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## Reform of Local Personnel Administration System in 14 Southern Border

### Provinces in Thailand

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#### ABSTRACT

This research has the following objectives: 1) to study the reform system of local personnel administration system in 14 southern border provinces of Thailand; 2) to study the factors affecting the local personnel administration system in 14 southern border provinces in Thailand; and 3) to propose guidelines for effective reform of local personnel administration system in 14 southern border provinces of Thailand. Qualitative research with in-depth research techniques was employed to collect data from group of 28 professional data providers, i.e., high-level executives of the Ministry of the Interior and directly related agencies, executives and assistants of the local administrative organization, governors, and deputy governors. In addition, a focus group was held with total of 10 persons, including experts on reform management of local personnel administration system for public services of the local administrative organization, high-level executives of the Ministry of the Interior and directly related agencies, executives and assistants of the local administrative organization, governors, and deputy governors.

It was found that the development guidelines for effectiveness with regard to the reform of local personnel administration system in 14 southern border provinces of Thailand had five components as follows:

1. Reform of recruitment system
2. Reform of selection and retainment system
3. Reform of public services of the local administrative organization
4. Reform of local personnel administration system in Thailand
5. Reform of management of the local administrative organization

For the development guidelines for effectiveness with regard to the reform of local personnel administration system in 14 southern border provinces of Thailand to be useful in the application, the



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consideration on appropriateness with the set objectives and goals must be in line with the current and future situation in order to provide fairly for all relevant parties in a sustainable manner thereafter.

**Key Words:** Reform of local personnel administration system, local administrative organization, 14 border provinces of Thailand



## **Introduction**

The National Council for Peace and Order places the importance on decentralization to local administrative organization by allowing self-governance according to the local people's will with the authority to administer and provide public services for the people's interest. The organizations have freedom to implement administrative policies in various areas such as public services, personnel administration, and financial matters in order to be flexible, efficient, able to solve problems, and meet the people's needs. As a result, all local administrative organizations must be prepared to be able to perform their duties effectively, specify the aims or directions of the development strategies clearly while systematically covering all respects of development missions, and build management readiness and potential to achieve the objectives (National Council for Peace and Order, 2017: 1-6).

The local administrative organization is facing a management environment of rapid, severe, and fluctuating changes arising from economic, social, cultural, political, technological, and environmental aspects. To survive, grow, thrive, and be sustainable (Local Administrative Organization Promotion, 2018: 11), adaptation or gradual adjustment and emphasis on solving problems on a case-by-case basis may not be sufficient. There must be a major reform that

focuses on the overall and forward-looking transformation in every dimension. Such changes have caused the local administrative organization to accelerate the development and increase the productivity of public services, redesign relationships with the people in order to respond to diverse needs and changing expectations, reform the structure and management system for the efficient delivery of public services, and change the work culture to focus on data analysis for public policymaking and internal management. The organizations must be able to compete with the private sector in terms of attracting and retaining talents in order to drive the missions with maximized impacts to the people's lives (Prasoet Suanchan, 2017: 39).

To develop sustainable local administrative organization to provide the most efficient public service provision and budgetary expenditure for the people's benefits according to the principles of personnel administration system reform, officials must have integrity and a service-oriented mindset to provide convenient, quick, non-discriminative services to the people, and work efficiently to meet the ethical standard as a basis for the application of public service management. They must develop an integrated database of local administrative organizations in accordance with the 12th National Economic and Social Development Plan, as reform of change-



responding capacity will be the key factor in aligning with the abrupt technological changes that deeply and widely affect the local administrative organization. Such changes will pressure these organizations to reform their structure, improve work systems, and alter work methods by using technology to replace manpower. Consequently, the relationship with the people, the service receiver, will also change. Initially, the preparation and provision of public services featured compliance with rules and regulations, lengthy documentation and process, and non-service-minded officials who do not care about the service receiver's feelings. However, it will be replaced by a relationship model with quick, privacy-oriented services via electronic channels. The people will be able to obtain information and openly share it with the local administrative organization. In addition, services of better quality and efficiency are expected to be provided (Koson Kukunchai, 2012: 55). As a result, the structure of the local administrative organization has continuously expanded. In particular, as the big employer, the personnel classification tends to increase at all times, leading to a continual rise of fixed costs and personnel budget. Operational capacity on the preparation and provision of public services are efficient and competitive (Harris, 2005: 681-696). Furthermore, there are alternatives of various delivery patterns

