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TRUST CULTURE AND THE ETHICS OF GOVERNMENT: WHEN TRUST AMONG CITIZENS IS DEFICIENT

Abstract

Citizens' trust in government mostly derives from the "ethics" factor, critically and particularly its "honesty" aspect. Public service is a public trust. This article aims to study the level of trust that Thai people perceive in the ethics of government, to investigate barriers to trust, and to provide determinant indicators that can promote ethical government and trust culture in the public sphere. Both questionnaires and the interview schedule were synthesised from the relevant literature. Based on the collected data, the findings were as follows: (1) citizens' perception of the ethics of honesty of the Yingluck government is at very low level; (2) citizens' trust in the ethics of honesty of the Yingluck government was found to be at a very low level in three areas of trust perception – trustworthiness, basic trust, and trust culture; (3) the relationship between the ethics of the Thai government and citizens' trust were positively correlated in the same direction at a high level ($r = 0.928$); (4) there was a very high level (sig. 876) of inconsistency between the behaviours regarded as a test of the government's honesty and those expected by citizens; (5) the major barriers to public trust in the Yingluck government derived from unethical norms and behaviours, a culture of distrust, political intervention in the bureaucracy, an unethical leader or a puppet leader (former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra – Yingluck's elder brother), mega-project corruption, autocratic rule, and illegal policies – the amnesty bill; (6) alignments to cultivate trust culture include incorruptibility, public interest and the upholding of justice, transparency and accountability, respect for diversity and for the worth and dignity of people, and commitment to excellence and to maintaining the public trust.

The article postulates sufficient evidence to conclude that citizens' trust in the ethics of the Thai government is at a very low level. It highlights where existing measures match the theory, but it also identifies a number of dimensions for which "trust deficiency" or "distrusted" was recorded. This was especially the case with regard to the content of the trust belief correlated with the ethics of honesty and

to the selection of possible alignments for contributing to trust culture among Thai citizens.

Keywords: ethics of honesty, trust, trust culture, trust management.

1. The Importance of Trust Culture and the Ethics of Honesty in Government

When governments or politicians are involved in public management, what they are in fact doing is managing the public trust citizens have invested in them in democratic elections. If public administration is just and trustworthy there will be public trust in the government. Governments play a major role as the representatives of citizens in public management. They serve the public interest by offering ideas, solving public problems and formulating good public policies. Their behaviour as policy formulators is also verified and exemplified in moral terms in the qualities of integrity, honesty, trustworthiness, impartiality, accountability and transparency brought to bear every day to serve the public interest fairly and to manage public resources properly. Fair and reliable public services inspire public trust and create a favourable environment for enterprises, which in turn helps markets function well and the economy to grow (OECD 2000). Good governance is therefore rooted in the reciprocal relationship between the confidence citizens have in themselves and a fair, just and reliable state.

Scholars of public administration generally agree that public ethics is a prerequisite for public trust and the cornerstone of good governance. Lewis and Catron (1996, p. 699) stated that: "Public service is a public trust. If there is anything unique about public service, it derives from this proposition". When people think of public ethics, honesty is an important substantive value with a close connection to trust for it implies both truth--telling and responsible behaviour that seeks to abide by the rules (Rose--Ackerman 2001). The close relationship between honesty and trust has an influence on state modernisation as it affects the functioning of the democratic state and the market at a time when there is a growing consensus among governments on what should constitute the essential elements of an effective and comprehensive ethical strategy. Trust does not vary across cultures and can be considered to have a socio-cultural underpinning. The relationship between these two factors is decisive for the success or failure of political coalition. Citizens' trust in governments is mostly derived from an ethics of honesty. In this way, for example, corruption is dishonest behaviour involving the use of a public position for private gain that violates the trust

placed in the government. As citizens of a modernising state in a postmodern age, individuals have increased expectations that governments will serve the public interest with integrity, fairness and responsibility to manage resources through appropriate public policies based on fundamental principles of governance.

2. How Thai People Perceived Their Government's Ethics of Honesty (PM Yingluck)

The critical cause of the political crises that have occurred in Thailand, such as fraud and corruption in large scale projects involving the bureaucracy and parliament, autocratic rules, conflicts of interest that have produced illegal public policy, the problem of bribes and the political conflict among Thai citizens, is a lack of morality. Thai society is also under constant pressure to bring itself into line with today's rapidly changing circumstances and realities, which include globalisation, regional integration through ASEAN and citizens' demands for a better quality of life and to be better served by a reformed government that offers improved performance and accountability.

Research Objectives

Based on the concepts set out above and against the background of the problems within Thai society, this article studies Thai people's perception of the ethics of honesty of their government (Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra) and the ways in which they trust or distrust it. Acknowledging the importance of building "trust culture", which is at the heart of public administration, it also investigates the relationship between trust culture and the ethics of honesty of government with reference to the perceptions of the Thai people. The paper also offers guidelines for developing and optimising government performance to promote "trust culture" – the values of democracy, good governance, and social dialogue about the ethics of honesty. The results of this research are expected to extend the frontiers of knowledge in public administration and human resource development.

Hypothesis

Citizens' perception of the ethics of the Thai government (Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra) is at a very low level and correlates with a deficiency in trust. Together, these factors form a major barrier to the creation of trust culture in society.

