

# INNOVATION OF BUDDHIST KNOWLEDGE DIFFUSION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THAI SOCIETIES TOWARDS SUFFICIENCY ECONOMY OF E-SAN LOCAL SCHOLARS

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## Abstract

The purpose of research aimed to study the status, role of knowledge, concepts and innovation of Buddhist Knowledge diffusion for development of Thai societies, towards Sufficiency Economy of E-san local scholars. It was a qualitative and quantitative method by the result of 11 editions of National Economic and Social Development Plan which were compared to change from sampling behaviors. It aims to study the process of farmers' development based on Buddhist way and implementation through Sufficiency Economy Philosophy. The research studied how the results

of sustainability would be different from each other. In the research, it revealed the needs for development of sampling and response of developed factors were balanced through the examination of the effects on economy, education, faith, confidence, social participation, and quality of life.

The Dhamma principles connected with Buddhist economics had to be modified for sampling' success, while the communication based on Buddhism and became point of balance, causing farmers to modify or change their behaviors in the direction that caused intellectual and lasting happiness towards the development of Sufficiency Economy Philosophy. Moderation was applied to theory of production; marketing and consumption from mainstream economic effects were directed by Buddhist economics and principles of Middle Path (*Majjhimāpaṭipadā*), Noble Eightfold Path (*Aṭṭhaṅgika magga*), Threefold Training (*Trisikkhā*), Chain of Causation (*Paṭiccasamuppāda*), Seven Qualities of Good Man (*Sappurisadhamma*), Five Precepts (*Pañcasīla*) and Five Dharma (*Pañcadhamma*). The Reasonability was regulated thorough Contemplation (*Yonisomanasikāra*), Three Characteristics (*Tilakkhaṇa*), Fourfold Noble Truths (*Catu-Ariyasacca*), Four Principles of Success (*Catu-Iddhipāda*), Four Principles of Social Integration (*Catu-Sangahavatthu*) and Four Principles of Virtuous Existence (*Catu-Brabmavihāra*). Self-Immunity Supervised by Mindfulness (*Sati-Appamādadhamma*) and True Good Friends (*Kalyāṇamittatadhamma*) in a strong base on knowledge and morality condition were controlled by people of knowledge (*Bahusutta*), Six Channels of Sense (*Āyatana*s) that were controlled by moral shame (*Hiri*) and the fear to the sin against corruption (*Ottappa*) as starting point.

In conclusion, social development strategies of E-san local scholars emphasized on the quality development and cooperation of person, integration of local and modern wisdom, promoted the local and own reliance and using a member network as an instrument to precede the project. Therefore, the innovative model in this research could also be used in different countries which were of different economics, societies, environments and cultures, because of the synthesis of the natural principles.

**Keywords:** The innovation of Buddhist Knowledge Relay, development of Thai societies, sufficiency economy, E-san local scholars

## Introduction

Buddhism teaches to use wisdom for solving the problems of suffering by accessing the way of thinking from the cause and principles of the practice to release the suffering as Buddhist proverb “the scholars said the person who live with wisdom has a wonderful life” (Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, 1996). Thus what the human beings need is the transference of knowledge correctly through the relevant communication that the results make understanding of the content meaning until the clear scope of the rules by cause and reason and then change the behavior of those who get knowledge until get the wisdom. It makes successful result in continuous development leading to mutual happiness and social harmony at each level.

Theories of economic and agricultural development in the long term can be wrong according to an analysis of economics developed from western civilization by Thai scholars. The result shows that the human is narrowly understood. It looks degenerate by focusing on producing of the materials for human needs without the end of human. It indicates that when the human response to who will be more happier as well as whole society. Though it has been promoted to compete with a free market system but the result is the opposite. That is competition leading to devastation that cannot control the moral code of free competition including resources which are used irrespective of environmental costs that is the ways of life for the original community in destroying. (Apichai, Sorawit & Phichet, 2003: 9)

Phra Brahmaganabhorn (*Bhikkhu P.A. Payutto*) (Phra Dhammapitaka (P. A. Payutto), (2002: 35) has preached on Buddhist economics that there is a central line in which quality of life and satisfaction are balanced. It indicates that there are two types of needs. First, it is self-consumption without limitation called (*Taṇhā*) craving. And second, it is the need for having a good life called (*Chada*), intention that makes self-potential improvement, especially the mental development to higher level with supporting and showing of the middle path or *Majjhimā*, without persecuting others in the three kinds: human, nature and society. Thus the application of Buddhist management is the concept and way of traditional practices of Thai society that will lead to sustainable development.

