

# The Development of Causal Model in Implementing the Integrity and Transparency Assessment Policy of Higher Education Institutions

Jirayu Thanavuth<sup>1</sup>, Somboon Sirisunhirun<sup>2</sup>, Phut Ploywan<sup>3</sup>, Somsak Amornsiriphong<sup>4</sup>, and Krish Rugchatjaroen<sup>5</sup>

---

## ARTICLE INFO

Received: 25 Dec 2024

Revised: 18 Feb 2025

Accepted: 28 Feb 2025

## ABSTRACT

This research aims to analyze the confirmatory factors influencing the success factors model in driving the evaluation policy of integrity and transparency. It employs a quantitative research approach. The population of the study comprises personnel from 18 state-owned higher education institutions that received an A grade in the 2022 evaluation of integrity and transparency in the operations of government agencies. The sample consists of 400 personnel from these institutions. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and Second-Order Confirmatory Factor Analysis (SOCFA) using statistical software were employed to analyze the data. The findings reveal that the developed confirmatory factors are consistent with the empirical data. The latent variable model influencing the implementation of the integrity and transparency evaluation policy (ITA) in higher education institutions consists of three main factors: leadership, policy acceptance and clarity, and organizational competency. The component weights of the latent variables range from 0.94 to 0.69, and the component weights of the observed variables range from 0.81 to 0.35.

**Keywords:** The Development of Causal Model, Integrity and Transparency, Assessment Policy, Higher Education Institutions, Leadership, Acceptance and Clarity of Policy

---

## INTRODUCTION

Transparency International, an organization dedicated to ranking countries based on their levels of public sector corruption, placed Thailand at 110th out of 180 countries in its 2023 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), with a score of 34 out of 100. (National Anti-Corruption Commission of Thailand, 2022). This unfavorable ranking reflects poorly on Thailand's image in terms of corruption and transparency on the international stage, potentially affecting foreign investor confidence and their decisions to invest in Thailand. Compared to neighboring ASEAN countries, Thailand's perceived lack

---

<sup>1</sup> Doctor of Public Administration – D.P.A. (Public Policy and Public Management) Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Mahidol University, Nakhon Pathom, Thailand, 73170. E-mail: jirayuthanavuth@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup> Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Mahidol University, Nakhon Pathom, Thailand, 73170. E-mail: somboon.sir@mahidol.ac.th (Corresponding Author)

<sup>3</sup> Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Mahidol University, Nakhon Pathom, Thailand, 73170. E-mail: phut.plo@mahidol.edu

<sup>4</sup> Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Mahidol University, Nakhon Pathom, Thailand, 73170. E-mail: somsak.amo@mahidol.ac.th

<sup>5</sup> Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Mahidol University, Nakhon Pathom, Thailand, 73170. E-mail: krish.rug@mahidol.ac.th

of transparency could lead foreign investors to relocate their investments elsewhere. This situation could negatively impact Thailand's economy.

In response to these concerns, Thailand has embarked on a journey towards sustainable development across various domains by formulating the 20-Year National Strategy (2018-2037). This strategy serves as a comprehensive framework for achieving sustainable development guided by good governance principles. The national vision is encapsulated in the phrase: "Thailand, a secure, prosperous, and sustainable developed nation, guided by the philosophy of Sufficiency Economy." The national development goals encompass: "National security, people's happiness, continuous economic development, a just society, and sustainable natural resources." The strategy aims to enhance the country's potential in diverse dimensions, encompassing the development of individuals in all aspects and across all age groups, fostering good character, skills, and quality, creating opportunities and social equality, promoting growth based on quality of life that is environmentally friendly, and establishing a people's government that serves the people and the public good. The implementation of the 20-Year National Strategy will focus on striking a balance between economic, social, and environmental development, encompassing six strategies. (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council of the National Strategy Committee, 2018).

