



The implementation of sufficiency economy in local development: A case study of administrative areas of Takuk Nuea Subdistrict Administrative Organization, Vibhavadi District, Surat Thani Province, Thailand

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Abstract

This research aims to (1) evaluate the implementation of sufficiency economy philosophy for local development in Tambon Takoek Nuea, Amphoe Wipawadee, Surat Thani province, (2) study the attitudes of the community towards the role of Tambon Takoek Nuea in driving the sufficiency economy philosophy for local development, and (3) examine the relationship between perception factors and participation factors with the attitudes of the community towards the role of Tambon Takoek Nuea in driving the sufficiency economy philosophy for local development. The research utilized a quantitative research method. The researchers used criteria for assessing the understanding, perception, and access to the sufficiency economy philosophy at the local administrative organization level as a framework for evaluation. An online questionnaire was used to collect data to study the community's attitudes in Tambon Takoek Nuea, with a sample size of 400 people. The data were analyzed using the SPSS software to calculate percentages, means, standard deviations, and to compare differences using t-tests and one-way ANOVA tests at a 95% confidence level. The Pearson correlation coefficient was used to test the relationships between variables.

The study found that (1) Tambon Takoek Nuea had an evaluation result of sufficiency economy understanding at the level of "understanding" (253 points) according to the Happiness Organization framework. (2) The community had attitudes towards the role of Tambon Takoek Nuea in driving the sufficiency economy philosophy for local development at an overall moderate level (mean of 3.22), and factors such as age, education level, and occupation showed significant differences in attitudes at a statistical significance level of 0.05. (3) Perception factors were correlated with the community's attitudes towards the role of Tambon Takoek Nuea in driving the sufficiency economy philosophy for local development in all three aspects, namely management, participatory community development planning, and community resources. This abstract summarizes the objectives, methodology, and key findings of the research, highlighting the importance of driving the sufficiency economy philosophy for local development in the context of Tambon Takoek Nuea's local administrative organization.

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1. Introduction

The Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (SEP) is a guideline proposed by His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej the Great, which has been advising Thai people on how to live their lives for over 25 years. Sufficiency refers to moderation, reasonableness, and built-in resilience, under two conditions: knowledge and virtue. This allows every sector of society to apply the principles of the SEP to everything in life at all levels, from the family and community/society to the state (Chaipattana Foundation, 2021). This approach is one that the government has tried to integrate into the process and is included in the plans of all units to align with the 20-year National Strategy (2018 - 2037). The vision for Thailand is a "stable, prosperous, and sustainable developed country through the development following the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy".

This aligns with the 12th and current 13th National Economic and Social Development Plan (2023 – 2027), in order to have all sectors of society hold to the "principles of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy" and put it into practice, leading to integrated development in all dimensions that are reasonable, sufficient, and have good risk management systems (National Economic and Social Development Plan Framework No. 13, 2021).

In the societal system known as local communities, there exists the power to establish their own government as stipulated by law, operating under the state's supervision. This is referred to as a Local Administrative Organization (LAO), a part of the Ministry of Interior. It is responsible for promoting and supporting Local Administrative Organizations across the country to be robust and capable in providing public services to relieve suffering and promote well-being among the public. A policy requires agencies within the organization, working groups, or personnel under the LAO to follow the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (SEP) as a guideline for their work to align and be compatible with policies, measures, and directions for national development. The focus is on linking the principles of the SEP to the development of administration and public services according to local missions (Department of Local Administration Strategy 2017 - 2026, 2017). Takook Nuea Subdistrict Administrative Organization in Takook Nuea Subdistrict, Wipawadee District, Surat Thani Province is one type of LAO that provides services and assists, taking care of people in the subdistrict on behalf of the central government. It is a legal entity and a local administrative unit with its budget and officials, having its name and the area for which it is specifically responsible. It was established from a Subdistrict Council, following income and population criteria of no less than 2,000 people. It has the authority and duties in the subdistrict's development in economic, social, cultural, and other aspects under the stipulated law. The vision of Takook Nuea Subdistrict Administrative Organization for local development is to 'develop quality of life, ensure economic stability, promote education to strengthen the community, and build resilience to changes'.

