



 sciendo

BALTIC JOURNAL OF LAW & POLITICS

A Journal of Vytautas Magnus University
VOLUME 16, NUMBER 1 (2023)
ISSN 2029-0454

Cite: *Baltic Journal of Law & Politics* 16:1 (2023): 336-358
DOI: 10.2478/bjlp-2023-000024

Strategies of Social Welfare Policy Implementation for Elderly People in Highland Ethnic Groups for Equality, Equity, and Social Justice in the New Normal under Multilateral Cooperation in Thailand

Perawat Nonthachot

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Uttaradit Rajabhat University, Thailand.

Email: perawatn98@hotmail.com

Anan Yaemyuean*

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Uttaradit Rajabhat University, Thailand.

Email: olan_story@hotmail.com

Teerapatra Ekphachaisawat

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Phetchabun Rajabhat University, Thailand. Email: Teepatra@gmail.com

Suwaluck Uansa-ard

Faculty of Management Sciences, Chiang Mai Rajabhat University, Thailand. Email: PLNBBKO@gmail.com

Received: December 26, 2022; reviews: 2; accepted: January 23, 2023

Abstract

Thailand is completely becoming the aging society as a result of structural change of populations leading to the increasing number of elderly people every year. Getting prepared to support the aging society is essential especially for the elderly people in highland ethnic group who have and have no right as a citizen. Since these people are a part of the Thai society and it is becoming to the aging society, they should be developed as same as Thai people. Therefore, the study's objectives were threefold: (a) to analyze situations and factors affecting the social-welfare policy implementation, (b) to develop strategies of the implementation and (c) to evaluate and provide policy-based and strategic recommendations for providing social welfare for elderly people in the highland ethnic group in Chaloeprakhiat District, Nan Province, Thailand with a mixed Methods. The findings reveal that the situation of social welfare policy implementation for the elderly people in the

highland ethnic groups according to the standard of elderly support was generally at moderate level ($\bar{X} = 3.53$). The technological and innovative factors related to follow-up and evaluation, management and cooperation of relevant authorities and leadership could be jointly exercised to predict the social welfare policy implementation for the elderly people in the highland ethnic groups in Chaloeprakhiat District, Nan Province, Thailand, for 51.3%. The result of developing the 5 strategies regarding the social welfare policy implementation for elderly people in the highland ethnic groups is under a concept of “create, promote, develop, follow up and assess”.

Keywords

Strategy of implementation; Social welfare; Elderly people in highland ethnic group; New Normal.

Introduction

Thai society is encountering the situation of populations' aging due to the trend of increasing number of the elderly people. According to data of the National Statistical Office, Thailand, in 2021, Thailand is becoming the complete aging society, with populations having age at least 60 years for 20% of all populations. It is anticipated that in 2031, Thailand will become the active aging society because of the number of populations with age 60 years or above for 28% of all populations. Structural change of the elderly people with rapid soaring is a challenge of the nation's economic and social development especially in Thailand with varieties of cultures, races, and languages. In the past, operations have been taken to get ready for aging society in different dimensions including social dimension, and academic dimension with a number of studies pertaining to Thai elderly people. However, there are few research studies about ethnic groups. Such data thus reflects preparation for elderly people with emphasis on life quality development of only Thai elderly people regardless of the fact that Thailand contains diverse languages and cultures, and there are several ethnic groups with distinctive cultures and languages especially with the ethnic groups on highlands, who have and have no citizenship, and cannot access any welfares. However, since these people are a part of the Thai society which is becoming aging, elderly management should be recognized in terms of varieties of ethnic groups in each area, and sensitivity of learning should be considered, while the core of traditional wisdom should be well studied. This is to understand the guideline for management in each area so that the elderly people with different cultural backgrounds can be well handled (Pornsiripongse et al., 2011).

Nan is a province in Northern region of Thailand, and it has substantial economic, social and technological expansion, and varieties of cultures, races, and languages. It is a province that rapidly encounters the aging. According to the data of population structure of Nan Province in past 10 years, the number of child populations with age 0 - 14 years continuously decreased, which was opposite to

the elderly populations with age at least 60 years, that the number unceasingly grew. In 2021, there were 68,416 children, accounted for 14.4% of all populations in the province, which decreased from 2012 for 9,286 persons or 11.9%. Meanwhile, the number of elderly populations in 2021 was 103,079 persons, equating to 21.7% of all populations in the province, which was at higher proportion compared with elderly populations in the country. This number increased from 2012 for 38,057 persons, accounted for 58.5%. When considering the burden that working populations with age ranged from 15-59 years need to take care of child and elderly populations in 2021, Nan Province's ratio of reliance with young people was 22.7 and the ratio of reliance on elderly people was 34.1. This means out of 100 working populations in Province, they need to take care of 23 children, and 34 elderly people. As per the data of basic need survey (BNS) in 2019 of Nan Province, the area where people had least yearly income/ person was Chaloemphrakiat District. Most people in this area are local mountain Thai (Lua), while some are Thai Lue, Kamu, Hoh, and local people, and they settle down around hills, and aside Nan River. Their average income was 46,417.65 Baht. Furthermore, the top 3 indicators of life quality that failed the standard were household orderliness, cleanliness and hygiene, money saving and alcohol drinking (Community Development Office Nan, 2019). Such data reflect problems of social welfare provision that stabilizing economic and social condition for local people is not effective as it should be. Despite Thailand driving operations related to elderly people under the national elderly plan since 2002, and the promulgation of the Elderly Act B.E. 2546 (2003) to promote, promote and support elderly people by their entitlement, the elderly-related operations were not consistent, and there was no integration between related authorities and the networks as well as uncooperative works, and repetition of issues and areas. Moreover, the issues of laws, rules or regulations related to elderly people are not accommodating and no database of the elderly people is provided in terms of data of elderly populations, elderly and public services or even needs of the elderly people. As a result, the overall operations at national level and their effects on evaluation of situations and implementation of different-level policies are not effectively realized (Department of Older Persons, 2019).

Therefore, social-welfare policy implementation by integrating works between local networks to support the aging society is crucial starting studying information related to problems and factors affecting social-welfare policy implementation for elderly people in the highland ethnic groups. Particularly, the study to develop capacity of elderly people to have more income from the grassroots wisdom should be emphasized, and strategies and tactics for suitable social-welfare policy implementation for elderly people in the highland ethnic groups should be developed. These operations will bring equality, equity and social justice in the New Normal, and it is essential to manage challenges from the aging society. Nevertheless, according to the literature review, there are no studies pertaining to the development of strategies in implementing social welfare policy for elderly people in ethnic groups. From data of the assessment of the 2nd national

elderly plan (2002-2021), throughout 15 years of employing such plan, only some parts were achieved as per the indicators and targets. The important thing is a strategy to render populations prepared for a quality elderly age, which remains a great challenge to cope with. This would help Thai people to for transition to the quality aging society (Department of Older Persons, 2019). Hence, the main purpose of this study is to develop a strategy for social-welfare policy implementation for elderly people in the highland ethnic group in order to bring equality, equity and social justice in the New Normal in Chaloeprakiat District, Nan Province.

