



The Study on Entrepreneurial Mindset of the Thai People of Mon Descent: A Case Study of Lamphun Province and Lopburi Province

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Abstract

This research article is an excerpt from the Research Report on Thai people of Mon descent and their entrepreneurship, using qualitative research via in-depth interview with individuals, both those investing or operating businesses and those who do not invest or operate a business, in the areas of 2 Mon villages, namely Ban Bang Khan Mak in Lop Buri Province and Ban Nong Du in Lamphun Province, totalled 60 informants. The main results are: business operators often mentioned “opportunities” as leading to the choice of their entrepreneurial path. Some do business due to the “need” to stay home to care for their loved ones, while non-entrepreneurs claimed they also had “need” for personal care or “lack of capital”. From interviews and observations, it is found that: Thai people of Mon descent have had a high “Power Distance” level, a low “Masculinity” level and a low “Need for Achievement”, and a high Collectivism level. All of which is not conducive to entrepreneurship. Those who have entrepreneurial careers seem to be more pro-active and more independent than those who are not entrepreneurs, and thus a higher Individualism level. They do not fear the risk, yet would accumulate skills and expertise, and wait for sufficient accumulated funds to leave their previous jobs to start their own businesses. Entrepreneurship depends on personal preference, but not on being of Mon decent. Therefore, there should be support for the Thai people of Mon descent to have greater self-confidence, willing to take risks, and have a more optimistic view of being an entrepreneur.

Keywords: 1) Thai people of Mon descent 2) Entrepreneurial mindset 3) Lamphun 4) Lopburi 5) ethnic group

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Introduction

Thai society has been influenced by Mon since at least the Ayutthaya period (Wyatt, 1996) since Phraya Kian and Phraya Ram led the Mon migrants across the Satong River from Burma to Siam, following the royal visitation of King Naresuan the Great to save the nation of Thailand. Another wave of exodus took place in the reign of King Rama II who appointed King Rama IV, who was, at that time, the Crown Prince, to receive the Mon migrants to settle on Siam land (Phakdiphumin, 2002).

Mon people have been assimilated into mainstream Thai society. Only in some communities, Mon culture can still be seen, such as in Phra Pradaeng, in Samut Prakan Province, and in Sam Khok, in Pathum Thani Province. There are also small Mon villages scattered in many places all over Thailand such as Koh Kret in Nonthaburi Province, Ban Nong Du in Lamphun Province, and Ban Bang Khan Mak in Lopburi Province. (Fine Arts Department, 2013)

The study of entrepreneurship among Thai people of Mon descent is important because commerce in Thailand is thought to be monopolised by either the Thai nobility or the Thai- Chinese community (Nana, 2004). Studies of entrepreneurship among people in Thailand are scarce. There exists only the factual reports of how many start-ups or new registered businesses per year or per month (Department of Business Development, 2021), but there are no classified segments of businesses according to ethnic or minority groups, nor details of entrepreneurship thereof.

The existing literature on the Mon in Thailand is also scarce. Information about

Mon as widely spread is often in the form of documentaries on Mon traditions or publications on their general way of life (Foster, 1982; Ocharoen, 1998 and 2009; BanChoon, 2009 and 2010a; and KetThet, 2013). None of them provides details about entrepreneurial activity or the operational nature of businesses among Thai people of Mon descent.

There is only one study about ethnicity and entrepreneurship in Thailand, but there were too few respondents of Mon descent in that work. Therefore, the work could only show the basic attitudes of those few people. They were less likely to take risks and did not view entrepreneurs as important careers like the Chinese (Rurkwararuk, 2010a).

Based on Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions, it is possible to propose that the Thai People of Mon descent might be: high in Power Distance, low in Individualism, low in Masculinity, high in Uncertainty avoidance, and medium in Long-term orientation. Thus, in general they might not be entrepreneurial.

This paper shows the results of a study on the entrepreneurial mindset of Thai people of Mon descent using qualitative research methods.

Research objectives

1. To study the factors that influence Thai people of Mon descent to operate a business compared with those who do not;
2. To suggest the application of acquired knowledge to encourage Thai people of Mon descent to operate a business in terms of policy recommendations.



Literature Review

Thai People of Mon Descent

The Mon were once one of the most prosperous nations in Southeast Asia. But now without land and country, the Mon have become a scattered minority in other countries. In Thailand, Mon culture is considered to have had the greatest influence on Thai culture. Mon people have, in the past, had the same status as Thai people. Many of Mon descent had titles and served as noblemen. They have had descendants who take part in all walks of life to this day (Rojanawipat, 2004; Nichaiyok, 2009, p. 158; KetThet, 2013, footnote p. 27; BanChoon, 2009, pp. 35-94; BanChoon, 2010b, pp. 38-39).

As the Mon population increased, the villages expanded to have more relationships with Thai people. Mon people, therefore, could not maintain their true Mon Identity, except for those Mon who are still living in the villages to which they originally settled. And since most of them are Buddhists, it was easy for them to be assimilated into Thai society (Ocharoen, 2009, pp. 19, 26). Being influenced by the development of society outside, both Mon and Thai are even more similar in adopting western cultural customs. Additionally, with the Thai education system, the Mon have become even more “Thai” (Ocharoen, 2009, pp. 28-30).

An example of famous Thai people of Mon descent is a group settled along the Mae Klong River near Ban Muang Subdistrict, Ban Pong District in Ratchaburi Province. Most of them have lived together with Thai, Chinese and Lao people for a long time. Therefore, there is already some cultural mixing. Distinctive features of the Mon include the presence of a temple as the centre for the

sustaining of traditions and rituals. There is consideration of “prestige”, “be praised by others”, “bringing disgrace to the family”, “respect for the elders”, “belief in superstition, traditions, and customs”, “dress according to your status, and not inferior to anyone”, and “having faith in sacred things, as mentally secure”. In addition to being strictly Buddhist, the Mon of Mae Klong Basin also respect Familial Ghosts (ancestors), who were their parents and benefactors. They must be revered, sacrificed, and worshiped, otherwise misfortune could occur in the family, or they would be disgusted and disdained by the villagers (Krua-witchayachan, 2000).

Another example of famous Thai people of Mon descent is a group settled in Koh Kret small river island of a central province Nonthaburi. Some of the Mon migrated to Koh Kret from a potter village in the south of Myanmar. The pottery pattern has been said to be exquisite and unique according to that ancient place. Since they had to contact other communities by water, their daily life has been self-sufficient. However, due to the location of Koh Kret which saw the passage of large ships from abroad coming to trade in the Ayudhya area. The Koh Kret people have thus been familiar with trade ever since. The Mon people of Koh Kret used to transport their pottery for sale in far-flung provinces such as Sukhothai. Later, the popularity of plastic and metal containers replaced clay containers. Pottery manufacturers turned their attention to producing beautiful products for the tourist trade. The Mon people then turned to other occupations such as civil service, labourers, trading, etc. (Fine Arts Department, 2013, p.17).