In this regard, the researcher will evaluate the past performance of Takook Nuea Subdistrict Administrative Organization in terms of how much it has adhered to the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (SEP) as a guideline for its operations. The research will also study the level of public perception towards the promotion of the SEP in local development, as well as relevant factors. This will provide insight into whether Takook Nuea Subdistrict Administrative Organization's operations align with the various measures and policies established by the state according to the SEP. It will also help identify areas of operation that should be developed or improved, and how they should be addressed moving forward.

2. The objectives of the study

2.1. To evaluate the implementation of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (SEP) for local development by the Takook Nuea Subdistrict Administrative Organization.

2.2. To study the attitudes of the local population towards the role of the Takook Nuea Subdistrict Administrative Organization in promoting the SEP for local development.

2.3. To investigate the relationship between awareness, participation, and the attitudes of the local population towards the role of the Takook Nuea Subdistrict Administrative

Organization in promoting the SEP for local development.

3. Literature Review

This research reviews concepts and related theories, principally including

3.1. Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (SEP) and its meaning

The characteristics of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy consist of (Chaipattana Foundation, 2021)

1. Moderation this means not too much or too little, avoiding excess or deficiency that could disrupt one's own happiness or cause distress to others.
2. Reasonableness this implies careful consideration of the impacts that will result from various causes and factors.
3. Self-immunity this refers to preparedness to cope with situations and changes that might occur in the future.

The decision-making to conduct various activities at the sufficiency level depends on two conditions

1. Knowledge condition this is the academic knowledge in various fields that helps in planning, consideration, and decision-making for different situations in a careful and cautious manner.
2. Moral condition this is the cultivation of morality, living life with patience, mindfulness, and honesty, and maintaining integrity in life.

3.2. Measuring Sufficiency Economy

The Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (SEP) is a guideline that every local governing organization (LGO) must include as part of their local development strategy. It is applied to various appropriate developmental areas such as: (1) Development of basic infrastructure (2) Economic development along the lines of the SEP towards sustainability (3) Management of natural resources, environment, and sustainable ecosystems (4) Conservation, restoration, and continuation of arts, culture, traditions, and local wisdom (5) Development in terms of quality of life (6) Community, social, and peace maintenance (7) Administrative development for good governance (Department of Local Administration, 2010).

Measuring the level of sufficiency economy to understand the direction following the principles of the SEP is crucial in assessing the performance or efficiency of the development approach. Indicators or metrics are necessary for measuring the level of sufficiency economy and can be classified into three levels: eligibility, understanding, and accessibility. 'Eligibility' refers to organizations that operate in a way that can be identified as being protective or defensive. 'Understanding' refers to organizations that operate in a way that can be identified as being protective and possess a mentality of sufficiency. 'Accessibility' refers to organizations that operate in a way that can be identified as being protective, possess a mentality of sufficiency, and are reasonable (Apichai Phantasen, 2017). By collecting and analyzing the mix between the philosophy of the SEP and the actual practices of LGOs nationwide, the criteria for scoring indicators of the SEP level of LGOs can be established, consisting of 12 indicators totaling 300 points (Apichai Phantasen, 2019).

3.3. Ideas on Local Governance

The concept of local governance (Chuwong Chayabutr, 1996,

cited in Pandat Norkhantod, 2013) is defined as follows: (1) Communities that have varying forms of governance based on prosperity, population size, and area. Currently, Thai local governance is organized into five formats: Provincial Administrative Organizations, Municipalities, Subdistrict Administrative Organizations, Bangkok, and Pattaya. (2) Autonomy in self-governance, where the government considers the distribution of power and responsibility for self-management to each local governing organization as appropriate, depending on the characteristics of prosperity and capabilities of the people in the area. (3) Local administrative units have legal rights to self-governance (Legal Rights) in enacting laws, regulations, and rules for the benefit of local people, such as the enactment of municipal laws, regulations of the Subdistrict Administrative Organization, etc. (4) The presence of executive and legislative organizations, which are necessary for managing their self-governance of local administrative units.