In line with the 20-Year National Strategy (2018-2037), Thailand has developed master plans to serve as detailed frameworks for achieving the strategic objectives outlined in the national strategy. These master plans are binding on relevant government agencies, mandating compliance with their provisions. The 20-Year National Strategy encompasses 23 master plans, and one of the plans specifically aimed at enhancing Thailand's Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) score is the Master Plan under National Strategy Issue 21, "Anti-Corruption and Misconduct." The Master Plan under National Strategy Issue 21, "Anti-Corruption and Misconduct," has a long-term goal of making Thailand a corruption-free and misconduct-free country. This goal is translated into specific targets: Thailand's Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) score to be no lower than 20 or at least 73 points by 2033-2037 and the average score for the Integrity and Transparency Assessment (ITA) of all government agencies in Thailand to be no less than 93 points by 2033-2037. The Office of the National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC) is the lead agency responsible for implementing the Master Plan under National Strategy Issue 21, "Anti-Corruption and Misconduct." (Office of the Prime Minister, & Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council, 2023)

Managing the challenges of corruption and the need to enhance transparency in the public sector, Thailand, through the National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC) in collaboration with relevant agencies, has developed and implemented the Integrity and Transparency Assessment (ITA) policy. This policy aims to provide a framework for various types of Thai government agencies to conduct their operations in a more transparent manner. The policy has ten indicators to achieve the policy's objectives, a working group has been established to promote the improvement of the CPI score, and the ITA Awards are presented to the highest-scoring government agencies in each category. One of the types of agencies that has implemented the ITA policy is higher education institutions under the government's supervision.

Higher education institutions under the government's supervision have adopted the Integrity and Transparency Assessment (ITA) policy as a tool to promote and instill integrity and transparency within their institutions. In fiscal year 2022, 86 higher education institutions implemented the ITA policy. However, only five institutions achieved a score of over 95%. (National Anti-Corruption Commission of Thailand, 2022). The low implementation rate and relatively low scores achieved by higher education institutions in the Integrity and Transparency Assessment (ITA) reflect the challenges associated with implementing this policy in these institutions.

Successful policy implementation requires a cohesive approach that integrates both macro-level and micro-level strategies. Macro-level implementation involves establishing guidelines and fostering acceptance for policy adoption at lower levels. Micro-level implementation, on the other hand, focuses on the operational processes that drive policy achievement. Research supports this two-pronged approach. A study by (Watcharin Sutthisai, Chaiya Yimvilai & Varadaj Chadarasorn, 2012). identified internal factors that contribute to the successful implementation of policies in Rajabhat Universities. These factors include: Clarity of policy objectives, performance monitoring, collaboration among stakeholders, effective communication and dissemination of information, positive attitudes and leadership among policy implementers, Strong coordination and communication channels, and Support from the private sector and relevant agencies. Similarly, (Richard Heeks, 2008) highlights internal factors that influence successful policy implementation: Policy momentum driven by government commitment, clear strategic direction and vision, effective management and capacity among implementers, efficacious mechanisms for stakeholder engagement, and Organizational capabilities and competencies.

Based on the principles and background outlined above, the researcher is interested in studying the development of a causal model for driving the implementation of ethics and transparency assessment policies in higher education institutions. This study aims to establish guidelines for driving policy implementation and operationalizing ethics and transparency assessment policies in higher education institutions in a concrete manner. In addition to providing a roadmap for successful implementation of ethics and transparency assessment policies in the operations of government agencies, this study also aims to address corruption issues in Thai higher education institutions in line with policy objectives. This will contribute to raising the level of integrity in Thai society, improving Thailand's Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) score, and enhancing the country's international image.

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

To analyze the confirmatory factors of the success factors model in driving the implementation of integrity and transparency assessment (ITA) policies in higher education institutions.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

**Population:** Personnel of state-controlled higher education institutions that received an ITA Awards score of A in fiscal year 2022, totaling 18 institutions: (1) Mahachulalongkorn Rajavidyalaya University, (2) Walailak University, (3) Srinakharinwirot University, (4) Mahidol University, (5) Mahamakut Rajavidyalaya University, (6) Thammasat University, (7) Suranaree University of Technology, (8) King Mongkut Institute of Technology North Bangkok, (9) Suan Dusit University, (10) Kasetsart University, (11) Chalermprakit Institute of Technology, (12) Thaksin University, (13) Chulalongkorn University, (14) Chiang Mai University, (15) Maejo University, (16) Songkhla Nakarin University, (17) Burapha University, and (18) Silpakorn University (National Anti-Corruption Commission of Thailand, 2022). Total number of personnel: 109,896 people (Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation, 2022).

**Sample:** Personnel of state-controlled higher education institutions that received an ITA Awards score of A in fiscal year 2022, who have worked at the current higher education institution for at least 1 year and are willing to participate in this research, totaling 400 people. The sample size was determined using the stratified sampling method, with each higher education institution as a stratum.

