

Foreigners' Experiences and Perception of Street-level Good Governance in Thai Public Sectors

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Abstract

Good governance principles have been adopted, applied, and implemented in Thailand, reflecting global trends. This notion enables public sector organizations to perform consistently in the best interests of stakeholders and residents, directly contributing to positive user experiences. Such favorable experiences are inextricably linked to foreigners' desires to interact with and work in Thailand. This research aims to discover foreigners' perceptions and experiences on good governance performed by the Thai public sector at the street-level. This qualitative research, in-depth interviews, and a group interview shed light on the public sector's effectiveness and efficiency as a service provider. There were 26 participants in this study, including 20 participants in in-depth interviews and 6 in a group interview. Adopting strong good governance practices can improve the country's global reputation and perception, benefiting the Thai economy.

The findings indicate that the perspectives and experiences of the majority of participants from both the in-depth and group discussion identified significant concerns and need for improvement in the areas of the rule of law, equity, transparency, and accountability. Also, the public sector's service performance toward foreigners can sometimes be inequitable due to race, wealth, and social status. Further research can uncover the underlying challenges that prevent the success of street-level good governance in the Thai public sector, that can be beneficial and help improve Thailand's reputation.

Keywords: Street-level Good Governance, Foreigners' Experiences and Perception, Thai Public Sector

Introduction

Numerous countries throughout history have battled with a public sector service gap against a backdrop of street-level good governance, and Thailand has been no exception.



It erodes trust, stifles economic progress, and exacerbates social inequality. Thailand's reputation has been tarnished by its high level of corruption, with a CPI score of 36 in 2018 and 2019. (International Transparency. The global anti-corruption coalition (n.d.). There are still difficulties at the street-level regarding what transpired and emerged in Thai public service, including the Thai public sector's questionable handling of residents, particularly foreigners. The performance of public sector officials can occasionally be unjust when it comes to delivering service to foreigners stemming from their ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic standing, or personal reasons.

Public policies take on their ultimate form and content at the street-level. Civil servants on the street are a subgroup of a public agency or government entity. Civil officials at the street-level usually have some control over the rules, regulations, and policies they administer. In this study, the civil workers who directly interact with the general population, including foreigners in Thailand, carry out and implement the acts mandated by a government's laws and public policies in sectors ranging from public safety and security to education and social services (Cohen, 2021). The visitors' impressions and experiences of the street-level governance of Thailand's public workers are intimately tied to the country's international reputation. (Tsai, M.-H., Melia, N. V., & Hinsz, V. B., 2020). As a result of this relationship, other foreigners in the global arena are more likely to judge how they engage with and connect with Thailand, particularly in this age of the internet and social media platforms. Foreigners' impressions and experiences of the Thai bureaucracy's street-level governance strongly correlate with trust. When compared to low trust, high levels of trust and confidence lowered perceived risks, and trust is favorably connected with economic development. At 10%, the correlation between trust and growth is statistically significant. Increases in confidence by one standard deviation - around 0.14 - enhance growth by 0.5 percentage points or 20% of the sample mean. (Yann Algan & Iza Pierre Cahuc, 2013) If the street-level perceptions and experiences of good governance in Thailand are positive, this will increase trust and confidence. For foreigners, selecting Thailand as their destination for various activities, interactions, and partnerships would be simpler.

Research Objectives

Foreigners' impressions and experiences of street-level good governance in the Thai public sectors are the focus of this study, which also aims to determine if street-level good governance has been successfully implemented in Thailand. The approaches used in this study will include qualitative research, in-depth interviews, and a group interview format.

Scope

This research aimed to investigate expatriates' perspectives and experiences about the street-level performance of good governance in Thailand's public sectors in accordance with the criteria established by Public Sector Development Commission's standards (OPDC). These good governance concepts include: Efficiency; Effectiveness; Accountability; Responsiveness; Moral/Ethical considerations; Transparency; Decentralization, Equity; the Rule of Law; and Participation/Consensus. For this study, 26 foreigners who had been in Thailand for at least one year, either for employment or study, in the Bangkok Metropolitan region and surrounding area during the years 2020 and 2021 were recruited from the Bangkok Metropolitan area and surrounding area. The factors investigated were foreigners' interactions with Thai public servants, the environment in which they occurred, their experiences, and their perspectives.