Modern globalized capitalism has made some Mon from Myanmar become migrant workers in border provinces or other coastal provinces such as Samut Sakhon, etc. The Mon accounted for 70% of those migrants in 2005 (Baonerd, 2009, p. 166). Mon migrants often shop at shops where they sell authentic goods imported from Myanmar including Thanaka powder, Mon language books, pictures of sacred objects, pictures of celebrities, artists, singers and sacred things. There was also clothing stores where Mon people can buy Mon-style costumes, T-shirts screened with picture of ancient Mon royals and some shirts with the text “Save the Mon Nation” and the like. (Baonerd, 2009, pp. 171-179).

Since most of the workers are Mon people causing the widespread use of the Mon language. Thai people of Chinese descent have started to hire employees who are Mon migrants to attract Mon customers (Baonerd, 2009, p. 184). Signs in the department stores, clinics, hospitals, factories are beginning to include the Mon language. (Baonerd, 2009, p. 186). Officials organized a learning centre for Mon Wisdom Development and started teaching the Mon language (Baonerd, 2009, p. 189) with money support from Mon people living abroad such as America and Australia (Baonerd, 2009, p.190). They have also organized the National Mon Day, which later the name was changed to “Mon Ancestor Remembrance Day”, and participated by representatives of Mon villages from all over Thailand (Baonerd, 2009).

The Cultural Dimensions of Hofstede

A world famous concept of culture and its consequences in people’s lives and career choices is that of Hofstede. Hofstede (1991, 2001, 2013) classified the attitudes that people worldwide view things in their lives into 5 dimensions:²

1. Power Distance (PDI)

This dimension expresses the degree to which the less powerful members of a society can accept and expect that power is distributed unequally within their society. In societies with low power distance, people strive to equalise the distribution of power and demand justification for inequalities of power.

2. Individualism versus Collectivism (IDV)

Individualism can be defined as the degree to which individuals are expected to take care of themselves and their immediate families only. Its opposite, Collectivism, represents a preference in which individuals can expect their relatives or members of a particular in-group to look after them in exchange for loyalty.

3. Masculinity versus Femininity (MAS)

Masculinity dimension represents a preference in society for achievement, heroism, assertiveness and material reward for success. Its opposite, Femininity, stands for a preference for cooperation, modesty, caring for the weak and quality of life.

4. Uncertainty Avoidance (UAI)

The Uncertainty Avoidance dimension expresses the degree to which the members of a society feel uncomfortable with uncertainty and ambiguity. Societies exhibiting strong UAI maintain rigid codes of belief and behaviour

² Hofstede (2021) added the 6th Dimension: Indulgence (vs. Self-Restraint). However, the dimension is not yet established. The author excluded this new dimension from the study.



and are intolerant of unorthodox behaviour and ideas. Weak UAI societies can accept different behaviour more and are more ready to take risks.

5. Long-term versus Short-term Orientation (LTO)

Societies with a Short-term Orientation exhibit great respect for traditions and a focus on achieving quick results. In societies with a Long-term Orientation, people believe that truth depends very much on situation, context and time. They show an ability to adapt to changed conditions, a strong propensity to save and invest, thriftiness, and perseverance in achieving results.

These 5 dimensions of culture can be linked to the entrepreneurial endeavours of people around the world, as explained in the next topic.

Entrepreneurship Theory & Related Research

Incentives or motivations that lead people to become entrepreneurs or to start-up a business can be: to make money (profit); being your own boss (Independence); escape a bad situation (freedom); enjoying a satisfying life (personal satisfaction); and contribute to the community (personal fulfillment) (Longenecker, et al., 2003). Characteristics that are often found in entrepreneurs are: among others, opportunity orientation; internal locus of control; and calculated risk taking (Kuratko, 2009). To be an entrepreneur who founds a new business, one must be able to identify and recognize opportunities. This is meant to find gaps in the marketplace, to fulfil customers' needs and wants. Additional aspects of opportunity recognition among entrepreneurs

often are: prior experience, cognitive factors, social networks, and personal creativity (Barringer and Ireland, 2012; Baron and Shane, 2008). Prior experience and social networks help one to get access to information and create confidence in what one will do, while cognitive factors and personal creativity help one to increase the likelihood of discovering and exploiting opportunities to create a business (Shane, 2003).

One meta-analysis indicated that specific traits produced higher relationships with both business creation and business success than global trait measures. These specific personality traits are: the need for achievement (prefer moderately challenging tasks), risk-taking (disposition towards risk), innovativeness (interest to look for novel ways of action), autonomy (want to be in control), locus of control (belief in controlling one's own destiny), and self-efficacy (belief to be able to perform a certain action effectively) (Rauch and Frese, 2007).

Several other scholars have tried to study why some people choose to become entrepreneurs (Gatewood, et al., 1995; Carter, et al., 2003). Some have concluded that the reason why people choose to be entrepreneurs may be because of their cultural roots which affect their willingness to do business (Caree and Thurik, 2002), but few mention a direct connection between culture and start-ups (Scheinberg and MacMillan, 1988; Birley and Westhead, 1994). Some features in their ethnic group and their worldview may affect their decision to choose to do business as a professional.

In referring to Hofstede's concept of Cultural Dimensions as mentioned

above, many scholars have found that entrepreneurship often is conducive and standing out in a culture that is lower in Power Distance level (McGrath and MacMillan, 1992 and 2000; Hofstede, 1991; Davidsson and Wiklund, 1995); high in Masculinity (Lee and Peterson, 2000), high in Individualism (Trosby, 2001; Lee and Peterson, 2000), low in Uncertainty Avoidance (Lee and Peterson 2000) and high in Long-term Orientation (Hofstede, 2001). In particular, the variable that has been especially emphasized as a catalyst to start-up is the degree of belief that entrepreneurs themselves have high social status (Beliefs about social status of entrepreneur) (Davidsson and Wiklund, 1995).

However, these Hofstede's Dimensions have focused more on the quantitative side of the coin. Scarce information has been on the qualitative side, especially the ethnic group in small countries such as Thailand.

Available research studies involving entrepreneurship in Thailand found the following information. The more the person viewed risks positively, the more they were willing to operate a medium-sized hotel, rather than a small one; and the more attractive the location of the hotel needed to be, the more the owners needed a strong connection with the local VIP persons (Sornsermsombat, et al., 2017). Entrepreneurial investment or enlargement in Phitsanulok province was largely affected by the experience of entrepreneurs already invested in the area and insider information from the entrepreneurs' network or financial advisors, both to reduce the risks related to the business (Rurkwaruk, et al., 2017). In both cases, entrepreneurial start-ups and entrepreneurial investment was

related to risk perception and connection to reduce risk.

Entrepreneurship/ Entrepreneurial Mindset among Minority/Ethnic Groups.

