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## Model of Sustainability Enhancement According to the Concepts of Sufficiency Economy from the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center in Thailand

Kanpetch Saranontawat<sup>1</sup>, Tanapol Kortana<sup>2</sup>, Bundit Pungnirund<sup>3</sup>

Doctor of Philosophy Program in Innovation Management, Graduate School, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University<sup>1,2,3</sup>

E-mail: kanpetch.sa@ssru.ac.th

### ABSTRACT

Sustainability in accordance with the concepts of sufficiency economy contributes to the improvement of quality of life for Thai people from all walks of life. The Sufficiency Economy Learning Center will promote and sustain the application of the concepts of sufficiency economy to the benefit of the individual, community, society, culture, and environment. By adopting these tenets, Thailand will move toward a more stable and prosperous future. The objectives of research were 1) to study the current state of sustainability in accordance with the concepts of sufficiency economy from the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center in Thailand; 2) to study the influence of variables on sustainability in accordance with the concepts of sufficiency economy from the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center in Thailand; and 3) to develop a model for sustainability according to the concepts of sufficiency economy from the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center in Thailand. This study used a mixed method, employing both quantitative and qualitative methods. The sample was 460 trainees from 47 of the Sufficiency Economy Learning Centers in Thailand. The sample size was 20 times the number of observational variables. Stratified Simple Random Sampling was used in the study. The study performed data collection with an estimation by questionnaire. To analyze data, the study used the Structural Equation Model (SEM). A survey was used in the qualitative research to collect data. The targets were 20 experts from the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center in Thailand. The findings were as follows: 1) Sustainability according to the concept of sufficiency economy at most level were (in descending order): condition of knowledge, condition of virtue, modesty, and social immunity, with reasonableness at a medium level; 2) Variables affected were learning skills, the knowledge and ability of the experts, the learning process, the learning network, learning potential and learning innovation. These had a positive direct influence on sustainability according to the concepts of sufficiency economy from the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center in Thailand at a level above statistical significance of 0.05; 3) The model for sustainability enhancement according to the concepts of the sufficiency economy from the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center in Thailand, To developments the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center depended on potential to steadily drive the organization, be stable, and be ready to adapt. This study focused on experts, networks, learning process, innovation, learning skills, and learning potential. To drive this organization, they depended on the new knowledge on sufficiency economy. The findings of qualitative study shown that trainees of the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center in Thailand were excited at the prospect of learning about online marketing technologies and skills required in the market. Sustainability in constant change is driven by the concepts of



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sufficiency economy from the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center in Thailand. Among the recommendations, the findings suggest that the government devise a policy that will enable the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center in Thailand to better promote learning. Sustainability is a key to thriving in financial hardship and adapting to ever-changing global trends. Trainees will apply sufficiency economy, providing context and connecting it to personal meaning, ensuring that they are equipped for current and future challenges.

**Keywords:** Sufficiency Economy, Learning Center, Thailand, Sustainability Enhancement



## **Introduction**

In Thailand, as in many other places in the world, the impact of economic and social problems unfolds over time. These problems hamper long-term development of the country. If the Thai economy cannot successfully make the transition, it will be difficult for Thailand to be stable, prosperous and sustainable. The biggest issue holding back the Thai economy is the need to better develop fundamental and strategic factors such as investments in research and development, scientific and innovative technology development, the acquisition of qualifications that match the need of the market, human development for all ages, better training. And classroom focus is building workers who will cultivate discipline, strong values, and social intelligence. Additionally, geographical development calls on governments to prepare environmental standard policies to decrease inequality so that Thailand will be able to “punch above its weight” (The Twelfth National Economic and Social Development Plan from 2017–2021).

