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Thung Sai's Local History and Human Capital on Traditions, Cultures, and Natural Resources Awareness of Thung Sai Municipality Sichon District of Nakhon Si Thammarat Province, Thailand



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Abstract

The research aims to (1) examine the historical development of Thung Sai Sub-district Municipality Sichon District of Nakhon Si Thammarat, Thailand across three main aspects: (a) perceptions related to initial settlement and governance structures prior to the formation of the sub-district municipality; (b) recognition of Wat Suchon and the Ta Pha Khao symbol; and (c) memories surrounding the 100-year-old Hua Tha Market community; (2) develop a local studies curriculum. This qualitative research employs in multiple research mythologies, including document analysis, fieldworks, group discussions, interviews, observations, and participatory action research. The researchers compiled the information from reliable and logical sources and had its content—analyzed based on the objectives and research frameworks. The researchers used the information gained to make local history presentations.

The findings revealed that (1) the perception of early settlement and governance reflects that approximately 200 years ago, a group of villagers from Khanom District, Nakhon Si Thammarat Province, and Koh Samui District, Surat Thani Province, arrived to travelled by boat near present-day Bang Por Beach; (2) the recognition of Wat Suchon and Ta Pha Khao coincided with villagers' arrival, as a spiritual symbol, developed in parallel, initially marked by a simple white flag at Bang Por Beach Cave, culminating in 2006 with the construction of a large pavilion housing the Ta Pha Khao statue for community worship; (3) memories of the Hua Tha Market, which emerged around 1937 due to limited boat-only transport to Thung Sai and Sichon, where goods were exchanged at a large port-side market till it was declined due to the highway construction in 1977. As part of the action research, the research team developed resources such as books, a mobile exhibition, and a documentary on Thung Sai's historical heritage, provided to the community through Wat Suchon and local primary and secondary schools in Thung Sai Sub-district. These activities have contributed to strengthening community citizenship awareness and preserving local traditions, cultures, and resources. The body of knowledge of this participatory research, the researchers applied the body of knowledge of the Thung Sai's settlement and its administration development, the perception of Suchon Temple and Ta Pha Khao together with a 100-year-old market to make local history presentations.

Keywords: Human Capital; Local History; Sense of Citizenship; Nakhon Si Thammarat; Tradition and Culture

Introduction

The local grassroots and history are both local social capitals depicting the richness of cultures and intellectual property transcending from the past generations to the present. Those are invaluable to all folk ways of life and needed by the society to reconnect their lives to

the local wisdoms with their own knowledge, creativity, beliefs, capacities and the concise factors for local development; all those factors affecting in local, community, and society development in general. Those local stories help promote to reconnect the unity and uniqueness of the local peoples' ways of life with the local administration organization in helping given and area development feasibly and easily whereas those lacking of these local commitments seem rare to accomplish the community goals practically. Thus, the inquiry of the local history and the local story of the people help share the learning process and the community strengthening the citizens indirectly and immensely. The sense of belonging is derived from those sharing and leaning among the local people in the community (Chanchai, 2017).

The community itself who creates their own story, manages the natural resources in the community that are of their own intellectual, cultural wisdom and community capitals (Laothamathas, 2016). Those concerns include the valued systems; namely trust, morality, discipline and integrity, Thai cultures, local wisdoms, historical archeological sites, clan systems and cooperation network. The connectedness and the diversity of the society, needs of each community are related to one another by community network connection, groups, organizations, and efficient cooperation. Those supportive and well-supported and developed groups help enhance bigger power to help preserve the traditions, cultures and resources of Thung Sai's community.

The researchers believe that the local history is a community capital. The local history affected to the sense of belonging and self-awareness and community building. This also helps the policy-makers to comply and implement the policy properly. It also helps decentralize the balance between the local history education and social sciences. Thus, the role of local history is a social capital and it is used as a tool for local natural resources management and community self-awareness.

Before the result of the study will be used as a model for social capital development in other communities, including economics, society, environments with the needs of the community. The study will be benefited as a strategic plan for community development and help build the Thung Sai's people awareness on traditions, cultures, and natural resources with the aims as “steady, wealth and sustainability.”