Literature Review

International organizations have been giving developing countries financial support to increase their development. On August 20, 1997, the IMF's Executive Board approved financial support for Thailand in obtaining financial assistance. One of the criteria required was to apply performance measure programs to public sector reform and introduce "good governance." (Wescott, C. 2000). In B.E. 2002, the Bureaucracy Reform resulted in considerable modifications to administrative processes and reorganization of government sectors in Thailand. It is the responsibility of the OPDC to provide support to the Office of Public Sector Development Commission (OPDC) by making recommendations and suggestions to cabinet ministers on a multitude of areas, including the structure of bureaucracy and budgeting systems, personnel systems, moral virtue, ethics standards, compensation, and other public sector practices. This is in accordance with the aspiration of the National Government Organization Act (5th Revision) B.E. 2002 and the royal decree 2003 B.E. on principles and practices of good governance. In 2012, the OPDC has introduced 10 Good Governance principles to promote reform and improve Thailand's bureaucratic institutions and public services. The OPDC good governance framework includes: Participatory, the Rule of Law, Transparency, Responsiveness, Equity, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Accountability, Strategic vision, and Consensus orientation. (OPDC, 2012)

Efficiency in the administration's resource allocation is targeted. Create investment-worthy productivity that maximizes public interest. The process and period of the mission must be minimized to facilitate and decrease the burden of expenditures and eliminate redundant and unnecessary missions.



Effectiveness requires that government officials have a strategic vision for meeting citizens' needs and that all stakeholders carry out their responsibilities in order to accomplish the organization's objectives; there is a clear operational goal, and that performance meets expectations. The public expects systematic and consistent operating procedures. Risk management is necessary, as is an emphasis on superior performance, which includes monitoring, analyzing, and continually improving operations.

Responsiveness means that government officials must be able to provide quality service, for example completing tasks on time to foster confidence and trust, thus meet the expectations/needs of service recipients and other stakeholders.

Accountability is open to public scrutiny, meaning government officials must be able to respond to inquiries and provide meaningful explanations or clarification. Included in this are establishing a progress reporting system and achieving public outcomes, as well as a procedure for resolving or minimizing any problems or impacts that may occur.

Transparency requires the government to act with integrity and openness, disclosing necessary and reliable information to the public. Additionally, a framework for quick access to this information must be established.

The rule of law requires those performing official duties to adhere carefully to the law, rules, and regulations. Treating all parties with equity, without discrimination, and considering the peoples' and diverse parties' rights and freedoms.

Equity requires that government service providers ensure equal service. There is no discrimination between sexes, ethnicity, language, age, physical conditions, socioeconomic status, religion, or education and that all service recipients and stakeholders are treated with the same practices and standards. Additionally, the equality of access to public services for a group of disadvantaged persons in society must be considered.

Participation/consensus-oriented means government performance must be receptive to public opinion and open for public participation in information sharing, understanding, and exchanging ideas and viewpoints. Government service providers, residents, or other relevant stakeholders should collaborate to solve critical problems/issues, engage in decision-making and operations, and participate in performance evaluations. Consensus or agreement amongst the groupings of stakeholders must be sought. Relevant interest groups, mainly those immediately impacted, must be free of objections or ongoing conflict concerns that prevent consensus.

This notion of public sector good governance will aid in improving the public sector's performance as a service provider and resolve service delivery issues.

Specific issues, however, continue to occur in public service, including the inappropriate treatment of the Thai public sector toward the citizens, especially foreigners. Many cases are filed against police officers and local administrative authorities. (Neubauer, Ian Lloyd, January 2015). The public sector official's performance can sometimes be substandard in providing service to foreigners due to race, gender, social status, or personal reasons. As these problems have existed for some time, parts of the Thai public sector have implemented good governance and performance measures since as early as 2002. Weak governance and slow economic development go hand in hand, while improved governance fosters development success (Thomson, Brown, Bureekul, March, 2003).