Some studies involving ethnic entrepreneurship found the following:

Ethnic origin is known to influence the choice between self-employment and paid labour (Storey, 1994). Ethnic immigrants are also pushed into self-employment due to a lack of choice (Bates, 1999). However, second and third generation immigrants tend to have lower self-employment rates (Caulkins and Peters, 2002) because they have better, and a greater variety of, employment choices (Casson, 2004).

In an empirical study of nine ethnic groups (including the Chinese) in the US, Caulkins and Peters (2002) found large negative correlations between the group tightness and the entrepreneurship possibility. Immigrants who started businesses had low group tightness scores. This suggests that those who became owners were more independent (less group attached) than the non-owners. There was no relationship between native born ethnic groups and social capital and small business start-ups. The authors suggest that social capital in an ethnic group does not help much in predicting entrepreneurship. Thus, ethnic clan tightness might not always be a significant factor in the decision to start a business, as previously asserted.

High social capital and strong ties within ethnic communities can support ethnic business entrepreneurs (Achidi-Ndofor and Priem, 2011). While ethnic communities and networks can help reduce economic risks while increasing acceptance and patronage, in



financing ethnic businesses. However, difficult conditions for bank loans and a lack of credentials are obstacles for ethnic groups in starting up a business (Volery, 2007). Although social networks and cheap labour help ethnic entrepreneurs survive, the firm's flexibility will be the most important factor helping the business to sustain through competition (Ma, et al., 2013).

Light and Dana (2013) found that social capital (and social networks) will promote entrepreneurship (in Alaska) only if cultural capital is also supportive. This means that Social Networks alone can help only in their chosen profession to survive daily. They cannot help in long-term survival if these social network do not contain the values, attitudes and skills directly related to business (Light, 2010). In addition, inter-marriage is a key measure of assimilation, as well as a means to acquire the necessary skills and financial capital and commercial entrepreneurship from the spouse's network.

Yet, the motivation to start a business may be peculiarly different among ethnic groups. Maslow (1954) suggests that, in different cultures, people tend to be satisfied by different causes and, therefore, different behaviours are to be expected and valued.

As Davidsson (1995) argued, the strongest and most direct influence on individuals across societies who believe that running their own firm is desirable is a "conviction" in their competitiveness or as also called "perceived ability", due partly to one's ethnic background, to see positive prospects in life (Mitchell, et al., 2000). Foo (2011) also found that age was significantly less associated

with risk perception, and emotion was more associated with risk than fear and hope. Outcome certainty and capability to control the outcome are more relevant to entrepreneurship than the hope for prosperity.

In general people who not facing unemployment nor being immigrant, individuals tend to identify an expectation of "monetary gain" as lower rank among reasons to start a business as compared to other needs such as "need for achievement" and "need for autonomy" (Davidsson and Wiklund 1997, 1995; Birley and Westhead, 1994; Scheinberg and MacMillan, 1988). Other motivational dimensions or factors for starting a business across cultures were: (1) need for approval; (2) perceived instrumentality of wealth; (3) degree of communitarianism (welfare considerations); (4) need for personal development; (5) need for independence; and (6) need for escape (Scheinberg and MacMillan, 1988). Another dimension of start-up motivation in some countries, such as Italy, was: "desire to follow role models" (Birley and Westhead, 1994).

Most trades in Thailand were believed to be monopolised by either the Thai nobility or the Chinese (Nana, 2004). Entrepreneurship among the Thai people of Mon descent is scarce. There is one empirical study regarding different ethnic groups and entrepreneurship in rural Thailand, and the study found that being Thai people of Chinese descent is not a factor to lead one to start up a new business. Rather, anyone with risk-taking propensity and a positive attitude towards entrepreneurs can induce the person to own a business (Rurkwararuk, 2010b).

The Thai People of Mon Descent and their Entrepreneurial Mindset

Most of the Thai people of Mon descent in Thailand have been farmers or government officials. There were some that produce bricks or pottery for sale (Ocharoen, 2009, p. 14). Additional examples are plant pot making in Koh Kret and shop-keepers in Samut Sakorn mentioned above. Otherwise, detailed information regarding the entrepreneurial endeavour or mindset is not found.

The closest information about entrepreneurial attitudes or mindset existing in Thailand's literature was from a PhD thesis (Rurkwararuk, 2010a). The study found that the most important reasons for start-ups among ethnic groups in Thailand were (1) need more income and (2) want to be one's own boss and be independent. The most frequently identified reason for "not" starting a business was "lack of capital". A high percentage of owners acquired help from those in their heritage group, especially from parents in terms of the initial investment for the business start-ups. Parents of owners tended to be more "in business", either small or micro, and tended to have lower education than parents of the non-owners. The owners of small businesses were significantly more "pro-business" but having more "risk-taking propensity" than the others. However, Thai people of Chinese descent are not more inclined to start up a business than others. This challenges the old belief that Chinese descendants have a higher propensity to run a business. This suggests that anybody with a "pro-business" while less "risk averse" attitude (disregarding their ethnic heritage) will have a higher propensity to start a business

(Rurkwararuk, 2010a).

Yet, according to Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions mentioned above, it is possible to propose that the Thai People of Mon descent might be:

- high in Power Distance (PDI), as they seem to accept and expect that power is distributed unequally within their society;

- low in Individualism (IDV), as they seem to avoid standing out, but tend to expect their relatives or members of a particular in-group to look after them and seek agreement before any decision or act;

- low in Masculinity (MAS), as they seem to be less assertive or seek for material reward for success; they seem to prefer cooperation, modesty, and quality of life;

- high in Uncertainty Avoidance (UAI), as they seem to feel uncomfortable with uncertainty and ambiguity, and might not be ready to accept different behaviour or ready to take risks; and

- medium in Long-term Orientation (LTO), as they seem to both exhibit great respect for traditions and believe that truth depends very much on the situation, context and time: and they show an ability to save and invest, but might not have strong perseverance in achieving results.