The concept of sufficiency economy philosophy based on the traditional way of life of Thai society by the office and committees of National Economic and Social Development (Office of the National Economics and Social Development Board. (2004: 18-21) identifies that the systematic view is constantly changing, escaping from disaster, crisis with stability and sustainability from development through the use of sufficiency economy in three practices as following: 1) sufficiency individual makes immunity in the family, 2) progressive sufficiency in the community and organizational levels including networking on a non-threaten but sharing each other to have sufficiency in practical way, and 3) sufficiency in the country level.

The process of farmer Development in Buddhist way is the main occupation of Thai society by major principles in Buddhist economics called *Majjhimā Paṭipadā* (middle path). It is a practice of leading to the destination while the sufficiency economy philosophy has modesty, rationality and good self-immunity by using well-informed knowledge, with morality is the basis of mind and lifestyle. It is to create the balance in society, objects, natural resources, wisdom and Thai culture by the participation of all people until the constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand BE 2550, National Economic and Social Development Plan, article 10 (2008-2011). It also mentions the implementation of the sufficiency economy philosophy as the main concept of the national development plan as well.

Local scholars play an important role to encourage the development of country, especially the introduction of Sufficiency Economy Philosophy of H.M. King Bhumibol Adulyadej, the reign of Thai King Rama IX of the Chakri Dynasty, to study and practice until get good results manifestly. It can bring a happy life for own self, family and community by integrating agriculture through the concept of sufficiency economy as well. As local scholars of agriculture in all regions of Thailand, especially E-san local scholars has main concepts of living and community development which are: 1) falling down, 2) thinking differently, 3) making an alternative, 4) attaching Dhamma, 5) practice to develop, 6) daring to present, and 7) believing in sufficiency economy (Thawatchai, P. 2007: Abstract). It depends on the individual media, innovative media from local wisdom and contemporary innovative media which relay and continue of Buddhist knowledge to develop Thai society into a sufficiency economy for a long

time period.

Thus the innovation of transferring of Buddhist knowledge to develop Thai society into sufficiency economy of E-san local scholars is very important and valuable, because it will makes the manufacturer to look back and analyze the original nature of living, and try to change the behavior based on the philosophy of sufficiency economy in the process of the production to the appropriate consumption of buyers to live the right way and empower in each parts of life and lead to sustainable development. This is the goal of today's national economic and social development (Pipat Y, (2004: 22-28).

## **Objectives of Research**

To study the status, character, concept, knowledge and innovation of the transferring of Buddhist knowledge to sufficiency economy of E-san local scholars

## **Scope of Research**

1. Content scopes are by the status, character, concept, knowledge related to the way of life, goodness, gratitude, sacrifice, and goal of life. The lifestyle of pattern living and process of transferring of the E-san local scholars is from the primary and secondary sources as follows:

1.1 Principles of the Theravada Buddhist scriptures by mainly studying the Thai Tipitaka Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University,

1.2. Theories of the main economics is analyzed, including of the theory of production, consumption, utility, productive distribution, economic welfare and the economic development.

2. Population scope: the local scholars in the Northeast or E-san, which is divided into Northeastern part consisting of 12 provinces and then are divided into three sub-groups. And the local lower Northeastern part has 8 provinces are divided into two sub-groups, including 20 provinces and 5 sub-groups. There are all 70 local scholars who were selected one from 5 sub-groups.

2.1 Northeastern province: first sub-group consisting of has 5

provinces: UdonThani, NongBua Lamphu, Nongkhai, Leoi, and Bueng Kan. There are totally 8 people and selected 1 person.

2.2 Northeastern province, second sub-group consisting of 4 provinces: SakonNakhon, Mukdahan, NakhonPhanom and Kalasin. There are totally 14 people and selected 1 person.

2.3 Northeastern province, third sub-group consisting of 3 provinces: Khon Kaen, Mahasarakam and Roi-et. There are totally 16 people and selected 1 person.

2.4 Lower Northeastern province, first sub-group consisting of 4 provinces: Nakhon Ratchasima, Chaiyaphum, Buriram and Surin. There are 18 people and selected 1 person.

2.5 Lower Northeastern province, second sub-group consisting of 3 provinces: Ubon Ratchathani, Amnat Charoen and Sisaket. There are total 14 people and selected 1 person.

## **Definition of term used in research**

1. **Innovation** refers to new ideas and processes that never have before or make any development or adaptation from the original to be better and when used, it makes the more effective.

2. **Body of Buddhist knowledge** refers to any kinds of knowledge that applies principle of Dhamma to use directly, or adapt to use in the appropriate situation to live and solve the problems in the community until the accumulation for learning and transferring of experiences from generation to generation.