Literature review

In this section, relevant literature and previous studies will be discussed. Additionally, social welfare provision, elderly people in ethnic groups, and equality, equity and social justice in the society are also discussed.

Social welfare provision

Social Welfare means social service system related to prevention, problem solving development and promotion of social security to respond basic needs of people in order to have good quality of life and to be independent thoroughly, concretely and standardly. This includes education, health and hygiene, residence, work operation and income, recreation, justice proceeding, and general social services. This is recognized for human dignity, and rights of people to receive and engage in social welfare provision at all level (Sudsomboon, 2014).

Social welfare provision in Thai society starts from unofficial assistance with each other of family members, relatives and the community. Later, the economy, society and politics change, and the social welfare provision is adjusted to more integrated and socially-based welfare. The social welfare provision can be categorized in to 4 groups as follows.

1. Social Assistance is another measure of the Thai social welfare system with emphasis on assistance of those who have a social issue by providing suitable services for different target groups. This welfare service is social assistance for youths and juveniles, women, people with disability, and underprivileged people as well as elderly people and victims.

2. Social Insurance or Social Protection: social welfare provision of this kind is operated by the government to protect income-earning people from not being in a trouble when all or partial income is lost or the income is insufficient for living. This assures proper living, and this service cover workers, bureaucrats and people such as the social security fund, compensation fund and Government Pension Fund etc.

3. Social Services are social welfare provision by the government and private organizations for people in order to enhance livelihood and wellbeing, and to respond basic needs of people, covering 4 main aspects including education, public health, facility and accommodation such as free mandatory education, universal coverage scheme, and elderly living allowance etc.

4. Social partnership support is one of social measures to construct social welfare which is the operation of community organizations, public sectors, volunteers, educational institutions, and, entrepreneurs who take responsibility for social issues and private insurance such as community organizations engaging in the business development process with Corporate Social Responsibility: CSR) etc.

Elderly people in ethnic groups

The United Nations: UN defines Older person as male and female populations with age more than 60 years, and divides entry to aging society at 3 levels as follows

1. Aging society means a society or country with populations having age more than 60 years more than 10% or with populations having age more than 65 years more than 7% of all populations in the country. This means that country is becoming an aging society.

2. Aged society means a society or country with populations having age more than 60 years more than 20% or with populations having age more than 65 years more than 14% of all populations in the country. This means that country is becoming an aged society.

3. Super-aged society means a society or country with populations having age more than 65 years higher than 20% of all populations in the country. It means that such country is becoming the super-aged society.

For Thailand, according to the data of the Office of the National Economics and Social Development Council, currently, Thailand has been the aged society, and the aging index in 2015 was 87.8. It is anticipated that in 2030, it will increase to 179.38, which is the year Thailand becomes the Complete Aged Society. From such situation, it reflects continuous increase of the number of elderly people. Therefore, it is necessary to get prepared for becoming the complete aged society in the future. However, changes in structure of the elderly population rapidly occur, and it is a challenge in economic and social development because Thailand has varieties of culture, race and language. Nevertheless, at present, it appears that there are more than 60 ethnic groups in Thailand, and each ethnic group has the same culture, tradition and language that have been succeeded from generation to generation resulting in the commitment and identity (Pongsapich, 2004). The structural change of elderly populations generally can be employed to anticipate whether the statistics of elderly people in ethnic groups tend to increase, and it is definitely affected by such structural change of the population. These ethnic groups include those who migrated to Thailand for more than hundred years, and who recently moved in. They may or may not have the rights of citizenship, and these different groups are culturally combined with marriage with a Thai national, and finally becoming Thai. Superfluously considered, they cannot be clearly differentiated. However, for ethnic groups on highlands, a number of members do not obtain the citizenship and cannot access welfares. Since these people are a part

of Thai society, they should be developed as same as Thai. Therefore, elderly-related management requires recognition of varieties of elderly people in each ethnic group and in each area. It is necessary to consider sensitivity of learning and studying the core of their traditional wisdom, value maintenance, and knowledge of the elderly people. Integrating cross-cultural knowledge is a key of constructing new knowledge in order to understand the management in each area. As a result, it is possible to handle elderly people with different cultural backgrounds (Pornsiripongse et al., 2011)

Concept of equality, equity and social justice

Equality, equity and social justice have similar meaning. In Thailand, these three words are used or defined in different perspectives and contexts.

The term equality is a perspective that every person needs to be equally treated without considering, or regardless of difference of each person. The word Equity has dissimilar implication to the word equality especially in legal term. Pakau (2020) explained that the equity is the foundation of human's dignity since humans should be represented and protected by laws equally as a human regardless of other properties such as race, religion, language, origin etc. Therefore, equity does not only mean just respecting rights and freedom of other persons without discrimination in aspects of race, color, religion and language, but it also covers assisting, acknowledging, and building relationship with each other in order to understand and respect to each other (Dick De Vos, 1999). Hence, the equity is the core of justice (Phromtha, 1996).

Meanwhile, the term social justice reflects legal limitation and a new border as a frontline to where the current legal system should be developed. When justice of the legal system is developed similarly to the social justice, it will be the smallest social gap (Panitkul, 2017).

Regarding social welfare provision of Thailand under the concept of four-pillar principle, it is clear that social welfare provision for each pillar is based on a concept of recognizing equality, equity and social justice, but that system has different focuses on each point as follows (Soonthronanantachai, 2018)

1. Equality and welfare system according to a concept of social services, provided by the government is regarded that everyone has the same basic needs. For example, living allowance for elderly people should be provided for every aged person. If any person attains age in accordance with the criteria or is qualified to be provided with that social welfare, they will be eligible for that welfare. However, if that person is not eligible for such right or social service as he/she should receive, that leads to inequality

2. Equality and social welfare system under a concept of social security is a welfare with aims to assure income in the future, considered from type of occupation. For example, in case of a bureaucrat, it will be the Government Pension Fund, while in case of a registered employee, it will be social security. However, for

unregistered employees, there will be Section-40 social security and national saving fund etc. This welfare is based on equality under types of occupation. Therefore, the concept of social welfare provision in this pillar corresponds to the concept of equality.

