

*A Model of Local Wisdom Transference Pertaining to the Making Palm Juice at
Paknam Village, Chachoengsao Province*

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Abstract

This qualitative research was aimed to study and develop a model of transferring local wisdom concerning how to make sugar palm juice at Paknam Village, Chachoengsao Province, Thailand. The research sample consisted of local people of a village in Paknam Sub-District, Bangkhla, Chachoengsao Province, which two local experts conveyed the knowledge of making sugar palm juice, 16 trainees who were members of the agricultural group, the Head of the village and the community developer of Paknam Municipality. Data and information were collected using document analysis, in-depth interviews, focus group discussion, and participatory action research. The local wisdom concerning how to make sugar palm juice at Paknam Village, Chachoengsao province had been done and transferred from generation to generation for a very long time, since 1934. There were six ways to transfer the knowledge of making sugar palm juice in the community, i.e., from the family, following models from neighbors, self-practice, from government agencies, and from schools. It was found that the model of knowledge transfer consisted three principles, i.e., a community based model, the learning process, and knowledge management. From this research and development, the model of transferring local wisdom how to make sugar palm juice was obtained and a community enterprise was initiated called “The Palm Juice Village” to reinforce and strengthen the community economically and socially. Finally, through this model, the local wisdom would be retained within the community.

Keywords: A model of transferring local wisdom, local wisdom, sugar palm juice.

INTRODUCTION

Rationale and Significance of Problems

From the past to the present, Thailand has had a variety of precious things such as ways of life, occupation, customs and tradition, arts and culture etc. In the old days, Thai people were in the agricultural society. The agriculture has been the foundation of Thai wisdom which comes from generation to generation for a very long time. Regarding the occupation of ancestors, it presents the identity of Thai, ways of life and local wisdom. Boonlong and Srirod (2011, p.1-4) stated that the consumption of human beings associate to the nature of location and climate. The experiences from the nature help human beings to think and develop devices, equipment and method to be useful for consumption and to have the quality. The quality factors are based on the familiarity of consumption of customs, tradition and beliefs within the community.

The National Education Act of 1999 and Amendments (Second National Education Act of 2002 and (Third National Education Act of 2010 defined the ways of providing education regarding promotion of strengthening the communities in Chapter 4, the ways of providing education in Section 29, stated that educational institutions in co-operation with individuals, families, communities, community organizations, local administration organizations, private persons, private organizations, professional bodies, religious institutions, enterprises, and other social institutions shall contribute to strengthening the communities by encouraging learning in the communities themselves. Thus communities will be capable of providing education and training; searching for knowledge, data, and information; and be able to benefit from local wisdom and other sources of learning for community development in keeping with their requirements and needs; and identification of ways of promoting exchanges of development experience among communities. Rajabhat Rajanagarindra University is the university assigned by the Office of the Higher Education Commission to be responsible for the project of One University One Province, taking care of three provinces in the east of Thailand. Duties include giving service to the society in providing education, arts and culture as well as being the knowledge source of locality to retain the local wisdom before it is gone.

The community of Paknam Sub-District, Bangkhla District, Chachoengsao Province is the place where local people make sugar from sugar palm trees. According to the information from Paknam Municipality and from local people, in the old days sugar palm trees were commonly found in Paknam Sub-District but now the occupation of making sugar from sugar palms is decreasing dramatically and it may be disappeared from the community in the future for many reasons because of a decrease of sugar palm trees.

In the past, the community of Paknam Sub-District, Bangkhla District, Chachoengsao Province was full of very high sugar palm trees, therefore, making palm sugar and sugar palm juice was the major occupation within the community at that time and it was also recognized the local wisdom. Making sugar palm juice is not only the occupation to earn money for living, but it is the way to retain the local culture and tradition also. However, in these days, the globalization has impacted Paknam Community like other areas in the eastern part of Thailand. There are many factories located near the community so a lot of teenagers and young generation move to work in the factory and neglect the occupation of making sugar palm juice which was created by their ancestors. Actually, sugar palm trees are economic plants and they are vital for Paknam community's ways of life. Making sugar palm juice is the local wisdom and the identity of Paknam community. In addition, sugar palm trees can be used for decoration as garden plants.

Palm Juice Village at Moo 11, Paknam Village, Bangkhla Sub-District, Bangkhla District, Chachoengsao Province is considered as the source of making sugar palm juice by the conventional method which has been conveyed from generation to generation for a very long time. In the old days, people made sugar palm juice for consumption in their household and gave to relatives but currently sugar palm juice is made for selling. Unfortunately, there are not many places for selling and the numbers of customers are not stable. People who do this occupation for living should be patient and have passion to do. They should have a special skill of climbing up sugar palm trees to get the water so they have to be very careful, otherwise, they might be risky to fall down from the trees. However, they earn a lot of money from this occupation.

