Original Research Article

Digital Leadership as a Key New Engine of Growth for Thailand 4.0: A Template for an Online Short Course Development in Digital Leadership

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Abstract: As Thailand has been struggling with a middle income and an inequity trap for past decades, a new economic model called 'Thailand 4.0' has been developed to unlock the trap. People investment is viewed as a vital key for a successful country transformation. Digital leadership is one of various forces that can help enhance people acquire ideas of digital technology and innovation. Nevertheless, no evidence in digital leadership course or training program developed by educational institution in Thailand was found. Thus, this study aims to create a short course template in digital leadership to be employed as a foundation for a future course development. Using documentary analysis and content analysis approaches, this study found six major components needed to be added as part of an online short course development in digital leadership. Six key elements included course overview, course objectives, content (lesson), duration, learning expectation and outcomes, and assessment. The limitations and recommendations for further studies were also discussed.
Keywords: Digital Leadership, Leadership, Thai PM.

INTRODUCTION

Thailand has been perceived as a developing country and struggled in a middle income and an inequality trap for long decades. Thai government has developed a new economic model called „Thailand 4.0‟ to unlock the country to become a developed country to avoid these traps as well as correct the inequity between humans and nature (Royal Thai Embassy, Washington, D.C., 2021). The four major objectives of Thailand 4.0 include economic prosperity, social well-being, raising human values, and environmental protection. This dramatic change is necessarily required in national strategies to respond to a world of disruption (Stevens & Strauss, 2018). In order to increase economic growth and national income per capita, Thailand must create a new s-curve, in which digital technology and innovation is a vital key for success. To accomplish this mission, people investment needs to be placed more emphasis and education reform is required (Asian Institute of Technology, 2016). Also, to ensure the success of people in a digital age, the perception of education has to change based on the shift of technology to prepare a leader for a future (Sheninger, 2019).

Digital leadership is viewed as a key force to help increase the opportunities of Thailand in all arenas: government, industry, business, and education, etc. in transforming an old model in competition to a new competitive model. Digital leadership is needed in today's rapidly disruptive environment for a successful transformation (Gorton, 2018). In addition, the recent survey demonstrated the importance of digital leadership as the key driven for digital change (Waldron, 2021).

Despite the importance of this new concept for the age of transformation and disruption, the recent study found that a few graduate programs in this area have been offered internationally (Promsri, 2019a). In Thailand, digital leadership program provided by the educational institution has not been found. Also, a research in this area in this country is very scarce (Promsuwan et al., 2019). To become a successful digital leader, various skills and characteristics are required as sometimes called a digital leader's ecosystem (Smith, 2018). For those who have a good English proficiency, a plenty of free online courses are available through the Cousera and MOOC lists, which can be searched on the Internet (Coursera, 2021; MOOC List, 2021). However, for Thai citizens who have some limitations to get knowledge and skills about digital leadership through theses platforms, this is a great opportunity for educational institutions and universities across the country to develop an online

short course or a degree program. Nonetheless, a past reviewed article addressed the failure of designers to properly develop short courses to get the best out of the learners as they failed to recognize how individuals learn and change (Lockyer, Ward, & Toews, 2005). Therefore, the purpose of this study is to develop a template of online short courses on digital leadership with key components to be used as the idea and outline for educational institutions for the future short course program development in digital leadership.

LITERATURE REVIEWS
The literature reviews on this study are divided into two major areas, which include concepts of digital leadership and a concept of an online short course as part of training programs.

Digital Leadership
Digital leadership has increasingly become an interesting concept in the past decade. Many scholars attempted to define the meaning digital leadership and identify the key characteristics of this leadership (Gorton, 2018; Caredda, 2020; Waldron, 2021). Gorton (2018) identified six qualities of digital leadership, which included digital recognition as transformation, digital skills development, integrated digital strategy, agility and risk taking, research-based for digital actions, and digital transformation inspiration and motivation. In addition, Smith (2018) coined the term digital leader's ecosystem to contribute the idea of how to become a successful leader. A digital leader's ecosystem includes six major points: digital knowledge, digital brand footprint, digital health, digital health hazards, digital mindset, and digital security/privacy.

Promsri (2019a) analyzed digital leadership characteristics using the documentary analysis method. Related key words of digital leadership were utilized for data collection on the Google. After carefully reviewing plenty sources of information, content analysis with synthesis matrix methods along with the congruence index of sources technique was employed. This study ultimately came up with six major qualities of digital leaders, which encompassed digital knowledge and literacy, vision, customer focus, agility, risk taking, and collaboration. These characteristics were utilized to develop a model called "Six Characteristics of a Digital Leader for Digital Transformation Success." In the same year, this author also analyzed key characteristics of disruptive leaders by gathering information on the internet. This study found 46 qualities of disruptive leaders from various online sources. Using content analysis approach for data analysis, this study discovered eight attributes of disruptive leaders including lifelong learner, truth acceptance, guide other through time of disruption, decisiveness, and rule breakers, unlock others' potentials, self-confidence, and business understanding (Promsri, 2019b).