Street-level bureaucracy is also critical and necessary because it serves as the foundation for street-level good governance measures. This is where the principles of good governance come to life and take shape in reality. We can identify the gap in public service or good governance based on foreigners' experiences in Thailand. Government support is typically conditional on street-level bureaucrat performance, as the street-level is the face of government for the majority of lay people, as are expatriates' impressions and decisions which influence the decision to interact and collaborate. However, a survey of the literature suggests that few study how foreigners perceive and experience good governance on the street in Thailand. Street-level studies of good governance are inextricably linked to street-level bureaucracy, which serves as the liaison between policymakers and the people. Examples include police officers, border guards, social workers, and public school professors. In comparison to policy-focused civil employees that do not interface with members of the general public, these civil authorities interact directly with them

Lipsky's "Street-level Bureaucracy" analysis of the implementation gap in welfare policy focuses on the problem of front-line discretion. Lipsky's primary concentration was on human administration, which he describes as "welfare, police, medical care, and education", bureaucracies at the grass-roots level. These lower-level employees "have significant power in establishing the kind, extent, and quality of benefits and punishments delivered by their agency (Lipsky, 1980). Themes include to distinguish yourself from one's individual's interests, or focus on the resources allotted to such organizations which are chronically insufficient, resulting in less staff time to handle huge caseloads. As long as service demand exceeds supply, this scenario will never change.

Street-level bureaucracy is also tasked to pursue several imprecise and conflicting aims concurrently, and success is difficult to quantify. Yet, street bureaucrats adopt work routines that serve their interests. Lipsky (1980) observed that street-level bureaucrats are only interested in handling work that suits individual purposes, or only carry out prominent



government policies that incorporate sanctions for non-implementation. They encounter structural barriers in fulfilling objectives and carry the perception that they must change their work habits to reflect lesser expectations of themselves and their clients while still doing their best under the circumstances. They often concoct rationales that enable them to continue working.

Lipsky identified three basic "practice patterns" employed by bureaucrats on the ground. To begin, they re-allocate services and attempt to curb demand, for example, by withholding information or using a method known as "creaming"—choosing work that is more likely to generate success. Another coping mechanism is to selectively choose people with uncomplicated or straight-forward issues to achieve results. Second, they alter their professional beliefs to close the gap between their desired outcomes and the resources available to accomplish goals. Finally, they often change perspectives toward work by adopting a cultural concept that impoverished people are accountable for their circumstances. Through this altered mindset, they reduce accountability.

Another researcher, Prottas (1979) studied how organizational structures shape the behavior of street bureaucrats. He focused on the role of bureaucrats as "frontier actors," occupying the front lines between organizations and customers and managing the information held by each other. According to Prottas, classification is a major activity of street-level bureaucrats, and classification can impact those seeking service. Bureaucrats alone have access to both the organizational rules that define categories and service choices toward clients with characteristics that fit more or less closely into those categories. Therefore, bureaucrats can manipulate rules to change a client's classification, or control the information provided by the client to influence a client's classification. And follow other

Albert Bandura is another researcher developed the Social Learning Theory, "a theory of learning that focuses on changes in behavior that result from observing others" (Bandura, 2001). Social Learning Theory is the view of psychologists, emphasizing that behavior is learned through environmental experiences and that cognitive factors influence learning. Building on this theory, Bandura developed Social Cognitive Theory which emphasizes the roles of beliefs, self-perceptions, and learner expectations. According to social cognitive theorists, learning is viewed as a change in a person's mental processes that stimulates the capacity to demonstrate different behaviors (McLeod, 2016).

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) emphasizes that learning occurs in a social context and that much of what is learned is gained through observation. SCT has been applied broadly to such diverse areas. "A closely related assumption within the SCT is that people have an agency or ability to influence their own behavior and the environment in a purposeful, goal-directed

fashion" (Bandura, 2001). Bandura created the Triadic reciprocal causation model, which can be used to explain how learning results from the interactions among three factors: (1) personal and cognitive factors, (2) behavioral patterns, and (3) social environment. An example of personal factors is self-control. This concept will help us understand participants who live in Thailand for a long time, adapt to the new culture, and follow other people as they conduct their daily life.

Methodology

The research consisted of in-depth interviews and a group interview. It was conducted from January to May 2020, with twenty in-depth interviews and six group interview participants. These participants included academics, business people, and students aged 20 to 60. These selected participants are foreigners who lived, worked, or studied in Thailand for at least one year. The selected foreigners who participated in this study represented the group targeted to be attracted to Thailand as they comprise a legal and skilled labor force that can contribute to the global reputation of Thailand.