Nowadays, the local people change their occupation from rice farmers and sugar palm juice makers to be mango agriculturists. However, because of many floods, a lot of orchards have been destroyed so many people change the occupation to be prawn farmers.

Currently, making sugar palm juice is also impacted to economics. People who have knowledge of how to make sugar palm juice is decreasing so there are not enough experts to convey the knowledge and there are not clear and defined models of local wisdom transfer on making sugar palm juice. A lot of adolescents move to work for other careers, especially work in the factories. Therefore, the local wisdom is nearly gone. Fortunately, government agencies give importance to conserving and promoting this occupation by processing the products as drinks and medicines etc.

From the reasons above, it is interesting to find the problems in the community and find the method to develop the models of local wisdom transfer on making sugar palm juice in order to retain the local wisdom within the community sustainably. The study of problem condition helps understand and obtain the models of development of local wisdom transfer on making sugar palm juice which related to value, culture of community emphasizing participation of all sectors with great balance. Moreover, engaging people to keep in mind about the culture of community, local wisdom and self-reliability which is truly consistent with the community's ways of life and consistent with providing the education in the graduate students' level, the course of Development of Learning Societies (GC1723) which aims to help students have the knowledge and understand the state and trend of globalization affecting families, communities, and nations. Therefore, the researcher is interested in finding the reasons why the number of people who make sugar palm juice is decreasing dramatically and how to promote this occupation sustainably for the community economy by A Model of Local Wisdom Transference Pertaining to the Making Palm Juice at Paknam Village, Chachoengsao Province.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this study were aimed to study the state of local wisdom transfer on making sugar palm juice at Paknam Village, Chachoengsao Province, and develop models of local wisdom transfer on making Sugar Palm Juice at Paknam Village, Chachoengsao Province.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The qualitative research was conducted as follows:

Site Selection Study. In this research, the researcher studied the context of the area where the local wisdom transfer on making sugar palm juice would be studied. The multi-site study was conducted by theoretical sampling. The principle was that the site should be consistent with the social structure of conveying local wisdom transfer on making sugar palm juice. The informants were selected by purposive sampling in order that they could trust the researcher and were willing to give details in every aspect. Paknam Village in Chachoengsao Province is the place where people make sugar palm juice for earning a living the most at the present time so it is suitable site for study.

Stage 1. This research was to the study of state of local wisdom transfer on making sugar palm juice at Paknam Village, Chachoengsao Province. The researcher implemented as follows:

1) Document analysis of general information of Paknam Village and making sugar palm juice at Paknam Village, Chachoengsao Province. The researcher defined the scope to study of related documents such as books, documents, textbooks, journals, researches which related to the context of Paknam Sub-District, Bangkhla District, Chachoengsao Province, history, culture, local tradition and how to make sugar palm juice.

2) In-depth interview with two local philosophers and 16 trainees who were members of the agricultural group.

3) Analysis and synthesis of the state of local wisdom transfer on making sugar palm juice at Paknam Village, Chachoengsao Province, which obtained from the in-depth interview by content analysis.

4. Obtaining the result from the study of state of local wisdom transfer on making sugar palm juice at Paknam Village, Chachoengsao Province.

Stage 2. Determination of models of local wisdom transfer on making sugar palm juice at Paknam Village, Chachoengsao Province.

The researcher implemented as follows:

1. Focus group discussion was conducted to define development models of local wisdom transfer on making sugar palm juice at Paknam Village, Chachoengsao Province. There were two groups as follows:

The first group: Two local philosophers who conveyed the knowledge. They were selected by the researcher based on their knowledge of making sugar palm juice and because they were respected and recognized by the local people in the community and the second group: Trainees who obtained the knowledge of making sugar palm juice. The researcher selected 16 trainees who were members of the agricultural group, one village headman and one community developer of Paknam Municipality.

2. The information obtained from the focus group discussion was analyzed and synthesized to check the draft of development models of local wisdom transfer on making sugar palm juice at Paknam Village, Chachoengsao Province by content analysis.

3. Models of local wisdom transfer on making sugar palm juice at Paknam Village, Chachoengsao Province were defined by the researcher.

RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

To implement the qualitative Research, the researcher collected the data and information by using the instruments of questionnaires, and performed an interview from May 2010 to

January 2012 under 4 methods of document analysis, observation, informal interview and focus group discussion. The reliability and completeness of information was investigated by the triangulation measurement in two ways: 1) triangulation measurement of information, 2) triangulation measurement of data collection. After that the information obtained from observation, interviewing and focus group discussion was analyzed by categorizing, comparing and summarizing. And the findings from the study were synthesized to get the conclusion and results associated to the research objectives.