Additionally, according to entrepreneurship theory and related research mentioned above, it is possible to propose that the Thai People of Mon descent might:

- have some incentives or motivations to become an entrepreneur or to start a business if they want to: make money (profit); being their own boss (Independence); escape a bad situation (freedom); enjoying a satisfying life (personal satisfaction); and contribute to the



community (personal fulfilment);

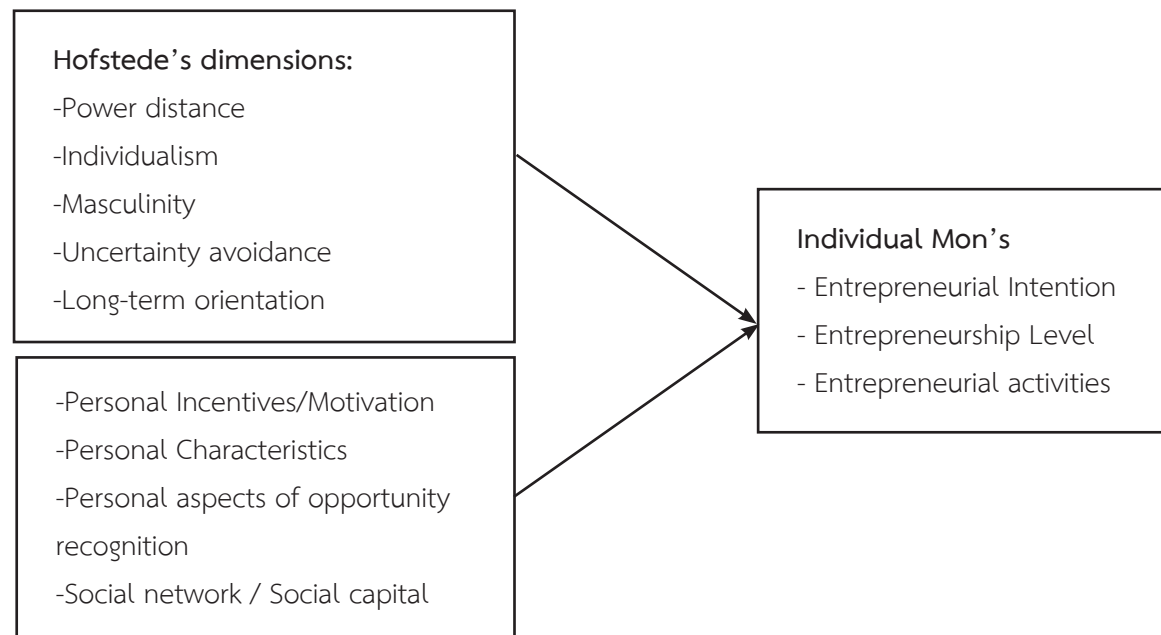
- not have those specific characteristics that are often found in entrepreneurs: for instance, opportunity orientation; internal locus of control; and calculated risk taking;

- not always have additional aspects of opportunity recognition among entrepreneurs, such as: prior experience, cognitive factors,

social networks, and personal creativity;

- have ethnic communities and social networks, as well as high social capital and strong ties within ethnic community that can help reduce economic risks while increase acceptance and patronage.

Thus, it is possible to create a conceptual framework, as follows:



Picture No. 1 Conceptual Framework

Methods

A group of researchers (Kampuansai, et al., 2016) studied and compared the maternal genetic ancestry (mtDNA) data of the Thai people of Mon descent in Thailand. They found that the Thai people of Mon descent in Lopburi did not show the shared haplotype with the Thai people of Mon descent in Lamphun, indicating genetic heterogeneity between them. While the northern Thai people of Mon descent have been clustered with their linguistically related groups who speak Austro-asiatic languages like the Thai people of Mon descent in the central area, the Thai people of Mon descent in Lamphun

showed genetic affinity to the Kra-Dai speaking groups of the northern Thai (the Yuan and Lue-speaking groups, who are their neighbours in northern Thailand), and thus supported the genetic exchange among them. However, this study relied only on sequences from only the HVR-I region of the mtDNA. Other mtDNA from the rest of the mtDNA genome and the Y chromosomal variations from the paternal side are yet to be explored (but not in this study).

The present study of the author of this paper explored and compared the social dimension of the attitudes of the Thai people of Mon descent in Lopburi and the Thai people of Mon descent in Lumphun. The Thai people

of Mon descent in Lopburi, living in central Thailand, is chosen to represent Mon who are related more to the Austro-asiatic groups, while the Thai people of Mon descent in Lumphun from the north of Thailand is chosen to represent Mon who are related more to the Kra-Dai groups.

Methods of conducting the study, are as follows.

(1) In-depth interviews were used for individual persons, both those who are investing in or operating businesses and those who do not invest in or operate a business, in Lamphun and Lopburi. There are 15 entrepreneurs and 15 non-entrepreneurs, totalling 30 participants in each province from 2 Mon villages, namely (1) Ban Khan Mak, Bang Khan Mak, Muang, in Lop Buri Province and (2) Ban Nong Du, Ban Ruean, Pa Sang, in Lamphun Province. The researcher received participations from a total of 60 key informants.

The informants were selected by Purposive Sampling and were those Thai people of Mon descent who were ready to disclose relevant information at will.

Key informants have been selected according to the following criteria:

1) They must have either or both of their parents who defined themselves as being “Thai of Mon descent”

2) They must be at least 20 years old, and if they are more than 60 years old they must be accompanied by a caretaker and agreed upon to participate by their care-takers or children or relative who are also of at least 20 years old, according to the legal provisions of the University with which the author is affiliated.

3) They must be citizens of the 2 towns or used to live there long enough, to know the town and its people, or might have been migrating to other towns to work but still have some connection with the Mon community of the said areas.

Apart from in-depth interview method, the author also participated in the following:

(2) Participating Observation:

1) taking part in the parade of Tak Baat Nam-Pueng (giving alms as honey) of the Mon society in Lamphun;

2) participating in the ceremony of Tam Boon Klang Baan (chanting and offering food to monks in the middle of a Mon village in Lamphun);

3) interacting with the people through buying and tasting food and desserts in the Talaad Nad Mon (open Market organized once a month before the Covid incidence) in a Mon village in Lopburi;

4) donating to help build a new and decorated high seat for monks to preach in Mon village in Lamphun (and to be in the ceremony after Covid ends);

5) donating to repair the road to the temple crematorium in Mon village in Lopburi.

(3) Non-participating Observation: being a member in a Line group called “Yuwachon Raman Group” (Mon Youth Group, where Thai people of Mon descent of both Lopburi and Lamphun provinces and others around Thailand participate).

Questionnaire interviews as quantitative data collection is not appropriate in this study because there will be less than 400 people able to participate by writing or ticking the questionnaire. Additionally, the study would need to gain insight in the informants’ mind



and their life in real settings, thus the in-depth interview is a preferred method of collecting data (Chantavanich, 2012), supplemented by the other 5 observations mentioned above.

The researcher started collecting the data in the field since September 2019 but then had to stop due to the COVID 19 pandemic. The research therefore had to be done via a range of media interviews, such as telephone and Line, both face-to-face (Video Calls) and non-face-to-face, depending on the informants' choices. There are community representatives such as the village headmen, the senior teachers and or the deputy abbot who are the Mon culture committee of the 2 villages acting as an intermediary to those key informants. The data collection was completed in June 2020.

Main questions used in the interview, according to Literature Review above:

1. Does coexistence in society with Thai people of other ethnic groups affect your attitudes, opinions and directions in your occupation or running your own business or not, how and why?

2. Do traditions, beliefs, religion, culture, spirit- or ancestor-worship affect your attitudes, opinions and directions in your occupation or running your own business or not, how and why?