Thailand has adopted the philosophy of sufficiency economy. The late king advised his people to be conscious, be moderate, be reasonable, have social immunity, consider carefully when making decisions, and evaluate ethical dilemmas. We are exhorted not to be materialistic. Consequently, the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center, which provides an education in sufficiency economy for all the people, was established by the government. The Sufficiency Economy Learning Center is sponsored as part of a strategic initiative established in partnership with private sectors all over the country. Currently, Thais generally do not apply sufficiency economy philosophy

to their lives. This study focuses on sustainability according to sufficiency economy. The researchers used the model for sustainability enhancement formulated by the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center. (Kasem Watthanachai, 2007; Chirayu Isarangkun Na Ayutthaya, 2006)

Learning centers and community learning centers work to become institutions where everyone, including people from vulnerable communities, can study and gain the knowledge they need. Local wisdom from experts will deepen their understanding of key areas—culture, values, and communitarian identity. Activities will match up with the needs to learn and focus on learning process that improve livelihoods in vulnerable communities under current world’s trend, or what I call “rapid and constant change.” This will strengthen ties in the community and be the center of lifelong learning for the public. (Provincial Community Development Office of Chiang Rai, 2017; Suwut Worawitpinit et. al., 2017)

The findings of Alexander, F. K., & Pushnik, J.C. (2017); Barlow, J. A. (2018); Loraine L. Lundquist, Kiana Lucero and Helen Cox (2018) suggest that ability of experts is able to help learners develop new ideas that are necessary for new job creation and also helps them perform better. This is because creativity boosts their performance on the job. Robert Lamont Moore (2018); Idowu (Ishola), O. M. and McCalla, G. (2018); Oluwabukola Mayowa Ishola (2019) found that the learning network of people in the same professions helps learners succeed. According to Ferguson, R., et al. (2019); Marte C. W. Solheim Sverre J. Herstad Rune Dahl Fitjar Ragnar Tveterås (2017); Gona Sirwan Mohammed, Karzan Wakil, Sarkhell Sirwan Nawroly



(2018), research showed that through learning innovation, management of learning leads to successful learning.

### Objectives

The researchers were interested in a model for sustainability enhancement according to the concepts of the sufficiency economy from the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center in Thailand. The model allows Thai people to apply the concepts of sufficiency economy they learn in the learning center and also helps the center bring more job skills to learners. The objectives are thus:

1. To study the current state of sustainability in accordance with the concepts of sufficiency economy from the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center in Thailand.
2. To study the influence of variables on sustainability in accordance with the concepts of sufficiency economy from the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center in Thailand.
3. To develop the model for sustainability enhancement in accordance with the concepts of sufficiency economy from the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center in Thailand.

### Methodologies

1. In this study, the Sequential Exploratory Mixed Method was used. The study performed quantitative data collection with an estimation by questionnaire distributed to 460 trainees. Data were analyzed by using descriptive statistics. Qualitative data were collected from 20 experts.

2. Random sampling: Sample size was determined by estimating observational variables under the study. The ratio was 1:20 and the model was consisted of 23 observational variables; therefore, the sample size was 460 (Unit of Analysis). Then, we used Simple Random Sampling.

Analysis follows;

1. Descriptive statistics used were average, and standard deviation.
2. To assess the influence, the study used technique called Structural Equation Model (SEM).
3. We analyzed data by using Content Analysis.

### Results

1. The findings of the current state of sustainability in accordance with the concepts of sufficiency economy by the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center in Thailand are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Average, standard deviation and interpretation of current state of sustainability in accordance with the concepts of sufficiency economy by the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center in Thailand (n = 460)

Variables	M	SD	Interpretation
1. Moderation	3.62	.57	Moderately high
2. Reasonableness	3.09	.86	About right



3. Social immunity	3.59	.64	Moderately high
4. Condition of knowledge	3.66	.62	Moderately high
5. Condition of ethics	3.66	.63	Moderately high
Sustainability in accordance with the concepts of sufficiency economy	3.52	.66	Moderately high

Table 1 shows that the sustainability in accordance with the concepts of sufficiency economy are at a moderately high level, with a mean of 3.52. When we consider each area, we found that all areas, with one exception, are at a moderately high level. The means indicate a range from 3.59 to 3.66. Reasonableness has a mean of 3.09.

2. The analysis of the model for structural equation of the influence of variables on sustainability according to the concepts of the sufficiency economy by the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center in Thailand is shown in Table 2.

The Table 2 parameters estimate direct effect, indirect effect, and total coefficients of model for structural equation of the influence of variables on sustainability according to the concepts of the sufficiency economy by the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center in Thailand (n = 460).