Research Questions

The research was conducted to answer the following questions by measuring the "trust culture" and "ethics of honesty" of the Thai government: (a) How do citizens perceive the ethics of honesty of the government? (b) What is the correlation between the level of citizens' trust and the ethics of honesty of the Thai government? (c) What is the relationship between the ethics of honesty of Thai officials and citizen trust? (d) How do different and apparently honest behaviours of the government compare with those expected by the citizens? (e) What are the major barriers to public trust in the Thai government? (f) How can public trust and trust culture be strengthened? The answers to these questions are of critical importance in building "trust culture", which should be at the heart of public administration.

Theoretical Framework

Different societies have different ways of assigning meaning, different values and different behaviours. Social or national culture is therefore determined by the values, beliefs, norms and behaviours which permeate their members and are expressed by them in words and behaviour. This article focuses on the ethics of honesty and trust as they affect the functioning of the democratic state. I am interested in informal interactions that rest on affect-based trust only insofar as they are a substitute for, are in conflict with, or complement the trust culture between governments and their citizens. The trust-building or trust-eroding relationships between the informal interactions of political servants, the formal behaviour of political servants and the rules of the bureaucratic system are my central concern.

Trust culture is identified with the rules disseminated in society that oblige every citizen to treat trust and trustworthiness as common, shared values. Many cultural theorists have given an account of "public trust" from a number of different perspectives and in a variety of cultural dimensions. Piotr Sztompka (1996, 1999, 2007) has suggested that public trust is composed of three factors perceived by society: trustworthiness, common trust, and trust culture.

Trustworthiness can be studied through the following government behaviours: integrity and honesty, devotion to public service, accountability to the public and commitment beyond the law. Common trust is embodied in the daily behaviour of government: merit and duty to citizens, compassionate treatment of people when providing the services of daily life,

Ethics of Honesty of Government / Perceived by Citizens	←→	Citizens' Trust

Mayer, Davis & Schoorman (1995), Sztompka (1996, 2007), OECD (2000), Rose-Ackerman (2001), Lewis & Gilman (2005), Six (2007)
1. Government action is in line with the public purposes of the organisations they regulate
2. Daily public service and public policy are reliable
3. Impartial treatment of citizens on the basis of legality and justice
4. Public resources are used effectively, efficiently and properly
5. Decision-making procedures are transparent to the public and are measured to permit public scrutiny

Sztompka (1996, 2007), (OECD 2000, 2004), Covey (2006), Dietz & Hartog (2006)
1. Trustworthiness (Sztompka 2007)
   – integrity and honesty
   – devotion to public service
   – accountability to the public
   – commitment beyond the law
2. Common Trust (Dietz & Hartog 2006)
   – merit and duty to citizens
   – compassionate treatment of people when providing the services of daily life
   – work competency
   – regularity in daily behaviour
3. Trust Culture (OECD 2000, 2004, Covey 2006, Sztompka 2007)
   – countering corruption
   – upholding the public interest and social justice
   – transparency, honesty, integrity
   – respect for worth and dignity of individuals
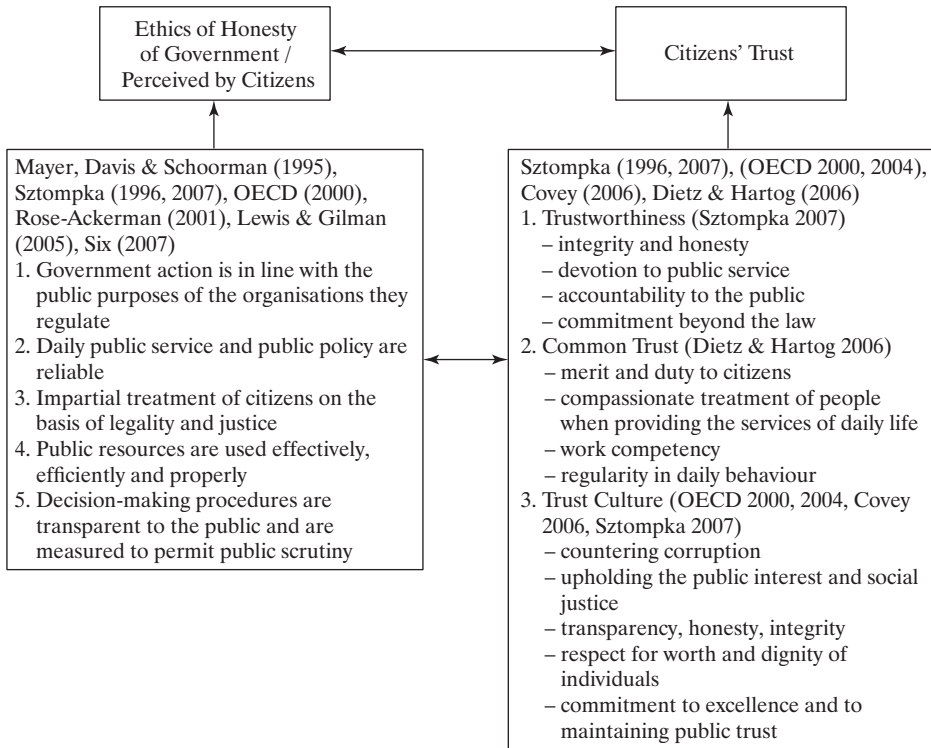   – commitment to excellence and to maintaining public trust

Fig. 1. Theoretical Framework

Source: prepared by the author.

