

# Participatory Budgeting: The Knowledge Premises and the Application to Thai Local Governance

*Walaiporn Chinnasri*

Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Mahidol University, Thailand

E-mail: walai11@hotmail.com

*Somsak Amornsiriphong*

Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Mahidol University, Thailand

E-mail: somsak.amo@mahidol.ac.th

## Abstract

The objectives of this research were, to Meta-synthesize the knowledge premises of the participatory budgeting; to investigate elements reinforcing the success of people participation same, and thirdly to recommend approaches appropriating the concept of the participatory budgeting to be implemented in organizing the Thai local governance. A qualitative method was applied to synthesize research works, methodologies, theories, data and field work from five local government organizations. Interviews were also conducted with the central administration personnel the local government specialists and 32 key informants, three focus groups and non-participatory observations. The results revealed the knowledge premises of the participatory budgeting originated in Brazil - a concept offering opportunities for people to participate in decision-making and spending monetary resources. Secondly, the elements reinforcing the success of people participation were the geographic contexts, attributes of people, opportunities offered by laws, the local leaders, common ownership creation, auditability, good governance approach, public relations, information provisions, trust of people, confidence and faith in the management of the local government organization, gaining utilities, responsive to problems, having diverse stages and channels to access information and the vigor of the civil sector. Thirdly, the approaches in appropriating the concept of participatory budgeting to be implemented in organizing the Thai local government involve, the government enacting either laws or rules or ministerial announcements, the local government organizations should orchestrate facilities and monitor ways to welcome people participation, the civil sector has to be enthusiastic, tax money should be spent with efficiency, the NGOs mediate between the local government and the people, and finally, the civil societies (CSOs) should avail opportunities to create networks both from social and political supporters.

**Keywords:** Participatory Budgeting, Thai Local Governance

## Introduction

The problems from working of the local government organization are 1) there is different conceptualization between the concepts of being an organization with dependency or to what extent it has been supervised; and 2) the structural problems of the local government organization which unclearly divides its duties between the top level and the low level. Its administrative system has been adjusted and needed relevancy. It is more inclined to bureaucratic and it is thus poor expedition. The problem of personnel such as unfair promotion; the local personnel cannot express their full latency. The problems of public service are mostly shortage of knowledge and experiences of leadership and so on. 3) Problems of factors promoting the system of the local government organization such as reform system, local financial system and the local latency. 4) There are problems from external factors, such as the bureaucratic sector in bureaucratic reform, reinforcing the CEO

systems, political public service reform regarding being interfered by politics at the international level. The government policy seems to focus directly on people and demanding it as the national agenda, such as educational policy, and health and so on. It includes the shortage of decentralization. 5) The problem of managing decentralization plans involves such as absence of unity to see all system before transferring, solving problems by scheduling, problem solving at the provincial level, too many agencies involved and other uncontrollable complicacy factors and so on (Office of the Parliamentary Secretary, 2014).

With problems above, it creates the questions of efficiency and the capacity of the local government organization in providing public services and worries about transparency of its internal administrative system. Therefore, there is steering for the local government reform through people involvement by offering them opportunities to monitor, check and co-operation with it. They are founded upon, 1) none knows the problems and needs development better than people who are the owners of the problems and area for operation. 2) Solving problems and development proposed by people are founded upon factual data, which leads to solving problems and development directly to the fact. 3) Budgetary spending meets restraint with saving and efficiency. 4) It is to strengthen to communities in self-organization. With such fundamental concepts above, the National Reform Council through the Local Government Reform Committee prioritized people involvement by proposing the way to solve the problems of people involvement with demanding the local government organizations disseminate knowledge to people without their request in order to make them active to the importance of their involvement (The National Reform Driving Force Commission, 2016).

Consequently, people involvement is the international principle accepted as important and necessary for the current democratic societies. The constitutional laws the sovereign rules of the country reflects the motive to clearly promote the people involvement including the government reform under the concept of the participatory governance and good governance and active to the importance of public participation. There are many laws to warranty their rights on participation and stipulating the public sector to offer participation of people as mentioned above especially for the local governance. Public participation is the core or the indispensable component and the local government is to offer opportunity for autonomy or to determine their own course of life and their community future by its people (Kokphol, 2008). Therefore public participation is essential beginning with having their representatives to be responsible for policymaking in both local and national levels. What is important to mention in this research is the public participation at the local level which should better prioritized than election but it also includes their participation in governance and the inspection of the performance of the local government organization targeted on its performance to directly respond to the need of people, speedily solving problems, creating transparency and being the method to strengthen their community, ownership of their community and promoting local democracy. Therefore, the local government needs to focus on promoting public participation in order to achieve the objectives of the birth of the local governance. That is to be the foundation of developing democracy itself.

