



New Trends and Issues Proceedings on Humanities and Social Sciences



Issue 1 (2017) 82-87

ISSN 2421-8030

www.prosoc.eu

Selected paper of 8th World Conference on Educational Sciences (WCES-2016), 4-8, February 2016, University of Alcalá, Madrid, Spain.

The strengthening of communities through a variety of traditions and cultures

Wanida Siriworasakul^a*, Phranakorn Rajabhat University, Bangkok, 73120, Thailand.

Panlayamon Sinnang^b, Phranakorn Rajabhat University, Bangkok, 73120, Thailand.

Wacharin Intaprom^c, Phranakorn Rajabhat University, Bangkok, 73120, Thailand.

Suggested Citation:

Siriworasakul, W., Sinnang, P., & Intaprom, W., (2017). The strengthening of communities through a variety of traditions and cultures. *New Trends and Issues Proceedings on Humanities and Social Sciences*. [Online]. 01, pp 82-87. Available from: www.prosoc.eu

Selection and peer review under responsibility of Jesus Garcia Laborda, University of Alcalá, Spain

©2017 SciencePark Research, Organization & Counseling. All rights reserved.

Abstract

The purposes of this research were; 1) to study the state of strength of the community of Ban Sala Daeng Nue, Sam Khok, Pathumthani Province, 2) to study factors, elements and traditions of the community which strengthen the community of Ban Sala Daeng Nue, Sam Khok, Pathumthani Province, and 3) to create models to strengthen up the community through tradition and culture of the community. This research was a qualitative research. The research tools were document analysis and in -depth interviews. The key informants were the people, the community leaders (official and unofficial), the temple abbot, the executives of local government organization and the Pathumthani Cultural Officials. The data were collected and the information had been analyzed and interpreted in order to answer the research questions. Ban Sala Daeng Nue community is a strong community which has been projected through the community activities are numerous and consistent all year. The activity communities have gathered the people cooperation and experiencing success without reliance on government sector. Factors, elements and traditions of the community which strengthen the community of Ban Sala Daeng Nue are the belief and faith of the people in the Buddhism and the religious leaders. Therefore, the tradition and culture of the community activities that strengthen cultural traditions and religious activities is primarily through the main element that is community meetings after the evening prayer everyday. Models to strengthen the community is to create and enhance belief and faith of the people in the community through tradition and culture and social activities of the community. The community has to meet regularly for motivated cultural and participatory activities which cooperate from community will lead to a strong sense of community.

Keywords: Strengthening of communities, variety of traditions and cultures.

* ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE: **Wanida Siriworasakul**, Phranakorn Rajabhat University, Bangkok, Thailand.
E-mail address: pong9889@yahoo.com / Tel.: +66-86351-5039

1. Introduction

The First to the Seventh National Economic and Social Development Plan (B.E.2504-2539) had been emphasized on the economic development which resulted in successful changes of Thailand economy which became more prosperous and increased in national income. However, it had the problem of uneven income distribution and various other issues such as the family structure has gradually changed into single family, family separation issue, epidemic drug problem, crime, materialism and consumerism, increased in labor immigration from the countryside to the capital, and natural resources and environmental degradation which caused Thai society so fragile. Thus, it was agreed that for developing country like Thailand, a focus on the economy issue only was not enough. Hence, the Eighth National Economic and Social Development Plan (B.E.2540-2554) was a major turning point for the country's development because it allowed society stakeholders to participate. Therefore, in the past development of the Eighth National Economic and Social Development Plan (B.E.2540-2554) had a focus on the holistic development based which held on a principle of "people were the center of development" and created a balance development in all dimensions in order to meet the dynamic changes in both domestic and international platforms. Meanwhile, the Eleventh National Economic and Social Development Plan (B.E.2555-2559) had determined the strategic human development as a sustainable lifelong learning society by immunizing Thai people and Thai society to recognize value, culture, and Thai indigenous knowledge. Including, the development of a strong community via conservation and restoration of local knowledge as well as encouraged community residents to generate ideas and guidelines for the development of local communities which held on a principle of self-reliance which considered about resource potential, indigenous knowledge, lifestyle, culture, and community environment as the key issues. Also, it highlighted on community learning and the transfer of knowledge to help improving skills that necessary for building a long term career.

In order to build sustainable development possible, it had to begin with the strengths in society and existing social capital especially community social capital which was critical to create a community strength of self-problem solving. Consequently, the community was a social organization that could help its members' to meet the needs of everyday life and solved the problems together. Community strength referred to the reunion of people from various communities either in urban or rural areas forming a "community-based organization (CBO)" which were the cooperation of community members in terms of learning, managing, problem-solving and that would result in changes or developments in economic, social, cultural and environmental aspects with the good impacts to both inside and outside the community. It was so-called this community as group, club, co-operative, company, community based organization, networking or in any other names that reflected the word "cooperation" which had a consequence in mutual benefits and generosity to other communities. Hence, community-based organization referred to group or club or cooperative or in any other names regardless of legally registration or not. On the other hand, it was an organization that originated from citizen's willingness who shared same goals and ideals. They also had strong friendship and generosity towards each other as well as an aim of infinite learning at work for problem solving and development of economic, psychology, social, culture, and environment. A natural leader occurred through a collaborative process. The strengthening of community based on the participation of community residents which each community would develop a strong sense of community strength in various dimensions such as economic, natural resource, social and cultural aspects. However, community strength could be developed on some dimensions over the others because each community had different conditions and processes.