work competency and regularity in daily behaviour (Dietz & Hartog 2006). The deep-rooted norms of trust culture are to meet ones obligations, to be honest, to be open and to collaborate with others (OECD 2000, 2004, Covey 2006, Sztompka 2007). Trust culture counters corruption, upholds the public interest and social justice, promotes transparency, honesty, and integrity, bolsters public servants' respect for the worth and dignity of individuals, and commits governments to excellence and to maintaining public trust (OECD 2004). Public trust is a reflection of citizens' perception of trust and can also be understood by the term "citizens' trust". The ethics of honesty are exemplified by government behaviour, accountability to the public, reliability in daily public service, impartiality, effectiveness and efficiency, and transparency (Mayer, Davis & Schoorman 1995, Sztompka 1996, 2007, Rose-Ackerman 2001, Lewis & Gilman 2005, Six 2007). The more

trust a government receives, the more citizens perceive that ethical public management, imbued with honesty, fairness and reliability, exists.

Literature Review for the Ethics of Honesty

Honesty is an important substantive value of government that is closely connected to citizens' trust (Rose-Ackerman 2001). Theories of the ethics of honesty in government have been employed in the OECD's concept of ethics, integrity, and professionalism (OECD 2000, 2004), in Rose--Ackerman's theories of honesty and corruption (2001), in Lewis and Gilman's concept of the ethics challenge in public service (2005), in Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman's concept of integrity (1995) and in Six's concept of integrity (Six, Bakker & Huberts 2007). Honesty implies both truth-telling and responsible behaviour that seeks to abide by the rules.

Nevertheless, interpersonal relationships are facilitated by the belief that the other person has a moral commitment to honesty. Governments are expected to act with moral and professional ethics, to serve the public interest fairly and to manage public resources properly day by day. A beneficial mechanism to preserve and promote "honesty" is thus a political advantage since it causes citizens to share their common interests with others and creates common needs that lead on to political collaboration and legitimisation. It is implicit when we say that someone is trustworthy that the probability he will perform an action that is beneficial (or at least not detrimental) to us is high enough for us to consider engaging in some form of cooperation with him (Gambetta 1988).

Trust and Trust Culture in the Further Development of Democratic Governance

Trust has a focal meaning for the success of every transaction and works to stimulate human activities. The theories and concepts of citizens' trust have drawn especially on Sztompka's theory of trust management (1996, 2007), on Cardona and Morley's idea of trust development between managers and subordinates (2012), on Dietz and Hartog's concept of measuring trust inside organisations (2006), and on Covey's idea of speed of trust (2006).

There is higher social well-being and economic growth in countries with trust culture (Fukuyama 1995). In distrust cultures, however, those who trust in others are believed to be naive and simple-minded and to be the exploited victims of unfair transactions. Cynicism limits collaboration and freedom of activity, destroys communication and divides people. The value of trust is therefore steadily diminished over time. The level of trust determines not

only our individual development, but also fosters the social and economic evolution of whole communities. The best solution is therefore to develop trust management. Yet this is possible only when we are acting in an atmosphere of trust in a society in which trust culture is commonly accepted and required from every member of society.

Trust culture is very helpful in insecure and unorganised situations (Bjerke 1999) and can also be recognised as a strategy for dealing with uncertainty. The willingness to make ourselves vulnerable to the actions of another party is based on the expectation that that party will perform a particular action that is important to the "trusting" party – irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party (Mayer, Davis & Schoorman 1995). It also illustrates the extent to which a person has confidence in another person and is willing to base their actions on that person's words, actions and decisions (McAllister 1995). Distrust culture, on the other hand, is based on cynicism disorder, corruption, exploiting others and on deceit. Various formal legal remedies are instituted in distrust culture to make functioning possible. A new democratic government needs to support a citizenry with high levels of trust in public institutions and with the habit of not relying on inter-personal relations. Generalised trust is thought to be one of the essential factors for the development of democracy (Inglehart 1996, Sztompka 1999, Uslaner 1999, Newton 2001) and its absence a serious obstacle to its further development.

Methodology

The selection of methodological approaches began with the assembly of a framework of issues for the author to consider when researching the interaction between trust and honesty. This framework was then used to analyse the data collected from the field research. The research design incorporated a mixed quantitative and qualitative design. The qualitative strand involved a test, whose reliability was ensured by examining internal consistency and sensitivity. With regard to internal consistency, Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of the test was 0.977 (Howell 2007), while with regard to sensitivity the test was found to have the discriminatory power to exclude the level of both variables. The qualitative strand was based on a semi-structured interview designed to probe the real opinions of the respondents. Both instruments were modified from the theoretical framework to be relevant to the Thai context and responsive to the building of trust culture. A total of 2,665 questionnaires were mailed to 13 target groups of Thai people in six regions. In addition, personal interviews with

390 purposively selected respondents were conducted, which was sufficient to reach the point of data saturation and specific enough to explore the emergence of trust culture. While the test provides a numerical indicator of the phenomena observed, the semi-structured interview sheds light on the causes.

Sample Selection

The research was exploratory in nature. The sample was selected by multi-stage sampling, which involved a combination of simple random sampling, purposive sampling, and quota sampling. First, the population was segmented into mutually exclusive sub-groups based on the stakeholders or interest groups of Thai society. They were classified by determining the three major groups of people in the political system: official groups, political groups and people in the major career categories in Thailand. All 13 career groups were purposively selected from those three major groups of people. The sampling frame, sampling unit, target population, sections of the sampling unit, and sample size are shown in Table 1.

