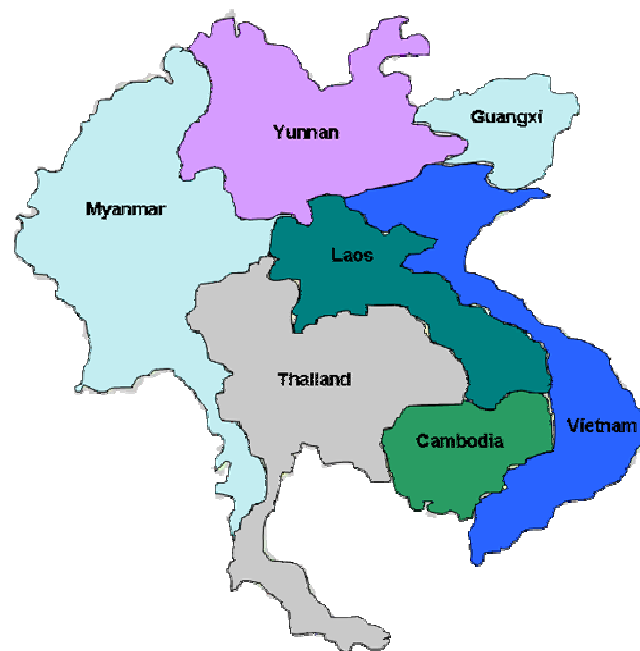


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The Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) consists of Cambodia, China (Yunnan & Guansi Provinces), Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam.

The Greater Mekong Subregion Academic and Research Network (GMSARN) was founded followed an agreement among the founding GMS country institutions signed on 26 January 2001, based on resolutions reached at the Greater Mekong Subregional Development Workshop held in Bangkok, Thailand, on 10 - 11 November 1999. GMSARN is composed of eleven of the region's top-ranking academic and research institutions. GMSARN carries out activities in the following areas: human resources development, joint research, and dissemination of information and intellectual assets generated in the GMS. GMSARN seeks to ensure that the holistic intellectual knowledge and assets generated, developed and maintained are shared by organizations within the region. Primary emphasis is placed on complementary linkages between technological and socio-economic development issues. Currently, GMSARN is sponsored by Royal Thai Government.

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Strengthening Transport Linkage Capability for the “New Trade Lane” in the Mekong Region

S. Jaensirisak and S. Paksarsawan

Abstract— This study emphasizes the analysis of strategies for strengthening transport linkages capability in order to accommodate an expansion of economic, trade and investment routes. The expansion of the route here can be referred to as the “new trade lane”. The key principle of this study, therefore, places special emphasis on the expansion of the route with efficiency on the corridor having new economic, trade, and investment potential among Thailand and countries close to Thailand in the Mekong Region, as well as among Thailand, China, and India. The focal point of the project is to study, to analyze and to develop the strategy of area development in the context of infrastructure linkage for multimodal transport by land, water and rail including connectivity for freight transport. The result of the study can be used as the Master Plan for the development of transport networks linking the new trade lane to the trading gateways of the country to support intraregional and interregional expansion of economy and trade.

Keywords— Transport linkages capability, the economic, trade and investment route, multimodal network.

1. INTRODUCTION

Globalization has made, at present and in the future, the Asian Region, the main area of trading and economic growth derived from the driving force from countries in the Region as China and India.

Thailand is in a position of geographical comparative advantage among Southeast Asian countries. This factor can lead to reducing international freight transport costs on some routes. This study emphasizes this strengthening advantage of Thailand and, together with the rapid economic growth of China and India, it will provide the opportunity for Thailand to benefit from its comparative advantage.

The development of transport network linkage to support the expansion of economic, trade, and investment corridor is to have Thailand as the transport and economic hub for the Region. The new trade lanes that Thailand should concentrate on as the first priority are the routes linking to China and India, the new economic areas of the world with rapid economic growth. The next two priority routes are to trading markets in the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) that are expanding and access to the world energy sources in the Middle East. Such routes are the main supporting factors to promote Thailand with the opportunity for economic production and expansion of economic, trade, and investment corridors.

Therefore, the basic principle of this study emphasizes the analysis of strategies for strengthening transport linkages capability in order to accommodate an expansion of economic, trade and investment route. The

expansion of the route here can be referred to as the “new trade lane”. The key principle of this study, therefore, places special emphasis on the expansion of the route with efficiency on the corridor having new economic, trade, and investment potential among Thailand and other countries in the Mekong Region, as well as countries further afield such as China, and India.

The focal point of the project is to study, to analyze and to develop the strategy of area development in the context of infrastructure linkage for multimodal transport by land, water and rail including connectivity for freight transport. The result of the study can be used as the Master Plan for the development of transport networks linking the new trade lane to the trading gateways of the country to support intraregional and interregional expansion of economy and trade.

The essential condition (Section 3) for the expansion of the route is the manner of achieving efficiency. The conceptual framework of the study is defined as the efficient transport linkages necessary to increase the economic benefit to Thailand. Therefore, the study suggests the guidelines for strategic planning “new trade lane” (Sections 4 and 5) for the regional economic development of Thailand and for the transport network linking Thailand with the economic, trade, and investment areas of those countries with the most rapid growth in the world and particularly Mekong region countries, China and India.

2. STUDY’S FRAMEWORK

Since globalization has created changes to cope with developments in the economic system, trade, society and politics, this study, then, places emphasis on the strategic planning of the overall transport network development within the country and links to other important world markets. Moreover, dynamic strategic planning must be coincident with the long term targets and the main policies of the country so that the planned strategies are efficient in relation to changes in the world economic

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system, trade and investment as well as in relation to the national development plan. The strategic planning in this study, then, is based on two major principles:

1. The strategy must be compatible with the Master Plan for Transport and Traffic of the Ministry of Transport and the Strategy for the Logistics System Development of Thailand developed by the Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB).

2. The strategy must support the policy of Thailand to be the regional hub for the economies, trade, investment and transport in Southeast Asia to enhance the marginal economic benefit of Thailand.

The conceptual frameworks are as follows:

- studying existing and expected demand for goods affecting development of the transport network on the new economic, trade, and investment corridor;
- studying guidelines for the development of cooperation in investment between Thailand-Mekong Region, Thailand-China and Thailand-India to increase the volume of trade between the countries developing and major world markets to the benefit of Thailand;
- studying guidelines for increasing production potential, competitive capability and goods processing in order to create added value and reduce logistics costs for Thailand; and
- studying freight transport within Thailand, linkages with Mekong Region, China and India, network capacity and establish suitable development guidelines to increase network capacity.

3. BEING THE TRANSPORT AND ECONOMIC CENTER OF THE REGION

Globalization has impacted upon changes and linkages in the economy, trade, and investment in various regions of the world including economic development policy and economic, trade, and investment linkages between Thailand and foreign countries.

As the country with geographic comparative advantage of having transport network links trading with China and India through the relationship policy within various cooperation frameworks (Table 1), Thailand has the opportunity to create linkages for economy, trade, and investment with the two countries and the markets in other regions through joint operation in harmony with physical natural linkages.

The geographical location of Thailand enables the country to be the transport hub for economic and trade linkage to the new markets such as China and India. The characteristic of the country’s location between the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean also places it on the crude oil transport routes between the production countries in the Middle East and the important consumption countries such as China, Japan and South Korea. Therefore, the western seashore (Andaman) has high potential for being the new economic route between the production base and the major energy consumers.

Table 1: Potential of New Trade Country Linkage [5]

Country	BIMSTEC ¹	ASEAN	GMS ²	ACMECS ³
Thailand	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cambodia	x	✓	✓	✓
Laos	x	✓	✓	✓
Myanmar	✓	✓	✓	✓
Vietnam	x	✓	✓	✓
China	x	x	✓	x
India	✓	x	x	x

Note: ¹ Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation
² Greater Mekong Subregional Cooperation
³ Ayeyawady – Chao Phraya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy

The expansion of trade markets and investment under the economic linkage within the GMS member countries creates new opportunities in trade for Thailand. GMS is the cooperation of regional development among 6 member countries comprising Thailand, China, Laos, Myanmar, Vietnam, and Cambodia. The cooperation framework was established in 1992 and is similar to the ASEAN framework. The agreement has progressed much further in transforming agreements into actions than for any other agreements that Thailand has made with other countries.

Under the GMS, road transport linkage is one factor creating the practical regional economic development and linkage among member countries, including enhancing of competitive capability of the member countries in the current globalization. The road transport network linkage is derived from the Transport Master Plan of 1995. The Master Plan defined the international transport linkage across the borders on each route according to the potential of economic growth of the member countries. Since 1998, the Master Plan has paid attention to the economic corridor concept. This concept emphasizes the investment in basic infrastructure such as linkage for roads, energy, telecommunications and tourism, especially transport with the same geographical area in order to create positive effects for the highest benefit. The economic corridors that have been defined are the North-South, the East-West, and the Southern Corridors as shown in Figure 1.

The new potential trade lanes under the GMS for Thailand are related to the growth of markets for producers and consumers in Southern China, Laos, Vietnam, and Cambodia. The major force for the establishment of the GMS Agreements is the transformation of economic activities from the Central Economy System to the Market Economy System within the four countries. Exchanges of trade in the free market economic system have created the economic linkages between Thailand and the four countries from the early 1970s (Figure 2).



Source: ADB, GMS Transport Strategy 2006-2015

Fig. 1. Main Economic Corridors under the GMS Agreements.

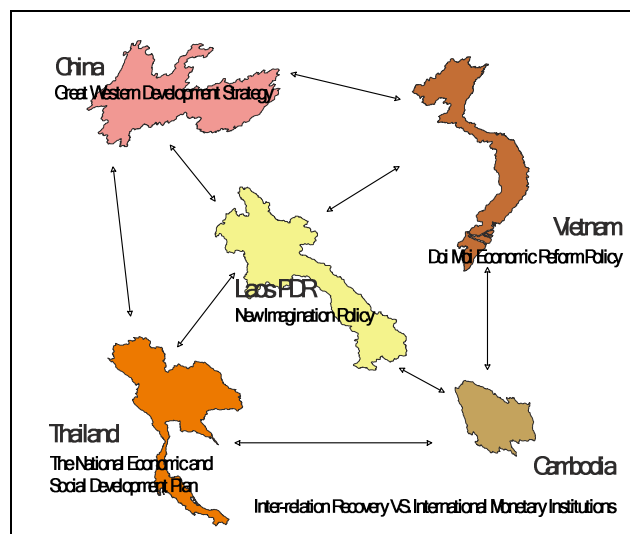


Fig. 2. International Economic Linkages [5].

Changes in the economic system of the four countries have shown the new market potentials for Thailand in two groups. The first group consists of Laos, Vietnam, and Cambodia, that had been under the influence of the Soviet Union. The second group is Southern China that has been starting the regional economic development after the Central Government of China announcement under the Great Western Development Strategy.

3.1 Potentiality from Economic Transformation of Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam

After the decline of influence of the Soviet Union by the end of 1980, and the withdrawal of Vietnamese military from Cambodia in 1989, a new era of economic and social development has emerged in this Region. The countries that had close relationships with the Soviet Union such as Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam started to find their own development strategies. Economic development started to change to that of the market system following the model from neighboring countries, especially Thailand, with each country applying the model in its own way. In the 1970s, Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam announced their intention to become members of the ASEAN. Vietnam was the first country from the Indochina Region to become the member of the ASEAN in 1995. Laos became the member of ASEAN in 1997, and Cambodia in 1999. After joining the ASEAN and after China adopted its own system of economic development, the countries of the Indochina Region have become a group of countries with high economic growth after the long period of stagnation under the Central Economy System.

