

A Riot Problem in Three Southern Frontier Province: A Cultural Management Model by Means of Peace

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Abstract: Problem statement: It was evident that a riot problem in Three Southern Frontier Provinces of Thailand resulted from many factors such as an economic factor, a social factor, a political factor, an educational factor, a religious factor, a cultural factor, a traditional factor, including a geographical location. These factors linked one another to affect systematically a riot problem in Three Southern Frontier Provinces and the centre of the problem was a religious factor. The purposes of this research were these: (1) to investigate the background of a riot problem in Three Southern Frontier Provinces, (2) to investigate cultural dimensions used for solving a riot problem in Three Southern Frontier Provinces and (3) to investigate a cultural management model by means of peace for solving a riot problem in Three Southern Frontier Provinces. **Approach:** Research areas consisted of 7 villages in Narathiwat Province, 6 villages in Pattani Province and 5 villages in Yala Province. These are crisis areas and there are some youth who had ever participated in “San Jai Thai Su Jai Tai” Project (a project for supporting people who affected by the riot) have lived in. A population was people in 18 villages of Three Southern Frontier Province. A sample was selected by means of a purposive sampling consisted of 54 key informants, 108 casual informants and 108 general informants. Research instruments used for collecting data were a survey, an observation, an interview, a focus group interview and a workshop. A triangulation technique was used for examining data and research results were presented by means of a descriptive analysis. **Results:** A riot problem in Three Southern Frontier Provinces results from the differences of culture and ways of life between the Buddhist-Thai people and the Islamic-Thai people. The majority of local population are Muslims, they have their own cultural identity so these differences cause many problems such as a problem of cultural misunderstanding, problem of beliefs misunderstanding, a problem of way of life misunderstanding and a problem of traditional misunderstanding. A Peaceful Cultural Model (P.C. Model) was developed within real cultural context or real life of people according to determined successful condition. **Conclusion/Recommendation:** The result of this research revealed that solving a riot problem in Three Southern Frontier Province must need an understanding of basic needs, collective consciousness and collective cause of most local people; including respecting liberty and cultural identity of one another.

Key words: Riot problem, three southern frontier provinces, cultural management, triangulation technique, multicultural society, cultural identity

INTRODUCTION

At present, the ways of life of people change far and away the past. These changes reflect clearly on an environmental change and a social change, they are influenced by many factors and these factors cause the changes and dynamism of social phenomena such as social disorder, values diversity, opinion diversity, requirement diversity, interest diversity, religious diversity and cultural diversity (Jackson, 1963). In case

of Three Southern Frontier Provinces, both the Buddhist-Thai people and the Islamic-Thai people had ever lived together with peace but at present everything badly changes like social disorder, the changes of ways of life and violent situations. These riots cause from a cultural conflict, an economic conflict and a religious conflict, these conflicts have been collected in people's mind for a long time and burst out at now. All of violent situations represent strong opposition to the Thai state. However, all situations are generally linked

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to religious factor because Islam strongly influences on Islamic culture since religion, culture and the way of life is the same thing and cannot separate (Bhatia and Batra, 2000).

Purposes and objectives: (1) to investigate the background of a riot problem in Three Southern Frontier Provinces (2) to investigate a cultural dimension used for solving a riot problem and (3) to investigate a cultural management model by means of peace for solving a riot problem in Three Southern Frontier Provinces.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Population and sample: A population was the people of 18 villages in Narathiwat Province, Pattani Province and Yala Province. A sample was selected by means of a purposive sampling consisted of 54 key informants, 108 casual informants and 108 general informants.

Instruments: The instruments used for collecting data were a survey, an observation, an interview, a focus group interview and a workshop.

Data analysis: A triangulation technique was used for examined data and research results were presented by means of a descriptive analysis.