As portrayed in Table 1, the sampling unit consisted of official groups, politicians, public enterprise officials, lecturers, entrepreneurs, workers from private organisations, journalists and news reporters, sellers, farmers, labourers, students, NGOs and general groups. After purposively selecting 13 career categories, the sampling unit was then judged by quota sampling selection from various sources to require 2,665 respondents for statistical testing. From those respondents, 390 were purposively chosen for interviewing, which was sufficient to reach the point of data saturation and specific enough to explore the emergence of power distance.

Data Analysis

Hypothesis testing of the perceptions of Thai citizens was accomplished by the following statistical methods: Percentage, Mean or Average, Standard Deviation (SD), F-Test, Two-Way Anova (Fixed Effects), Paired Sample Test with Fisher's Least Significant Difference (LSD), Pearson's Correlation Coefficient, and the T-Test. These statistical methods were employed to verify the results for the hypothesis and research questions. Factor analysis of the dimensions of trust and ethics was employed in the qualitative analysis.

Table 1. The Sampling Selection by Way of Multi-stage Sampling

Sampling Frame	Sampling Unit (random sampling)	Target Population: 13 Groups from 6 Regions (purposive sampling)	Sections of Sampling Unit (quota sampling)	n (2,665) Test	n (390) Inter-view
Thai People in 6 Regions: 1) North 2) North-East 3) Central 4) East 5) West 6) South	Stakeholders or Interest Groups of Thai People in Three Major Groups of the Political System: 1) Official groups 2) Politician groups 3) People from all career groups	Politicians	Members of the Assembly, Senators	205	30
		Official Groups	Officials, Teachers, Doctors, Nurses, Soldiers, Naval Officers, Air Force Officers, Policemen	205	30
		Public Enterprise Officials	PE Officials, Public Servants in Public Enterprise Organisations	205	30
		Lecturers	Lecturers in Universities	205	30
		Entrepreneurs	Businessmen from Companies and Private Organisations	205	30
		Workers from Private Organisations	Workers from Companies and Private Organisations	205	30
		Journalists and News Reporters	Workers from Media Organisations	205	30
		Sellers	Merchants and Sellers	205	30
		Farmers	Farmers, Gardeners	205	30
		Labourers	Labourers	205	30
		Students	Students from Schools and Universities	205	30
		NGOs	NGOs	205	30
		General Groups	Housekeepers, Retired Officials, Older groups	205	30
				2,665	390

Source: prepared by the author.

Findings

The data were collected in the period between November 2013 and February 2014. The findings follow below.

1. Citizens' perception of the ethics of honesty of the Thai government. The perception of the honesty of the government among the respondents in the 6 regions was at a low level (mean 2.92; SD 1.026). The northern region ranked the government's honesty highest (mean 3.08) while the eastern region ranked it lowest (mean 2.72). Broken down by occupation, most respondents in the 13 career groups – apart from those from the private group – had a moderate perception of the government's honesty. People in official careers had the highest perception of the government's honesty (mean 3.31) while workers and employers in the private group had the lowest perception of the government's honesty (mean 2.63). The mean and SD value for all careers was very low (2.45 and 0.798) (see Table 2).

2. Citizens' trust in the ethics of honesty of the Thai government. Citizens' trust in the ethics of honesty of the Thai government was found to be at a low level and was separated into three areas of trust perception: (1) trustworthiness – as reflected in daily life both in reasonable or unreasonable actions – was perceived at a low level (mean 2.94, SD 1.004). Though the government was trusted on the dimensions of honesty, commitment beyond the law, and provision of public service, it was not trusted on responsible stewardship of resources such as time, people, money (tax) or employment – or for the advantage it was perceived to take of the spoils system. The perception was that the government could avoid punishment because of connections with powerful people. (2) Basic trust – derived from socialisation – was also perceived at a low level (mean 2.90, SD 0.982). The government was distrusted on the dimensions of fairness and social justice. (3) Trust culture – reflected in the integrity of behaviour throughout society and promoted by credible norms and activities – was perceived at a low level (mean 2.92, SD 1.026). The government was distrusted on the dimensions of respect for the worth and dignity of individuals, commitment to excellence, and maintaining public trust (see Table 3).

3. The relationship between the ethics of honesty of the Thai government and citizens' trust. The results revealed that the ethics of honesty of the Thai government and citizens' trust were positively correlated in the same direction at a nearly high level ($r = 0.928$). In relative terms they were also in a two-way relationship. The results of the statistical test uncovered the following correlations among the three elements of citizen trust:

Table 2. Comparison of Citizens' Attitude and Perception of the "Ethics of Honesty" of the Government (Mean, Standard Deviation Value, F value, F prob.) N = 2,524 – Categorised by Career and Region

