

## Communication Process to Promote Public Participation in Anti-Corruption of People in Muang Chiang Mai District

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### Abstract

This research was a mixed-method research. The objectives were to study the situation, condition, problems, and communication process in promoting participation in anti-corruption of people in Muang District, Chiang Mai Province. The result was synthesized into a body of knowledge and a guide book, which was assessed the standard as the last step. The population and data sample were 400 people in Mueang Chiang Mai District, which were randomly randomized (Accidental Sampling) from 16 sub-districts aged between 18-80 years with the validity of the sample size at +95% and the errors at +5. The three-part questionnaire was used to collect the data. The second data group was the content analysis presented in 2017 of Chiang Mai News, Thai News, Rob Wiang Chiang Mai radio program, WE TV news, and Chiang Mai Mai Kong radio program. The media content was selected with multi-stage randomization, while the data collection tool was coding sheets. The third data sample group was the interview of 21 people who were directors, editors and journalists from the local mass media, local independent media, a group of academics in mass media, law and social sciences, the leader of public sectors, the community leaders, and officers in the Chiang Mai Office of the National Anti-Corruption Commission (ONACC) and Office of Public Sector Anti-Corruption Commission (PACC). The semi-structured interview was conducted as the data collection tools. The data were analyzed for frequency, percentage, and standard deviation. The research results revealed that people in Mueang Chiang Mai District were the middle class with urban lifestyle with slight involvement with local and the lower classes which had a rural lifestyle. The middle-aged and older were groups that had highly engagement with communities. The media usage and participation behaviors of Mueang Chiang Mai District residents found that most of them use Facebook, LINE, and Instagram. They participated with liking and sharing through social media, only 10.5 percent of them had ever participated in the social movement. The results of the anti-corruption participation found that local media did not attach importance to presenting corruption news for fear of harm, while some had mutual benefits with local

politicians. For the anti-corruption agencies such as the NACC and PACC emphasis, it was placed on the corruption combat training of local civil servants and officials. By this, the guideline suggested that the communication process should be divided into two groups: the middle class should use online media to communicate, and the lower-class should apply meetings, community media, and affordable online media as the tool, while the community leaders were the mainstay of communication. The anti-corruption organizations must primarily support the formation of groups with budget, knowledge, and safety. An important aspect of participation is the safety of members and whistleblowers including avoiding conflicts igniting in the community. The communication strategy must provide knowledge and consequences of corruption, the inequality that leads to corruption, protection laws, and safety.

**Keywords:** Public participation, Communication process, Anti-corruption, Corruption, Public sector

## Introduction

Successive governments have attempted to eradicate corruption by issuing corruption suppression policies. However, the situations have been deteriorating, as seen from the country's ranking on the corruption perception index (CPI) by Transparency International. It was revealed that, from 2017 to 2021, the ranking of Thailand fell from 96 in 2017 to 110 in 2021 (Bangokbiznews, 2022). This was in line with the survey of the World Economic Forum, stating that the number one obstacle for investment in Thailand was corruption. The survey respondents perceived that giving and receiving kickbacks (bribery) and corruption among state officers were still rampant. Although there has been punishment of the offenders, they are usually low-ranking officers (Pleantid, 2021). The most frequent complaints are abuse of power, budget allocation with hidden motives, and bribery. As high as 70-80% of the complaints were related to local administration organizations (Matichon online, 2019). Mana Nimitmongkol, the secretary of Anti-Corruption Organization of Thailand (ACT), expressed his opinion that "state mechanisms are not transparent with a double standard of power and legal enforcement. Official administration and non-governmental organizations are intervened and there are no checks and balances on the justice and non-governmental organizations" (BBC News Thai, 2020). Although anti-corruption agencies have launched campaigns and exploited various media, corruption problems have been increasing. Moreover, public participation is at a low level due to safety concerns, ignorance, and remote offices as well as local governmental agencies refusing to publicize relevant information and provide the public an opportunity to investigate and participate (Kaewhanam & Kaewhanam, 2017; Korrasing, 2017).

Communication, for that reason, has become an important tool against corruption. Media can educate about fraudulent behaviors that have negative impact to society. It also helps to detect and disclose corruption practices including the increase of public participation in the audit process (U4, n.d.). In many developing countries, for example, in South Africa, where the news media exposed corruption until the government investigated. Similarly in Bulgaria where in 2019 the media collaborated with NGOs detected corruption of politicians and civil servants. Stapenhurst (2000) explains that the media has created the "tangible effects" in the fight against corruption (UNODC, 2020). In the case of Thailand, although the government has generated a national strategy plan to combat corruption, to promote public participation, and produce several media campaigns, it has barely diminished corruption cases. This research, therefore, needs to investigate and find solutions to reduce corruption through a communication process and increase people's participation. The research's target was people in Mueang District, Chiang Mai province. Chiang Mai people have highly and actively involved in political movements for many decades, in contrast, it is a province in the northern region with high reports of corruption cases. Hence, this research was conducted to reveal the cause and the suitable solution as a guideline to increase people's participation through communication process to reduce the corruption for people in Mueang Chiang Mai District.