Therefore, for promoting public participation and other agencies to provide public services in the local government organization, promoting inspection and balancing power which is to prevent centralization; the local government needs to facilitate supporting the roles of community and civil society to manage itself as much as it efforts. In order to be coherent with the vision admission of decentralization plan, strengthening within the local government organization; it is to support and to promote people to play the role in decision-making in many important activities especially activities related to livelihood, problems and needs of people. Such strengthening is necessary to relying on the tool in administrating the works of public sector through developing models and methods to strengthen the local government

organization by participatory budgeting. This concept is renowned and widespread in various countries worldwide. The participatory budgeting is another democratic innovation selected to be implemented in the public sector's operation to gain transparency in using resources and readiness of the agencies involves. It is based on direct democracy allowing people to participate in decision-making through budgeting system. It needs a lot of people to have opportunity to learn about the works of public sector. Playing such role, it offers people to voice and influence the decision-making in public interest. It affects the improvement of the works of public sector, reduces the patronage system, nepotism and corruption (Shah, 2007). Based on the discussion, three research questions were proposed: 1) What are the knowledge premises of the participatory budgeting? 2) What are the elements reinforcing the success of people participation in the participatory budgeting of the Thai local government organization? And, 3) what should be the approaches in implementing the concept of the participatory budgeting in the Thai local governance?

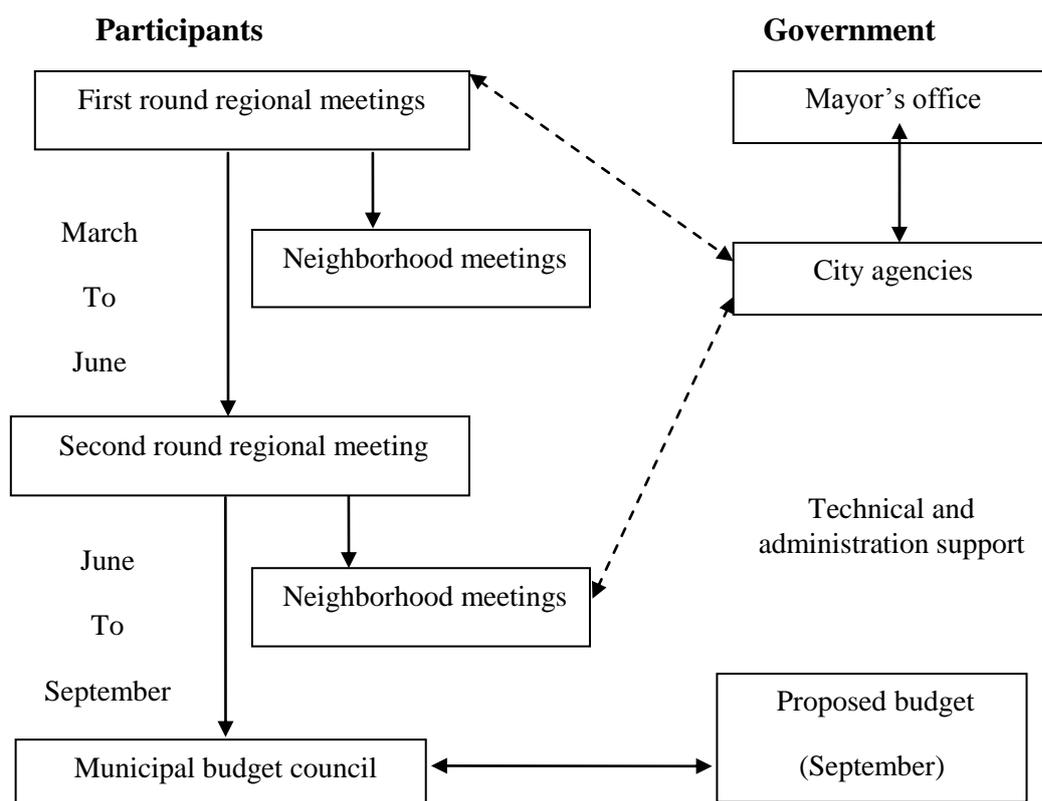
### **Literature Review**

Democracy is used in many countries for administration; people (citizens) play the important roles more than other forms of administration. The keys that will survive democracy many centuries are there are three main principles of check and balance, good governance and citizen empowerment.

In most developing countries; though using democracy but they cannot leverage people satisfaction towards their public sector's administration. In the past, the administration of public sectors still inappropriately distributes the scarce resources and is irresponsive to the problems and to the needs of people. In addition, the another problem of the developing countries is the inefficiency of tax collection which make income inadequate for self-reliance. In addition, it affects the weakness in organizing and delivering public services when the public sector administration is inefficient, ineffective and poor public services. They will affect people in all sectors especially the social disadvantageous groups who have no rights to voice their claims for the services from the public sector. Therefore, PB expresses the direct democracy through budgeting, which offers opportunity for most people to learn how the government works and it is the exchange of opinions, debates and persuasion of the public resource allocation. These are the tools to investigate the bond creation and the public empowerment while more strengthening good governance. In addition, the PB system also helps promote transparency and readiness for accountability, which will reduce inefficiency and monopoly of the clientelism, patronage system and corruption. PB still helps people to voice and influences decision-making in the matters of public utility and can improve the government performance and shares to thrive the participatory democracy (Shah, 2007).

