

***Communication Process of Community in the Conservation of Biodiversity:  
A Case Study of the Doi Saket Chiang Rai Province Community***

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**Abstract**

The objective of this research is to study (1) To study the Doi Saket Community. (2) To Study the Communication Process of Community in the Conservation of Biodiversity Case Study Doi Saket Community.

This is a qualitative research based on a sample of 5 government staffs of Chiang Rai Municipality and 5 Community leaders of Doi Saket Community who know about Biodiversity of Community Doi Saket. The sample is selected through purposive sampling. Data is collected using an in-depth interview form and analyzed using descriptive analysis.

The results found:

- 1) Doi Saket area of forest in the core area, Chiang Rai Municipality introduce the knowledge and respect the decision of the community. That reflects the Community of Doi Saket. There is a strong community that is central to the culture and traditions of the people in the community come together and share the benefits of Doi Saket forest in the community.
- 2) Communications of the conservation of the biodiversity of Community Doi Saket, is the Informal communication. In Activities of the community in the various traditions, the communication of the conservation of biodiversity, the Chiang Rai Municipality officials use official and unofficial communication to community leaders and the people in community.

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## **Introduction**

### **The history and importance of the problem**

Generally speaking, due to in each society and culture human relating with their environment, human behavior is also a factor in the destruction of biological diversity. To Change human behavior, the link between knowledge and consciousness is taken into accounted as the important factors. Besides this, intellectual property also could help in changing behavior in a better way.

Science and technology plays an important role in this case. On one hand, it can cause the damage in biodiversity. The development of science and technology should be aware otherwise the biological could be affected. For example, some Herb may be extinct, if it is only be used as a commercial good regardless the reforestation or replanting. On the other hand, the well management of local wisdom and trading, in turn, could generate the benefit to the community.

Nowadays many books about Thai local wisdom are translated into many languages. This shows that its advantages could be realized in somehow. However, in Thailand, the researchers believe that unless the biological diversity preservation is rapidly implemented, the world will have some effects.

The deforestation has been occurred continually which effect to ecosystem as well as biological diversity. The Forest area in Thailand has been constantly decreased from 53.3 % or 171 Million acres of Thailand in 2504 (1961) to 33.6% or 107.6 Million acres in 2552 (2009). From the reduction of the forest, where is forest ecosystem and biological diversity or the living area, and the basic factor for economic development of the country in the future, there is some conservation and utilization program is set up to manage this. Consequently some species is discovered, while the number of endangered species is increased.

The biological diversity conservation program is set to support the world climate changing in 3 areas. One out of three are is Doi Saket community in Chang Rai province. This area also obtains the capital support from Japan in order to study the biological diversity. Better resource and environment management creates a stronger community. People in the community could gather each other idea, in other word, they could brainstorm to find the solution or overcome the problem for their own community. In addition, the well natural resource management could preserve and sustainably restore the biological diversity. Furthermore, changing development process by emphasizing local people participation and Sufficiency Economy could enhance the efficiency of community development. This could lead to self-sufficiency and sustainable community. Therefore, it is very interesting to study “communication process of community in conservation of biodiversity case study Doi Saket Chiang Rai”.

### **Objective**

1. To Study Doi Saket community
2. To study a communication process of the community in conservation of biodiversity case study in Doi Saket Chaing Rai province.