Career	Statistical Value	Region						State (6 regions)	F value	F prob.
		North	North-East	Central	East	West	South			
1. Politicians	Mean	3.2840	3.1333	3.0171	2.8800	3.0533	3.0520	3.0649	12.031	0.000
	SD	0.42981	0.36984	0.92014	0.88174	0.76892	0.99294	0.79305		
	n	25	30	70	20	15	25	185		
2. Official Groups	Mean	2.9720	3.3483	3.2133	3.5250	3.6000	3.1680	3.2568		
	SD	0.85855	0.49974	0.67261	0.67658	0.43425	0.85719	0.70021		
	n	25	30	90	20	15	25	205		
3. Public Enterprise Officials	Mean	2.7640	2.9333	2.6500	3.2100	3.2200	2.6560	2.8119		
	SD	0.81898	0.82518	0.83055	0.66325	0.71534	0.90281	0.83186		
	n	25	30	78	20	15	25	193		
4. Lecturers	Mean	2.8840	2.9767	2.7371	2.8600	2.4600	2.7520	2.7886		
	SD	0.63093	0.47393	0.67118	0.44296	0.42728	0.67523	0.60616		
	n	25	30	70	20	15	25	185		
5. Entrepreneurs	Mean	3.2880	2.9828	2.4429	2.5650	2.4438	2.4200	2.6690	–	
	SD	0.56223	0.81987	0.77948	0.59052	0.44418	0.53852	0.74457		
	n	25	30	56	20	15	25	171		
6. Private Organisation Workers	Mean	2.6520	2.7333	2.2822	2.0500	2.6400	2.7040	2.4483		–
	SD	0.85397	0.77385	0.71226	0.61857	0.85840	0.93295	0.79770		
	n	25	30	90	20	15	25	205		
7. Media	Mean	2.9520	2.9667	2.9520	2.8300	3.1067	3.2960	2.9989		
	SD	0.65518	0.67279	0.74441	0.83924	0.67556	0.70562	0.72506		
	n	25	30	75	20	15	25	190		

Table 2 cnt'd

Career	Statistical Value	Region						State (6 regions)	F value	F prob.
		North	North-East	Central	East	West	South			
8. Sellers	Mean	3.3320	3.0433	2.8556	2.5850	3.1800	2.4200	2.8854		
	SD	0.17253	0.47971	0.87937	1.06636	0.53612	1.10454	0.84441		
	n	25	30	90	20	15	25	205		
9. Farmers	Mean	3.6800	3.0133	3.2186	2.0300	3.0667	3.3640	3.1265		
	SD	0.42328	0.36553	0.65835	0.95537	0.88694	0.55293	0.76585		
	n	25	30	70	20	15	25	185		
10. Labourers	Mean	2.9640	3.1200	2.0862	2.5850	2.9667	2.9440	2.5867	–	–
	SD	0.37068	0.23401	1.08298	1.08301	0.49522	0.68012	0.94117		
	n	25	30	80	20	15	25	195		
11. Students	Mean	2.6640	3.0667	2.6511	2.6238	3.1267	2.5640	2.7345		
	SD	0.56927	0.76082	0.78729	0.82092	0.66059	0.78256	0.76943		
	n	25	30	90	20	15	25	205		
12. NGOs	Mean	3.0000	2.5533	2.7138	2.9150	2.9533	2.9160	2.7908		
	SD	0.66458	0.34113	0.57451	0.61325	0.60812	0.64140	0.58593		
	n	25	30	80	20	15	25	195		
13. Others	Mean	3.6680	2.9100	3.3389	2.7263	3.0600	3.0280	3.2005		
	SD	0.62698	0.49295	0.68642	1.03593	0.92721	1.08032	0.80885		
	n	25	30	90	20	15	25	205		
All Careers	Mean	3.0849	2.9832	2.7869	2.7215	2.9878	2.8680	2.8748	13.494	0.000
	SD	0.68987	0.59934	0.85561	0.88658	0.71816	0.86254	0.80299		
	n	325	390	1029	260	195	325	2524	3.994	0.000

F-value and F-prob. on the test of "Ethics of Honesty" impact cooperated with different careers and regions

Source: results of data analysis based on a field research questionnaire (November 2013–February 2014).

Table 3. Comparison of Citizens' Attitude and Perception of "Trust" in the Government (Mean, Standard Deviation Value, F value, F prob.) $N = 2{,}524$ – Categorised by Career and Region

Career	Statistical Value	Region							F value	F prob.
		North	North-East	Central	East	West	South	State (6 regions)		
1. Politicians	Mean	3.3424	3.1680	2.9843	2.8015	2.8840	3.0296	3.0407	11.153	0.000
	SD	0.47702	0.45931	0.76789	0.73773	0.56543	0.81936	0.69036		
	n	25	30	70	20	15	25	185		
2. Official Groups	Mean	2.8104	3.5423	3.2523	3.4845	3.5053	3.2572	3.2826		
	SD	0.78448	0.47715	0.60327	0.59971	0.34014	0.75773	0.64645		
	n	25	30	90	20	15	25	205		
3. Public Enterprise Officials	Mean	2.8756	3.0117	2.7750	3.3470	3.2847	2.8448	2.9327		
	SD	0.72138	0.71690	0.80266	0.72361	0.63679	0.93310	0.79457		
	n	25	30	78	20	15	25	193		
4. Lecturers	Mean	2.9578	2.9177	2.7660	2.8300	2.7853	2.7468	2.8224	–	–
	SD	0.63451	0.47946	0.65199	0.65376	0.78626	0.73686	0.64514		
	n	25	30	70	20	15	25	185		
5. Entrepreneurs	Mean	3.3508	2.9110	2.4796	2.5505	2.4063	2.3744	2.6662		
	SD	0.40164	0.81237	0.68176	0.49360	0.44938	0.39871	0.67853		
	n	25	30	56	20	15	25	171		
6. Private Organisation Workers	Mean	2.6688	2.7770	2.4124	2.1695	2.8007	2.9200	2.5637		
	SD	0.84757	0.82621	0.68299	0.78851	0.91949	0.84392	0.79865		
	n	25	30	90	20	15	25	205		
7. Media	Mean	3.0480	3.1887	3.0312	2.7920	3.1607	3.3252	3.0820		
	SD	0.54721	0.51552	0.62922	0.87842	0.62003	0.58514	0.63525		
	n	25	30	75	20	15	25	190		

