Coexistence and Peace Based on Diversity in a Multicultural Society: Case Study of Ban Rai Community, Soppong Sub-Districy, Pang Mapha District Mae Hong Son province

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Abstract---This research paper is qualitative research, and the objectives are as follows: 1) To study the context of the community and society Political Culture and economy that facilitate coexistence 2) To study the factors contributing to coexistence and peace based on diversity in a multicultural society. Data was collected by gathering them from relevant documents, In-depth interviews with informants, small group chat, and participatory observation. The groups that provide information consists of community leaders, religious leaders, ethnic leader's expert and the villagers, totalling 39 people. The researcher found out that: The social community context has strong relationships between networks. In terms of governance, there is a decentralized government to divide the government into a community worthwhile. Common village rules in terms of culture, beliefs, traditions, and rituals are inherited from ancestors and economic aspects, the concept of sufficiency economy is applied to the practice of integrated agriculture. It leads to the integration and formation of groups for the production, distribution, fundraising within the

community. This is an important mechanism to ensure the sustainability of a shared learning community.

Keywords---beliefs, coexistence, culture, ethnic group, multicultural society, peace, traditions.

Introduction

UNESCO is the first international organization to promote the importance of nations "Coexistence Based on cultural Differences" and emphasized that this is a universal principle that is fundamental to humanity. UNESCO's work focuses on raising public awareness of their cultural identity, awareness of cultural pluralism, realize the right to difference respect for other people's culture including minorities (Department of Cultural Promotion, 2016). Phongsapitch (2006), said that the acceptance of cultural diversity and the uniqueness of each culture (Cultural integration) or multicultural (Cultural pluralism) means that the society accepts cultural differences and try to dominate each other. (Phongsapitch, 2006). There is diversity in ethnicity, language, religion, customs, traditions, and culture (Kasmanee, 2012) as mentioned above although human beings have differences in national beliefs, religions, languages and cultures caused by ethnic diversity, everyone needs to coexist on this planet (Wimmer & Perner, 1983). If only considering the differences between them can lead to conflicts that do not benefit either party. Therefore, multicultural education is a key that will lead to the reduction of conflicts in social differences it can also create an understanding of differences in race, religion, language and culture, which will lead to peaceful coexistence (Pinasco & Romanelli, 2006).

Besides the difference in multiculturalism, academics, media, government agencies and NGOs as well as the general public have found a way that leads to peaceful and equal coexistence between groups of people with racial and cultural differences. The research team, specifically selected Mae Hong Son Province because there are many outstanding characteristics especially ethnic diversity. There are many groups of hill tribes, representing 60 per cent of the total population, including Hmong (Miao), Lisu (Lisu), Lahu (Muse), Lua, and Pga Khen (Karen), etc. Community groups of different ethnicities in Pang Mapha District Mae Hong Son Province are a minority who live amid valleys and dense forests, surrounded by pure nature and far from civilization in urban society. They, therefore, have a good state of mind and are naturally happy. Pang Mapha District is located in the northernmost part of Mae Hong Son Province. It borders the border between Shan State (Burma) and is divided into 4 sub-districts, 38 villages, consisting of Na Pu Pom Subdistrict, Pang Mapha Subdistrict, Tham Lod Subdistrict and Sop Pong Subdistrict. It has a total population of 20,523, comprising a population of diverse ethnic groups including Shan, Daeng Lahu (Red Muser), Black Lahu (Black Muser), Hmong, Pakaya (Karen), Lua and Lisu, and the area is full of intricate forests. There are many caves and archaeological evidence which found the human sarcophagus over 1,000 years ago. which is why the district's motto is "Land of ghosts, land of hundreds of caves, beautiful mountains, including hill tribe" (Community Development Office, Pang Mapha District Mae Hong Son Province [Online].)