Sala Daeng Nua community in Sam khok district, Patumthani province was Mon ethnic community with a strong conservative traditions and cultures of Mon and was generally well accepted in public. It was well-known with many awards received such as was the role model village both in the provincial and national level, smart village (Pan dim tham-pan din thong), best health village, best development village, best green village, outstanding village committees, best river conservation, and many more awards. Those awards reflected strong community strength of Sala Daeng Nua community so it

amused researchers how variety of traditions and cultures of the Mon community could built community strength.

2. Research objectives

- To study community strength of Sala Daeng Nua community in Sam khok district, Patumthani province
- To study factors, components, and traditional activities and community cultures which built the community strength of Sala Daeng Nua community in Sam khok district, Patumthani province
- To develop a community strength model through a variety of traditions and cultures.

2.1 Research methodology

Key informant

- Community residents of Sala Daeng Nua community in Sam khok district, Patumthani province
- Executives and local administration officers of Sala Daeng Nua community in Sam khok district, Patumthani province
- Public, private, community leaders for example government officers of provincial cultural office, district office for local administration, community developers, abbot, official and unofficial community leaders, and local wisdom elite.

2.2 Data collection

1) Documentary study: The process of preparation and data collection. Researchers chose to collect data from multiple sources and studied secondary data which researched and compiled information from various relevant places such as published academic papers, articles in print media, researches, theories and articles.

2) In-depth interview: Key informant which were community residents of Sala Daeng Nua community in Sam khok district, Patumthani province, executives and local administration officers of Sala Daeng Nua community in Sam khok district, Patumthani province, public, private, community leaders for example government officers of provincial cultural office, district office for local administration, community development, abbot, official and unofficial community leaders, and local wisdom elite. The in-depth interviews with key informants who provided important information related to this study. Researchers used the purposive sampling method. After the in-depth interview session, researchers then utilized the snowball sampling method in order to get sample groups both in the past and in the present time which recommended by interviewed key informants who had knowledge and experience so that it could meet the objectives of the study.

3) Participant & Non Participant Observation: Traditional and cultural activities that built community strength to Sala Daeng Nua community in Sam khok district, Patumthani province

2.3 Analysis and interpretation of data

In this study, researchers collected data from in-depth interviews with executives, representatives from the government sector, academic specialists and civil society sector. Afterwards, data had all been verified for accuracy using triangulation method and then checked that it could fully meet the purposes of this research or not and whether it was reliable and detailed enough to describe the relationships, then researchers read and interpreted data in order to summarize inductive conclusion.

3. Conclusion

3.1 Community Strength of Sala Daeng Nua community in Sam khok district, Patumthani province

Community strength of Sala Daeng Nua community reflected by the numerous awards received from many organizations and achievements of community activities which could develop, prevent, and solve community problems as well as could conserve Mon cultures and traditions through the participation and cooperation of community citizens which the consensus came from a community meeting after Buddhist prayer evening session every day. However, the community activities were not relied on government-based organization but it was characterized as self-reliance community.

3.2 Factors, components and traditional activities and community cultures which built the community strength of Sala Daeng Nua

Factors and components which built the community strength of Sala Daeng Nua were as follows;

(1) Belief and faith; of community residents towards Buddhism. The major of community activities were related and associated with religion which led to the involvement and cooperation of the people in the community.

(2) Community leaders; starting from belief and faith of the community residents towards Buddhism, an official leader was the village headman while the unofficial leaders were the Mon prayer leader and the abbot for religious leader who embraced the tenets of the religion. They were beloved and trusted by community residents so they were able to form a strong bond among community citizens and were able to organize successful activities.

(3) Community meetings; Components that linked people in the community and contributed to the cooperation of the community was unofficial meeting before and after the Mon prayer session which took place every day at 15:00 p.m. The informal meeting led to the consensus of the community events.

(4) Culture of respect and obey adults; another component that helped strengthening the community was a culture of respect and obedience of adults of the new generation. Thus, when community organized the activities, parents, grandparents or elders could easily induce young people to participate.