The three countries changed their economic development planning from the Central Economy System to the Market Economy System. Vietnam has reformed the economic system by the announcement of the Doi Moi policy in 1989. Laos announced the economic reform according to the New Imagination Policy in 1993. Cambodia started its policy on the reconstructed relationship with the International Financial Institute in 1993. Linkage of economic and social infrastructure of the three countries resulted in changes in their economies supporting higher economic growth (Table 2). The basic economic and social infrastructures of these three countries have resulted in increasing of economic growth and a better standard of living for their citizens since the 1990s. Statistics show that the people have a better living standard after the changes that occurred early in the 12 years between 1992 and 2004, and the expansion of trade, investment, and

economic growth led to a higher average income per head of the people especially before the economic crisis in 1997. Countries with economic growth during that time were Thailand and Vietnam. Although the poverty problem has decreased in Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam so that their people are better off economically, although poverty is still a serious problem in the region (Table 3).

Table 2. Growth Rate of Gross Domestic Products during 2003-2007 [1]

Country	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Laos	6.1	6.4	7.1	7.6	7.1
Cambodia	5.2	6.0	6.0	6.3	6.5
Vietnam	7.3	7.8	8.4	8.2	8.5
Thailand	7.1	6.2	4.5	5.1	4.8

Table 3. Poverty Index and Income Distribution for Indochina Countries [2]

Country	GDP Per Head (USD)		Per Cent of Poverty below Poverty Line of Country	
	1992	2004	1992/1993	Lastest Figure ^a
Cambodia	220	348	39.0 ^b	35.9
Laos	271	402	46.0	32.7
Thailand	1,945	2,544	23.2	9.8
Vietnam	144	500	58.1	24.1

Note: a: Cambodia (1999) Laos (2002) Thailand (2002) Vietnam (2004)
b: 1994

The change of policy in favor of building up economic infrastructure linkages with world society has a better socio-economic trend in the economic and social indices of the three countries. Data in Table 4 shows that Vietnam had on average the best status among the three countries since Vietnam had been actively reformed in the decade of 1990s and the human resource of Vietnam was greater than the other two countries. The reform of land and agricultural markets in Vietnam resulted in rapid growth of rice production during 1988-1995, but the similar reform has not happened in Laos and Cambodia so that people in the two countries are still poor and the human resource is still unskilled.

Table 4. Basic Economic and Social Indices of the Countries Studied, 2005 [3]

Country	Area (1,000 Sq.km)	Population (Million)	GDP Per Head (USD)	Export (Mill. USD)	Import (Mill. USD)	Trading Growth (Per Cent)
Laos	237	5,758	423	510	745	10
Cambodia	181	13,589	358	3,100	3,700	17
Vietnam	394	44,150	554	31,625	36,476	21
Thailand	513	64,470	2,537	110,110	118,191	16

3.2 Economic and Trading Potentiality of Southern China

The Chinese Central Government announced the Great Western Development Strategy starting from January 2000. The target areas are 12 regions away from the coast consisting of 6 regions of Gansu, Qinghai, Shaanxi, Sichuan, GuiZhou, Yunnan; 5 self governed territories of Xinjiang, Ningxia, Xizang, Guangxi, Inner Mongolia; and 1 Metropolis Chongqing. The overall economy of the 12 regions was shown in Table 5 as data of the 12 regions comparing with the whole country.

Of the mentioned 12 regions, only 3 regions (Figure 3) were considered to have the economic potential to induce trade and investment along the transport network on the North-South Corridor between South China – Northern Laos – Upper North of Thailand. The three regions are Yunnan, Chongqing, and Guangxi. Table 6 shows the comparative Data of the 3 regions of China and Thailand.

Table 5. Important Economic Indices of 12 Western Regions Comparing with National Indices, 2005 [4]

Economic Indices	Unit	China	12 Western Regions	Per Cent of Country
Area	(Million Sq.km.)	9.60	6.86	71.5
Population	(Million)	1,307.56	359.76	27.5
GDP	(Billion Baht)	89,728.03	16,414.73	18.3
Average Income per Year	(Baht)	68,808.64	45,764.60	-
Industry				
- Coal	(Hundred Million Tons)	22	8	36.6
- Crude Oil	(10,000 Tons)	18,135	4,502	24.8
- Electricity	(Hundred Million kwh.)	25,003	6,104	24.4
- Iron	(10,000 Tons)	35,324	4,555	12.9
Investment on Fixed Assets	(Billion Baht)	43,507.05	8,647.64	19.9
Retail Trade	(Billion Baht)	32,922.58	5,675.49	17.2
International Trade	(Hundred Million USD)	57,189.36	1,815.13	3.2
- Export	(Hundred Million USD)	30,645.71	1,036.07	3.4
- Import	(Hundred Million USD)	26,543.65	779.06	2.9
Transport				
- Length of Existing Railway	(kilometre)	75,437	27,594	36.6
- Highway	(kilometre)	1,930,543	780,339	40.4
- Expressway	(kilometre)	41,005	10,530	25.7

Table 6. Economic Indices of 3 Western Regions Categorized According to GDP, 2005 [5]

Thailand/ South China	GDP (Trillion Baht)	Average Income/ Year (Thousand Baht)	Population (Million)	Total Trade (Trillion Baht)	Export (Trillion Baht)	Import (Trillion Baht)	Actual FDI (Billion Baht)	Retail Trade (Trillion Baht)
Thailand	7	109.4	64.2	10.6	5.2	5.3	181	-
China	88.5	70	1,300	57.2	30.7	26.6	3,181.40	32.9
Yunnan	1.7 (23 rd in China)	38.1	44.5	0.2	0.1	0.1	7.6	0.5
Guangxi	2.0 (17 th in China)	42.8	46.6	0.2	0.1	0.1	15.2	0.7
Chongqing	1.5 (26 th in China)	53.5	28	0.2	0.1	0.1	20.1	0.6

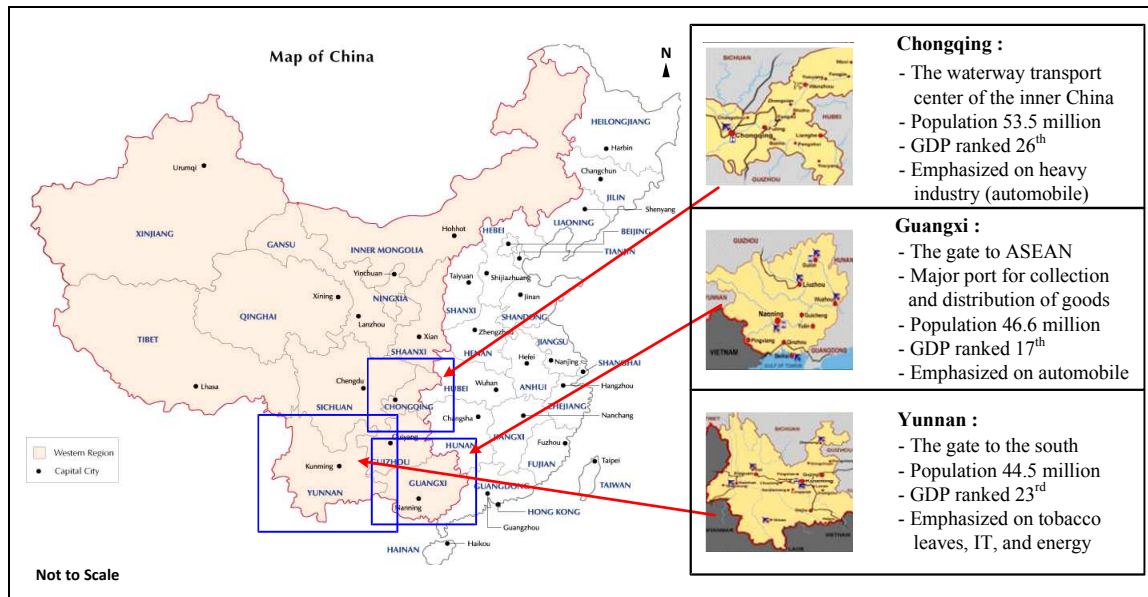


Fig. 3. Republic of China and 3 Western China.

These three regions of China have ample resources and have experienced an annual increase in economic growth. Continuous inflows of foreign investment have increased the potential of these 3 regions to play an important part in economic development in the future.

4. NEW TRADE LANE

What has been presented (Section 3) in relation to targets, conditions, and strategic issues has been used as the guidelines for study leading to the conclusion of Thailand as the new trade lanes place to be the transport and business hub of the region consisting of (1) Freight Transport Routes and International Trade; and (2) Transport Routes for Freight and Travelers.

4.1 Freight Transport Routes and International Trade

The freight transport routes and international trading routes especially between China and India and the major markets of the world passing through Thailand can save transport cost and time for both countries. The study defined the new freight transport as follows (Figure 4):

- (1) Routes linking Southern China to Northern Thailand by land passing Laos to Laem Chabang Port and coastal harbors on the Andaman Sea by the North-South Economic Corridor (N-S Economic Corridor No.1 and 2).
- (2) Routes linking from Da Nang Port passing Laos to Mukdahan and to deep sea ports on the Andaman coast (No.3) on the East-West Economic Corridor (E-W Economic Corridor). The routes in (1) and (2) provide links from Southern China and countries in the Pacific Group to the Middle East and Europe. The study assumed that there will be saving on cost and time through the linkage on the corridors that the freight transport can bypass the Melaka Chamber through the southern Thailand.

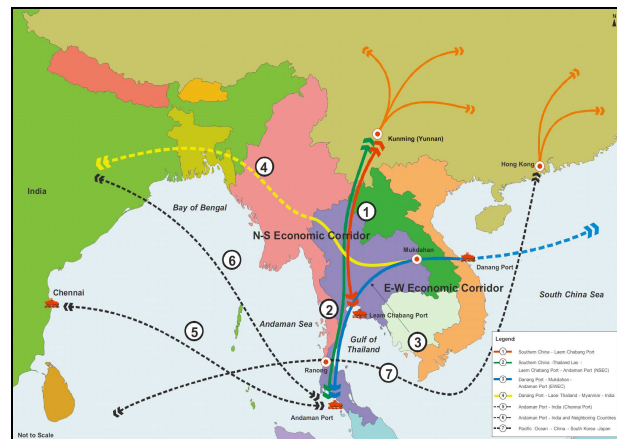


Fig. 4. New Trade Lane [5].

- (3) Routes linking from Da Nang Port passing Laos from the Northeastern to Northwestern parts of the country to Myanmar to India (No.4). This route will link India to the countries in the Pacific Group. The study assumed that the trade will be more efficient due to saving in cost and time since the freight transport can bypass the Melaka Chamber.
- (4) Routes linking by sea between the ports on the Thai Andaman coast and India and neighboring countries (No.5 and 6). The study assumed that Thailand can increase the efficiency of trade with countries in those groups since the freight transport can bypass Laem Chabang Port and the Melaka Chamber.
- (5) Routes linking energy sources (crude oil) with the industrial countries on the Pacific coast as China, South Korea, and Japan, through the coastal seaboard of the Southern Thailand (No.7).