## **Literature review**

### **Definitions and Characteristics of Corruption**

Corruption is the abuse of power in the decision-making process and the use of public power for personal gain to facilitate a particular group or even to a single person. It can also happen in all occupations, such as governments, civil servants, parties, corporations, educational institutions, villages, tribes, families and friends. Corruption doesn't always have to be a matter of money. It may be the use of the position for personal gain (Corruptie.org, n.d.; International Monetary Fund, 1998, p. 8). Corruption can be divided into several types, for example: grand versus petty corruption, conventional versus unconventional corruption, and public versus private corruption (Public Safety Canada, n.d.). The behaviors consist of bribery, extortion, fraud, embezzlement, nepotism, cronyism, appropriation of public assets and property for private use, and influence peddling (Myint, 2000). Corruption in developing countries is a major hurdle for their development. They are rampant due to low income or a low level of GDP, closed economy, influence of religion, low media freedom, low people freedom, a low level of education, and high political conflicts (Transparency International, 2014; Sumah, 2018). Whereas the most common corruption practice in Thailand is bribes, business interference from government officials, indecisiveness in punishing, inefficiency in the work of government agencies. It can be seen that the government is indifferent in reducing the rise of corruption (PPTVHD36, 2022). Also, Chiang Mai is another province with corruption. There were 1,165 corruption complaints in 17 Northern provinces, with the most complaints in Chiang Mai and Nakhon Sawan provinces. Topics of most complaints

were related to procurement, negligence in the performance of one's duties or abuse of function, and bribery (Thaipublica, 2015).

## People's participation

The United Nations Research Institute for Social Development defines people's participation as the organized support to increase control over resources and regulative institutions on the parts of groups and movements hitherto excluded from such control. It is also the efforts that people make in order to influence public policy decisions (United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, cited in Involve, 2005). Public participation, besides, must be formed at the grassroots level, not by a state agency. There is collaboration among stakeholders in order to influence policies and decision making on programs or activities that affect communities. The objectives of public participation are for administration transparency, community empowerment, community development, and promotion of active citizenship for equality (Singh, 1992; Holdar, 2002; Involve, 2005). Participation in daily life can be done in several manners, such as, publicizing information, catching up information, or participating in program activities, from brainstorming, expressing opinions, criticizing programs, partaking in public forum, to participating in the budget. Additionally, daily participation can be done in the forms of catching up relevant issues from the media, voting, signing a petition, or participating in a gathering, meeting, or financial mobilization (Arnstein, 1969).

As for public participation in Thailand, it was initially the formation for political movements. Whereas anti-corruption and anti-state power, it was found in the last decade due to conflicting opinions and conflict of interest between local people and state agencies (Ananapibut & Suntranurak, 2015). In Chiang Mai and the upper northern region, group formation of communities and the people sector was found in areas having impacts from state policies. Consequently, local networks were established by employing "the culture for battle" strategy and conventional community cultures as well as religious beliefs, both Buddhism and Christianity, were exploited. Additionally, there was in-group and public communication to cultivate understanding and support mobilization on movements, financial support, community supporters, community networks, NGOs, and academics (Yuenyong, 2014; Maneerattanachaiyong, 2016). On the other hand, people in urban and semi-urban areas were formed into larger networks, consisting of the middle class and organizations, e.g., academics, artists, business and private sectors, state agencies, mass media, and religious organizations. Nevertheless, they were mostly the middle class.

## Media and anti-corruption participation

A crucial tool to promote public participation is the media. The media play a role in inspecting and presenting corruption news on a regular basis, proposing solutions, and collaborating with the state, private and public sectors. Schauseil (2019) stated that the media play three major roles. The first role of a watchdog against corruption is to inspect and report

corruption events in order to scare those intending to get involved in corruption. The second role of promoting integrity involves campaigns for all sectors to perceive the importance of anti-corruption collaboration among domestic and small media to publicize a wider perception on the issue. The last role is to engage citizens in anti-corruption by exploiting modern technology, so that everyone is able to access it and participate in the issue. The media should cultivate “a watchdog culture” in the society by inspecting, reporting, and providing the public of all levels an opportunity to participate. Thus, social media can play a significant role in providing the public an opportunity to participate in anti-corruption. Moreover, the media can promote the participation of civil society by supporting and presenting those inspection results (International Bank of Reconstruction and Development, 2000). To accomplish this, the media must have a freedom in news reporting. Journalists and newsmen must have sufficient income in order not to take bribes, and have undergone skill training in presenting investigative news (International Bank of Reconstruction and Development, 2000; Tegulle, 2011).

As for the anti-corruption role of Thai media, they have not performed their duties to a satisfactory level. They have been free to carry out only some aspects of their duties in the past decade. However, it was found that Thai media are often used as public relations tools to promote activities by governmental organizations. We can see corruption investigations and exposures which more common in independent media, while the local mass media are still less active due to the mutual interests and threats of news coverage (Bangkokbiznews, 2022). Although, some of them are independent media, they have not intended to commit themselves to the anti-corruption role. However, the media practitioners have perceived that anti-corruption campaign activities of the anti-corruption agencies have not been effective. They seem like a publicity of the agency performances rather than serious actual problem solving (Sirisawad, 2017).