Participatory Budgeting (PB) is a budgetary system begun in Brazil in 1989 in the municipality of Porto Alegre by the Labor Party, which the left party after Brazil has been under junta for 21 years. PB is a method for the return of the government and demonstrates the efficiency in the resource redistribution and transparency. The PB proposed by the Labor Party includes four principles, i.e. (1) direct public participation in the government decision-making process and supervision; (2) halting corruption through transparency of good governance and financing system; (3) improving infrastructures and public services especially helping the deprived groups; and (4) changing new political cultures and demanding citizens to serve democracy. For the past 20 years, PB has improved the Brazilian democratic quality, supervision and public empowerment. In addition, the tangible results of the other aspects in relations to PB in Brazil are more municipal expenses of the public health. The number of civic sector organizations (CSOs) is increased and the rate of infancy death is decreasing (Touchtone & Wampler. 2014).

From the Brazilian CSOs more working with their municipalities than other countries in South America, it is the popular and widespread budgetary administrative innovation worldwide. Porto Alegre is a high expensive standard and strong in the civic politics. At this cause, when the enforcement of Constitution in 1988 with the gist offers opportunity for people to participate in organizing the state activities (Sintomer et al., 2010); and the Labor Party wins and at that time it is found that municipality is almost bankruptcy because the errors of bureaucracy. Therefore, the new municipal executive board offers direct public participation in administrating finance with PB, too (Wampler, 2007). PB in Porto Alegre specifies procedures and important attributes of PB in many ways. First, around March to June, it is the time to provide information of policy, budget and election of representatives through conducting meeting the first round of regional representatives to report situations and issues before proposing PB. The state authorities prepare the indicators of quality of life, financial data and proposing projects for approval. The last part is Q&A, analysis on the regional resource uses. As of civil meeting is to propose technical data and details, financial analysis, project defense in details, municipal prioritization and preliminary selection of the projects and regional representative meeting. The second round is conducted during June to September. It is to draft preliminary budget of the projects to be proposed; disseminating information to each region; and trailing municipal budget. As of the second civil meeting, there will be authorities to closely work with the committee for technical planning to be proposed to the municipality (Wampler, 2000) as in the figure.



**Figure 1** Annual Participatory Budgeting Cycle  
Source: Wampler (2000)

It is found that the Brazilian PB has community councils to debate and prioritize of investment in every year. There is periodically regional representative meeting for negotiation about the details with the municipal authorities before submitting budget to the

municipal council for approval. The Brazilian PB innovation is renowned worldwide. As of today, it is seen that PB is applied in many countries around South America, Europe, Asia, North America, Africa and Middle East. Consequently, more than 1,500 cities worldwide apply PB (Baez & Hernandez, 2012), because PB shows direct democracy of budgeting proposed to public for learning how the government works. People express opinions, debate and influence the distribution of resources. PB is a tool to build bond and to empower public, to reinforce strength and to be the state with good governance, transparency and ready for admit guilty, to reduce inefficient working, full of patronage system and corruption (Shah, 2007).

In addition, the characteristics of Participatory Budgeting (PB) are to highly resilient adaptability worth for applying with the different geographical contexts. Applying PB is serving the needs of people, the government, NGOs and CSOs so that people can directly voice in budgetary distribution. The size of areas spending PB is from national level to the regional level. Organizations supporting PB begin from the Labor Party in Brazil to the NGOs at the international levels such as World Bank, Political Environment, Economy, and social affecting PB in reinforcing empowerment, decentralized decision-making and accountability. Therefore, it is found that PB is differed from the budgetary distribution standards decided by bureaucrat and politicians to conventionally organize the public resource distribution (Gilman, 2016).

Gilman (2016) mentions that PB can diversely be completed but relying on where and how it will be applied. However, PB is basically attributed as follows: (1) having information system: people are accessible even costs and impacts of the projects organized by the government; (2) community meeting: for the people to clarify the needs of local budget; (3) having budgetary representatives: some people register to directly debate with the state authorities and to propose budgetary draft; and (4) voting: a large group of people is empowered to choose which project can be invested.

## **Research Methodology**

A qualitative method was applied to synthesize research works, methodologies, theories, data and field work from five local government organizations. They were 1) the Provincial Administration Organization of Mae Hong Son Province, 2) the Muang Municipality of Khao Sam Yod, Lopburi Province, 3) the Tambol Municipality of Tambol Kho Kha, Lampang Province, 4) the Tambol Administration of Tambol Suan Mon, Khon Khaen Province, and 5) the Nakhon Municipality of Khon Khaen, Khon Khaen Province. The selection criteria of the local government organization are based on awards, i.e. the golden award from the King Phrajadhipok Institute and/or awards of good governance of the local government organization from the Office of the Prime Minister for at least three years and they are constructively steered by citizens. Interviews were also conducted with the central administration personnel the local government specialists and 32 key informants, three focus groups and non-participatory observations. Data collection from 19 August 2016 to 16 August 2017.