Subsequent questions used in the interview may include, but are not restricted to, the following:

3. Did you need a loan for your business or just your own/family savings? Why and why not?

4. Any risks involved in borrowing?

5. Do you perceive any risks in running your business? Do you perceive any future risks

if you aim to start a business of your own?

To protect the privacy of the informants, the researcher reordered the contributors' list by considering the level of business risks, from the largest size, or the highest investment, or the riskiest down to the lowest. And enter the code for that person with the following details:

In Lamphun Province, informants who are obviously doing business are assigned their identity code as A01-A15, while other people who do other jobs yet there may be little trading in their lives to being employed or self-employed, are assigned as codes A16-A30. Same patterns are assigned to people in Lopburi Province. Informants who are obviously doing business will get identity code as B01-B15, people who do other jobs, code B16-B30. The list of the key informants in the full names can be inquired from the researcher.

Analysis of Data

Data from key informants was analysed by performing a "content analysis" by:

1. Word count: which words they mentioned often, what percentage of the word was used among the informants;

2. Partial data triangulation:

- 2.1 Location Triangulation: to find comparative information between informants in Lamphun and Lopburi Provinces;

- 2.2 Person Triangulation: to find comparative information between Thai people of Mon descent who do similar jobs, such as construction contractor compared with construction contractor, shop keeper compared to shop keeper, etc. This is to see whether the information will be the same or different among people of similar careers

between the two provinces.

However, the researcher could not do the Investigator Triangulation, because the researcher is only one person. And the researcher was unable to do the Methodological Triangulation because this study used in-depth interview questioning, only one method, a triangulation on different ways of how to collect information is thus not possible (Chantavanich, 2012, pp. 129-130).

As for the qualitative research method, it can be concluded that the target group's "truth" and the "truth" in the researcher's mind may not match, and can make the research incomplete, the development not successful (Noppakesorn, 2012). This study of Entrepreneurship of the Thai people of Mon descent should be classified as applied research and should be under applied sociology, psychology and anthropology, with economics theme focusing on a self-reliant economy in a minority society, in the midst

of free trade competition in large society (Noppakesorn, 2012, p. 52).

Results

The overview of information of the key informants in the provinces of Lamphun and Lopburi are: male and female are approximately of equal numbers from Lamphun, but more of female participants in Lopburi; age 34-76 (those who are over 60 would have to be agreed by their adult children or care-takers); mostly married with 1-3 children; and their education is from Grade 4 to Graduate Degree, with average of High School (Grade 12). The occupations of them vary, from small business owners to employees and labourers, as briefly exemplified in Table No. 1. All those interviewed who are entrepreneurs can be classified as "small business" group, according to Size Definition of the Department of Business Development of Thailand.

Table No. 1 Examples of Interviewee's data (Lamphun Province: A, and Lopburi Province: B) sorted by type, size and risk level of the businesses and duties performed.

Interviewee's ID *	Occupation	Interviewee's ID *	Occupation
A1	Construction Contractor	A16	car mechanic,
A2	General construction contractor + Member of the Subdistrict Administrative Organization (Or Bor Tor)	A17	Produce home-made Kanom Chin (rice noodle)
A3	wood furniture factory + Member of the Subdistrict Administrative Organization (Or Bor Tor)	A18	Making Khao Khuab (or Khao Kreab Wow, or thin rice crack-er)



Table No. 1 (Continued)

Interviewee's ID *	Occupation	Interviewee's ID *	Occupation
A4	stainless steel welder + Village Headman	A19	Independent trade
B1	car garage	B16	Desserts producing and selling, employee (company)
B2	Mini-bus owner (Song Taew)	B17	Made OTOP products for sale
B3	Contractors of wrought iron + Member of the SAO	B18	Spokesperson for the temple fair
B4	Contractors of wrought iron, mosquito net, roof frame + assistant village headman	B19	Early retiree, housewife, selling lemons + Assistant village head

Source: The researcher's fieldwork

* This interviewee code is to protect the privacy rights of the interviewee. This was not in the chronological order of the interview. They are sorted by type of business and work performed.

From the information obtained from the key informants, the researcher performed the content analysis to find the common variables and hidden concepts as shown in the Conceptual Framework above, as follows:

The factors that influence Thai people of Mon descent to operate a business, compared with those who do not

The author will explain the results according to main variables previously presented in the Literature above:

Cultural Dimensions according to Hofstede

1. Power Distance

None of the interviews have shown that Thai people of Mon descent have had such concerns about Power Distance in their lives, or in doing business. They tend to accept differences in status. From interviews and observations, they respect monks, ancestors,

elders, teachers and village heads. They tend to be ready to serve those of higher rank. This means that Thai people of Mon descent should have a high level of Power Distance.

2. Individualism

From interviews and observations, Thai people of Mon descent of both provinces rarely show a desire to be distinguished from others. But it appears to be the opposite side, that is, they prefer to live and work in a cluster or team (Collectivism). They tend to be co-operative with one another, consultative, participate in village's activities. However, it is noted that those who have entrepreneurial careers seem to be more pro-active and independent than those who are not, and seem to avoid those group activities if they could. This means that Thai people of Mon descent should have a low level of Individualism, or a high level of Collectivism.

3. Masculinity

From interviews and observations, Thai people of Mon descent do not show to have a high level of competitiveness or want to show the world that they are successful or victorious. Everything in their lives is smooth and self-sufficient. “Need for Achievement” is moderate among them. However, it is noted that Thai people of Mon descent in Lopburi Province seem to have more haste and determination (active) in carrying out various activities than in Lamphun Province. In contrast, Thai people of Mon descent in Lamphun Province seem to be calm and able to wait for the right time. Overall, Thai people of Mon descent should have a low level of Masculinity, or a high level of Femininity.

4. Uncertainty avoidance & Risk Perception

From interviews and observations, Thai people of Mon descent do not fear the risk or uncertainty. But they are not recklessly daring to take risks. They would accumulate skills and expertise, and wait for sufficient accumulated funds to leave their previous jobs to start their own business. This does not result in a large investment in any way. They gradually collect small equipment or items, or gradually buy more tools, and or gradually expand their businesses. Besides, most of them use their own accumulated capital, or of their parents’ savings. They rarely borrowed from financial institutions or informal loan sources. Thus, there is no problem of having to find money to pay interest or pay back the principal soon. Therefore, there was minor concern of financial risks.

There is only one informant that pointed out his concern for his business risk:

“... But this (stainless fixture for door, fence, railing, porch) welding work has some risks because we are contractors ... sometimes collecting money is difficult, and we get paid very late ...” (Interviewee A04, Welder, May 2020, Lamphun)

In addition, those who continue on their family businesses do so without making much decision of taking risk or not. Overall, Thai people of Mon descent should have medium Uncertainty Avoidance level.

