

ความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างการประยุกต์ใช้ปรัชญาเศรษฐกิจพอเพียงกับคุณภาพชีวิตครัวเรือนของเกษตรกรสวนยางพาราในจังหวัดบุรีรัมย์

Effects of Application of Sufficiency Economy Philosophy on Household Life Quality of Rubber Farmers in Buriram Province Thailand.

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บทคัดย่อ

การวิจัยครั้งนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์ เพื่อทดสอบผลกระทบของการประยุกต์ใช้ปรัชญาเศรษฐกิจพอเพียงที่มีต่อคุณภาพชีวิตครัวเรือนของเกษตรกรสวนยางพาราในจังหวัดบุรีรัมย์ เครื่องมือที่ใช้ในการวิจัยเป็นแบบสอบถาม โดยทำการเก็บรวบรวมข้อมูลจากหัวหน้าครัวเรือนของเกษตรกรสวนยางพาราในจังหวัดบุรีรัมย์จำนวน 206 คน สถิติที่ใช้ในการวิเคราะห์ข้อมูลได้แก่การวิเคราะห์สหสัมพันธ์พหุคูณและการวิเคราะห์ความถดถอยแบบพหุคูณผลการวิจัยพบว่า 1) การประยุกต์ใช้ปรัชญาเศรษฐกิจพอเพียง ด้านความพอประมาณมีความสัมพันธ์และผลกระทบเชิงบวกกับคุณภาพชีวิตครัวเรือน 2) การประยุกต์ใช้ปรัชญาเศรษฐกิจพอเพียง ด้านความมีเหตุผลมีความสัมพันธ์และผลกระทบเชิงบวกกับคุณภาพชีวิตครัวเรือนและ 3) การประยุกต์ใช้ปรัชญาเศรษฐกิจพอเพียง ด้านการมีภูมิคุ้มกันที่ดีมีความสัมพันธ์และผลกระทบเชิงบวกกับคุณภาพชีวิตครัวเรือนดังนั้น เกษตรกรสวนยางพาราในจังหวัดบุรีรัมย์ควรใช้ปรัชญาเศรษฐกิจพอเพียงเป็นแนวทางในการส่งเสริมคุณภาพชีวิตครัวเรือนของตนเองให้มีประสิทธิภาพสามารถมีความเป็นอยู่ที่ดีได้ในอนาคต

คำสำคัญ: การประยุกต์ใช้ปรัชญาเศรษฐกิจพอเพียง, คุณภาพชีวิตครัวเรือน, ความพอประมาณ, ความมีเหตุผล, การมีภูมิคุ้มกันที่ดี

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to investigate the effects of application of sufficiency economy philosophy on household life quality of rubber farmers in Buriram province. Questionnaires were used as the instrument of the research and data collection was conducted from the 206 household leaders of rubber farmers in Buriram province. Statistics used for analyzing the collected data are multiple correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis. The findings showed that: 1) Application of sufficiency economy philosophy for moderation is positively correlated with household life quality; 2) Application of sufficiency economy philosophy for reasonableness is positively correlated with household life quality; and 3) Application of sufficiency economy philosophy for self-immunity is positively correlated with household life quality. Therefore, the rubber farmers of Buriram province should regard sufficiency economy philosophy as a guideline to enhance their household life quality so as to have good standard of living in the future.

Keywords: Application of Sufficiency Economy Philosophy, Household Life Quality, Moderation, Reasonableness, Self-Immunity

Introduction

In the capitalized World, nations are focusing primarily on economic growth; that is, to seek wealth from investment, production, and consumption. However, the production of goods and services requires raw material from natural resources and the greater the consumption, the more damage to the environment is inevitably sustained. The World is, therefore, severely affected both by natural exploitation and pollution from production and use of consumables (Tantivejkul, 2011). Modern development has caused changes in all aspects of Thai society. The positive impacts of the development are economic growth, progress of material and public utilities, modern communication systems, and improvement and expansion of education. However, rapid economic growth and the rise of consumerism have led to a state of

economic dependence and deterioration of natural resources as well as the deterioration of household life quality of Thais, especially at rural areas (The Chaipattana Foundation, 2013 : Website).