## **Participant and Data Collection**

The qualitative research consisted of: 1) Its data collection was Meta synthesis from 15 researches, theses, and dissertations of various universities and the e-database of Mahidol University, it was to synthesize PB knowledge. This research would lead to know how methods, processes and procedures of the participatory budgeting are useful to the budgetary governance of the local government organization (LGO) and other organizations which apply it. Also, it reveals what participatory budgeting factors affect the success and failures by practices. 2) The in-depth interview - this approach uses an interview format as a tool in its data collection. The informant contains open-ended questions to be conducted with 32 local key

informants who are the local administrators, the local council members, the permanent secretary of the local government organization and the Director of Finance Division, the personnel of the local government organization, Civil-citizen sector, private groups, scholars, the personnel of the Office of the Decentralization to the Local Government Organization Committee (ODLOC), the personnel from Department of Local Government Promotion. The randomized sample has declined the non-probability selection sampling but applied a purposive sampling. 3) The Focus Group - the researcher specifies 24 focus group members through purposive selection and not through non-probability selection sampling. They involve people who hold election rights and are the stakeholders in the LGO budgeting while living in the LGO locality of data collection. 4) The non-participatory observation - it is an indirect academic watching the key-informant group on their behavior during their participation in order to collect data which the researcher cannot directly collect from them. Finally, a review of both primary and secondary document as part of the study and discussion on the finding derived from the meta synthesis, in-depth interview, focus group and non-participatory observation.

### **Data Analysis**

The researcher analyzes data and learns along with the data collection according to the principles of a qualitative research under the procedures of meta-synthesis, documentary study, and in-depth interview. The data analysis, researcher has planned to collect data by disassembling, coding, and then sorting and sifting, as following five steps: 1) Familiarizing, identifying a thematic framework 2) Referring the process of categorizing verbal or behavioral data to classify 3) Using on category to developing and applying code 4) Identifying themes and relationships 5) Conclusion and summarize the data. Triangulation (Denzin, 1989) was used in the triangular data analysis in the considering the interaction between the documentary data, meta-synthesis, the interview, focus group and non-participatory observation.

### **Results and Discussion**

The knowledge condition of the PB concept, its success, challengers, failures, efficiency and its applicability Participatory budgeting (PB) knowledge - it is found from the research synthesis that the qualitative investigation is mostly employed for PB and in-depth interview is the most popular methodology for data collection followed by documentary research and secondary data. Most objectives of PB are to estimate the success of PB application and the approach to apply PB in other countries outside Brazil where PB has its birth. Synthesis shows that PB applied in various countries are met with both success and failure. However, it is found that PB serves the Thai context, had it been supported and catalyzed by the agencies involved.

#### **Successes in participatory budgeting application**

The success of applying participatory budgeting: PB - from synthesizing 15 research papers, it is found that reasons of these investigations are from curiosity about methods and success of applying PB within the state sector agencies because PB is diverse and prevailing around the world in both developed and developing countries. PB has been endorsed and enthusiastically supported by international organizations like World Bank but it does not mean that PB applied will all be successful. There are many worries and recommendations as presented below.

PB can increase social capital through providing public products and their improvements. It process can continuously increase social capital through trust and create new innovations, non-coercive participation, bring wellbeing in sanitation and other infrastructures. Another successes PB contributes are solving global warming and problems of environments accounted growing deadly. Applying this technical concept, it encourages people to play their

roles of decision-making to solve such problems. In addition, the leading goals of the Brazilian PB are to solve poverty and social inequality and it can do in many countries upon their applications (Gilman, 2012; Walker, 2013; Shah, 2007; Durán, 2014; Cohen, 2012; Hamilton, 2014).

As above, they are the materialist or empirical successes, which cannot be calculated in figures or intangible. They are the public perception for participation, pride in using PB, growing more depth in understanding democracy and righteous relationship of networking. The good attributes of each individual authenticate their internal networking. PB links each one together until the rise of social capital and bridged to citizenship participation in mega projects under democracy. In addition, people become enthusiastic, cultivate sense of civic virtues in the course of democracy without just restricting their interest for the common good and justice but also patience and generous to other different perspectives. PB brings trust among people or between people and the political parties or officers. PB brings willingness to participate in deliberative affairs, hearing, respecting rule of law and the rights of other persons.

#### **Failures of participatory budgeting application**

PB failures in many areas still there are many problems and failures due many factors especially the leader for practices. The study of Gilman (2012) shows that the approach in addressing PB is by only the technical officer with key positions only. The mechanism of people participation is not adapted to meet the local environment, its values and its social norms. Therefore, it bars common people from the public resource distributions. Involvement of people in budgeting process is restricted to the procedure of preparing budgeting only. Similarly, the study of Leduka (2009) finds that the Mantsopa municipality in South Africa does not improve and promote people participation in the municipal decision-making process but there is shortage of clear strategies to support people participation in preparing the municipal budgeting.

In addition, the study of Kihm (2010) in Córdoba: Latin America and finds that PB in Cordoba fails unlike other cities. The worst limitation is its demographic attributes, political structure and history. The structure and failure of PB come from political distraction and the reduction of political will that displays its growing important compared to other cities and other countries. The final problem of PB is lacking measure of tangible performance evaluation (Chapin, 2013). Similarly, the study of Fölscher (2007) on PB in the Middle East and North Africa, he finds that barriers of PB are no determination, political will, no law frame, ill-facilitated political environment for people to freely express, shortage of PB data, and expected roles expressed by the stakeholders.