to provide public services to the people. Nonetheless, the local administrative organization in the country's insert high proportion of roles in the country's economy and society, yet with low efficiency, because the regulations and procedures are high in number, complicated, not flexible, delayed, not dexterous and not economical. Additionally, the expansion of advance Information and Communication Technology leads the people to receive services with higher efficiency through various channels, as well as require improvement of public services to meet the international standard (Hood, 2001: 109).

As previously mentioned, it is evident that the local administrative organization is of great importance. To successfully achieve the stated goals, systematic design and desired qualifications shaped into high-quality personnel in the system are needed (Kim & Kellough, 2014: 218-236). Therefore, recruitment and selection are the most important aspects of human resource management. Selecting the right personnel to do the work will promote advancement and growth in the current world of globalization. Placing importance on administration and governance by adhering to the principles of personnel administration system reform or better management will also positively affect the economic development system and people-centered activities. The local administrative



organization is the government agencies that are closet to the people with decentralization and independence on administration. The executives are directly elected by the people. The objectives are to solve the regional issues and meet the people's needs. Nevertheless, the local administrative organization still experiences several management problems: 1) problems of local authority in self-management and local independence; 2) problems of local structure from unclear non-democratic work system with disparity in the overall national administration; 3) problems of local administration such as policies and local administration plans in terms of policy and plan formulation, implementation, supervision and performance assessment; and 4) corruption in various forms, such as fraud in the budget, accounting, procurement and finance, as well as personal corruption, especially by the local executives and members of local councils (Chanchai Chitlao-aphon, 2009: 81-83).

The reform of personnel administration system refers to the principles, procedures, and goals that lead to most complete development of work system resulting in national development. It is the matter of new management principles that focus on principles rather than theoretical models. The use of such administration is believed to give the best results, which include fairness, honesty, efficiency and effectiveness (Auluck, 2006: 27-41).

The administration, in accordance with the principles of personnel administration system reform, will allow the local administrative organization to operate in accordance with the authority stipulated by law, both in terms of granting power and limiting the executives' exercise of power, encourage the people to participate in the local administration according to the democratic system, create transparency from corruption, use the administrative resources that are worth the budget, deliver impacts on local development, and have the ability to support future changes (Smith and Lewis, 2011: 381-403; National Council for Peace and Order, 2017: 1-7; Chumphon Nimphanit, 2008: 112-115).

The situation stated above reflects the causes of problems of the executives' unjust exercise of power that result in unfairness. It is the pursuit of personal interests from the public interests and a serious government offense. The reasons that cause these problems result in inefficient local personnel administration. In this regard, the researcher is interested to study "Reform of Local Personnel Administration System in 14 Southern Border Provinces of Thailand" in order to obtain the knowledge that will be the role model of building the personnel capacity, component that leads to the desired success, and recruitment and selection of the most suitable personnel to work in the responsible mission. This



is to maximize the benefits to the local administrative organization, people, society, and the nation.

### Research Objectives

- 1.To study local personnel administration system in 14 southern border provinces of Thailand.
- 2.To study the factors affecting the reform of local personnel administration system in 14 southern border provinces of Thailand.
- 3.To propose guidelines for effective reform of local personnel administration system in 14 southern border provinces of Thailand.

### Conceptual Framework

From the study of concepts, theories, literatures, and related researches, the researcher integrated and synthesized the conceptual framework for the research on "Reform of Local Personnel Administration System in 14 Southern Border Provinces of Thailand" as shown in Figure 1.