**Instruments:** A questionnaire was developed by the researcher based on a review of relevant literature, theories, and research. The questionnaire consists of 3 parts: Part 1: Demographic information, Part 2: Perceived success of the ITA policy, and Part 3: Policy drivers. The questionnaire uses a 5-point Likert scale.

**Data Analysis:** Data were analyzed using SPSS software. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the characteristics of the sample and the variables under study. Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to analyze the relationships between the variables. Stepwise multiple regression analysis was used to identify the factors that predict the perceived success of the ITA policy. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to test the validity of the proposed model.

## RESEARCH FINDINGS

Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the Factors Influencing the Success of the ITA Policy in Higher Education Institutions. The results of the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) of the proposed model indicate that the measurement model is highly consistent across all measurement forms. The chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) values range from 0.95 to 25.29, the degrees of freedom (df) range from 1 to 19, and the p-values range from 0.12412 to 0.62211. The goodness-of-fit index (GFI) values range from 0.99 to 1.00, the adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI) values range from 0.97 to 0.99, the comparative fit index (CFI) values are 1.00 for all measurement forms, and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) values range from 0.000 to 0.058. These results suggest that all four measurement forms are highly consistent.

When examining the individual factors, the CFA results indicate that the confirmatory factors of the factors influencing the success of the ITA policy in higher education institutions are highly consistent across all measurement forms, as follows: Organizational Competency (OC): The CFA results for OC indicate that the model is consistent with the empirical data ( $\chi^2 = 1.60$ ,  $df = 2$ ,  $p = 0.44897$ ,  $GFI = 0.99$ ,  $AGFI = 0.99$ ,  $CFI = 1.00$ ,  $RMSEA = 0.000$ ). Leadership (LS): The CFA results for LS indicate that the model is consistent with the empirical data ( $\chi^2 = 0.95$ ,  $df = 2$ ,  $p = 0.62211$ ,  $GFI = 1.00$ ,  $AGFI = 0.99$ ,  $CFI = 1.00$ ,  $RMSEA = 0.000$ ). Acceptance and Clarity of Policy (AP): The CFA results for AP indicate that the model is consistent with the empirical data ( $\chi^2 = 2.36$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $p = 0.12412$ ,  $GFI = 1.00$ ,  $AGFI = 0.97$ ,  $CFI = 1.00$ ,  $RMSEA = 0.058$ ). ITA Policy Success (IP): The CFA results for IP indicate that the model is consistent with the empirical data ( $\chi^2 = 25.29$ ,  $df = 19$ ,  $p = 0.15134$ ,  $GFI = 0.99$ ,  $AGFI = 0.97$ ,  $CFI = 1.00$ ,  $RMSEA = 0.029$ ). These results are summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1. Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the Factors Influencing the Success of the ITA Policy in Higher Education Institutions**

Factor	Confirmatory Factor Analysis						
	$\chi^2$	df	p	GFI	AGFI	CFI	RMSEA
Organizational Competency (OC)	1.60	2	0.44897	0.99	0.99	1.00	0.000
Leadership (LS)	0.95	2	0.62211	1.00	0.99	1.00	0.000
Acceptance and Clarity of Policy (AP)	2.36	1	0.12412	1.00	0.97	1.00	0.058
ITA Policy Success (IP)	25.29	19	0.15134	0.99	0.97	1.00	0.029

The second-order confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) results indicate that the proposed model is consistent with the empirical data. The chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) value is 82.18, the p-value is 0.00060, the

degrees of freedom (df) are 45, the goodness-of-fit index (GFI) is 0.97, the adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI) is 0.94, the comparative fit index (CFI) is 0.99, and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) is 0.046. These results suggest that the model is a good fit for the data. The standardized weights of the latent factors indicate that the importance of the factors influencing the success of the ITA policy in higher education institutions is as follows: Leadership (LS), Acceptance and Clarity of Policy (AP), and Organizational Competency (OC)

**Table 2. Second-Order Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the Factors Influencing the Success of the ITA Policy in Higher Education Institutions**

Second-Order Confirmatory Factor Analysis				
Factor	IP			R <sup>2</sup>
	b	SE	t	
OC	0.69	0.09	5.66	0.47
LS	0.94	0.07	11.86	0.88
AP	0.91	0.06	14.70	0.82
$\chi^2 = 82.18$ df = 45 p = 0.00060 GFI = 0.97 AGFI = 0.94 CFI = 0.99 RMSEA = 0.046				

#### Analysis of Observable Variables by Component

##### 1. Leadership (LS)

The LS component is measured by the observable variables X5 - X9. The results indicate that the most important variable is X9 (performance evaluation system), followed by X7 (work standards and assignments), X8 (reward and punishment system), X6 (work communication), and X5 (planning and control effectiveness).