4.2 Transport Routes for Freight and Travelers

Thailand has Suvarnabhumi Airport as the open gateway linking the Indochina Region to world markets. Suvarnabhumi Airport provides Thailand with a comparative advantage on aviation flights linking the Indochina Region with other regions of the world, compared to other airports in this Region as Changi Airport in Singapore. Consideration of corridors for trade, investment, and linkage of transport for travelers and air cargoes, emphasis will be on travel and transport from Suvarnabhumi Airport and potential new services that can be linked with the GMS, China, and India in three routes as:

- (1) Airways: The development of Suvarnabhumi Airport and the reuse of Don Muang Airport are the main routes of Bangkok as being the traveling center of the Region and the Airport as the hub of Asia.
- (2) Waterways: Water transport along the Mekong River from China to Chiang Rai (Chiang Saen) and Chiang Khong to Laos heading to Luang Prabang should be the new route for future tourism having Chiang Saen Port as the hub.
- (3) New Roads: The new roads are the East-West corridor from the center of Da Nang to Mukdahan to Indochina Intersection at Phitsanulok and going to Myanmar at Mae Sot. The traffic volume is still low on the route and, currently, there are some problems, politically, on the way passing Myanmar.

4.3 Potentiality of the New Trade Lanes

The main factors that were considered in this study defining the recommended potential new trade lanes having Thailand as the transport center of the Region providing economic benefits to the country are (Figure 5):

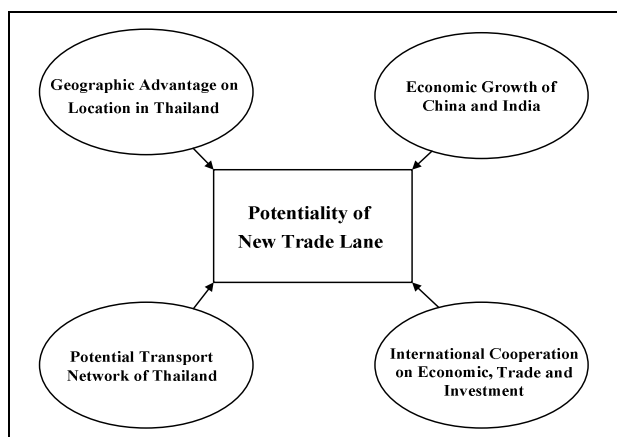


Fig. 5. Potentiality of New Trade Lanes [5].

- (1) Southern China and India are the countries with high economic growth and expansion. The geographical location of Thailand is of comparative advantage in terms of cost saving in freight transport on the

recommended routes for the international trade of the two countries and the world markets providing freight transport through Thailand, or through cooperation in trade and investment. The two countries have substantial populations and high purchasing power. Thailand will be benefit through trade and investment providing linkage with the two countries in the future.

- (2) Political changes in the world especially the decline of the Soviet Union (Russia) led to expansion of international trade. The competition is tougher while agreements by trading and investing groups in the same regions increased. The conceptual framework for cooperation in economy, trade and investment of Thailand and the neighboring countries, therefore, emphasizes the development of common markets. The driving forces from international development bodies such as the UNESCAP and the ADB have resulted in the development of countries in the same region and the development of common markets modeled on the European Union (EU). The main concept is to encourage economic development among the concerned countries.
- (3) Development of road network and rail network on the potential economic, trade, and investment routes of Thailand.
- (4) Geographical comparative advantage of location on the Southern coast of Thailand will enable transport linkage with saving on cost and time between the crude oil sources and the industrial countries consumers.
- (5) Thailand has efficient domestic transport networks and can increase the efficiency in transport linkage to support the expansion of economic, trade, and investment corridor.

5. DEVELOPMENT OF TRANSPORT NETWORK LINKAGE STRATEGY

Analysis of current situations (Sections 3 and 4) in network linkage enables the setting out of the framework for strategic planning of development of the transport network. The major strategy is to enhance efficiency in the freight transport process and to reduce the cost for the operators and users in order to increase the potentiality of Thailand in competing for being the transport hub for the Indochina Region. The study defined that the main network consists of the North-South Corridor of Thailand with the potential to accommodate high volume of freight transport compared to the networks of the neighboring countries. Transport from the Chiang Khong custom house, Chiang Rai Province, to the Laem Chabang Port or the Andaman Seacoast port, has the transfer point at Sila-Asana. For the East-West network, transport from Mukdahan to the Laem Chabang Port has a transfer point at Thapra Station, Khon Kaen Province.

For the short term development, the Laem Chabang Port

is set as the main gateway of the country. In the future, if the Laem Chabang Port is used to its full efficiency and the volume of goods is high enough for exporting to the Western countries, there must be development of ports on the Andaman Seacoast to help cater for the volume of goods, and to be the gateway to the European Union, countries under the BIMSTEC, and countries in the Middle East. The Laem Chabang Port can still be the gateway to the U.S.A., East Asia, and Australia. Thailand can use these networks to promote the value added services to the Thai economic system through the mechanism of collection and distribution of goods and raw materials from China, including linkage to the industrial estates for processing products for export.

The reason that the Laem Chabang Port should be the main gateway of freight transport linkages with other regions is based on the fact that, currently, it is the port with the highest potential in infrastructure, service quality, and capacity to accommodate the volume of goods passing through. The management emphasizes that the inflow-outflow of goods from China should pass through the Laem Chabang Port as the gateway to other regions. The high traffic of goods transported at the Port will attract the shipments to stop for loading-unloading of goods that will reduce the time and expenses of transferring of goods to feeders at Singapore or Malaysia for further shipment to Thailand in the case that the Laem Chabang Port does not have enough volume of goods.

To use the Laem Chabang Port as the gateway for freight transport between China and other regions to help balancing the volume of import and export containers, Thailand as the exporter, still faces the problem of inadequate containers for exporting. To carry empty containers to load goods for export results in a higher cost of freight transport. However, if the management can bring in more imports, the requirement for import of empty containers will be reduced as well as the cost of transport, thus increasing the potentiality of the Laem Chabang Port. This strategy has been used by Malaysia in attempting to develop Port Klang to be a high potential port that is able to compete with Singapore.

This strategy is for enhancing the potential of the transport network to accommodate the expansion of the economic, trade, and investment route defined the transport network on the North-South Corridor linking to the Southern China and Laem Chabang Port as the Backbone Network to support Thailand to become the transport hub of the Indochina Region.

The network on the East-West Corridor has lower potential than that of the North-South since the economies of the neighboring countries of Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam are small and having low development potential for the development of an efficient network. The strategy of network development should be for the collection and distribution of goods and raw materials from the neighboring countries having Thailand as the center to help strengthening the potentiality of the main network and to make the East-West Corridor as the secondary network.

6. CONCLUSIONS

This paper has developed the strategic planning that strengthening transport linkage capability for full efficient usage of the multimodal networks (road, rail, air and water) within the Mekong Region by linking with network development on suitable routes with the potential for future strategic development in terms of economy, trade, investment, and tourism.

Conclusions can be made for development of each network as follows (Figures 6 and 7):

(1) Roads

- Development and improvement of missing links
- Improvement/Expansion of the route on some parts with heavy traffic
- Expansion of truck routes that have heavy traffic
- Improvement of the roads on parts having effects on traffic at high steep or sharp curve points.

(2) Rail

- Improvement of the efficiency of freight trains
- Improvement or expansion of the single track to double track
- Push for the actual rail restructuring process

(3) Waterways

- Strengthening the efficiency of waterway transport through multimodal transport linkage.

(4) Aviation

- Strengthening the efficiency of aviation transport through multimodal transport linkage.

Therefore, the transport networks of Thailand on the North-South and East-West Corridors can be linked among the regions to China, Laos, Vietnam, and Cambodia, having Laem Chabang Port as the gateway for trade. The important program is development of the road network to accommodate freight transport on the corridor consisting of the construction of a bridge crossing the Mekong River at Chiang Khong linking to Highway R3 and increasing the capacity of the route on the parts having high traffic to provide convenience and to increase safely the speed of travel on the transport route.

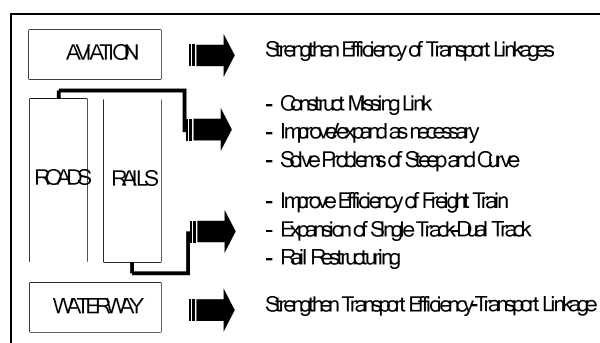


Fig. 6. Issues for Development of Transport Network Linkage [5].

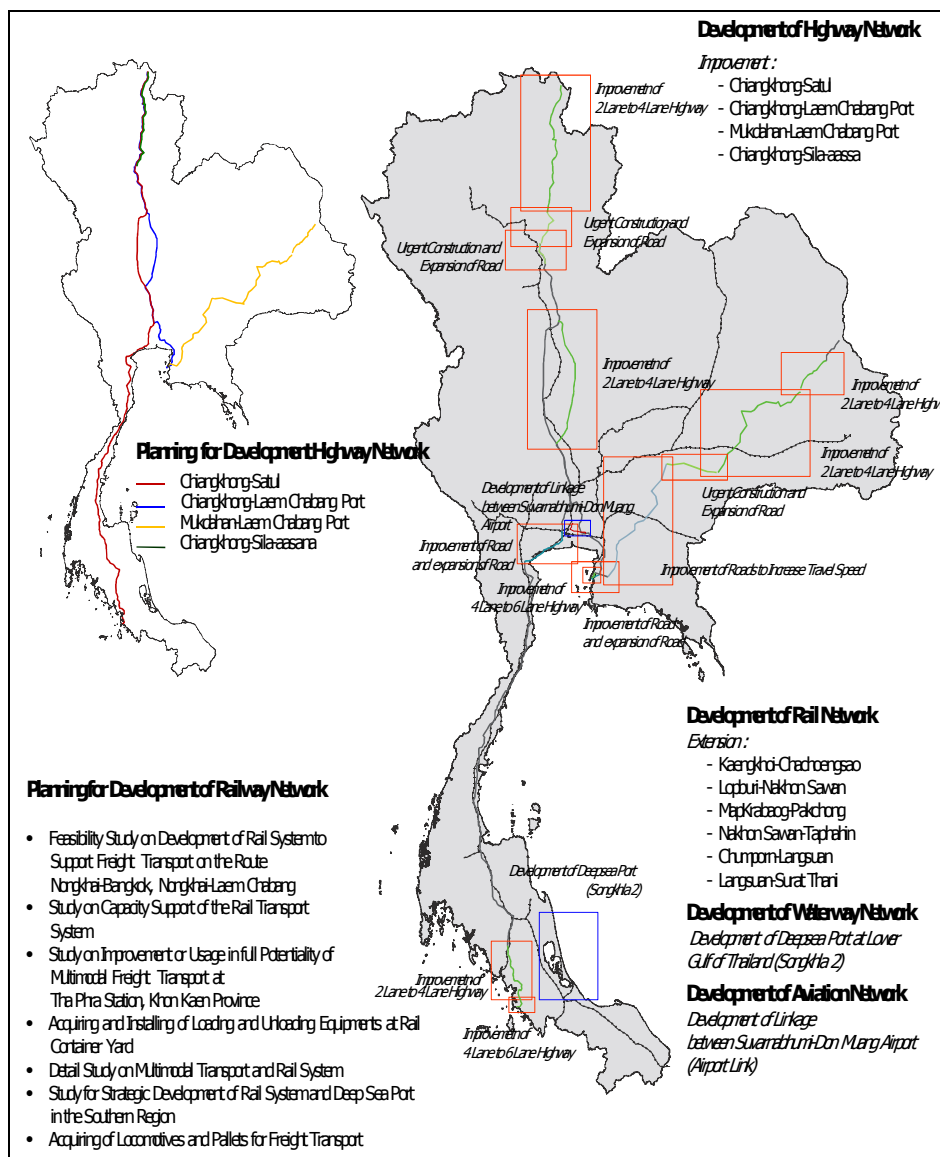


Fig. 7. Development of Transport Network Linkages [5].

