

## Local Community Participation in Public Administration Plan: An Empirical Evidence of Ratchaburi, Thailand

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**Abstract**— The present study has the objectives to enhance the local community participation in reflecting the problems, making decision in local public administration plan and to promote the cooperation of related parties in local public administration planning in the case study of Berkprai Sub-District, Ban Pong District, Ratchaburi Province, Thailand. The output of the study was the draft of community public management plan in the 4 areas of community problems. The results was discussed in terms of the impact of the process and the further implementations.

**Keywords**—community; participation; public administration plan

### I. INTRODUCTION

With the importance of decentralization in the changing role of the public sector and the construct of the public administration in Thailand, it is a mechanism that enables the population, especially in the local community to participate in the process of decision-making and planning. Decentralization can be defined as the transfer of authority or responsibility for decision making, planning, management, or resource allocation from the central government to its district administrative units, local government, regional or functional authorities, semiautonomous public authorities, private entities and non-governmental private voluntary organizations [1], [2].

However, according to the previous studies conducted in Thailand [3], [4] the results revealed that the participation of local people in public administration plan need to be encouraged for the creation of an appropriate and conducive public plan in which can perform effectively.

The present paper is aimed to shape the community participation in the public administrative plan in a local community of Thailand. The selected community is Berkprai Sub-District, Ban Pong District, located in Ratchaburi Province, the central part of Thailand.

The paper provides the study objectives and the overview of the context of selected community. The research methodology and the analysis of results will be provided later. Finally, the results of the community participation in the public administrative plan are discussed and recommended.

### II. STUDY OBJECTIVES

The present study has the objectives as.

- To enhance the local community participation in reflecting the problems, making decision in local public administration plan.
- To promote the cooperation of related parties in local public administration planning.

### III. CONTEXT OF SELECTED COMMUNITY

Ratchaburi is one of the central provinces of Thailand. The province is full of cultural heritage, beautiful places, and historical sites. Ratchaburi covers 5200 square kilometers. It is located 80 kilometers west of Bangkok and borders. The population consists of Thai, Chinese, hill tribes, Mon, Lawa, Lao and Khmer minorities. The province is subdivided into 10 districts. Ban Pong District is the economic hub of Ratchaburi. Nowadays, the town's economy depends much on the industrious activities. With in the district, there are more than 400 factories, producing everything from jewelry to car parts. Berkprai is an important sub-district with 725 populations in 2009 and full of industrial and agricultural activities.

### IV. PROCEDURE

The present study was conducted in Berkprai Sub-District, Ban Pong District, located in Ratchaburi Province, the central part of Thailand. The research procedure was presented below.

#### A. Population and Sample

The research population was 135 households in Berkprai Sub-District, Ban Pong District, Ratchaburi Province, Thailand.

Samples consisted of 287 volunteered representatives of all of population in Berkprai Sub-District, Ban Pong District, Ratchaburi Province, Thailand.

#### B. Scope of Content

The participation of the population and the sample included presenting the problems concerning the public administration in community and making decision in local public administration plan.

C. Scope of Research Area

Berkprai Sub-District, Ban Pong District, Ratchaburi Province, Thailand.

D. Research Process

The community participation process of local population was employed for this study. The principles of the process are:

- a) Representatives of all people in the selected area will be affected by decisions participate in the process;
- b) The process is designed by participant representatives;
- c) Participants receive necessary information;
- d) The process is open and the results are publicized;
- e) Planning is clearly defined.

Two workshops and one meeting were held to set a planning meeting of the representatives of populations. The first workshop was held with 287 participants in order to discuss the current public administration problems and the problem solving strategies and activities. Then, the results of the first workshop were summarized.

The second workshop was held with the 287 participants to further consider and revise the draft strategies and activities of the first workshop.

A final meeting was held with the key participants finalize the draft public administrative plan.

The research procedure was presented in Fig. 1 below.

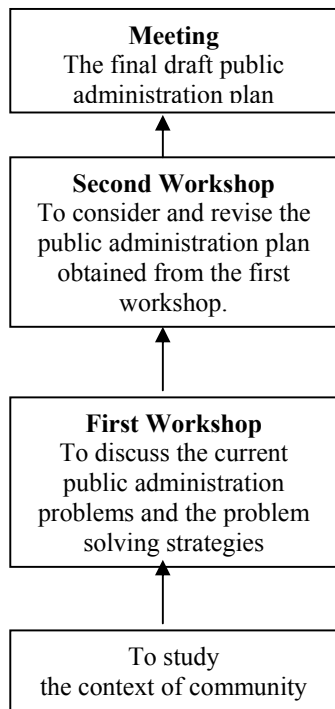


Figure 1. The summary of research procedure

V. OUTPUT

In this section, the output of the process will be presented in the following.

A. Present Community Problems in Public Administration.

The results revealed that there are 4 types of problems that the community would like to solve.

- *Infrastructure Problems* as the inconvenience of transportation, water management in the rainy season, the lack of electricity and lights, especially on the roads, the lack of clean water, and the damage of water supply system.
- *Life Quality Problems* as the lack of recreation places and activities, the lack of job opportunities, uneducated problem, especially in the young people and the children, the declining of traditional culture, the drug addiction, and the health problems.
- *Social Security Problems* as the individual security
- *Environment, Resources, and Investment Problems* as the waste from the factories and community, and the local art and cultural destroy.