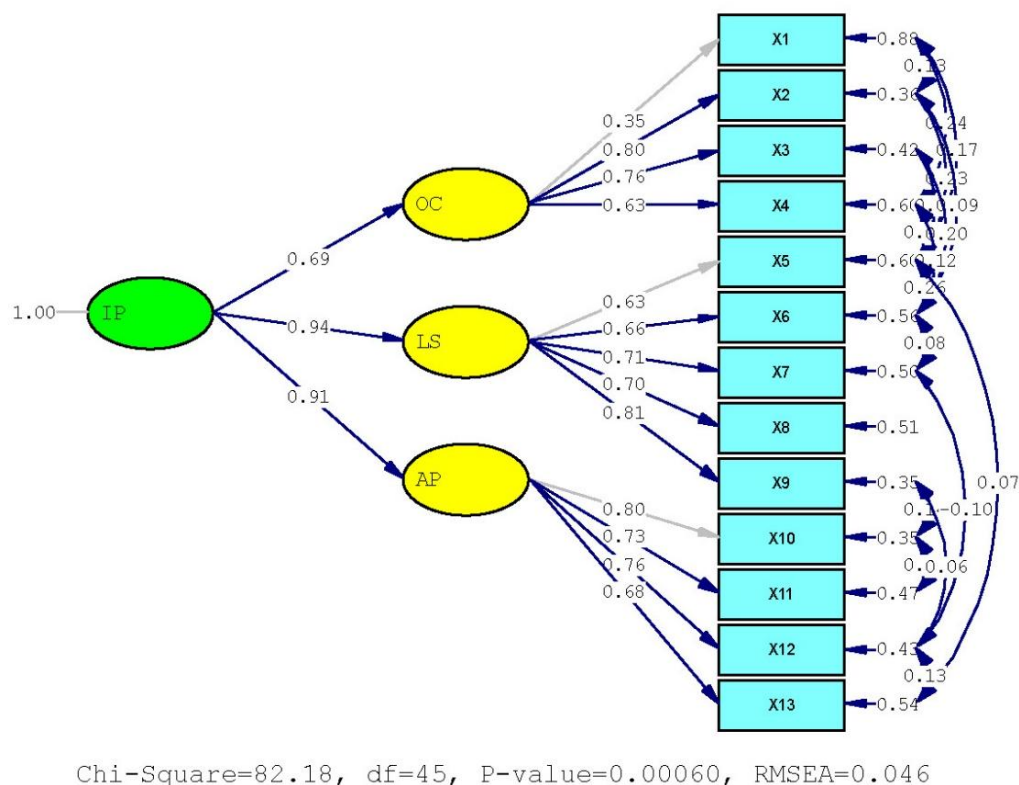
##### 2. Acceptance and Clarity of Policy (AP)

The AP component is measured by the observable variables X10 - X13. The results indicate that the most important variable is X10 (understanding of the real situation of management), followed by X12 (clear policy objectives), X11 (acceptance of policy as part of work duties), and X13 (control and supervision measures).

##### 3. Organizational Competency (OC)

The OC component is measured by the observable variables X1 - X4. The results indicate that the most important variable is X2 (appropriate resources), followed by X3 (sufficient budget), X4 (knowledge and skills of personnel), and X1 (organizational structure and systems).





**Figure 1.** Second-Order Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) of the Factors Influencing the Success of the ITA Policy in Higher Education Institutions

## DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

### Analysis of the Factors Influencing the Success of the ITA Policy in Higher Education Institutions

The results of the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) indicate that the proposed model of the factors influencing the success of the ITA policy in higher education institutions is consistent with the empirical data. The model consists of three latent factors: Leadership, Acceptance and Clarity of Policy, and Organizational Competency. These factors are all important predictors of ITA policy success.

#### 1. Leadership

The Leadership factor is measured by five observable variables: 1) Performance evaluation system 2) Work standards and assignments 3) Reward and punishment system 4) Work communication 5) Planning and control effectiveness. The results indicate that the performance evaluation system is the most important variable, followed by work standards and assignments, the reward and punishment system, work communication, and planning and control effectiveness.

