The Implementation of Successful Public Participation in Thailand

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Abstract

This study has found that the concepts of public participation in development, "participatory governance," used by the Office of Public Sector Development Commission (OPDC) as their administrative guideline and for implementation by Thai government officials at present, are different from the western theory when applied in actual practice. The study utilized qualitative methods and multiple case studies. The researcher participated in the study and collected data through in-depth interviews, documentary analysis, observation, field notes, and focus group discussions. The key informants were the public officers, people, and civil society that participated in the projects which resulted in awards for participatory governance being given to the governors of three Thai provinces.

This study attempted to answer the following questions: 1) How is the current situation engaged in by Thai people? 2) What are the factors that influence successful public participation? and 3) What is the model for successful public participation?

The initial use of public participation was not generated by the requirements of the community; rather, it was from projects originated by the ideas of the governmental sectors. Public service officers are driven by the policy to build on the success of participatory governance, and then a selected community is approached to work with.

Keywords: Public participation, participatory governance

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การศึกษาเรื่อง การมีส่วนร่วมของประชาชนที่ประสบความสำเร็จในประเทศไทย

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บทคัดย่อ

ในการศึกษานี้พบว่า แนวความคิด "การบริหารราชการอย่างมีส่วนร่วม" ที่สำนักงานคณะกรรมการพัฒนาระบบข้าราชการนำมาให้เป็นแนวทางการบริหารให้ข้าราชการ เจ้าหน้าที่ภาครัฐ ใช้เป็นหลักปฏิบัติเพื่อให้เกิดการมีส่วนร่วมของประชาชนในปัจจุบันนั้น การนำมาประยุกต์ใช้มีความแตกต่างไปจากหลักการจากทฤษฎีทางประเทศตะวันตกที่เป็นต้นแบบ การศึกษานี้เป็นงานวิจัยเชิงคุณภาพ โดยใช้วิธีการกรณีศึกษา (case studies) หลายตัวอย่าง ผู้วิจัยมีส่วนร่วมในการศึกษาและเก็บรวบรวมข้อมูลจากการสัมภาษณ์เชิงลึก การวิเคราะห์ข้อมูลเอกสาร การสังเกตการณ์ บันทึกภาคสนามและการสนทนากลุ่ม ผู้ให้ข้อมูลคือ เจ้าหน้าที่ภาครัฐ ประชาชน และภาคประชาสังคมที่มีส่วนร่วมในโครงการที่ทำให้ผู้ว่าราชการจังหวัดได้รับรางวัลบริหารราชการอย่างมีส่วนร่วมจาก 3 จังหวัดในประเทศไทย

จากการศึกษานี้พยายามตอบคำถามทางการวิจัย 3 ข้อคือ 1) สภาวการณ์ปัจจุบันที่มีการเข้าร่วมของประชาชนในประเทศไทยเป็นอย่างไร 2) ปัจจัยอะไรบ้างที่มีผลต่อการมีส่วนร่วมของประชาชนที่ประสบความสำเร็จ และ 3) การสร้างแบบจำลองของการมีส่วนร่วมของประชาชนที่ประสบความสำเร็จ ซึ่งการศึกษานี้มาจากการศึกษาโครงการที่ได้รับรางวัลการมีส่วนร่วมของประชาชนในประเทศไทย

ผลการศึกษาพบว่า จุดเริ่มต้นของการมีส่วนร่วมของประชาชนในโครงการนั้นมิได้เกิดจากความต้องการของชุมชน แต่โครงการเริ่มต้นมาจากแนวความคิดของเจ้าหน้าที่ภาครัฐ ซึ่งถูกผลักดันขับเคลื่อนด้วยนโยบายของรัฐบาลเพื่อให้เกิดการบริหารราชการอย่างมีส่วนร่วม ทำให้เจ้าหน้าที่ภาครัฐต้องเข้าหาชุมชนและคัดเลือกชุมชนเข้ามาทำงานร่วมกันเพื่อให้เกิดความสำเร็จ

คำสำคัญ: การมีส่วนร่วมของประชาชน การบริหารราชการอย่างมีส่วนร่วม

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Introduction

Public participation is part of the "people centered" or "human centric" principles, which have emerged in Western cultures over the last thirty years, and has had some influence on education, business, public policy and international relief and development programs. Public participation is promoted by the humanitarian movements that are at the forefront of a "people first" paradigm shift. In this respect, public participation may challenge the concept that "big is better" and the logic of centralized hierarchies, advancing alternative concepts of "more heads are better than one" and arguing that public participation can sustain productive and durable change (Jennings, 2000).