Additionally, Caredda (2020) pointed out three major points relating to digital leadership as follows: digital leadership as a role, digital leadership as a skillset, digital leadership as a distributed culture. A study of MIT revealed four types of successful digital leaders/executives based on the data collection and analyzes from 211 digital executives in manufacturing companies in three European countries (Reck & Fliaster, 2019). Four profiles of successful digital executive consist of network & catalyzer, insider expert, innovation evangelist, and lone icebreaker. Each profile has its own specific characteristics, and a particular combination of traditional leadership qualities and digital skills. The most important part of this study is to address that each profile has a distinctive degree of effectiveness depending on the condition.

An Online Short Course as Part of Training Program
Training establishes a basic concept in people development especially specific skills needed to create a new business model and transformation. Training is perceived as a valuable tool that can help increase individuals skills and knowledge to an optimal level. To ensure the maximum benefits and impact of training, a strategic and systematic approach is required, which divides training into four stages: needs assessment, program design, implementation, and evaluation ((Bohlander & Snell, 2013).

Ellis (2016) addressed that the increase of learning technology has shaped the way of corporate learning and development, which heavily relies on e-learning, learning management system, virtual classrooms, MOOCs, game and simulations, and microlearning, etc. Surprisingly, the latest survey of training delivery methods in the training industry in the U.S. in 2020 divided by company size indicated that all company sizes (small, medium, and large) greatly delivered their training method through instructor-led classroom (more than 35%)(Statista Research Department, 2020). Nevertheless, the use of technology for learning and development is imperative for training success in a digital age. Also, Center for Creative Leadership (CCL) pointed out six strategies for digital learning success, which can be utilized as a platform for developing an online short course for digital leadership top. Six strategies comprise of the focus on the applicable courses, top management supports, learner-centered design, embrace a leaders as teachers approach, learning partnerships, and performance measurement/evaluation. From these strategies, it can be found that professional training program in digital leadership development needs to be precise but powerful, and needs to be delivered through the online platform. Hence, an online short course for digital leadership development is needed.

An online short course is defined as one of various approaches to enhance people skills and knowledge in a specific area and considered as a useful method for learners to study topics, concepts, and theories that interest them. A short course is advantageous learning program that reduces learners' budget and time to learn the specific subject in a period of time, which is quite similar to a certificate program or an e-course (Tech.com, 2021). Furthermore, the purpose of using short courses is to enrich new and latest skills and up-to-date for career advancement. However, a past study found that numerous short courses were not properly designed to get the best out of the learners as they failed to recognize how individuals learn and change. Thus, short courses designers need to be careful and learn how to effectively develop short courses for learners' advantages (Lockyer, Ward, & Toews, 2005). Duffy (2017) pinpointed four key elements to develop a successful short course consisting of short time, idea focus, practical application, user friendly. Promsri (2019d) analyzed training program for leadership 4.0 and finally developed an example of training program on leadership 4.0, which had six key elements as follows: name of the program, program highlights (4 modules designed),targets, duration, delivery format, and training methods. In addition, Neelakandan (2021) identified five elements of e-learning course including navigation, relevant content, and design and visuals, interactivity, and track learners' progress. Besides,

National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (2021) exemplified the short courses that encompass key criteria to follow including rationale and aim, statement of learning, priority learning units, course overview, expectation and learning outcomes, assessment for reporting, assessment for certification, and feature of quality.

METHODOLOGY

This study was a documentary analysis in which the internet was a key tool for gathering data. Key words such as short courses examples, components of short courses, short courses elements were utilized for data collection. Unfortunately, there were a few explanations of short course elements, which could be useful for developing a template of digital leadership short course.

After carefully reviewed, four major sources were employed as the fundamental for further development of short course template for digital leadership. There sources comprised of Duffy (2017), Promsri (2019), Neelakandan (2021), and National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (2021). Elements of these sources were analyzed to create a template of digital leadership short course (See Table 1). To ensure the presence of relevant elements for a further development, the congruence analysis of at least two sources was utilized.

Table-1: Data Report for Key Elements of Short Courses Development

Sources	Number of Elements	Elements
Duffy (2017)	4	short time, idea focus, practical application, user friendly
Promsri (2019d)	6	name of the program, program highlights, targets, duration, delivery format, and training methods
Neelakandan (2021)	5	navigation, relevant content, design and visuals, interactivity, and track learners' progress.
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (2021)	8	rationale and aim, statement of learning, priority learning units, course overview, expectation and learning outcomes, assessment for reporting, assessment for certification, and feature of quality.