5. Long-term orientation

From interviews and observations, Thai people of Mon descent tend to consider the future of being Mon rather than their personal development. They do not aim to do their own activities or their businesses to acquire wealth in the short term. They seem to be ready to leave their own work, share their time for social work, to continue their being Mon and being united. As similarly discussed in the Individualism part above, it can be noted that those who have entrepreneurial careers seem to avoid those group activities if they could. Furthermore, these entrepreneurs tend to be more adaptive to change, and can manage their saving and investing than those who are not. Thus, this seems to show that Thai people of Mon descent who are entrepreneurs seem to have higher Long-term Orientation than others.

According to the Literature Review, the following 4 main personal variables can be explained from the data collected:

1. Personal Incentives/Motivation

From interviews and observations, some of the Thai people of Mon descent who are in businesses tend to have had a unique opportunity that others do not have. An



example is a candle maker in Lamphun:

“... making these candles originated from Mon traditions ... there must be a spell, a “ta-krud” (a part made of cloth thread or metal in the wick), and the wick has to be scribed in Northern alphabets ... We send them to be sold in Chiang Mai ...” (Interviewee A07, Candle Maker, September 2019, Lamphun)

Some of them have had some special needs to have to turn to business endeavours, such as taking care of their loved ones or they themselves had some accident and cannot work normally:

“... if you work elsewhere you won’t be able to take care of your parents ... But in coming back to sell things at home, I can also take care of my parents. But this year, my parents are all gone ... and because there are not many grocers around here, so I took over this business from my uncle (the house next to this house) who used to sell things, but had stopped, (Interviewee A09, *Shopkeeper*, November 2019, Lamphun)

“... I graduated in Accounting, but at that time we had some difficulties at home ... my mother was very ill and then my brother became very sick, so I could not go to work elsewhere. I have to stay at home to take care of both of them (meaning ... necessity forced me to be an entrepreneur)” (Interviewee A12, *Shopkeeper*, June 2020, Lamphun)

“... I had an accident and one hand and a leg became half paralyzed ... therefore, I had to do light work instead (selling freshly brewed coffee) ...” (Interviewee A13, *Café*, September 2019, Lamphun)

“... I used to work in another province and I missed home, and even when I wanted to come and visit, or someone got sick, I still

could not come ... Working at home now (making bottled young coconut juice for sale) solves this problem well ...” (Interviewee B16, *Desserts & Coconut Drink*, January 2020, Lopburi)

It can be noted that shopkeepers, in particular, would choose their professions as grocery shop owners due to a necessity to stay home to care for their loved ones. This occurs across informants in the same profession, thus a Person Triangulation.

Some of them aimed for a monetary gain, and some of them mentioned a need for Money to make them turned to business:

“... In the past, I worked for an accounting company, but the income was not sufficient. When I tried to sell things, I saw a lot more money, so I gradually quit and become an entrepreneur, selling clothes in a bazaar ...” (Interviewee B09, *Clothes Retail*, May 2020, Lopburi)

2. Personal Characteristics

Prior Experience, especially in other businesses or as an unsatisfied employee, can make one turn to entrepreneurship:

“... used to do stainless work / galvanized iron roof / aluminium work / air duct ... in a metal-work factory in Chiang Mai ... when I had enough savings and enough experience and skills, I split off to found my own workshop ...” (Interviewee A04, *Welder*, May 2020, Lamphun)

“... I had learnt how to do stainless joining (rain gutter) from Chiang Mai ... as an employee to a Chinese-Thai employer ... went to do it as an apprentice at the age of 12 and opened my own shop at the age of 26 ...” (Interviewee A05, *Welder*, May 2020, Lamphun)

“... I went to train after leaving the

school. I went to the garage (the way they called it “garage”, where the wrought iron was made). Then I left the place to do it by myself ... Technicians often co-operate and send work to one another, for example, if we get a construction job, when it is woodworking, cementing, we will pass it on to them ... so we just help one another reciprocally ...” (Interviewee B03, Welder, May 2020, Lopburi)

“... My husband used to be a subordinate in a factory that made wrought iron / mosquito net / roof frame before, so we saved money to do them ourselves, and borrowed some money to be used to pay the employees ...” (Interviewee B04, Welder, January 2020, Lopburi)

It can be noted that welders, in particular, would choose their professions due to prior experience. This occurs across informants in the same profession, thus a Person Triangulation, and across 2 provinces, thus a Location Triangulation.

Former employees turned themselves into business owners, due to prior experience gained, and thus feel comfortable with doing business similar to their former bosses:

“.. I was a worker attaching film to car windows in an auto accessories shop owned by a Chinese-Thai man. Being trained at that shop since the age of 18-19, now I have expertise and have enough savings ... so I separated to do it by myself ... at home” (Interviewee B05, Car Film, May 2020 in Lopburi)

Former employees turned themselves into business owners, due to prior experience gained and their personal characteristics, and thus feel comfortable with doing business:

“... My father used to be a carpenter (“Sla”), so I continued to do the work as

the customers’ orders ... most of them were westerners, the prices were very good ... and I like designing ... it’s my nature ...” (Interviewee A03, Furniture Factory, November 2019, Lamphun)

“... just make a dessert that uses young coconut to make the filling ... and there is a lot of young coconut juice left-over every day ... don’t want to throw it away ... try bringing it to the boil. The response is good, therefore the bottled pasteurized young coconut water has been originated ... we have been asking for FDA approval (Or. Yor.) ... plus, I used to be a mechanic in the garage myself, so I have experience in estimating car repair costs. So I know how to calculate various cost accounts ..., therefore, driving around, selling and delivering bottled coconut water to nearby provinces without worrying because I can repair the car by myself at any time ...” (Interviewee B07, Bottled Coconut Drink, May 2020, Lopburi).

3. Personal aspects of opportunity recognition

From interviews and observations, some of the Thai people of Mon descent from both provinces saw the chance of bringing the Mon culture and traditions to a real career or a supplementary profession. Examples are: operating a small business such as making a shoulder cloth, Sabai, for women who have to dress like Mon in traditional activities that require them to march in a traditional parade and/or to wear Mon hairdressing and ornaments.

