

## **Communication for Participation of Worship Dancers for Thao Suranaree, Nakhon Ratchasima Province**

**Wachirarat Nirantechaphat<sup>1\*</sup>**

<sup>1\*</sup> Lecturer in Thai Program, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences,  
Nakhon Ratchasima Rajabhat University

\*Corresponding author's Email: [wachirarat.n@nrru.ac.th](mailto:wachirarat.n@nrru.ac.th)

**Received:** May 28, 2024  
**Revised:** August 21, 2024  
**Accepted:** August 21, 2024  
**DOI:** <http://doi.org/>

### **Abstract**

The Thao Suranari worship dance is an important activity of Nakhon Ratchasima Province to honor Thao Suranari's heroic deeds. This article is part of the research on “Studying the communication network of worship dancers for Thao Suranaree, Nakhon Ratchasima Province”. This is qualitative research, that aims to study communication for the participation of worship dancers. The results showed that the model of communication is as follows: The messenger (Sender) is the dancing lady of Thao Suranaree. Content (Message) is lyrics, dance moves, melodies, and music. Media (Channel/Media) is a dance to worship Thao Suranaree. And receivers are members who attend the ceremony. The communication process consists of three steps as follows: 1) The planning stage with all relevant parties to prepare for worship dances held annually on Victory Day celebrations from March 23 to April 3. 2) The dance practice stage may be practiced in one's own community or practiced in a centralized location and time by planning a trip with a group of friends or separately to rehearse as convenient. And 3) in the inspection and

evaluation stage, each year's dance rehearsal has been adjusted to dance moves, lyrics, locations, and dance schedules as appropriate for the situation.

**Keywords:** communication, participation, worship dancers, Thao Suranaree, Nakhon Ratchasima

### **Introduction**

Thao Suranaree, better known as "Ya Mo", was a heroine who saved the country of Korat from Laos on March 23, 1826, at Thung Samrit, Phimai District, Nakhon Ratchasima Province. Participation of people who have faith in Thao Suranaree has been going on since the reign of King Rama III. Until now, it can be seen from traveling to worship Thao Suranaree by paying homage or offering Korat songs. In addition, Nakhon Ratchasima also attaches importance to organizing the Red Cross annually between 23 March and 3 April by organizing an exhibition to sell products, marching, and organizing a sacrifice ceremony, changing Thao Suranaree's robes, and also organizing a sacrifice dance by a dancer who has been trained and wears the same Thai dress to give Honor and glorify Thao Suranaree's heroic deeds since 1996. And allow students and the general public to participate in the worship dance of Thao Suranaree simultaneously.

Participation of the public, private, and public sectors in conducting the Thao Suranaree sacrifice is part of the Thao Suranaree Victory Festival. The main operators are government agencies within the province of Nakhon Ratchasima under the assignment of the provincial governor and the president of the Red Cross, An operating committee has been added asking for cooperation and asking for more support from government agencies and private sectors to show the solidarity of the

people of Korat, For example, the Central Sacrifice Dance Instructor has added teachers who have knowledge and ability in dancing arts from educational institutes in all parts of the province, namely; Nakhon Ratchasima College of Dramatic Arts, Nakhon Ratchasima Rajabhat University, Educational institutions under Nakhon Ratchasima Municipality, and educational institutions under the Office of Basic Education Nakhon Ratchasima Province (Chanama, 2020, pp. 82-83).

Organizing a ceremony to worship Thao Suranaree is an activity that reflects the intention of communicating the participation of worship dancers for Thao Suranaree from the planning, operational, inspection, and evaluation stages. There was a change in the work preparation plan clearly when the situation of the outbreak of the new coronavirus 2019, has planned a dance rehearsal for many days and asked for cooperation from the department stores, including The Mall Nakhon Ratchasima Department Store, Central Plaza Nakhon Ratchasima Shopping Center, and Terminal 21 Korat shopping center, and a small group gathering at the Office of Arts and Culture, Nakhon Ratchasima Rajabhat University. In addition, it has also received cooperation from dance rehearsals from various institutions, including the College of Dramatic Arts, Nakhon Ratchasima Rajabhat University, and female dancers from all thirty-two districts. In addition, the process of adjusting the operational plan, including the meeting, the announcement of social media to cooperate from those involved in all parties, and the media, both as a group of teams and other media. Participate in disseminating news to the general public.