Other programs to accommodate transport by different modes are development of the rail network to improve the efficiency of commodity transit through the improvement or expansion of single track to dual track in bottle neck areas. Improvement of the rail line is expected to create more transport by the rail system.

The development of waterway network and the aviation network are for more efficient use of the network both the deep sea port and the linkage between the Suvarnabhumi and Don Muang Airports.

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Organizational Capacity of Transport Agencies in East-West Economic Corridor

P. Uamturapojn and H. Kato

Abstract— Addressing organizational capacity in cross-border transport infrastructure (CBTI) projects is critical to reduce development gap among counterparts and facilitate the structural adaptation. An assortment of bureaucratic hierarchy levels of administration is significantly mixed up with responsibilities, incentives, and benefits between national and regional level. The study deals with the East-West Economic Corridor (EWEC) project adopted by the Greater Mekong Subregion Program (GMS), by emphasizing different circumstances of organizational capacity in national in-line ministries and coordinated stakeholders among Lao PDR, Thailand, and Viet Nam throughout the CBTI implementation. It examines the role of CBTI-related mechanisms towards coordinating organizational capacity approaches, and discusses associated challenges. We found that country-specific organizational arrangements as the National Transport Facilitation Committees (NTFCs) are playing the strategic progress of in-between national and regional organizational capacity building in parallel with integrating vertically and horizontally across their bureaucratic frameworks.

Keywords— Cross-border transport infrastructure, East-West Economic Corridor, Regional integration, Organizational capacity.

1. INTRODUCTION

Trends towards regional integration are progressing across infrastructure planning and transportation policy, by influencing throughout public sector and its organizational structure, among variety of administrative levels [1, 2]. One of the central challenges for implementing and integrating regional counterparts is how to produce meaningful mechanisms for promoting the participations of a broad cross-section of actors in resource planning and management decisions [3]. The mechanism of transport agencies' organizations in Asia has been submitted to considerable changes during emerging of regional integration strategies [1], [4]. Multinational transportation infrastructure projects and their backward and forward interlinkages provide an important practice to clarify the relationships among actors and their structural networks. Cross-border transport infrastructure (CBTI) is, therefore, one of fundamental determinants that mixed up with responsibilities, incentives, and benefits [2], [5, 6]. Indeed, its framework challenges national resources, as well as overcome gap between neighboring counterparts, which influences not only absolute, but also comparative, advantages. In a dynamic context, the CBTI itself is

adopted as a regional public goods that moves factors of production within and across countries, thus involving the regional integration attaining harmonized productivity [7, 8]. Significantly, it is expanding to highlight the importance of multi-dimensional environment at integrating decisions among various actors [9]. In practice, a complex interplay of multi-leveled government agencies is gradually influencing the scope of organizational capacity [10].

Organizational capacity is influenced by variety of factors, including leadership and governance, financial management, technology, program development and human resources, thus its definition is also far from simple or consistent [11, 12]. In a regional setting, the organizational capacity is a combination of two components: national and regional, where requires a systematic organizational arrangement, whether formal or informal [13]. Though in theory, ad hoc organizational coordination and negotiation between governments on a project-to-project basis would work well without a formalized institutional or legal framework, in reality this approach has head high failure rates, significantly raising transaction costs and making such collaborations infeasible [14]. Thus, the organizational capacity development plays a vital role to promote prosperity and stability in participating countries, particularly with regard to mitigating risks of varying strengths and weaknesses of regulatory regimes between regional countries [4], [9, 10].

2. ROLE OF CBTI IN GMS PROGRAM

The GMS program is an economic assistance program initiated by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) since 1992 for the purpose of strengthening economic ties and promoting economic cooperation among six countries along the Mekong River Basin: Cambodia, People's

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Fig.1. East-West Economic Corridor in GMS Program.

Republic of China (PRC), Lao People’s Democratic Republic (Lao PDR), Myanmar, Thailand, and Viet Nam. Infrastructure is one of the “three I’s,” along with incentives and institutions, that are key determinants of overall growth and the magnitude and productivity of capital inflows to liberalizing economies [15]. Consistency with operational practice with the ADB, the definition of CBTI is broad and inclusive as: (i) infrastructure facilities that involve physical infrastructure, and/or coordinated policies and procedures spanning two or more neighboring countries; (ii) national infrastructure projects that have a significant cross border impact, in that their planning and implementation involve cooperation and/or coordination with one or more neighboring governments; and (iii) infrastructure facilities that aim to stimulate amounts of regional trade, or are designed to connect to the network of a neighboring or third country [1], [8], [16]. Physically, connectivity through CBTI development is crucial for enhanced regional integration and economic cooperation [17, 18]. Nonphysically, the CBTI projects are becoming an important role for harmonizing across sectors, organizations, countries in term of depth and breadth of regulatory systems, bureaucratic coordination, and policy making cooperation [9], [19]-[21]. These activities include enhancing availability of adequate standard, a reliable system of legal resource and dispute resolution, an effective competition policy, and the capacity of existing human capital to process exchanges [22, 23]. Main obligations of CBTI implementation are to: (i) adopt the highway network as a coordinated plan for the development of economic corridors; (ii) bring the

national design standards into conformity with regional classification; and (iii) facilitate the transformation of the transport corridor into a genuine economic corridor [24]. Such frameworks particularly abide by a double track approach: (i) construction of CBTI projects; and (ii) implementation of organizational capacity development. Accordingly, it is essential to examine the organizational capacity throughout their bureaucratic structures among both national and regional level [25]. In 1994, three CBTI projects were designated as road improvement of transport priority projects, consequently adapted to economic corridors concept at the GMS Eighth Ministerial Meeting in 1998 [26], composed of East-West Economic Corridor (EWEC), North-South Economic Corridor (NSEC), and Southern Economic Corridor (SEC). The EWEC extends 1,320 kilometers as a continuous land route to reduce significantly travel time and transport costs between the Andaman Sea in the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea as shown in Fig. 1 [27].

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Addressing the EWEC, the study aims to examine the organizational capacity on the dimension of integrating transport facilitation throughout the CBTI mechanism. Among various factors coordinated by: 1) growing number of actors and agencies involved in EWEC development process; 2) increasing interrelationship between stakeholders; 3) overlapping roles and responsibilities among actors and counterparts, the CBTI is not only associated with differences in regulatory regimes of national government, but also reflect much boarder differences in regional values, cultures and languages [28, 29]. It is hypothesized herein that the degree of organizational capacity among EWEC countries will be influenced by two levels; national and regional levels. The organizational capacity of transport agencies, for instance, is characterized by intensive interactions between both levels of governance.

A literature review of various strategic and implementation plans [1, 2], [6], [20], [25], [30, 31] was conducted for pinpointing the different roles and responsibilities from different agencies to provide both technical and policy perspectives. The study particularly draws on material documents from two workshops: 1) Regional Workshop on the Draft Strategy and Work Program for Transport and Trade Facilitation in the GMS on 3-4 June 2009; and 2) the GMS Economic Corridors Forum (ECF) on 16-17 September 2009. Both workshops were focused on institutional mechanism for improving integrated transport and trade facilitation policies [32]-[34]. Representatives of governmental bodies from GMS countries took part as well as the private sector and academic scholars. The workshops involved a mixture of plenary session with presentations and short discussions, prior to 1) institutional arrangements promoting policy integration; 2) barriers and bottlenecks; 3) supportive institutional arrangements and their transferability; and 4) dissemination and

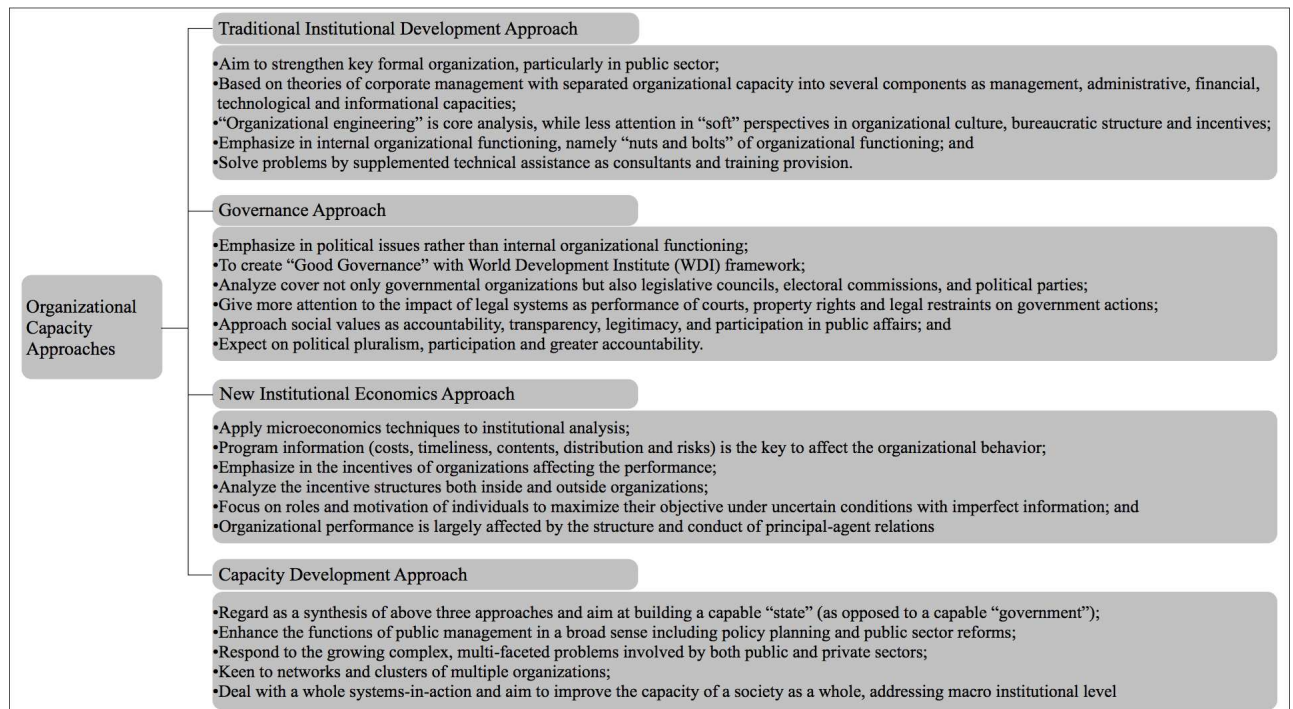


Fig. 2. Summarization of organizational capacity approaches.

information. Consequently, semi-structured interviews with national government officials were conducted for overcoming the discussions and validated information [27], [34]. Contacted by emails and conducted visitings with government officials, planners, and policy-makers in Lao PDR, Thailand and Viet Nam on 9-21 September 2009 and during 29 March to 5 April 2010, the interviews were discussed and examined existing transport plans throughout different actors and captured the opinions and assessment of the success and failure of those plans collected with background data on agencies (types of plans and policies) and participants (position in agency and main responsibilities). Accordingly, the interviews were emphasized on the structural framework of organizations, which particularly play a momentous role for implementing and operating overall CBTI's procedures.

