

# FACTORS FOR PARTICIPATORY SOCIAL WELFARE PROVISION FOR SENIOR PEOPLE

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## ABSTRACT

Change of population structure leading the world to enter an aging society has caused wide effect both at macro and micro levels of economy. Therefore, preparing people in the society for the aging society becomes an important agenda for the nation. The objective of this research was to study the influence of a social welfare system for aging society, organization roles, and conditions for participation on the participatory social welfare provision. This study employed a quantitative research methodology. Data were collected from senior people whose age were above 60 years and lived in four town municipalities of Nakhon Pathom Province including Sam Phran Town Municipality, Raikhing Town Municipality, Krathum Lom Town Municipality, and Muang Nakhon Pathom Town Municipality. The sample size was calculated based on Taro Yamane Formula. As a result, 380 respondents were selected. Data were collected with the use of a questionnaire and analyzed with a structural equation model. The research findings showed that a social welfare system for aging society, and conditions for participation had an influence on the participatory social welfare provision whereas organization roles had no influence.

**Keywords:** Senior People, Social Welfare, Participation

## INTRODUCTION

The Thai government has brought a policy and a strategy related to the welfare of senior people into practice with the aim to respond to needs of senior people and to solve problems faced by this group of people. It has also established mechanism and develop guidelines for practice that are consistent with a human right concept and the United Nation's senior's welfare related policies. The examples of these policies are the 2nd National Plan of Elderly, B.E. 2002-2021, the government policy on elderly, the Department of Older Persons' policy. These policies focus similarly on how to prepare the nation towards being a quality aging society, promoting quality of life, and providing social security for senior people. These policies will serve as a framework and guidelines for people, families, communities and public and private organizations to pay a special attention to and treat senior people properly. They also provide guidelines for participating in activities related to senior people (Department of Older Persons, 2016). Additionally, the government also puts a plan of elderly in the 12<sup>th</sup> National Economic and Social Development Plan (B.E. 2560-2564) and emphasizes the importance of providing senior people and less fortunate people with good public service including services of public health, accommodation, and career and income opportunities. The government also emphasizes that such public services should be access to senior and less fortunate people throughout the country both in terms of their quantity and quality. Moreover, it has also attempted to establish strength for communities by creating new jobs for people in the communities, establishing a

career service center, providing proper social welfare and public services for people in the communities, and more importantly establishing a network between research institutes, educational institutes, public and private organizations, communities, and local residents. These practices will create strength for the communities which in turn serves as social power that plays a role in promoting good social welfare for senior people. (Office of the National Economic and Social Development, 2016)

Local Administrative organizations generally have duties and authorities in providing social welfare and enhancing a good quality of life for senior people in the communities. They do these by arranging leisure activities, creating jobs and additional income sources, providing public health and medical services, and preventing problems that may occur to senior people. Additionally, according to the Determining Plan and Procedures in Decentralizations to the Local Administrative Organization B.E. 2542 Section 16, the participatory in providing public services is mentioned. Specifically, local residents are encouraged to take a role in the development of their communities. Moreover, the Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand B.E. 2560 Section 43 Item 4 states that individual and communities have a lawful right to work with local administrative organizations in providing community welfare. Based from the above- mentioned laws, we can see that social welfare provision and a quality of life development for local residents in the community, especially senior people are not solely a duty and an authority of local administrative organizations, on the other hand, these activities are also duties of local people. Therefore, local people should be actively encouraged to participate in these activities because they have true understanding of problems and needs of senior people in the communities. Local participation can lead to an achievement in the development of a good quality life of senior people which is consistent with the national policy and strategy of this issue.

## **Research Objectives**

This study aimed to study the influence of a social welfare system for aging society, organization roles, and conditions for participation on the participatory social welfare provision.

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

The term ‘participatory social welfare provision’ in this study means a practice which government organizations and local administrative organizations provide an opportunity for senior people to take a role in determining rules and regulations and policies and in procedures related to social service provision for senior people in the communities. Encouraging senior people to participate in these activities can help preventing problems as well as solve problems faced by senior people. This action can also create social security for senior people and respond correctly to basic needs of senior people, enabling them to enjoy a good quality of life. The participatory social welfare provision consists of certain steps of participation including initiating, planning, implementing, receiving benefits, and evaluating.

A social welfare system refers to procedures relating directly to solving problems and eliminating barriers of the development and promotion of a good quality of life for senior people. This factor enables senior people to be able to access to necessary supports and assistance which help them to enjoy more convenient, high standard, and efficient living. A social welfare system consists of four basic aspects including social security, public assistance, public services, and support from local residents.

