

## Information Culture in Thai Public Libraries

Namtip Wipawin<sup>1</sup> and Pawinee Sanchon<sup>2</sup>

### ABSTRACT

The Public library service reflects the learning culture in every community. Information culture at the national level is mostly influenced by value systems, while organizational cultures appear to be primarily based on shared practices. Information culture is as varied as the organizational culture, which is the perception of information work and information practices by its members within an organization. If information culture is part of the organizational culture which may reflect the organizational effectiveness, the goal of information culture will also impact on the delivery of products and services to users. This paper aims to study the organizational and information culture in Thai public libraries. The qualitative research method was applied by interviewing head librarians of major public libraries in Thailand. The tool used in data collection was an in-depth interview. Descriptive analysis was used for data analysis.

This paper identifies the organizational and information culture in Thai public libraries, the success factors of the public libraries in Thailand by comparing with Finland. The success factors of public libraries in Thailand are administrator policy, qualify staff, teamwork, cooperation and network within departments while the success factors of public libraries in Finland are teamwork with leaders who always listen to customers to support the education system with the key strategy of customer-oriented service development.

**Keywords :** Organizational culture, Information culture, Thai Public library

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<sup>1</sup> Associate Professor in the Ph.D. Program, Department of Information Science, School of Liberal Arts, Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University.

namtip.wip@stou.ac.th, nwipawin@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of Information Science. Sakonnakhon Rajabhat University.

Ph.D. Candidate, Program in Information Science, Department of Information Science, School of Liberal Arts, Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University.

pawineesanchon@hotmail.com

## Introduction

Many decades of public library development in Thailand reflect the learning culture in Thai society as well as Thai national libraries development to provide library services to public. Since the beginning of the public reading room in 1916 by the Education Department (Now is Ministry of Education) to promote reading and learning habits. At present, there are more than 800 public libraries in 76 provinces for the Thai population of 67 million people. While the national library of Thailand with 16 branches acts as the legal deposit repository of Thai national intellectual properties. Thai national libraries also serve as the public libraries as the places to support life-long learning education and reading habits in Thai society.

The concept of information culture can be defined in individual level within organizations in terms of "a pattern of behaviors and attitudes that express an organization's orientation toward information." (Davenport and Prusak 1997: 84) It refers to the beliefs (assumptions, values, norms, attitudes) and behaviors (work practices, rituals, social dramas, and communication) of people within organizations which comprise organizational information and information technology. Therefore, information culture is the perception of information work and information practices by its members within the organization. Information culture becomes part of organizational culture that portrays values and attitudes to information. Information

culture may reflect the organizational effectiveness (Oliver 2011). The goal of information culture will also impact the delivery of products and services to users.

Culture at the national level is mostly influenced by value systems, while organizational cultures appear to be primarily based on shared practices. Information culture is as varied as the organizational culture. Some studies suggest that organizations that have strong information culture are more likely to achieve success in their business performance (Grimshaw 1995). Then library information services aim at providing high quality information and services to users. The purpose of this article is to explore information culture in Thai public libraries.

## Research questions:

This paper aims to study the organizational culture and information culture in Thai public libraries and comparing the information culture in Finnish and Thai public libraries.

## Data and methods:

Data for this study were gathered from five head librarians in the major cities of Thailand in May-July 2015. The major public libraries are in Bangkok, Pitsanulok, Rayong, Trang and Khonkaen. The tool used in data collection was an in-depth interview. The interview questions are 2 parts, part 1 is organizational culture (organizational structure, plan & work flow, communication, leadership), part 2 is information environment, information

gathering and use, information systems). The interviews ranged from 30 minutes and the library observation. All interviews were taking notes. The data were analysed by content analysis. The data was transcribed at word level. By reading the transcripts were identified the themes of research questions. Based on these themes was formed an index. The observation and interview data were sorted by the index categories