B. Public Administration Plan

The public management plan was finalized from the community participation process was summarized in Table 1.

TABLE I. PUBLIC MANAGEMENT PLAN

Problems	Strategies/Activities	Objectives
<i>Infrastructure Problems</i>		
1. Inconvenience of Transportation	1. Reconstruction Projects for damaged roads and bridges	To maintain the transportation facilities and to expand the local transportation.
	2. Expanding the village roads and bridges	
2. Water management in the rainy season	1. Rehabilitating existing infrastructure	To increase the efficiency of water management.
	2. Developing a water network/grid and the distribution system	
3. Lack of electricity and lights	1. Improving more electricity system and lights	To ensure sufficient and equitable electricity and lights for the various basic needs.
	2. Developing the light resources in accordance with potential and	

TABLE I. PUBLIC MANAGEMENT PLAN (CONT.)

Problems	Strategies/ Activities	Objectives
	needs of various activities, both in terms of quantity and quality with due consideration of the environment	
4. Lack of clean water and the damage of water supply system	1. Preparing additional water resources development plan	To ensure sufficient and equitable water for the various basic needs.
	2. Studying and setting water allocation	
	3. Rehabilitating existing system.	
	4. Improving the management system	
<i>Life Quality Problems</i>		
1. Lack of recreation places and activities	1. Building the village recreation center and park	To promote the useful recreation activities in free time.
	2. Promoting the recreation activities in the free time	
2. Lack of job opportunities	1. Promoting the various technical trained tasks to the population	To develop the skills of population, which are appropriated for the employment and to gain the support from the private entities or business.
	2. Making joint ventures between the private entities or business and schools or related organization	
	3. Improving job opportunity and income	To ensure the income.
	4. Enhancing private business owners	

TABLE I. PUBLIC MANAGEMENT PLAN (CONT.)

Problems	Strategies/ Activities	Objectives
3. Uneducated population	1. Enhancing educational chances to every group of population	To develop the qualified educational opportunity for the population.
	2. Empowering services in both formal and informal education	
4. Declining of traditional culture	1. Preparing the plan to promote the traditional culture	To promote the traditional culture.
	2. Campaign to create awareness of traditional culture of population about the necessity to conserve the culture	
	3. Setting up the continuous activities to promote the traditional culture	
5. Drug addiction	1. Strengthening the role of family in drug prevention	Participation of community in the protection of drug addiction.
	2. Campaign to create awareness of dangerous of drug usage to the users and the community	To create awareness of the dangerous of drug addiction.
6. Health problems	1. Setting the health care policy, plan and activity with clear direction.	To have a clear quality health care plan.
	2. Engaging the related organization for health services	

TABLE I. PUBLIC MANAGEMENT PLAN (CONT.)

Problems	Strategies/ Activities	Objectives
<i>Social Security Problems</i>		
1. Individual security	1. Promoting the campaign of neighborhood role in individual and community security	To have the efficient individual and community security protection plan.
	2. Promoting the activity and the training of community security volunteers	
	3. Promoting and supporting local organization to be capable of prevention individual and community security	
<i>Environment, Resources, and Investment Problems</i>		
1. The waste from the factories and community	1. Promoting reducing the waste and the reusing or recycling of used material.	To ensure the efficient plan for waste management.
	2. Developing a recycling process for factories	
	3. Strengthening the capacity of local organizations and population to take care of activities affected to them and the environment.	Participation of community in the waste management process.
	4. Promoting participation of public and local organizations in the waste management process.	

TABLE I. PUBLIC MANAGEMENT PLAN (CONT.)

Problems	Strategies/ Activities	Objectives
2. The destroy of local art and culture	1. Promoting public awareness and understanding of the importance and maintenance of local art and culture	Participation of public and local organizations in the management as ell as acknowledgement of their responsibilities for the maintaining and conserving the local art and culture.
	2. Campaign for public awareness of their responsibilities for maintaining and conserving the local art and culture.	

C. *The impact of the process*

The impacts of the process were presented by the representatives of the population as.

- The process created the awareness of community problems to the population.
- The problem solving was presented with the participation of the population.
- They learnt how to make the public management plan themselves.
- The process created the working network among the related participants.
- The cooperation among the shareholders in problem solving was developed.

VI. ROLES OF COMMUNITY IN ENSURING THE DEVELOPMENT

The results presented in the previous sections highlight the roles of community participation in mastering their public management plan, and implying to their master in community development. The local community through their population and organizations facilitate problem reflection, learning and collective actions to strengthen community decision making and planning. The process of participation empowers the community [5].

The results highlighted the need of cooperative approach in local development. The following steps could be followed in local development.

- Involving community participation in policy development and implementation.
- Promoting effective community networking.
- Creating awareness, improving knowledge skills, changes attitudes in incorporating for all

development activities and plans, especially in the grass root level.

- There a need for paradigm shift in government in that development is an empowering process through which local people voice out their ideas and opinions, and making decisions on their development
- Encouraging the cooperation of local community with their own wisdom in the development in different ways and aspects.

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