3. **Buddhist Knowledge Diffusion** refers the process of telling and sharing of ideas through verbal communication, demonstration and exemplification. The visited-study of real location, making texts and documents, media materials are dealt with knowledge in living and solving the problems of community by using Buddhist principles.

4. **Local Wisdom / Local Knowledge** refers to knowledge, ideas, beliefs, behavioral abilities in solving the problems of the local scholars which happened from their way of life by adapting to the constantly changing environment.

5. **E-san Scholars** refers to the people who bring the thought and practice by using local wisdom and Buddhist principles in the Northeast region.

## **Research Method**

This is Qualitative research involved two types of study namely, documentary research and field research, with the target group and research methodology as follows:

1. Documentary Research is the first step that is by studying and researching of books and other documents related to this study such as, *Tipitaka*, scriptures, commentary, sub-commentary, supplications, supplements, books and other related materials. They are used to analyze the concept of Northern local scholars by using the guideline for further field studies.

2. Field Research uses the methods of data collection by the interview and observation as follows:

2.1 Interview is briefly summarized in the following:

1) It is by In-depth Interview and individual leader who are local scholars and the Northeast local scholars (E-san) in all 20 provinces

2) Group interviews (Focus Group) are contacting the representative as stakeholder, joint together about 5-10 people to discuss or informally discuss issues of the interview.

3) Phone Interview is used in the case of target group who has health problems and are not easy to travel or if there is some unclear information.

2.2 Non-participation observes are used by the researcher collected data by specified intervals that did not participate in activities with target groups in the research area.

2.3 Participation observe is used by the research process observation by the use of daily activities and other activities that happened in that communities and participate in those activities such as, academic activities, local cultural activities, religious activities etc., among target group

in the research area.

### 3. Research Tools

In this research, the researcher uses a structured questionnaire to collect data and keeps the data with the details of the tools used. There are six parts as follows:

Part 1 is the question about history and development of the community.

Part 2 is the question about the history of local scholars in the community.

Part 3 is the question about the concept of local scholars in each community, including the world philosophers, philosophers' life, goal of life and wisdom of living values and the way of practices

Part 4 is the question about the rituals, practices, activities of local scholars in the community.