## The conceptual framework

1. Definition and characteristics of corruption
2. Public participation
3. Media and Communication process to promote public participation in anti-corruption



Communication process and the guide book to promote public participation in anti-corruption of residents  
in Muang district, Chiang Mai province

**Figure 1** The conceptual framework

From the conceptual framework, this research applied three concepts which are Definition and characteristics of corruption, Public participation, and Media and Communication process to promote public participation in anti-corruption to create a research conceptual framework in order to create anti-corruption guidebook for people in Mueang Chiang Mai District.

### **Research objectives**

1. To investigate the contexts, problems, and communication process in promoting public participation in anti-corruption of residents in Muang district, Chiang Mai province
2. To synthesize the knowledge in the form of a guidebook on the communication process
3. To assess the standards of the guidebook

### **Expected results**

1. There was realization on the contexts, problems, and communication process to promote public participation in anti-corruption of the residents.
2. Knowledge, mechanisms, and an efficient guidebook for creating the communication process to promote public participation in anti-corruption were derived.
3. The research findings could be used as tools and mechanisms to reduce corruption problems in the province and other urban and sub-urban areas.
4. There are guidelines to create public participation in the form of areal and online networks between the state, civic and public sectors in anti-corruption and other issues.

## **Methodology**

This research utilized a mixed-method approach to collect both quantitative and qualitative data as follows.

### **1. Procedures for collecting data on the current situation and problems of the variables in Chiang Mai**

#### **1.1 Quantitative data collection**

The first group is the population and sample group of 234,837 residents in Mueang Chiang Mai District (the 2016 data) which were randomly randomized (Accidental Sampling) from 16 sub-districts. They were both males and females aged between 18 and 80 years old. The Yamane formula was applied to define the sample size at 399.32 or 400 residents, with the validity of the sample size at +95% and the errors at +5. The three-part questionnaire was used to collect the data. The first part was concerned with general information of the respondents, which included gender, age, occupation, income, and educational level. The second part was about their behavior on social media and application use for communication. The third part involved their aspects of social media and application use for their exposure to information as well as social movement groups on the issues of corruption. Their behaviors of the third part were divided into two topics. The first one was their use of social media and communication applications for corruption news presented by the press and the general public. The second one

was their use of social media and communication applications for social movement groups. The questionnaire was verified for its content validity by three experts specialized in mass communication, social sciences, and political science. The data were statistically analyzed for frequency, percentage, and standard deviation.

The second data sources were local media contents presented in 2017. The multi-stage random sampling method was applied to select the sample group, which consisted of “Rob Wiang Chiang Mai” radio program, “WE TV News” by the WETV Cable Television Network, Chiang Mai News and Thai news newspaper, and Chiang Mai Mai Kong (Zero corruption Chiang Mai) radio program by Chiang Mai Office of the National Anti-Corruption Commission (ONACC). The data collection’s instrument was coding sheets which was verified the content validity by three experts. The analysis of contents that promoted public participation and corruption in Chiang Mai was conducted. The data analysis units were theme and item, while the data from the coding sheet were analyzed for frequency and percentage.

## 1.2 Qualitative data collection

The depth interview was conducted with 21 informants. The first group of local mass media and local independent media were consisted of directors, editors, journalists, and news anchors. The second group was officers in the Chiang Mai Office of the National Anti-Corruption Commission (ONACC) and Office of Public Sector Anti-Corruption Commission (PACC), while the third group was media, social science and law academics. Besides, community leaders and public sector leaders of “the Green Beauty Scented Organization” and “Love Doi Suthep Network” was interviewed as the last group. The content validity of the semi-structured interview form was verified by three experts. The interview focused on contexts, problems, and communication process in promoting public participation and a guideline for establishing anti-corruption groups or networks to promote both the onsite and online participation of the public in Mueang Chiang Mai District. After this, the data were categorized and analyzed descriptively.

## 2. Steps in making and assessing the efficiency of the guidebook

The data from the first step was summarized, divided into groups or topics, and analyzed until the result was obtained and created a guidebook. Next, the guidebook had the standard assessment in the four dimensions, which include utility, feasibility, propriety and accuracy standards (Buosoute, 2012). The content validity of the assessment was verified by 3 specialists in Social Sciences, Political Science and Assessment. It was calculated for the index of item-objective congruence (IOC) of each statement. Subsequently, the assessment results revealed that the efficiency of items 1.5, 2.3 and 3.5 was at a high level, whereas that of the rest of the items was at the highest level. The results from the first assessment were used to improve the contents. Then, the guidebook utility was re-assessed by 3 leaders who were representatives of the expected users from the ONACC, local independent media, and the public sector, to examine the content validity and improve the language and issues until the efficient guidebook was obtained.