3. Equity and welfare system according to the concept of social assistance is based on social assistance provided that the government provides services for any persons in need or who require assistance such as welfare for dependent elderly people, or underprivileged people compared with general aged people i.e. family support. The social welfare provision pursuant to this concept is thus focused on assistance and support of some people in need or in difficulty rather than others in order that the people in this group can sustain their life with equity as same as others.

4. Social justice and welfare system according to a concept of social partner support: Since the welfare system according to the concept of social service, social security, and social assistance is mainly provided by the government, which, at present, is problematic in various issues such as problems of elderly people in using health service in a public medical facility, difficulty in travelling to public medical facilities, insufficient channels particularly for the elderly people, and the difficulty in referring a patient between medical facilities etc. Moreover, money support for families, elderly people and house's repair support for aged people is not adequate that the elderly people are mainly subject to the government's welfare or their children's payment.

Therefore, to provide social welfare system for true social justice, a concept of social partner should be exercised with the mainstream welfare system provided by the government in order that every relevant sector in the society engages in filling the gaps from the social system provided by the government fairly and sustainably.

Methodology

In this research, the researcher employs Mixed Method Approach including quantitative and qualitative methods. The research is conducted in three phases as follows

Phase 1: Analysis of situations and factors affecting social-welfare policy implementation for elderly people in the highland ethnic groups to construct equality, equity and social justice in the New Normal in Chaloeprakiat District, Nan Province, Thailand

1. Quantitative Research is conducted to examine opinions of people related to factors affecting social-welfare policy implementation for elderly people in the highland ethnic groups in Chaloeprakiat District, Nan Province, Thailand, by following the below the procedure.

1.1 Population in this study is people in highland ethnic groups in Chaloeprakiat District, Nan Province, Thailand, totaling 3,884 people.

The samples are 362 people in Lua Ethnic group and Kamu Ethnic Group, residing in the highland in Chaloeprakiat District, Nan Province, Thailand, who are randomly selected with Proportional Stratified Random Sampling method. The cluster size is calculated with the formula of Taro Yamane with deviation at 0.05.

1.2 A research instrument is a questionnaire pertaining to factors affecting the social-welfare policy implementation for elderly people in the highland ethnic groups in Chaloeprakiat District, Nan Province, Thailand, created by the researcher. This questionnaire covers 5 variables including management, leadership, cooperation of relevant authorities, technology and innovation, and follow-up and assessment, and issues involved with social-welfare policy implementation for elderly people in the highland ethnic group at local level, and the framework of support for elderly people of the Department of Provincial Administration, Ministry of Interior. The obtained data will be employed to assess performance of the social welfare provision for elderly people in 6 aspects including 1) health and medical treatment, 2) income, 3) accommodation, 4) recreation, 5) security, facility, caretaker and protection and 6) service and support network. All questions are rating-scale based, validated by the 3 experts with Index of Item Objective Congruence: IOC from 0.66 -1.00, Internal Consistency of Reliability, calculated from Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient Method, at .83.

1.3 Data collection is performed by providing a consent form for participants. The samples are inquired and explained for the method of questionnaire completion. After that, the data are validated, and analyzed according to the statistical methods.

1.4 Data analysis is performed with frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, and Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis

The criteria of interpreting mean are based on the concept of Srisaard and Ninkaew (1992), and the mean score is ranged as follows

- 4.51 – 5.00 means social welfare promotion at highest level
- 3.51 – 4.50 means social welfare promotion at high level
- 2.51 – 3.50 means social welfare promotion at moderate level
- 1.51 – 2.50 means social welfare promotion at low level
- 1.00 – 1.50 means social welfare promotion at least level.

2. Qualitative Research is conducted to explore viewpoints of social actors related to situations, causes, tendency, as well as important measures in social-welfare policy implementation for elderly people in the highland ethnic group in Chaloeprakiat District, Nan Province, Thailand to bring equality, equity and social justice in the New Normal. The methodology is as follows

2.1 Key informants include 55 persons related to the operations in promoting the social welfare provision for elderly people in Chaloeprakiat District, Nan Province, who are selected with purposive sampling method. These informants are divided into 4 groups including 10 administrators, 15 actors and

network members, 15 community leaders, and 15 representatives of elderly people in Lua and Kamu Ethnic Group in Chaloeprakiat District, Nan Province, Thailand.

2.2 The research instrument is In-depth Interview.

2.3 Data are collected by providing for a cooperation form for the key informants in these 6 groups for interview, and data are recorded with a voice recording device during the interview.

2.4 Data analysis is performed with Content Analysis to find a conclusion related to the perspectives of the key informants in the 4 groups on social-welfare policy implementation for elderly people in the highland ethnic groups in Chaloeprakiat District, Nan Province.

Phase 2: Development of a strategy for social-welfare policy implementation for elderly people in the highland ethnic groups to bring equality, equity and social justice in the New Normal, under multilateral cooperation in Chaloeprakiat District, Nan Province, Thailand.

The researcher employs the result of studying situations and factors affecting the social-welfare policy implementation for elderly people in the highland ethnic groups in Chaloeprakiat District, Nan Province, Thailand in phase 1, as supporting data for providing a strategy by analyzing internal and external environments (SWOT Analysis). The strategy is drafted through a workshop with academicians, and teachers from the local higher educational institutions, and representatives from public and private sectors and local network, totaling 30 persons in order to jointly draft the strategy by applying a technique of strategic planning and Balanced Scorecard: BSC). The strategic draft contains 6 components: vision, mission, objective, strategic issue and guideline.

The instrument for data collection is a workshop record form for drafting the strategy by applying a technique of strategic Planning and Balanced Scorecard: BSC. This includes environmental pairing analysis, a strategic planning according to the Balanced Scorecard Model and a strategic form pursuant to the Strategic Map

The analysis of data from the workshop is carried out with content analysis method by connecting the strategic issues, strategizing as per the Balanced Scorecard Model, and strategic development as per the Strategic Map. The description of strategic indicators is provided, and the strategic components are provided. Furthermore, the visions, missions, objectives, indicators, strategic issues, tactics and guideline for development will be concluded.

Phase 3: Assessment and policy-based recommendation regarding the strategy of social-welfare policy implementation for elderly people in the highland ethnic groups to support the aging society, and reduce social inequality in the New Normal, under multilateral cooperation in Chaloeprakiat District, Nan Province, Thailand.

The researcher applies the conclusion from the stagey development to create an assessment form for judgment by 5 experts by considering suitability of each strategic issue and measure/ guideline for development related to the social

welfare provision for elderly people in the highland ethnic groups in Chaloeprakiat District, Nan Province, Thailand, concretely. The Index of Concurrence: IOC from opinions of the experts is exercised for assessment.