The objectives of participatory social development communications shall take into account the following: 1) Encourage the community to see their own worth, 2) ensure community involvement, 3) overrule the preconceived notion that one cannot use technology, 4) Build communication skills for the community, 5) Let the

community express their views, 6) Increase responsibility for the community, and 7) create more content for the community (Kaewthep, 2000, pp. 65-66).

Since 1996, Mr. Chaweewan Supasorn, President of the Red Cross, and Khunying Pinthongsongsunthorn, the 2nd Region Commander and the provincial governor, have determined that Thao Suranaree worship dances have been practiced until now, enabling all sectors to participate in the management of activities during this period to be able to succeed every year.

The Ritualistic Model is related to participatory communication because participatory communication is communication that requires a mutual understanding between the sender and the receiver. For communicators to be able to create mutual understanding, communicators must exchange ideas/emotions/experiences through two-way communication where no one is monopolized as the sender or the receiver. Static substance. Rather, role shifting is performed as sender/receiver, allowing both communication partners to participate in the communication process. These four basic concepts can be applied to Mercado's development communications management concept (cited in Chaiala & Ruengroj, 2013, pp. 39-41)

For this study, the researcher has collected research related to sacrificial dances from several provinces as follows: The commodification of culture: a case study of sacrificial dance prince Prajak Silapakhom Udon Tani province. and is reproduced by the mass media and social media. There is the creation of surplus value or profits of capitalists from the exploitation of labor leads to the capital Accumulation, which is in line with the development of the capitalist system as the Marxist school considers the change of local cultural use value to economic exchange value. Economy at the local, provincial, national and international levels. (Chomphon, 2020, pp. 136-137)

The elements of a sacrifice ceremony are 1. Person 2. Time and Place 3. Sacrifice 4. Equipment in terms of the form of music and dance. (Phuphraingam, 2022, pp. 1-2) Beliefs and identities that appear in sacred dances at religious sites in the Northeast It comes from the beliefs and beliefs that Isan people adhere to in their way of life. (Chantamala, 2015, pp. 236-237) In addition to being consistent with religious beliefs, it is also a symbolic expression that means Paying homage to various sacred things that Thai society reveres. (Srisura, Vannalee & Ruengrong, 2023, p. 57)

Worship dances take place in many areas in the Northeast. In Nakhon Ratchasima province, Thao Suranaree has been the center of spirit for a long time. Therefore, this article aims to present communication for the participation of worship dancers for Thao Suranaree, Nakhon Ratchasima Province, to understand the role of work between the sender and the receiver, which consists of three steps: planning stage, operation stage, and examination and evaluation stage, both in the dimension of administration and people management based on participatory development according to an alternative development paradigm.

### **Research Objectives**

To study communication for the participation of worship dancers for Thao Suranaree, Nakhon Ratchasima Province from the planning stage, the operational stage, and the examination and evaluation stage according to the communication model.

### **Expected Benefits**

1. A guideline for understanding communication for the participation of worship dancers in Nakhon Ratchasima province in the digital age society.

2. Acquiring cultural knowledge, continuing to study, and enhancing communication science knowledge.

### **Literature Review**

1. A participatory communication strategy is a process that focuses on building relationships and participation between communicators and target groups. The objective is to create understanding, cooperation, and full participation in various activities. This type of communication is important in many contexts, such as education, business, politics, and community development.

2. Pierre Bourdieu (1930-2002) is a French sociologist known for his concept of "capital," which plays a significant role in understanding social structure and social inequality. Bourdieu's concept of capital includes several types:

1. Economic Capital
2. Cultural Capital
3. Social Capital
4. Symbolic Capital

Bourdieu's concept of capital helps us understand that resources and opportunities in society are not only distributed unequally but are also used to maintain this inequality through social and cultural processes.