## Results

### 1. The study results on the contexts, problems, and communication process to promote public participation in anti-corruption

#### 1.1 The aspects and behaviors on anti-corruption participation of the residents in Muang district, Chiang Mai province

##### The residents

The residents were classified into two major groups: the middle class and the grassroots or lower class. The middle class consisted of local residents and those migrating from other areas. They were not so interested in inspecting corruption at the local level but in public problems at the national level. The lower class consisted of local villagers and those migrating to reside in congested urban areas. In terms of participations, they formed into groups to participate in political activities at the national level, and they were not so interested in local politics as well. The elderly lower class was most active in involving activities and meetings. Due to the internet expenditure, most of the lower class barely used social media; however, some used social media such as LINE to form into groups, e.g., villagers group, village headmen groups, or village health volunteers group. The grassroots were not so involved in inspecting and filing local corruption complaints. If there were issues, they would gather and file their complaints via their community leaders since their kinship relationship was still in existence. Community leaders were consulted whenever problems arose. Nevertheless, these community leaders were often involved in consensual corruption with local influential figures. In such a case, complaints were filed through local mass media or agencies dealing with corruption suppression. On the other hand, the middle class mostly use social media for participation and occasionally join social movement demonstrations. For complaints of corruption, they often complain through arranged state channels and media.

##### Local mass media

From the interviews, it was found that directors, editors, and journalists of local mass media conceded that corruption news was not presented as often as it should have been for fear of eminent threats. Some media outlets, moreover, were owned by businessmen and had ties with local politicians. Occasionally, local people have complaints through their media, while the evidence must be examined before reporting. However, the local media staffs usually recommend the whistleblowers report to the responsible anti-corruption agencies. This was in line with the analysis results of local news contents, revealing that Chiang Mai mass media presented very little corruption news.

The result from the analysis of news contents in 2017 from 4 local mass media platforms was revealed that Chiang Mai News presented corruption news in the front page news the most, at 63.63%, and 27.27% at the opinion columns. Thai News presented the news

in its news articles the most, at 62.5%, and 25% in the front page news. Additionally, Chiang Mai News presented most corruption news in the criminal news, at 26.31%, 15.78% in law news, and 10.53% in political news respectively. Thai News presented most corruption news in political news at 36.36%, 18.18% in financial and criminal news, and 9.09% in environmental news respectively. As for corruption types in Chiang Mai News, it was found that 26.66% were on negligence of official duties, 20% on conflict of interest and abuse of power, and 13.33% on fraudulence and concealment of bidding information and practices of state agencies. The same was found in Thai News with 36.36%, 18.18%, and 9.09% respectively. For the Rob Wiang Jiang Mai radio program, it was revealed that no corruption news was presented. For WETV program, only two pieces of such news, or 2.58%, were presented in short news and criminal news. On promoting public participation in anti-corruption, it was found that Chiang Mai News and Thai News presented corruption news at 46.7% and 45.45%, followed the news at 33.33% and 27.27%, and persuaded the public to inform corruption activities at 20% and 9.09%. On the other hand, the similar contents were not found in the radio and WETV News programs. In summary, from the interview and content analysis of local media, it was found that very little corruption news were presented which mostly were news from other provinces.

### **Local independent media**

Independent media in Chiang Mai had more coverage of corruption news in the form of investigative news. However, they are still unable to carry out to their fullest extent because they are small organizations without adequate financial resources. More often than not, they have to mobilize financial support from external agencies. It requires time and financial support to report corruption activities, and threats and dangers often occur. What they can do is to start the issues in order to catch attention of national media. Certain independent media organizations focus their attention on promoting, training and encouraging the public to report corruption news or to become civil journalists in an attempt to empower them to inspect and report such news by themselves. This is regarded as the cultivation of public participation.

### **Officers of the Offices of the National Anti-Corruption Commission (ONCC) and the Public Sector Anti-Corruption Commission (PACC) in Chiang Mai**

The two agencies are involved in anti-corruption in Chiang Mai with the main focus on training state employees, officers of local administrative organizations, some students, and some groups of the public in order to raise their awareness on the corruption issue. The emphasis is on punishment, relevant laws, and corruption complaints from all sectors. However, media and training information are produced in the headquarters in Bangkok and implemented nationwide which were not so relevant to local contexts. The two local agencies produce some media of their own due to budget restrictions. For instance, the Chiang Mai ONACC produces a radio program to provide the public knowledge about corruption laws and current policies from the government. Both agencies also have major roles in educating and receiving complaints on anti-corruption in Chiang Mai. The two agencies mainly use speakers

together with the real case study of the law and the punishment to communicate and attract attentions from participants. Nonetheless, these two agencies worked passively and primarily focused on educating and training local officials.

The results in this section revealed that residents in Mueang Chiang Mai District as well as the local media were not earnestly interested in participating in anti-corruption, but continue to participate in activities of their own interest that was beneficial. The fear of intimidation was one of major reasons. Furthermore, the middle class were not really affected from corruption since they had a regular income. On the other hand, the lower class was clearly affected from receiving equal and complete allocated resources from the state.

## **1.2 Behaviors of the participants in exposure to and participation in social media**

The results of the study in this section are information of the use of social media of the sample group. The result was used in designing suitable media and communication channels for target groups. Moreover, the result of participation behaviors were applied to understanding the target groups which led to the creation of communication strategies.