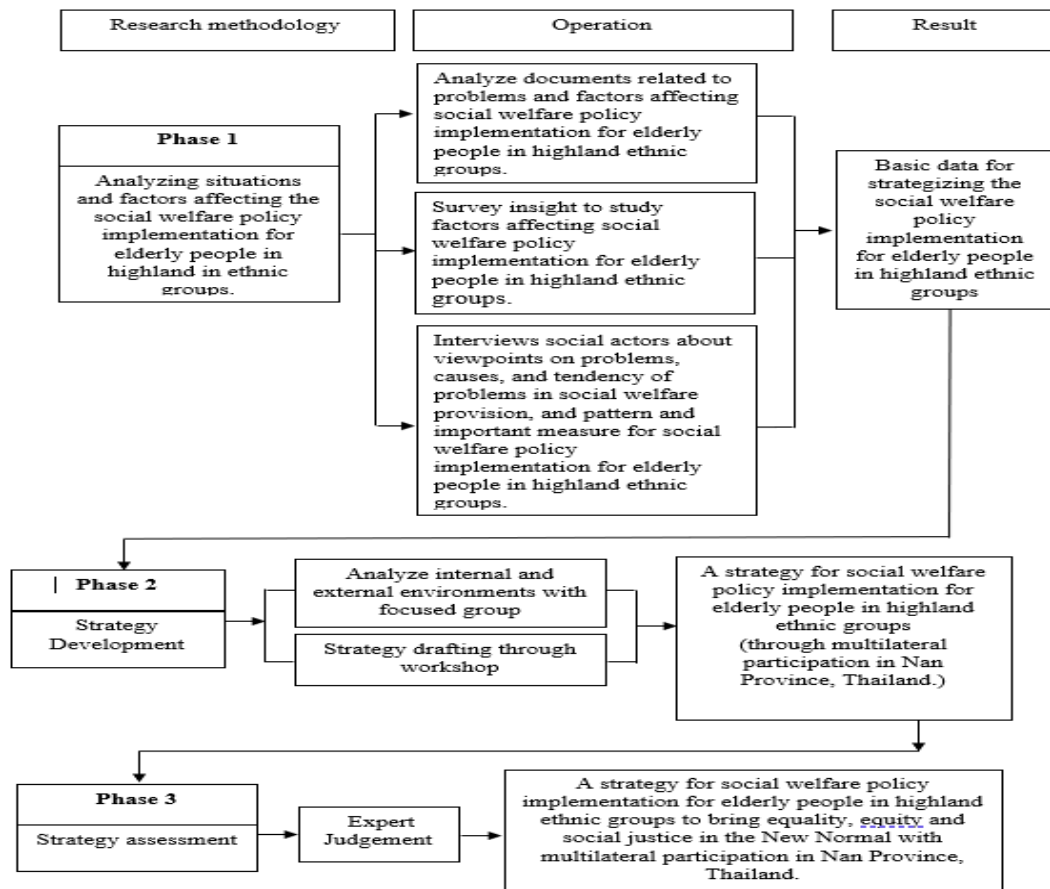


Figure 1 illustrates the flow process of the study

Ethics approval

This research was approved by the ethical committee of the Uttaradit Rajabhat University, Thailand on June 9, 2021 (URU-REC No.034/64).

Results

1. Result of studying situations and factors affecting social-welfare policy implementation for elderly people in the highland ethnic groups in Chaloeprakiat District, Nan Province, Thailand

1.1 Result of quantitative data study

1.1.1 The situation of social-welfare policy implementation for elderly people in the highland ethnic groups in Chaloeprakiat District, Nan Province, Thailand in overall was at moderate level ($\bar{X} = 3.16$, S.D = 0.62). When considered by aspects, the health and medical treatment ranked the highest ($\bar{X} = 3.37$, S.D = 0.75), followed by services and network of support ($\bar{X} = 3.23$, S.D = 0.65), and security,

family, caretaker and protection ($\bar{X} = 3.12$, S.D = 0.65), respectively.

1.1.2 Opinions pertaining to the social-welfare policy implementation for elderly people in the highland ethnic groups in Chaloeprakiat District, Nan Province, Thailand, were generally at high level ($\bar{X} = 3.53$, S.D = 0.24). Considered by aspects, the technology and innovation ranked the highest ($\bar{X} = 3.59$, S.D = 0.52), followed by leadership ($\bar{X} = 3.56$, S.D = 0.38), and follow-up and assessment ($\bar{X} = 3.54$, S.D = 0.58), respectively.

1.1.3 Factors affecting the social-welfare policy implementation for elderly people in the highland ethnic groups in Chaloeprakiat District, Nan Province, Thailand, were found that at least a factor could predict the social-welfare policy implementation for elderly people in the highland ethnic groups in Chaloeprakiat District, Nan Province including technology and innovation (X_3), follow-up and assessment (X_5), management (X_1), cooperation of related authorities (X_4), and leadership (X_2) with multiple regression coefficient of the predictors at raw score of .382, .346, -.361, .157, and .155, respectively, the multiple regression coefficient of the standard score at .323, .327, -.273, .108, and .097, respectively, and multiple correlation coefficient at .716. Power of forecasting was 51.3% with statistical significance at .01 with deviation of the forecasting standard for .435, while the equation constant of forecasting in form of raw score was .713. This could be used to create the forecasting equation of social-welfare policy implementation for elderly people in the highland ethnic group in form of Unstandardized score) $Y' = .713 + .382(X_3) + .346(X_5) - .361(X_1) + .157(X_4) + .155(X_2)$. The forecasting equation for Standardized score was $Z' = .323(X_3) + .327(X_5) - .273(X_1) + .108(X_4) + .097(X_2)$.