Public participation in Thailand started with the Ninth National Economic and Social Development Plan 2002-2006, (The Knowledge Service Center, National Institute of Development Administration, 2003) and continued with the Tenth (2007-2011) and the Eleventh Development Plans (2012-2016). It was a Western concept. The transfer of ideas from administrative reform management's tools initially came from the developed countries and then into Thai politics. After the overthrow of the absolute monarchy in Thailand in 1932, they were absorbed into Thai bureaucracy with the New Public management (Bowornwattana, 2010). But, after that, many local development projects were frequently identified as being the evidence of failures, such as,

1) The failure to respond to the community's demands

2) The cause of conflict and a disaffected relationship between the people in community and the public officials, and

3) The increase of apathy in participation by the people, because the communities were weak (Amornsanguansin, 2005). All these issues made the results of the development ineffective. It became apparent that public participation was more beneficial. The resource mobilization decisions will be more transparent and match people's demand. Public officials can get involved through creative constructive engagement. By the use of a participatory governance approach, communities will receive more help from the central government. This is a systematic process, from the government to approach the people, and ensures that the mobilization of resources and expenditure spending are efficient.

Although there was a considerable amount of research carried out into whether or not the development projects used public participation principles, there are few studies of the actual factors which affect successful outcomes. However, many scholars believe in the self-reliance of the community. In fact, the success of development projects was often achieved by a strong community and not by the government. This study has determined

that both the strength of the community and public sector participation are important factors for sustainable development in all aspects, by answering the questions of how the current situation is engaged by Thai people and what are the factors that influence successful public participation. The findings are helpful to identify the real implementation of a public participation project.

A Tool of Management in Local Government

Thailand's government has encouraged participatory governance in all public sectors since 2007. This has focused intensively on practical administrations in order to achieved concrete effects. The government has set a policy of a Participatory Governance process since 2008, which was the policy for all public service units from a central command paradigm. Hopefully it will pave the way to a better quality of service and would be a big leap in the development of the civil service system. Participatory governance, by definition, is an administrative tool whereby government official units define the people to participate in the decision-making process both directly and indirectly. The primary aim of this is to serve the real needs of the citizens. In practice, direct involvement can be done through a referendum or public hearing, while indirect participation can be done through various networks, such as citizen networks, academic groups, representatives from the private sector, mass media and other social or non-profit groups (OPDC, 2013). This participation must be in accordance with the following terms and conditions; 1) The freedom to participate is voluntary 2) Equality in participation 3) Participants must have sufficient ability to participate in activities.

Idea, Meaning and Manifestations of Public Participation

Public participation is a normative concept which has had wide acceptance as a policy tool and has been extensively analyzed in its application (Morgan-Trimmer, 2010). It is an outcome which the government tries to create, to make a better relationship between the public administration i.e. the governmental official units, or the state, and the people (Arnstien, 1969; Wilcox, 1994; White, 1996).

Firstly, in the USA, President, Jefferson advocated locally based, bottom-up government that was responsive to its citizens (Berner, 2011). The first policy used a public participation process related to public health. Later it was the pioneers who explored the western areas who required the government to help them with what they needed to sustain their lives (Siisiäinen, 2000; Aulich, 2009).

Factors of Successful Public Participation

Social Capital

Social capital has three components: moral obligations and norms, social values (especially trust) and social networks (Putnam, 1994). If a region has a well-functioning economic system and a high level of political integration, these are the result of the region's successful accumulation of social capital.

Other scholars also wrote in the same vein that the emphasis in modern societies is on consensus, based on interconnected networks of trust - among citizens, families, voluntary organizations, religious denominations, civic associations, and the like.

Similarly, the very "legitimacy" of modern societies is founded on "trust" of authority and governments as "normal."

The concepts of social capital and trust are directed to questions about mechanisms that strengthen the integration of the values of society, solidarity and togetherness; and that create consensus and maintain the stable development of society in equilibrium. As already noted, it is difficult to deal with conflicts or opposing interests using Putnam's approach or with struggles about the stakes in different fields; forms of power or violence; and forms of domination and deprivation.