“... I finished my vocational certificate in home economics / sweets / sewing / handicrafts ... and following my mother, in selling Thai desserts (Khanom Bua, sesame



pudding, etc.) and Mon dessert (soft Kreab). I also make traditional Mon Sabai cloth for sale, as a supplementary career ... If there is a community event, the Mon will order a large number of Sabai shoulder cloths at a time ... such as 100 pieces ... sometimes, the Vice Abbot suggested the pattern and then I adjusted it to make it a unique Sabai shoulder cloth of the Bang Khan Maak Mon group ...” (Interviewee B13, Desserts & Sabai, May 2020, Lopburi)

Some business owners mentioned the opportunities they have experienced in their lives which led to the choice of the entrepreneurial path:

“... just a partner of a friend “I am not good at things by myself,” but I have talented friends ... so we do small contracting ... my friend has an engineering degree and I did marketing. Though we needed huge capital, we didn’t borrow at all because my mother had enough!!! ...” (Interviewee A01, Contractor, May 2020, Lamphun)

“... just a self-employed individual ... used to operate a mini-bus to deliver workers to construction sites ... when workers were absent, they called me to help as a substitute and since then I saw the opportunity, and I started contracting myself ...” (Interviewee A02, Contractor, May 2020, Lamphun)

“... used to be a company employee, but resigned because I wanted to have a business of my own ... my brother was selling groceries, and had not enough bottled water for sale ... so we decided to do it by ourselves (Bottled water) ...” (Interviewee B06, Bottled Water, May 2020, Lopburi)

4. Social network / Social capital

From interviews and observations, some

of the Thai people of Mon descent from both provinces have been shown to have had their social networking, social capital, or connections to provide them access to Information, skills, and capital for business start-ups or investment.

Coexistence with other Thai people of other descents does not affect the way of life in any way, and sometimes the informants are able to exchange knowledge with them and learn from those people’s careers. This knowledge and skills can be further developed by these people into their own professions. Some Thai people of Mon descent have brought some styles of business operations of Chinese employers to operate their own businesses when they return to their Mon community, such as car garage workers and stainless-steel railing, as already mentioned in previous section.

Others have utilized their social networking to advance their business career:

“... My husband, (who has passed) used to be a mechanic in a garage in Bangkok ... wanted to open a garage of his own ... and some Mon relatives invited us to stay in Saraburi (adjacent province) because it is an industrial city, thus many customers ... and relatives helped us with money ...” (Interviewee B01, Garage, May 2020, Lopburi)

Reasons that make one a non-entrepreneur

The key variables seem to be driving the Thai people of Mon descent to not operate a business or be an entrepreneur or own a business were: personal restrictions, such as a need for personal care or a lack of funds (lack of capital), as well as a negative perception on risk. These variables are explained as follows:

Personal restrictions

“... must take care of my disabled child, and also my parents are very old ... and thus, accepting ‘trivial jobs’ like this (making sweets for sale, continuing from mom’s career, and ironing clothes from factory) to sustain life is ‘just enough’ ...” (Interviewee A15, Desserts & Ironing, November 2019, Lamphun)

“... I graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Management, but came out to take care of my parents who are old... and now additionally to take care of an aunt who is ill in bed ... I used to make some desserts (Piek Poon and Khanom Chan) and a Mon dessert, but had to stop ... everyone else in the family sent money to me to take care of these adults ... But I have participated in some activities to help the Mon community occasionally ...” (Interviewee B28, Housewife, June 2020 in Lopburi)

No funds (Lack of Capital)

“... When I was young, I was an unruly child, and did not want to go to school ... but attended the garage apprenticeship ... I have really wanted to run my own business ... I do have enough skill, but there is still no funding... and the documents and all for a bank loan are not ready, therefore I cannot request a loan ...” (Interviewee A16, Garage Worker, May 2020, Lamphun)

“... My sister (with a longan garden) opened a mini-grocery store and I help her. But we do not have sufficient funds to be able to expand our business, so we take in sewing work. ... Stay “sufficiently” according to King Rama IX ...” (Interviewee A23, Sewing, May 2020, Lamphun)

Negative Perception on Risk

“... Parents sent us to study. They preferred us to work in government service.

Although trade is viewed as not difficult, it was risky. We did not have a car and driving a motorcycle to buy things from the city to be sold at the shop was dangerous, as accidents can occur en route ...” (Interviewee A27, Governmental Employee, May 2020, Lamphun)

“... I don’t think of trading at all, because I felt insecure and that it was risky. As seen from the aunt and mom, the merchant will not be able to know what the daily income will be, it depends on chance ...” (Interviewee B23, Governmental Employee, May 2020, Lopburi)

It can be noted that employees, in particular, would choose their professions due to a reason to avoid their kinds of risks. This occurs across informants in the same profession, thus again is a Person Triangulation.

For the concept of variables in Entrepreneurship, the findings can be separated into 3 main points, as follows:

1. Level of intention to do business (Individual’s Entrepreneurial Intention of the Thai people of Mon descent)

For those who are not entrepreneurs, as of the date of the field interview, many of them are inconvenient to do business or trade because they do not have capital, or have a respectable profession, and have already sufficient income. People said if there is a chance in the future or they retire, they may start doing some kind of business. Their business can be especially products related to Mon, such as Sabai shoulder cloth, Mon food, or activities related to tourism in the Mon community. Only one case in Lamphun mentioned about opening a construction material shop, as her husband’s employer.



2. Entrepreneurship Level (Individual's Entrepreneurship Level of the Thai people of Mon descent)

For those who are already entrepreneurs, it was found that Thai people of Mon descent live a simple life. They seem to be content and do not rush to get rich. They diligently carry on with their businesses and are ready to allocate time to help with social work and community cultural activities. The level of their entrepreneurial activities varies, depending on their profession. Some, such as construction businesses, require a huge amount of investment and risk. Others, such as groceries, require just the necessary endeavour.

3. Entrepreneurial Activities (Individual's Entrepreneurial activities of the Thai people of Mon descent)

The researcher noticed that Thai people of Mon descent can trade, can find suppliers, and do have business networking. However, with their simple and kind character, it is often found that they are not strict in cost accounting, or do not charge high prices in any way. It seems that everyone is willing to sell things for a low price and charge their own labour in sewing and embroidery at a very low rate. This is just to have enough to eat, and yet enough to share with others in order for them to have a product or service at an affordable price.

Conclusion and Discussion

From interviews with informants in Lamphun and Lopburi provinces, either those people are entrepreneurs already, or are entrepreneurs-to-be or those who will not, the author can summarize the findings according to main variables, according to the Research

Objectives as follows:

The factors that influence Thai people of Mon descent to operate a business, compared with those who do not

1. Cultural Dimensions of Hofstede

1) Power Distance

Thai people of Mon descent in general tend to have high levels of Power Distance. This is true to both business people and non-business people alike. Yet, according to scholars (Hofstede, 2001; McGrath and MacMillan, 2000), people with a lower Power Distance level will be inclined to be entrepreneurs if all the factors concerned are ready. The result of this study is contradictory to the past literature, as both entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurs have high Power Distance. Thus, there must be some other factors leading Thai people of Mon descent to become entrepreneurs.

2) Individualism

Thai people of Mon descent in general tend to have a low level of Individualism, or a high level of Collectivism. However, it is noted that those who have entrepreneurial careers seem to be more proactive and more independent than those who are not entrepreneurs, and seem to avoid those group activities if they could. Thus, all this merits the literature that entrepreneurs seem to have a higher Individualism level than others (Trosby, 2001; Lee and Peterson, 2000).