#### **Recommendations of participatory budgeting applications**

Recommendations for applying PB - due to experiences of various cities implementing PB in associated with recommendations from researches of scholars, there are good viewpoints with diversity of implementing PB. Recommendations on policy are emphasized and applicable to the Thai local governance. The study of Leduka (2009) recommends the creation of appropriate environment, the process design to facilitate participation, creation of new innovative mechanism, target and end result-led consciousness on people participation in PB. The study of Drouault (2008) recommends applying PB demands co-decision-making with the large amount of budget to allow participants sense their involvement. It is necessary to have deliberative and aggressive policy to increase budgeting participation because they have to be responsible for its results. PB demands transparency and this transparency must be legitimate. Therefore, PB requires ongoing adaption to preserve the above criteria.

In addition, there are recommendations from the work of Durán (2014). She recommends on policy that 1) it is necessary to improve the assembly structure of PB because it covers more representation. 2) It is necessary to check whether the community leaders/men of power

facilitate deliberative activities without mandate and coercion. 3) It is necessary to make PB tie with government to be the complement for decision-making. 4) It is necessary to transform social vision so that PB can and should be the platform for the community. 5) It is necessary to transform the model of PB meeting for deliberative activities and more priority.

The similar recommendations imposed by researchers are training and developing training programs so that all know the existing rules and regulations, better known the PB process, and enable people involved to legitimately evaluate performances (Gilman, 2012). Other recommendations are distribution of budget by project but emphasizing projects for social rather than infrastructures, developing system and the city structures while increasing participation of the marginalized groups (Kihm, 2010). The public service delivery of the municipality should not specify residences; there are more affairs on transports, and education. Therefore, PB has to integrate city plan which is the policymaking as it is the municipal public service delivery (Walker, 2013).

### **Participatory budgeting process**

PB process contain four important procedures, i.e 1) brainstorming idea of the community people to propose their problems and needs, 2) developing proposals for justification and deserve prioritization, 3) Voting to select critical and urgent proposals with appropriate budgeting, and 4) Applying the fund wining project with checking and trailing its performance by civic sector.

With the critical principles above and when PB process is improved to meet the context of the Thai local governance; the researcher finds 7 procedures, i.e. 1) it is the overall forum in the local in order to disseminate data, to propose the projects of the previous year, to present the current budget and to demand explanation of PB. 2) It is the forum in each village or community to deliberate, to opine, to present projects and to select representatives for the supervisory committee. 3) It is the PB Council meeting to prioritize projects and budgets, to vote for the complete project attended by the residents of Thai local governance, the state officers and selecting the PB representatives. 4) It is the Mayor's Offices meeting to structure budget advised by the PB council along with the projects not using PB. 5) It is the local council meeting to deliberate budgets and projects, which use PB, in order to discuss and to finalize budget issues. 6) It involves the project constructions and supervision to recognize their progress, responsibility and adherence to the projects. 7) It involves the meeting to trail and evaluate performance of the projects in order to recognize success, problems, barriers and transparency. The above 7 PB procedures are coherent with the budgeting process in Porto Alegre (Wood, 2004; Abers, 2005; Wample, 2004; Souza, 2001) the meetings have to be often organized and with many levels to see problems by overview and problems risen in specific local community. See Table 1 below:

**Table 1** Participatory Budgeting Process

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Meeting Objectives</b>	<b>Participants</b>
1.General Local Meeting	Providing data - present previous year projects - present current budget - explain PB process	people, civic sector NGOs, local authorities
2. Meeting in each village or community	- Deliberative, express opinion, propose projects - select representatives for supervisory committee	Village /community residents