Research Objectives

The study of local history of Thung Sai sub-district municipality was divided into 3 domains as follows: (1) to examine the historical development of Thung Sai Sub-district Municipality across three main aspects: (a) perceptions related to initial settlement and governance structures prior to the formation of the subdistrict municipality; (b) recognition of Wat Suchon and the Ta Pha Khao symbol; and (c) memories surrounding the century-old Hua Tha Market community; (2) to develop a local studies curriculum.

Research Methodology

1. This qualitative research consisted of key informants, including 1) local educated, 2) villagers of Thung Sai, and 3) representatives from government and religion sectors using purposive sampling of 3 groups for 30 people. There were as follows:

1.1 Local Educated

1.1.1 Three local educated of Thung Sai's local history from the past to the present, living in Thung Sai for more than 70 years with a good knowledge of the community.

1.1.2 Three local educated of Wat Suchon history with a great recognition by the government and the community.

1.1.3 Three local educated of Ta Pha Khao story especially a key person in Ta Pha Khao statue Building and organizing committee of Ta Pha Khao Festival.



1.1.4 Three local educated of 100-year-old Hua Tha Market living nearby the 100-year-old market and a well-recognized person by the community.

1.2 Thung Sai Villagers Group

1.2.1 Five villagers settling at Thung Sai more than 60 years.

1.2.2 Five villagers annually participating Ta Pha Khao and Wat Suchon (Suchon Temple) activities at least 5 years.

1. 2. 3 Five of more than 60-year-old villagers participating a 100-year-old Hua Tha Market in the past, for examples; merchants, a boat serviced-man, and customers and those who used to live and do the related activities here at least 5 years.

1.3 Government and Religion Sectors

1.3.1 One Thung Sai's administrator.

1.3.2 One Thung Sai's community head.

1.3.3 One Suchon Temple's abbot.

2. Research Instruments

The research tools were structural in-depth interview, focus group discussion constructed based on the research objectives and were approved by three experts prior to its application to collect the data.

3. Data Collection

The data collection and research methodology including:

3.1 The data collected from related research works or documents.

3.2 The data collected from field trip, observation, in-depth interview, focus group discussion, the participation with the community and collected from the key informants.

3.3 The researchers examined the data to see if it is reliable or not and to see if it was consistent or not.

3.4 The researchers analyzed the data.

4. Data Analysis

For data analysis, this research employed directed content analysis gaining from document, in-depth interview, and group discussion. The researchers applied concise theories and related research works for coding and category making. After that, the small topics gathered would be used for main themes based on the research objectives. The analysis result made this research a descriptive one.

Results

The research results about Thung Sai's local history towards citizenship, traditions, cultures, and natural resources awareness of Thung Sai Municipality, Sichon District of Nakhon Si Thammarat Province, Thailand are as follows:

Objective 1: the study of local history capital of Thung Sai Sub-district Municipality, Thung Sai may derive from “Pa Sai” which once was a fertile forest (plentiful). Once the villagers cut the forests for plantation, the fertile forest became rare, later on, villagers used this vast land for rice growing with its clear water and the name so-called “Thung Sai” (clear paddy rice/fields).

1.1 The perception of the previous settlement and pattern administration of Thung Sai. About 200 years ago, villagers from Koh Samui District, Surat Thani Province sailed their boats to Bang Por beach (presently an area/a part of Moo 8) and at the same time villagers from Songkhla and Hua Sai District of Nakhon Si Thammarat Provinces also disembarked at Thung Sai. The Harriet disaster in the year B.E. 2505 making those affected people from Songkhla Province, and villagers from Pak Phanang, Hua Sai and Chian Yai Districts of Nakhon Si Thammarat Province went and disembarked at Thung Sai with their clans.