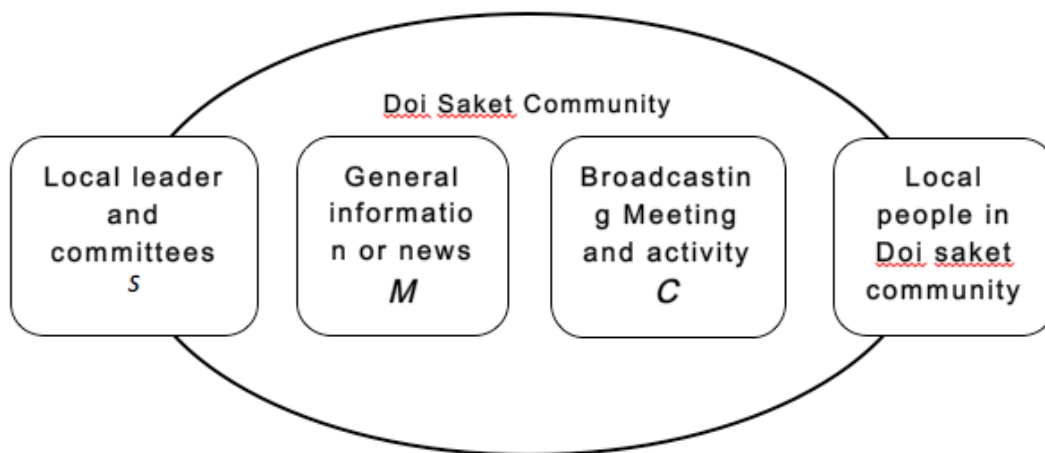
## Methodology

This study is qualitative research focusing on the community communication process in biological diversity preservation at Doi Saket Chiang Rai province. The sampling group consists of Government officers and also people who engage in Doi Saket biodiversity preservation activities.

Place of study: Doi Saket community Chiang Rai province.

This research is generated by interviewing with 10 selective sampling members within 30 days from 1 May 2013 to 30 May 2013

## Conceptual research framework.



## Specific Term

Communication process refers to communication pattern of Doi Saket community comprising of Source (who could be a person or group of people), deliver Message, through a communication channel to receiver (who could be a person or group of people).

Community context describes general condition of Doi Saket, referring of topography, weather, way of living, internal and external communication of individual living at Doi Saket.

Conservation is the optimization of natural resource consumption as long as possible and distributing the resource utilization across each other.

Biodiversity refers to many different and various species of creature living in the ecosystem.

Doi Saket community describes a person or people living together at Doi Saket area, Chiang Rai province respecting a common rule or regulation.

## Population and Sample group

Target Population is defined as a group of government agents and people who involve with biodiversity conservation at Doi Saket community.

The target group, a group of government officers and individuals who involve with biodiversity conservation in Doi Saket community, is selected by purposed or it can be called a purposive sampling group consisting of 5 members of public sector and 5 members of private sector, as total 10 members.

## **Research tools**

The interview form which is designed by the study relating topic from many sources of information such as articles, textbooks etc., of this researchers. It could be divided into 2 main sections

1. The question relating with Doi Saket community
2. The question focusing on a communication process of biodiversity conservation.

## **Data collection**

The researcher and his 3 collaborations gathered the complete interview information at Doi Saket Chiang Rai Province.

## **Analysis**

This study bases on content analysis which creating the synopsis base on theoretical framework. Then, preliminary finding will be defined that whether its corresponding with any theoretical framework stating as an assumption at the beginning of the study or not. The process and condition in these findings are in accordance with the hypothetical concept or not. Lastly, summary or result will be raised from the comparison and confirmation of those.

## **Main Body**

### **Research Summary**

#### **1. The study of Doi Saket community context**

Doi Saket is a small mountain located in the District of Chiang Rai, its border is the resident of Doi Saket community which is 1 out of 60 communities under Chiang Rai municipality responsibility. The municipality governed area covers 60 square kilometers with about 69 636 of its populations which are 33058 males and 36 578 females. There are about 35750 households in the area. The average population density is about 1136 individual/ Square kilometers.

Its condition, Mixed Deciduous Forest is still abundant. The plants such as Iron wood, Dipterocarpus, Teak, Mango, genus Litchi, Protium serratum, Indian gooseberry, Jequirity, Beleric Myrobalan, Fabaceae, Sweet Acacia is scattered. Besides this, there are many kinds of bamboo such as Yellow Running Bamboo, Bambusa and Dendrocalamus hamiltonii.

Nowadays these forests are not quite useful for local people. It is used as a place for regional ceremonies and recreation. However, in some area still is considered as the community nourishment source and residential area, such as Bamboo shoot and insect as well as its wood still used for daily life. The rich will buy or possess the land in that area for building their home. Nevertheless, the community itself still has the central area to resemble a living together in a community. Buddha's relics, located at the central area for local people, to pour water or warship every year. However, these days there are some invasion for deforestation and space utilization from others out of community.