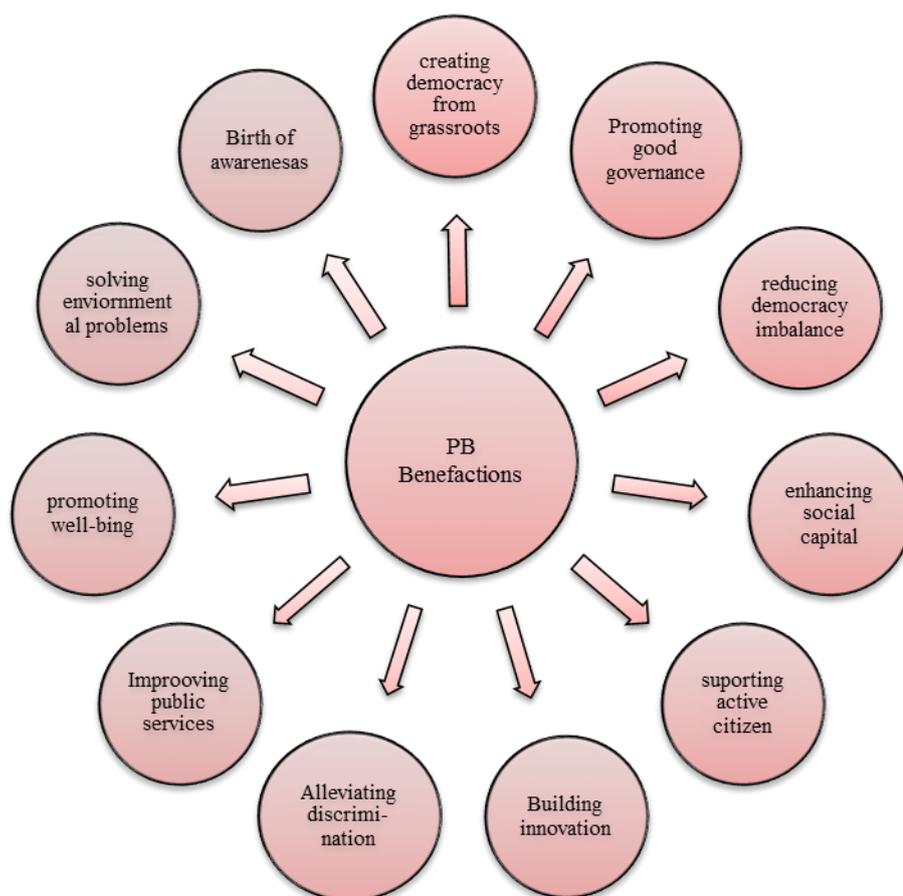
**Table 1 (Con.)**

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Meeting Objectives</b>	<b>Participants</b>
3. PB Council Meeting	- prioritize project and budget - vote for perfect projects	- Residents of local administration organization -the state authorities -select PB representatives
4. Mayor's Offices Meeting	- Structure budget through the advice of the PB council and non-PB council	- Executive/Deputy Chief - Teamwork/Advisory team
5. Local Council Meeting	To be deliberate budget and PB project - debate and conclude budget	- local council members - Chief Executive - PB representatives and interested common people
6. Project Construction and Supervision	Progress of the project - responsibility - pursue the project	- local council members - Chief Executive - PB representatives and interested common people
7. Project Trailing and Evaluating	Acknowledge success/ problems and limitations/ transparency	- local council members - Chief Executive - PB representatives and interested common people

### **Participatory budgeting benefactions**

Findings from research synthesis reveal PB benefactions from abroad applying PB that it is relying on the goals of the persons involved to address what kind of the problems. PB benefactions are helping to reinforce the grassroots democracy, which offers people opportunity of direct involvement in decision-making to spend budgets and the state functioning. PB reinforces good governance on transparency, participation, responsibility, cost effectiveness, and rule of law. PB can also solve democratic deficit in terms of information deficit, transparency, needs and performance of imposing policy under multitude involvers (Forkovocova, 2013).

In addition, PB also reinforces social capital and civil network which link people in societies together to arrive at social capital. PB promotes active citizen who is conscious of his/her own citizenship, rights and duties. PB helps reinforce crating innovation or new projects with more legitimacy, fairness and transparency. It helps alleviate inequality of rights and liberty particularly among the poor people for their participation. It also improves the public service delivery, people wellbeing, solve environmental problem such as global warming, greenhouse effect. Finally, PB breeds consciousness among people and brings them sense of civic virtues according democracy and knowing how the government works. The grassroots democracy witnesses values and the importance of their own humanness while being patient to hear other contradictory opinions, and being generous to other perspectives. These are the distinctive civil qualification facilitating the success of applying PB (Gilman, 2012; Walker, 2013; Shah, 2007; Durán, 2014; Cohen, 2012; Hamilton, 2014). They are concluded in the figure 2 below.



**Figure 2** Participatory Budgeting Benefactions

### **Elements Reinforcing the Success of People Participation**

From research synthesis, literature reviews and field work survey through in-depth interview, focus group and non-participatory observation, it is concluded that elements reinforcing the people participation success involve geographic context such as being the area of the poor people, inconvenient transpiration, wilderness without adequately good infrastructure of public utility for livelihood, being the arid areas, and being flooded area. These hardships are primarily unavoidable elements and a component to coerce people to participate in order to drive problem-solving. In addition the population attributes are other factors drawing people to participate, for example, educational level, socialization-favored and consciousness of their own rights and duties.

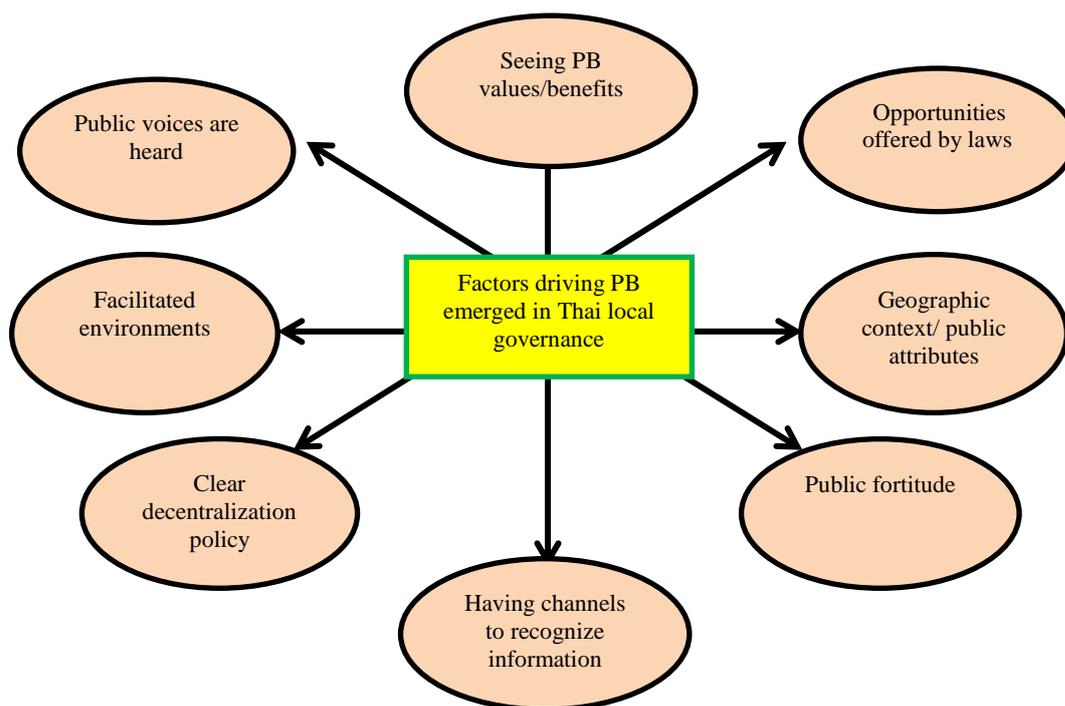
Besides geographical context and population, there are other factors facilitating people participation success, i.e. 1) opportunity offered by law, the local elected leaders and the conventional authorities. 2) It is the sense of common belonging/ownership to propose problems, opinions and part of the local resource distribution. 3) It involves the civil ability to check various local projects to recognize their justification and transparency. 4) It is the adherence on good governance of the local government which attract people participation on activities unrelated to the security affairs. 5) It needs public relations and providing them to people ore there must be channels for people to involve in opining with freedom. 6) People feel reliability, confidence, trust and faith in the administration of the local government and witness the importance of its existence. 7) People gain benefits from their participation and the ability to directly respond to the problems or the needs of people. 8) It is to provide multiple forums and channels of people to access information and to express their opinion,

