

ABSTRACT

Title of Research Paper : Background of Thai Muslims in the Semi-urban and Semi-rural community and the Social Structure of the Community : A Comparatives Study of The Semi-urban and Semi-rural Community and the Urban Community and the Rural Community in Pattani Province

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The study was part of the package research which covered all the areas in Pattani Province. It focused on finding out the background of Thai Muslims in the semi-urban and semi-rural community and its social structure-whether the kinship system, the patron-client system or the factional- system was mainly used in the community. It also compared the three kinds of communities : the urban community, the semi-urban and semi-rural community and the rural community to see the difference in social structure among them under urbanization. An interview schedule was used to collect the data from 361 Thai Muslims. Percentage, mean and correlation were used to analyze the data.

It was found that the social structure of the semi-urban and semi-rural community was of mixed type. It mainly used the kinship system, followed by the factional-system and supplemented by the patron-client system : but there was much difference in proportion. The background variables of the subjects were not found to be related with the social structure. The factional- system tended to play an important role in the community because the time when the data were collected was in the period of changing from the sanitary zone to the tambon municipality. People became more concerned about the conflict arising from the factional-system during the election. The importance of the kinship-system was reduced and the patron-client and the factional-system were becoming more and more prevailing as politics began to play an importance role in the community.

Recommendations

The community still mainly hold onto the kinship system, perhaps because of the Islamic teachings and practices, such as Lamad, which make people get together regularly. The religious practices can be said to bring about unity in the Muslim community. Although the patron-client system and the factional-system become more important due to the increasing role of politics, their influence was very slight. Therefore, to retain the kinship-system in the Muslim community, the government should promote religious practices so as to keep the identity of the Muslim community in Pattani Province.