The methods used in the interviews included phone, e-mail, and face-to-face. The in-depth interview and group discussion participants' identities have been concealed for anonymity. The two groups were asked for their perspectives and experiences regarding the ten principles of good governance: efficiency, effectiveness accountability, responsiveness, moral/ethics, transparency, decentralization, equity, the rule of law, participation/consensus, that is reflect by the public sector at the street-level of good governance. The in-depth interviews were held at the researchers' workplace, university, or a specific meeting place. Each in-depth interview with the individual participant lasted approximately 45-60 minutes. The interview format consisted of personal and unstructured interviews where semi-structured questions were used to elicit key information. The participants were from 11 countries: Australia, China, Croatia, Germany, Nepal, New Zealand, Nigeria, the Philippines, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

The data was analyzed with assistance from Atlas-ti analysis software. The collected information was grouped based on the similarity of concepts, which determined the factors that caused street-level good governance to be successful or successful in providing effective and efficient service by the public sector from a foreigner's perspective. In addition, a focus group was conducted consisting of international students from different countries. It utilized semi-structured interview questions to gather data on their thoughts and experiences regarding street-level good governance in the Thai public sector.



Findings and Discussion

Following an in-depth interview with participants, the researcher observed that they consistently and regularly referenced four OPDC concepts: accountability, transparency, equity, and the rule of law. Of these four issues the Royal Thai Police and the Department of Immigration were where respondents highlighted these themes. Both sectors are critical to Thai society and to the study's international participants who live in Thailand. Everyone who wishes to remain in Thailand must maintain a proper visa status. Also, foreign nationals must report to their local immigration office every 90 days to verify current residence and visa status.

The interviewees said they visited immigration at least four times each year to preserve their legal status while residing in Thailand. Concerning the Royal Thai Police, several participants stated that they interacted with police mostly with traffic difficulties, lost and stolen property, or reporting a crime. Numerous individuals discussed their experiences as a "consumer or client" based on street-level good governance ideas.

Regarding experiences with effective governance, accountability will be examined, followed by transparency, equity, and the rule of law.

Accountability

Accountability is a concept that is evident in the public sector, where government officials are accountable to higher authorities in the institutional chain of command as well as to the general public, non-governmental organizations, the news media, and a variety of other stakeholders (Khotami, 2017). Accountability relates to responsibility and liability to higher authorities. For example, the accountability of work units is to local governments, the accountability of local governments to the central government. Horizontal accountability is the government's responsibility to the broader community. Accountability explains duties and responsibilities, promotes responsible behavior, and establishes legitimacy and trust. The study's majority of participants had encountered problems with horizontal accountability when officials were not held accountable for their obligations. Most participants emphasized accountability regarding the public sector's acts that fostered community confidence, devotion to its position and responsibilities directed toward the community.

Royal Thai Police

Participant #20 claimed that she experienced unfair treatment after a traffic accident. Participant #20 works at a private university living in Thailand for the last ten years. She once got into a car accident with a motorcyclist. The participant related that the motorcycle hit her car in the intersection. She felt she was not wrong since she had already passed through the

intersection. The participant also discovered that the motorcyclist did not have his motorcycle license or insurance for his motorbike. Importantly, the police officer was connected to the respondent's uncle. She felt that the police officer did not care about her situation and paid little attention to the evidence related to the event despite the participant attempts to show him her video recording as evidence. The participant felt that her rights were being ignored and that she was mistreated. The police officer claimed that the participant was at fault and refused to examine any of the participant's evidence. He did not perform his job properly and exhibited nepotism.

"I got into a car accident, where the motorcycle hit me on the side after I crossed to the other side. It might be partly my fault, but everything happened so fast. At that time, I panicked since it was my first car accident in Thailand. I also found out later that the motorcyclist did not have a license. The police arrived, and the first thing the officer said was, "It was your fault". I was shocked, did not know what to do and didn't understand why he didn't look at the evidence. Later, I found out that the driver who hit me had an uncle who is a police officer. The police officer was taking sides rather than seeing the actual situation."

(Participant #20, Business owner, personal communication, February 20, 2020)

This participant's report indicated that the police officer did not demonstrate horizontal accountability, which is the government's responsibility. In this case, it was the accountability of the police officer to the broader community to build legitimacy and trust. Participant 20 mentioned that the police officer did not perform his duty appropriately as he did not provide a fair judgment of the situation. This issue relates to horizontal accountability, where the police officer is expected to clarify his role and responsibilities, encourage responsible activism, and build legitimacy and trust.