1.2 Result of qualitative data study

According to the interview those related to the situation of social-welfare policy implementation for elderly people in the highland ethnic groups in Chaloeprakiat District, Nan Province, Thailand, including the administrators, actors, community leaders and representatives of elderly people in ethnic groups, these 4 groups had a corresponding opinion that the situation of social-welfare policy implementation for elderly people in ethnic groups in aspect of health promotion and medical treatment was substantially problematic. This was because elderly people in ethnic groups believed that taking care of their health in a traditional way that has been inherited for long time of tribal people in the highland led to refusal and disbelief with contemporary medical treatment. Furthermore, the factors of communication and language affected operations related to health promotion for elderly people in ethnic groups as same as the welfare policy implementation pertaining to income and employment promotion. It was found that the driving was considerably problematic due to limitation of knowledge, competency and lack of funding for occupation of elderly people in ethnic groups in the local area. Additionally, a problem of residence of elderly people in ethnic groups was that they mostly lived in forest area, slope mountain, and long distance from

a town. They were also attached to the old way of agriculture in form of shifting cultivation, and they showed no interest in joining a program for new occupation promotion from related authorities. However, related persons suggested that to drive the social welfare provision in this regard, public and private authorities should promote and support other ways of income earning apart from main occupation of the elderly people in ethnic groups such as area development as a cultural tourist attraction etc. This was because most areas in Chaloeprakhiat District, Nan Province, Thailand, still have the culture that reflects the identity of each ethnic group and tribe. It should be focused on development that does not prejudice current living way of each tribe, but that promotes better quality of life of local community. The tourism can be employed as a mechanism for social-welfare policy implementation by promoting more income and employment for elderly people in ethnic groups. The development could be in a form of touristic village, which is combined with the living way of each tribe and community tourism. A learning center related to the identity of each ethnic group may be established to build up knowledge, understanding and social acceptance, and to attract tourists to visit the area. The government should provide community-based assistance covering all dimensions of the development to distribute income in response to the community need. This would help creating a unique village-level tourism community and uplifting products from the wisdom of elderly people in ethnic groups by combining innovation with the community's way. If it is possible, it may a form of a job, occupation and income earning for the community especially for elderly people in ethnic groups, that they are truly independent. It is to promote grassroots economy and bring equality, equity and social justice. Meanwhile, the promotion of social welfare provision in terms of residence and clothing service was a minor problem because according to their living way, the elderly people in ethnic groups mostly coexisted with family members in a big family. Thus, it was not a crucial ground for elderly people in ethnic groups to separate from their family. Previously, the government authorities supervised and supported expenses in case residences of elderly people in ethnic groups were affected by natural disasters such as house repair, and allowance for living etc. As to social-welfare policy implementation pertaining to recreational activities, the actors had a congruent opinion with the local administrators that the situation of welfare provision policy driving was a difficulty because the local elderly people in ethnic groups barely had time to join the activities of both government sectors or the community. Most of the time was spent to earn a living for themselves and their family. Thus, it was hard to realize importance of social welfare provision in this regard. In case of gathering, it would be just a small group to enjoy conversation without doing official recreational activities in the community. Meanwhile, speaking of the situation of social-welfare policy implementation in aspect of social security, family, caretaker and protection for elderly people in ethnic groups to exist in the society with dignity and grace, the 4 related group had a similar opinion that there were a number of problems such as legal service for security, right and welfare, respect to local elderly people,

consulting, and right protection etc. The relevant authorities thus should promote legal knowledge, give advice, or take other actions pertaining to cases or family problem solving of the elderly people in ethnic groups. Particularly, it is necessary to promote the opportunity of learning for elderly people in ethnic groups to access news and information. Speaking of social-welfare policy implementation for elderly people in ethnic groups related to social service and network of support, the related persons agreed that the local government authorities in the promotion area were at very high level such as volunteers to take care of elderly people in the community, especially for local health volunteers who took care of elderly people in ethnic groups in the reciprocal area.

However, from problems an obstacles in the social-welfare policy implementation for elderly people in ethnic groups in such areas, if ordered from the highest to lowest level of top three that possibly affected inequality, equity and social justice in 4 groups, they had similar opinion that the social-welfare policy implementation regarding income and employment promotion for local elderly people in the ethnic groups tended to be subject to greatest severity of problem, followed by social services and network of support, and recreational activities, respectively. The main causes of such problem were due to different associated factors such as race, cooperation with relevant authorities, leadership, local administration, and belief or identity of each ethnic group. Therefore, the problems of social-welfare policy implementation that resulted in inequality, non-equity, and no social justice for elderly people in the ethnic groups were likely to be resolved because of news and information about social welfare provision for elderly people in ethnic groups, with promotion of useful technology and innovation for promoting and restoring potential of the aged persons, combined with local wisdom. Additionally, education for elderly people, and empowerment of the network members to drive social welfare provision for elderly people in the ethnic groups to bring equality, equity and social justice should be promoted.

2. Strategy of social-welfare policy implementation for elderly people in the highland ethnic groups to bring equality, equity and social justice in the New Normal under multilateral participation in Chaloemphrakiat District, Nan Province, Thailand.

The study of a strategy of social-welfare policy implementation for elderly people in the highland ethnic groups to bring equality, equity and social justice in the new Normal under multilateral participation in Chaloemphrakiat District, Nan Province, Thailand, showed that it was based on the concept of 5 principles including "create, promote, develop, implement and follow up". The social-welfare policy implementation for elderly people in the highland ethnic groups should be the combination of these 5 principles such as creating a mechanism of management to propel social welfare for elderly people in ethnic groups, promoting and connecting the network of cooperation at all levels, developing knowledge, data system and technology and innovation for the elderly people in ethnic groups, promoting economic and social security based on the living way and culture of the

tribes, and following up and assessing the social welfare promotion for elderly people in ethnic groups. The developed strategy is emphasized on bringing equality, equity and social justice in the New Normal according to the conceptual framework of the 20-year national strategic plan in the 12th national economic and social development plan (2017-2021), the Elderly Act B.E. 2546 (2003) and amendment (the 3rd issue) B.E. 2560 (2017), the Social Welfare Promotion Act B.E. 2546 (2003), the strategy of the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security B.E. 2560-256 (2017-2021), the strategy of the Department of Older Persons year 2017-2022, the policy and resolution of the cabinet, proposals of the social reform commission, and any other relevant measures of the government. These are focused on constructing a mechanism of driving comprehensive operations at all levels and in all sectors, and they are human -centered and community-based development with emphasis on the participation process of all local sectors. This would bring equilibrium in all dimensions holistically. The result of development of the 5 strategies, 11 tactics and 99 measures/ guidelines is as follows

Vision

“A model area of concretizing social welfare promotion for elderly people in the highland ethnic group with a mechanism of management, technology, innovation, participation orientation, and implementation of related measures to stabilize the economy and society under systematic follow-up and assessment”

Mission

1. To strengthen the mechanism of management for promoting social welfare for elderly people in ethnic groups for real practices
2. To promote participation and network of cooperation in providing social welfare among every sector including social-public sector and local network related to social welfare promotion for elderly people in the ethnic groups.
3. To develop knowledge, data system, technology and innovation that accommodate living of elderly people in ethnic groups based on living way, community, local culture and spatial context.
4. To drive approach measures regarding economic and social stabilization based on the tribal way of living and culture.
5. To follow up and assess the promotion of social welfare for elderly people in the highland ethnic group in the area in order that they can access basic social welfare effectively.