1.2 The perception of Suchon Temple and Ta Pha Khao shrine situated on Khao Plai Dam (Plai Dam Mountains) Bang Por-Tong Yang roadside, Village No. 8, Thung Sai Sub-district, Sichon District of Nakhon Si Thammarat Province was not only the center for the mindfulness



purification of the Thung Sai's villagers but also for the passers-by of both the sea and land transports from the past up to the present especially going out to seek for fish from the sea. They normally pray and ask for great wishes in fish-caught in a great amount in return. Also, the service boats in the past time and if it was a boat of the shadowy presenter/owner, they would respect them by blowing out the musical instrument and played the drums aloud requesting the flow and safe journey along all routes. Every 7th March of each year is an annual Ta Pha Khao respectful/festival day as it was the beginning day for the Ta Pha Khao present portrait invention. At present, the portrait is at the main hall which was invented in the year B.E. 2547 replacing the old, small and is the new one. There was not any portrait over there anymore then. The start of the Ta Pha Khao respectful ceremony is when the sun begins to set down and it is the time for those people to come and join in the ceremony around 5 o'clock in the evening. Those people will put on white clothes and will stand in rows with drums presentation in the front followed by the Ta Pha Khao village representatives with the torches in their hands. And when it comes to the right time, the parade of the dance will move with joy and fun along the route about 1 kilometer long. And once they reach the Ta Pha Khao hall, everyone will put down the worshipped torch in the front and will go up to Ta Pha Khao and pray for good wishes, prosperous and graceful life.

Wat Suchon (Suchon Temple) was registered as a monastery for more than 130 years. Originally, the temple named "Wat Thup Kham" with a historical story back in the reign of King Tak Sin who went to fight against the Nakhon Si Thammarat's Nagara rulers in the year of B.E. 1312. At that time, the Nagara rulers settled at Ban Bang Khai and they had the rafts built for the gangs to cross over, and that's the name was so-called. However, the name literally changed a bit from Thup Kham to Tup Kam might be because of the abbot Pluem; the first

temple abbot who came from Songkhla Province and to build a very small hut under a big tamarind tree with an easy-going style material use called “Thup” before developing it to be a temple later on. Wat Thup Kham was a possible name source of the temple then and the name was changed to Wat Suchon (Suchon Temple) as it was the previous name of Sichon District in the past time. The temple code is 05801401003 with a Maha Nikaya sect, Thung Sai, Number 1, Village Number 8, Thung Sai Sub-district, Sichon District of Nakhon Si Thammarat Province. The temple occupies the land of 23,000 square meters with a real estate contract number of 35575. The north and the east of the temple is close to the private land’s owner, the south is a public land and the west is a public road. All the temple land is a descendant land of Phra Leum (Monk Leum). The key landmarks of the temple included head monk in the ordination hall (main hall), Somdej Phra Phudha Chayanmee Si Suchon (Luang Phor Thup Kham), the Buddha replica, 4.5 meters in width and 8 meters in height, with its highlighted skillful artists from 4 different ages, including Chiang Sean, Sukhothai, Sri Vichaya, and India, built in the year B.E. 2556. Besides the above mentioned, there is also Phra Laak Mai (Wood-Pulling Monk) with a bowl holding gesture. Currently, Wat Suchon normally called by the tourists “Wat Thao Wes Su Wan” (Wes Su Wan Temple) as Thao Wes Su Wan (Thana Bodi Type) is there and is respected by the one who was born on Tuesday with a dominant on luck and money. The sacred site is in a red cloth for those worshipped to write the name and surname, day and date of birth together with a red rose and a golden leaf for the worship.

1.3 The memory of the Hua Tha 100-year-old Market, People in the past used boats to travel from Thung Sai Sub-district to Sichon District. There are two piers, including Sichon River Pier (Nai Sae Pier) and Thung Sai Pier or Hua Tha Pier. The boat used in the past was a long-tailed boat loading not more than 15 passengers and the time used for



travelling was 30 minutes. At the Hua Tha Pier, there is a Friday-market in the early morning, often called “Hua Tha Market.” The owner of the market named Mr. Chuang Chawepak and it is the biggest Friday-market in Sichon District. There were 2 boats from Pak Phanang District named Boat Chan and Boat Darunee to buy agricultural products (crops), especially orchids and coconuts whose Thung Sai plantation was the biggest in this area and sell them at Pak Phanang District as it was really impossible to grow those crops in an acid soil/land over there. Those merchants from Pak Phanang District brought with them seafood products and clothing and when they returned back to Pak Phanang, they brought with them those agricultural products from Hua Tha Market of Sichon District.