Rubber industry is accounted as one of the most significant enterprises of Thailand in both employment and exportation. Thailand has been the World's largest natural rubber producer and exporter since 2001. Thailand is heavily dependent on export market of which rubber output is in the form of primary processing products (The Thai Rubber Association, 2012a : Website).

Natural rubber industry affects the lives of around one million families or about seven million farmers, entrepreneurs, labors, government officers, and other related sectors. The rubber industry is an integrated supply chain involving production, transformation, marketing, and

manufacturing. So, any international or domestic economic influence will profoundly impact natural rubber production in Thailand, which eventually directly and indirectly affects farmers (The Thai Rubber Association, 2012b : Website). Most cultivation areas of rubber in Thailand are situated in the South, Northeast, East and Center, and North at the rate of 68%, 17%, 11%, and 4% respectively. Having been compared among all the northeastern provinces, Nong Khai has the highest tapping areas (126,398 Rai with its productivities of 35,138 tons), followed by Buriram (75,956 Rai by 20,660 tons), and Udonthani (52,000 Rai by 14,880 tons). The rubber cultivation in the Northeast will be a vital step of rubber development of Thailand. It encourages the improvement on regional economy, society, and environment and also contributes the competitive potential of the country in the World market (The Thai Rubber Association, 2012c : Website). With its second largest tapping areas in the Northeast, Buriram consists of approximately 1,646 households of rubber farmers who have grown rubber trees as their main occupation. Most rubber plantations in Buriram province are family-owned plantation (Buriram Agriculture Office, 2012).

Household life quality has increasingly become an important issue for scholars and policy makers throughout the World. There is a growing awareness that expanding the gross national product per capita (GDP Per Capita) will not, by itself, lead to improved citizen well-being. Household life quality involves much more than income and economic indicators are not capable of assessing the standard of

living. With its roots in the individual life quality concept, household life quality has emerged in response to the needs for a strength-based theoretical and conceptual framework within which to understand and develop family-centered approaches to family support (Brown and Brown, 2004). As contrasted to individual life quality, household life quality addresses the impact of individual life quality on the family – the interaction and reverberation of individual members as they produce the aggregate of household life quality (Poston et al., 2003). Families experience a high life quality when their needs are met, they enjoy their time together, and they are able to do things that are important to them (Park et al., 2003). Although individual life quality research has produced sufficient momentum to result in an international consensus document, household life quality is at the very beginning of the conceptualization process (Poston et al., 2003). Poston et al. (2003) suggested a domain structure of family life quality with two parts: (a) domains with an individual orientation and (b) domains with a family orientation. Domains with an individual orientation represent the idiosyncratic ways that the life quality of individual family members has an impact on the life quality of other family members and on the family as a whole. The six individual domains are advocacy, emotional well-being, health, physical environment, productivity, and social well-being. And the four family-oriented domains are daily family life, family interaction, financial well-being, and parenting.

Sufficiency economy philosophy stems from remarks made by His Majesty King

Bhumibol Adulyadej throughout his 58 years of the throne (NESDB, 2004a). Sufficiency economy philosophy stresses the middle path as an overriding principle for appropriate conduct by Thais at all levels, from family to community to country. It calls for national development and administration to modernize in line with the forces of globalization. Sufficiency economy philosophy framework comprises three key principles and two underlying conditions (Tantivejkul, 2011). Three key principles of sufficiency economy philosophy are moderation, reasonableness, and self-immunity. Moderation means sufficiency at a level of not doing something too little or too much at the expense of oneself or others, for example, producing and consuming at a moderate level. Reasonableness refers to the decision concerning with the level of sufficiency which must be made rationally with consideration of the factors involved and careful anticipation of the outcomes that may be expected from such action. Self-immunity means the ability to cope with shocks from internal and external changes by considering the probability of future situations. Two underlying conditions necessary to achieve sufficiency economy philosophy are knowledge and morality. Sufficiency economy philosophy requires breadth and thoroughness in planning, carefulness in applying knowledge, and the implementation of those plans. As for the moral/ethical condition, sufficiency economy

philosophy enforces the conditions that people are to possess – honesty and integrity – while conducting their lives with perseverance, harmlessness, and generosity. Sufficiency economy philosophy serves as a guide for the way of living/behaving for people of all levels, and is scalable with universal domain applicability, including business organizations (Piboolsravut, 2004).