Organization roles refer to actions which are duties or responsibilities of organizations in charge of social welfare provision for senior people. Such actions must be performed

according to expectations and perception of senior people. The organizations relating to social welfare provision include three main groups of organizations which are government organizations, private organizations, and local administrative organizations.

Conditions for participation refer to factors affecting whether to participate in a certain activity. They serve as motivations of senior people to take a role and work with local administrative organizations in determining directions, policies, and guidelines for providing social welfare for themselves and other senior people in the communities. Their roles in these activities can lead to the so-called ‘participatory social welfare provision for senior people. These conditions consist of such factors as leaders, satisfaction, understanding, and public relations.

## METHODOLOGY

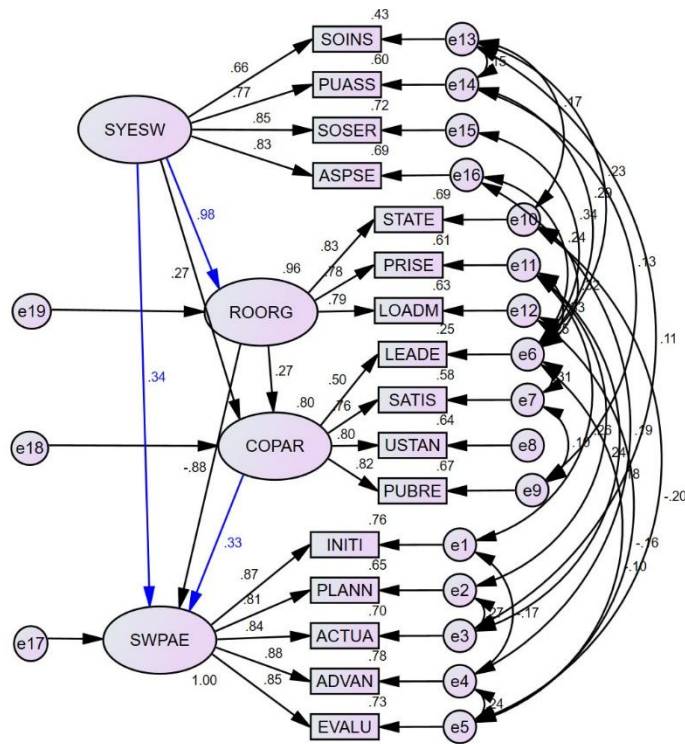
The population of this research were senior people who were above 60 years old, both female and male. They lived in four town municipalities of Nakhon Pathom Province including Sam Phran Town Municipality (1,779 people), Raikhing Town Municipality (5,554 people), Krathum Lom Town Municipality (1,955 people) and Muang Nakhon Pathom Town Municipality (1,256 people). The total number of population was 7,544 people (Muang Nakhon Pathom Town Municipality, 2016). The sample size was calculated based on Taro Yamane Formula. The variance of sample selection was allowed for 5 percent (Narong Kunides and Sudawan Somjai, 2015). Data were collected with the use of a questionnaire and analyzed with a structural equation modeling.

## RESULTS

The research result showed that a participatory social welfare provision for senior people was influenced by a social welfare system (SYESW) and conditions for participation (COPAR) and the variable of the participatory social welfare provision for senior people can be explained by 99.8 percent. On the other hand, the participatory social welfare provision was not influenced by organization roles (ROORG). This result can be summarized in a form of an equation as follow:

$$SWPAE = 0.343*SYESW - 0.877*ROORG + 0.332*COPAR, R^2 = 0.998 \dots (4.17)$$

|         |         |         |
|---------|---------|---------|
| (0.132) | (1.192) | (0.554) |
| 2.598   | -0.890  | 5.613   |



**Figure 1**  
A Model for Participatory Social Welfare Provision for Senior People

**Table 1**  
Compatible Values of the Indicators and the Data

| Indicators    | Criteria of Compatibility    | A Model | Compatible Values |
|---------------|------------------------------|---------|-------------------|
| Chi-square/df | Less than 2.00               | 1.44    | Pass              |
| RMSEA         | less than 0.05               | 0.034   | Pass              |
| GFI           | Equal to or higher than 0.90 | 0.96    | Pass              |
| CFI           | Equal to or higher than 0.90 | 0.99    | Pass              |
| PGFI          | Equal to or higher than 0.50 | 0.53    | Pass              |
| RMR           | Less than 0.05               | 0.01    | Pass              |

Based on the analysis shown in Figure 1, the researcher compared the compatible values of the indicators with the data and the value of these indicators gained after modifying the model as displayed in Table 1. The result showed that after modifying the model, the indicators were compatible with all the data as suggested by the scholars (Joreskog, & Sorbom, 1996) who developed these criteria, or in other words, the empirical data conformed well to the model.

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