Findings

Based on data analysis, six components were found in common to be important to use as part of short course template for digital leadership. Table 2 displayed the synthesis and analysis of data that leads to key elements for short course template development. These six components consisted of course overview, course objectives, content (lesson), duration, learning expectation and outcomes, and assessment. Lesson/Content element (100%) was found to be the most important component among these four sources followed by learning outcomes (75%), overview (50%), duration (50%), and assessment (50%)

Table-2: Data Synthesis and Analysis of Short Course Elements Development

Sources / Elements	Duffy (2017)	Promsri (2019d)	Neelakandan (2021)	National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (2021)
Course Overview			√	√
Course Objectives	√			√
Lessons/Content	√	√	√	√
Duration	√	√		
Learning Outcomes	√		√	√
Assessment			√	√

Course overview introduces the course and provides the guidelines for learners for what needs to be done in this course. Also, this part includes statement of the instructor, which gives information on course structure such as schedule, communication channels, class activities, and assessment.

Course objectives not only describe what learners are to acquire from the course, but also provide guidelines for instructors to evaluate at the right point. In addition, course objectives should be visibly addressed and written based on learner-centered approach.

Lessons and Content provide information about the units or relevant topics need to be learned in that specific course. The lesson should be scoped and focused in a timeline, which should not take too long to ensure that learners are to remain their attention. Besides, course content can be described as the module that directs a learner from one lesson to the next one step by step, which helps learners be more systematic on studying the lesson and concepts of the course.

Duration provide the period of time to study in the specific course. The short course should be short, which takes about 40-60 hours for completion. For each unit, the lesson should not be exceeded 10-15 minutes if possible.

Learning outcomes describes the particular knowledge, skills, and ability in which learners gain from the course. Also, learning outcomes are measurable accomplishment of learners after course learning completion.

Assessment is a process of measuring learning progress of leaners. This process provides a clear understanding about strong and weak points of course participant learning. The short course provides assessment in learning in

Findings of this study suggested that these key components were imperative for developing a short course template in digital leadership. Table 3 demonstrated an example of short course template in digital leadership, which could be used as a fundamental for a further development in this specific course.

Table-3: Short Course Template Development for Digital Leadership

An Online Short Course for Digital Leadership
Course Overview: The arrangement for this short course in digital leadership is created based on a significance of digital disruption environment that influences the need of digital transformation. This short course develops in learners a greater sense of how to become more competitive in a digital era through five inter-connected modules as indicated in lessons section.
Course Objectives: This short course aims to enhance and cultivate learners' ability to become a digital leader in a time of disruption as well as extend their knowledge, skills, and ability to use digital technology and literacy more effectively in support of their improvement, learning and capacity to create transformation.
Lessons/Contents: Lesson 1: Introduction to digital leadership Lesson 2: Digital literacy and knowledge Lesson 3: Agility as part of digital transformation Lesson 4: Digital mindset (vision, customer focus, risk-taking) Lesson 5: Digital citizenship
Duration: 60 hours
Learning Outcomes: (This section needs to be separated into two columns as follows: 1) what learners learn and 2) what learners should be able to do)
Assessment: This short course uses several methods to assessment to ensure that learning objectives are met. Different learning activities are utilized to assess learners' progress in this course. The requirement of 80 percent accomplishment in this short course deems satisfactory, and certificate will be given for those who pass this criterion.

CONCLUSION

This study attempts to develop a template for an online short course in digital leadership in the light of preparation for educational institutions to create more courses and programs in this area. This specific course is very important and in an urgency to help support Thailand 4.0 policy. This study is the first study in this area to pinpoint the importance of digital leadership as a key driven for economic growth. Using documentary analysis and content analysis, findings reveal six major components that need to be added on the short course template development in digital leadership. The example of template demonstrates key sections that can be extended in a real program development. Nevertheless, this study has some limitations, which need to be filled in the future study. Firstly, the sources of information used to explore key elements of short course development are very little. Thus, the next study should place more emphasis on searching additional sources. Secondly, the template presented in this study is based on a free access mode. In case of charging fees for learning a short course, this information should be calculated to ensure the return on investment when delivers the course. Lastly, this short course templet in digital leadership focuses on an online platform solely. The adaptation of approaches and learning contents should be conducted.

The main recommendation for a further study is to develop a short course template for the other courses/subjects. Another recommendation is to extend the importance of digital leadership development by creating a training program or a graduate program in this area.

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