From the survey, general information of the respondents revealed that the number of male and female respondents was equal. It was found that 46% were aged between 20 and 30 years, 14% between 51 and 60 years, and 13.3% between 31 and 40 years. As for their education, 59.3% were bachelor degree holders, 10% were high school certificate holders, and 8.3% were master's degree holders. Regarding their monthly income, 3.5% earned between 20,001 and 30,000 baht, 29.8% between 10,000 and 20,000 baht, and 12.3% between 30,001 and 40,000 baht. As for their occupations, 22.3% were involved in self-employment or trade, 21.5% were students, and 14.3% were in others.

As for their behaviors in exposure to social media and applications, it was revealed that 91% were using Facebook, 85.8% were using Line APP, and 47% were using Instagram. With regard to their frequency of use, it was revealed that 74.3% used them every day, 13.5% used them 4-5 days a week, and 7.3% used them 2-3 days a week. For their duration of use, it was found that 35.8% used them between 20.01 and 24.00 hours, 30.8% used them all day, and 14% used them between 16.01 and 20.00 hours.

Regarding their manners of using social media and communication applications toward social movement groups concerning corruption, it was found that 38.8% just followed corruption news and movements, 22.8% clicked emoji icons to express their likes or emotions, and 20.5% shared corruption news to others.

Nevertheless, it was revealed that, among the respondents, 44 of them or 10.5% participated in the movements convinced by leaders of social movement groups. About five of them or 1.3% donated money or things to support the movements and their leaders. Furthermore, five of them or 1.3% participated in dress, using products and decorating places as convinced by the groups and their leaders. The results showed that of these people, social media is the most popular for news and engagement, with only 10.5% of people who have

really joined the social movement. Most of the sample group showed an engaging role by interacting with the content through social media, but other forms of support such as wearing a support t-shirt, hanging a flag, and tying a green ribbon are not shown. Besides, those who have joined the previous movement, they participated in rallies, donate money, and doing activities to support the movement. From the research results, it was summarized that most of the respondents were middle class. They preferred to use social media and only 10 per cent of them participated in social movement rallies.

## 2. Knowledge synthesis and analysis results to create the guidebook

The author analyzed and synthesized the aforementioned results to create the guidebook which consists of the guidelines for group/network formation and the communication process to promote anti-corruption. The user of this guide is the anti-corruption agencies and the public sector. The communication process must be created in parallel with the establishment of the anti-corruption group, by this; the next part will describe this process.

1. To create a communication process for people in Mueang Chiang Mai District, the target group must be divided into two groups: the middle class and the lower class groups because of the differences of participation and media use behavior. In addition, from the political conflicts for nearly twenty years in Chiang Mai, some of these two groups have had different political views. Whereas corruption is often associated with political factions and different policies, it is unlikely that the two groups can be participated harmoniously and effectively.

2. From the research results, it was not recommended to create a special group to act solely on anti-corruption because of threats and intimidations. Besides, this may not be recognized and caused suspicion by local authorities and people. To reduce the repetition and responsibility, the tasks should be partaken by the existed groups in community. As well, the activity should not be too demanding or risky so that the local were contented in joining. Good governance or community development was the appropriate terms to name the group or created as objectives, especially in rural areas.

3. The anti-corruption agencies in Chiang Mai must provide the groups on information and knowledge of corruption, legal and technical advice, funding, training, media production advice, protection of groups and whistleblowers, and project implementation tools.

4. Anti-corruption cannot be achieved with any one group; there must be cooperation and support from partners. Corruption behaviors are complicated, it is necessary to have knowledge to distinguish. Other than this, group members must learn and understand the laws and regulations to protect themselves as well as methods to communicate and produce the effective media, thus, the people's sector, the governments and anti-corruption agencies must cooperate with the groups. Educational institutions and local media should provide advice and workshops on communication skills, media production, and civic journalism skills.

The next part is the Table 1 that presented the communication process establishment which divided into 4 components: senders, messages, channels, and receivers.

**Table 1** Components and details for group/network formation and the communication process for anti-corruption

Components	Details	
	The middle class	The lower class
1. Guidelines for group/network formation in communities.	<p>1. Survey of community's corruption issues, resources, prospective partners, residents' behaviors on corruption/participation/media use, and local government's anti-corruption policies.</p> <p>2. Brainstorm the commitment, objectives, policy, and strategies to encourage participations and combat corruption.</p> <p>3. Create a network and partners with external groups such as anti-corruption agencies, educational institutions, non-governmental organizations, business, public sector leaders, local mass media, and independent mass media, academics, influencers, and interest groups to support and promote the group's activities. Partners and networks are vital for members' safety. They can provide various channels for reporting and hinting the clues.</p> <p>4. Safety is of the utmost importance which can build trust for participants. In some cases, it is not always necessary to reveal member's identities. However, there should be channels to contact the group.</p> <p>5. Building trust and familiarity among members may take time, thus, the group leader should initially design easy and fun activities to attract more participants and break the ice.</p> <p>6. Groups and networks must be open to any comments and encourage members to report the corruption clues through safety channels. However, issues related to political conflicts should be strictly avoided.</p>	