Towards analytical frameworks, the study investigates an expanded definition of organizational capacity, particularly identified the functional performances between bureaucratic organizations. The organizational capacity is predominantly classified in four approaches as 1) traditional institutional development approach; 2) governance approach; 3) new institutional economic approach; and 4) capacity development approach, as summarized in Fig. 2 [35, 36].

4. ACTORS IN EWEC DEVELOPMENT

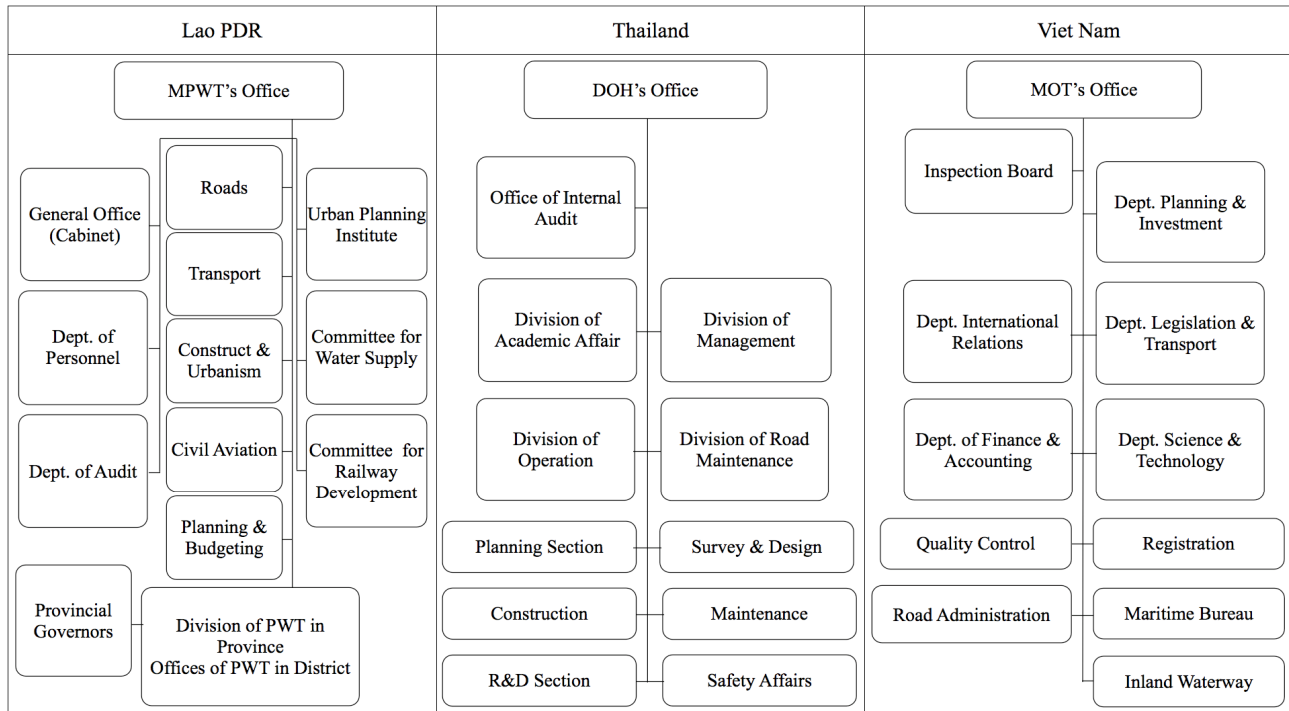
Many analyses of networks and policy communities have previously often focused on the vertical interactions of government organizations. While ways of measuring the extent of the different types of integration are explored [37, 38] as: 1) vertical integration between different levels of government; 2) horizontal or inter-sectoral

integration; 3) inter-territorial integration between neighboring authorities with shared interests; and 4) intra-sectoral integration between different sections within one department. The study aims towards analyzing the scope direction of organizational capacity development throughout transport agencies. In the EWEC context, efforts to align organizational capacity through CBTI implementation come at the expense of domestic administration and unilateral liberalization among members [39]. Necessarily, pressure of compatibility is complimented with the involvement of a wider range of actors. Yet, it remains substantial among variety of bureaucratic characteristics in both national in-line ministries and coordinated organizations in Lao PDR, Thailand, and Viet Nam (alphabetized by name).

Lao PDR

With recognition of the obstacle of the land-locked location, together with the GMS program, the Government of Lao PDR has introduced a land-linked strategy as a tool to overcome and perceive the regional integration opportunity [40]. The Ministry of Public Works and Transport (MPWT) is directly responsible for the development of national roads in the whole country, concurred with the national land-linked strategy by the Department of Roads [41]. In November 2007, the MPWT was reorganized from the Ministry of Communication, Transport, Post, and Construction (MCTPC), which was lack of clarification of roles and responsibilities of civil servants [40]. Although the government policy framework basically adapted for fostering decentralization, several impediments persist, including lack of coordination at the decision making levels; the centralization of the early 1990s, which led to dominance by the center in policy making and budget allocation; the absence of transparent conflict resolution

Table 1. Organizational charts of main actors in the EWEC development



channels; and the hindrances to efficient service delivery created by numerous bureaucratic layers [42]. In order to construct and implement the CBTI projects respecting the EWEC plan, beside budget, the MPWT has essentially developed number of cooperation with international agencies for technical assistances. An essential challenge associated with the CBTI projects is to balance bureaucratic powers and coordinate organizational mechanisms [40], [42, 43].

Thailand

The Department of Highways (DOH) under the Ministry of Transport (MOT) is entirely responsible for interurban roads and highways, including the CBTI projects. The DOH is the executing agency, assisted by a number of offices within and outside the Department, facilitating the conduct of the GMS highway expansion projects [30], [44]. Besides, planning and implementation in the CBTI projects are particularly shifting towards improving standards throughout GMS agreements. Within key performances, the DOH's organizations whose respective mandates concerning the CBTI implementation are structured with functional lines, whereas their works typically cross functional boundaries [25], [45]. Two initiatives are critical for improving efficiency and enhancing CBTI delivery: 1) rationalizing functions and streamlining organizations both within and between departments; and 2) reducing the scope of central government intervention in the provincial performance [43, 44].

Viet Nam

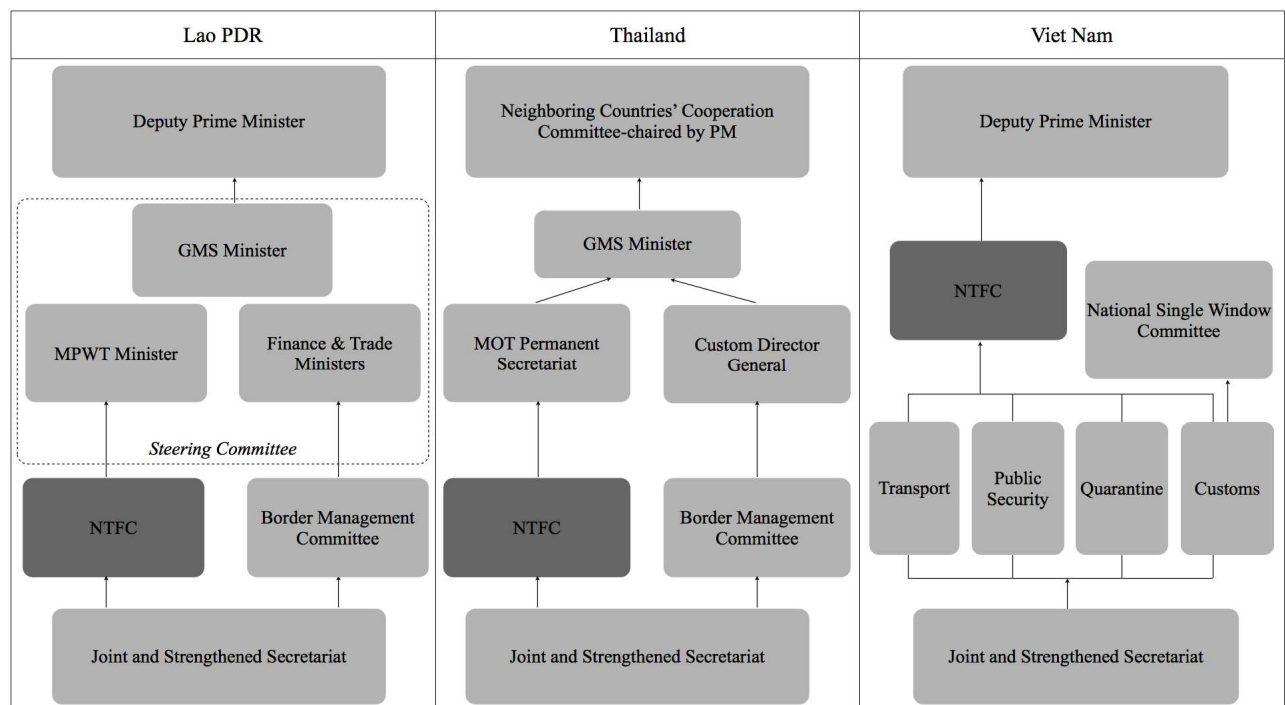
Transport infrastructure in Viet Nam is predominantly financed, built and operated by the public sector, either directly through the government or by quasi-independent state-owned enterprises (SOEs). The administration of

the road sector is complex with different agencies responsible for financing and implementation and others for investment and maintenance [46]. For the CBTI projects, investment finance is approved by the Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI), the implementation is the responsibility of the Project Management Unit of the Ministry of Transport (MOT), and maintenance is undertaken by the Viet Nam Roads Authority (VRA) with funds channeled through the Ministry of Finance (MOF) [47]. The implementation process is particularly dependent on the capabilities of the MOT throughout departments as shown in Table 1.

5. ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY OF TRANSPORT AGENCIES

Regarding to the EWEC implementation, the CBTI projects are amalgamation with capacity and capability among the MPWT, DOH and MOT, who are centralized to national governments, with coupling responsibilities between national and regional frameworks. Their organizations are regularly addressed and affected by the GMS structure, focused on motivation of country members to concentrate on the provision of seamless transport network [1], [6]. Indeed, essential organizational capacity remains lack of accountability and results in gap between counterparts. Accordingly, the National Transport Facilitation Committees (NTFCs) are initiated for playing a crucial role on mandate for inter-ministerial coordination as standing committees to ensure that: (i) there will be substantive and regular participation by all relevant ministries and agencies; and (ii) concerns of various affected interest groups are adequately addressed [32]. Liaisons with monitoring and evaluation of the CBTI implementation, the NTFCs are involved with the private sector in proactively consolidating the agreements into strategic growth plan.

Table 2. Proposal of organizational arrangements in the EWEC development



Therefore, they particularly replicate among line ministries and agencies to incorporate the CBTI implementation and agreements into the national legal and regulatory framework, while crossing functions among administrative boundaries.