Strategy

1. There are 2 strategies for creating a mechanism of management to promote social welfare for elderly people in ethnic groups as follows

1.1 A strategy for uplifting quality of social welfare management to meet the standard.

1.2 A strategy for promoting and supporting potential development for personnel who perform elderly-related operations.

2. A strategy for promoting and connecting the cooperation network at all levels including 2 sub-strategies as follows

2.1 A strategy for promoting participation in enhancing social welfare for elderly people in ethnic groups in an integrate manner.

2.2 A strategy for developing and linking cooperation network in all sectors.

3. A strategy for developing knowledge, data system, technology and innovation for elderly people in ethnic groups consists of 3 sub-strategies as follows

3.1 A strategy for developing knowledge of promoting social welfare for elderly people in ethnic groups.

3.2 A strategy for developing database of the elderly people in ethnic groups at spatial level.

3.3 A strategy for developing technology and innovation that accommodate living way based on the community

4. The strategy for implementing the approach measure for economic and social stabilization based on tribal living way and culture comprises 2 sub-strategies as follows

4.1 A strategy for promoting occupation, skill, and increasing income for elderly people in ethnic groups in the area

4.2 A strategy for stabilizing society at local level.

5. The strategy for following up and assessing the promotion of social welfare for elderly people in ethnic groups consists of 2 sub-strategies as follows.

5.1 A strategy for developing the database of follow-up and assessment reporting

5.2 A strategy for following up and assessing the operations based on the cooperation.

The assessment of strategy by calculating the index of congruence of experts' opinions was found that in general, the strategy developed by the researcher under a concept of "create, promote, develop, drive and assess" including 5 strategies and 11 tactics was suitable and practically feasible. However, the experts suggested that such strategy should be "innovation of social-welfare policy implementation for elderly people in the highland ethnic group" developed from participation process of the public sector, private sector, and social sector in Chaloemphrakiat District, Nan Province, Thailand. Therefore, to employ the strategy from this study as a mechanism in social-welfare policy implementation for elderly people in the highland ethnic group should be emphasized on cooperation from every sector in the local area in order to generate balance in all dimensions holistically and coherently for sustainable life quality development.

Discussion

1. The situation of social-welfare policy implementation for elderly people in the highland ethnic groups in Chaloemphrakiat District, Nan Province was generally at moderate level. When considered by aspects, most samples agreed that the policy of social welfare provision related to health and medical treatment should be promoted the most. According to such conclusion, it indicates that any situations or conditions regarding the social-welfare policy implementation for elderly people in the highland ethnic groups should be developed, especially a public health service center for elderly people in the ethnic groups that should be established, and an annual medical checkup should be provided, along with advice related to health and illnesses for the elderly people in ethnic groups individually. The result corresponds to the interview with stakeholders related to social welfare for local elderly people, stating that the social-welfare policy implementation for elderly people in the highland ethnic groups was not successful, and the overall operations were not consistent. Nevertheless, it is possible that the operations of the local relevant organizations lacked cooperation and integration, and policy practices. Importantly, there was no cooperation of the elderly people in the highland ethnic groups who still believed in the traditional healthcare that has been inherited in each ethnic group, and showed no interest in contemporary medicine nor joining any programs provided by the government, related to health services and medical treatments. Furthermore, there were problems about the communication and language used, which were an essential obstacle for relevant officers who would perform their works in promoting health for the local members in the ethnic groups. This is in line with the study of Sasuad (2017) finding that the promotion of social welfare provision for elderly people required strong cooperation between public and private sectors in taking care of older peoples, with highlights of all aspects including physical, emotional, and spiritual condition. Thus, it is clear that to render the social-welfare policy implementation for elderly people in the highland ethnic groups for healthcare and medical treatment to become successful, all related sectors at local, district and provincial levels should engage to realize all policies, action plans or projects to achieve the objectives and missions. Additionally, there should be clear assignments and standard of operations in the local areas.

2. The opinions with respect to social-welfare policy implementation for elderly people in the highland ethnic groups in Chaloemphrakiat District, Nan Province, Thailand, generally were at high level, with mean at 3.53. When considered by aspects, it was found that

2.1 The factor of technology and innovation ranked the highest with mean of 3.59, at high level, because technology and innovation uplifts quality of life and responds needs of the older people in various aspects effectively. Particularly, the database of elderly people in the highland ethnic groups should be updated, and linked between sectors, and obtained information should be utilized in providing a policy and action plan to minimize inequality among elderly people in the ethnic

groups. An Application to help people get prepare for the aging should be promoted in order to access data and information system useful for taking care of older people in the family, community and society. This is consistent with the result of interview with informants related to social welfare provision for elderly peoples, mostly agreeing that promoting technology and innovation was crucial and beneficial especially for promotion and restoration of potentials of the elderly people in the highland ethnic groups. Nevertheless, to apply the technology and innovation, it is necessary to consider and recognize needs and potentials of each older person in the highland ethnic groups by focusing on combination with local wisdom, and participation from every sector in order that the elderly people can access technology and innovation suitably and thoroughly. This conforms to the research of Pinphila (2021) proposing that a guideline of promotion should be highlighted on development of the information technology and communication system to be updated, safe, and thorough among target groups and the sectors at all levels. Moreover, Poon-eiad & Khongwan (2021) found that a guideline for social welfare provision for elderly people of the local administrative organization should be equipped with database of the elderly people, which was extremely necessary in the digital age. It should be connected with the government authorities that the local administrative organization could access data. As a result, the operations concerning social welfare for the older people by the local administrative organization could help and develop good quality of life of the elderly more effective. Therefore, the local government authorities should promote the implementation of such policy by promoting the development of modern technology and innovation which is appropriate for daily application of the elderly people in ethnic groups under coordination of local entrepreneurs and members of the social welfare provision network.

2.2 Regarding the leadership, the mean was 3.56, which was at high level. This conclusion was made because leadership plays an important role in implementing the social welfare policy for elderly people in the highland ethnic groups to achieve the objectives efficiently and effectively, bringing highest benefits for people and constituting sustainable development. Particularly, leaders who are competent in linking the action plan pertaining to social welfare provision for elderly people and a provincial development plan, or a local development plan to determine social missions for the elderly people that requires cooperation from all responsible sectors should be promoted. These leaders would be able to assign works for actors related to the social welfare provision for elderly people in the ethnic groups suitably based on individual knowledge, capability, and aptitude. They would also be capable of checking, supervising, monitoring and allocating budgets for operations related to elderly people in ethnic groups, where equity and social justice should be emphasized, and taking actions related to the elderly people with focus on projects/ activities that respond the strategy of minimizing inequality, and securing the aged persons. This includes rendering new-generation people to be prepared for the aging society, and securing economy and society for the older

people to have environment that accommodates living of people in every group to support the aging society. This is in agreement with the concept of Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980) that leadership was vital in defining success or failure of the policy implementation, and in line with the study of Saenpukdee & Chamruspanth (2019) finding that the factors leading to success of the healthcare management and promotion of lie quality of elderly people in Nakhonratchasima Province were leadership, work unity, motivation, teamwork, organization, design, network, and network empowerment.