According to the aforementioned, the researcher has investigated the effects of application of sufficiency economy philosophy on household life quality of rubber farmers in Buriram province. The main purpose of the research would improve the efficiency of application of sufficiency economy philosophy among rubber farmers to help them lead the moderate lives and have a good household life quality sustainably.

Literature Review and Research Hypothesis

In this research, application of sufficiency economy philosophy was determined as the independent variable and has effects on household life quality of rubber farmers in Buriram province. According to the purpose of the research, conceptual framework of the research can be determined as follows: (Figure 1)

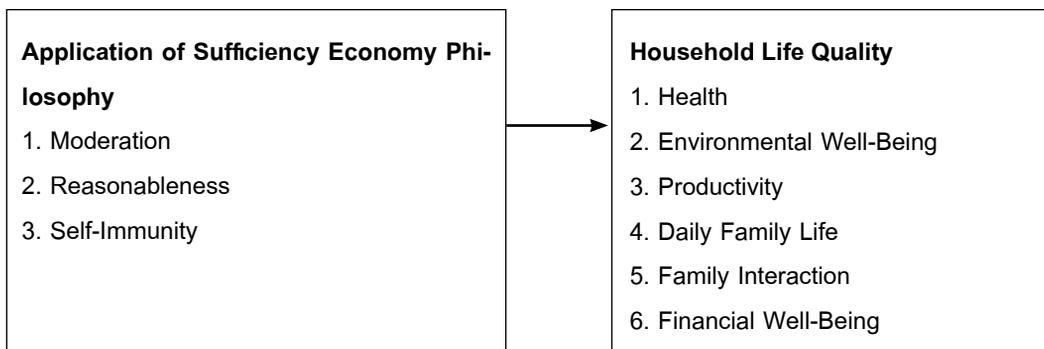


Figure 1: Model of Application of Sufficiency Economy Philosophy and Household Life Quality

1. Household Life Quality refers to degree of living condition in family which involves many factors such as basic needs, health, leisure, entertainment, security, education, and environment.

1.1 Health refers to the condition of family members' health both physical and mental health.

1.2 Environmental Well-Being refers to good condition of surrounding environment such as neighborhood, school, work place, and so on.

1.3 Productivity refers to ability of family's members to access good education, suitable job, and leisure and recreation.

1.4 Daily Family Life refers to free time from working and enjoyment of activities.

1.5 Family Interaction refers to relationship among members of family in everyday life.

1.6 Financial Well-Being refers to good level of having money to support family expenditure.

2. Application of Sufficiency Economy Philosophy refers to achievement of practicing the concept of sufficiency economy philosophy

that stresses the middle path as the overriding principle for appropriate way of life at individual, family, and community levels and bases on three principles: moderation, reasonableness, self-immunity and two conditions: knowledge and morality.

2.1 Moderation refers to having enough or sufficient to live on and ability of leading decent lives with necessity instead of luxury and extravagant.

2.2 Reasonableness refers to decisions and behaviors which are made and acted by intelligent approach supported or justified through fair, proper, and sound reason by avoid greedy and extremes.

2.3 Self-Immunity refers to the condition of being able to resist or prevent oneself from risks both internal and external changes.

In this research, the researcher has reviewed some studies related to the topic such as Kittivongprateep (2007) investigated the perception of sufficiency economy, quality of employees' work life, and work happiness: a case study of employees in the provincial Electricity Authority. The research found that the