Lao PDR

The Lao PDR National Transport Committee (NTC), created in 2002, acts as the NTFC for the purposes of cross-border transport agreement, which is a non-standing committee headed by the Minister of MPWT. Membership of the NTC includes: (i) Deputy Minister of Ministry of Industry and Commerce; (ii) Deputy Minister of Ministry of Finance; (iii) Director of Immigration Bureau; (iv) Director General of Quarantine Bureau; and (v) Director General of Foreign Affairs Bureau. Private sector representatives from the Lao International Freight Forwarders' Association, the Passenger Transport Association, and insurance companies are included. The NTC has four working groups on customs, transport, immigration, and quarantine [27], [48].

Thailand

The Thailand's NTFC is chaired by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Transport, which is also a non-standing committee. Membership is generally composed of senior officials at the Director General or Secretary General level. The NTFCs meet on an ad hoc basis with secretariat arrangements, consisting one staff member from the International Affairs Bureau of the MOT and one from Department of Land Transport [27], [32].

Viet Nam

The Viet Nam's NTFC, created in 2001, is chaired by the Vice Minister of MOT. The membership extends to

following ministries and agencies: (i) Transport (including the Viet Nam Road Administration); (ii) Finance (Customs); (iii) Planning and Investment; (iv) Agriculture and Rural Development; (v) Health; (vi) Foreign Affairs (Immigration); (vii) Public Security (Border Control); and (viii) the Viet Nam Automobile Transport Association as private sector association representing some 700 trucking companies [5], [27], [32].

The organizational capacity development throughout the NTFCs adaptation is consolidated to achieve in the fundamental reform of administrative procedures. It plays as a key support to overcome diversity of bureaucratic organizational capacity, which the ADB carried out a diagnostic assessment on the national institutional arrangements for benchmarking the CBTI mechanism [49]. Addition to transform the EWEC into a productive economic corridor, the NTFCs are shifted the practical initiative for generating combination of transportation and trade facilitation (TTF) [33]. Proposed the modified organizational arrangements arising from the ADB consultation is shown in Table 2. To strengthen the organizational capacity, while recognizing on a country-by-country basis, the NTFCs are considered as: (i) standing committees meeting at formally regular intervals in plenary sessions with an established agenda rather than an ad hoc arrangement; (ii) high-level representatives from all ministries; (iii) a coordination mechanism; (iv) a strengthened secretariat; (v) involvement of local authorities and agencies at the border; and (vi) greater involvement of private sectors. In address concerns of overlapping mandates, the NTFCs are directly responded to enhance interagency coordination both among different levels of government and among different agencies.

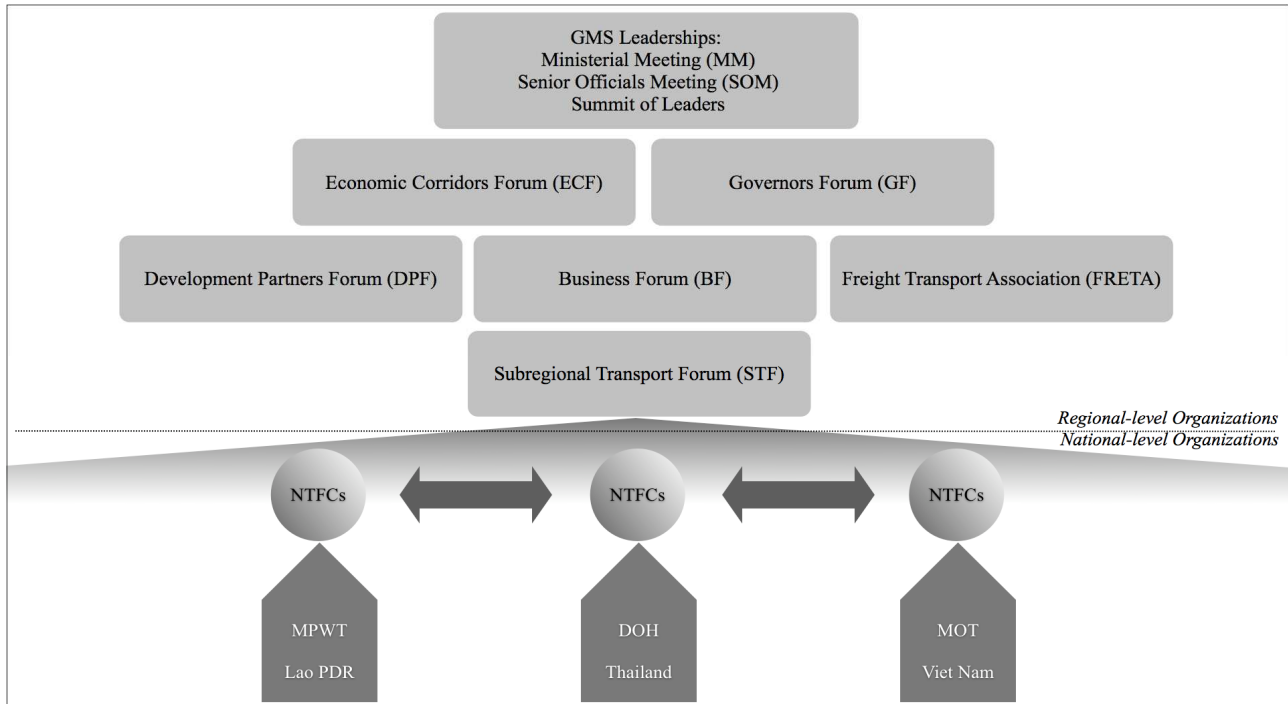


Fig. 3. Organizational capacity development of the NTFCs coordination.

6. ANALYSIS

Differences between countries in the quality of CBTI implementation help to explain differences in each actor's organizational capacity. The successful implementation of CBTI projects are particularly required a change in the attitude of transport agencies involved in the facilitation process because it has to be accompanied by the restructuring of existing organizations. These changes entail NTFC's challenges as new mechanisms to strengthen organizational capacity among control agencies and related ministries. While negotiation of far-reaching bilateral and/or multilateral agreements is progressively adopted, the NTFCs play as intermediated coordinators towards allocating limited organizational capacity between relevant counterparts. The organizational framework of the NTFCs encompasses public and private stakeholders, as well as operates in-between national- and regional-level organizations as shown in Fig. 3. Therefore, the NTFCs are being pursued by both bilateral and multilateral frameworks throughout: (i) GMS member countries' own initiatives; and (ii) the initiatives of regional infrastructure cooperation programs. However, the GMS strategic frameworks as well as country strategies continue to depend on the national bureaucratic organizations. They are titled toward addressing national constraints rather than developing regional arrangements [43].

Towards the traditional institutional development approach, the NTFCs are particularly in public sector standing as a core bureaucratic structure and incentives. Furthermore, they are expected on multilateral participation between in-line ministries to handle operational CBTI projects throughout the process of developing the Strategic Framework for Action on Trade

Facilitation and Investment (SFA-TFI), with the linkages of border management, customs, and quarantine [5]. As shown in Fig. 3, the NTFCs remain at the heart of the process of CBTI cooperation, which are intermediately positioned between national and regional level. Yet, they are heavily dependent on the beneficiary participation among ministries. Attention to greater private participation in public affairs, the NTFCs are creatively acted in governance approach, differently structured and determined on a country-by-country basis regarding their own incentive structures. Regarding the new institutional economics approach, the NTFCs are strategically performed to meet various bureaucratic objectives, particular to economic benefits and social security. Being pursued through bureaucratic structured frameworks, the major challenges of NTFCs are: 1) assignments between local counterparts with provincial organizations; 2) qualified communication channels between representatives; 3) establishment of regional standards; and 4) compatible timeline of project implementation. Intended throughout different standardized capacities, the degree of managerial accountability among the DOH, MPWT, and MOT are particularly influenced towards strengthen the organizational capacity across stakeholders. Where responsibility of project implementation and operation has been vertically decentralized, the varying strengths and weakness of the NTFCs between countries are horizontally significant. Both frameworks for implementing CBTI projects and modifying responsibilities of national bureaucratic agencies, shared common principles, are to be worked in parallel. In recognition of these strong links between NTFCs, the improvement of organizational capacity throughout horizontal integration is helping to achieve the CBTI's sustainable development goals.

7. CONCLUSION

Being challenging by regional integration dynamics, the EWEC is represented through various interrelated elements, particular to the organizational capacity. Hence, interests and priorities of national and regional stakeholders throughout CBTI projects set the stage for organizational capacity development trends, which stimulated the efforts to improve coordination among both vertical and horizontal bureaucratic frameworks. The formation of NTFCs illustrates the progress of coordination in-between national and regional task forces, providing horizontal compatibility in initiated regional cross-border cooperation.

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The Relations between Gender Difference and Advancement in Thai Academic Careers

Boonnanida Sodha, Mustafa Özbilgin, and Sara Connolly

Abstract— *The fact that women have increasingly expanded their academic roles; it seems on the surface that problems associated with gender inequality do not exist in academic careers. The researcher argues that the above data is still inadequate to come to that conclusion because headcount is not a sufficient measure for gender equity at work. The pilot study with Thai academic researchers presented in this work is aimed to understanding the complexity of gender and academic career advancement in Thailand. Multiple sources of data including questionnaires, interviews, and documentary data related to gender issues are collected. One important finding from this study illustrates that the respondents did not perceive gender discrimination in academic careers, despite the quantitative data indicated that women got less on rewards. The expected main contributions of this work for academic careers are as follow: to assist in identifying the problems faced by women and to offer useful information relevant to gender equality issues in academic careers. Furthermore, this study provides useful data for the development of Thai research on gender issues.*

Keywords— Academic careers, career advancement, gender.

1. INTRODUCTION

Rapid industrial growth and increased access for women to education make women participation in the labour market steadily increases [1]. This is also true in Thailand, where women account for over a half of all employees in the labour market. Because gender bias in Thailand is deep-rooted and predominant in every societal sector and the level of awareness in gender discrimination is extremely low [2], Thai women, therefore, remain under represented in top managerial positions and the gender wage gap still exists [3]. The evidences supporting these observations could be found in Thai academic careers. Although women are predominant, they seem to hit the glass ceiling. Women account for over 60 percent of academic workers, but below 30 percent of them take responsibility at higher levels in the workplace [4]. In addition, female academics' income was approximately equivalent to 89 percent of that of men [5].

It was found that most literature has always focused on the importance of academic careers in industrialised or developed countries. Basically, characteristics of academic personnel in developing countries are different from those of developed countries in several ways. Moreover, the conceptualisations of gender vary in one country to another, depending on cultures, traditions and values [6]. For this reason, it is difficult to make the generalisations about issues associated with gender in academic career for both developed and developing

countries. Since social and institutional environments are dissimilar due to the society being considered, so their impacts on gender issue are very distinctive. Consequently, each society requires its empirical studies to demonstrate the effects of social and institutional environments on the mechanism of gender gaps in academic science [7].

Thailand, a developing country with less technological advancements, was selected to study about gender difference in academic career. Two reasons to carry out the study could be explained as follow. For the first one, it is noteworthy that more than half of Thai academics are women while in industrialised countries, females account for only 25 percent of total academic workers. It is interesting to find the explanation to clarify the difference between these two figures. For the second reason, gender research in Thai context is incomplete in its practical application because there are limited studies to discover the problems of gender discrimination in academic careers in Thailand. With these two reasons, Thailand is very attractive to serve as a case study in this paper.