### Research Methodology

This study is a qualitative research and evaluation. It is the researcher's attempt to explain the phenomenon of public administration in the local administrative organization in Thailand with regards to the Local Personnel Administration Act B.E. 2542 (1999) and the period after the enforcement of the Order of the National Council for Peace and Order. It consists of qualitative research from in-depth interview with a group of 28 professionals, including high-level executives of the Ministry of Interior and directly related agencies, executives, and assistants of the local administrative organizations, governors, and deputy governors, for data collection and analysis to initiate guidelines for reform of local personnel administration system in 14 southern border provinces of Thailand. The snowball technique was used for selection from the Commission on Local Government Personnel Standards, Provincial Administrative Organization Officer Commission, Municipality Officer Commission, Subdistrict Officer

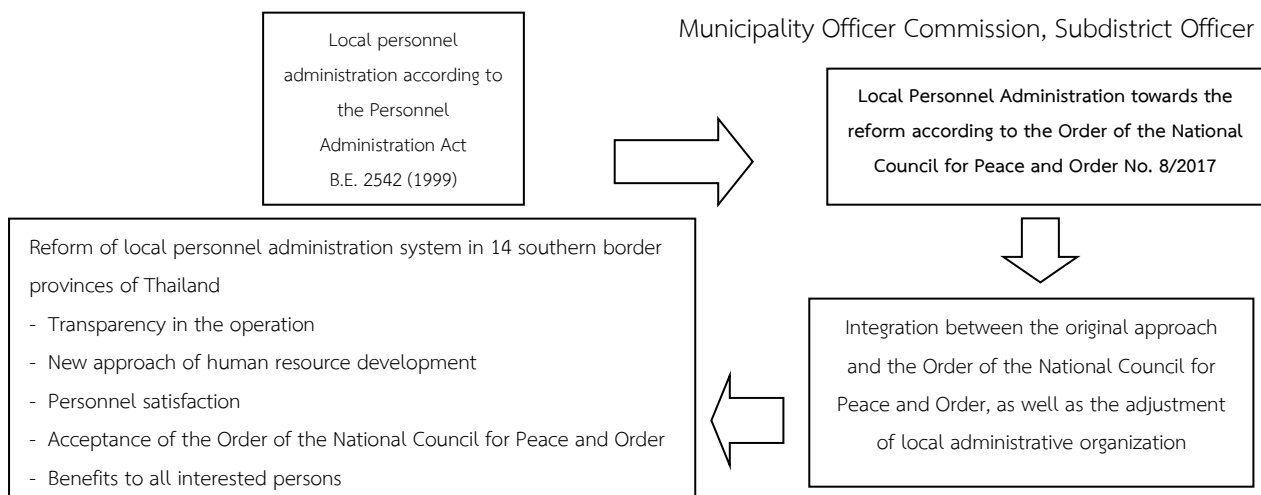


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



Commission, and Focus Group, which comprised 10 persons, including the experts on reform management of local personnel administration system for public services of the local administrative organizations, high-level executives of the Ministry of Interior and directly related agencies, executives and assistants of the local administrative organizations, governors, and deputy governors.

For the analysis of data from the interview with the experts, the researcher conducted transcripts, truncated duplicate text, or eliminated excess passages from the specified research framework. The researcher attempted to keep the majority of the interviewees' own wording and the experts' original meaning as much as possible by summarizing them according to the issues set forth in the content scope. After that, it was compiled into categories, organized into the system to link the relationship among the concepts, and interpreted regarding the content scope to summarize the interview without distortion for each question. Once completed, it was analyzed by the method of group classification and presented in the form of descriptive explanation in order to attain the analysis framework to obtain the answers regarding the research objectives. For the analysis, the interviewed main data provider presented the summary individually, and assessed the overview

according to the conceptual framework of the data analysis to obtain the conclusion. Once the weight of all variables was received, the variables were arranged to see if the given variables and the initial variables were repetitive or not. If they were repetitive, it confirmed that the set variables were correct and able to be used for the explanation. The additional variables, new findings, were arranged and allocated with the weight. If the variables had insignificant weight, they should be eliminated for the ease of practical operation. Once the relevant components were in the variable group, the conclusion was drawn by the supporting information from the documents, related words from the interview, and observed matters to explain the particular variables and produce the summary for the research readers' comprehension. In this research, the researcher considered that the research results might include very abstract aspects. Therefore, additional study was completed to make it easy to understand and practical. Accordingly, the abstract analysis results on the development of reform of local personnel administration system in 14 southern border provinces, Thailand, were connected.