Therefore "trust" in the Putnamian sense of the word has no place in Bourdieu's theorization. In those areas where the two approaches overlap, the concepts adopted are almost oppositional. From the concepts of the two famous scholars, Bourdieu and Putnum, Bourdieu focused on the structural dimension (Siisiäinen, 2000), this referred to the standard unit, linking patterns and social organization in community. But in the content dimension, this meant the normative patterns, trust, togetherness and other variables for collaboration.

So, that, in theoretical terms, participation is an outcome of the social capital in a community. Only the community which has strength in social capital can build citizen participation. The theory of participation is also related to other social theories. To explain:

Leadership

The leadership of the leader of the group will motivate people to collaborate and be willing to achieve their goals. Leadership can also explain motivation as stated by other theories such as mass persuasion theory from Maslow (Rabibhadana, 2014). The concept of mass persuasion theory states that both saying and writing is required in order to make the belief or action successful. The leader should know how to lead using skill and a concern for people's motivation.

At the national level, participation is related to the national morale theory. This is the way in which people in a community participate and with a positive attitude. Nationalism theory relates to factors which lead to participation, by creating a sense of nationalism to happen; to hold values about the interests of the nation and to have pride in the national honor (Rabibhadana, 2014).

People Based Decision Making

Recent decades have seen the flowering of empirical social theory. The normative theory as a pragmatic experience study has an inflexible government and government processes and those references are made to incorporate the spectrum of the theory. The idea of citizen involvement and participation might be of benefit for specific attempts to relate them to social theory, such as, Pareto's theory, to make social change by interest in 80/20 role that means to adjust the attitude the few people who have demonstrated an interest, if it is successful, others will follow.

American political policy provides a backdrop for a review of politics in governmental processes. Participation is the relationship between the state and the citizen. This is included in two theories; firstly, the theory of representation, in which it is the policy makers who seek the formulation of a political theory only, so participation is only a method by which they seek to gain voting strength. Secondly, the theory of power in which political philosophers have been fascinated by issues of social and political power- the influence by some on the behavior of others. Concepts of public participation could benefit from efforts to relate them to theories of political and social power.

Table 1. Summary of Public Participation Literatures

Author	Finding	Context of the Study	The Use of Public Participation
Arnstien (1969)	The level of public participation is the scale to measure the relationship and characteristics of public participation.	The public service in USA.	Public participation can be better with more control than less by the authorities but is dependent on the desire of the community and needed control with necessary support.
Wengert (1976)	To explain the initiation of public participation in USA in order to support the principle of "people centric".	The theory of development of natural resource management in USA.	It was better for collaboration between the people and the government.Public participation process is a better condition for empowerment.
Rabibhadana (2014)	Theories of participation which consisted of social theory such as; leadership, mass persuasion perception, altruism, national pride theory, and nationalism.	The Thai community context.	The participation of people in the community that impacted on the achievement of development.
Putnam (1994)	The importance of social capital in development management. Social capital has three components; norms, social value and social network.	The exploration of social capital in an Italian community.	The strength of the community was from social capital and that social capital was able to support collaboration.

Table 1. Summary of Public Participation Literatures (continued)

Author	Finding	Context of the Study	The Use of Public Participation
Burns et al. (1994)	The level of citizen empowerment was the scale to measure the attempt to incorporate the degree of participation and its quality.	The public service in USA.	Added the degree of engagement of people.
Wilcox (1994)	The different ideas of the five rungs of the ladder of public participation; with a requirement of the appearance of participation in the process.	The UK regeneration context.	This ladder does not have a level of "citizen control" rung.
Seligman (1997)	The emphasis in society on consensus based on interconnected networks of trust.	The American context.	As discussed, the three components of Putnum's concept of social capital by examination; problems of trust, between the government and the communities, were in the samples in context of the American communities.
IAP2 (2014)	The spectrum of public participation describes increasing levels of public impact from information dissemination to an empowered citizenry.	Case studies from many member countries around the world.	To be the principle for practitioners around the world.
Siisiäinen (2000)	The concepts of social capital and trust.	Compared study of Bourdieu versus Putnam.	Different structural approaches of social capital.