2.3 Speaking of the follow-up and assessment, the mean was 3.54, which was at high level because the project follow-up and assessment could help relevant persons implementing the policy of social welfare for elderly people in ethnic groups to realize success and failure of the operation effectively. A standard measure for following-up and assessing the overall operations should be determined, and the working group to supervise and asses the operations should be appointed with participation of elderly people in ethnic groups. Furthermore, a report of assessment and health screening for the elderly people should be provided along with analysis and planning for health care of the elderly people in the highland ethnic groups continuously. A progress report of operations related to social welfare provision for the elderly people in the highland ethnic groups should be provided at least twice a month, and it is necessary to accelerate operation to meet the target and examine work effectiveness regularly. This is in accordance with the concept of Nimphanit (2009) that the factor of follow-up and assessment was necessary and crucial to understand whether the operations followed the plan or not, and whether there was any problem and obstacle. A corrective measure should be implemented and improved for more effective results. This conforms the research of Ruangpon et al., (2021) finding that the empowered follow-up and assessment was a factor affecting the policy implementation for life quality development of elderly people.

3. The result of analyzing factors with effect on social-welfare policy implementation for elderly people in the highland ethnic groups in Chaloeprakiat District, Nan Province was discovered that there were 5 factors including technology and innovation, follow-up and assessment, management, cooperation of relevant authorities and leadership that could predict the social-welfare policy implementation for elderly people in the highland ethnic group for 71.6%. This indicates that to promote the social welfare provision for elderly people in the highland ethnic groups in Chaloeprakiat District, Nan Province, effectively, it is necessary to consider diverse components especially with technology and innovation. It should be focused on provision of the database related to the elderly people in the highland ethnic groups to be updated and linked among sectors in an effective manner. It is favorable to promote elderly-related operations at policy level, and the government level for integrated performance. Moreover, credits or capitals for independent working of elderly people in the highland ethnic groups should be supported, and leaders related to the drive of welfare provision policy for

the older people should be able to link an action plan pertaining to social welfare provision for elderly people with a provincial development plan or a local development plan. With these operations, the missions concerning aging society will be subject to cooperation of all sectors, with result assessment and follow-up at local and policy levels. This is consistent with the concept of Jantanukul and Kenaphoom 2016; Chockworgul 2012; Jansawang 2022 identifying that social welfare provision for positive result and sustainable operations should rely on promotion in various aspects from government authorities, private sectors or even people. Particularly, the community was subject to different factors such as leadership of the community leaders, and participation of members in the community.

4. A strategy of social-welfare policy implementation for elderly people in the highland ethnic group to bring equality, equity and social justice in the New Normal under multilateral participation in Chaloemphrakiat District, Nan Province, Thailand consists of 5 main strategies including mechanism of management for social welfare promotion for elderly people in ethnic groups, promotion and linkage of cooperation network at all levels, development of knowledge, data system, technology and innovation for elderly people in ethnic groups, stabilization of economy and society based on the tribal living way and culture, and follow-up and assessment of the social welfare promotion for elderly people in ethnic groups. These five 5 strategies are provided based on opinions and learning exchange of relevant persons resulting in acceptance of public opinions, and concrete practice in accordance with the strategic judgment of experts, assessing suitability and feasibility. Most of them agreed to the strategy, action plan/ project from this research. Nevertheless, it is possible that the developed strategy this time is focused on social welfare provision for elderly people at local level in a more approach way. The strategy also requires participation of relevant persons including the government, private sectors and people to jointly develop a guideline for effective social welfare provision for the elderly people in the highland ethnic groups by giving precedence to the development under the community-based concept and mechanism of operations to cover all sectors. This is the human-centered, and community-based development, highlighted on participation of every sector for effective operations and true engagement of the community. Apart from a tool for planning and providing measures to provide social welfare for the elderly people in the highland ethnic groups to bring equality, equity and social justice in the New Normal in integrated nature, it can be employed as the fundamental data for creating a mechanism for driving local- and provincial-level operations by determining a vision "model area of concrete social welfare promotion for elderly people in the highland ethnic groups with mechanism of management, technology and innovation, with participation orientation, and drive of measures for economic and social security under the systematic assessment." Each developed strategy is consistent with the 20-year national strategy, and the 12th national economic and social development plan (2017-2021), the Elderly Act B.E. 2546 (2003), and

amendment (No. 3) B.E. 2560 (2017), the Social Welfare Promotion Act B.E. 2546 (2003), the strategy of the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security B.E. 2560-2564 (2017-2021), the strategy of the Department of Older Persons Year 2017-2022. This conforms to the study of Wattanasirithorn & Dhammaso 2021, recommending that a strategy for happy condition to support aging society should be provided, and a master plan, strategy and policy to support preparedness for the aging society should be clearly defined at personal, community and national level. Particularly, it is necessary to raise awareness of importance of the aging society, and care of elderly people to meet the 20-year national strategy and the 2nd national elderly plan. Additionally, a network for developing potentials of older persons should be developed by arranging different modern activities and projects. This includes realization of aging society for the elderly people to be prepared for self-care, and to be a model for other sub-districts, which will bring pride to them. Education about technology for seeking knowledge, social issue resolution, social relationship construction, and setup of the aging club as well as a network for public and recreational activities should be promoted in order to bring peace in mind. It is consistent with the concept of Polprasert & Chankong (2018) finding that to support aged society, it is necessary to promote strong and sustainable grouping of older people because gather is physically and mentally beneficial to members. It also stimulates changes and results in learning exchange to prevent and solve any problems because of integration of knowledge, skills and experiences of each member. As a result, it becomes the active aging. However, as to gathering of older people, an elderly club is an essential foundation of older people to do activities together, and it is a center of coordination among older people in and out of the community in an effective manner.

