

A Model of Political Participation Development for People in Roi-Ed Province

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ABSTRACT

The research aimed to investigate factors affecting political participation development of people in Roi-Ed province, to design a model of political participation development for people in Roi-Ed province, and to implement and evaluate the model. The research methodology was divided into three steps : contextual study, model design, and model implementation and evaluation. The data was collected by questionnaires, and analyzed by the computer program. The Stepwise method of discriminant analysis, canonical correlation analysis and MANOVA (Repeated Measures) were used for hypotheses testing. The findings showed that the factors significantly affected the political participation of people in Roi-Ed province at the .05 level. The factors included faith in political party, trust in political rights, convenience of transport, and catching up with political news. The model of political participation for people in Roi-Ed province consisted of seven major activities of the three key factors. 1 Trust in political party consisted of three activities: 1.1) a training course of ideology, principles, and relationships between political party and members, 1.2) a training course of political party administration, and 1.3) study trip and knowledge exchange with experts in politics. 2) Catching up with political news consisted of two activities: Thai citizenship and creating democratic attitudes. 3) Political rights included two activities: field trip and knowledge exchange with experts in politics. Lastly, the findings indicated that the trainees believed in the political parties, caught up political news, trusted in political rights and participated in political issues significantly at the .05 level.

Keywords : Political Participation, Roi-Ed Province

Introduction

Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand (interim edition) of B.E. 2007 has legislated the main role in political participation of Thai people in the Act 7. The political participation refers to the authority of Thai people to determine the national policies and public policies, including election of national and local candidates of the political parties. One of the most important administrative strategy is a decentralization system of Thailand. Due to the previous centralization of Thai political system, the system caused the structural violence in Thailand. Therefore, the decentralization has been employed to reduce the violence and conflict and the system improves the political stability in Thailand. However, most of Thai citizens have not participated the democratic campaign including political activities. As a result, they have not known and realized their rights, roles and responsibilities as Thai citizens according to the Constitution of Thailand (Pornammarin Promkerd, 2000: 17). Thailand has implemented the Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand (interim edition) of B.E. 2007, which Thai people were provided the opportunity to enact the constitution of 2007. The current constitution emphasizes political reform, called the public constitution, and the constitution focuses on stability and security of the politics in Thailand. The political participation of Thai citizens is rarely offered by the government, and the strategy for the political participation has not been improved. Additionally, most Thai citizens

have not understood the democratic system, their political rights precisely. The political nominees are a key factor influencing the political system of Thailand. Most of the political nominees are businessmen, and they work for their own benefits and his colleagues (Witayakorn Chaingkul, 1987:7).

Accordance with the issues mentioned, the author has conducted research on factors affecting the political participation of people in twenty districts of Roi-Ed province. The factors are useful to design a model of political participation for people in Roi-Ed province, and the model is implemented to the target population and evaluated by the experts and the target population. The research results are useful for political participation development of people in Roi-Ed province.

Objectives

1. To analyze factors affecting political participation of people in Roi-Ed province
2. To design a model of political participation for people in Roi-Ed province
3. To implement and evaluate the model of political participation

Hypotheses

Faith and belief in politics, catching up political news, and political participation of people in Roi-Ed province after using the model will be more than that of before using the model.

Methodology

The research methodology was divided into three phases:

Phase 1 : The quantitative research was used to analyze factors influencing political participation of people in Roi-Ed province.

1. The population was 1,021,916 citizens in Roi-Ed province who were over 17 years old in 2013. The samples were 400 citizens in Roi-Ed province. The Taro Yamane method was used to calculate the sample size and the samples were selected by the stratified random sampling and the simple random sampling methods.

2. Research Variables

2.1 Independent variables were 13 factors influencing the political participation of people in Roi-Ed province: faith in politicians and political parties, belief in political efficiency, political party membership, voting campaign, attending voting speech, political discussion, influence of community leaders, influence of voting leaders, rewards, influence of promise, transport and catching up political news.

