The respondents' general data analysis found that the majority of respondents were female (56.33%), 41-50 years old (39.59%), had a postgraduate degree (72.65%), had 6-10 years of work experience (61.63%), and were mostly teachers (86.94%).

Table 1 shows the average and standard deviation of the administrative skills of administrators.

Administrative skills of administrators	$\bar{X}$	SD	Level of opinion
- Life and work skills	3.79	0.66	High
- Transnational social and cultural skills	3.63	0.76	High
- Creative and self-centered skills	3.66	0.78	High
- Information, media, and technology skills	3.67	0.76	High
- Leadership skills and responsibilities	3.61	0.72	High
Overall	3.67	0.68	High

From table 1, shows that the majority of respondents had a high level of opinion on the administrative skills of administrators as a whole based on the average. The majority of respondents had the highest opinion on life and work skills ( $\bar{X} = 3.79$ ,  $SD = 0.66$ ), followed by Information, media, and technology skills ( $\bar{X} = 3.67$ ,  $SD = 0.76$ ) and the least opinion on leadership skills and responsibilities ( $\bar{X} = 3.61$ ,  $SD = 0.72$ ).

**Table 2** shows the hypothesis testing between demographic factors and administrative skills.

Administrative skills of administrators	Gender	Age	Education level	Working experience	Working status
- Life and work skills	-1.82 (0.07)	3.76* (0.01)	2.11 (0.12)	2.25 (0.11)	-1.99* (0.05)
- Transnational social and cultural skills	-1.46 (0.15)	1.37 (0.25)	1.94 (0.15)	0.92 (0.40)	-1.73 (0.08)
- Creative and self-centered skills	-1.75 (0.08)	2.37 (0.07)	1.28 (0.28)	1.63 (0.20)	-1.66 (0.10)
- Information, media, and technology skills	-2.05* (0.04)	1.56 (0.20)	2.09 (0.13)	1.49 (0.23)	-2.44* (0.01)
- Leadership skills and responsibilities	-1.75 (0.08)	2.46 (0.06)	1.47 (0.23)	1.82 (0.16)	-2.02* (0.04)
Overall	-1.91 (0.06)	2.51 (0.06)	2.04 (0.13)	1.78 (0.17)	-2.13* (0.03)

\* Statistically significant at 0.05

From table 2, found that demographic factors such as gender, age, and work status differed. This resulted in a statistically significant difference in the perception of administrative skills of administrators at a level of 0.05.

## CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

1) According to objective number 1, the research findings revealed respondents' opinions about administrators' administrative skills. It was found that the respondents had the most opinions on life and work skills because the management skills of school administrators required both people-oriented and work-oriented leadership skills to balance the human resource management services of different educational institutions. In particular, the roles and responsibilities of the faculty members must be taught in terms of research and development, and they must create innovations for educational institutions. As for the supporting personnel, there must be the promotion of the main job conditions for educational institutions with the preparation of documents and managing information processes to facilitate the management of educational institutions. Respondents also had their opinions on information, media, and technology skills in the next rank because information, media, and technology are important for management in today's era, where both past and present information must be used to forecast and plan future operations. In addition, technology plays an important role in helping to make management and various processes in educational institutions more convenient and faster. This is consistent with research by Afandi, Sajidan, Akhyar, and Suryani (2019), who studied "Development frameworks of the Indonesian partnership 21st-century skills standards for prospective science teachers: A Delphi Study." The research results showed that in the 21st century, various educational institutions have to face the fierce competition of the world, especially in technology and big data. Therefore, school administrators must have critical thinking skills, creativity at work, the ability to use information and technology, and set spiritual values, following the research of Sonsaard and Darbavasu (2019), who studied "Administrative skills of modern school administrators." The results showed that key skills for

school administrators in the 21st century include analytical thinking, creativity, problem-solving, communication, and technology skills.

2) The findings for objective 1 showed that demographic factors such as gender, age, and work status differed. This resulted in a statistically significant difference in the perception of administrative skills of administrators at a level of 0.05) Due to teachers' freedom to develop their potential, the pursuit of knowledge and the ability to perform tasks differ. There are different powers, duties, and characteristics of the operation. Everyone can work independently of gender, age, and work status. However, school administrators have different organizational structures according to the context and culture of the organization. Consistent with the research of Alenazi, Muenjohn, and McMurray (2017), who studied "The effect of demographic characteristics on leadership behavior," the results showed that different demographic factors of age affected perceptions of leadership behavior significantly differently. And following Jones and Bekhet's (2015) research, "Leadership styles and personal demographic profile: An empirical study on private business organization in Egypt," the results showed that job title correlates with the skills of business leaders in a statistically significant.

3) Implications of the study (3.1) Leadership skills and responsibilities should be developed and committed to achieving results by encouraging people to be enthusiastic about their work and providing opportunities for colleagues to express their opinions and accept different abilities to keep pace with a rapidly changing society. (3.2) Develop information, media, and technology by developing an online network within the school premises thoroughly to facilitate and speed up the operation and dissemination of information to the public more widely. In addition, school administrators should focus on lifelong learning and the development of modern educational institutions.

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