3.4. Definition of Social Innovation

Social innovation is something new, whether it is a thought process (imagination), creating opportunities, or taking action to solve problems or to improve society. This novelty also includes adaptations or developments on an existing basis. The key features are (1) a new approach to problem-solving, (2) it arises from the collaboration, joint thinking, and creation of people in society, not from external commands, (3) it has a public spirit, seeing the benefit of the public over the individual, and (4) it has development, expansion of effects leading to changes in both spatial and characteristic terms (Chunruthai Kanchanachitra and Wassana Im-aim, 2003, cited in Alongkorn Kutrakul, 2010).

3.5. Concepts and Theories about Perception

Perception is the process by which living things attempt to understand their environment through the senses. It starts with sensing stimuli and then organizes thought systems from the new stimuli and interprets the meaning of the sensed stimuli. In the step of interpreting meaning, the step uses old experiences to interpret meanings (Sitthichoke Waranusantikul, 2003, cited in Nitipong Manapong, 2018). Perception refers to the response of individuals to what is happening. Perception is divided into 2 activities: receiving information and translating information into messages according to understanding. Perception must consider knowledge, understanding of information, interest, and experience, to interpret it correctly (Banyong Tojinda, 2000, cited in Nitipong Manapong, 2018).

3.6. Concepts and Theories of Participation

According to Jiraporn Srika (2004), participation refers to the involvement of individuals who are interested in or related to the same issue to perform tasks, whether in planning, implementation, receiving work results, monitoring and evaluation, or performing various activities together to achieve the set objectives.

Roger (1978) stated that factors motivating individuals to decide to participate in new community activities or accept new things are communication and personal characteristics. These factors are:

1. Communication channel factors are the methods by which the sender sends information to the receiver in two ways:
 - 1.1. Mass media channel is a method of transmitting

information related to communication, such as newspapers, magazines, journals, and other types of books, such as films, radio, television, which are important in increasing knowledge, disseminating news, and can change the attitude of individuals.

1.2. The interpersonal communication channel is a person-to-person contact to transmit information between the sender and the receiver, which has a greater impact on changing attitudes than other types of media.

2. Personal characteristics related factors include age, social status, economic status, income, land size, and special abilities, including education level, public lifestyle, which seems to have an indirect impact.

3.7. Concepts related to Attitudes

Attitude is a predisposition before it is expressed as behavior. That is, attitude is something that prepares individuals to observe and make appropriate decisions about what they hear, listen to, then think, consider, and express as actions (Allport, 1995:22).

Attitude refers to the degree of intensity of positive or negative feelings towards an object (Psychological Object), which could be a thing, person, article, organization, etc. These feelings indicate whether one agrees or disagrees (Thurstone, cited in Somjate Thaiyanon, 1998).

Attitude means the feelings towards various things, which result from learning experiences and motivate individuals to behave or have a tendency to respond to those stimuli in one direction. This could be in support or opposition. This depends on the learning process, the social methodology, which these attitudes will be expressed or clearly seen in the case where the stimuli are social stimuli (Cherdsak Kovasith, cited in Nachapat Asawaratchanan, 2011).

4. Conceptual Framework for Research

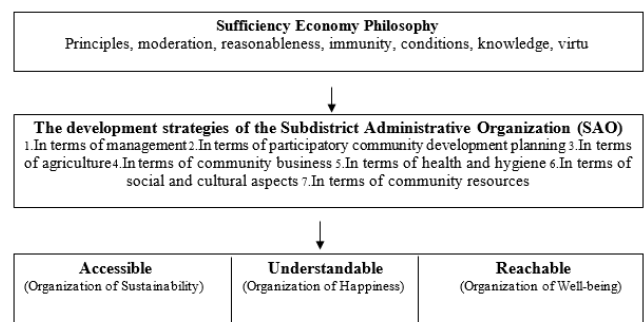


Fig 1: Conceptual Framework

As figure 1 show conceptual framework so that

1. To evaluate the results of promoting the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy for local development of the Taku Kuen North Subdistrict Administration Organization.
2. To examine the public's attitudes toward the role of local administration in promoting the sufficiency economy philosophy for local development.
3. To study the relationship between perception factors and participation factors with the attitudes of the people towards the role of Tambon Administration Organization (TAO) of Tako Nuea in promoting the philosophy of sufficiency economy for local development (Figure 2).