propose problems and needs or claims such as village forums, civic forums, websites, and online media including aggressive approach by arranging mobile public relation services and meeting people in the responsible areas. 9) The fortitude of the civil sector in the local - it leads to network to organize various local activities or there is bargaining, claim and propose opinion through their representatives or the group leaders with continuity and without coercion.

However, the conclusions from the focus group and the non-participatory observation are people participation is unlikely perfect because there are limitations such as inconvenient transpiration, disability, poor skills of communication, disability to access information, preoccupation on earning living, not having consciousness of rights and duties, and short of sacrifice. In addition, the local government is poor in the aggressive public relation with multiple channels. This might come from restrictions on budget and personnel because offering people opportunity to participate demand higher costs, time spending and patience to the contradictory opinion of the participants.

Elements reinforcing the success of applying PB in the Thai local governance. This research finds that the context of the Thai local governance provide many elements rein forcing the success of applying PB with the Thai local governance and from many local government offices. The findings are also corresponded with PB applications in other countries found in the research synthesized. These elements are: 1) All parties involved see the PB values and usefulness. 2) The geographic context and the population attributes - in participating the budgeting process, the geographic context becomes either support or barrier. 3) Opportunity opened by laws and the existing leaders as of the local Thai context, there are many laws enacting opportunity for people to participate in the local government affairs which are the keys to promote PB. 4) The fortitude of citizen and civic networking - civil politics or civil assemblage become surplus in the Thai locality ether formally or informally. 5) Having diverse channels and perceiving information, ability to access information by people and having many channels for people to acknowledge information and opinions to propose problems and needs through those channels. 6) General environment either politics or economy or social or customs and traditions in the Thai context, there is no politics which is not democracy or political ideology where schism is deadly. 7) The clarity of the decentralization policy due to decentralization policy promotes participation; and decentralization empowers the local governance to be free and enable its autonomy under the independence of a nation. 8) The civil voices are heard from the public sector personnel. This research discloses that the local governance personnel need to be patient and are interested to hear contradictory opinions of people (Shah, 2007).

From factors promoting the success of applying PB in the Thai local governance; the researcher present figure 3 below.



**Figure 3** Elements reinforcing PB success in the Thai local governance

### **Approaches of Applying Participatory Budgeting (PB) with the Thai Local Governance**

It is concluded from the study that there are four procedures. First, it needs to explore and understand the PB knowledge to find its lessons and experiences of its applications around the world while it is necessary to adjust PB to meet the Thai local governance. Second, it is the fieldwork survey and data collection on elements reinforcing the people participation success. Third, in-depth interviews, exploring overall PB context and feasibility are conducted while recommendations from the personnel from the central administration and supports and promotion of the local governance including recommendations from the perspectives of the local governance specialist on PB. Fourth, it is to propose the approach to apply PB in the Thai local governance.

Consequently, applying PB with the Thai local governance requires main players like the government, the local government, civil sector business or private sector, NGOs and CSOs (Shah, 2007; Shall, 2007; Lhorsuwannarat, 2013; Wampler, 2007). 1) The government - the roles and authority of the government are promoting and supporting PB application by enacting laws, rules and ministerial announcement to be the principle and practice clearly modeled and with common understanding for its application. The government agencies involved like Ministry of Interior and Bureau of Budget have to agree and finally catalyze it into law. Using PB requires integrated mechanism of many agencies related in order to bring unity and reduce repetitive works. 2) The local government - it has to understand PB concept and consent to apply it, to witness its values and its importance. In addition, the local government has to facilitate and supervise the method of people participation without coercion or mandate. Though PB and people participation are successful in other aspects, the local leaders have to offer people opportunity to participate. 3) Civil sector - people must have motivation, witness benefit and importance of the concept and participation because if we have common needs; it leads to synergy and people will be conscious of their rights and duties of their participation while adhering to laws. Therefore, cognition is the right way of the concept and to what extent people want to participate, whether they want to participate or not. They need deliberation. 4) The business/private sector - It help driving PB as taxpayers