Table 1. Summary of Public Participation Literatures (continued)

Author	Finding	Context of the Study	The Use of Public Participation
OECD (2001)	The active participation framework is a relationship based on partnership with government in policy making.	The principle for policy makers world-wide.	Only three models are needed to evaluate the relationship for any policy maker.
Creighton (2005)	The difference between "public participation" and "citizen involvement." The practices of public participation.	The examples of public participation projects in many countries.	A practical guide to designing and facilitating public participation in enviromental and public policy decision-making. Written for government officials, public and community leaders, and professional facilitators.
Amornsanguansin (2005)	The sample had community social capital embedded in the structure of the community and was used for natural resource management.	The local community in Northern Thailand.	The strength of Thailand's local community and social capital.
White (1996)	The tactics of public participation.	The practices of public participation with the stakeholder demands in USA.	Using mixed interests for change management.
Aulich (2009)	The achievement of using public participation.	The implementation of local government management in making service delivery policy in Australia.	Using public participation in policy making.
Bowornwathana (2010)	The transformation of Thai bureaucracy to NPM.	Thailand's policies.	The NPM for Thailand's public administration.

Table 1. Summary of Public Participation Literatures (continued)

Author	Finding	Context of the Study	The Use of Public Participation
Berner (2011)	That public participation is a good thing for both citizens and government.	The implementation of local government management in budgeting in Canada.	Using public participation in case studies of budget management.

In the past, public participation was a principle which the OECD's Development Assistance Committee aligned to the developing countries which received loans, because the processes of decision-making using public participation principles would build transparency in resource flows, which is essential to support developing countries in making best use of the diversity of funding sources.

Conceptual Framework

Literature shows that successful policy implementation can be caused by interrelated factors. As shown in Figure 1, the heart of this research is to explore the factors affecting successful participation. Actual policy delivery, which is related to bureaucratic capacity and resources, as well as contextual realities and the social capital in the community, are the main components that can influence the implementation of a relationship to build public participation.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the factors affecting the success of public participation by analyzing the local government and the province's administration, which have received annual awards for excellent in participatory governance. The design of the conceptual framework needs to take into account the initiation, processes and the success factors.

Research Methodology

This study used qualitative research as it tries to explain the implementation of successful development projects which were a collaboration between the people in the communities and the public sector unit's executives and agents. The factors affecting public participation are illustrated in three case studies. Case studies, in different contexts, in which successful collaboration to access the factors that affected the success of participation are analyzed.

The data collection method used were documentary analysis and field research. In-depth interviews and focus groups were carried out. The key informants in leadership positions of leader in the events were interviewed by the researcher for between 2-3 hours. Each focus group lasted for about 45 minutes.

All interviews were recorded, and after the interviews, the recordings were transcribed. Copies were made to prepare for the next step of analysis. Preferred subjects for interviews were identified due to their previous successes and because they were role models. They were acknowledged and had agreed to be identified by all parties.

The Success of Public Participation Projects

In this study, three successful projects were selected, from over 60 acknowledged and recipients of excellence award for cooperative administration projects in the years 2009-2011. The "Participatory Governance" Awards from the government to honor provincial governors began in 2008, based the implementation participatory policies. The OPDC gave this award to the governor who had completed successful projects, based on the objectives of the Ministry of Interior, to reduce people's poverty.

This study selected three provinces which had received awards more than once because that demonstrated sustainability. The provinces are as follows; Kalasin Province had the "Project of a New Theory of Agricultural Based on His Royal Majesty's Initiative" of a farmers' group in Khaowong District; Samut Songkram Province had Khon Muang Mai's solidarity, and Lamphun Province had a "sufficiency village," Ban Sri Donchai village in Banthi District. These projects were significant for the province's achievement in evaluation because their objectives, processes and results were in response to the major criteria.

Table 2. The Three Dimensions of the Core Criteria of Awarded Public Official Projects in Each Province

Dimension	Criteria Description
1st Dimension	To evaluate the implementation of the public sector by the governor and the executives and officers, in participatory governance by their achievement through the annual plan activities, relevant projects and how they created involvement to match the local citizen's demand.
2nd Dimension	To evaluate the implementation of the public sectors by the governor and executives and officers, in participatory governance and how they facilitated the building participation processes.
3rd Dimension	To evaluate the implementation of the public sectors by the governor and executives and officers. The public executives and officers how they use participatory governance to support the greater development in communities and in building public participation as a core value. How and what they learnt with the people.

The successful projects definitely provided success to the related governmental units as expected. The government sector units were motivated to achieve success by approaching the community and encouraging them to participate in their projects. The success would not be possible if government sector did not have this "interaction" with community or just sat in their offices.

