

## ABSTRACT

**Title of Research Paper** : Problems and Needs of Thai Muslim People in the Rural Areas and Leadership Power of Local Leaders : A Case Study of Pattani Province

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The two objectives of the study were 1) to reveal the problems and needs of Thai Muslim people in the rural area in Pattani Province, and 2) to see whether formal and informal leaders of all types and at all levels could respond to local people's needs and to what extent. The leaders considered ranged from neighborhood, village, tambon and municipal leaders to local politicians, Members of Parliament, and government officials.

The data were collected from 793 households in Muang, Yaring, Nongjik, Kokpho and Mae Lan districts in Pattani Province. The total sample accounted for 5 percent of the total population. They were household heads or their spouses or their representations. The multistage random sampling was used to select the samples who were then interviewed by using an interview schedule. Percentage was employed to describe the data. The findings were summed up as follows :

**Problems and needs** Most subjects said that they had all sorts of problems. The most serious problems was illegal drugs, especially marihuana Next to the social problem was the public utilities problems. They experienced the problems of road damage and lack of public telephones. Both were equally serious. The economic problem that they were faced with was uncertainty of income and additional income. As for the natural resource and environmental problem, they had the problem of garbage disposal and waste treatment.

**Leadership power of local leaders** The majority of the subjects stated that they could rely most village leaders, followed by village headmen, subdistrict headmen, and village committee members, neighborhood leaders, tambon leaders and members of the tambon administration organization. On the contrary, they could depend very little on Members of Parliament, government Officials in the tambon and the district, and members of the Provincial Administration Organization. This finding indicated that immediate leaders from whom people could seek help. That is, they could be trouble shooters for them.

**Recommendations :**

Since most problems encountered by local people are not directly under the responsibility of local government agencies, the government is recommended to decentralize its power to the grass root level of leaders as soon as possible and as much possible so as to use the community process to solve local problems.

Local administration organizations should conduct a survey to find out local people's problems and needs in order to use the information to set plans and activities to solve local problems in the future.