3. S-M-C-R communication model, developed by David Berlo, stands for Source-Message-Channel-Receiver. It is a straightforward representation of the communication process, emphasizing the following components:

Source (Sender): The originator of the message, who encodes and transmits it. This includes their communication skills, attitudes, knowledge, social system, and culture.

**Message:** The content being communicated, which consists of elements, structure, content, treatment, and code.

**Channel:** The medium through which the message travels from the source to the receiver, such as auditory, visual, tactile, or written.

**Receiver:** The person or group who decodes and interprets the message. The receiver's understanding is influenced by their communication skills, attitudes, knowledge, social system, and culture.

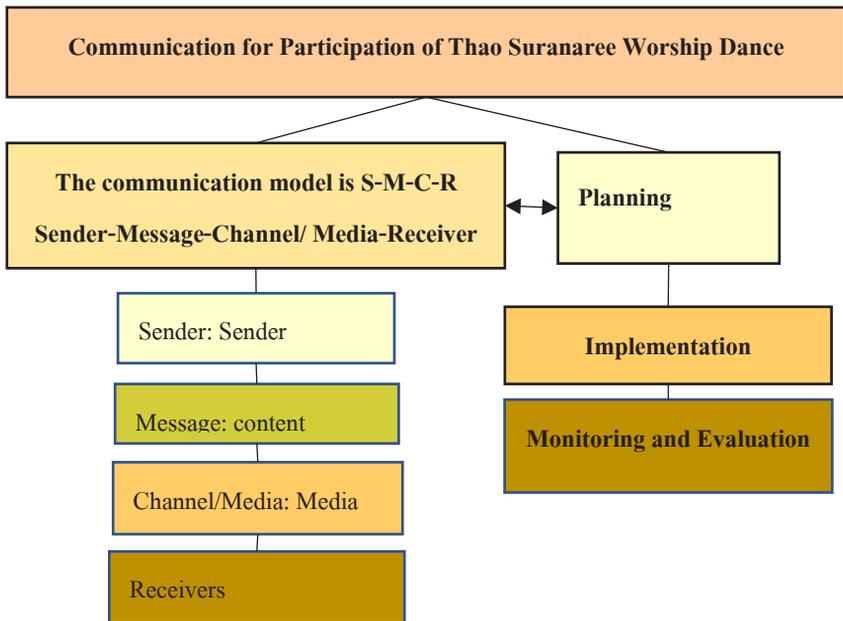
This model highlights the importance of clear encoding, appropriate channel selection, and effective decoding for successful communication.

### **Conceptual Framework**

The research title “Communication for the participation of worship dancers for Thao Suranaree, Nakhon Ratchasima Province” was designed as conceptual as followed;

**Figure 1**

Conceptual Framework

**Methodology**

The Qualitative Research, The researcher collects data from Field Observation, Participation Observation, and In-Depth Interviews;

**Population:** Those in the Thao Suranari Sacrifice Dance Network, Nakhon Ratchasima Province.

**Sampling:** The selection of the sample group of practicing teachers and Thao Suranaree Dancers was done by the method. Non-probability Sampling, Purposive Sampling, the area where the researcher has a network in Nakhon Ratchasima Province. Researchers will collect data using Snowball Sampling, a chain of access.

Thus, contributing to more convenient access to information sources. The sample group consisted of three training teachers, and eight dancers, who had danced in sacrifice for at least five years as follows:

1. Teacher who practiced the worship dance is a teacher of classical dance in Nakhon Ratchasima Province, and is an important person who has participated in the Thao Suranaree worship dance network from the beginning until the present

2. Thao Suranaree's worship dance, eight people, The researcher collected data from Snowball Sampling, from people that the researcher has a network to obtain information from important people in various networks and answer questions that meet the objectives.

### **Tools used to collect information**

The researcher plays the role of an observational analyst and an interviewer. Interviews were conducted using interview forms and audio recordings, in addition to field notes. Field diaries are used to record the date, time, location, and interview details, and periodically record important information. The interview is informal, and questions will be recorded so that the discussion does not go off-topic.

