

SIWAPORN THANA : PATTERN OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF ISLAMIC  
LEADERS TOWARD POLITICAL PARTY SYSTEM IN PATTANI PROVINCE. THESIS  
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The objectives of this thesis are to find out how the three Islamic high leaders, Imam, Koteb, and Bilan in Pattani province, one of the four provinces in the South with most of people are Islamic, participate in political activities towards the political party system and whether their different socio-economic status has influence on their different degrees in political participation and thoughts about Thai political party system.

This thesis is descriptive study with two sources of data : documents and questionnaires answered by the leaders.

The study shows that the three Islamic high leaders in Pattani province have influence on election process. Political parties and candidates in election also need them to be their supporters and their "Huakanan" (canvassers of the candidates) if they want to win in election. Islamic people are faithful in traditional Islamism, so the three leaders are important or influential men in their communities. They are their leaders in doing any kind of public activities and in performing religious ceremonies.

As for the relation of the three leaders' socio-economic status to their political participation, this study shows that lacking deep knowledge and thorough understanding in the role of political parties in democratic form of government, they participate in political activities for a short period of time during election campaign. This phenomenon is consistent with the aspects of Thai political parties : lacking of local organization and playing limited roles in each election campaign mostly aiming at being a government. So it may be concluded that their different interest in politics results in their different degrees in participating in political activities. That is to say their different levels of socio-economic status is not a distinct influence on their different degrees of political participation.