Those three projects consisted of objectives for community development which were implemented by the community and facilitated by governmental units in terms of technology, knowledge and partial budgets. The success, then, has also furnished the community with knowledge gained from real practice and this in turn has empowered their self-reliability. If they are self-reliable, they will not be a burden to others and, on the contrary, become helpful and useful both to themselves and others.

The success from the cooperation between the government sector and public sector has delivered useful knowledge to the government units and people involved.

Current Situation of the Public Participation in Thailand

It was found that the concepts of public participation used by the Office of Public Sector Development Commission (OPDC) as their administrative guideline and for implementation by Thai governmental officers at present is different from the Western theory when applied in actual practice.

Public participation in Western countries is based on the opinions and the petitions that people present to the government to launch a policy or perform such actions in response to their demands. For example, the petition of the American settlers, who moved to reclaim the western coast of the country in the last century. They demanded basic living essentials and the infrastructure, such as railways and roads. After receiving the petition from the people, the government took it into consideration, in accordance with the relevant regulations, and arranged the necessities to provide assistance. Public participation schemes in foreign countries also included the attempt to have people's involvement in the completion of a project or a policy for development implementation to ensure such projects or policies are successful. If it is not agreed by the people, execution will not be initiated in order to avoid future problems, such as the land development projects. Foreign news has also reported public hearings on the construction of new museums, buildings, the management of national park and the involvement in no smoking campaign, etc. Public participation is a democratic process.

Public participation in Thailand has been the involvement in activities or processes already considered by the government to decentralize the decision making, investigate and follow up a process to the public. That was not allowed for every project, and mostly happened with the public sector.

According to the original participation theory, the initiation of public participation was inspired by a strong requirement for change. The first reason for the involvement in public participation of the community people was that the people responsible for the activity or the process were the community leaders or a local organization. The leaders, therefore, were the people who could achieve the change. Thus public participation was a major factor that facilitated community development. The cooperation between the government sector and public sector was a key factor for local development. No country in the world was developed without public cooperation.

Local participation, then, has been significant for communities in Thailand from the past until now. Many communities which were overlooked by the government have developed local cooperation that has made their community become stronger and more self-reliant. From the three case studies, the community cooperation was strong prior to the involvement of the government sector in the projects. Community strength is required by the government sector when they have a policy for community development. A strong community will enable the achievement of the policy and success for the government sector.

Threats to Public Participation

From the study, some problems, arising from the public and government sectors were identified.

Nonparticipation

Nonparticipation was identified in related political and governmental officers as well as the members of the community. From the study, nonparticipation was found to be related to following reasons:

1) People had no free time to participate as they were engaged with their work. It was therefore difficult to encourage people to participate in an activity at the same time. Some that did participate in the activities were the retired members of the community as they only stayed at home and had a lot of free time. The governmental officers did not participate in the activities because of their work loads and lack of interest.

The chief of the district said, "There are not any measures."
The chief said, "I do not want to bother you much. Phuyai (chief of village),
you are paid 8,000 baht a month and Phuchuay (assistant to chief of vil-
lage), you get 5,000 baht a month. Don't make people blame us! We have
volunteered to work for them. Could you promise me that you will deliver
5 days a month to work for community? I understand that you need to go
to work. The chief has asked everyone. Some may not come but at least
they will feel embarrassed."

2) The people did not participate because they felt that it exceeded their ability. Even though the governmental projects looked very good but if they considered it to be beyond their capability, the people chose to refuse to get involved.

"They have come and observed and said my garden looked good
and beautiful but they did not do anything."

3) The people had strong and fixed beliefs. Such as when the government sector had the policy to encourage people to grow rice by using homemade compost and do a joint plantation to preserve the soil and omit the usage of chemicals. It was very hard to encourage people to follow and believe that a single plantation and the use of large quantities of chemicals has caused soil damage.

"They have come to see and said growing rice without fertilizer,
when we can eat it?"

The Governmental Sector's Projects and Policies Did Not Facilitate Public Participation

The governmental units related to the project, sometimes, call for participation by offering an alternative, instead of allowing participation in the activities involvement in decision making process, joining the implementation, being the co-beneficiary or participating in the assessment process such as the body checkup project, spectacles provision project and dental checkup project arranged by local public health offices. The participation happened between the private sector and the group of participating people only. It did not provide the opportunity for other communities to get involved and it caused ignorance, or incorrect perception and understanding among most of the people that were not involved. It was the duty of other people, such as the community chiefs, heads of official units and the governmental officers, etc.