## 2. Guidelines for communication processes

<b>A. Senders/Founders/Actors</b>	<p>1. Founder of the group or network should be the public sectors cooperate with anti-corruption organizations.</p> <p>2. Group leaders should review the disseminated information and monitor the members including the partners.</p>	<p>The founder of the group or network should be the leader of the community working with anti-corruption organizations. Community leaders, regularly, are trusted by locals to lead in various activities and distribute resources.</p>
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Components	Details	
	The middle class	The lower class
	<p>3. The group should provide channels for commenting and reporting clues with a strict confidentiality process.</p> <p><b>Communication strategy:</b> The middle class did not have much time to participate onsite. Therefore, the network or group should be built primarily through online media and provides constant information, especially the impact that affect the way of life in urban areas, such as the lack of budget for road development, electricity, and quality of life, etc. Moreover, the sense of belonging to Chiang Mai community must be created to promote participations.</p>	<p><b>Communication strategy:</b> Meetings in a community setting is required; however, there must be other channels that allow people who are not comfortable with revealing identity to contact the leader.</p>
<b>B. Messages/Contents</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contents or messages must be created in accordance with communication goals to increase awareness, recruit partners, resources, and encourage more whistle blowers and participations from various groups in community.</li> <li>Contents that must be presented is: 1) corruption aspects and types, 2) laws and punishment, 3) whistle-blowers' protection guidelines, 4) the 1997 State Information Act, 4) cultivation of attitude and behavior to anti-corruption, 5) convenient and safe channels for corruption complaints.</li> <li>Contents must be uncomplicated and tailor-made in line with target audience. Local dialect may be applied.</li> </ol>	
<b>C. Media/Channels</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Online media or social media should be the major communication channels for this group, since they participate through online media the most.</li> <li>Public sectors should cooperate with anti-government organizations to manage the media.</li> <li>Recently, some anti-corruption social media pages have been emerged, these can be others channels to inform</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For the in-group communication, the group should use village broadcasting towers and meetings.</li> <li>Media for the out-group are online media, activities such as exhibition, rallies, sport, cultural, and music events.</li> </ol>

Components	Details	
	The middle class	The lower class
	<p>the clues. Some journalists point out that these pages are probably originated by staff from the anti-government organization to disclose the cases.</p>	<p>3. Skilled and experienced speakers are the essential medium for the lower class. They may invite speakers from partners and also train some local speakers.</p> <p>4. Whistle blowers channels should be created and coordinated with anti-corruption organizations.</p>
<b>D. Receivers/ Target audiences</b>	<p>The middle age residents who have been in Chiang Mai for a long time should be apply local beliefs and Lanna or northern culture as communication strategy. On the other hand, the younger generation should be convinced with information, unequal, disadvantages of corruption which impacts to their daily lives.</p>	

**Table 2** The standard assessment results of the guidebook

<b>Standard</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Experts' opinions</b>	
		<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
1. Utility	The guidebook can differentiate concerned stakeholders and they are able to benefit from it clearly. The contents are wide-ranging and in response to the needs and interest of users. They are easy to understand and up-to-date	4.17	0.26
2. Feasibility	The guidebook proposes practical implementation methods, and the implementation methods and steps are cost-effective.	4.11	0.39
3. Propriety	The contents enable related groups to create communication processes to promote public participation in anti-corruption efficiently. The presentation of the contents and implementation steps is based on the respect of group's dignity and value. The presentation is also morally and ethically suitable for resources and expenses.	4.00	0.00
4. Accuracy	The explanations of the contents and methods are clearly detailed with suggestions of relevant data sources, resources, agencies, and groups. The implementation steps are clear and adequate with valid and systematic contents.	4.37	0.33

This table 2 is presented the result of guideline evaluation, while the guideline's contents were created from the synthesized information from Table 1. The evaluation process has been conducted twice. The first process was the content validity evaluation by 3 experts on participations, communications, and laws, followed by the second assessment of the guidance users which was a representative of the anti-corruption organization, public sector leaders, and independent media journalist. The assessment results revealed that the efficiency of items 1.5 (Utility Standard), 2.3 (Feasibility Standard) and 3.5 (Propriety Standard) was at a high level, whereas that of the rest of the items was at the highest level.