Recorded with an audio recorder (mp3), the interviewer asks permission for the interview, and the interview, explains the research objectives, reveals the identity of the interviewee, and asks for permission to transcribe experiences and data from the interview in the research paper. The researcher used participatory observations with subjects including online group conversations, private conversations, and networking observations of worship dancers for Thao Suranaree through the Facebook network. The atmosphere of the interviewees will be recorded using both participant and non-participant observation tools, both face-to-face and networking in

various channels such as telephone, line chat program, etc. The audio recordings allow for smooth inquiry, less distraction from writing, and help separate questions, contributing to the analysis of information from the recorded transcripts.

Mobile phones are used for interviews when it is inconvenient to travel due to time and place constraints so they can video call or use it when more information is needed, and use the phone to record the atmosphere of the interview and the location of the data. Including recording of Line conversations, personal conversations on Line or Facebook, applications and websites related to the news of Thao Suranari worship dance

### **Data collection**

Data Collecting both documents, news presentations via social media and personal Facebook, including group chat messages with Nang Dance's LINE chat program, for example, the presentation of news from the media through local news pages from various online channels. In addition, there was also an in-depth interview (In-dept interview) from 1 December 2022 to 17 February 2022. In-depth interviews with those involved in organizing the Thao Suranaree worship ceremony, including: three training teachers, and a total of eight dancers who have danced in sacrifice for at least five years. In addition, the researcher also collected data by observing participants and non-participation in the Thao Suranari worship ceremony for the year 2020. The data collection location is The Mall Nakhon Ratchasima Department Store, Central Plaza Nakhon Ratchasima Shopping Center, Terminal 21 Korat shopping center, and a small group gathering at the Office of Arts and Culture, Nakhon Ratchasima Rajabhat University with participatory observation in 2020. Take off the researcher's experience from the worship dance at Thao Suranaree area

for five years. In addition, it also collects information from Facebook friends and collects information from participation in groups in the LINE chat program for data analysis.

### **Data analysis and presentation**

The researchers analyzed the data in conjunction with the field data collection and after day-to-day data collection. The researcher categorizes the obtained results, categorizing them for analysis throughout the research period. Presentation of qualitative data obtained from content data collection; the data will be analyzed by Analytical Description.

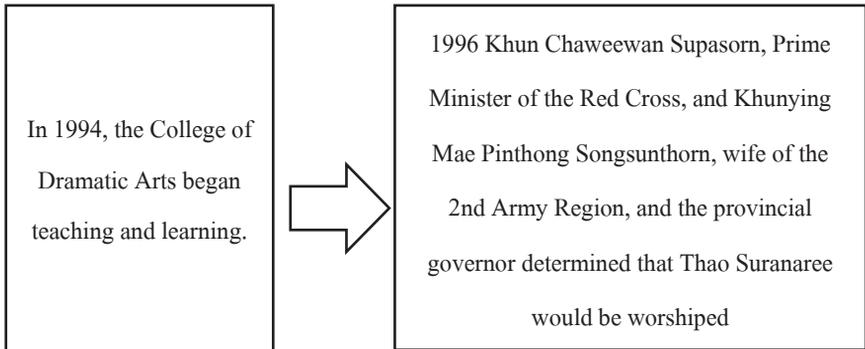
### **Results**

Participatory communication of worship dancers for Thao Suranaree, Nakhon Ratchasima Province, according to the concept of Kasemsuk (2011), summarizes the form of participation that is commonly performed as follows.