The Leadership Styles Which Do Not Facilitate the Participation Are as Follows:

1. Disinterest in participation

2. Just work for personal success

3. A power dominant person

Executions Which Do Not Facilitate the Participation Are as Follows:

1. The people involved had a lack of responsibility

2. The officers involved do not go to see the project site so they do not understand its details or execution.

The Factors That Influence the Success of Public Participation

The identification of the successful public participation characteristics from the three case studies was supported by information related to the events that occurred during the period of the project implementation and current information. The study on the content of each community in previous chapters is summarized in the following table as a comparison of the characteristics of the three case studies.

Community Readiness

Community readiness is the balance between human resources and the community environment, including social capital, committed leaders, good management that allowed for community participation and delegation of responsibilities and enthusiastic people with the ability to fully perform all assignments accordingly. These are factors found in the three case studies.

1. Social Capital

From the study, it was found that Coleman has given the definition of social capital that, according to its role, social capital comprises of structural elements that enable people to implement some particular activities. Social capital is like other capital in supporting the production of products but different in terms of its existence as it's usually hidden in the relationship between people and the work or the organization.

Table 3. The Comparison of the Factors Influencing Successful Public Participation in the Three Case Studies.

Success Factors	The Farmers' Group in Khaowong District, Kalasin Province	Khon Muang Mai Community, Samut Songkram Province	Ban Sri Donchai, Banthi District, Lamphun Province
Community readiness	- With social capital and strong local wisdom. Products were identical. - The leaders provided their devotion. - The community was well managed. - The people were enthusiastic for community development.	- With social capital and strong unity among the major groups of people. - The leaders provided their devotion. - The people were enthusiastic for community development.	- With social capital and strong sense of local tradition and culture. - The leaders provided their devotion. - The community is well managed. - The people were enthusiastic for community development.
Governmental approach	- Government sector needed to approach the community. - Use of local wisdom in approaching the community. - Closely participated in the activities.	- Government sector needed to approach the community. - Listened to the community's idea first, avoided guiding. - Closely participated in the activities.	- Provided assistance to the community including educating them on occupations and health.
Intervening conditions	Participation administration policy of the Ministry of Interior has pushed the officer to want to be successful to participate in the project and approach the people.		

Social capital usually exists in; 1) strong relationships that included obligation, hope and trust, together with an information distribution channel, norms and practical punishments; 2) social structures with close network relationship and appropriate organizations.

Putnam has studied and said that social capital facilitated the initiation of participation. Social capital was high in a strong community, as it provided unity and cultural values of the community. Putnam considered that social capital comprised of three important social characteristics, namely networks, norms and trust that, with cooperative execution, enable the achievement of the objective (Putnam, 1994). Putnam explained that the social capital concept can be considered as new discourse included in civic society. Putnam concluded in the study that even though these local communities are within the same organizational structure, the strength and development are far different. Governmental policy and projects can be achieved in the areas with more social capital. What Putnam called social capital actually was a norm of the trust, reciprocity and civic engagement of each community that initiated civic matters.

In the three case studies the social capital with the different communities was as follows:

1) The Farmers' Group in Khaowong District, Kalasin Province: Their community capital was "local wisdom" and "the intellectual" in terms of agriculture, soil, fertilizer, fishery, rice and livestock. Initially, the local wisdom had existed but had never been considered or widely expanded as people in community did not have an open-mind and did not believe in following others. They were stuck with their own individual ideas and so they did not have a common direction. When they came together in the same direction of thought, they, then, exchanged their knowledge with each other and that enabled the expansion of knowledge and effective implementation. By the time the government required community participation, social capital was the most important factor for consideration when choosing which community to be involved in the project.

2) Khon Muang Mai Community, Samut Songkram Province: Their community capital was the "solidarity" of the community. The people in the community were cooperative and responsible for community development. They were helpful with each other, made decisions together, even though some were not born there or were with "different words - different language". After they became part of the community they lived in harmony and with the same goal in community development. The community unity was acknowledged by outsiders so they were usually given the chance to join in with various organizations activities and received numerous awards related to community development. The more awards they received, the more they recognised their community strength. When the government sector need a community to participate in an activity, such community capital was considered.

