

**ABSTRACT**

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

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**Degree** : Master of Arts (Social Development)

**Year** : 2001

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The survey was conducted to find out 1) what problems Thai Buddhist people in semi-urban and semi-rural communities encountered and what their needs were, and 2) how much local people could seek help from formal and informal leaders ranging from neighborhood, village, tambon or municipal leaders to local politicians, Members of Parliament and government officials.

The sample group consisted of 186 Thai Buddhist households living in tambon municipalities in Yaring, Nongjik and Kokpho districts in Pattani Province. The sample accounted for 5 percent of the total population and were selected by multistage random sampling. An interview schedule was used as an instrument to interview household heads, or their representatives. Percentage was used to describe the data.

**The findings were summarized below.**

**Problems and needs** Most Thai Buddhist people under the study said that had all kinds of problems. They suffered most from the economic problem (low income from the primary occupation), followed by the public utilities problems (poor road condition), the social problem (illegal drugs, especially marihuana), and the natural resource and environmental problem (garbage disposal and waste treatment).

**Leadership power of local leaders** They were found to be able to depend most upon neighborhood leaders, followed by village and tambon leaders, members of the municipal council, village headmen, subdistrict headmen and village committee members. On the contrary, they could hardly depend on Members of Parliament, members of the Provincial Administration Organization and government

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officials in the district and the tambon. Therefore, immediate leaders could be trouble shooters for local people.

**Recommendations :**

The problems the Thai Buddhist people suffered were not under the responsibility of any local government agencies, so the government must implement its decentralization of power policy as soon as possible and as much as possible and use the community process to solve local community problems.

Local administration organizations should conducted research to survey local people's problems and needs in order to use the results in determining plans and activities to attack local problems.