Objective 2: to develop a local studies curriculum, in order to record the study benefit, the researchers made textbooks concerning about Thung Sai’s capital towards good citizens with the concerns about traditions and cultures conservation and gave the textbooks to 5 elementary school libraries and 1 secondary school library, making a total of 6 school libraries in the Thung Sai community. To create exhibitions and documentaries: 5 mobile exhibitions included a map of Thung Sai, the memory of the community settlement and the Thung Sai’s governing prior to the present Thung Sai Municipality, the perception of Wat Suchon (Suchon Temple), the perception of Ta Pha Khao and the memory of the 100-year-old Hua Tha Market situated at Wat Suchon (Suchon Temple), Thung Sai Sub-district, Sichon District of Nakhon Si Thammarat Province. In addition, 1 documentary video presented on the Thung Sai Municipality and Thung Sai’s Municipality Schools webpages, Sichon District, Nakhon Si Thammarat Province (<https://thungsai.go.th/index.php>). The contents of the books were as follows:

2.1 The perception concerning about the settlement and the administration development of Thung Sai community in the previous time prior to the present one.

2.2 The perception of Wat Suchon, an old temple built in the reign of King Rama V up to the present as well as the perception of Ta Pha Khao of Plai Dam mountain respected by the villagers in the community and it becomes a part of their life when their wishes become true.

2.3 The memory of 100-year-old Hua Tha Market. The origin of the market was a pier/a ship port in the past time where people used to deliver the household goods and products from Thung Sai to Pak Phanang and vice versa. In that time there were no roads around there. Once the roads were constructed in the year of B.E. 2515, the land transport from Thung Sai to Sichon District was easily practical and that made the river/canal transportation routes would not be used any more.

Discussion

The findings about Thung Sai's historical capital towards its citizenship traditions, cultures, and resources conservation were as follows:

1. The study about Thung Sai Municipality's historical assets covering in 3 domains, including 1) the perception of its settlement and its previous patterns of administration prior to the present one, 2) the perception of Wat Suchon and Ta Pha Khao, and 3) the memory of 100-year-old Hua Tha Market found that all those three domains affected to the community sense of belongings and sense of engagement and helped make them proud of their community. That is, they are proud of their own historical story, the settlements of their own ancestors as they were all related clans. That made them the same clans of the same origin. The same engagement of the same clans helped make them to join hands in doing the community activities, for examples: joining hands

in the development of the community temple (Wat Suchon), the annual Ta Pha Khao festival organizing, and trying to make 100-year-old Hua Tha Market to become alive again. Sumalee (2014) found that the study of the community history with the community people themselves helped make the people in the community understand their grass-roots of their origins definitely and that helped make them concern about their own local wisdom, traditions and sense of belongings and community concerns. The utmost conservations of their local wisdom, cultures, historical sites, rituals and traditions, the belief systems together with their previous local wisdom were then practically possible. It is said that human capital was those who were educated, capable, social-service minded, kindness, generosity, and sacrifice themselves to the society. The institute/organization capital was those institutes, organizations who helped make the community people living a happy life and share the community work together happily. That is the people in the community were active in their rights and the community activities' concerns and participation, and they had the rights to express their opinions with the related community concerns completely. Thus, the citizenship of the community reflected meaningfully to their roles, duties, responsibility towards their own community as Tevanarimitrkul (2012: 31-36) explained that the qualifications of the citizen in a democratic way were the responsible to the society.

2. The making of the Thung Sai historical textbooks towards the citizenship, traditions, cultures, and natural resources conservation idea was as the same as Chobyot (2019) that the community history was a set of local knowledge and the elaborate community perception which told the social history of the community development, political condition, previous economic condition of the community and could bring the community history to make community textbooks for the people in the community to perceive and acquire it thoroughly. As this study activated its community textbooks so that every one of any age

can study and learn his community. Wasi (2002) also said that in the previous time the Thai education system emphasized on textbooks rather than the understanding of the community no matter how biological diversity, history, and the capacity of the community are, the education system was floated away from the real society. We then needed to help the people build awareness towards their community, making them understand and valuing their local community. It is agreed by Ratchaloem (2013) the teaching of local history, teachers should bring the students to see and observe the real community, to go and chat (talk) with the old people in the community and if the students are old and mature enough teacher can guide them to learn and study more from the documents, textbooks and thesis and so is this study that brought the findings to make community textbooks.