3) Ban Sri Donchai, Banthi District, Lamphun Province: Their community capital was "tradition, culture and relations". The tradition and cultural capital was derived from their ancestor, the Lanna tribe who came from Muang Lue, Muang Yong and Muang Yuan. They were called Tai Lue, Tai Yong and Tai Yuan. In the village, most of the people were related to the Tai Yong. They had maintained their traditions and culture in terms of clothing, language and festivals that they joined and arranged with other villages in the district. It could be considered as a cultural tourism resource.

Personnel relationships were normally close as there was the tradition for people of the same tribe to marry ensuring and continuing the blood relation. But at present these relations were far apart; close relationships provided a strong community. They were living under the dominance of relatives and using "house rules" as their rules for living in harmony; they could blame each other if wrong doing was found. So according to their basic behavior they were not trouble makers. This type of capital enables high public participation. The committee arranged activities, and all the people/family fully participated. When the government sector requires public participation, the community capital was carefully considered. The findings in this study are therefore, in line with the social capital scheme. When looking for a community to meet governmental requirements, the governmental sector focused on strong communities with high social capital.

2. The community with a committed leader

3. A community which is well managed, such as the Farmers' Group in Khaowong District, Kalasin Province had set up the community of the group, Khon Muang Mai Community had a civic society committee and Ban Sri Donchai had a village committee with "house rules" identity.

4. Most of the people in community were enthusiastic to participate in the activities. However, in Ban Sri Donchai, all the people/families participated in the activities, as they realized the importance of participation.

The Government Sector Needed to Approach the Community

As it was government policy so the success of the participation project was carefully monitored by the government sector as it could reveal the efficiency and evaluate the working performance of management officials accurately.

> *"It is only a concept, the participation. It had been mentioned by government for a long time but it never happened."*

To achieve the objectives, they needed to approach the people. Personnel performance, therefore, depended on an individual's capability in performing in accordance to the working unit's requirement. In terms of relation, if they were the community's members, it will easy for them to approach the people and build up a strong relationship between the government officers and people in the community. The performance at the sites of the officers that created good relationship enabled their work flow.

Officers should commit to devote themselves to the people. They should be responsible for their roles, responsibilities and execution of their duties both during and after working hours, and consider providing assistance to the people first. They should not adhere to a wrong value such as *"working to please the boss"* for personal achievement or stick with the opinions such as, *"... the officers who work with the people are foolish as they will gain nothing."*

Government Leaders' Performance

It is important that the leaders of the government sectors should enable public participation. In practice, it is hard for a leader to be successful if performing without being ordered to do so by their supervisor. That means, for official execution, the officers implement policy accordingly to the orders of their superiors "... do not do anything without an assignment!" Some may decide to execute a project on their own, but that mission will definitely not be successful.

"When the governor came, the sheriff jumped into the canal, not only in our district, but others also."

"As the saying goes, "If the head nods, the tail also wag." The governor stretched out but the sheriffs could not reach, could they? Could they swim or not, I don't know. But they stood and cheered and that it was all right."

"When the governor assigned the job he also ran it. He would come and show them what to do. This showed a strong community, the community is strong and the governor is strong too."

The Implementation of the Officers

Officers' operational success demonstrated their capability. It is understood by all that the officers will follow their superior' commands. Execution with no commands from their seniors are against the regulations. So, the success of the officers is evaluated accordingly to official regulations.

The officers, who work in collaboration with community, should approach the community and express their full intention for community development. They should go to the field to learn the real problems. From the interviews, the leaders have a significant role in determining the officers' performance. Their leaders should be role models at work and at sites, meeting with people, participating in personal events, listening to the ideas of the people and have the people cooperate in the decision making of related issues. These should be executed by all officers.

Community Approach

For the group of farmers in Khao Wong District, Kalasin Province, the government sector cooperated to obtain assistance from "Pra Maha Suparp" as they could not encourage the people to participate in "Lhoom Porpieng or Sufficient Hole" Project. They asked Pra Maha Suparp to help because the monk was a community developer, who was responsible for the project, to adjust the attitude of farmers from poverty and broken homes. He promoted a new agricultural theory, according to His Majesty King Bhumibal Adulyadej's philosophy, or the "Lhoom Porpieng" project to the farmers. This was the same project that the government required the participation of the people. Pra Maha Suparp helped conduct training to change the attitude of the people and established networks for receiving the products produced. The project, then, had more people participating in despite only a few of them at the initial stage. It was obvious that Pra Maha Suparp has helped enable the success of the project.