Independent Variable	Effect	Dependent Variable
		sustainability according to the sufficiency economy (sufsus) $R^2 = .92$
Experts' knowledge (lectur)	Direct	.49 (2.89)
	Indirect	n/a
	Total	.49 (2.89)
Learning network (network)	Direct	.39 (6.33)
	Indirect	n/a
	Total	.39 (6.33)
Learning process (leapro)	Direct	.43(5.18)
	Indirect	n/a
	Total	43(5.18)



Learning skills (leaski)	Direct	.51 (3.85)
	Indirect	n/a
	Total	.51 (3.85)
Innovative learning (leaino)	Direct	.21 (4.46)
	Indirect	n/a
	Total	.21 (4.46)
Building trust (confi)	Direct	-.28 (-.73)
	Indirect	n/a
	Total	-.28 (-.73)
Learning support (suppo)	Direct	-.09 (-.36)
	Indirect	n/a
	Total	-.09 (-.36)
Learning potential (potlea)	Direct	.24 (2.80)
	Indirect	n/a
	Total	.24 (2.80)

$\chi^2 = 302.61$  df = 158 p-value = .00000,  $\chi^2 / df = 1.91$ , RMSEA = .049, P-Value for Test of Close Fit = .66, NFI = .99, IFI = .99, RMR = .021, SRMR = .042, CFI = .99, GFI = .94, AGFI = .91, CN = 276.84

\* At a level above statistical significance of 0.05

From Table 2 found that the SEM fit data. Goodness-of-fit indices are  $\chi^2 = 302.61$  df = 158 p-value = .00000,  $\chi^2 / df = 1.91$ , RMSEA = .049, P-Value for Test of Close Fit = .66, NFI = .99, IFI = .99, RMR = .021, SRMR = .042, CFI = .99, GFI = .94, AGFI = .91, CN = 276.84

The model fit of the Structural Equation Model discovered experts' knowledge, learning network, learning process, learning skills, innovative learning and learning potential had positive influences on the sustainability in accordance with the concepts of

sufficiency economy. The coefficients of influence were: .49, .39, .43, .51, .21, and .24 respectively, at a level above statistical significance of 0.05.

Conversely, building trust and learning support did not influence the sustainability in accordance with the concepts of sufficiency economy. All variables were able to predict 92% of the sustainability in accordance with the concepts of sufficiency economy. Model fit are shown in Figure 1.