3. The making of mobile exhibitions and videos about Thung Sai's historical assets towards the citizenship, traditions, cultures, and resources allowed the two channels for the community people to easily and presently access to them at anytime and anywhere. The mobile exhibitions attracted attentions a lot from the people as they were of high valued and potential to respond people's interest individually. The mobile exhibitions provided the viewers a lot of knowledge, understanding, behavior adjustment, emotion and feelings, attitudes adaptation, and decision-making which was agreed by Khuhapinant (1999) that mobile exhibitions or transported exhibitions were exhibitions that were moved on and rotated to anywhere to have the community publicized and target groups that was the same as Prachusilpa (1988) that the exhibitions helped promote the people's knowledge and interest mindfully, called people's specific interest and collected the abstract ideas to the concrete ones of the people thoroughly. The videos about Thung Sai's history were the movable pictures and continuous story-telling, easily accessed by the online applications which was agreed by In-udom (1996) that the media can be used

personally, small groups, big groups, and mass responding to all genders, ages, and levels.

1. Thung Sai History as a Community Capital

This issue makes Thung Sai community proud of their history, their settlement of ancestors, all are relatives. This shares the same clans of relationships. And that helps make them share activities together for examples; Ta Pha Khao Festival, 100-year-old Hua Tha Market rehabilitation which corresponds to Sumalee (2014) that the study of local history must come from the people in the community who seem to appreciate clearly their roots and backgrounds of their origins. That shares the sense of belongings of their local wisdoms and community conservation concerns. Those local and wisdom cultures like historical sites, traditions and rituals, the beliefs systems, and community wisdom will be conserved meaningfully.

2 . Thung Sai Local History, Civics, Traditions, Cultures, and Resources

Those issues come from the use of local history capital driven and thus to make people and community share the sense of good civics corresponding to Bunyu (2013) mentioned that human capital is those who are keen, capable, public-minded, generosity, and kind and is ready to help the public activities. Institute/Organization Capital are those who support the community to live their lives fruitfully and share the public activities together. The sharing of the sense of belonging and the community conservation concerns together with joining hands in the public/community activities and/or with the Municipality with a sense of responsibility and sharing their opinions freely. A good community civic shares the meaning to the social accountability, community, and responsibility as Tevanarimitkul (2012) explained that a good citizen based on the democratic system is those who are responsible to the society.

Currently, the importance and role of local history helps fulfill various dimensions of history to the community knowledge; yet, it helps the community to tell their own history/story and can be manifested to the community policy decision-making. This can help the community to learn their own roots, the community learning-center invention and help develop local/area studies curriculums to those schools and to interested people in the community. Also, this helps promote the cultural and traditional tourism for the community, the development of added-values of local products designs. It can be used as a negotiation tool to fight against their initiatives, paradigm shifts, and share the same local history with the community development and balance building among the community properly.

Because of the community concerns and a sense of community concerns from the knowledge development, skills, and disposition help make the people in the community to love and care for the traditions, cultures, and resources. The 100-year-old Hua Tha Market Rehabilitation in the memory was an example to hose people and the community as well as the canal Bang Khai rehabilitation with plenty of fruitful mangrove forests resources and make them to be a tourist spot and more income earning together with the resources conservation concerns from the following generations.