3) Masculinity

Thai people of Mon descent in general tend to have a low level of Masculinity, or a high level of Femininity. Thus, it is likely that they are not prone to be entrepreneur, according to Lee and Peterson (2000).

However, it is noted that Thai people of Mon descent in Lopburi Province seem to have more determination (active) in carrying out various activities than those in Lamphun Province. This may be because the informants of Bang Khan Mak village is in the city of Lopburi and is closer to Bangkok. They may, therefore, be influenced by the need to be competitive and they have a greater sense of perseverance. In contrast, informants in Lamphun Province seem to be calm and are able to wait for the right time. This may be due to the peaceful nature of their village which is far from the big cities of Lamphun and Chiang Mai, and they have been familiar with waiting for produce such as longan. Thus, it is contradictory to the findings of Lee and Peterson (2000). Therefore, the Masculinity level is **not** as influential as other factors on entrepreneurial thinking yet it influences the need to be competitive and it leads to a greater sense of perseverance.

4) Uncertainty avoidance & Risk Perception

Thai people of Mon descent in general tend to have medium Uncertainty Avoidance level. However, those who are in entrepreneurial careers show less Uncertainty Avoidance level, or a higher risk-taking level in both provinces. This supports the findings in the literature that entrepreneurs seem to have a lower Uncertainty Avoidance level and view risks more positively than others (Lee and Peterson, 2000). In addition, those who continue with their family businesses, do so without much consideration of risks. This seems to be congruent with the suggestion of the concept of “family business bias” when entrepreneurs would display lower risk-avoidance than others (Fang, et al, 2019).

5) Long-term orientation

Thai people of Mon descent who are entrepreneurs seem to have higher Long-term Orientation than others. They can save, invest, and wait for outcomes. Those who are not, however, are less likely to be able to accept deviance from norms and traditions. Thus, this seems to support the findings in the literature that entrepreneurs seem to have higher Long-term orientation than others (Hofstede, 2001).

2. Personal Variables

1) Personal Incentives/Motivation

Thai people of Mon descent who are in business tend to have unique opportunities, some special needs, such as taking care of loved ones or they had accidents and cannot work normally. Some of them aim for monetary gain and the Need for Money made them turn to become entrepreneurs. These are congruent to the findings of Rurkwararuk (2010a).

2) Personal Characteristics

Prior Experience, especially in other businesses or as an unsatisfied employee, can make one turn to a business career. This supports the literature in that prior experience helps create confidence in what one will do (Barringer and Ireland, 2012; Baron and Shane, 2008; Shane, 2003).

3) Personal aspects of opportunity recognition

Some of the Thai people of Mon descent from both provinces saw the chance of bringing their culture, traditions, and the “being Mon” to a real career or a supplementary profession, including making a shoulder cloth, Sabai, for women in traditional activities. Some business owners mentioned the opportunities



they have experienced in their lives which led to the choice to become entrepreneurs. This is in line with Caulkins and Peters (2002) who said that social networks help foster opportunity recognition and development, as well as help gain experience through human capital (Ardichvili, Cardozo and Ray, 2003; Westhead, Ucbasaran and Wright, 2004; Sangkamanee, 2010; Achidi-Ndofo and Priem, 2011). It is also congruent to the claim that those who do have an entrepreneurial base can invest or start their businesses more comfortably than those who do not (Dunn and Holtz-Eakin, 2000).

4) Social network / Social capital

Some of the Thai people of Mon descent from both provinces had their social networking, social capital, or connections to give them access to information, skills, and capital for business start-ups or investment. This is consistent with former studies suggesting that social networks help one to get access to information and create confidence in what one is doing (Barringer and Ireland, 2012; Baron and Shane, 2008; Shane, 2003). This is also supportive to a study proposing that social networking helps ethnic entrepreneurs survive (Ma, et al., 2013).

Coexistence with other Thai people of other descents enabled Thai people of Mon descent to learn from their professions and turn them to their own advantage. They also have utilized their network to advance their business career. This is agreeable with assimilation concepts proposed by several Thai Studies scholars (Ocharoen, 2009; BanChoon, 2010a).

3. Reasons that make ones non-entrepreneur

Key variables seem to be driving some Thai people of Mon descent not to operate a business or be an entrepreneur or own a business were: personal restrictions, such as need for personal care or lack of funds (lack of capital), as well as negative perception on risk. Yet, the need to care for loved ones can lead to both entrepreneur and non-entrepreneurial choices. Thus, it is not a key affective factor.

There is only one person in Lampun who stated that “being a governmental officer can make parents very proud, and can provide for medical aid”. This is congruent with, but not completely, to the original information where people believe that Mon prefer agricultural work, making clay pottery, or government service”. (Foster, 1982; Ocharoen, 1998; Fine Arts Department, 2013).

Recommendations

The Application of Acquired Knowledge to Encourage Thai People of Mon Descent to Operate a Business: Policy Recommendations

1. Strengths of Thai People of Mon Descent, Based on Hofstede's Concepts

1) High levels of Collectivism among the Thai of Mon descent, though does not induce a person to become an entrepreneur, can lead to a collective endeavour such as “social enterprise group”. Government can support this by creating group of self-sufficient village business activities.

2) High levels of Femininity among the Thai people of Mon descent, though does not induce a person to become an entrepreneur, can lead to a soft skill of compromising nature. This can help support that “social enterprise group” mentioned

above to survive with fewer conflicts and competition among members.

3) Encourage Thai people of Mon descent to be in a profession that they have previously been in, either from their employers or their parents. This includes Mon food and dessert making, culturally-related manufacturings such as candles, Sabai cloth and Mon dresses, mechanics, construction, welding, and even hotels and tourism related to Mon cultural traditions and activities.

2. Policy Recommendations

1) For Governmental Institutions to Increase the Capacity of Thai People of Mon Descent:

- Local government agencies should provide an institute for excellence in providing information and budgets for skills training to promote the investment of the city (town's institute for best practice).

- Build a network of entrepreneurs or investors in the province to join each other and encourage activities and consolidation among entrepreneurs in the same industry or with related networks (supply-chain business owner network) no matter they are Thai of Mon

descent or other descent or ethnicity.

- Provide an environment for international investment, whether it is professional skills training for workers, or a source of money for investment convenient for access (the availability of venture capital, special bank-loans, etc.).

2) For Enhancing Entrepreneurship Skills

- Encourage risk-taking propensity, by providing more of business training, short-courses on management, marketing, accounting, finance, and how to write a Business Plan in case they need to apply for bank loans, and how to start a new small business;

- Enhance the role in education to promote positive values and attitudes towards entrepreneurship by encouraging apprenticeship in factories and selling activities, while in schools, colleges or universities;

- Acquaint young people, or adults alike, to programs and games aiming towards adaptation to change, saving, investment, team building, leadership, creativity and innovativeness.

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