Immigration

Croatian participant #4 has been living in Thailand for three years, working as a researcher and business owner. He alleged that he was mistreated by a Department of Immigration official who provided service during his visa renewal. He had the impression that the immigration officer was uninterested in assisting him. He stated as follows:

"...They are not that helpful...when I go out and do this visit to immigration, I feel like they didn't want you, they behave like that. Waiting in the queue for all of us is for hours. Nothing. Then you have all these papers, and then they say I don't have this one, come back...Oh.my...." (Participant#4, Student, personal communication, February 28, 2020)

According to this participant, the immigration officer failed to exhibit horizontal accountability, which is the Department of Immigration's obligation to the broader community



to foster legitimacy and confidence. Participant 4 indicated that the immigration officials failed to do their duties because they were unwilling to assist the participant or treat them like a consumer or client. According to the participant's opinion, the immigration officer evaded their responsibility in this circumstance.

The results of the in-depth interview suggested that the Department of Immigration and the Royal Thai Police lack the necessary horizontal accountability to the broader community to foster legitimacy and confidence. They fail to discharge their responsibilities properly and fairly toward non-Thai people residing in Thailand. This result may erode public faith in the Royal Thai Police and the Immigration Department.

Transparency

Transparency is another well-recognized key component of effective government. The phrase "transparency" refers to disclosing information and functioning openly and applies to governments, public sectors, private corporations, and small businesses. Transparency is another critical component of good governance. Transparency, according to the OPDC, requires government officials to act honestly and candidly, which includes giving required and trustworthy information to the public and developing a mechanism for simple access to data. During the in-depth interviews, participants presented a variety of perspectives on their experiences with good governance on the ground. The findings suggested that the majority of participants believed that Thailand lacked transparency.

Participant#4 from Croatia had lived and worked in Thailand for three years as a researcher. He claimed he had experienced a lack of transparency in the immigration sector. He stated that laws and regulations frequently change and are not transparent. He said as follows:

"I didn't see much challenge in dealing with Immigration except that it's never clear exactly what we need to do and it changes too often. It changes all the time..." (Participant#4, researcher, personal communication, February 28, 2020)

Participant #2 was from China and spent three years working at a private institution in Thailand. He and participant #4 concurred, claiming that the material presented is ambiguous and that the rules and regulations are continuously changing. He stated as follows:

"... transparency is an issue. The information (requirements) is not clear at all." (Participant#2, lecturer, personal communication, February 7, 2020)

The experiences of Participants #4 and #2 indicated a lack of transparency since laws and regulations were continually changing, confusing the participants as to the appropriate course of action.

In general, based on their claims and experiences, international participants believed that transparency was an issue that required improvement. Even now, changes have been achieved with the assistance of technology and policy development; nonetheless, specific information remains obscure and difficult to locate, resulting in misconceptions and a breakdown of confidence between the government and its people. This might eventually result in resentment and mistrust of the public sector.

Equity

In terms of equity and inclusivity, individuals should have the opportunity to enhance or maintain their well-being. The OPDC defines equity in Thai good governance as the ability of the government's service performance to deliver service equity. There is no distinction between male and female, ethnic origin, language, age, physical condition or health, economic or social standing, religious views, educational attainment or training. Equitable access to public services must also be considered when a group of disadvantaged persons in society is considered.

The international participants' perspectives demonstrate that many continue to believe that there is little-to-no equitable treatment in the public sector.

Participant #15 from the United States is a teacher at an international school in Thailand. He had spent two years in Thailand. He claimed that officers treat foreign nationals differently based on their origin. Foreigners from western nations who are wealthier receive preferential treatment over those from Thailand's neighboring countries, such as Cambodia. According to the participant, the officer treated visitors from Cambodia as third-class citizens. He stated as follows:

"They are discriminated against people from a different countries but all foreigners are treated differently, especially the Western ones who are the ones with money. The one from Cambodia, are treat like 3rd class, and we are treated 2nd class." (Participant#15, Teacher, personal communication, February 25, 2020)

Participant 12, a lecturer, mentioned that foreigners could also classify into classes depending on where they are from and will be treated differently, resulting in inequality.

I think it comes already defined class how much money you have because they are discriminated against people from doing good cheese [wealthy people], but all foreigners are treated differently, especially the Western ones[who] are the ones that have money...like if there from a neighbor country they treat you differently...and look down[at] these countries.'
(Participant #12, lecturer, personal communication, February 19, 2020)



After in-depth interviews, a focus group revealed agreement with participants 12 and 15 about wealth and financial status. One of the focus group participants observed that power might erode the rule of law.