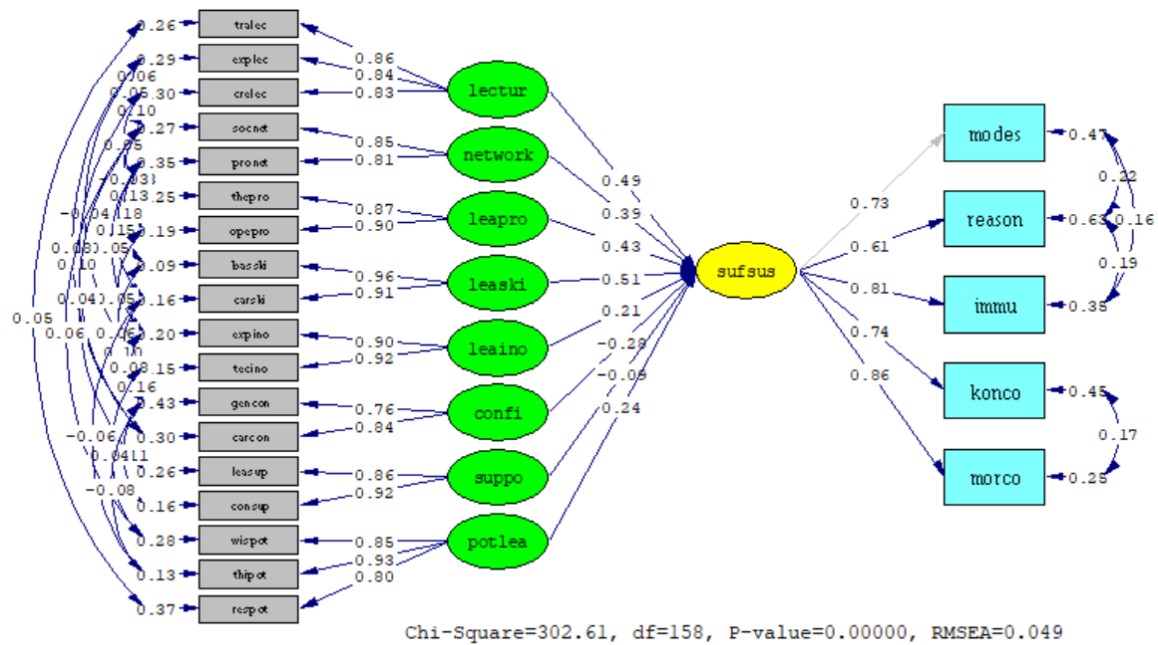


Figure 1 Fit of model for structural equation (n = 460)

3. The model for sustainability enhancement according with the concepts of the sufficiency economy from the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center in Thailand (SELC Model) was developed as shown in Figure 2.

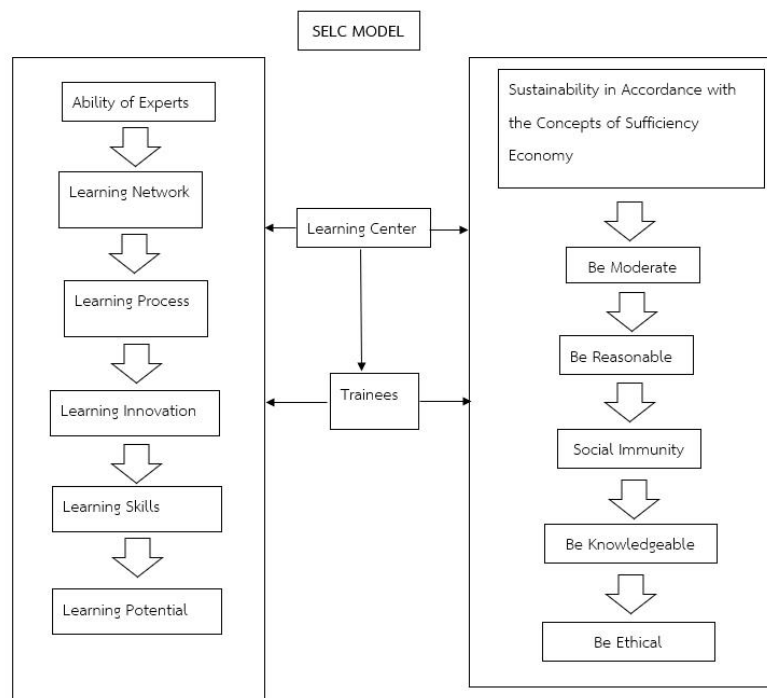


Figure 2 The model for sustainability enhancement according to the concepts of sufficiency economy from the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center in Thailand



Figure 2 shows that to develop the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center depended on the potential to steadily drive the organization, stability, and adaptability. This study focused on experts, networks, learning proves, innovation, learning skills, and learning potential. To drive this organization, they depended on the new knowledge on sufficiency economy.

### **Discussion**

The study found that experts' knowledge, learning network, learning process, learning skills, innovative learning, learning potential were the distinguishing factors in determining influence on sustainability in accordance with the concepts of sufficiency economy. Their coefficients were .49, .39, .43, .51, .21, and .24 respectively. P-value was .05. All of the variables achieve 92% accuracy of sustainability in accordance with the concepts of sufficiency economy. The findings can be explained as follows:

1. Experts' knowledge had influence on sustainability in accordance with the concepts of sufficiency economy set forth by the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center in Thailand. Experts can equip and empower trainees with knowledge and experiences of the concepts of sufficiency economy. How do they live their daily lives? The report identifies the following factors: living virtuously, working for career development, social immunity, social responsibility, and being environmentally friendly. As well as knowledge on sufficiency economy, trainees will also upskill and launch careers in the sector they would like to be employed in. Alexander and Sabina

(2018) observed how cultural sustainability takes place through learning. They concluded that intergenerational transfer of knowledge promotes sustainability. In another study (Amy (2016), researchers observed professional uncertainties). They found that if we help trainees enhance their potential, they will connect to job recommendations. This boosted the country's economy because the human capital was of high quality. Allyson (2017) examined experiences in non-governmental organizations aimed at increasing the abilities of female refugee and migrant laborers. The researchers concluded that, in an adult learning project in Kenya, knowledge and experiences of these refugees and migrant laborers helped them get jobs, and further learning led them to make steady income.

