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## **Community Business Management of Self-Sufficiency Economy: A Case Study of Nopphitham District Nakhon Si Thammarat Province**

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### **การจัดการธุรกิจชุมชนในระบบเศรษฐกิจพอเพียง : กรณีศึกษาของตำบลนบพิตำ จังหวัดนครศรีธรรมราช**

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#### **Abstract**

This present study carried two objectives: (1) to investigate components of Self-Sufficiency Economy in community business management, and (2) to examine components of community business management and components of Self-Sufficiency Economy. The researchers used purposive sampling to secure 300 participants. A set of questionnaire was used to collect data. The obtained quantitative data were analyzed for percentage, mean, and standard deviation. The results showed human resource management, marketing management, production management, and accounting and financial management as four key elements of community business management ( $\bar{x}$  =3.99 and S.D.=0.799). Meanwhile, moderation, reasonableness, self-immunity, appropriate knowledge, and ethics and virtues are five highly crucial components of Self-Sufficiency Economy ( $\bar{x}$ =3.81 and S.D.=0.764).

**Keywords:** Community Business Management, Self-Sufficiency Economy, Nopphitham District Nakhon Si Thammarat

## บทคัดย่อ

วิจัยนี้มีสองจุดประสงค์ คือ (1) ศึกษาในรายละเอียดของการใช้เศรษฐกิจพอเพียงในการจัดการธุรกิจชุมชน และ (2) ตรวจสอบองค์ประกอบของการจัดการธุรกิจชุมชน และองค์ประกอบของเศรษฐกิจพอเพียง ผู้วิจัยได้ใช้การคัดเลือกแบบเจาะจงเพื่อให้ได้ผู้ให้ข้อมูลจำนวน 300 คน มาตอบแบบสอบถาม ข้อมูลจากแบบสอบถามจะถูกวิเคราะห์เป็นค่าเปอร์เซ็นต์ ค่าเฉลี่ย และค่าเบี่ยงเบนมาตรฐาน ผลจากการวิเคราะห์ข้อมูล แสดงสิ่งองค์ประกอบของการจัดการธุรกิจชุมชน (ค่าเฉลี่ย = 3.99, ค่าเบี่ยงเบนมาตรฐาน = 0.799) คือ การจัดการทรัพยากรมนุษย์ การจัดการการตลาด การจัดการการผลิต และการจัดการงานบัญชีและการเงิน และได้พบว่ามีห้าองค์ประกอบที่สำคัญยิ่งของเศรษฐกิจพอเพียง (ค่าเฉลี่ย = 3.81, ค่าเบี่ยงเบนมาตรฐาน = 0.764) คือ การปฏิบัติสายกลาง ความมีเหตุผล การมีภูมิคุ้มกันของตน ความรู้ที่เหมาะสม และจริยธรรมและคุณธรรม

**คำสำคัญ:** การจัดการธุรกิจชุมชนจังหวัดนครศรีธรรมราช ตำบลบพิตำ ,เศรษฐกิจพอเพียง ,

## 1. Introduction

Community businesses play important roles in assisting communities to survive well. In general, investment of community businesses could be relatively small. The typical goal of the businesses is to promote employment in the communities for all the community members to survive economically. The small scale of a business implies flexibility in operations. The income at the early phase of the investment would not be large; sellers and customers are usually close and sales are likely to start in a friendly atmosphere. Such a business tends to cover four areas: production, retailing, wholesaling, and servicing. The benefits of the business usually include promoting entrepreneurship, providing employing opportunities, promoting industrial business, strengthening the community's economy, and lessening social problems. As known, systematic management is necessary for an effective community business.

Self-Sufficiency Economy refers to development with three main components: moderation, reasonableness, and self-immunity, with two additional accompanying conditions: appropriate knowledge and ethics and virtues (Community Development Department, Ministry of Interior, 2006); Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board, 2007). The philosophy features one of the major goals in the Tenth National Economic and Social Development Plan (2007-2011) and the Eleventh National Economic and Social Development Plan (2012-2016). The philosophy serves as a guideline for a sustainable and stable economy, especially at the time of economic crisis. Sustainable development as a current development trend focuses on continuous and abiding advancement with adequate resources and appropriate environment. Under sustainable development, Self-Sufficiency Economy covers six aspects: (1) promoting economy and well-being of community people, (2) promoting agricultural production, (3) promoting sufficiency and self-reliance to alleviate external risks, (4) depending exclusively on ability of self or the community, and (5) producing more than exchanging, and (6) integrating local wisdom for creative development (Community Development Department, Ministry of Interior, 2006). In Nopphitam District, Nakhon Si Thammarat