The aim of this pilot study is to explore whether or not gender inequality exists in academic careers through a comparison of career advancement between male and female workers in academe. The expected contribution of this study is to offer some possibility to reveal the hidden reality on gender issues in Thai society, which helps to pinpoint the problems faced by women and men workers in academic disciplines. This would support executives and policy-makers in order to organise possible policy to encourage career advancement amongst personnel in this sector into the future.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In this part, three topics of literature are reviewed: the political and legislative promotion of gender equality in Thai society; the gender treatment in Thai academic

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organisations, and the influence of individual background on the career advancement.

In Thailand, women movements started to come to the scene since the mid 20th century. However, according to [8], "gender issues were seriously considered in academic institutions after 14 October 1973, the day when a political demonstration started into the democratisation movement". A significant outcome of the movement was a gender equality clause in the 1974 Constitution of Thailand, which brought about some significant legislation including, "every person is equal in Law and is protected in equality and is protected in law equally between men and women, without discrimination to person because of gendered differences could not be done" and "women should be protected in employed person, job employment, career advancement, leadership and benefits of consideration from working as men by eliminating all forms of discrimination against women" [9]. This legal system is groundbreaking to a career path for women; for example, the first female minister was appointed in 1976.

However, academic institutions in Thailand remain controlled by men. The perceived male culture in scientific society and the difficulty of being taken seriously in a male-dominated profession put women off academic career advancement, particularly at senior levels [10]. Thai female academics account for 66 percent of the total academic population, but the percentage of female professor is under 30 per cent. Although law or mechanism has been developed to prevent discrimination against women, most Thai people is still of an opinion that it is acceptable that men, as opposed to women, are granted with more opportunities in their careers [11]. According to [12], "women as a group receive fewer chances and opportunities in their careers, and for this reason they collectively have worse career outcomes". As a result of these organisational practices, women are disadvantaged and have fewer opportunities of promotions to higher positions.

In addition, some researchers have suggested that individual background is also a key factor in determining women's access to higher positions [13]-[15]. Women of higher socio-economic status, such as holding higher degree earned, had greater access to more opportunities to move forward at their workplace [16], [17]. Furthermore, there are some studies argued that family role is an important factor to distract women from career advancement [18]. Although economic and social changes make it necessary for women to earn family income, parental role tend to be permanent role for women than men [19], [20]. As long as households roles limit the time those women spend in developing their careers, women remain disadvantage in career advancement [21].

In light of the above literature, this review of the literature illustrates that academic career advancement can be determined not only by politics and government legislation, societal values, organisational practices, but also by individual factors [22]. Therefore, the multi-factors should be considered in order to explain the hidden reality of gender issues in Thai academic careers.

Table 1. Participants' profile

Characteristic	Number of respondents (N=21)	
	Male (N=7)	Female (N=14)
Marital status		
Single	4	8
Married	3	6
Spouse's occupation		
Academic areas	1	4
Non-academic areas	2	2
Highest degree earned		
Bachelor degree	2	3
Master degree	4	8
Doctoral degree	1	3
Holding administrative position		
Yes	3	6
No	4	8
Age (years)		
Minimum	24	22
Maximum	54	54
Mean	42	37
Working Experience (years)		
Minimum	4	2
Maximum	34	34
Mean	11	17

3. METHODOLOGY

The tool for gathering information in this pilot study is the semi-structured interviews. Sampling size of participants was determined in terms of information richness rather than the number of participants as in [23]. Although a sample of 12 participants is sufficient to obtain the richness of data when using the semi-structured interviews [24], the results obtained in this pilot study were analysed with data assembled from 21 participants. A summary of selected participants is provided in Table 1.

The pilot study was conducted, largely during April 2009, in Bangkok, Thailand with three academic organisations comprising the public and non-public organisations and the educational institutes. Participants were recruited from academic personnel whose primary job is in academic area. In order to access the participants, the researcher contacted a number of academic organisations and approached some academic personnel through social contacts and deployed snowball techniques.

The semi-structured interviews were conducted with 21 participants to gather information on career chances in relation to gender in academic careers. The participants also had to be involved with a questionnaire

survey to compare academic career advancement between men and women in term of gender pay gap.

Descriptive statistics was employed to compare career advancement, in term of earned income, between male and female academics whereas the qualitative approaches were used to derive themes from the interviews so as to explain the advancement opportunity in academic careers. An examination of macro level (e.g. social values that may impact the advancement of the Thai academic careers) was also conducted based on documentary data. The career advancement of Thai men and women in academic careers is the main focus for the data analysis in this work.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In order to understand the gender difference in academic career advancement, the researcher took individual background of participants including educational degree earned and work experience into consideration. Based on educational level, all participants were classified into three groups as; group of bachelor degree earned, group of master degree earned, and group of doctoral degree earned. In addition, more two groups were set, based on work experience of all participants, as groups of less than ten and more than ten years experience. The quantitative findings gained from the questionnaire are graphically shown in the bar chart of Figure 1. It should be noted that the information presented in Figure 1 was calculated by using the average values of male income in each group as the base value for comparison.

It is interesting that even in the case of male and female workers with equivalent education level and years of work experience; female workers were paid less than were men. As seen in Figure 1, income of women who earn bachelor, master, and doctoral degrees was approximately equivalent to 43, 81, and 85 percent of that of men holding the same degree respectively. In addition, income of women who have work experience less than 10 years and more than 10 years was approximately equivalent to 67 and 69 percent of that of men holding the same work experience, respectively. It can be noticed that the ratio of earned income shown in Figure 1 would continually increase due to high educational degree and much academic experience of women. This finding is consistent with the review of literature, indicating that women of higher status were found to have more opportunities to move forward at their workplace [16].

In addition to disadvantage in rewards, women have been reported that the roles of wife and mother require too much of time, resulting in less time for academics. A large number of female participants with dependent children and other family commitments faced problems relating to their families. It is because academic occupations are taking more time, so it is difficult for women to meet family responsibilities and continue working [6]. Female married academics admitted that marriage and children interferes their career, especially on how to balance the time between work and family. Many stated the desire to be in the same geographical

location as their partner and family, which often lead to problems in career development. The following comments came from a number of participants:

"I have a young son which make I don't want to attend conferences or training outside this area. It can be difficult if you need a position, but you are limited to geographical mobility" (a 39-year-old, female, married academic)

It was found that, because women generally are more involved than men in child care and domestic work, they may be willing to forego advancement so as to have more flexible hours to take care of their family. One was quoted as saying,

"After marriage, I stop working late to take care of my family. They don't ask for that but it's my obligation." (a 35-year-old, female, married academic).

One participant said she did not wish to start a family, as this would prevent her from progressing further in her careers, stating,

"I have decided not to have marriage, partly due to my concerns regarding the work/life balance. If I am single, I don't have burden so that I can work more". (a 49-year-old, female, single academic).

Three of the participants observed that most successful female academics were single or divorced while it was not so in the case of men, pointing that having a family may relate to the advancement of female academics.

This finding is consistent with the review of literature in [25], indicating that "highly qualified women may be delaying childbirth or not embarking on it at all, especially women working in technology and in natural sciences were less likely to be mothers than those in other occupations".

However, family does not impede all females for their career advancement. It was found that the roles of spouses can support females in some situations. There were a few participants saying that marriage did not come between her work and family because her spouse understood her workload, helped with house chores, and had financial support to raise her children.

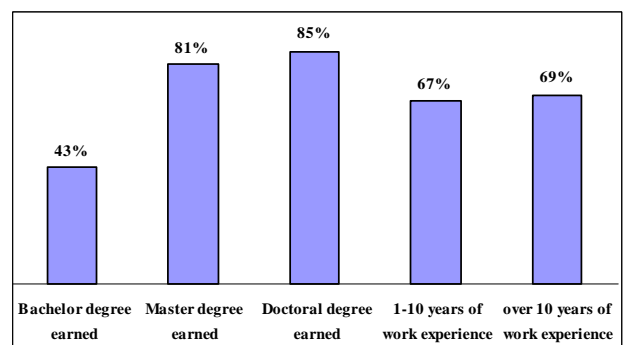


Fig. 1. Ratio of estimated female to male earned income in academic careers classified by education back ground and years of work experience.

"My spouse influences my decision of continuing my research career because he understood that the continuation of the lab work requires me to stay late" (a 31-year-old, female, married academic)

"My husband is financially healthy and also gets a high salary and thus shares our housing expenses and childcare expense" (a 43-year-old, female, married academic)

In addition to family role within the mind sets of women, the practice of the academic organisations can explain the barriers of women's advancement in academic careers [26], [27]. According to conservative Thai cultures stated in [9], "it would be unacceptable to permit women to perform leadership, so men, who are taking on their protective role, have more chances to get a job with leader tasks". This action is accepted by society and it is thought to be part of an organisational culture. This is consistent with finding from this study which revealed that men has biased attitude toward women in higher position. A number of male participants shared the following comments:

"Working in a female dominated environment, it may be that my ideas have been created less than working with male colleagues." (a 34-year-old, male, single academic).

"She (his boss) acts as devil, always blames my work, and checks my work in all details. I am not a young student. That makes me feel bored." (a 45-year-old, male, married academic)

Surprisingly, one important finding from this pilot study illustrates that the participants did not perceive gender discrimination in academic careers, despite the above finding indicated that women got less on rewards, had barriers in their personal lives, would be unacceptable to perform leader tasks, which those were likely to hinder professional development. The participants indicated that they felt they had little or no experience in gender discrimination. For example, one of the participants (a 54-year-old, female, married academic) replied:

"Such a gender problem rarely happens or does not happen at all because women have more opportunity and they are getting better in their jobs. Almost all of the staff at my division is women and they can work well".

The other (a 39-year-old, female, single academic) said that:

"I got enough, I don't need more"

And another one (a 50-year-old, female, single academic) was quoted as saying,

"I'm happy with what I have; I don't think I should be greedy".

As mentioned in [12]: "the causes of gender disparities in career achievement are held to lie within women themselves. The gender differences are said to be innate or else to be the result of gender-role socialisation or culture patterns". In traditional Thai society, women

have been socialised into the 'beautiful and charming', also have been given by social norms to do in domestic roles, whereas men are supposed to be strong and to dominate the wider world [9]. That makes women tend to rate themselves lower than men on their competence in the academic domain, and these kinds of self perceptions make many high-achieving women believe that they have gained career success through pretense rather than actual abilities [28]. This practice can explain why gender discrimination may not be a concern or become a hidden-issue among academe [19].

In light of the above studies, the researcher relies on two common explanations for the gender disparities that exist in academic fields: women's family-care responsibilities which preclude women having enough time for research and the practice within organisation which obstruct opportunities for women in advance their careers.

5. CONCLUSION

This paper presents the comparative study for career advancement of Thai male and female in academic careers. The study reveals that there are practices within academic careers that were at an unfair disadvantage for women, whereas personnel do not perceive any existence of gender discrimination. There are two points explaining the persistence of gender disparities in academic careers including; traditional role in family which distracts women from professional devotion and the existing of the male-dominant culture which discourage women in academic career advancement.