Ban Rai Community, Soppong Subdistrict, Pang Mapha District is another community that is important and has a variety of cultures, traditions and lifestyles of various ethnic groups living together in the area. And most importantly, it has a long history of more than 100 years (Jones, 2018; Wiese, 2012). It is a village with a large area. The topography is forests, mountains, creeks, resulting in a large number of ethnic groups living together of up to 10 tribes, such as northern people, central Thai, Tai, Lisu, Hmong, Lahu, Chinese, Karen, Pa-O and Isan. Each tribe expresses its identity, own way of life cultural tradition, handicraft products, ethnic food, local wisdom, local playstyle, accommodation and communication of ethnic beliefs. which shows the diversity of "multicultural society" thus allows the ethnic groups in Ban Rai community to express and maintain their local culture very well, can coexist peacefully with ethnic groups of different cultures (Kulik, 2016; Dusi et al., 2014). There have never been any conflicts arising from differences between languages and cultures and Ban Rai community has always been a community filled with harmonious relationship (Martin & Siehl, 1983).

Based on all the above mentioned, therefore, the researcher is interested in studying peaceful coexistence based on diversity in a multicultural society. A Case Study of Ban Rai Community, Soppong Subdistrict, Pang Mapha District Mae Hong Son Province. Thus arises a question that amid cultural diversity, ethnicity, religion, class differences, that live together in this society. What is the social context, politics and governance, culture and economy of the multicultural society of ethnic groups? and What is the model for peaceful coexistence in a multicultural society of ethnic groups? that will deepen the understanding of the peaceful coexistence in the multicultural society of ethnic group. Furthermore, It will also benefit academic circles in using the findings and compared the result with the peaceful coexistence of ethnic multicultural societies in other areas.

Research objectives

- To study the social community context, politics and governance, culture and economy that facilitates coexistence.
- To study the factors contributing to peaceful coexistence based on diversity in a multicultural society.

Literature review

The theoretical concepts that support this research include, the concept of multicultural society, the concept of community culture and concept of peaceful coexistence. In each concept, the researcher has synthesized the important ideas as follows.

Multicultural concept and the multicultural policy of the government

Although human beings have racial, religious, linguistic and cultural differences caused by ethnic diversity, but everyone needs to coexist on this planet. But considering the differences between them, might lead to conflicts that do not benefit either party. Therefore, multicultural society is the key to reducing conflicts in social differences. It can also create an understanding of ethnic,

religious, language and cultural differences leading to peaceful coexistence. In the same way Multicultural society is made up of diverse groups of people. There are social and cultural differences. Such as; religion, language, dress, being, etc., because each group has different beliefs and faith in religion including culture. To enable each person to live together in the same community or society, rely on each other, help each other, without encroachment, no harm, or infringement of each other's rights. Each group can perform religious ceremonies according to their own beliefs and faith freely without discrimination, interference, harassment of each other, enabling them to coexist on social and cultural differences in peace, and dependence on each other without conflicts or violence (Forbes 2019; Sirisakdamkoeng, 2006; Khankhaw, 2018; Junhasobhaga et al., 2020).

The concept of community culture

This concept has become evident in entered Thailand during the past 50 years, during which time the need for a nation-state was created. This focus and emphasizes on cultural unity, and Thainess. This concept helps to reduce bias towards each other. Cultural insults were also reduced. This concept has a power relationship in dealing with or interacting with other peoples or government. This concept has three conceptual bases, such as culture, ethnic, and the identity of the community (Taylor, 1994; Kymlicka, 2007; Ponzanesi, 2007; Fortier, 2008).

Moreover, pluralism is a concept that characterizes the middle path that is, accepting differences in the diversity that exists in the society, on the other hand, the issue associated with pluralism is "nationalism", which is used as a political tool. The indoctrination of nationalism give rise to extreme concepts. In the past, the government tried to use "Assimilation" method, which is an important process in building a nation-state in many societies which is a process of destroying, exclude, force sub-culture to become just a part of the big society. In recent times, the government has changed its policy to "Integration" with a multicultural policy focusing on acceptance. Coexistence and integration of cultural diversity of different peoples within the same country, this will be a way to reduce the conflict between different ethnic groups because it aims to lead the society to realize the inclusion and unity of all societies. Therefore, the method of looking at the benefits on "Single culture" must change and becomes "cultural pluralism", that is, there is no single cultural model, for example, there is no Thai culture that is the only royal culture, but there is a lot of diversity coexisting (Techatanminasakul, 2020; Phrasamutrawachirasophon, 2020). Therefore, in the principled analysis of the multicultural concept in this research, the rights, culture, ethnicity, and community identity of this community will be given priority, because it is an element of social diversity. It is a guideline for the researcher to clearly understand the differences of multicultural society and can be used to measure the ability of the people to coexist as well.