2. Learning networks had influence on sustainability in accordance with the concepts of sufficiency economy set forth by the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center in Thailand. Diaspora networks and networks of people in the same professions led to application of what was learned at the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center. It shares performance innovation to collaboratively develop a broader understanding of performance. Networks of people in the same professions make it easy for trainees to share experiences about interested professional issues. As a result, they will display appropriate behaviors at work, their work will be correctly done, and they will have social immunity. Academics discovered that knowledge generated in online learning will suit learners' needs and desires. They can gain the specific knowledge and work from





different locations and in different time zones. Virtual tools help learners accomplish tasks easily and quickly and the knowledge is novel. According to Breivik (2016), who studied online research, knowledge can be acquired via online learning.

3. The learning process had influence on sustainability in accordance with the concepts of sufficiency economy set forth by the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center in Thailand. Theoretical materials and practice for trainees from the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center in Thailand help trainees develop learning processes. These include theories on sufficiency, being reasonable, and cultural protections. The researcher distilled four key dimensions: life, economy, society, and environment. Trainees practiced the concept of sufficiency economy with prudence when they make a plan, proceed with the plan, and build social immunity to their professions. Academics also studied development of forms of managing learning centers according to sufficiency economy philosophy by employing so-called “The Mueng Petch Way” (meaning traditional knowledge and wisdom). They found that learning about the sufficiency economy philosophy can lead to sustainability, recognizing traditional knowledge, and increasing the engagement of local people. Learning about the sufficiency economy philosophy can inform actions in vulnerable communities. Alexander and Sabina (2018) studied sustainable cultural safety. They found that learning processes in cultural conservations and activities of continuous cultural protection led to sustainability. Moreover, it will help future generations see significance of cultural conservation. Learning skills had influence on sustainability in accordance with the

concepts of sufficiency economy by the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center in Thailand, because providing fundamental skills and professional skills help trainees learn in a more systematic way, in steps, and enable them to think about the problem more abstractly. To have learning skills are to have fundamental skills to aid in drawing conclusions and improve one’s ability to deploy step-by-step procedures in each profession, which have different characteristics of learning skills. Chi-Fang (2018) studied factors that reinforce second-language communication skills. The researcher found that learning step by step will build students’ skills of communication. Similarly, Courtney (2016) **studied** learning experiences in middle and high schools and found that learners who had developed learning skills acquired knowledge faster.

4. Innovative learning had influence on sustainability in accordance with the concepts of sufficiency economy set forth by the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center in Thailand. Experience management and utilization of technology for coaching at the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center in Thailand can reinforce trainees’ knowledge and understanding by providing different ways of learning experience management. If they want to build new knowledge, they must help trainees utilize technology in managing learning to develop efficiently. Idowu and McCalla (2018) focused much attention on increased efficiency’s link to consultation with friends about lifelong learning. The new and accepted ways can increase efficiency. Jason Davis (2018) studied multimedia’s influence on learning management. He



found that multimedia can develop learning efficiently and sustainably.

5. Learning potential had influence on sustainability in accordance with the concepts of sufficiency economy set forth by the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center in Thailand. This is because intelligence, mindsets, and responses of trainees at the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center in Thailand can create sustainability in learning. Trainees used intelligence, mindsets, and responses, and using these adaptive skills influenced how they subsequently developed sustainability in accordance with the concepts of sufficiency economy. Dunne (2019) studied the instruction of critical thinking. Critical thinking can develop learners to be intelligent because trainees think about reasons, which is a response of learners. Elizabeth (2018) studied the impact on learning when mindset is the basis for self-control. She found that teaching students the thinking process can lead to intelligence and can help learners develop self-control. Gorla and Konstantinidis (2017) examined online learning in private institutions. They discovered developing intelligence needs to practice thinking and reactions to responses. Gona, Karzan and Sarkhell (2018) studied the relationship between small lessons and developing learning potential. They concluded that small lessons can develop thinking and intelligence effectively. In particular, learners who respond more to teaching can acquire more knowledge.