The policy of Chiang Rai municipality has 5 aspects in its development plan and one of them is the policy for developing and preserving natural resource and environment. This plan will promote local people to increasing Green area as well as reducing the Global warming effect. In addition the plan is aim to build a network for cooperating between government, private sector and people for environment management. With these, Chiang Rai governor realizes that this forest have to be simultaneously conserved and developed in order to be the “City Lung” with its interesting history and advantages for both community and city.

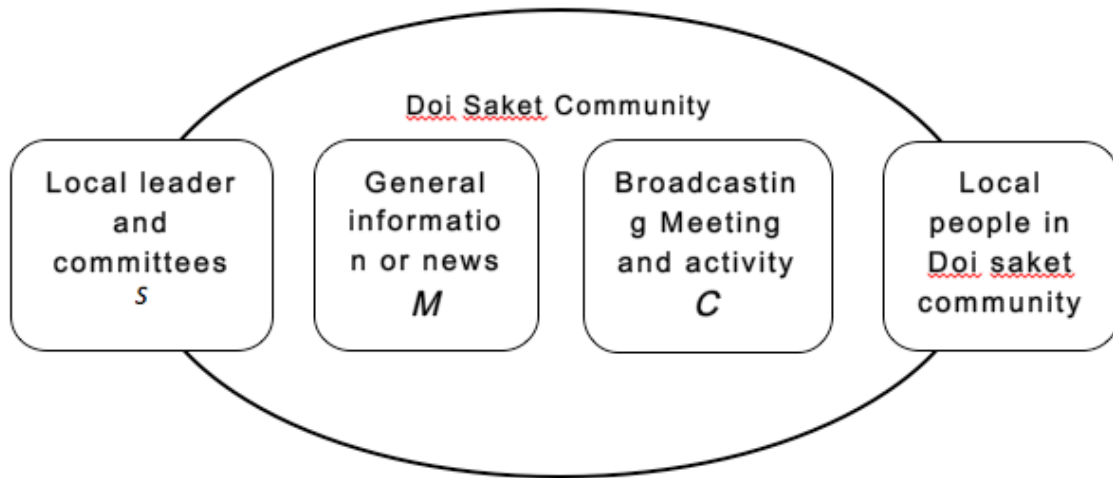
With its beautiful nature and the remaining biodiversity, when Thailand environment institution has an opportunity from Keidenren Nature Conservation fund (KNCF) Japan, for operating the Enhance Urban Biodiversity in Thai Cities for Climate change Mitigation, the governor agrees to join the program. Since then, Doi Saket is this first target city for this program.

It is very necessary to engage academic specialist in the Survey of the Biological diversity at Doi Saket as the research base on theoretical concept. Moreover, the project emphasized entirely involvement. This is quite difficult to manage smoothly between local people and local governor which in this article means, Chaing Rai municipality.

## **2. The study in communication process of the community in conservation of biodiversity case study in Doi Saket, Chaing Rai Province.**

Communication in conservation of biodiversity Doi Saket Chiang Rai is an unofficial communication as local people know each other well. The content of communication is normal greeting. The activities organized in the community, the communication style will be an unofficial. In Local broadcasting for the communication in conservation of biodiversity, the officer of Chiang Rai municipality are sent to communicate with Local people both official and unofficial way. The message will be transmitted to community leader and committees by unofficial conversation. Moreover, a meeting will be held for concerned people to allow them to have knowledge and understanding for biodiversity, the important of Doi Saket forest as well as detail plan of the project. These could be indicated government officer, community leaders and committees as the delivers, the information about biodiversity and the important of Doi Saket Forest is the message, the talking and broadcasting are media and people in Doi Saket are receivers.

## Summary for communication process of Doi Saket community Chiang Rai province



It is highlighted that its broadcast way mainly focus on informing News and activities that would be happened in the community as well as having a meeting in the community. When committee meeting is organized, a chairman will be selected by voting from the local people raising their hand. Mostly local people have the same objective which is developing their community. The examples of those are road maintenance, cutting some trees that blocking the road, cleaning local streets since there are some traditional events such as Tan Kuay Salak, Tan Kwonkwao Pee Mai, Firework event at the Relic in every year at Doi Saket. The point of conversation normally is a greeting among each other. However, in the case of any problem, the issue will be discussed in the meeting topic by topic. The discussion points aim to not only community development but also Doi Saket forest conservation. Furthermore, in the meeting news will be announced. In term of the biodiversity preservation at Doi Saket, the deliver mainly are government officers, local leaders, and committees who is the community opinion leader.