### **Conclusion**

As per the conclusion on guidelines for effective reform of the local personnel administration system in 14 southern border



provinces of Thailand, the analysis results that meet the objectives are classified as follows:

1. Guidelines for reform of recruitment system

Recruitment is an important process that the local administrative organization conducts to attract qualified persons to apply for the planned job position. In other words, it is the process that motivates capable persons to apply for the job by advertising to inform the job requirements to the people who are interested. It is the first step of the recruitment process, which may be an internal or external search from the local administrative organization. Reform of recruitment system should make use of advance technology. The executives must be inclined to communicate with the job applicants via network tools and devices at all times. The local administrative organization will begin to use it in the future due to the trend of temporary employment, external recruitment, lack of necessity of close interaction, and more independence among personnel. Accordingly, the leading executives cannot pose control or force to a great extent, but instead should focus on exchanging knowledge and ideas as well as sharing goals. Personnel should be proficient in coordinating with various departments. Local administrative organization has special characteristics, i.e., there are a great number of relevant persons both within the local

administrative organizations and coordinators from outside. Hence, the desired personnel must not only be able to complete the assigned mission, but also work on coordination and be the representative of the local administrative organization. These qualities are somewhat important to the success of the project. The acquired personnel's good behavior and high moral and ethical standards appear to be a very significant matter, since corruption exists in every area. Well-behaved personnel will bring improvement to the local administrative organization. Similarly, ill-behaved personnel may cause unexpected damages. Thus, recruitment of personnel with good behaviors is crucial to the local administrative organization.

High-level executives must respond to the changes of the local administrative organization, which illustrates the attempt to react to newly emerging situations, apply the administrative development from a variety of operations, and find the equilibrium to specify the organizational directions and objectives despite some controversies such as restructuring and administrative decisions that place importance on new reforms with the emphasis on decision-making by the authorized leading executives. However, the local administrative organization retains the top-to-bottom decision-making system, which leads to various problems. Administration





that focuses on both building efficiency together with cooperation from the personnel is also challenging for the leading executives to some extent. Furthermore, under the incurred changes, previous ideas about administration must be changed in the competitive era with economic fluctuation, technology, competition, law, and politics. It is therefore accepted that the local administrative organization that require long-term growth need systematic administration, and use it to achieve the desired success by thriving for efficiency arising from decision to operate in various situations during different times to achieve maximized benefits. There should be a review of the highlights of the policies, interested persons, and circumstances by specifying four key areas: increase of efficiency on Information Technology system, quality improvement of public services, local administrative organization, work efficiency with the network, and remuneration according to quality of work. Those matters should be transferred to practice by assignment and knowledge exchange from the prototype local administrative organization, as well as communication by talking and meeting with the quality improvement team in line with continual study. The executives of the local administration organization should have the communication mechanism to convey the vision, value, objectives, action plans and review of results, as

well as clarify the policies and practices of the quality improvement team through the knowledge exchange. At the organizational level, there should be performance control, daily tasks, and review of both problems and general matters. This is to ensure that the communication thoroughly covers every level of personnel. The communication must inform the personnel of the expectations to create inspiration, commitment, and participation in completing the mission for progressive success. The organizations must stimulate creativity at all times, provide challenges for personnel, see the problems as opportunities, support new experimental methods, start new initiatives, encourage personnel to find solutions to problems by themselves, allow personnel to showcase their full range of abilities, encourage everyone to work independently in his/her work scope of expertise, create sound work environment, and promote learning and confidence to allow everyone in the organization to be successful and efficient.