Muang Mai Community, Samutsongkram Province: The community participated in the projects by proposing the projects that included public participation to the provincial office under the supervision of the Governor; Mr. Prapas Boonyindee. It was requested that the provincial office cooperate to implement the project. The support and cooperation received while jointly executing the "Long Khak Long Klong" project with the provincial office increased the value of the participation between government sector and public sector.

Ban Sri Don Chai, Banthi District, Lamphun: After the village had been selected as an "economy sufficiency village" for the district in the class of a wealthy and happy village, the provincial office acknowledged and provided assistance related to occupational knowledge and health care. This created participation between the government sector and public sector.

> *"... We had a meeting to discuss the problems. Our community has a lot of expenses but little income. So, I told them to spend only as necessary. Some things need to be purchased but I told them not to get a loan. Use what we have, I told them. Later we applied the sufficiency*

philosophy as the guideline. Then there were more officers came in to help. After we did this for a while, there was some success, the officers then came in (repeat) to support at the final stage."

Intervening Conditions

The official administration policy that included public participation has driven the management and officials to take the role, duty and responsibility to create success which is the indication of their performance. Participation policy has encouraged officers to approach the community to gain people's participation, generated execution, sacrifice of personal time and creating good relationships. It has also engendered the use of the community member status to provide access to the people in the community to gain their acceptance and trust.

Figure 1. The Model of Successful Public Participation

Suggestions for Implementation

However, it does not mean that the government has understood the farmers and executed all the projects with understanding. Some policies were launched because of identifying the capability of the community but it was not in line with the community capability according to their assessment. For example, it was found that the establishment of social enterprises as co-operatives, even though the farmers had been assessed as suitable, they did not have the capability to handle it. Even so the co-operative was established and a co-operative building was constructed.

The offer of tools and equipment which were not in line with the requirement of the community, was found in the case of the government offer to build a large rice mill. But the farmers did not want it because they grew premium rice that required only a small-scale rice milling machine.

Another offer of tools and equipment which was not in line with the requirement of the community was found in the case that the government allocated Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn's fund to offer a small-scale milling machine to the community but it was not usable because the community had no electricity supply. The machine required a stable electricity supply but the electricity from the generator was not stable. They then needed to purchase a new machine that could be used with the generator and kept the supplied machine in the cooperative building for over two years.

> "We did not have a rice mill, then we received a rice mill but when we got it there was no electricity. All of the issues were not integrated. The machine required a stable electricity supply but we used generator. So, we kept it there and bought a new machine that was usable with less power and a solar cell. It was a smaller machine."

Or in the case study at Muang Mai, where it was found that the farmers were offered seeds for planting that the farmers did not want.

> "We do not grow that kind of banana here as it can't be sold here. Nobody eats it. But the Agriculture office stilled offered it to us. That kind of pomelo has not been grown here. They still gave it to us. So, people then just took it and left it without growing it."

These examples were partly caused by the non-integration or insufficient consideration for the supplied organization. The government sector should learn from this and reduce these problems.

Limitation of the Study

The limitation of this study is the access to the people involved in the project during the time of occurrence. During 2008-2010, some governmental officers were transferred or changed, such as the governor. The freshness of the incident in the memory of the people involved could affect the data collection. Therefore it is necessary to find the leaders to provide information first by conducting purposive sampling and subsequently finding more information givers using a snow ball method. However, the research during this period can reflect the sustainability of the project initiated four years ago. Every project required time and experience of relevant people from both government sector and public sector.

Conclusion

The characteristic of participation in the projects that are considered by government as successful projects in Thailand, such as the three case studies, are public-participation initiated differently from its identification in Western theory. The initiation of the participation in the studied projects was not caused by the requirements of the community, but were projects that originated from the ideas of the government sector and then the selected communities were approached to work together. All projects were from initiation, planning, community selection, execution, and the creation of relationships with the community according to the strategy of the government for project achievement and for success.

Public participation in the particular form that occurred in Thailand and that is considered successful was made possible by factors such as community readiness, including the community's social capital, a devoted leader, and good management and enthusiastic people. The factors related to the governmental sector were the community approach, both management and officers should approach the community. Although that can be a challenge. In the future, if the people and public officials have more skill, public participation in Thailand will be a great tool for local development, as has happened in the West.

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