Table 3 cnt'd

Career	Statistical Value	Region						State (6 regions)	F value	F prob.
		North	North-East	Central	East	West	South			
8. Sellers	Mean	3.3140	3.1250	2.8913	2.6435	3.1373	2.4808	2.9208	–	–
	SD	0.39647	0.50762	0.83882	1.06758	0.44245	1.09035	0.82566		
	n	25	30	90	20	15	25	205		
9. Farmers	Mean	3.6992	3.0550	3.2577	2.0720	3.0600	3.3336	3.1505		
	SD	0.38482	0.26835	0.62130	0.97448	0.85007	0.51150	0.73553		
	n	25	30	70	20	15	25	185		
10. Labourers	Mean	3.0136	3.2270	2.3004	2.6015	2.9353	2.9488	2.6972		
	SD	0.30460	0.26155	0.94513	1.03594	0.66890	0.77108	0.85621		
	n	25	30	80	20	15	25	195		
11. Students	Mean	2.7528	3.1103	2.8257	2.6486	3.1827	2.7176	2.8531		
	SD	0.59776	0.55108	0.75854	0.79011	0.66193	0.58765	0.70111		
	n	25	30	90	20	15	25	205		
12. NGOs	Mean	2.9480	2.4993	2.6829	2.9350	2.9493	2.9992	2.7755		
	SD	0.53964	0.45409	0.56809	0.47041	0.30257	0.61309	0.55102		
	n	25	30	80	20	15	25	195		
13. Others	Mean	3.6640	2.9757	3.3218	2.6947	2.9807	2.9240	3.1806		
	SD	0.55114	0.52233	0.62220	0.88790	0.83326	0.81446	0.71959		
	n	25	30	90	20	15	25	205		
All Careers	Mean	3.1112	3.0395	2.8525	2.7360	3.0025	2.9155	2.9224	14.225	0.000
	SD	0.64912	0.59332	0.77772	0.86492	0.68245	0.78789	0.74832		
	n	325	390	1029	260	195	325	2524	3.994	0.000

F-value and *F*-prob. on the test of "Trust" impact cooperated with different careers and regions

Source: results of data analysis based on a field research questionnaire (November 2013–February 2014).

Table 4. Correlation between Citizens' "Trust" and the "Ethics of Honesty" of the Government (r, t-prob.) N = 2,524 – Categorised by Career and Region

Specifi-cation	Career		Trust-worthiness		Common Trust		Trust Culture		Trust		Ethics of Honesty		Region	
	r	t-prob.	r	t-prob.	r	t-prob.	r	t-prob.	r	t-prob.	r	t-prob.	r	t-prob.
Career	–	–	–0.066	0.567	–0.066	0.567	–0.149	0.194	–0.100	0.385	–0.079	0.492	0.000	1.000
Trust-worthiness	–0.066	0.567	–	–	0.865**	0.000	0.934**	0.000	0.966**	0.000	0.928**	0.000	–0.196	0.085
Common Trust	–0.066	0.567	0.865**	0.000	–	–	0.892**	0.000	0.951**	0.000	0.885**	0.000	–0.103	0.372
Trust Culture	–0.149	0.194	0.934**	0.000	0.892**	0.000	–	–	0.977**	0.000	0.963**	0.000	–0.156	0.173
Trust	–0.100	0.385	0.966**	0.000	0.951**	0.000	0.977**	0.000	–	–	0.959**	0.000	–0.155	0.175
Ethics of Honesty	–0.079	0.492	0.928**	0.000	0.885**	0.000	0.963**	0.000	0.928**	0.000	–	–	–0.152	0.183
Region	0.000	1.000	–0.196	0.085	–0.103	0.372	–0.156	0.173	–0.155	0.175	–0.152	0.183	–	

** statistically significant at the level of 0.01 (two-tails).

Source: results of data analysis based on a field research questionnaire (November 2013–February 2014).

trustworthiness – correlated with honesty of government at a high level (r = 0.928), basic trust – correlated with honesty of government at a nearly high level (r = 0.885) and (3) trust culture – correlated with honesty of government at a high level (r = 0.963) (see Table 4).

4. Were the behaviours regarded as a test of the government's honesty consistent with the expected ones? The results showed that there was a very high level (sig. 876) of inconsistency between the behaviours regarded as a test of the government's honesty and those expected by citizens, whose expectations with regard to the government's honesty were expressed in the following five dimensions: (1) rather than being aligned with private or nepotistic interests, government behaviour must be in line with the public purpose and public interest (2) daily public service and public policy for enterprise must be reliable rather than corrupt (3) citizens must receive impartial treatment based on justice and legality (4) public resources should be effectively, efficiently, and properly used (5) policy decision-making procedures must be transparent to the public and measures must be in place to permit public scrutiny and redress (see Table 5).