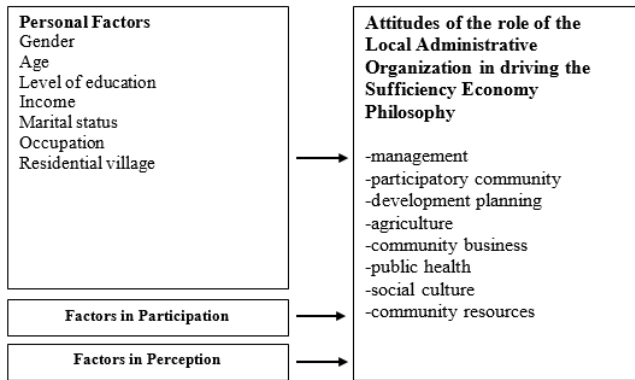


Fig 2: Factors toward attitudes

5. Research Methodology

This research aims to study the role of Takuapa Subdistrict Administrative Organization in driving the sufficiency economy for local development. The study evaluates the promotion of the sufficiency economy philosophy using assessment criteria based on the understanding and accessibility of the sufficiency economy philosophy at the local government level, which includes 12 indicators and scores out of 300 points. Online questionnaires were used to collect data to study the attitudes of 400 residents towards the role of the Takuapa Subdistrict Administrative Organization in promoting sufficiency economy for local development. The collected data was analyzed using the SPSS software to calculate percentages, averages, and standard deviations. Additionally, differences were compared using a t-test to test the differences between the means of two groups, and one-way analysis of variance (One-way ANOVA) was used to test

differences in the means of more than two groups with a 95% confidence level. Lastly, Pearson's correlation was used to test the relationship.

6. Research Results

6.1 Evaluation of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy Promotion for Local Development by the Takuapa Subdistrict Administrative Organization

The assessment of the sufficiency economy level of Takuapa Subdistrict Administrative Organization concluded with a total score of 253 points from all 12 indicators. Upon checking the conditions for the sufficiency economy level assessment, it was found that the Takuapa Subdistrict Administrative Organization scored 72 points on indicators 1, 2, and 3. Therefore, it passed the eligibility level (sustainable organization) and the understanding level (happy organization) with 46 points on indicator 5.

6.2 Attitudes of Residents towards the Role of the Takuapa Subdistrict Administrative Organization in Promoting Sufficiency Economy for Local Development

The analysis of residents' attitudes towards the role of the Takuapa Subdistrict Administrative Organization in promoting sufficiency economy for local development found that the majority of the sample group had an average opinion level (mean score 3.22). When analyzing each component, it was found that most of the sample group had a high opinion of management (mean score 3.68), followed by participatory planning (mean score 3.26), health and hygiene (mean score 3.20), socio-cultural aspects (mean score 3.18), agriculture (mean score 3.13), community business (mean score 3.13), and community resources (mean score 3.02).

Table 1: Showing the results of the analysis of the difference between personal factors and the attitudes of the residents towards the role of the Takuapa Subdistrict Administrative Organization in promoting the philosophy of the Sufficiency Economy for local development

Personal factors							
Attitudes towards the role of Local Administrative Organization (LAO) in promoting sufficiency economy philosophy	Age	Gender	Level of Education	Income	Marital Status	Occupation	Residential Village
1. Management	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
2. Participatory community development plan preparation	×	×	×	×	×	√	×
3. Agriculture	√	×	√	×	×	√	×
4. Community business	√	×	√	×	×	√	×
5. Health	√	×	√	×	×	√	√
6. Social and cultural aspects	√	×	√	×	×	√	√
7. Community resources	√	×	×	×	×	√	×
overview	√	×	√	×	×	√	×

Sig < 0.05 indicates statistical significance at the 0.05 level.

Note: The symbol √ denotes a significant difference, while the symbol × indicates no significant difference.