Province, the majority of the community people are farmers, consisting of 4,088 agricultural groups. The management in those groups attracts much attention from the researchers of this study. The research team decided to conduct a case study to investigate the management of Community Business Management on the principles of Self-Sufficiency Economy. The research team expected that the obtained findings will generate useful implications for the community's well-being.

## **2. Objectives of the Study**

The study carried two objectives:

1. To investigate the components of Self-Sufficiency Economy in the management of community businesses in Nopphitam District, Nakhon Si Thammarat Province.
2. To examine the components of community business management and the components of Self-Sufficiency Economy in Nopphitam District, Nakhon Si Thammarat Province.

It was expected that the obtained findings can serve as guidelines for other communities to learn and develop their sustainable well-being.

## **3. Scope of the Study**

The scope of the study covered six agricultural business groups: (1) fried durian, (2) curry paste, (3) dessert, (4) bio-composed, (5) off-season durian planting, and (6) golden banana plating. The participants resided in Nopphitam District Nakhon Si Thammarat Province. There were 300 people from three villages in Moo 7, Moo 8, and Moo 9. The research team collected data from these residents.

## **4. Research Methodology**

### **4.1 Research Tools**

This study used a set of close-ended questionnaire in three sections as shown below:

Section 1: The background information in 11 close-ended questions in a checklist format.

Section 2: The application of Self-Sufficiency Economy on community businesses and community management was in a close-ended form. All 18 items were in the Likert Scale format. The data were measured on an interval scale.

Section 3: The management of community business was in a close-ended form on the Likert Scale. It contained 15 items to be measured on an interval scale.

## **5. Results and Discussion**

### **5.1 Results**

The results of the study were reported as follows:

The results of Section 1: background information showed most respondents as female (70.30%), aged 40-49 years (34.00%), 30-39 years (20.70%), and only 20- 29 years (20.30%). The majority (83.00%) were married, 11.00% single, and 5.60% divorced. As for education, 34.30% completed lower secondary level, 34.00% primary level, and 11.30% with vocational certificates. More than half at 53.30% were rubber gardeners, 17.00% were workers, and 15.70% were sellers. Their positions in the business groups varied: 70.70% on the committee as members, 13.00% vice presidents, and 10.70% treasurers. These people took other roles, for example, 44.00% as committee members of career groups, 17.70% on the community committee, and 13.30% percent worked as community consultants/ philosophers.

Most products of the groups were from off-season durian planting and golden banana planting (20.00%), while fried raw durians, curry paste, dessert, and bio-compost shared 15.00%. Almost half of the respondents (45.00%) earned 10,000 – 19,999 baht a month, while 39.30% obtained less than 10,000 baht, and 8.70% gained around 20,000 – 29,999 baht. Nearly half of the respondents (47.00%) attended community business training twice a year, once a year (28.00%), and three times a year (16.00%). Of those who did not attend any training program, more than half (68.70%) stated inconvenience, lack of interest (17.70%), and not being selected as representatives (13.00%).

The results of Section 2 dealt with the application of Self-Sufficiency Economy on community businesses and community management.

**Table 1:** Application of Self-Sufficiency Economy on Community Businesses and Community Management

Factors of Sufficiency Economy	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	Level of Priority
Moderation	3.00	0.69	moderate
Reasonableness	4.00	0.78	high
Self-immunity	4.03	0.79	high
Appropriate knowledge	3.95	0.79	high
Ethics and virtues	4.07	0.78	high
Total	3.81	0.76	high

As shown in Table 2, the application of Self-Sufficiency Economy in the community businesses was high ( $\bar{x}$  =3.81, S.D. = 0.76). Ethics and virtues gained the highest mean of 4.07 (S.D. =0.78), followed by self-immunity ( $\bar{x}$  =4.03, S.D. =0.79). Likewise, the application of reasonableness was also high ( $\bar{x}$  =4.00, S.D. =0.78). The same trend was also found in appropriate knowledge ( $\bar{x}$  =3.95, S.D. =0.79), followed by  $\bar{x}$  of 3.00 (S.D. of 0.69) for moderation.