### **Findings:**

This paper describes the organizational culture of the public libraries in Thailand as perceived by experienced professionals, the head librarians of five major cities in the country. This regards the issues of organizational structure, work processes, communication and leadership styles. Further, our approach to information culture regards the issues of information environment, information gathering and information systems as follows:

1) The Organizational Culture of public libraries in Thailand

The study found that the organizational culture of Thai Public Libraries comprised of the decentralized organizational structure, which relied on the non-formal education department and the local government policy. For flat organizational structure used a variety of expertise and knowledge for running the library operations. The Thai public library's core values were learning space of the community, 12 Thai values and dynamic organization. The strategies of the public libraries were friendly spaces, library as public service, follow national strategies, local information and lifestyle urban community. The success factors of the public libraries were administrator policy, qualify staff, teamwork, cooperation and network within departments. The communication within organizations was the non-formal meeting, survey need of resources, survey feedback and user satisfaction. The leadership style built on group relationship and flexible teamwork. The head librarians also emphasized that the director also leads as a coach with interpersonal skills. The details are shown in Table 1:

Public libraries in Finland	Public libraries in Thailand
<u>Organizational Structure</u>	<u>Organizational Structure</u>
<b>Structure:</b> Decentralized, Part of Hierarchy(5)	<b>Structure:</b> Decentralized(4) Flat(1)
<b>Core values:</b> Customer oriented(5)	<b>Core values:</b> Learning space of the community(5) 12 Thai values(4) Dynamic organization (1)

Public libraries in Finland	Public libraries in Thailand
<b>How staff works for core values:</b> Talking/ Meeting(5)/Discussion/Culture <b>Communication</b>	<b>How staff works for core values:</b> Non Formal Meeting(5) <b>Communication</b>
Non-formal, Ask, Survey feedback, Use statistics	Non-formal, Pro-active activity, Survey need of resources, Survey feedback
<b>Plan &amp; Work flow</b>	<b>Plan &amp; Work flow</b>
<b>Strategies:</b> Reading as a way of life(2)/Motivation is high among staff/Leisure, work with schools/In-time Library collection and service culture	<b>Strategies:</b> Friendly spaces(3), Library as public service(2), Follow national strategies(1), Local information(1), Lifestyle urban community
<b>Success factors:</b> Teamwork(2), Good leaders/Listen to customers(5) Go for targets/Education system and reading culture	<b>Success factors:</b> Administrator Policy(5) Qualify staff(5) Teamwork(4) Cooperation and network within departments(4)
<b>Workgroup activities:</b> Regular meetings(5)/Discussion, Talk about budgets, Staff education, Education and culture groups	<b>Workgroup activities:</b> Regular meeting (2)
<b>Work plans:</b> City plans, Follow strategies(5) <b>Leadership</b>	<b>Work plans:</b> Library activity plans, Follow strategies <b>Leadership</b>
Coach ,Open, Flexible, Team, Direct	Group relationship, Open, Flexible, Coach

**Table 1** : The Organizational Culture of Public Libraries in Finland and Thailand.

2) Information culture of public libraries in Thailand

The study found that the information culture of Thai Public Libraries comprised the information environment of non-formal education apartment policy and national policy with library activity plan. Information channels were meetings. Information systems were leaflet, reports, memo of non-formal meeting and e-office. Information sharing were office news, reports, magazines, meetings/collaboration with other departments. Head librarians expressed that information gathering

and use were local information, newspapers, reports Information sources were Internet, memo from non-formal education department, newspapers /customer feedback/ /social media. Information resources were intranet library system and OPAC. Most public libraries lacked of library websites and webOPACs but only few Internet services available as well as webOPAC. Library information services as community public services were free access to information. Information skills were service mind, interpersonal communication skills and reading activity skills. The relationship of orga-

nizational culture and information culture were regular meetings with other departments to

support high-quality service within the public libraries. The details are shown in Table 2:

Public libraries in Finland	Public libraries in Thailand
<u>Information environment</u>	<u>Information environment</u>
Information policy: City policy(5)	Information policy: Non-formal education department policy(4), National policy(1)
Information management plan: City plan(5)	Information management plan: Library activity plan(5)
<u>Information Systems</u>	<u>Information Systems</u>
Information channels: Internet, Meetings(5)	Information channels: Meetings(5)
Information systems: Library databases(5), Databases for staff(5)	Information systems: Leaflet(4), Non-Formal meeting(4), e-Office, e-Book(1)
Information sharing: CoP, Blog, eLearning, Meetings/Collaboration with customers	Information sharing: Office news/reports, Magazine(3) Meetings/Collaboration with other departments
<u>Information Gathering</u>	<u>Information Gathering</u>
Types: Statistics information(5), newspapers, reports, articles in social media/city plan strategies, city intranet	Types: Local information(5), newspapers, reports,
Sources: Internet, City intranet, Memo from library groups, Archives, Articles/Customer Feedback/Library magazines/Email groups/Social media	Sources: Internet, Memo from Non-Formal Education Department, Newspaper /Customer Feedback/ /Social media
Info.resources: Library system(5), Library collection/Finnish classification system (YKL)	Info.resources: Library system(5)
<u>Information Use</u>	<u>Information Use</u>
Info.skills: Cooperation, Communication skills, Helping people/ICT skills(3), Language skills(2), Literatures/Project skills/Services skills	Info.skills: Service mind, Interpersonal Communication skills(3), Reading activity skills(2)
Ethics: Keep information privacy of customers(5), Education for staff/Freedom of speech, Free access to information	Ethics: Free access to information(5)

Table 2 : The Information Culture of Public Libraries in Finland and Thailand.

## Conclusion

Even though, most Thai public libraries in this study are under the Non-Formal Education Department but there were also under the Bangkok metropolitan administration, local government in the provinces and Office of Knowledge Management and Development (Public Organization) which they shared the common core value as the learning place for the community and the strategy as the friendly space. The various administrations of Thai public libraries affect the insufficient budget provision in life-long learning education in Thailand which is different from Finland that public libraries in Finland are regulated by the Library Act and decree defining of policy and funding. Therefore, the Finnish government subsidized the organization activities by funding the proportion of the cost to run public libraries in each community. From this study, the success factors of public libraries in Thailand are administrator policy, qualify staff, teamwork, cooperation and network within organizations while the success factors of public libraries in Finland are teamwork with leaders who always listen to customers to support the education system with the key strategy of customer-oriented service development. So the success of Thai public libraries depends very much on the administrative policy makers and leaders who understand concept of lifelong learning education and support the library as the infrastructure of learning and reading culture for improving people quality in each community.

Free access to information, service mind, Interpersonal Communication skills are the common activities in public libraries in Thailand and Finland. The needs to use ICT skills and the Internet for sharing information should be developed more in the Thai public library policy and plan as well as language skills, project skills and service skills. Information gathering and use are local information, newspapers, reports, memo from non-formal education department and the intranet library system. Information culture in Finnish public libraries is the perception of information work and information practices by its members within the organization that follow the city policy and to ensure the access to knowledge and cultural sources in a networking information, civic and learning society. Besides, the quality of public libraries in Finland comprises the sufficient number of qualified librarians and staff, adequate and update information resources, the Internet and digital services (Finnish Public Library Policy 2015: 2009).

Therefore, Thai public libraries still need the non-formal education policy for the sufficient number of qualified librarians and staff, adequate and update information resources, the Internet and digital services. As the high quality library services to support the learning culture of Thai society are the goal for Thai public libraries to move forward by emphasizing on customer-orientation as the core value and using information technology to improve library performance. From this study, it is interesting to find out how to create

strong information culture for the high-quality library performance.