**1. Public Information:** From an in-depth interview with Teacher Tiyapan Prapanwittaya (interview, February 15, 2022), it can be concluded that

**Figure 2**

Summarize the Participatory Communication of Worship Dancers for Thao Suranaree



“In the year 1994, the College of Dramatic Arts began teaching in the year 1996 when the Red Cross Prime Minister was Mae Muang Chaweewan Supasorn. Everyone was very happy that the College of Dramatic Arts was born. The Prime Minister at that time, Chatchai Choonhavan, had pulled the budget to build the College of Dramatic Arts. Later, there was the National Theatre, the first director was Than Penthip Chantum, and Than Khunying Mae Pinthong Songsunthorn was the wife of the 2nd Region Commander. At that time, they came to discuss with Mother Chaweewan who said that “Nakhon Ratchasima, we have Thanya Mo as a brave heroine representing a brave woman, until it became the slogan of Nakhon Ratchasima Province, and there was a sacrifice to celebrate the victory since the year that he won the battle, there has been a sacrifice and making merit continuously. There is a team led by the governor, there is always a ceremony to worship, the women of Nakhon Ratchasima should come together,

Korat city, there is music as local music, Nakhon Ratchasima women we should have a sacrifice dance.

It represents readiness and gratitude towards the benefactors of the country.”

**2. Public Consultation:** The results of the interview showed that the policy was set by the governor of Nakhon Ratchasima Province, and the policy was forwarded to the Nakhon Ratchasima Red Cross. And attended the meeting with the relevant parties, namely administrators and teachers of the Nakhon Ratchasima College of Dramatic Arts, communication with Pong Lang melody was generally evaluated by critics. After that, the music was modified to be in line with the Korat locality.

**3. Public Meeting:** The gathering of sacrificial dancers must gather eight members to join the dance line, and send news about the worship dance to draw lots for the dance line at the Prem Tinsulanonda Auditorium. Then collect the money to pay at the clerk of Nakhon Ratchasima Province, and spread the cloth to cut for the dance in time. It also supervises dance rehearsals at designated locations. The use of economic capital was important because the sacrificial dance required money to buy clothes, cut clothes, make-up, and do hair. The cost of the fabric is 1,500 baht, and the cost of cutting the dress is about 1,500 baht. As for the stroke, it can be used to sell as the centrally specified or buy anywhere else as before. As for the make-up, the hair depends on each dance.

**4. Decision Making:** Choosing a training location, traveling, adjusting according to the situation, and travel readiness. As for the choice of fabric and fabric color of the Central Red Cross, Nakhon Ratchasima Province is determined.

- **Practice place:** Rehearsals in the past were scheduled to be rehearsed at the Prem Tinsulanonda Auditorium, Nakhon Ratchasima City Hall, and as the number of dancers increased, rehearsals were scheduled at shopping malls: The Mall Nakhon Ratchasima, Central Plaza Nakhon Ratchasima Shopping Center, and Terminal 21 Korat shopping center Schedule set by the organizer and publicize the Worshipdancers for general knowledge.

- **Travel:** will focus on the convenience of worship dancers, some come with friends, and some come alone and network with people in the dance venue, because it is a dance rehearsal, it is an event that everyone comes with the devotion of body and heart, having faith in Thao Suranaree.

- **Selection of fabrics and fabric colors:** Each area of Nakhon Ratchasima province has determined which color and type of ramen cloth will be used, depending on the leaders and members of each locality determine the type of fabric, it may be the famous cloth of district or can be cut by imitating the color of the cloth used in the annual dance that has been determined by the center, such as Pha Ngyong Nang Dam of Sung Noen District, Pha Yuan of Sikhio District.

As for the sacrificial dancers who work as cloth tailors, it is suggested that choosing the cloth of the central community should allow the use of cloth to make Thao Suranaree sacrificial dance dresses from other communities. “It's like a tradition that has been passed on since then. It's like spreading income. Sincerely, I want you to choose fabrics that are local to us. It doesn't always have to be silk. For example, taking Khon Buri Pak Thong Chai Sung Noen would be a distribution of income” (Jittanan Sirithonaphongphak, interview on February 17, 2022)