to promote transparency and reduce corruption and taxes spent with efficiency. 5) NGOs - they become the intermediary between the local government and people and might be the compromisers between the public sectors or participants, and promote civil latency and transparency of the local government. 6) CSOs - they share the part in catalyzing to start PB which allows them opportunity to build networks with growing number of social and political supporters. Civic network offers fortitude, bargaining power and drive policy to begin in the locality in order to solve problems and troubles of the local people.

## **Recommendations**

The results of the study and their conclusions bring recommendations for policy as follows:

1. This study reveals that applying PB in the Thai local governance requires major players the government, the local government, business/private sector, NGOs and CSOs. As of the government, its roles and authority of the government are promoting and supporting PB application by enacting laws, rules and ministerial announcement to be the principle and practice clearly modeled and with common understanding for its application. The government agencies involved like Ministry of Interior and Bureau of Budget have to agree and finally catalyze it into law. Using PB requires integrated mechanism of many agencies related in order to bring unity and reduce repetitive works. In its application, the government should enact laws or policy with clear procedures in order to arrive at functional framework with the same direction. It creates common understanding and endorses people participation in the PB process and its application will be corresponded with the decentralization policy where the central administration decentralize its missions to the local government. It is also corresponded with the national reforms demanded the rise of the civil politics, to reinforce grassroots democracy through civil empowerment in decision-making on budget which is originally decided by the government.

2. This study discloses that in the local government context, there are many factors reinforcing PB application success from many investigated agencies. They are corresponded with PB in many countries gained from syntheses. Factors reinforced PB application with the Thai local governance are 1) parties involved witness PB values and benefits, 2) geographic context and population attributes, 3) offering opportunity by laws and local leaders, 4) civil fortitude and civil network, 5) having multiple channels and ability to access and recognize information, 6) general environments of politics, economy, social, customs and culture in the local context, 7) clarity of decentralization policy, and 8) civil voices are heard from the public sector.

Therefore the PB catalyst existing in the local government, Department of Local Administration Promotion: Ministry of Interior can deploy these factors to promote and drive PB by demanding it as the PB plan to avail all the local government to apply. To promote the local government to apply PB; the agencies involved with awarding the local government on good governance like the Office of the Prime Minister or award from the King Prajadhipok's Institute should set criteria of participatory budgeting award with regulations or to reward the successful local government in applying PB in order to be the spiritual supports for people and the local personnel and it shall being another way promote the good image of the local government.

3. This study reveals that PB process is corresponded with the local development and the annual fiscal budget plan of the Thai local governance and contains 7 procedures, 1) the overall forum in the local in order to disseminate data, 2) the forum in each village or community to deliberate, 3) the PB Council meeting to prioritize projects and budgets, 4) the Mayor's Offices meeting to structure budget, 5) the local council meeting to deliberate budgets and PB projects, 6) the project constructions and supervision of the projects, and 7) meeting to trail and evaluate the success of the projects. Consequently, the local government can apply these seven procedures which could be in the model of One Local Government

One PB as the pilot project and experimentation. Upon gaining positive result, then it can be expanded to other projects. In addition, the PB committee or council to coordinate and educate persons involved.

## Conclusion

Based on the research finding, the success factors of PB are culture and citizen ability, free from discrimination of participation while offering opportunity and facilitating for participation. If people are naïve of ability and clear understanding of roles and responsibility of all players related to PB even they have low education. It is similar with the study of participation in South Africa and finds that factors affecting the efficiency of PB are educational level because it shares the important part to understand jargons and the budgeting process and the absence of good communication between the political leaders and the technicians. Therefore, absence of cognition and consciousness of PB because they are unable to access information and do not understand the local government process will be similar to the local council members and other local personnel who have no knowledge of budgetary planning and process. These will fail or be unlikely successful.

Therefore, people participation in PB practices is likely hard to happen because the public budgeting involves techniques, intrinsic complex and related to many types of public fund structures. They could be the critical barriers for people to access information or could unlikely participate in the meaningful decision-making. However, being the active citizen and democratic citizenship bring people skills to think and to deliberately express their opinions, knowing their right and duty, able to work with others, diligently sharing local working, including strictly adhered to the common gains, having devotion and faith in the local government, believing in equality and human dignity, adhering to the principle of peace and order because different opinions or conflict of interest might lead to local schism.

Applying PB knowledge with the Thai local governance by beginning from offering opportunity for people to participate is imposed by the decentralization policy from the central administration. Missions have been transferred to the local government and increases the local government more missions with authority. However, Decentralization would have high efficiency when people have opportunity to participate in decision-making on policy and projects organizing the local public services. In addition, it offers people opportunity to participate in politics at their own local community according to the principles of autonomy by their intention in democracy. Therefore, applying PB is another critical tool to create democracy innovation and to reinforce the grassroots civic fortitude.

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