## Discussions

### 1. Contexts, problems, and communication process in promoting public participation in anti-corruption of the target group

From the 400 respondents of the questionnaire, it was found that only 10% used to participate in social movements. For their behavior in using social media to participate in inspecting corruption, it was revealed that most of them used the media to follow such news, indicating that the middle class in the study area were involved in less participation in local development. This might be due to the fact that there was a demographic change over two decades ago when local residents migrated to less urban areas after there was more traffic in town and residences were more congested. New migrants into the city center were middle class people from other areas, so they felt less love and bond to the locality (Charoenmuang, 1989). Although the new immigrants were willing to collaborate with their communities, conflicts occurred (Binthavihok, 2009). Moreover, educated and wealthy middle class did not like to participate in community meetings or activities and they had channels of communication and complaint filing without going through community leaders (Pa Daet Sub-district headman, 2018). The participation of the middle class in social movements is on the issues of the environment, politics, and development. These issues involve the networks at the provincial and national levels. Nonetheless, the grassroots do not usually participate with the middle class due to political conflicts over ten years ago. The former perceives that the latter participate in the movements that are against the progress of the province (Mattana, 2006; Pinta, 2013; Maneerattanachaiyong, 2016). The latest movement in Chiang Mai involved over 50 networks at the provincial and national levels, called “Love Doi Suthep Network”. These movement leaders were still the middle class who were both local residents and those migrating from elsewhere. Group leaders expressed their opinions that Chiang Mai is a city with NGOs and most of them migrated from other areas, and public movements are still going strong (Leader of Love Doi Suthep Network, 2018; North Public News, 2018). Consequently, the media and language used in movements of these groups may be appropriate to the middle class, making some of the lower class being unable to access and understand. Accordingly, most of social movements in Chiang Mai have been led by these middle class networks.

The participation of the grassroots in local developments was still at a low level due to several hurdles, such as, insincerity of local agencies in revealing budget information and concealment of the information that people and the public sector asked for. More importantly, people at the grassroots level are afraid of the influence of local state employees and officers because these influential figures have a close connection. Furthermore, people do not pay much attention to and are not aware of the importance of public participation as well as the understanding of their duties and impacts. In remote areas, travelling can be difficult, so they

are unable to attend meetings, besides, many people are daily wage earners and their daily income will be lost if they attend the meeting (Chalui, 2006; Sirisoda 2014; Anti-corruption officer of ONACC, 2018). Some grassroots people in urban areas participate in activities that are specifically beneficial to them, e.g, development activities or election of politicians who promised to bring good to them (Pa Daet Sub-district Headman, 2018; Sattayanurak, 2018; Director of Thai Civil Rights and Investigative Journalism, 2018).

For the problems and hurdles of local mass media in investigating corruption, they stem from business restrictions and safety, because they are small-sized and depend on local supporters. At the same time, business people are also owners of the media, so the focus is more on benefits than on ideology with the practices of mutual interest in order to survive. Although relevant laws and measures have been issued to protect complainants and witnesses, they do not cover and support the work of local mass media. Moreover, the media do not earn much, so they opt for presenting news that does not affect their lives. This is another cause that makes the media to become a part of corruption (Tegulle, 2011; Numcharoen, 2018; Saeteow, 2018).

From this, it can be seen that the middle and lower classes did not highly partake in corruption combat because of work, family, economic burdens, prolonged political conflicts in Chiang Mai, lack of local bonds, and threats. Moreover, investigation and punishment process took time; people did not want to take risks and waste money and time to testify including the danger from revealing identities. Thus, other key guidelines to against corruption is establishing channels to educating and training, reducing political conflicts during the commination process, stressing on damages from corruption, and finding a convenient and safe way to whistle-blowing. The leaders must not instigate members to cause conflicts and intimidations in communities. All of these can help people to get more involved.

## 2. The knowledge analysis and synthesis results to create the guidebook

To accomplish the objective, the guidebook was created from the results of media use and participation behavior from a survey of 400 residents in Mueang Chiang Mai District, including the interview of academics, anti-corruption staff, community leaders, public sector leaders, and media practitioners. These data have been used to design media and communication strategies for the middle class and the lower class in Chiang Mai such as the effective types of media and messages and the partners and resources supporters. The guidebook was evaluated the standard assessment in the four dimensions of the guidebook thereafter, which include utility, feasibility, propriety and accuracy standards in accordance with the methods of Ratana Buosoute (2012) and Jintana Sooksomdan (2021). In terms of guidebook's contents, it is divided and explained into 4 elements of SMCR (senders/founders, messages/contents, channels/media, receivers/audiences). There are two groups of guidebook user. The primary user is the governmental and anti-corruption organizations, whereas the public sector is the secondary user. In regard to groups and networks creation, the middle class

and lower class should be created their own groups since they have different media use and participation practices. Online media is the most appropriate channel for the middle class, while meetings and community media should be the main tool for the lower class group.

The middle class preferred to use Facebook, Line, and Instagram. The public sector group also mentioned that those participating in movements, particularly the middle class, preferred to use social media for participation. It was advisable that the anti-corruption group or network produce their own media. Presently, public sector groups have started using social media to publicize information in conjunction with mass media, activity media, and specific purpose media. However, social media are the mainstream because they are cost-free. Additionally, contents can be specifically designed, information can be spread more quickly, and mainstream mass media can be attracted to participate in news production (Suwantarat, 2012).