6. Building trust does not influence sustainability in accordance with the concepts of sufficiency economy. This study found that neither general trust nor trust in profession do not build the sustainability in

accordance with the concepts of sufficiency economy. In another study, Gilboy, Heinerichs, and Pazzaglia (2015) observed a flipped learning method. The team of researchers found that flipped learning that focused on goals can build trust in students' learning. Nevertheless, this study was instead more focused on general trust and trust in profession. The problem is that trainees often do not have a good understanding of application of the concepts of sufficiency economy. Furthermore, the current economic stagnation and families' economic malaise are hard on trainees. Families often have sizable expenses, such as school fees and healthcare costs. Trainees lack confidence in the application of sufficiency economy concepts. At first, trainees may be able to apply the sufficiency economy philosophy to their lives, but they cannot continue to do it sustainably because of family issues that they have to encounter. Additionally, when they apply the sufficiency economy philosophy to their lives, they see the problems of applying the sufficiency economy philosophy. These additional problems include lack of capital, lack of governmental support, and lack of energy to turn their ideas into professions.

7. Learning support does not influence sustainability in accordance with the concepts of sufficiency economy set forth by the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center in Thailand. The study found that, while learning and continuing to bring sufficiency concepts into actions, variables of learning support did not cause sustainability. Most learning support during learning was technological assistance, including media and tools trainees need to learn as well as job recommendations and understanding of what they are learning at that time. Support while trainees bring



sufficiency concepts into actions were consultations and equipment assistance is necessary. Academics like Jonathan and Wiggles (2016), Melvin (2018), and others examined what helps each learner to thrive. The support they provided was to give opportunities, to give funding for activities, to provide technological assistance, and consultations. Consequently, they observed learning continuation and sustainability outcomes. Nevertheless, in this study, we believed that learning support simply did not affect sustainability. One study consistent with our findings was Nuryanti and Prima's (2018) study of the impact of knowledge management by supporting utilization of technological innovation. They found that knowledge management by supporting technological innovation led to successful learning at first. However, those concerned did not continue to provide support, and learning results decreased.

#### **Policy recommendations**

It is essential to turn what we know in academics into what we do to enhance sustainability in accordance with the concepts of sufficiency economy set forth by the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center in Thailand. Our recommendations are that the public and private sectors should work hand-in-hand as partners, to promote trainees' learning skills, to reinforce experts' skills, to develop learning networks, to develop learning potential, and to bring innovations into learning to enhance the sustainability in accordance with the concepts of sufficiency economy set forth by the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center in Thailand. The set of guiding principles for the sustainability should include livelihood, economy,

community engagement, and environment so that their lives will be steady and sustainable.

#### **Academic recommendations**

Based on this study, influence of variables that affected sustainability in accordance with the concepts of sufficiency economy by the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center in Thailand correlated with trainees' learning skills variables. Second, experts' knowledge variables, learning process variables, learning network variables, learning potential variables, and innovative learning/learning Innovation variables. However, learning support variables and learning trust variables did not affect sustainability in accordance with the concepts of sufficiency economy set forth by the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center in Thailand. In addition, all of the causal variables can predict 92% of sustainability in accordance with the concepts of sufficiency economy set forth by the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center in Thailand. The researcher suggests the government where Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives and Ministry of Education play a key part integrate projects. If they want the projects to support learning and in turn, strengthen the sustainability in accordance with the concepts of sufficiency economy by the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center across Thailand, the government will need to develop trainees' learning skills, develop experts' knowledge, make the best of experts' knowledge, create learning processes, build rapport, create learning networks to encourage learning potential, and bring innovations into learning to develop trainees' new skills at the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center.



#### **Recommendations for future research**

It will be interesting to examine whether using a Multilevel Analysis can study the impact of factors that affect sustainability in accordance with the concepts of sufficiency economy set forth by the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center in Thailand. Data can be

collected for a collection of factors from organizations, communities and individuals that affect sustainability in accordance with the concepts of sufficiency economy set forth by the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center in Thailand. Accordingly, information will be more reliable.



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