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made for improving leadership in higher education institutions in order to promote the success of the ITA policy: Establish clear performance evaluation criteria that are aligned with the ITA policy, implement a reward and punishment system to incentivize compliance with the ITA policy, communicate the ITA policy effectively to all stakeholders, develop effective planning and control mechanisms to ensure that the ITA policy is implemented as intended. The findings of this study are consistent with previous research

on the factors that influence the success of policy implementation. For example, (Rungrouang Sukapirom, 2000) found that six factors are necessary for the successful implementation of education policy: teacher development, policy clarity, leadership, clear implementation guidelines, resource availability, and community cooperation. Similarly, (Ramjuan Benjasiri, 2002) found that the successful implementation of the Public Sector Standard Management System (P.S.O.) in Thailand was dependent on a number of factors, including support from senior management, organizational innovation, the quality of the system itself, acceptance of the system, cooperation from managers, organizational learning, work regulations, resource availability, workload, the continuity of leadership, and political change. The results of this study also suggest that the ITA policy in particular is likely to be successful if there is a strong focus on performance evaluation, work standards and assignments, and reward and punishment systems. These findings are consistent with the idea that effective leadership is essential for policy implementation. Leaders need to be able to set clear goals, communicate those goals to others, and motivate and reward employees for achieving those goals

## **2. Acceptance and Clarity of Policy Factor**

The Acceptance and Clarity of Policy factor is measured by four observable variables: 1) Understanding of the real situation of management 2) Clear policy objectives 3) Acceptance of policy as part of work duties, and 4) Control and supervision measures. The results indicate that understanding of the real situation of management is the most important variable, followed by clear policy objectives, acceptance of policy as part of work duties, and control and supervision measures.

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made for improving acceptance and clarity of the ITA policy in higher education institutions: Conduct a thorough assessment of the current organizational culture and identify any potential barriers to acceptance of the ITA policy, communicate the policy objectives clearly and concisely to all stakeholders, incorporate the ITA policy into employee performance evaluations and job descriptions, implement clear and consistent control and supervision measures to ensure that the policy is being followed. The findings of this study are consistent with previous research on the factors that influence the success of policy implementation. For example, (Wacharin Sutthisai et al, 2012) found that the following factors are important for the successful implementation of university policies: Clarity of policy objectives, monitoring of implementation, cooperation in implementation, dissemination of information and public relations, attitudes of policy implementers, leadership, coordination and communication, and support from the private sector and related agencies. The findings of this study are also consistent with (Richard Heeks, 2008), who found that the following factors are important for the success of e-government projects: External factors such as citizen-led reform and technology and internal factors such as government-led drive, clear strategy and vision, effective management of implementers, effective stakeholder engagement, and organizational capacity.

## **3. Organizational Competency Factor**

The Organizational Competency factor is measured by four observable variables: 1) Appropriate resources 2) Sufficient budget 3) Knowledge and skills of personnel 4) Organizational structure and systems. The results indicate that appropriate resources are the most important variable, followed by a sufficient budget, knowledge and skills of personnel, and organizational structure and systems.

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made for improving organizational competency in higher education institutions in order to support the implementation of the ITA policy: **Secure adequate** funding for the implementation of the ITA policy, invest in training and development programs to improve the knowledge and skills of personnel and streamline organizational structures and processes to support the implementation of the ITA policy. The findings of this study are consistent with previous research on the importance of organizational resources for policy implementation. For example, (Witoon Simachokedee ,2007) found that the use of management tools in public sector agencies depends on the readiness of each agency. Agencies should promote and

support the role of agency managers in implementing policies. The responsible agency must understand the reality of the tools and the structural problems of the bureaucracy that need to be holistically integrated. The findings of this study are also consistent with (David Salvesen, Kelly R. Evenson, Daniel A. Rodriguez and Austin Brown, 2008), who found that the following factors are important for the successful implementation of local policies: Knowledge and awareness or communication, competence and accountability, coordination between agencies, support or promotion, and conflict.

## RESEARCH RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. Policy Recommendations

**Institutionalize the ITA policy.** Make the ITA policy a core organizational policy that all units and personnel are required to follow. Build knowledge and awareness of the policy and promote understanding of its objectives and implementation methods. Encourage personnel to integrate the policy into their daily work practices. This will ensure the sustainable implementation of the ITA policy.

**Incentivize ITA policy compliance.** Implement policies that reward units and personnel who excel in implementing and adhering to the ITA policy. This will motivate units and personnel to comply with the ITA policy and contribute to its success.