RESULTS

The research results are the follows: The background of a riot problem in Three Southern Frontier Provinces of Thailand has resulted from the difference of culture and ways of life between the Buddhist-Thai people and the Islamic-Thai people. The majority of local people are Islamic-Thai people so it has caused many gaps among both Thai people groups; for example a cultural gap, a gap of beliefs, a gap of way of life, a traditional gap, a gap of rites and a gap of relationship. These gaps have led to misunderstanding, abomination, ideal difference, non-cooperation and conflict.

In terms of cultural dimension for solving a riot problem in Three Southern Frontier Provinces, it has followed to the philosophy of sufficient economy of His Majesty King Bhumibol concerning "Understanding-Connecting-Development", the principle of "Virtue leads knowledge" and the participation of communities and religious organizations for enhancing peace and solidarity among cultural diversity. In order to suit the ways of local life and world community so the projects of nation state and multicultural society promotion such as the Project of Opening Learning World in

Multicultural Society, the Project of Learning Exchange on Different Cultural Life and others have been held. The purposes of these projects were to encourage the people in target areas really understand external culture.

In terms of a cultural management model by means of peace, the P.C. Model (Peaceful Cultural Model) was developed within real cultural context and real life of people according to determined successful condition. If everything is operated according to cultural management model, it will lead to the successful targets of 3 levels are these: (1) a cultural level, it is an innermost phenomenon concerning the ways of life, beliefs and faith which needs understanding and acceptance among Buddhist and Islamic-Thai people. At this level, a conflict which is collected from the past to now and presented into an ideal or a cause like an ideal of country separation or an ideal of Pattani-State establishment will be calm down and an ideal of cooperation in thinking, doing and solving or an ideal of "Gaining Both Mind and Man" will return, (2) a structural level, it relates to policy, politics, religion and education which needs people participation in all practices. From the past to now, misunderstanding in identity has been a base of all problems, if it is solved, it will enhance family stability-community strength and country growth and (3) a surface level, the current problems are managed by government officers and cultural diffusion is diffused by community participation so the problem at a cultural and a structural level in a form of terrorism will calm down and lead to a peaceful society with people's serenity.

DISCUSSION

A riot problem in Three Southern Frontier Provinces of Thailand results from the difference of culture and ways of life between the Buddhist-Thai people and the Islamic-Thai people. The majority of local population are Muslims, they have their own cultural identity so this difference cause many problems such as a problem of cultural misunderstanding, a problem of beliefs misunderstanding, a problem of way of life misunderstanding and a problem of traditional misunderstanding

In terms of cultural dimensions used for solving a riot problem; since Three Southern Frontier Provinces have their own cultural identity, including the variety of ways of life, languages and religions so the P.C. Model (Peaceful Cultural Model) is developed within real cultural context and real life of people according to determined successful condition. This model has used for solving a riot problem in Three Southern Frontier Provinces, however its results need time for improving

and developing. This phenomenon is congruent with research result of Thongwol *et al.* (2010), he wrote in The Social Movement of the Phuan in Thailand that the organization for social and cultural operation movement in the Phuan identity construction and resurgence and became the first step to collect the resource and capital for establishing the foundation and Thai Phuan Monks United-geographical Organization of Thailand. The Phuan organization was firstly for collecting groups for only cultural and traditional preservation. Because they believed that even though some parts of traditional culture were destroyed by globalization, some other parts were still existing especially ethnic consciousness, shared descent feeling and social value which changed more slowly than material culture and could be resurged. From this point of view, it meant that opening more space or public exposure of the Phuan society was to satisfy social acceptance needs or to be regarded as equivalent part of national state society and deserved “hearing” in the public forum involved in their own interest, economic, politic and social status.

CONCLUSION

Research results revealed the application of the royal strategy of “Understanding-Connecting-Developing”, including the use of peaceful means for the base of solving. Thus, giving justice, holding justice and respecting judicial process by using the participation of all sectors as a power for approaching people and creating an understanding of real situation for people living within and without the country in order to encourage the awareness of living in the same country on the base of the variety of view point, ways of life, culture and religions for promoting peace and sustainable development are important factors for revitalizing state power.

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