2.2 Dependent variable was political participation.

3. Research instrument was a questionnaire consisting of three parts: 1) general information, 2) factors affecting political participation, 3) Political participation.

4. The questionnaire was designed and developed by documentary study for the conceptual framework and assessed by the experts.

5. The data was collected by questionnaire from 400 research participants.

6. Data was analyzed by the descriptive statistics : percentage, frequency, mean, standard deviation. Hypothesis was tested by discriminant analysis, the Stepwise method and canonical correlation analysis with the .05 level of the statistical significance.

Phase 2 : A model design of political participation consisted of:

1. The target population was thirty participants: experts, academicians, ones concerned with the political participation. They were selected by the purposive random sampling method.

2. The instrument was a practical strategy for political participation based on the data of phase 1. Workshop approach was employed to design and develop a model.

Phase 3 : The model was implemented to 70 samples from 14 sub-districts in Ponthong District, Roi-Ed province

1. Research variables

1.1 Independent variable was a model of political participation of people in Roi-Ed province.

1.2 Dependent variables were faith in politics, catching up political news, beliefs in political efficacy and political participation.

3. Research instrument was a questionnaire for assessing the independent variables.

4. Quasi experimental design and one-group pretest-posttest design were employed for the research.

5. The model was implemented to 70 participants and evaluated by comparison of their knowledge before and after using the model. MANOVA (Repeated Measure) was used to test hypothesis.

Results

1. The factors significantly influenced the political participation of people in Roi-Ed province at the .05 level. The two key factors were faith in political parties, and belief in political efficacy.

2. The model of political participation of people in Roi-Ed province consisted of 1) training for ideology, concepts and connection of political parties, 2) training for political party administration, 3) study trip and sharing knowledge with politicians, 4) training for catching up political news, 5) training for creating Thai citizenship and democratic attitude, 6) training for belief in political efficacy.

3. The findings indicated that the trainees' faith in political parties, catching up political news, belief in political efficacy and political participation significantly increased after using the model at the .05 level.

Discussion

1. The factors significantly influenced the political participation of people in Roi-Ed province are summarized as follows.

1.1 The faith in political parties is the most key factor affecting the political participation. The results may be caused by the

special interest in the political party. Lester W. Milbrath (1968 : 153) asserts that persons who are completely faithful in a political party, they are likely to participate the political issues.

1.2 Catching up political news is the second factor affecting the political participation. The result is consistent with the study of Kamol Somwichian. Kamol Somwichian (1973: 91) states that mass media have greatly influenced on the political movement and values, and the mass media is a key factor for giving knowledge, expressing and sharing ideas, experiences, values, truth and attitudes. James David Barber. (1972 : 27) asserts that the social value of people in community influences the political participation which is affected by mass media. Sithipan Puthahun (1998: 373-374) claims that communication is an efficient strategy for exchanging and expressing knowledge and ideas of political issues.

1.3 The belief in political efficacy is one key factor influencing the political participation. Robert A. Dahl. (1961 : 120) states that the belief in the political efficacy encourage people to participate in politics, and the political participation makes people believe in the political efficacy. Angus Campbell, P.E. Converse, W.E. Miller and D.L. Stokes. (1964 : 119) state that a person with political efficacy is a major one who can change the politics. Narong Sinsawad (1996:123). Persons who are interested in politics, understand, self believe in political efficacy, faith in political process and politicians, awareness of political participation, and socialism.

2. The research findings indicate that the trainees have significantly improved their knowledge of political participation and rights, they understand more precisely the political parties. Additionally, the research shows that the trainees are more interested in political news through television, radio, and newspaper. People have many choices to read and believe in the political news. They also believe more in their political efficacy.

Suggestions

1. The faith in political party should be established through study trip, training for people to understand the political party precisely. These activities should be organized regularly and continuously for people throughout Roi-Ed province.
2. People should be encouraged to catch up political news to improve their knowledge and attitudes towards politics including political participation.
3. People should be motivated to believe in the political efficacy of Thailand.
4. Government and private sectors should provide opportunities for officers to express and share their ideas appropriately in the democratic country.

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