Table 2: Relationship between Perceptual Factors and Attitudes of the Public towards the Role of Tambon Takoek Nuea in Driving the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy for Local Development

The Role of Tambon Takoek Nuea in Driving the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy for Local Development	Perception factors			
	Person Correlation	Sig. (2 – tailed)	direction	level of relationship
1. Management	.124*	.010	same	very low
2. Participatory community development plan preparation	.171**	.001	same	very low
3. Agriculture	.128*	.010	same	very low
4. Community business	.132**	.008	same	very low
5. Health	.147**	.003	same	very low
6. Social and cultural aspects	.155**	.002	same	very low
7. Community resources	.180**	.000	same	very low
overview	.193**	.000	same	very low

*Statistically significant at the 0.05 level

** Statistically significant at the 0.01 level

Table 3: Relationship between Factors of Participation and Attitudes of the Community towards the Role of Sub-district Administration Organization in Promoting the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy for Local Development

The Role of Tambon Takoek Nuea in Driving the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy for Local Development	Engagement factors			
	Person Correlation	Sig. (2 – tailed)	direction	level of relationship
1. Management	.164**	.001	same	very low
2. Participatory community development plan preparation	.160**	.001	same	very low
3. Agriculture	.083	.098	-	-
4. Community business	.053	.287	-	-
5. Health	.058	.249	-	-
6. Social and cultural aspects	.006	.901	-	-
7. Community resources	.114*	.001	same	very low
overview	.124*	.013	same	very low

*Statistically significant at the **0.05** level

** Statistically significant at the **0.01** level

7. Discussion

The evaluation results based on the 12 indicators measuring the level of sufficiency economy of the Sub-district Administration Organization (SAO) of Tambon Takuakhen showed a score of 253 out of 300. This indicates that the organization is at the level of "Understanding" (an organization of happiness). This means that the organization operates in a manner that demonstrates resilience and a balanced approach, with no risks or temptations for corruption. The organization manages its operations with transparency, integrity, and the well-being of all individuals within the organization. This aligns with the vision of the Department of Local Administration in building a strong and transparent local community, advancing towards Thailand 4.0, in accordance with the sufficiency economy philosophy. Furthermore, the assessment is consistent with the Local Performance Assessment (LPA) conducted in the year 2022 for Tambon Takuakhen. The SAO received a score of 487 out of 595, which translates to 81.01%, indicating a significantly good performance.

Based on the study, it was found that the overall attitude of the public towards the role of Tambon Takuakhen in driving the philosophy of sufficiency economy for local development is at a moderate level. This is consistent with the evaluation of the local administration organization (SAO) of Tambon Takuakhen's implementation of the sufficiency economy philosophy and the Local Performance Assessment (LPA) conducted in 2022. The findings indicate that the SAO of Tambon Takuakhen demonstrates transparent and accountable management practices, with a focus on good governance and compliance with the law. There were no attempts to collude for personal gain among the village head, sub-district headman, chief technician, and treasury head. Additionally, there were no complaints or grievances related to the procurement process in the past budget year. Tambon Takuakhen actively engages in collaborative planning and ensures the dissemination of information to all stakeholders in advance for verification. They have established a database and developed local development plans according to the standards, with the goal of achieving well-governed local organizations. In terms of public services and public activities, Tambon Takuakhen works towards the well-being of the community, as defined in their vision. They promote and support public health initiatives and disease prevention in various areas. They have implemented projects to promote health and prevent diseases, aiming to create a healthy environment within the community.