The communication has many ways such as local broadcasting by community leaders and committees and a meeting to exchange the information held once a year. There are about 100 people to join the meeting. In addition, every Buddhist holy day, people will go to temple and monk will inform news or important information. This is mainly face to face communication. Then each family will cascade to their family members. As it is limited area and mostly is relative or family, the communication is informal and casual.

The problem of Doi Saket community, before brainstorming from local people, first, the government has created awareness by document distribution or management could raise this to regional, state and international level. Consequently, the community is stimulated. This is because local people could realize that even though Doi Saket is their hometown, other people are taken Doi Saket problem into their consideration. This could be the inspiration for them to take more responsibility toward their hometown. Next, group discussion called “LOM CHONG LAO KAN TUMNAN DOI SAKET” will be set. This is the first time that will be official communication, then, smaller group discussion will be held. This could be unofficial meeting among

local people aiming to establish agreement or law for space utilization at Doi Saket area which this could be considered as community opinion.

There are some events allowing local people to express and exchange their idea and opinions. The committee conference has been held annually and also the traditional event such as Tan Koey Salak, Tan Kun Kao Pee Mai and the firework event that has been organized every year are the ways for local people exchange their opinion. Also, every Buddhist holy day at KEE LEE CHAI temple, the people could show and exchange the idea with other member, and the government staff will join to have a survey once a week. With those activities, the communication way is unofficial and the topics which local leaders from each area have a discussion mainly relate with the progress of Doi Saket development projects. After the community could operate it by themselves, the officer would join with them only once a month until now.

### **Summary the overview of communication process in biodiversity conservation**

Among local leader and committees, the communication way is an unofficial. To illustrate this, it is like the teaching way between Dad and son , uncle and nephew which is consider as unofficial communication. However, an activity called “LOM CHONG LAO KAN TUMNAN DOI SAKET” has been set by the government. This is the first time for the community to have an official communication. Then, there could be smaller groups discussion which is unofficial meeting in order to establish agreement for space or land utilization. This could be called community opinion or local policy.

### **Summary and Result**

Chiang Rai Municipality and Thailand environment organization have tried to educate local people about the benefit for biodiversity in remaining green forest in a big city which could be the basis of city's sustainable development. Moreover, they have supported and driven all cooperation in biodiversity research. Doi Saket is the area that have been followed-through the process for local truly involvement. This is in accordance with Innovation Diffusion Theory from Roger. People could be separated by the level of acceptance of innovation diffusion. Social adoption process, it is important for technology adoption that need some channel in communicate with social. To communicate from one to another, the innovation will be communicated by different channel. This could take some period of time for reach to social members. These could be described as four main factors which are innovation, communication channel, time, and social group. When Critical mass who less acceptance or adoption innovation have interactive with high innovation adoption group. If the ratio of high innovation adoption is big enough as a result of, technology still exist by itself.

The rule or agreement of Doi Saket community described as following. The community agrees for forest conservation. In case of any invasion or deforestation, there would be some penalty such as fine or other upon the community regulation. However, currently the fine or penalty regards to its community laws. As the municipality allows community to establish its own law, they will have a meeting to establish their own law and regulation. If there is some lawbreaker, their neighbor will go to inspect and report to community leader. The leader will proceed the next step such as warning. Regarding to forest utilization, there still is no strong regulation. A

big trees are not allowed to be cut. They allow to use small natural branch or brushwood for firewood instead of trees and honey. The concession has been provided for local. As the same objective which is to develop community, many annual activities are organized such as road repair, cutting branch that block the road and cleaning community area. These is in accordance with Kannika chomdee (1981) idea, stating that there are many different ways showing people involvement such as joining meeting, exerting, donating money and also device, involving as leaders and committees, persuading others, and being a creative. However, joining meeting shows the most involving rank. Next is the exerting and persuading.

