

ABSTRACT

Title of Research Paper : Problems and Needs of Thai Muslims in Semi-urban and Semi-rural Communities and Leadership Power of Local Leaders : A Case Study of Pattani Province

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The purposes of the study was to find out 1) the problems and needs of Thai Muslims in semi-urban and semi-rural communities in Pattani Province, and 2) whether formal and informal local leaders existed in the communities, and whether local leaders of different types and levels (i.e., neighborhood, village, tambon or municipality leaders, local politicians, Members of Parliament and government officials can serve the needs of the people.

The sample group consisted of Thai Muslim household heads, spouses or representatives of the household heads living in the tambon municipality in Yaring District, Nongjik District, and Kokpho District in Pattani Province. The total sample of 361 households accounted for 5 percent of the total population and were selected by multistage random sampling. The data were collected by interviewing the samples using an interview schedule. The descriptive statistic were used to describe the data. The findings were stated below.

Problems Most subjects said that they had all sorts of problems. The most serious problems was the economic problem (the uncertainty of income from primary occupations), followed by the public utilities problem (water for drinking and consumption), the social problem (marihuana) and the natural resource and environmental problem (pollution and garbage disposal), respectively.

Leadership power of local leaders The subjects stated that village leaders, followed by neighborhood leaders, were the persons they could depend on most. The leaders they could depend on less than the first two types of leaders were

tambon leaders, members of the Municipal Council, village headmen, subdistrict headmen, the village committee, respectively. On the other hand, the persons they could depend on little were Members of Parliament, Members of the Provincial Administration Organization and government officials in tambons and districts, This indicated that immediate leaders can be trouble shooters for the people.

Recommendations :

According to the research results, the problems that the people were faced with not directly under the responsibilities of local government agencies. Therefore, the government must accelerate decentralization of power to grass-root level as soon as possible in order to use the community process in solving local problems.

Local administration organizations should survey the people's problems and needs to use the findings as data to set plans and activities to solve the community problems, There should be coordination among local administration that encountered similar problem, as specialization and a large budget may be necessary to solve the problems.