The concept of peaceful coexistence

Thailand, which is an ethnically diverse area, has differences in ethnicities, languages, cultural traditions, as well as attitudes and beliefs in this multicultural and multiethnic society, the people can coexist peacefully without conflicts and incidents of violence (Saarinen, 2006; Baum et al., 2004). The

coexistence of people in multicultural society according to the principles of Buddhism, Christianity, Islam emphasizes on love, compassion, goodwill for each other, support no infringement of each other's rights, having patience with each other in a diverse and different society. (Den Hartog et al.,1999; Tejavaro et al., 2017 ; Chawanit, 2018; Sukhawatthano et al., 2021; Dokchan et al., 2020).

Research Method

This research is qualitative, it consists of documented research and field research. The steps and details are as follows.

Key informants

The research team selects the target groups who are key informants in conducting In-Depth Interview through Purposive Sampling. The key informants are divided into 5 groups: 1) Religious leaders such as Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, 3 people, 2) 10 ethnic or tribal leaders, such as northern people, central Thai, Tai, Lisu, Hmong, Lahu, Chinese, Karen, Pa-O, Isan, a total of 10 people 3) A group of representatives from government agencies involved and experts, such as village headmen, village leader, teachers, doctors, members of the Sub-District Administrative Organization, a total of 8 people 4) a group of people in the area, totalling 18 people. Altogether 39 key informants

Data Collection

Data collection were done from documents, research papers related to the concept of a multicultural society. Religious principles and tribal beliefs of coexistence in the society. Data were also collected from the synthesis of data, from interviews, observing the people's way of life in the village, such as occupation, religious ritual, customs, etc., and a brainstorming meeting where the researcher team invite various tribal leaders in a discussion on peaceful coexistence within the community.

Data Analysis

The researcher uses grounded theory to understand human interactions which is a complex phenomenon, diverse and interconnected in many dimensions. So trying to understand how a person describes things around him, to connect to an explanation of how a person thinks and acts. This makes it possible to understand the social phenomena occurring in the studied community more deeply and completely.

Research Results

The results of document analysis and from interviews, small group discussions, and participatory observation. The research team would like to summarize the study results according to the research objectives as follows.

Objective One

Study on social community context, politics and governance, culture and economy that facilitates coexistence. We found that in terms of *society*, it is a community with kinship relationships of 436 households with a population of 1,468 people. People in the community are in love and bond with each other, they are generous, they rely upon and support each other (Suryasa, 2019). In term of *Politics and governance,* there is decentralized power to divide the community into house groups, namely Ban Nam Bo Sape, Ban Tha Krai, and Ban Sam Lang. Each house group has a leader to help manage and coordinate activities, and the headman of the village is an important liaison between the government and the people. He/she is a psychology leader at the community level. Hence, an important mechanism for aggregation brainstorming learning and exchange (Udu et al., 2016). Therefore, it is a basic democratic political mechanism at the local level that enables the villagers to learn true democracy and set the direction of village development and mobilization of people's participation to help the administration and coordination of village activities, also enacting community rules and regulations. There is a campaign for political activities to exercise the right to vote at all levels. In terms of *Culture,* there are cultures, traditions, beliefs and rituals according to their tribes (Loi, 2021). It is considered the traditional social capital of the community; it is an important tool and is the anchor of the people in the community (Mantra et al., 2016). It is practised, inherited, conserved, and restored from ancestors to generations. In terms of the *Economy.* The main occupation is agriculture. Therefore, the concept of a sufficiency economy has been put into practice in the community with integrated agriculture. This creates an inclusion of members and is often empowered at the community level. Community livelihoods are organized by groups or organizations to produce, distribute, fundraise, and save as a community financial institution, with activities to reduce expenses, increase income to promote the economy of the community and organizing a market system in the community for the exchange of produce between the communities, producers, and consumers through the empowerment of the community at the individual and community level. This serves as an important mechanism for the sustainability of the learning community.