RESEARCH CONCLUSION

1) The study of state of local wisdom transfer on making sugar palm juice. According to the information of qualitative research, it found that the occupation of making sugar palm juice has decreased gradually since 2003. Government agencies promoted and restored the occupation according to the nation's policy. After that, people returned to make sugar palm juice because the sugar was very essential in Thai cuisine, especially for Thai desserts. In the old days, this community was very well-known in making sugar palm juice. The sugar made by this community was called "Nam Tan Pak Nam". The findings were that the skill of making sugar palm juice was still remained in the community and transferred from generation to generation and became the models of behavior, thinking system, knowledge and beliefs which were ordered by the experiences contributed to the awareness and pride rooted by the local wisdom.

Factors influencing the local wisdom transfer on making sugar palm juice were Internal factors according to the qualitative findings, where the internal factors were obviously important in the community, comprising of expert, local philosopher, resource: sugar palms, reputation of making sugar palm juice in the community, habitations, group of relatives, community regulation, culture and local wisdom.

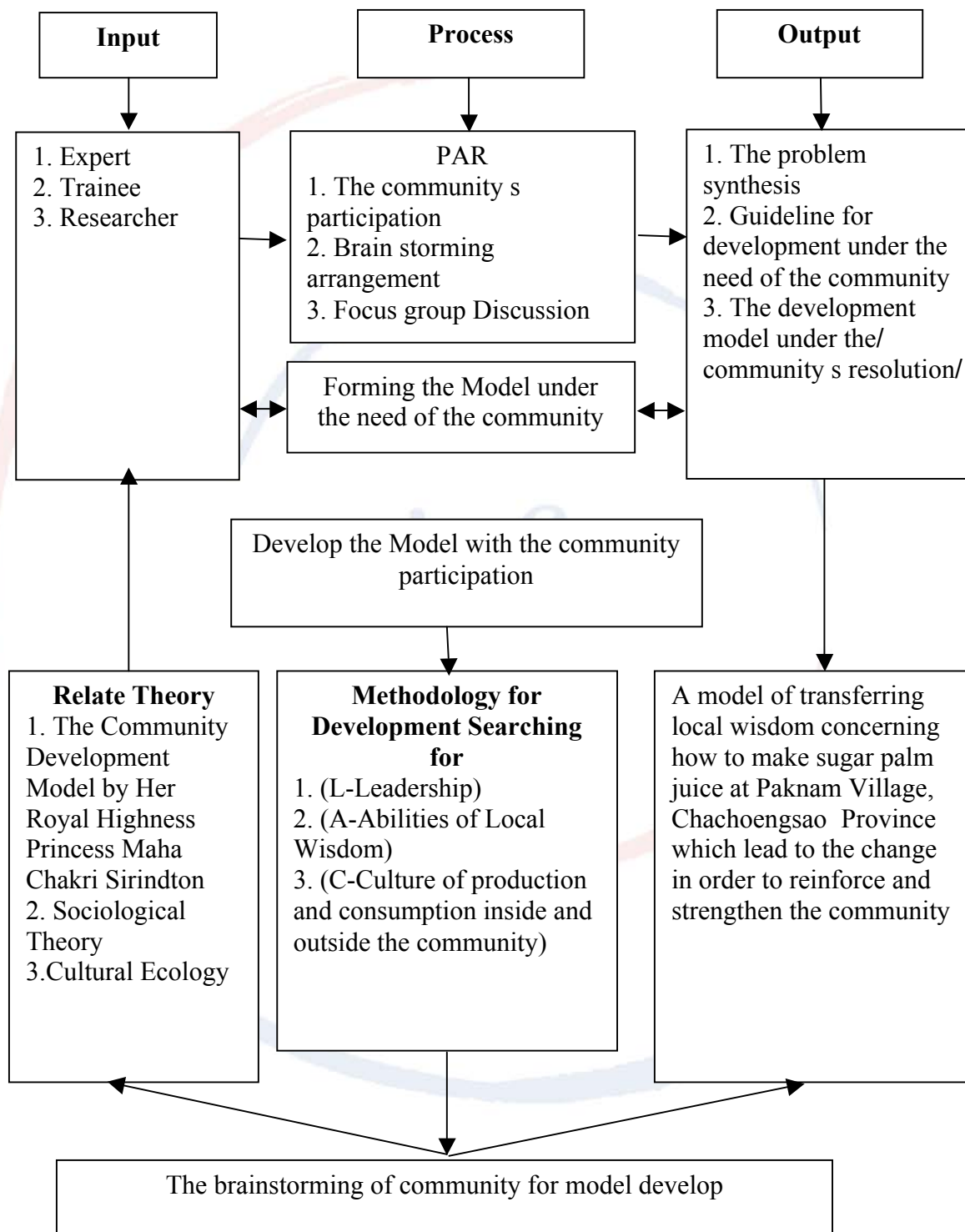
External factors:

According to the qualitative findings, government agencies, for example, provincial organizations, Provincial Industry Office, District Agricultural Extension Office, Public Health Office, Local Administration Organizations, Paknam Municipality, Non-Formal Education, educational and financial institutions had an important role in supporting the community to make sugar palm juice and help strengthen the community. According to the results, the internal factors to promote making sugar palm juice were: 1) leadership, 2) structure, 3) ability and 4) culture.

According to the synthesized results in each aspect, it was found that the factor to promote and convey the local wisdom of making sugar palm juice was the community leaders. They collaborated in implementing and moving the development and local wisdom transfer on making sugar palm juice in the community by cutting sugar palm trees and temporarily donating the land for establish Palm Juice Building which became a learning source as well as a center of doing group activities. In terms of social structure aspect, the community had natural resources which could be used as needed. There was a relative system. Everyone is aware of sharing the space. Habitation was in harmony with the nature. The sugar palm juice makers in the community had ability to develop the sustainable local wisdom. The community had the culture related to the natural environment.

2) Development of models of local wisdom transfer on making sugar palm juice at Paknam Village, Chachoengsao Province. The internal and external factors were used to construct

models of local wisdom transfer on making sugar palm juice by using Participatory Action Research (PAR). Local people, the researcher, and the local government agencies collaborated together in brainstorming, implementing and making solution. A model of local wisdom transfer on making sugar palm juice at Paknam Village, Chachoengsao Province is shown below:



I-1 A model of transferring local wisdom concerning how to make sugar palm juice at Paknam Village, Chachoengsao Province

DISCUSSION

A Model of Local Wisdom Transference Pertaining to the Making Palm Juice at Paknam Village, Chachoengsao Province was created from the Value culture of community and also the offence participation of all sectors, including Leadership (L), Structure (S), Ability(A), and Culture (C) with the strong factors of the community consisting of community expert, resource sugar palms, reputation of making sugar palm juice in the community, habitations , group of relatives that can from their teamwork, community regulation realizing on the value culture of community, culture of Thai style consumption and the local wisdom which comes from generation to generation for a very long time. Moreover there was a well support and co-ordinating from the government session including Chachoengsao Provincial Organization, Provincial Agricultural office, Bangkla Agricultural office and Paknam Municipality in term of super wising and Transference some essential information. Researcher was the advices to develop A Model of Local Wisdom Transference Pertaining to the Making Palm Juice at Paknam Village , Chachoengsao Province under the goal of having the community develop their abilities focusing on participation of the community to develop their community idea by brain storming , implementing and making solution. It was a Collaborative Learning which is a cooperative learning under the setting learning program and everybody share idea and experience to create new knowledge. There are 10 steps to take the factors of the community and government part to arrange a community base activity (Rojpitakkul,2007)Community Bose Model Holding a community s meeting , Following Consensus, Setting Goal and objectives. Concept, Learning for Development, Forming Learning Process, Setting Learning Network, Knowledge Management Learning, Making Decision and Doing for Development. The result of the model development will permanently Strong then the community depends on the well participant within community that has a strong organized group and well budget setting for advertising the community.

From the results, I would like to make a suggestion of follows:

- 1) In order to develop by using the instrument of local wisdom, the capability of community, the potential of community leader, the knowledge of local philosophers and agricultural group members should be considered. The government or private agencies should support and promote instead of controlling the community. The place for selling products should be provided. Giving advice to the community and creating network outside the community should be implemented.
- 2) The community and government agencies should arrange the learning system in the community by using the models of local wisdom transfer on making sugar palm juice in order to respond the community's needs and retain the local wisdom within the community.

EXPECTED BENEFITS

This research is to support the concept of development of models of local wisdom transfer on making sugar palm juice at Paknam Village, Chachoengsao Province. It is the ways of conserving and promoting local people in the community to realize the importance of source in the community, the importance of local wisdom from ancestors, being proud of their locality. The expected benefits from the research are as follows:

1. The ways of implementing providing of education to local wisdom transfer on making sugar palm juice at Paknam Village, Chachoengsao Province.

2. Obtaining models of local wisdom transfer on making sugar palm juice at Paknam Village, Chachoengsao Province and promoting products of sugar palm juice by participation of local people in the community.
3. Conserving and publicizing the customs, tradition, culture and local wisdom on making palm juice at Paknam Village, Chachoengsao Province.

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