According to the study (Table 1,2,3) the factors related to information perception and the attitude towards driving the sufficiency economy philosophy of the sub-district administrative organization (SAO) showed a significant relationship. The study examined various channels through which individuals received information about the sufficiency economy philosophy, such as education, special exhibitions/events, conversations with friends/family, television, radio, newspapers/magazines, and the internet. These communication channels are consistent with Roger's (1978) mass media channels, which play an important role in disseminating information, increasing knowledge, and influencing individuals' attitudes. Furthermore, interpersonal communication channels, which involve direct contact between individuals to transmit information, were found to have a greater impact on attitude change compared to other media channels. These channels serve as intermediaries for communicating various information related to the principles of the sufficiency economy. When individuals receive information through these channels, it can potentially influence their attitudes. The study emphasizes the importance of convenient and up-to-date access to information, education and learning about the sufficiency economy, and the involvement of individuals in decision-making processes as significant factors in the relationship between individuals' attitudes and the organization. Creating an environment that facilitates access to information and promotes learning and understanding of the sufficiency economy philosophy, as well as fostering participation in decision-making processes, are important factors in establishing a strong connection between the public and the sub-district administrative organization (SAO). Removing limitations in perception and understanding of the sufficiency economy will contribute to building a solid bond between the public and the SAO.

From the study, it was found that the participation of individuals in activities/exhibitions or training related to the sufficiency economy philosophy is significantly correlated with their attitudes towards driving the sufficiency economy philosophy in three aspects of sub-district administrative organization (SAO), namely (1) management, (2) participatory development planning, and (3) resource management. Participation in activities/exhibitions or receiving training related to the sufficiency economy philosophy, whether in the form of lectures, seminars, workshops, or field visits, leads to the development of knowledge and understanding, as well as the exchange of

principles and practical experiences related to development based on the royal initiatives and philosophy of the sufficiency economy. This, in turn, affects the attitudes towards the operational activities of the sub-district administrative organization (SAO), which is contextual and content-specific to the training received. This finding aligns with the research conducted by Pongpipat Panngam (2009) on the factors related to attitudes towards community participation in the development planning of the local administrative organization in Nong Lalong Sub-district, Bang Kapi District, Rayong Province. The study found that the factor significantly correlated with attitudes towards community participation is the experience of having participated before.

8. Recommendations

1. Place importance on people of all age groups in the community by conducting surveys to determine the needs of each age group. This information can be used to design appropriate projects and initiatives that promote holistic and balanced growth and development of individuals in the community. For example, supporting education for children and youth, promoting employment opportunities for working-age individuals, or providing retirement support for the elderly.
2. Diversify communication methods to cater to different segments of the population with varying educational backgrounds. Since different educational levels can affect learning, understanding, and analytical abilities of individuals, it is essential to consider and adapt communication methods that are suitable for the target audience. This may involve using different approaches and tools to effectively reach different groups.
3. The sub-district administrative organization should collaborate with educational institutions, private organizations, and other supportive entities to develop appropriate policies and achieve success in meeting the needs of each profession within the area. This collaboration can help in developing tailored strategies and policies that effectively address the specific requirements of different professions in the community.
4. The sub-district administrative organization of Tambon Takoek Nuea can take the following actions to promote community participation in projects and activities related to sufficiency economy (1) Create a strong and confident community: Foster a sense of community strength and confidence among the residents by promoting unity and collective responsibility. (2) Establish spaces for meetings and communication: Provide physical spaces where community members can gather, hold meetings, and communicate with each other. (3) Encourage community involvement in decision-making: Create opportunities for community members to actively participate in decision-making processes. (4) Promote education and access to information: Support educational initiatives and ensure access to relevant information for community members. (5) Foster cooperation and shared responsibility: Encourage collaboration and shared responsibility among community members. (6) Establish monitoring and evaluation systems: Implement systems to track progress and evaluate the effectiveness of projects and activities.
5. A data center is a crucial communication channel that enables residents to quickly and accurately access

information related to the organization's activities and projects. The following steps can be taken to establish an effective data center (1) Create an easily accessible data center: Establish a data center that is easily accessible to community members. (2) Regularly disseminate information: Ensure regular dissemination of information through the data center. (3) Develop user-friendly and engaging content: Create content that is easy to understand and interesting for the target audience. (4) Build an online community for communication: Establish an online community platform for communication and interaction. (5) Support feedback mechanisms: Promote feedback mechanisms to encourage community members to provide input and suggestions. (6) Provide training and development opportunities: Support training and development programs to enhance the skills and knowledge of community members. (7) Maintain credibility and impartiality: Uphold credibility and impartiality in the operations of the data center.

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