## 2. Guidelines for reform of selection and retainment system

Selection is a crucial activity in the human resource management process, since it is the key to attaining staff who have the knowledge, capabilities and qualifications who can work efficiently and effectively. Selection begins when a person applies for the job and ends when the



employment decision is made. It depends on test results and impressions from the interview. To integrate human resource management with strategies of the local administrative organization, the practices include selection, training and capability enhancement, and retainment of talents in the local administrative organization because the human resources must be trained to have the attitude, knowledge, ability and capability to support the strategies of the local administrative organization, and conservation or initiation of new wisdom that will unceasingly respond to the changes of external environment.

Reform of selection and retainment system in the local administrative organization should promote vocation to improve the quality, and quality standard that lead to tangible results. Every personnel in the organization are responsible for improvement to achieve the specified shared goals of services with highest standard. The executives should begin with hosting ongoing academic conferences to enhance the capabilities of the staff member in every area. This cooperation aims for the exchange of personnel experience and knowledge among each other, the promotion of innovation and creative work, the creation of challenges for the team in order to acquire innovation, knowledge management to promote innovation, amendment of regulations against innovation, provision of

incentives by giving awards to honor those with accomplishment, and the use of technology in communication, personnel development and new higher-quality services. The knowledge must be utilized as new innovation emerges every moment. In addition, for growth and development measured from new excellent services, the local administrative organization must initiate the key work process that responds to the goals and corresponds with the service quality aspect. In addition, there must be result indicators in terms of efficiency and effectiveness that truly demonstrate excellence, improvement of work process or method, and systematic and continual learning and development that will stimulate improvement of the local administrative organization by learning with the consultants, accreditation by external organizations, and constant evaluation and development.

### 3. Guidelines for reform of local personnel administration system in Thailand

For the local administrative organization to achieve these set goals, the administrative process must be in an orderly manner and applies the suitable administrative theories or tools in the management. For instance, strategic management and strategic planning are applied as a continual process for the prescription of the mission and objectives under the environmental context outside the organization. Specification of



appropriate strategies, operation in accordance with the specified strategies, authorization on strategy control should be employed to ensure that the utilized organizational strategies are in line with the mission and objectives of the local administrative organization. Additionally, the executives' and personnel's determination must be strengthened continuously and sustainably until it becomes the quality culture in the local administrative organization that results in the desirable outcomes according to every party's acknowledgment. It is a response to the demand and expectation on personnel service quality that needs balance building for every party, both the service providers and service receivers, with regards to the expectation.

Goal-oriented actions that focus on public satisfaction especially on services and personnel emphasize the effects on the people's well-being to develop the public service quality, both in terms of caring process, main work process, and service quality improvement including innovations for services and work that have major effects on public care. The local administrative organization should propose to the government, ministries and other related agencies to obtain the standing point on the personnel movement under the mutual agreement in the same direction. Nevertheless, at present, some issues, such as tests remain controversial, and should be adjusted

accordingly. To create innovation, staff must use their knowledge, intelligence, and ability and engage with true interest, as well as have constant patience and high responsibility. Innovation must be created from the strengths of the local administrative organization, which is the key driving force. Another essential matter is to promote thinking and learning together, and self-management. This will allow creative work in new ways that will reduce costs and increase efficiency and effectiveness. The executives play an important role in driving innovation based on the policies that support forward-looking vision, and pride for being part of the development to achieve the ultimate goal. The organization should also cultivate an atmosphere that is conducive to teamwork and innovation, such as opportunities for everyone to share their feelings and opinions, long-term plans for management amidst the changing circumstances, and efficient communication. Another important promotion of creativity is the courage to take risks, the decision to initiate innovation. Personnel must be informed of the expectations, as this will eventually lead to innovation. Furthermore, the organizations should develop the comprehensive administrative system, expand the technological base, establish connectivity and subcontract between the businesses and local administrative organization in Thailand, organize training by increasing the



investment on research and development, link the network and connection to transfer the technology, and reform the management system of the local administrative organization to achieve the goals.

4. Guidelines for reform of public services of the local administrative organization

1. Plans that lead to allocation of limited resources to thrive for the set goals resulting in the allocation of limited resources for achievement of the specified goals.