Picture 1: ethnic group or tribe, such as northern people, central Thai, Tai, Lisu, Hmong, Lahu, Chinese, Karen, Pa-O, Isan.
From the second research objective, factors contributing to peaceful coexistence based on diversity in the multicultural society of Ban Rai community, can be summarized as follows:

- Community Leadership Council It an important mechanism to drive the project and create the process of participation of people in the community. Provide opportunities for the new generation and the old to work together, starting from joint thinking, joint planning, joint survey and data analysis, joint operation and participation in the follow-up evaluation, enabling communities and localities to create activities and projects that are creative and beneficial to the public.
- Reconciliation Justice Process: Using negotiating principles as a means of compromising understanding and solving problems with formal and

informal leaders. which is accepted and believed by people in the community such as village committees, village headmen, senior leaders or tribal leaders use a mediator to settle disputes that will arise against each other's property, body and mind.

- Joint learning process Emphasis on learning together from various activities according to the roles and duties of the work to be accepted in the opinions of each individual Helping and exchanging knowledge rationally.
- Community rules: There is a set of rules and regulations which is a community rule to guide community practices such as village rules, community forest rules, aquatic rules, and rules of different groups
- Roles of various institutions: Support organizations and institutions in the community, such as family institutions, schools, senior citizens Women, housewives, youth groups, etc., They serves as a role model, and they also show some generosity and dependence in the community. As for the local government organizations, they support activities to cultivate unity and love the hometown community.
- Culture, local customs: It is something that moulds and refines the people in the community to have a basic way of thinking and a way of life. Following right and good morals.
- Natural Resources and Environment: This is an important factor that creates stability in the life of the community. Both as a source of food, income, and dependence on the abundance in the community's production system.

Result Discussion

From the study, the research team can discuss the results as follows; In terms of Social context, politics and governance, cultural and economic contexts in the multicultural society of ethnic groups revealed that communities have a relationship system that is fundamental to the activities occurring in the community. They are united, help each other both in terms of working together in group systems and networks. Moreover, the community come together to create a good awareness of natural resources management to be worthwhile, collaborate in preserving, rehabilitating, and maintaining to stay with the community. Our result findings were consistent with the research of Suwannarat (2008), who studied "Factors promoting the peaceful coexistence of Thai Buddhists and Muslims in Satun Province." The results showed that Thai Buddhists, Muslims and Chinese are minorities who live in the same community, make a living together, they depend on each other from the past to the present, so there is no conflict because of ethnicity, religion, values, traditions and customs (Chernysheva, 2021). They engage in the same occupation, have the same production method and production relationship Therefore, there is no class gap in the community. There is no oppression and exploitation of the people in the community. Therefore, there is no conflict and governance of the leaders of each community, that comes from the consent of most of the people especially the selection of community leaders from past to present based on the principle of representing the majority. Therefore, changes in the rules, regulations, and rules of governing do not signify obstruction of peace. It has become an important factor in promoting peaceful coexistence between the two cultural groups (Suwannarat, 2008), the results were consistent with the research of Wani &

Saleeming (2014), who studied "The Coexistence of communities in a multicultural society: a case study of Sai Khao Subdistrict, Khok Pho District Pattani Province". The result of their study shows that natural resource capital, strong community leader, fair regime, kinship and communication in the same language is a factor contributing to the peaceful coexistence of Thai Buddhists and Malay Muslims in the Sai Khao sub-district. The Sai Khao community adjust and utilize relationship guidelines between Thai Buddhists and Malay Muslims during the unrest in the southern border provinces. By using a compromise method for clarification, understanding and cooperation of all parties, which is a good and sustainable method. (Wani,S. and Saleeming,M. 2014) and our result was also consistent with the research of Phasakorn Dokchan and Rapeeporn Thongton and Suraphon Promgun who studied The Creation of Harmonies of Loei's People According to the Dhamma Principles in the Texts on Theravada Buddhism for Living Together with Happiness. The research result found that creating reconciliation according to Dharma principles in Theravada Buddhist scriptures to have a coexistence in the happiness of the people as a whole at a high-level Physical, mental, and social behaviours. There are two methods for creating harmony among people for coexistence. (1) Jurisprudence. with the provincial governor and heads of various government departments and all sectors in the province are aware and driven the issue of reconciliation; and (2) the political science approach, to building reconciliation of the people for peaceful coexistence, it is found that activities should be organized to carry out activities involves the drive for monks to get involved with the public and private sectors and people in the link pushing the project to achieve its goals to cultivate reconciliation to create reconciliation and caring atmosphere (Dokchan et al., 2020).