Table 5. Consistency between Apparent Government Behaviours and Expected Behaviours

No.	Apparent Behaviours	Expected Behaviours
1	actions aligned with private interests, conflicts of interest, spoils system, nepotism	actions should be in line with public purpose and public interest
2	corruption in public service and policy, especially on "mega-projects"	daily public service and public policy are reliable
3	treatment not based on legality and justice, double-standards	laws and regulations should be enforced equitably
4	government's political network takes advantage of and exploits public resources	public resources should be properly used
5	power centralised in policy-making, authoritarianism	policy decision-making procedures must be transparent to the public to ensure good governance

Source: results of data analysis based on a field research questionnaire (November 2013–February 2014).

5. Major barriers to public trust in the Thai government. The factors the qualitative results identified as barriers to public trust in the Thai government were: (1) a lack of ethical norms in society, (2) political

intervention in the bureaucracy, (3) an unethical leader, (4) a lack of democratic values, (5) a lack of valued public servants and professionalism, (6) inefficient and inequitable law enforcement, (7) the lack of a public--service ethic, (8) the lack of good governance.

6. Indicators or determinant factors that strengthen public trust and trust culture. The qualitative results pinpointed the following determinant factors which strongly promote trust culture and reduce dishonesty in Thai social culture: (1) honesty as a value, (2) an ethical leader, (3) valued public servants and professionalism, (4) an ethic of public service, (5) trust in the public, (6) democracy as a value, (7) impartial law enforcement, (8) good governance. These are the cultural dimensions that sustain and strengthen trust among citizens in Thai society (see Fig. 2).

Determinant factors contributing to trust culture:
1. Honesty as a value
2. Ethical leader
3. Valued public servants / Professionalism
4. Ethic of public service
5. Trust in the public
6. Democracy as a value
7. Impartial law enforcement
8. Good governance

Ethics of honesty of government:
1. Government behaviours
2. Accountability to the public
3. Reliability in daily public service
4. Impartiality
5. Effectiveness and efficiency
6. Transparency

Citizens' trust:
1. Trustworthiness
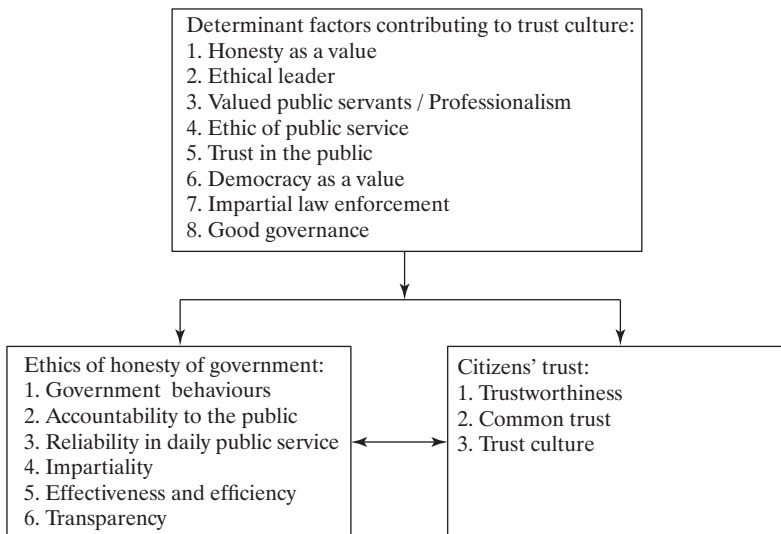2. Common trust
3. Trust culture

Fig. 2. Determinant Factors Contributing to Trust Culture

Source: results of data analysis and synthesis based on a field research questionnaire and a semi-structured interview (November 2013–February 2014).

7. Alignments contributing to public trust and cultivating trust culture. The qualitative results revealed that the following five alignments contribute to public trust and cultivate trust culture: (1) incorruptibility – promoting ethical norms of honesty, (2) public interest and the upholding of justice – enforcing the law impartially and honestly, (3) transparency and accountability – governing by the rule of law, (4) respect for diversity

and for the worth and dignity of people – striving for a democratic society, (5) commitment to excellence and to maintaining the public trust – having a public-service ethic that promotes the value of public servants and professionalism.

3. Conclusion

The research provides sufficient evidence to conclude that:

1. Citizens' trust in, and their perception of, the ethics of honesty of the Thai government are at a low level.

2. The "ethics of honesty of the Thai government" and "citizens' trust" variables are highly positively correlated in the same direction.

3. The honesty of the behaviours of Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra's government as perceived by citizens in daily life were very far from those that were expected.

4. The article has highlighted where existing measures match the theory, but it has also identified a number of dimensions for which "trust deficiency" or "distrusted" was recorded. This was especially the case with regard to the content of the trust belief correlated with the ethics of honesty and to the selection of possible alignments for contributing to trust culture. These factors were incorruptibility, the public interest and upholding justice, transparency and accountability, respect for diversity and for the worth and dignity of people, and commitment to excellence and to maintaining the public trust.

5. Trust culture values orientations that encourage the individual to seek honesty and collaboration.

6. When explaining the level of trust at the collective level, one should take into consideration the extent to which the preconditions of trust are safeguarded by macro-level factors that embrace all stakeholders in the population.