employees had the moderate level of perception of sufficiency economy, moderate level of quality of work life and moderate level of work happiness. Quality of work life and work happiness had a meaningful correlation at significant level of .01. The employees who had different perception of sufficiency economy had different levels of quality of work life at significant level of .05 and the employees who had different perception of sufficiency economy had different levels of work happiness at significant level of .01. Poolsawat (2008) investigated the application of sufficiency economy philosophy with business management of small and medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Pathumthani Province. The research found that, application of sufficiency economy philosophy with business management of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Pathumthani province was at a high level in the following respective aspects i.e., moderation, reasonableness, and self-immunity. However, the application of sufficiency economy philosophy in the aspect of knowledge was at a moderate level. Having studied business operation results of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Pathumthani province, it was following respective aspect i.e., environmental capital and physical capital. However, business operation results in aspects of human capital and social capital were at a moderate level. Having compared between organization characters and business operation results of SMEs, it was found business operation results at the entrepreneurs with different knowledge of sufficiency economy philosophy were also significantly different at .05

level. In addition, the application of sufficiency economy philosophy with business management significantly related to SMEs business operation results at .05 level. Gill and Renwick (2007) investigated the relationship between family quality of life and service delivery for family with adults who have developmental disabilities. Utilizing interview data previously collected in one geographical region as part of a larger project, this secondary analysis explores service delivery as an important aspect of quality of life for families with adults who have developmental disabilities and are living at home. Employing a modified grounded theory approach, a finer-grained analysis of data from 10 interviews with family members revealed the following themes: 1) obstacles that families encounter when accessing services, 2) concerns about the future, 3) accepting additional responsibility, and 4) unmet service needs. All of the participants stated that they encountered obstacles of some sort when trying to access community services for their children. Reported obstacles encountered included: lack of coordination of services, lack of information, long waiting lists, and lack of services available to access. All of these obstacles detracted from overall quality of life experienced by their families. All but two families had their son or daughter living in the family home. The parents' major concerns were optimal future care and future residential placements for their child. Most participants clearly emphasized that their families could not take an increased responsibility for their children, either at present or in the future. Most families stated in very strong terms that they could not take on, or accept, any more

responsibility. All but one of the participants indicated that their families' current service needs were not being met. The result was often detrimental and detracted from the quality of life experienced by the family, including the adult member with disabilities. The findings of this study provide a clearer, broader, and more detailed picture of how having an adult child with a developmental disability affects quality of life experienced by the family. In addition, this research makes a strong link between service provision and family quality of life. It is clearly evident that the participating families' quality of life has been significantly impacted by several aspects of service delivery. Further, they highlight the need to address the manner in which services are delivered in order to contribute to an improved quality of life for the families who require and utilize these services at two levels, public policy and service delivery. Ondigi and Mugenda (2011) investigated the psychosocial determinants of quality of life among Kenyan families. This research was to establish to investigate whether psychosocial related factors such as emotional status, marital status, spiritual status, number of children, health status, educational level, and income level contribute to the satisfaction of quality of life among Kenyans. The information was gathered from all the eight Kenyan provinces including urban and rural households. A total of 5179 people were interviewed using a survey questionnaire and also use of focus group discussions. The research found that the majority of the respondents who were married, had more children, had more income, had high education level, were in good health status, who were

more spiritual, indicated more satisfaction with their quality of life. Therefore, this study concluded that psychosocial factors attribute greatly to the satisfaction of quality of life among Kenyans of all walks of life. In essence, the majority of Kenyan people will be happier if their health status improves to what they called good, have a circle of family or friends, stay married for a longer period of time, increase their income level, stabilize their emotional level by reducing stress related impediments, elevate their educational level, have more spiritual people, and have a precise number of children for prestige and pride.

From the literatures, the three hypotheses are proposed as follows:

Hypothesis 1 (H1) : Application of sufficiency economy philosophy for moderation will be positively correlated with household life quality of rubber farmers in Buriram province.

Hypothesis 2 (H2) : Application of sufficiency economy philosophy for reasonableness will be positively correlated with household life quality of rubber farmers in Buriram province.

Hypothesis 3 (H3) : Application of sufficiency economy philosophy for self-immunity will be positively correlated with household life quality of rubber farmers in Buriram province.

Research Methodology

This research was conducted in two phases. The first phase involved secondary research such as reviewing of relevant literatures, journals, publications, books,

official reports, working papers, websites, and other related information. The second phase, the primary research involved collection of primary data via survey research structured questionnaires.