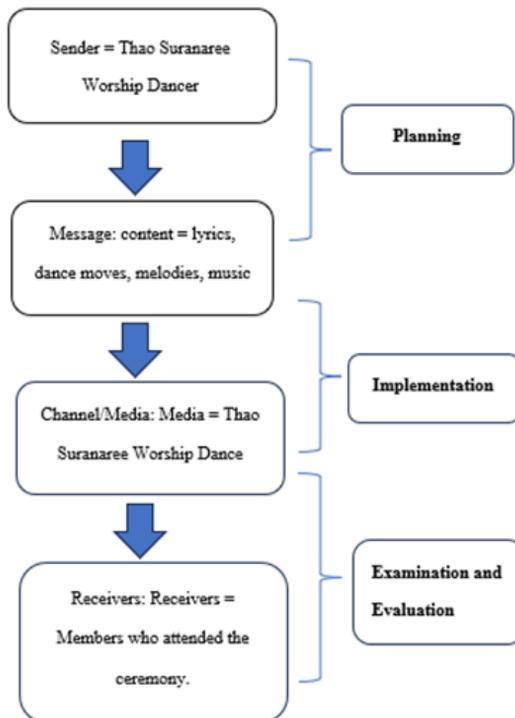
The song composition for Thao Suranari worship will be adjusted according to the situation of the country that year, the organizer wishes to honor the royal

family, and there will be a song written in the melody of Korat to raise awareness of the locality. However, the Soraphanya melody will be a song that is danced annually with lyrics about Thao Suranaree that the sacrificial dancer can dance and sing along to fluently.

The new knowledge from the research can be summarized as shown in the diagram.

**Figure 3**

The new research knowledge



## Discussion

According to the information obtained from in-depth interviews with three Thao Suranaree worship dance teachers, namely; the Deputy Director for Academic Affairs, College of Dramatic Arts, Nakhon Ratchasima Province, and the former deputy director of the Nakhon Ratchasima Province Dance Arts, and eight dancers worshipping Thao Suranaree, namely; Deputy Prime Minister King Red Cross, Sung Noen District, Ban Ko Sub-district Administrative Organization, Teachers at Pak Thongchai Pracha Niramit School, Military officer, Business owner Witsanuphan, Maharaj Hospital Nursing, The owner of a salsa tailor shop, and the owner of a small dessert shop.

Communication for the participation of worship dancers for Thao Suranaree is in line with Kaewthep (2010, p. 3) It suggests that the connection between communication and ritual can be viewed from various angles in the form of real-world relationships and academic approaches. For example, since a communicator might consider that there is always a communication dimension involved in performing rituals, the researcher can conclude the model of communication as follows.

Sender: Sender = Thao Suranaree Worship Dancer

Message: content = lyrics, dance moves, melodies, music

Channel/Media: Media = Thao Suranaree Worship Dance

Receivers: Receivers = Members who attended the ceremony.

Summary of the communication process for the participation of Worship Dancers for Thao Suranaree, Nakhon Ratchasima Province according to the concept of communication management for the development of Mercado (cited in Chaiala & Ruengroj, 2013, pp. 39-41). It consists of three main steps as follows:

### **1. Planning**

Thao Suranaree Worship Dance is held annually on Victory Day from 23 March to 3 April every year and started the first Thao Suranaree worship dance in 1996 according to the initiative of Mr. Suporn Supasorn, the provincial governor. Sacrifice dance management, including the creation of the sacrificial dance process by those who have roles in the practice of sacrificial dance management, there are three parts; Organizing groups, historical experts, performing arts experts, local philosophers, and empirical evidence, the process of organizing the worship dance in each locality (Chanama, 2020, p. 84).

### **2. Implementation**

Thao Suranari worship dance helps to build confidence and help to bring peace. A good activity in Nakhon Ratchasima Province connects people in every part of the province to come out and show their power from the scheduled date. Rows are drawn every December and dances are performed according to the schedule set until the actual dance day in March. Dancers may dance in their own communities or practice at a centrally designated place and time by planning a trip with a group of friends or separately to practice at their convenience.

### **3. Examination and Evaluation**

According to the research, it was found that adaptation and resolving the situation are always adaptable and flexible since 2020, it is necessary to postpone the Thao Suranari worshipping ceremony and refrain from selling items at the Red Cross event, after which dance rehearsals will be held at distances in department stores and do not rotate at the rehearsals. But it is a small group and spread the dance teachers to different areas. Including practicing in small groups according to departments or schools and practicing by releasing dance moves in advance through YouTube, but

the dancer suggested that the dance cloth should be released earlier so that it could be cut in time. As for making the dance moves easier, it is appropriate.