Recommendations

The research presents an overview of trust culture and the ethics of honesty of public servants as perceived by citizens in Thai society. It highlights trust culture as a critical issue in managing public organisations. It shows that the ethics of honesty should be the first priority in the process of building trust culture between government and the citizen, between public organisations and the citizen, and even among citizens through facilitation strategies. This study offers the following recommendations:

1. The role of government and government leaders is to promote public management that is founded on a culture of trust and on honesty. They should promote and praise honest and non-corrupt officials and campaign for the values and norms of integrity within society and government agencies. They should sustain the ethic and purpose of public service and promote professionalism. Corrupt officials should be seriously punished. Officials should be examined by independent regulatory agencies and monitored by external agencies to help sustain a culture of trust.

2. The role of government agencies is to reinforce political behaviour that promotes a culture of ethics, honesty and trust. They should reform the hierarchical culture of the bureaucracy, government agencies and officials who implement public policy so that it becomes a supportive environment favourable to a good political culture. By emphasising and promoting a culture of honesty they will be in a position to lead society towards a strong culture of trust.

3. The government should encourage a supportive culture by reducing centralised, top-down command, control, and authorisation. This will increase participation in policy so that citizens become involved in the formulation of public policy and in public hearings and thereby contribute to building a public consensus. Promoting democratic values that emphasise decentralisation and encouraging the participation of individuals will therefore help to cultivate a culture of trust in Thai society.

These conclusions and recommendations lend support to Piotr Sztompka's concept of trust management (Sztompka 2007), while the study's findings are in step with the work done on trust culture and honesty by Sztompka (1996), Rose-Ackerman (2001), the OECD (2000, 2004) and Dietz and Hartog (2006). Trust culture among citizens and an ethics of honesty among public servants allow people to see other members of their community not as enemies or strangers, but as fellow citizens, which encourages a tolerance for pluralism and for a variety of ways of life.

Implications and Further Study for Cultural Management in HRD

Notwithstanding the research regarding the links between trust culture and honesty, including the social value of trust and goodness, the issues of trust culture and its influence on public governance have not been systematically explored in current human resource development (HRD) literatures. The following question arises as a consequence: "Should governments that consider culture in their approach to trust culture management, and that adjust facilitating strategies, be more successful in

achieving the expected results of organisational culture than governments that neglect culture in their trust approach?". The answers to this question should be sought in a further empirical study.

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Abstract

Kultura zaufania oraz etyczność rządu: kiedy zaufanie społeczne jest niewystarczające

Zaufanie społeczne do rządu w większości opiera się na jego „etyczności", a w szczególności na postrzeganiu przez społeczeństwo „uczciwości" rządzących, jako że służba państwowa wymaga zaufania publicznego. Celem artykułu jest zbadanie poziomu zaufania tajskiego społeczeństwa do etyczności rządu, a także zidentyfikowanie barier utrudniających tę ufność. Ponadto wskazano determinanty wzmacniające kulturę etyczności i zaufania w sferze publicznej. Wykorzystane kwestionariusze badawcze (2) oraz scenariusz wywiadów zostały opracowane na podstawie dostępnej literatury przedmiotu. Opierając się na uzyskanych danych, stwierdzono, że: (1) postrzeganie etyczności rządu Yinglucka przez społeczeństwo jest na bardzo niskim poziomie; (2) bardzo niski poziom zaufania społeczeństwa do etyczności rządu wynika z trzech czynników: wiarygodności, wzajemnego zaufania oraz kultury zaufania; (3) związek pomiędzy etycznością tajskiego rządu a wysokim poziomem zaufania społecznego wykazuje dodatnią korelację ($r = 0.928$); (4) występuje bardzo duża niezgodność ($p = 0.876$) pomiędzy zachowaniami mającymi na celu kontrolę uczciwości rządu a zachowaniami oczekiwanymi przez społeczeństwo; (5) największe bariery w osiąganiu zaufania społecznego przez rząd wynikają z nieetycznych norm i zachowań, kultury podejrzliwości, interwencjonizmu politycznego w zakresie biurokratyzacji, nieetycznego przywódcy i (lub) „rządu marionetkowego" (wcześniejszy premier Thaksin Shinawatra był starszym bratem Yinglucka), olbrzymiego korupcjonizmu, autorytaryzmu oraz nielegalnych działań (ustawa amnestyjna); (6) istnieje poparcie do kultywowania kultury zaufania, obejmującej: nieprzekupność, przestrzeganie prawa i interesu publicznego, transparentność i odpowiedzialność, szacunek dla różnorodności, wartości oraz godności ludzkiej, a także zaangażowanie w budowanie i utrzymywanie zaufania publicznego.

Przedstawione rozważania pozwalają stwierdzić, że zaufanie społeczne do tajskiego rządu i wiara w jego etyczne działania jest na bardzo niskim poziomie. Zwrócono także uwagę na obszary – wyniki badań, które potwierdzają teorię zaufania publicznego, ale także zidentyfikowano liczne obszary, dla których odnotowano „deficyt zaufania" lub „nieufność". Przedstawione badania szczególnie skupiają się na korelacji pomiędzy przeświadczeniem o zaufaniu a etyką bądź uczciwością oraz na selekcji regulacji, które mogą przyczynić się do budowania kultury zaufania wśród ludności tajskiej.

Słowa kluczowe: etyka uczciwości, zaufanie, kultura zaufania, zarządzanie zaufaniem.