1. Process of Population and Sample Selection

Population of the research was 1,646 households of rubber farmers in Buriram province (Buriram Agriculture Office, 2012) and sample of the research was 350 household heads of rubber farmers in Buriram province (Krejcie and Morgan, 1970 : 608). There were 206 questionnaires that were completely responded representing 58.85%, compared to the total questionnaires, which is consistent with Aaker et al. (2001) who argued that the response rate of questionnaire must be at least 20% to be acceptable. The sample was selected by convenience sampling as follows:

1.1 Selected the household heads of rubber farmers who live in the most planted areas of rubber trees in various districts of Buriram province such as Ban Kruot, Lahan Sai, Non Suwan, King A. Kaen Dung, and Khu Muang.

1.2 Delivered the questionnaires to the household heads of rubber farmers via the village chief of each village throughout various districts by convenience sampling until getting enough sample size.

2. Measurement of Variables

Application of sufficiency economy philosophy is the independent variable which consists of 3 variables such as 1) Moderation included 5 questions which covered about leading life by the middle path, sufficiency,

and economical; 2) Reasonableness included 5 questions which covered about careful decision making, careful planning, using resources in the best way, and consciences; and 3) Self-immunity included 5 questions which covered about risk management and readiness for coping with various shocks.

Household life quality is the dependent variable which consists of 6 variables such as 1) Health included 5 questions which covered about physical and mental health; 2) Environmental well-being included 5 questions which covered about surrounding safety, neighbors, facilities, and infrastructure; 3) Productivity included 4 questions which covered about education, job, and free time; 4) Daily family life included 4 questions which covered about daily activities in daily life; 5) Family interaction included 4 questions which covered about the relationship among family members; and 6) Financial well-being included 4 questions which covered about family income and financial security.

The measurement for all questions is 5-level rating scale.

3. Reliability and Validity

The researcher has tested the reliability and validity by calculating the discriminant power value by item-total correlation technique in which application of sufficiency economy philosophy has discriminant power value (r) between 0.616 – 0.839 and household life quality has the discriminant power value (r) between 0.594 – 0.887, which consistent with Maneelek et al. (2003) who argued that the discriminant power value for each variable must be more than 4.000 to

be acceptable and instrument reliability value by alpha-coefficient method of Cronbach in which application of sufficiency economy philosophy has alpha-coefficient value between 0.757 – 0.807 and household life quality has alpha-coefficient value between 0.818 – 0.917.

3. Statistics Used for the Research

In this research, the researcher used multiple correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis to investigate the effects of application of sufficiency economy philosophy on household life quality of rubber farmers in

Buriram province as the following equation:

$$HLQ = a + \beta_1 SEM + \beta_2 SER + \beta_3 SES + \epsilon$$

In which,

- a : Constant
- $\beta_1 - \beta_2$: Coefficient
- ϵ : Standard Error
- HLQ : Household life quality
- SEM : Moderation
- SER : Reasonableness
- SES : Self-immunity

Research Results and Discussions

Table 1: Correlation Analysis of Application of Sufficiency Economy Philosophy and Household Life Quality of Rubber Farmers in Buriram Province

Variables	HLQ	SEM	SER	SES	VIF
\bar{X}	4.23	4.38	4.35	4.40	
S.D.	0.64	0.56	0.53	0.52	
HLQ		0.641*	0.695*	0.650*	
SEM			0.592*	0.481*	1.548
SER				0.744*	2.666
SES					2.253

* represents statistical significance at 5% level

According to the Table 1, each independent variable is correlated each other that might cause multicollinearity problem. Therefore, the researcher has tested the multicollinearity by using variance inflation factor (VIF) value of the independent variable of Application of Sufficiency Economy Philosophy that has value from 1.548 – 2.666 which is less than 10. Thus, it illustrates that the independent variables are correlated each other at the level

that does not cause multicollinearity problem (Black, 2006)

According to the coefficient of correlation, each independent variable of application of Sufficiency Economy Philosophy is positively correlated with dependent variable of Household Life Quality at the statistically significant at the 5% level of significance. The coefficient of correlation is between 0.641 - 0.695.