**Establish an ITA policy implementation unit.** Designate a unit responsible for implementing the ITA policy across the institution. This unit should oversee and evaluate policy implementation, including risk assessment for potential obstacles to achieving policy objectives. This will enable the institution to effectively monitor and refine its policy implementation strategies.

### 2. Practical Recommendations

**Organize ITA policy awareness activities.** Conduct activities to promote understanding of the ITA policy among all personnel in the organization. This will ensure that personnel can effectively apply the policy in their work.

**Adopt the ITA policy implementation success factors model.** Utilize the ITA policy implementation success factors model developed in this research as a tool and guideline for successful policy implementation. Clearly understand each component of the model to ensure consistent interpretation before applying it to the institution.

**Develop ITA policy implementation success factors model guidelines.** Create institution-specific guidelines for the ITA policy implementation success factors model. Expand on each component to provide clear and comprehensive implementation practices aligned with the institution's organizational structure. Ensure guidelines are easy to follow and serve as effective implementation tools.

### 3. Recommendations for Future Research

**Study factors hindering ITA policy implementation.** Conduct further research to identify and analyze the factors that hinder the implementation of the ITA policy in higher education institutions. This will provide insights into the specific challenges that impede policy success and inform strategies to overcome these obstacles.

**Expand research to other contexts.** Replicate the research in different contexts, such as private higher education institutions or other government agencies. Compare the findings to identify potential differences and their underlying causes. This will enhance the generalizability and credibility of the research findings.



**Investigate success factors for other policies.** Apply the research methodology to develop success factor models for implementing other relevant policies in higher education institutions, such as a nationwide systematic research promotion policy or a policy to produce graduates aligned with national development needs.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Benjasiri, R. (2002). The implementation of Public sector Standard management system and Outcomes (PSO): A case study of the community development department. Doctoral Dissertation. National Institute of Development Administration. Bangkok.
- [2] Heeks, R. (2008). e-Government for Development: Success and Failure in e-Government Projects. <https://www.egov4dev.org/success/index.shtml>
- [3] Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation. (2022). Higher Education Personnel, Academic Year 2021, Semester 1, in All Higher Education Institutions, Classified by Institution/Group/Gender/Educational Level/Faculty/Personnel Type (Civil Servants, University Employees, Civil Servants)/Sub-Personnel Type (Academic, Operational)/ (Academic Stream (Regular Faculty) and Academic Stream (Adjunct Faculty)). [https://info.mhesi.go.th/stat\\_stf.php?search\\_year=2564](https://info.mhesi.go.th/stat_stf.php?search_year=2564)
- [4] National Anti-Corruption Commission of Thailand. (2022). Handbook for Evaluating Ethics and Transparency in the Operations of Government Agencies, Fiscal Year 2022. Nonthaburi: Office of Ethics and Transparency Evaluation, National Anti-Corruption Commission of Thailand.
- [5] National Anti-Corruption Commission of Thailand. (2022). Announcement of the National Anti-Corruption Commission of Thailand Dated August 1, 2022, Re: Results of the Assessment of Ethics and Transparency in the Operations of Government Agencies (Integrity and Transparency Assessment: ITA) for Fiscal Year 2022. Nonthaburi: National Anti-Corruption Commission of Thailand.
- [6] Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council of the National Strategy Committee. (2018). National Strategy 2018-2037. Bangkok: National Economic and Social Development Board.
- [7] Office of the Prime Minister, & Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council. (2023). Master Plan under the National Strategy 2023-2037 (Revised Edition). Bangkok: Office of the Prime Minister.
- [8] Salvesen, D., Evenson, K. R., Rodriguez, D. A., and Brown A. (2008). Factors Influencing Implementation of Local Policies to Promote Physical Activity: A Case Study of Montgomery County, Maryland. *Journal of Public Health Management and Practice*. 14(3), 280–288
- [9] Simachokedee, W. (2007). The development of public administration quality policy. Doctor of Public Administration Dissertation, Ramkhamhaeng University, Bangkok, Thailand.
- [10] Sukapirom, R. (2000). Analysis of Factors Related to the Implementation of Educational Policy: A Case Study of the Basic Education Expansion Policy. Doctoral Dissertation in Educational Administration. Chulalongkorn University. Bangkok.
- [11] Sutthisai, W., Yimvilai, C., Chadarasorn, V. (2012). Factors Affecting the success of the Implementation of the Rajabhat University policy: A case study of Rajabhat University in North-East of Thailand). *Chophayom Journal*, 23, 51–65.