Conclusion

According to the study, it can be concluded that 1) the situation of social-welfare policy implementation for elderly people in the highland ethnic group in Chaloemphrakiat District Nan Province, Thailand was generally at moderate level 2) The analysis of factors affecting the social-welfare policy implementation for elderly people in the highland ethnic group in Chaloemphrakiat District, Nan Province, Thailand, were found that technological and innovative factors in term of follow-up and assessment, management, cooperation of relevant authorities, and leadership could be employed to predict the social-welfare policy implementation for elderly people in the highland ethnic group in Chaloemphrakiat District, Nan Province, Thailand for 71.6. 3) The development of strategies pertaining to the social-welfare policy implementation for elderly people in the highland ethnic group consisted of 5 main strategies including a strategy of constructing a mechanism for management in order to promote social welfare for elderly people in the ethnic group, a strategy for promoting and connecting cooperation network at all level, a strategy for developing knowledge, data system technology and innovation for

elderly people in the ethnic groups, a strategy for stabilizing economy and society based on the way of living and culture of the tribes, and a strategy for following up and assessing the promotion of social welfare for elderly people in ethnic groups. According to the study results, the researcher has following recommendations. 1) Speaking of a policy-based recommendation, it is important to promote older people in a local area to gather and set up an elderly club of ethnic groups as a public organization playing a crucial role in developing the work system of older people. This leads to development of life quality of older people in the ethnic groups, and truly responds to health, social and welfare issues and needs. Furthermore, public participation should be promoted to play a vital role in developing older people in their community by determining a guideline for partnership-based operations and joint development among related sectors. With this activity, welfares and life quality of local older people are more developed, and it is sustainable budgetary self-reliance. Additionally, it is necessary to promote provision of a strategic plan, a development, and an action plan regarding social welfare for older people in the ethnic groups, depending on collaboration of different sectors in the province. To achieve this operation, it is to emphasize involvement of stakeholders in expressing opinions, and jointly providing a plan/project, and taking actions to comply with any strategic plans, defined by provincial government authorities for effective local-based operations. 2) Recommendation for further research is indicators for following up and assessing the social-welfare policy implementation for elderly people in the highland ethnic group in Thailand should be developed, and a strategic plan for social-welfare policy implementation for elderly people in the ethnic group in Chaloeprakhiat District, Nan Province, should be extended at district, provincial and national level.

Conflicts of interest

The authors declare no conflicting interests.

References

- Chockworgul, S. (2012). The Development Policy for Quality of Life of the Elderly in the Local Administrative Organizations in the Northeastern Provinces. *Journal of Political Science and Law Kalasin Rajabhat University*, 1(1), 146-165.
- Community Development Office Nan. (2019). Report on the quality of life of people in Nan Province in 2019 [Online] Available from: <https://nan.cdd.go.th/download/> [Accessed: 14th May 2022].
- Department of Older Persons. (2019). *Measures to drive the National Agenda on Aging Society "6 Sustainable 4 Change"* (2nd ed.) Amarin Printing and Publishing.
- Dick De Vos. (1999). *Foundation of Freedom "Foundations Of Freedom"*. Translated by Dr. Chidphong Chaisawasu (2nd ed.) Cyberbook Network Press.

- Jansawang, K. (2022). State Social Welfare Management for an Aging Society of Local Administration: A Case Study of Surat Thani Municipality, Surat Thani Province. *Law and Local Society Journal*, 6(1), 163-184.
- Jantanukul, W., & Kenaphoom, S. (2016). The Approach of the Sustainable Community Social Welfare. *Area Based Development Research Journal*, 8(4), 3-14.
- Nimphanit, J (2009). *Policy Analysis : Scopes Concepts Theories and Case Studies*. (4th ed.) The Office of the Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University Press.
- Office of the Nation Economic and Social Development Board. (2017). The Twelfth National Economic and Social Development Plan (2017-2021) [Online] Available from: https://www.nesdc.go.th/ewt_dl_link.php?nid=9641 [Accessed: 14th May 2022].
- Pakau, S. (2020). Double Standard: Unequality in Thai Society. *Journal of MCU Humanities Review*, 6(1), 333-343.
- Panitkul, P. (2017). Understanding "Social Justice", the Power of Social Networking Project Health Social Justice Program [Online] Available from: http://social-agenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Social-Justice_Pisit.pdf. [Accessed: 18th May 2022].
- Phromtha, S. (1996). *Social and political philosophy* (2nd ed.) Chulalongkorn University Press.
- Pinphila, A. (2021). Driven Social Welfare Holistically with the People-Centered Sector in Saraburi. *NRRU Community Research Journal*, 15(1), 109-123.
- Polprasert, P., & Chankong, W. (2018). How to Manage the Elderly Club to Success?. *NRRU Community Research Journal*, 12(2), 26-36.
- Pongsapich, A. (2004). *Human and Cultural*. In *Social and Cultural* (9th ed.) Chulalongkorn University Press.
- Poon-eiad, S & Khongwan, S. (2021). Guideline for Social Welfare Arrangement of Local Administrative Organisations to Support the Aging Society. *Journal of Social Science and Buddhist Anthropology*, 6(5), 18-30.
- Pornsiripongse, S., Sasiwongsaroj, K., Burasith, Y., Yamabhai, J., Boonrugsa, T., Ruangpon, P., Khaisokk, T., Yodboon, W., Karnsomdee, P., & Kultangwattana, P. (2021). Driving the Policy on the Elderly Quality of Life Development Into Implementation in Sakon Nakhon Municipality. *Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences Nakhon Phanom University*, 11(1), 129-143.
- Sabatier, P.A. & Mazmanian, D.A. (1980). The Implementation of Public Policy: A Framework of Analysis. *Policy Studies journal*, 8(special issue), 538-550.
- Saenpukdee, D., & Chamruspanth, V. (2019). Factors for the Achievement of the Geriatric's Management System and Geriatric's Life Quality Promotion in Nakhon Ratchasima. *Governance Journal*, 8(1), 41-61.
- Sasuad, K. (2017). Factors Affecting the Quality of Life of the Elderly in the Eastern Province. *NRRU Community Research Journal*, 11(2), 21-38.
- Soonthronanantachai, T. (2018). The Equality, Equity and Social Justice with the Social Welfare of Thailand. *Huachiew Chalermprakiet Law Journal*, 7(2), 52-

65.

- Srisaard, B., & Ninkaew, B. (1992). Population reference when using rating scale with sample. *Journal of Educational Measurement*, 1-4.
- Sudsomboon, S. (2014). Social Welfare for Aging People in Thailand. *Journal of Southern Technology*, 7(1), 73-81.
- Suvimolstign, C., Cusripituck, P., Rudeejumrean, S., & Ungsitipoonporn, S. (2011). *Self-Reliance Wisdom of Ethnic Elders*. Research Report of National Research Council of Thailand (NRCT). DOI: https://doi.nrct.go.th/ListDoi/listDetail?Resolve_Doi=10.14457/MU.res.2011.7
- Wattanasirithorn, C., & Dhammahaso, P.H. (2021). Peacebuilding Strategy to Support the Elderly Society: A Case Study of Sawai Subdistrict, Prang Ku District Sisaket Province. *Journal of MCU Peace Studies*, 9(3), 976-987.