Table 2: Regression Analysis of Household Life Quality for of Rubber Farmers inBuriram Province

Application of Sufficiency Economy Philosophy	Household Life Quality		t	p-value
	Coefficient	Standard Error		
Constant (a)	-0.473	0.277	-1.710	0.089
Moderation (SEM)	0.385	0.064	6.035	0.000*
Reasonableness (SER)	0.361	0.088	4.087	0.000*
Self-Immunity (SES)	0.329	0.083	3.955	0.000*

F = 99.110 p = 0.000 AdjR² = 0.589

* represents statistical significance at 5% level

According to the Table 2, Application of Sufficiency Economy Philosophy for Moderation (SEM), Reasonableness (SER), and Self-Immunity (SES) is positively correlated with Household Life Quality(HLQ) at the statistically significant at the 5% level of significance. Therefore, we accept the hypotheses 1, 2, and 3.

The results showed that SEM is the most significant independent variable to HLQ at the statistically significant at the 5% level of significance. The findings indicated that application of sufficiency economy philosophy for SEM will help the rubber farmers economize their expenditure, focus on only necessary consumptions and decent living standard, balance their work life and personal life, and be proud to be the rubber farmers. Therefore, the rubber farmers will definitely have a high household life quality if they can apply sufficiency economy philosophy for SEM at strongly level. This is consistent with the findings of Poolsawat (2008) which was found that the application of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy with business management of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in

Pathumthani Province was at a high level in the following respective aspects: moderation, reasonableness, the need for good immunity and moral principles. This is also consistent with the findings of Kittivongprateep (2007 : Abstract) which were found that the employees who had different perception of sufficiency economy philosophy had different levels of quality of work life at significant level of .05 and the employees who had different perception of sufficiency economy philosophy had different levels of work happiness at significant level of .01.

The SER is also positively correlated with HLQ at the statistically significant at the 5% level of significance. The findings illustrate that application of sufficiency economy philosophy for SER will help the rubber farmers make decisions wisely by considering all factors involved and careful anticipation of outcomes, make careful planning on monthly expenditure which does not make their family indebted and creates some savings for their family, use their own existing resources in the most efficient and effective way, prevent environmental problems such as pollution and makes this kind of agriculture to be acceptable in their community,

and lead their lives based on consciousness about their own social context instead of imitating from the globalization trend. Therefore, the rubber farmers will definitely have a high family life quality if they can apply sufficiency economy philosophy at strongly level. This is consistent with the findings of leamvijarn (2009) which was found that most of the retailers in the provinces cluster number 12 of Thailand had knowledge and understood the sufficiency economy philosophy at a high level and they agreed at a high level with the application of sufficiency economy philosophy as a whole and each aspect.

The SESis also positively correlated with HLQ at the statistically significant at the 5% level of significance. The findings indicated that application of sufficiency economy philosophy for SES will help the rubber farmers get ready to cope with changes causing from internal factors such as cost or labor change and changes causing from external factors such as economic or political change, build network among rubber farmers in their community which benefits everyone instead of competing each other for self-interest, do not underestimate any situation which might affect their rubber growing, and manage risks by estimating the likely impacts that might affect their living standard and try to find the best solution to cope with those risks. Therefore, the rubber farmers will definitely have a high household life quality if they can apply sufficiency economy philosophy at strongly level. This is consistent with the findings of Leungingkasut (2008) which was found that the household accounting of people in the area of Nhong Pai sub-district, Muang

district, Udon Thani province have cognitive knowledge of the sufficiency economy philosophy at a high level and when considering of the cognitive knowledge level for each part, it was found that the parts of the environment conservation and the sustainable use of the natural resource, the increasing income, the reducing expense, the learning, and the saving and helping each other were at a high level.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Application of sufficiency economy philosophy for moderation, reasonableness, and self-immunity is positively correlated with household life quality. Therefore, the rubber farmers could take into account of this finding to improve their household life quality. The rubber farmers should give importance to SEM so as to economize daily expenditure, give priority to only basic needs instead of luxuries, and lead their lives through middle paths. The rubber farmers should give importance to SER so as to make decision carefully, to make careful planning, and live wisely and consistently with the social context independent from globalization trend. The rubber farmers should also give importance to SES so as to cope with various shocks, and manage risks efficiently.

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