Doi Saket Law and regulation has been established by community meeting. To this point of time, there has been never been revised or edited as no one provoke to against the law as most local people are afraid of the holy. They believed that if they would like something such as tree in this forest, they would have to pray and ask the permission from spirit or angel. Since they believe that there are some angels to protect this forest, such as Saint Sri Somboon, Saint Sri Suwan, Saint, Plawpongfah, Saint Ongdum. Currently, there are still some shrines for those saints located at Doi Saket. According to Nilunon Sangartid , she believes the factors that bring people to get involve with river conservation are as followed. First, internal factor, refer to the possessive of river and animal, the need to enhance economic level, responsibility and religious ceremony and the believe in the officient

Government officers have communicated with the villagers both official and unofficial by primary discussion with local leader and committees. In additional to this, the meeting has been held to educate people for biodiversity, the important of Doi Saket forest, and the comprehension of project plan. In biodiversity research at Doi Saket, the members from its community and stated officers have participated in all steps. As a result of this, the learning and passing on academic knowledge in biodiversity from the stated agent to local community has been really occurred. This is concurrence with Dusit and his group (2003), mentioned that for the participation pattern, local people participate by themselves and for the participation process, most of them have joined from project action especially in activity basis. In term of local resource management, the majority of people in the community have scarified their time to involve and express their opinion.

Main message deliver for biodiversity at Doi Saket are Government officers, local leaders and committees. The message delivers mainly are local opinion leader. Those is in accordance with Paul Lazarsfeld , 1949 ) and team, said that the spread of news could be taken place into 2 steps. First, it happens from mass media to local leader. Second step is happened from local opinion leader to local people. These could show news form mass media not always be direct and have influence on the receivers. The important element could be personal influence or opinion leadership. Thus, Two step flow theory has been studied which its concept is concurrence with Nuprattra 2005). She believes that factors that make local people understand, accept and participate in forest conservation in Kaleng community, Mae Ka boong village are as following. First of all, factor from deliver which could mean the reliability of state officers, the important of local tradition and culture, the understanding of local custom in the way of living and their hospitality dependent on forest. Secondly, receiver factor could refer to conforming the older and ancestor for forest conservation and allowing local people recognized responsibility and duty of national park officers as well as the



advantages of forest preservation.

The communication in biodiversity conservation at Doi Saket Chiang Rai province, it is an unofficial communication because of the well-known and close relation among people in the community. Even though in the community activities that most local people join, the communication way still be unofficial. There are so many activities that could gather local people to the same place. To illustrate this for religious activity, people will go to Kee Lee Chai temple and for community meeting, they will go to Doi Saket learning center ( old school). This is agreed with Kanchana Kaewthep and group (2000) mentioning that the content of local media should relate to local experience and way of living. In Addition to this, Sri thon Rojsupod (2004) saying that the unofficial communication could be conversation in families, relatives, neighbors. This could be taken place everywhere such as in shops, temples, farms and reservoirs etc. However, when there is some critical, the opposite will control the communication center.

The Activity “LOM CHONG LAO KAN TUMNAN DOI SAKET” is the first official communication. After that, there will be smaller group discussion in the community which is a unofficial meeting among local members. The aim of the meeting is to establish the community law or agreement for land or space utilization, which this could be called referendum in the community. However, among local leader and committees and local people, the communication will not be official. The style will be like unofficial talking between Dad and son, uncle and nephew. It is agree with Vipavee Rewsuwan and Kitti Kanpai (2003) who found that Viengklang community has effectively drived AIDS campaign. The reason of its success is from important factors as followed. 1) Leaders’ strength and readiness in supporting or helping local people for find the solution. 2) The desire of community themselves for eliminating AIDS problem from their community 3) the good family relationship of community members. This, in turn, could support to solve the problem.

### **Suggestion**

- 1) The communication process of community in biodiversity conservation should be compared with other area awarded from Thailand environment institute such as Bang Khun tean, Bangkok, which is the seashore area , and Klong Nam Jed area Trang province.
- 2) The communication process of community in biodiversity conservation should be co- developed with other community. This would create the community strength in biodiversity conservation
- 3) The external factor that drives the communication process of community in biodiversity conservation success in long term should be studied.
- 4) The development of the community communication process in biodiversity conservation for building its strength should be raised to Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment.
- 5) The promotion and development proposal for community communication process for building local strength in conservation should be proposed to Ministry of Interior.
- 6) The proposal for promoting community communication process in forest conservation should be submitted to Royal Forest Department.
- 7) Propose to Department of Local Administration for the development in community communication process in biodiversity conservation



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