(5) Community activities; numerous events both social and religious activities that contributed to the collaborations were the components that strengthen the community. The traditional activities included;

Jood Look Noo Tradition – Seen in the funeral of Raman monks

Songkran Tradition - Key activities include: The sand pagoda, the tradition of sending rice, the Hanghong parade, Philanthropy ancestral bones

Tak Bat Nam Peung Tradition

Merit Sart Day Tradition

Tak Bat Roi Phra Tradition

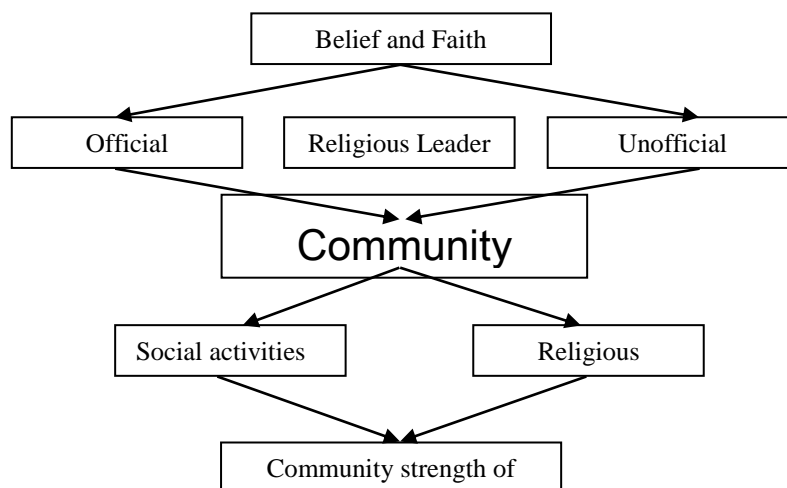
Loy Kratong Tradition

Religious traditions

Wedding traditions merit ordination funeral home.

3.3. Community strength model through a variety of traditions and cultures

Guidelines for strengthening the community were to create belief and faith of community residents through traditional, cultural and social activities. As a result, organizing community meetings regularly with the participation and cooperation of local residents in the community should drive traditional, cultural and social activities. This should lead to strong community strength of Sala Daeng Nua community in Sam khok district, Patumthani province which was illustrated as a model below;



4. Discussion

The study found out that community strength of Sala Daeng Nua community reflected from achievements of community activities which could help developing, preventing, and solving community problems. In addition, the components that strengthen the community of Sala Daeng Nua community were belief and faith, community leaders, community meetings, culture of respect and obey adults, and community activities. Therefore, such components complied with the study of Prawet Wasi (2541) who defined community as the number of people who shared a common purpose and had generosity towards each other. Also, that group of people had an attempt to do something together and had collaboration in learning as well as exercised the two ways communication. Hence, community strength based on the strong bond of community members so that it powered great potential to the community. Therefore, the important characteristics of community were the shared objectives, the love towards each other, the collaborations in action and learning. In addition, element that aroused from the joint action was the spirit and natural leadership and management. Thus, community strength could solve any problem in which this fact complied with the study of U-thai Dulyakasem and Orasri Ngamwittayapong (2540) who had discussed about the solidarity of the community and the concreteness of the community which were the dependence and cooperation of potential members in various activities and in all situations. In addition, having high self-reliance in decision-making and high level of participation, community residents could control and deal with any problem by themselves using their own local wisdom, knowledge, and mechanisms within the community. Also, they were constantly developing self-potential in many aspects through learning process, wisdom and knowledge creation in various fields which resulted in community knowledge, self-development and knowledge transfer through on-going processes.

Moreover, Sala Daeng Nua's community strength was in line with the indications of Srilaporn Nakornsup (2541) who discussed about system of belief, value, mindset of the community and the impact from the community organizations' performance. Community organizations' performance was

such a good reflection of community strength which was consistent with the Policy Research Center (2541) who concluded that the community strength was a result of "basic fundamentals" that of lifestyles, cultures, beliefs, and values, indigenous knowledge, and leadership. In the meantime, Somphan Techa-arthic (2541) discussed about the creation of community strength which resulted from decision-making and the learning of community of how they could participate, exchange and draw conclusions to solve the problem as well as leadership style, participatory development, and recognition to vision, values and cultural heritage.

Recommendations

Community strength originated from the basic fundamentals of the community. Therefore, the guidelines to build up community strengths were ,firstly, government sector should be act as a mentor to the community who could helped searching for the factors that led to the cooperation of the community, in the meantime, the government sector should helped supporting, educating and recommending about the development of the community in various aspects such as the conservation of cultural heritage, natural resource, and environment as well as career and economic development on the basis of sustainable development, philosophy of sufficiency economy, ethics, and the good governance.

References

- Policy Research Center (...). Guidelines to develop academic research project in the community as participatory action research: opinions, guidelines, and experiences of Assistant Professor Dr.Alissra Chuchat. Revised by Amornwit Nakornsup and Duangkaew Chansrakaew. Policy research center, faculty of education, Chulalongkorn University.
- Prawase W. (2010). A Proposal on Alternatives for an Educational System Appropriate for the Well Being of Thai People. Bangkok. Pappim
- Somphan Techa-arthic et al (...). The development of community strength of local organizations. Bangkok: Charoenwit Printing.
- Nakornsu, S. (...) Education and research for Thailand development: Education for sustainable development Bangkok: Office of Research Fund.
- U-thai Dulyakasem and Orasri Ngamwittayapong (2540). Education systems and community.. Plan publishing.