Inequality occurs in Thai society, which can result in unfairness at times. The researcher took note of foreigners' situations in which norms and regulations were overturned, and a penalty was evaded. This, it seems to them, had become the norm. This erodes public confidence in government, particularly in departments such as the Royal Police and the Department of Immigration. According to participant reports, this results in a decrease in society's faith in maintaining equality.

The Rule of Law and Consensus-oriented

The rule of law is vital to society's stability since it establishes a legally enforceable framework. Additionally, it serves as a social compact between the government and its population, laying the groundwork for trust and responsibility. Without the rule of law, the social compact may collapse, and governments may face conflicts that erode the system's stability and people's security. The findings from the in-depth and focus group interviews suggested that all participants considered that the rule of law was weakly implemented.

Participant#17 from the United States was a business owner who lived in Thailand for more than ten years. He shared his perspective and experience with the rule of law. He claimed that the rules in Thailand are unwritten and controlled only by certain people within that sector. He stated:

"Law is a gray area here. Many unwritten rules are most active in the U.S., but at least [in] the U.S., it is laid out regarding how you have to overcome the hurdle. The hurdles that you have to get over. You have to overcome all the bureaucracy, but in Thailand, those rules are unwritten and control only certain people within that sector...You see...it is not changing anything per se. I'm sure you've heard the term anything can be changed in Thailand with money. You see... that's corruption. That's where you see all the time people commit the crime and don't get prosecuted." (Participant #17, Business owner, personal communication, February 20, 2020)

Participant#17 feels that rules are frequently unwritten and are manipulated by specific individuals. Money can influence everything, even regulations, and laws that allow individuals to commit crimes without being charged.

As the participant remarked, the rule of law is not well enforced. In this instance, the police officer disregarded violators of the law. He has witnessed this several times and understands why individuals do not obey the rules when they know they will not face the

consequences for breaking the rule. The participant remarked that foreigners who have lived in Thailand for an extended period realize this.

Participant #7, from New Zealand, was the marketing director of a private institution in Thailand, where he had spent two years in Thailand. He stated that the regulations had been abused. Too many restrictions demand several supporting papers when contacting the public sector, such as household registration, national identification, or other essential documents to authenticate your identity.

"It's overused. It's too many, and I mean it's too many rules...for example, if you go to do something...you need your citizen ID. You need a household registration paper. You need so much documentation just to do some simple thing ...you have to do copy after copy and signature after signature. When I live in New Zealand, I use only my driver's license for everything." (Participant#7, marketing director, personal communication, March 11, 2020)

According to the statement, far too many restrictions demand documents to establish one's identification. In New Zealand, though, he only required his driver's license to prove his identity.

Participant#17 from the United States was a business owner and had lived in Thailand for more than ten years. He shared his perspective and experience with the rule of law. He claimed that the rule of law sees little enforcement and people can avoid punishment.

"I also actually bought my way out driving without a driving license. They stop me and at that time, I don't have my driving license with me. So, I gave the cop 100 baht, and they let me go." (Participant #17, Business owner, personal communication, February 20, 2020)

All participants agreed that Thailand's rule of law is mostly unenforced. Additionally, the rule of law is frequently unwritten and, when it is codified, can be ambiguous. Wealth and power were the most often stated elements in relation to the rule of law by participants. This circumstance erodes public confidence in government agencies such as the Royal Thai Police and the Department of Immigration. Participants thought that they could live without fear of getting into trouble if they owned two things: riches and authority.

These findings on foreigners' viewpoints are critical since they reflect on outsiders' perceptions of Thailand's public sector performance. By enhancing foreigners' trust and confidence in Thailand, good governance improves the country's reputation and so boosts the Thai economy

The participant's reactions indicated that excellent governance may be achieved via systems and regulations that assure the repeatability and consistency of processes. Within an organization, the highest level of authority should be able to cascade down transparency, accountability, and effective policies. This favorable effect on the public sector's overall



performance and efficiency is one of the primary reasons why excellent governance helps an institution's success. According to the research, there are some challenges that several foreigners have encountered. As street-level officials said in Michael Lipsky's study, lower-level personnel ratios can affect service availability. This may result in the development of new client-processing processes or routines, resulting in disparities and injustices in service provision and discriminatory service decisions. In this instance, it will be up to the foreigners who obtain the service to ensure they receive adequate and fair treatment. In the majority of the situations cited in this research, the officers deliver the service using their method of offering assistance to foreigners. Another element that may contribute to service inequity is a language barrier, which results in miscommunication between officers and clients over the interpretation of issues.