Participatory Communication (Pengprang & Kaewthep, 2005, p. 63) This said that the concept of “participatory communication” has two implications; (1) The first implies the use of various types of communication as a means or tool leading to participation in public life such as writing open letters to the media complaining about the work of government officials, sharing opinions about development projects at village meetings. (2) The second implies the opportunity for people to take part in the communication itself.

Changing the identity of Thao Suranaree's worship dance from a "Noblewoman" to a "woman from Nakhon Ratchasima province" to allow everyone to participate in activities to show their love, and faith in the heroines that they have respected until now in unison.

The above can be explained by Budier's concept of capital, this is called social capital. Social capital affects a person's image, affecting the perception and perception of status from people in society towards that person, which Budier called symbolic capital, Budier also proposed that capital could be transformed from one type to another. The creation of different types of capital is an activity that human beings do consciously and unconsciously in struggle, struggle, competition, and bargaining. The creation of these types of capital is seen as the reproduction of social distinction, which creates the "class" in a society (The Matters team, 2019). Because participating in the Thao Suranari worship dance network requires capital to facilitate each other, both economic capital, cultural capital, social capital, and symbolic capital, thus making the network of middle-class dancers stay strong.

### **For implication for further studies**

Other issues related to the Thao Suranaree worship dance group should be studied to see various dimensions, such as the identity of each Thao Suranaree worship dance in each area of thirty-two districts, or to study the language dimension through the study of wireless media. Words through songs or dances of Thao Suranari worship dance.

### **Acknowledgment**

Thank you for the research grant from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Nakhon Ratchasima Rajabhat University for the fiscal year 2020.

### **References**

- Chaiala, P., & Ruengroj, S. (2013). Participatory communication management: A mechanism for the implementation of the alternative development paradigm. *Humanities and Social Sciences*, 30(2), 23-42. [in Thai]
- Chanama, C. (2020). Thao Suranaree worship dance: Background and cultural context of performance. *Journal of Suan Sunandha Arts and Culture*, 1(1), 69-86. [in Thai]
- Chantamala, O. (2015). Some traditions and identities reflected in dancing performances for worshipping religious places in Northeast Thailand: Rabam Champasi. *Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences Mahasarakham University*, 34(1), 232-237. [in Thai]
- Chomphon, A. (2020). *The commodification of culture: A case study of sacrificial dance prince Prajak Silapakhom Udon Thani Province*. Faculty of Economics Chulalongkorn University. [in Thai]

- Kaewthep, K. (2000). *Media for the community: Compilation of knowledge*. The Research Fund Office. [in Thai]
- Kaewthep, K. (2010). Communication in ritual, Ritual in communication. *Journal of Management Science Chiangrai Rajabhat University*, 5(1), 1-26. [in Thai]
- Kasemsuk, C. (2011). *Communicating with social changes*. Chulalongkorn University Press. [in Thai]
- Pengprang, K., & Kaewthep, K. (2005). *Engaging communication: From idea to practice*. *Journal of Communication Arts*, 23(3-4), 62-81. [in Thai]
- Phuphraingam, S. (2022). Status of performances rituals: Dance in sacrifice ceremony of Chao Poh Sri Thep. *Journal of Man and Society*, 6(1), 1-23. [in Thai]
- Srisura, S., Vannalee, C., & Ruengrong, A. (2023). Dance patterns in Pleng Na Pat Sathukarn in the Royal worship of Phra Siam Devadhiraj. *Journal of Thithat Watthanatham*, 22(1), 40-61. [in Thai]

## Author

Wachirarat Nirantechaphat

Lecturer in Thai Program,

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Nakhon Ratchasima Rajabhat University 340 Suranarai Rd., Muang District,

Nakhon Ratchasima 30000

Tel: 08-6876-2466 E-mail: [wachirarat.n@nrru.ac.th](mailto:wachirarat.n@nrru.ac.th)