The media for the grassroots consist of person media or speakers, who are ideological and respectable leaders like state officials, village heads, monks, or teachers. Moreover, they should apply village broadcasting towers as well as activity media, e.g., folk play, exhibition, drama and music, in order to convey messages and movements to the public. The use of social media for the grassroots has still not been convenient because they have to pay for internet services (Kaewthep, 2000; Don Kaew Chief Administrator of Sub-district Administrative Organization, 2018; Pa Daet Sub-district Headman, 2018). Moreover, for the grassroots groups, it is found that a good leader and/or an efficient speaker will be able to motivate them to participate. The leader as the group speaker must possess high leadership, be ready for change and inquisitive for new knowledge, and seek both internal and external collaboration. Furthermore, he should be able to convince members to develop themselves and perceive the benefits of the public. In addition, he should provide everyone an opportunity to express their opinions and to take part in thinking and designing activities that they are satisfied with and trust in, so that more participation can follow suit (Mungkung, 2017; Don Kaew Chief Administrator of Sub-district Administrative Organization, 2018; Pa Daet Sub-district Headman, 2018).

In terms of contents, the guidebook suggests the presentation of corruption causes and solutions in communities. People should be made aware of the impacts and damages of corruption on their lives and communities. Moreover, complaint lodging processes and relevant laws should be proposed and issued in order for the safety of complainants. Complaint lodging channels should be specifically created and personal information of complainants must be kept strictly confidential. Local administrative organizations should not be involved as there might lead to conflicts and dangers.

There should be a collaborative network among anti-corruption agencies, the public sector, mass media, and others in order to support one another. Giving rewards to complainants and whistle-blowers is another way to motivate them (Sanositrakul, 2010). Nevertheless, some people have still lodged their complaints via mass media. It is therefore recommended that the

government establish a fund to support local and independent media to work specifically on anti-corruption, so that they can be independent and have mechanisms to protect their safety (International Bank of Reconstruction and Development, 2000; Numcharoen, 2018). In addition, collaboration with neighboring communities in order to share knowledge and create a network is the key for safety and resources supports. Community members should form their own communication process in an attempt to establish solution guidelines through collective thinking, learning and bonding, so that real public participation is achieved (Gilbreath & Zakharchenko, 2002; Sthaphitanonda, 2008).

## Conclusion and suggestions

This research article revealed that characteristic of residents in Mueang Chiang Mai District is a city blended with rural. Most of them are middle class with local origin; also there are a lot of middle class immigrants from other provinces. The residents are not interested in participating with local issues, but focus on national issues. This may be due to a lack of local relations and a middle-class lifestyle that pays attention on work and current agendas. Social movements of the past decades have applied Lanna culture and religious beliefs as movement strategies. However, when the character of the people changed and developed into an urban lifestyle making it impossible to use this traditional communication strategy effectively.

Accordingly, creating a communication process to promote participation must divide into 2 groups, the middle-class groups with urban lifestyles and the lower classes with a rural lifestyle. The first group prefers to communicate and participate via online media, while the latter prefer on-site meetings which the community leaders are influential in leading activities and receiving complaints. Significantly, the communication process to promote anti-corruption must emphasize on safety and confidentiality of whistleblowers. It is necessary to be a network with anti-corruption organizations, educational institutions, and local media to support funding, information, and legal and security assistance. In addition, the middle class and lower class in Chiang Mai has had conflicts caused by diverse political views. Issues of corruption are often related to groups and politics which easily lead to conflicts. To reduce this conflict, group leaders need to be cautious and emphasize on corruption combat and goals. What is mandatory for every group is that channels for lodging complaints about and inspecting corruption must be confidential, safe, and convenient. Although the public sector should play a key role in combating corruption, there are threats and dangers toward the whistleblowers. Therefore, anti-corruption organizations must play a vital role in advocating in this area to build trust. Chiang Mai is a province where the public sector is strong, so concerned agencies should provide necessary resources to them to fight corruption. To distinguish corruption behaviors, training on knowledge about corruption inspection and communication should be particularly provided to the groups. Additionally, state agencies must be serious in revealing relevant information to

the public. Nonetheless, safety of complainants must be of utmost importance in order for the public to be willing to participate in the corruption combat.

### **New knowledge and the effects on society and communities**

This research found that people living in Mueang Chiang Mai District have both urban and rural lifestyle, while there is an immigration of the middle class from other areas causing a lack of ties with local life, culture, politics, and social issues. Moreover, urban life drives them to work and study hard which leaves no time for local participations. The middle class pays attention to politics and national agendas, but neglect local problems, especially on corruption. Therefore, to create participation at the local level, it requires communication processes through online media that demonstrate how an unequal resource allocation effect on their quality of life. On the other hand, the lower classes still have a rural lifestyle which community leaders are a key player in leading activities and participations. Consequently, leaders and facilitators with communicative skills contribute to a greater understanding and participation of lower classes. Furthermore, political conflicts between the middle and lower classes in Chiang Mai remains a major obstacle on cooperation, whereas anti-corruption is often associated with investigate and reveal the policies and practices of some particular groups which stimulate more conflicts. To accomplish the plan, the group leader must be cautious and focus on the corruption's solutions and control the political conflict among members. Lastly, the key to participation is ensuring the safety of participants and the confidentiality of whistleblowing. Local anti-corruption agencies must take the lead in building this safety together with the community in order to promote trust and active participation of all groups.

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