Supporting factors lead to harmonious and peaceful coexistence. Based on diversity in a multicultural society, it consists of the following important elements: 1) Community Leadership Council 2) Reconciliation Justice Process 3) Collaborative Learning Process 4) Community Rules/Regulations 5) Role of Institutions in the Community 6) Local Customs and Cultures and 7) Natural Resource Capital and environment. Our result was consistent with Techatanminasakul (2020) research paper, on Guidelines to create social capital and social reconciliation in Thailand. He mentioned social capital as a form of collective action based on trust, kindness, generosity, mutual assistance, and the relationship system of people in the community, including wisdom, tradition, belief, culture, rules, and customs. These community patterns are formed as the forces in the community and society that can be used for self-management. In addition, cultural values, ideas, beliefs, strong relationship systems show the use of the community's existing capital as a tool to manage the community so that they can coexist peacefully (Techatanminasakul, 2020).

Suggestions and Solutions

The board of the research proposed in terms of policy recommendations to the community and suggestions for future research are as follows:

- Policy recommendations

  Government and private agencies help play a very important role in encouraging the community to learn how to coexist peacefully, by relevant departments at the district level. Local government organizations should focus, support and promote the learning of ethnic groups. Set goals, work plans, projects for peacebuilding in community plans and district development plans or action plans.

- Community-Level Recommendations

  Traditional value system, community's way of life, a body of knowledge and local wisdom of the community, beliefs, cultures, traditions, etc., Encourage community members to participate in the development of this social capital through a learning process by working with external aid agencies especially the community's participation in decision making which is at the heart of the most important contribution.

- Recommendations for further research:

  1) There should be a comparative study of peaceful coexistence in the multicultural society of ethnic groups with other communities. to see their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threat, including social change in the coexistence of the globalization era

  2) There should be a study on the roles of tribal leaders, community leaders, natural leaders and people who respect them to help in coordinating and solving problems. Also, encourage communities to participate in learning to solve problems and develop their social capital in solving problems.

  3) There should be a study of power relations on conflict and ethnic mix in the network connection of conflict management. To see the difference in management processes and formats.

Conclusion

Peaceful coexistence based on diversity in the multicultural society of Ban Rai community, Soppong sub-district, Pang Mapha district Mae Hong Son Province with the community and tribal leaders to create an understanding and acceptance of differences in concepts, cultures, traditions and differences ethnicity, language, religion, creed Living together harmoniously and peacefully for over 100 years, it is a community that is interesting to find answers to the principles of peaceful coexistence based on diversity in a multicultural society. Some principles and factors support coexistence. The research was a qualitative study, data were collected from related documents, in-depth interview, small group discussion, participatory, observation and the key informants are community leaders, religious leaders, ethnic leaders, qualified and experienced personnel, and local philosophers the results showed that the social community context was strongly correlated between the networks. In terms of governance, power is distributed to protect the community and they also set up guidelines and common village rules. In terms of culture, there are beliefs, traditions and rituals inherited from ancestors. In terms of the economic aspect, the concept of sufficiency economy has been put into practice in the community and the grouping for production, distribution, and fundraising within the community. This serves as an important mechanism for the sustainability of learning together

in the community. The supporting factors for harmonious coexistence and peace based on diversity in a multicultural society are 1) Community Leadership Council 2) Reconciliation Justice process 3) Co-learning process 4) Rules/rules. Community regulations; 5) roles of institutions in the community; 6) local customs and traditions; and 7) natural resource and environmental capital.

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