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## A Model for Self Sufficiency Economy Development of Don Du Village, Pasang Sub-district, Jaturapakpimarn District, Roi-Ed Province

Komin Kulwetchakit , Suwaki Sripatha and Rangsan Singhalert<sup>1</sup>

### ABSTRACT

The purposes of the research were to analyze current conditions, problems and needs for self-sufficiency economy development of Don Du village, Pasang sub-district, Jaturapakpimarn district, Roi-Ed province, 2) to design a model for Self Sufficiency Economy Development of Don Du village, and to implement and evaluate the model. The research methodology was divided into three phases. The data was collected by questionnaires and analyzed by the computer program. MANOVA (Repeated Measures) was employed for hypothesis testing. The study showed the primary data of Don Du village. There were 26 families in the village, most of people in the village were farmers and temporary jobs such as growing vegetables and handicraft. The problems of self-sufficiency economy development of Don Du village consisted of knowledge and professional skills, government support, professional training, yearly drought, and capital. The needs for self-sufficiency economy development of Don Du village included professional training, knowledge of the self-sufficiency economy philosophy through study visit to farms of organic vegetables, raising domestic chicken and ducks, raising pig, planting mushroom, raising cow, cat fish and frogs. The model for self-sufficiency economy development of Don Du village consisted of six activities: study visit to the best practice village/community, 2) frog farm projects, 3) catfish farm project, 4) organic vegetables farm, 5) mushroom farm project, duck farm project, and domestic chicken farm project. Finally, the findings indicated that the research participants significantly earned more money than before using the model. Additionally, they saved more money from buying consumer products than before using the model because they grew their own organic vegetables and they raised their own animals.

**Keyword :** Economy Self-Sufficiency Community Self-Sufficiency Economy

<sup>1</sup> PhD Candidate, Doctor of Philosophy Program in Regional Development Strategies, Rajabhat Maha Sarakham University

<sup>2</sup> Associate Professor, PhD. Lecturer of the Philosophy Program in Regional Development Strategies, Rajabhat Maha Sarakham University

<sup>3</sup> Assistant Professor, PhD. Lecturer of Humanities and Social Sciences Faculty, Rajabhat Maha Sarakham University

## Introduction

In 1932, Thailand had a custom-based society, and the Buddhism principles have been applied to create their behavior, values and daily life of Thai people. Thai people have the simple lifestyle based on the religious principles (Soontharaporn Dechapalokul, 2000 : 160). The 8th National Economic and Social Development Plan (1997-2001) focused on human resource development contributing to the sustainable development of economy, society and natural resource and environment in Thailand. Wicharn Panich (2001 : 21) states that Thailand has encountered the problems of economy, society and environment, so that it is necessary to keep balance of four main areas of the national development : economy, society, politics and environment.

Consequently, The 9th National Economic and Social Development Plan (2002 - 2006) emphasized the strong base of Thai society focusing on morality and quality of Thai people. The strategies for sustainable rural development was to develop rural and urban areas in Thailand focusing on participation and self sufficiency based on the self-sufficiency economy philosophy. The 10th National Economic and Social Development Plan (2007-2011) applied the principles of the self-sufficiency economy philosophy to improve human resource, society, and economy of Thailand focusing on moderation, reason, carefulness, and morality for planning and making decision. The 11th National Economic and Social Development Plan (2012-2016) has

accelerated the competency of Thai citizens in preparation of economic and social development.

According to the national strategies of the 10th and 11th national Economic and Social Development Plan, the author has conducted research on a model for self - sufficiency economy development of Don Du village, Pasang sub-district, Jaturapakpimarn district, Roi-Ed province consisting of two phases : model design and development, model implementation and evaluation.

## Objectives

1. To analyze current conditions, problems and needs of people for self sufficiency economy development of Don Du Village, Pasang Sub-district, Jaturapakpimarn District, Roi-Ed Province
2. To design a model for self sufficiency economy development of Don Du Village
3. To implement and evaluate the model

## Hypothesis

Family income, food of people in Don Du village increases and their expenses of consumer products decreases after implementing the model for self sufficiency economy development.

## Research Methodology

The mix research was composed of quantitative research and participatory action research, and the research was divided into three phases.