The results of Section 3 dealt with management of community businesses.

**Table 2:** Mean and S.D. of the Priority Areas of Community Business Management

Community Business Management	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	Level of Priority
Human resource management	4.06	0.74	High
Marketing management	3.92	0.82	High
Production management	4.04	0.76	High
Accounting and financial management	3.94	0.87	High
Total	3.99	0.79	High

As presented in Table 3, overall management of the community businesses was high ( $\bar{x} = 3.99$ , S.D. =0.79). To be more specific, the areas which gained high priority included: human resource management ( $\bar{x} = 4.06$ , S.D. =0.74), accounting and financial ( $\bar{x} = 4.04$ , S.D. =0.76), production management ( $\bar{x} = 3.94$ , S.D. =0.87), and marketing management ( $\bar{x} = 3.92$ , S.D.=0.82), respectively.

## 5.2 Discussion

The results of the study were discussed in two aspects: the components of Self-Sufficiency Economy, and the components of community business management as follows:

### 5.2.1 The components of Self-Sufficiency Economy

The components of Self-Sufficiency Economy were found in the management of community businesses in Nopphitam District Nakhon Si Thammarat Province. The major components were moderation, reasonableness, self-immunity, appropriate knowledge, and ethics and virtues, which are officially listed by the Community Development Department, Ministry of Interior (2006). Wiriyaphan (2007) has later clarified the three basic elements in the balance of living--not too much or too little. Firstly, it is advisable for people to become aware of their ability and not to pay much attention to material gains. People are free to depend on self for full self-reliance. Secondly, being sufficient is associated with reliance on logics, being cautious with spending, and practically employing knowledge to increase production as desired.

It should be noted that promoting mental sufficiency was meant to encourage people to feel in their heart to give priority to happiness from self-sufficiency, not from increased material gains. Sufficiency is promoted to reduce greediness for happiness as the ultimate goal in life, that is, for human beings to be self-reliant and free from debt. With self-reliance, they will be able to provide assistance to others, maintain social and natural resources, and cope with technological demands. Self-sufficiency implies that money is important, but it is not the first thing in life to keep a person happy—physically and psychologically.

### **5.2.2 The Components of Community Business Management**

The data analysis of the community business management on Self-Sufficiency Economy revealed four components: (1) human resource management, (2) marketing management, (3) production management, and (4) accounting and financial management. These four components were congruent with the studies by Laohawanit (2001) and Sirabucha (2006), who examined the leather product community business in Laharn District, UdonThani Province. However, the four elements were different from those found in international contexts, particularly in the work by Miller & Besser (2000) who reported five crucial elements of community business management: (1) collaborating in the community, (2) variety of alternatives, (3) collaborating between communities, (4) promoting expertise for entrepreneurs and managers, (5) and promoting networking to external businesses. In addition, Jackson (2004) pointed out that successful community business management had its focus on preserving natural resources and promote positive relationship between communities. As seen in the studies of local and international researchers, it should be noted that social/ cultural values seemed to have impacts on the components of community business management in specific contexts.

## **6. Suggestion and Implications**

Based on the reported results, the researchers of the present study would like to make a suggestion and state implications as follows:

### **6.1 Suggestion from the Research Team**

Apart from the established components of Self-Sufficiency Economy, the researchers would like to suggest that other relevant elements, such as the extent of community participation in the management, and leadership issues be explored for their possible impacts on community business management. These additional components can perhaps shed more light on the degree of success/ failure in business management of a selected community under investigation.

### **6.2 Implications of the Study**

The researchers expected that the identified components of human resource management, marketing management, production management, and accounting and financial management can generate implications for use in relevant organizations in Thailand, particularly Community Development Department, Office of Small and Medium Enterprises, and organizations handling businesses for local communities.

## **7. The Authors**

Pitchayut Penmas, Waraporn Kanjanaklod, Piangpis Sriprasert are now working for the Program in Management, Business Administration, Management of Science Nakhon Si Thammarat Rajabhat University, Thailand. Their current research interest lies in the areas of community activities, business management, Self-Sufficiency Economy as related to the local contexts in the South of Thailand.

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