2. Quality work that builds progress and stability with public access when required. Focus on working to meet the people's need to deliver satisfaction and happiness to the service receivers.

3. Every staff member should be enthusiastic and ready to respond to the people's needs. Fast service with review on the survey system and listening to the interested persons' opinion are important, as is preparing the process of utilizing the evaluation results in the administration.

4. Make improvement for acceptable services with continual care that meet the public expectation based on systematic process that specifies the steps, people in charge, and clear operation framework. Accordingly, the process can be done repetitively. There should also be appropriate result measurement and evaluation.

5. Improve the services to be appropriate both in terms of ethics and academics in order to have satisfying fast services. The executives develop the vision on the quality policies that thrive to reach the standards.

5. Guidelines on reform of local personnel administration system in Thailand

1. Coach every staff member to perform in an excellent or outstanding manner based on expertise and professionalism.

2. The local administrative organization should be prepared to promote personnel's learning as is the indicator of sustainable growth.

3. Adopt plans that lead to the allocation of limited resources to thrive for the set goals by emphasizing the outstanding outcomes from the capacity and work system for the personnel of all levels to understand the individual roles and duties, boost confidence and improve personal capability for the responsible work. This is the key factor that will have permanent influence on effective performance.

4. The authority structure classifies the supervision level accordingly. Work should be divided by using knowledge, capability, and skill as criteria.

5. Personnel must cultivate the behaviors and relationships that support the management of the local administrative organization. Everyone should set the ultimate goal for very meaningful



and important matters that will encourage and stimulate the personnel to be appreciative, and bond the personnel with the objectives of the local administrative organization.

### **Recommendation**

#### 1. Recommendation for Application

1. Internal personnel within the local administrative organization should be recruited to allow growth in their career that will help building up the morale and spirit, shaping loyalty, as well as formulating and transferring administrative strategies, beliefs, and values to the next generation of personnel.

2. Recruitment of new qualified personnel will create outstanding work-piece and can improve efficiency and effectiveness of the local administrative organization. In addition, selection of personnel with new attitudes, skills, experiences, ideas, and perspectives for the work system development will increase the efficiency and effectiveness to higher extent.

3. Recruitment must be focused on finding the most suitable person in terms of education, experience, and capability and on improving the quality of the staff to be the driving force for steady progress. Personnel selection and improvement must set the public service standard.

4. Support and further expand the personnel's knowledge and experience for proficiency to achieve the objectives and goals. Improve the personnel by the provision of training and further education for up-to-date knowledge and skills regarding the changes, and goal achievement according to the plan of the local administrative organization.

5. Improve work process to allow the personnel to have higher capability and efficiency that leads to the goals of the local administrative organization, and employ personnel with their own work pattern and team that suit the standardized public services.

6. Coach every staff member to cultivate a good personality, be polite and gentle to the service receivers, show hospitality to clients, and uplift the bureaucracy system for higher efficiency, both in terms of behaviors and work processes. In addition, transfer those qualities accordingly to allow smooth effective operation. Design the work to be flexible, decrease repetitiveness, and increase challenges to incentivize the personnel to continue working with the local administrative organization.

7. Produce high-quality work to create advancement and stability. Allow public access when required. Determine to work in accordance with the people's needs to provide satisfaction and happiness.



8. Every of the personnel should be enthusiastic and ready to respond to the people's needs. Service must be fast, with review on the survey system and staff must listen to the interested persons' opinion, and prepare the process of utilizing the evaluation results in the administration.

## 2. Recommendation for Further Research

1. This research only examined the reform of local personnel administration system in 14 southern border provinces of Thailand only. For further study, there should be connections between other agencies for completion of the reform process of the personnel administration in Thailand.

2. Those who are interested may study other groups of orders from the National Council for Peace and Order toward the reform of the personnel administration of this organization in the overall and complete manner by collecting information from the interested persons. Accordingly, a clearer overview of the organization will develop.

3. Study other population groups to analyze the differences of the existing and expected factors if they are differed from this research.

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