Body of Knowledge

Studying the Thung Sai's Local History Human Capitals on Traditions, Cultures and Natural Resources Awareness in three issues, allows the community to gain knowledge about 1) the local history of settlement and the pre-Thung Sai Sub-district administrative form, 2) local history of the Suchon Temple and Ta Pha Khao, which are the center of faith and spiritual support of Thung Sai villagers, and 3) the historical local market of the past century that once flourished, which is important to the community. Understanding the past to learn stories and bring local lessons to society is very important, which allows

villagers to create a sense of belonging, leading to the creation of their local pride in the dimensions mentioned. The background of local history, the migration of ancestors, which almost all villagers are related, creates a sense of belonging. Such feelings or scholarships allow villagers to gather together in activities such as organizing white cloth parades. Together, we revive the 100-year-old Market by using social capital such as trust and norms to promote, support, and collaborate in each other's operations, making community organizations stronger and more energetic, creating trust among people in the network, enabling communication and information systems to be quickly facilitated, and utilizing past successes to build cooperation in the future. And using capital is a person who is knowledgeable, capable, public minded, generosity, and generosity, ready to sacrifice for the community. Institutional/organizational capital is an institution, an organization that supports, promotes the community to live together in peace and gain common interest. That is, to make members of the community active in maintaining their rights, including conscious participation in various community activities or local administrative organizations, by expressing the right to freedom of expression, democratic citizenship, reflecting the role, duties, and responsibilities of members towards the community and society. The study of local history will be the basis for policy planning for future development of the region, as shown in Figure 1.

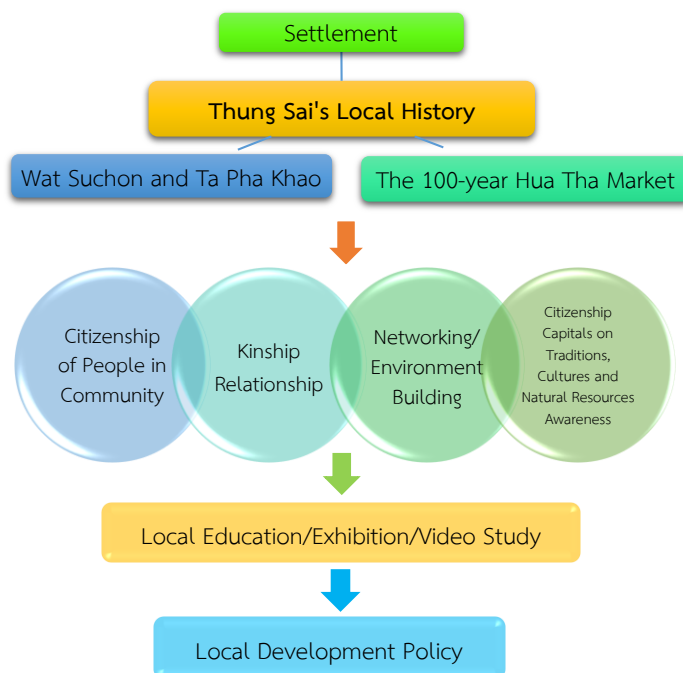


Figure 1: Thung Sai's Local History

Conclusion

The study of Thung Sai's Local History and Human Capital on Traditions, Cultures, and Natural Resources Awareness, absorbing cultural traditions and resources. The awareness about the settlement and the form of rule in the pre-Thung Sai Sub-district came from a group of villagers from Koh Samui District, Surat Thani Province. Then they persuaded a group of relatives to live in Thung Sai area. This turns Thung Sai a current municipality. The awareness about Wat Suchon and White Fabric makes it known that Wat Soon is an ancient temple. Along with the history of clear fields, in complied with the settlement of the first villagers, important in Buddhism and education. The Ta Pha Khao is of great importance as it is the center of the hearts of the villagers both in the clear fields and outside the area, and the recognition of the memory

of 100-year-old market community which was important to the local people in Thung Sai community, which was a large port market that was important to the economic system of the Thung Sai people at that time, including occupation, trade, and transportation. From the recognition of history, local education was provided to local educational institutions in the area to continue as a study. The exhibitions and video related to the historical capital of the region have been prepared. The knowledge of the local community is cherished for the tradition, culture and resources, to promote the public to know the history of Thung Sai Sub-district from the past to the present. Suggestions from researchers, as follows: 1. Local community: local history should be studied and collected as a database for local citizenship awareness, 2. local governments should include activities promoting local history to citizenship in the local government development plan, 3. create a local history learning center to realize citizenship for the community, focusing on participation of the implementation, and 4. local schools should play a role in the local history learning process towards citizenship awareness.

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