Conclusion

For more than a decade, Thailand has struggled with accountability, transparency, inequality, and the rule of law, resulting in substandard public performance on the ground. The Thai Royal Police and the Department of Immigration were the most often cited sectors in the in-depth and group interviews. The findings indicated that foreigners' experiences of good governance at the street-level were most strongly associated with four principles: accountability, transparency, equity, and the rule of law. According to the accountability component results, most participants believed that both the Department of Immigration and the Royal Thai Police lack horizontal accountability, i.e., a duty to the larger community that may help develop legitimacy and confidence. Both Immigration and the Police failed to hold themselves accountable for their actions. They could not carry out their responsibilities effectively or fairly in relation to non-Thai people residing in Thailand. This led participants to have less faith in the Thai Royal Police and the Department of Immigration.

Most international participants agreed that the level of openness in street-level good governance should be improved. The majority of participants felt that recent advancements had occurred as a result of technological assistance. However, many details remain unclear and difficult to locate, resulting in misconceptions and a breakdown of confidence between the government and its population. This might result in dissatisfaction and a rise in public sector distrust.

All participants agreed that there is inequity in providing services to the public sector, which can occasionally result in unfairness. The findings suggested that laws and regulations may be overruled and that punishments could be avoided. Many participants accepted this

as expected, becoming ingrained in Thai culture. The findings from the participants' experiences may point to a decline in public confidence in the public sector.

The participants in the rule of law issue all agreed that there would be relatively minimal enforcement. The majority of interviewees stated that the laws were unwritten or ambiguous as to whether it was published. Several participants noted that abundant statutes and regulations made it difficult to keep up with current critical situations. The most often mentioned elements affecting the rule of law by participants were wealth and power, which were perceived to result in unfair outcomes.

Foreign experiences with good governance at the street-level in the Thai public sector suggested some progress in recent years. However, there are still difficulties in establishing good governance at the street-level. These issues arise due to officers' inability to be held accountable, a lack of transparency, inequity, and a lack of enforcement of the rule of law. This result is also connected to Lipsky's discovery of his Bureaucracy's Street-level research. His research reveals that the public officer, or, as he described it, the civil servant, may design their process differently by allocating services differently and attempting to reduce demand through a practice called "creaming" (that is, employing what they think they are likely to succeed). Additionally, officers or public servants might alter their professional views in order to close the gap between their desired outcomes and the resources available to accomplish them. Thirdly, they can alter their opinions of customers by embracing the widespread societal assumption that impoverished people are to blame for their circumstances. At the street-level, with good governance, their opinion may be that foreigners' service is less significant than that of Thai citizens.

As indicated in the study, most foreigners have the experience that the service they received from public servants such as the Royal Thai Police or the Department of Immigration was limited. The results indicated that those who lived in Thailand for more than five years appeared to have adapted more to Thai culture and had more positive experiences of street-level good governance. This is a link to Social Learning Theory, "a theory of learning that focuses on changes in behavior that result from observing others" (Bandura 2001 as cited in Eggen, Kauchak, 2013). The data indicated that participants who live in Thailand for longer periods have learned how to adapt to the new environment and understand the new culture better than those who just recently moved to Thailand. As a result, they did not express the extent of dissatisfaction in their views as those who lived in Thailand for shorter periods. Participants from developed countries, such as the United States, Australia, and the Netherlands, had more negative comments about their experiences at the street-level. Participants from developed countries have a higher expectation of rules of law since they



have been in an environment where the rule of law is considered a priority and punishment can occur if one does not follow the standard the government has set. This higher expectation resulted in a concern about their action and the belief that law enforcement and public sectors should also perform their duties as is expected of one in wider society.

This research result can benefit society as it provides unique insights for the future which have not been observed at the street-level. The findings of this research into street-level good governance from a foreigner's perspective will benefit academics by providing new knowledge of foreigners' experiences and perspectives relating to street-level good governance. In addition, improving street-level good governance will improve Thailand's ranking on the corruption and transparency index, strengthening trust which will ultimately help boost the Thai economy.

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