Part 5 the question about the method and process of transferring

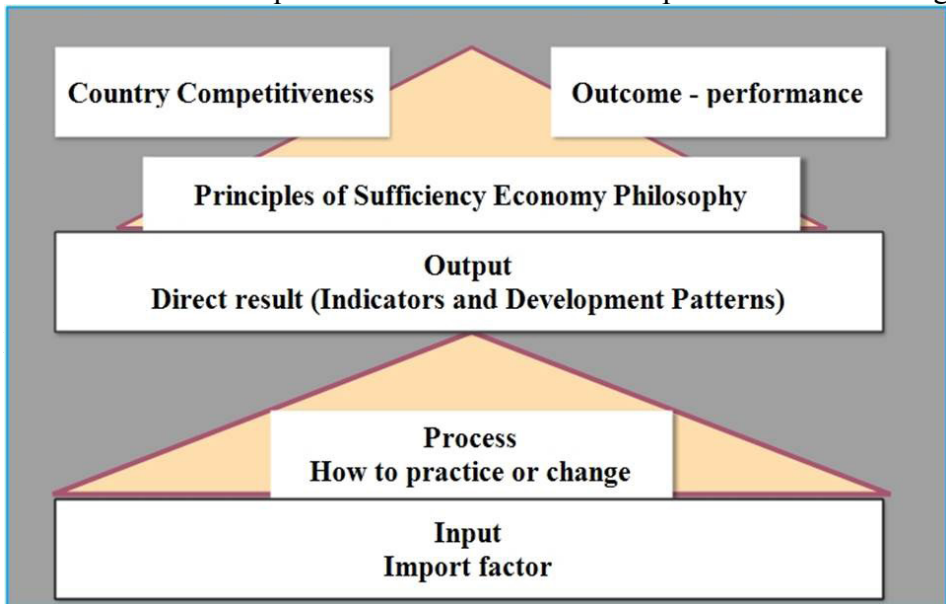


Figure 1.1 the conceptual framework for the research process



## Results

1. The body of knowledge with thinking of using the rational and moral framework is the basis of local E-san scholars. It is principle to apply the modesty with the marketing productive theory and consumption of mainstream economics are directed by Buddhist economics and Buddhist principles of the Middle Path (*Majjhimāpaṭipadā*), Noble Eightfold Path (*Aṭṭhaṅgika magga*), Threefold Training (*Trisikkhā*), Chain of Causation (*Paṭiccasamuppāda*), Seven Qualities of a Good Man (*Sappurisadhamma*), Five Precepts (*Pañcasila*) and Five Dharma (*Pañcadhamma*). On the other hand, the reasonability is directed by the principles of thorough Contemplation (*Yonisomanasikāra*), Three Characteristics (*Tilakkhaṇa*), Fourfold Noble Truths (*Catu - Ariyasacca*), Four Principles of Success (*Catu - Iddhipāda*), Four Principles of Social Integration (*Catu - Sangahavatthu*) and Four Principles of Virtuous Existence (*Catu - Brabmavihāra*). Self-Immunity Supervised by Mindfulness (*Sati - Appamādadhamma*) and True Good Friends (*Kalyāṇamittatadhamma*) is directed on a base of knowledge and the morality condition controlled by the people of knowledge (*Bahusutta*). The Six Channels of Sense (*Āyatana*s) are controlled by the moral shame (*Hiri*) and the fear to the sin against the corruption (*Ottappa*) as a starting point. It can adjust the idea and attitude of people to create a society of sharing, creating and practicing of leadership that can bring the body of knowledge to transferring and network expansion. The Understanding of application of balance living with the production is not only used the production of raw material, but also to be in touch with the marketing techniques, knowing of natural consumer behavior as well as ready to create new things from daily life with strategic sustainability. It gets achieved of the balance from the needs of both the manufacturers and consumers to complete the response of policy, practical method and achieve real development goals from the new form of communication based on Buddhism for development to sufficiency economy.

2. Principle of transferring of Buddhist knowledge of E-san local scholars teaches with compassion through a balanced communicative process such as

2.1 The useful communication for the listeners to get benefits to the senders and receivers without returned expectation is the goal of communication at each turn.

2.2 The communication to build the knowledge and comprehensive understanding is both the cause and process of problems solution in short, medium and long with systematical levels. There is a good reason to understand by compassion, not for the benefits that will affect own self and others in either positively or negatively.

2.3 To focus on communicative methods is practical and good examples of personality, convincing people to be close and get happy. It will be result in the presentation of knowledge and constantly propagation by providing of informative systems and building of new trust in the society by a wide scope and visible effect. Even though there is place or individual group have similar or different opinions by the basic knowledge, it makes their lives happy. A life that dares to perceive everything set a correct attitude to those problems and manage to solve them correctly with understanding. It can access suffering from craving, selfish desire, conflicts and suffering for both own self and others by the levels of passion, which is caused by ignorance, that does not understand and see things in truth. There is an attitude towards all things are correct, which are ignorance (*Ajija*) to organize and create the transcendence instead of it.

3. Social development strategies of E-san local scholars focused on developing of people are to be qualified with focusing on the participation of the villagers. The Integration of local wisdom combined with modern wisdom to encourage self-reliance and other-reliance in the community and use the creation of network as the tool to process work by social development strategies of E-san local scholars can be classified into the following strategies:

3.1 Collaborative strategies: (1) the formation of self-confidence to achieve acceptance in the self-development to model of living in moral conduct, personality and leadership etc., (2) create a participatory systematical work and allow members or networks to think, to do and to solve problems in cooperation, and (3) collaborate with people, both public and private agencies in order to access the knowledge, funding and other resources.

3.2 Strategies on the use of local scholars' wisdom are: (1) development must be based on a well-connected the lifestyle between human being and nature, (2) there are application of local wisdom and the modern wisdom together for using of benefits and knowing how to use

wisdom appropriately, and (3) apply the principles of Buddhism as a way of life.

3.3 Continuous and sustainable strategies are: (1) focus on developing of people to be qualified in order to get the knowledge and will live knowingly with socially aware of the changes happening, (2) creation of co-networking at all levels to have to wide cooperation, and (3) focus on developing based on real life and have a willingness to work.

## Discussion

The innovation of the body of Buddhist Knowledge of local E-san scholars are based on personal media, innovative media from local wisdom and contemporary media in convey the body of Buddhist knowledge to develop Thai society to sufficiency economic for long time and many periods. This is the Buddhist communication to convey the knowledge with consciousness and wisdom that knows what knowledge is gained? In the term of using, it gets wisdom that affects behavioral change toward sustainable development. It is the main factor which is the opportunity of accessing of knowledge and the availability of new technology used in everyday life without personal use, individuals used in family as connectors to communicate for the benefit of self-development to have constantly good welfare to community. This is the main cornerstone of sufficiency sharing and developed innovation through smart phone and computer systems by the channels of the community radio and local communication among themselves, that is the very important part of the transmission from the process of using communicative technology in conjunction with the workshop management by communicative technology and phones through SMS, MMS, Line, Video Clip, Facebook and E-Commerce etc. to change the mindset and lead to behavior enhancement and the involvement, therefore it will continue to develop towards sustainability.

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