Based on the findings, possible policy is required to remove the barriers to women's advancement in academic careers. In particular, academic organisations should be aware of gender discrimination and negative gender stereotypes in their workforce. Especially, they need to accept the fact that there is gender discrimination in organisations and account them from top to bottom level. All of which should be embraced in organisation in order to demonstrate for fairness which can motivate workers to do their best work.

However, the scope and context of this pilot study remain limited in term of quantitative measurement. A full study using survey research will conducted with a large sample in the future. The purpose of the full study is to understand how women embark on their careers through the organisation system. In addition, more studies will further examine academic career advancement between men and women as to broaden the results and implications.

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A Study of Performance of SMEs in their Application of Sufficiency Economy Philosophy

Supawadee Khunthongjan and Aree Wiboonpongse

Abstract— The aims of this research were (1) to study performance of small and medium size enterprises (SMEs) in accordance with Sufficiency Economy Philosophy and (2) to study the level of application of the Sufficiency Economy SME principals in these enterprises. The data was gathered from 120 SMEs, participating in the Sufficiency Economy Practice Contest organized by The Office of the Royal Development Projects Board to celebrate the King's 80th birthday. The instrument used in this research was a questionnaire. The percentages mean and standard deviations were calculated. The survey administration took one year. The results were as follows: The SMEs studied (1) adapted to change; (2) applied wisdom in production and (3) were able to lower costs and maintain quality of goods and services.

Keywords— Sufficiency economy philosophy, small and medium size enterprises, performance do business.

1. INTRODUCTION

Thanks to the economic crisis in 1997 severely has affected the economic situation in Thailand, the Small and Medium Enterprises: SMEs were unable to adjust well in the new environment changes. It's, therefore, definitely caused the unbalance and the risk among the macroeconomic and manufacturing sectors, then followed by the economic problem and unemployment, in particular, labor. So, to develop the Small and Medium Enterprises : SMEs (production, trading (wholesaling and retailing), and hospitality), which those are key businesses effectively supporting and increasing national income, have seriously been specified to be the goal of SMEs developing plan, since the nature themselves are unable to adjust well in the new environment with flexibility.

Besides, the Small and Medium enterprises paid the capital cost lower than the bigger ones. It's rather used human than the machinery and lessen number of migrant workers in Bangkok and the environs because those workers are able to work in the factory in their hometown after farming and harvesting finished that helps expand the economic growth to the region.

Because of degree of marketing race in the globalization era was getting higher, the situation of the Small and Medium Enterprises were effected severely included manufacturing, trading investing and technology. Thus, immediate change in the critical situation was needed in order to maintain the business. The Small and Medium Enterprises in many countries confronted such similar difficulties until they go bust. From the report of the Department of Business Development (2007) there's 20,078 of the enterprises in

Thailand went down in the last six month of 2006

Therefore, the Small and Medium Enterprises at present have to go over either the strategy or the methodology used in operating business in order to measure how much it suits the current economic situation. The Small and Medium enterprises need to be enhanced their analytical and strategic skills and other concerned method, which would be leading to capability of running business effectively. Through such form, the Small and Medium Enterprises decided to change the manufacturing target to respond demand of marketing not the brand image as usual and on-going follow up marketing activity in order to be well-known, and promote goods. Meanwhile; the entrepreneurs need to study the strengths and weak points of the business; so that, they could improve the business to be better than any others or equivalent to. Flexibility and quick adjustment become distinctive characteristic that needs to build up under the proper business environment, which is beyond the supervision of these SMEs.

The Sufficiency Economy can be integrated for solving problems on inefficient business management in order to meet the demand of economic cycle in the globalization era. In cases of the foreign countries have been found that the entrepreneurs lack skills of strategic planning in term of total administration without be applied with the current situation (Vos. 2005: 124-138). Those difficulties and limitations are similar to other countries that need to be continuously supported and strengthened, particularly applying of moderation, reasonableness, and wisdom.

Not only the administration principle is important in the business but also ethics in business, in particular, the Corporate Governance: CG and the Corporate Social Responsibility : CSR because the business can't be existed individually, but it's surrounded by an individual, group of people, and other business sections both internal and external organization, for example, stake holders, staffs, customers, and distributors.

At present the Corporate Governance and the Corporate Social Responsibility are about to apply the business ethics to its operation process in accordance of

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the ethics in the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy that bestowed by His Majesty the King to his subject through royal remark on many occasions over the path three decades. All detailed information appeared in the Sufficiency Economy emphasized on the factual knowledge that was composed of “awareness” and “intelligence”. It is, therefore, if the three principles – CG, CSR and the Sufficiency Economy philosophy – were combined together, it would be complete business because the terrible marketing race would decrease and it’s more emphasized on sustainability that making profit. If it’s deeply considered, we would find that the CG and the CSR are the component of the Sufficiency Economy as said by Apichai Puntasen (2003) that the Sufficiency Economy has already covered the principles of the Corporate Governance and the Corporate Social Responsibility.

Presently, some entrepreneurs running mainstream business found that it doesn’t happen of any sustainability or long-term stableness. Moreover, they were pushed under pressure by surrounding factors such as market positioning, innovation, financial resource, and profit making capability (Peter Drucker. 1974). The sufficiency Economic would be Buddhism moral and other religious, being fine person, composed of seven key points; 1) self-reliance; 2) leading one’s life with carefulness; 3) not to cause violence to any life in the world; 4) Work for society with honesty and patience; 5) not to molest oneself and other; 6) lead one’s life without greed and; 7) be ashamed of wrong behavior. Those mentioned before are the way of Sufficiency Economic Business operation that base on Buddhist principle (Apichai Puntasen. 2004 : 679). Currently, the entrepreneurs in Thailand be aware significance of the Sufficiency Economic Business trend, which can be seen on the bill board and on other media promoting all business concerned sectors lead their life and operate the company under sufficiency way.

At present, the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy can be applied in factual world and the forthcoming future that is going to confront with unbalance of the resource and human’s greed, which do not seem to be decreased. To be utilized the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy with business operating is so flexible in the rapid changing globalization. So, the Sufficiency Economy is one of other distinctive way to develop economy by stepping ahead in this age. By the research of Apichai Puntasen 2003 showed the survival of many entrepreneurs in the age of economic crisis in 2003 whose business characteristics were in high rank regarding to Sufficiency Economy Philosophy. However, the business needs supporting from the concrete model or the organization leaders due to be practicable truly and effectively because currently only few enterprises realize the significance of Sufficiency Economy Philosophy in their business.

The researcher was interested in studying the results of the SMEs after running regarding to the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy in order to enlarge number of SMEs running their business with Sufficiency Economy Philosophy and to be the holistic knowledge for another entrepreneurs to apply in own business. Then, the SMEs

holders would be capable to operate and grow sustainably and stably as the strong economic base of the country. However, the study results would be beneficial for planning, developing, and setting policy leading to the balance and sustainability for the whole country.

2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To study the results of the SMEs after running the business regarding to the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy
2. To study the significant volume of applying the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy in the SMEs

3. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

1. To know the results of the SMEs after running the business regarding to the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy
2. To know the significant volume of applying the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy in the SMEs

4. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The results of business regarding to Sufficiency Economy that was used in this study are:

1. Cost and Quality
2. Innovation
3. Adapt to Change

5. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The followings are scoops of research:

1. The groups to be concerned in this research were 120 of the owners or the authorized ones of either small or medium enterprises who on behalf of office or organization submitted their masterpiece to the Office of the Royal Development Projects Board on the occasion of the 80th Anniversary of His Majesty King Bhumibhol Adulyadej on 5 December 2007. 71 of those who passed the basic screen were small enterprises and 49 were medium enterprises. (The Office of the Royal Development Projects Board. 2007: <http://www.rdpb.go.th>: 25 November 2007)
 - 1.1 The Medium Enterprises: approximately value of the property (Land excluded) is over 50 million baht but not over 200 and/ or number of staff is more 50 people but not over 200.
 - 1.2 Small Enterprises: Value of permanent property including land is not over 50 million baht and employment number is less than 50 people.
2. Type of business to be studies: the Import and the Export Business
 - 2.1 Manufacturing: Instant Food Industry, Gem and Accessories Industry, Cosmetics and Medical Supplies, Medical Appliance and

Agricultural Tools, Homemade and Ready-made Dress Products, Electronic Parts and so on.

2.2 Trading (Retailing and Wholesaling): Construction materials, Home Furniture, Instant food store, agriculture goods etc.

2.3 Hospitality: Hotels and other accommodations, Entertainment Complex, Medical Clinic, after-sell service of electric appliance etc.

3. Duration of data collecting: 6 months from 1 February 2008 to 31 August 2008 total 7 months.

6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

6.1. Tools used for collecting data

The tools used for collecting data were the questionnaires that accordingly set up under objectives and notion of research and separated into three parts:

Part 1: General information of the SMEs

It's 13 items with multiple choice questionnaires and was covered all detailed information of business i.e. type of business, period of operation, authorized capital, employment number, amount of temporary property, etc.

Part 2: The results of business operation regarding to the Sufficiency Economy

It's rating scale 5 with open-ended questionnaires and was covered cost and quality, innovation, and adapts to change.

Part 3: Assessment of the Sufficiency Economy principle

It's rating scale 5 questionnaires and was covered

6.2. Gathering Information

1. It is kindly requested the Office of Royal Development Projects Board to distribute the complete questionnaires which done by the entrepreneurs themselves.
2. In-depth interview the Small Enterprise Owner 9 people and the Medium Enterprise ones 9 people.
3. Non-participant observation. It happened in the example business group due to learn their livelihood while in the workplace.

6.3. Analysis Information

All information from explanatory questionnaires was analyzed intensely due to logically find out its outcome. Besides, we also had processing program of SPSS FOR WINDOWS to partially analyze population's general information as:

Part 1: Analyzing population's general information by descriptive statistics for calculating its frequency and percentage.

Part 2: Analyzing the SMEs' characteristics by descriptive statistics.

Part 3: Analyzing for its Mean and Standard Deviation and finally present in the form of table and summary description (Boonchon Sisaad. 1998: 99-100).

Value of the awareness

The most important	score	5 marks
Much important	score	4 marks
Intermediate	score	3 marks
Slight	score	2 marks
Least	score	1 mark

Then, it's figured out the standard deviation with following indicators (Boonchom Sisaas. 1998 : 99-100)

4.51-5.00	meaning	the most important
3.51-4.50	meaning	much important
2.51-3.50	meaning	intermediate
1.51-2.50	meaning	slight
1.00-1.50	meaning	least

7. RESEARCH RESULTS

1. General data of the Medium Size Enterprise that participated the contest organized by the

Office of the Royal Project Board were the domestic business 70.00% and other 30% were exporting business with the period of running business about 15-20 years. Type of the business was manufacturing and trading 66.00% and other 34.00% was service industry. Value of permanent property was 20 million Baht with the registered capital stock 5-200 million Baht and employee 100-150 people

2. The results of the SMEs after running the business regarding to the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy

2.1 The SMEs running the business regarding to the Sufficiency Economy found the characteristic of Adapt to Change at most that could be identified as follows:

Reasonableness was composed of:

- 1) Proper ratio between work and labor
- 2) Having the scale of production within managerial ability
- 3) Running the business based on ethics and moderation with own skill and technique

The Moderation was composed of:

- 1) Having scale of production under the marketing demand
- 2) Less emphasis on short term profit
- 3) Share part of personal profit to expand business
- 4) Well-budget allocation with less expenditure

A good immunity was composed of:

- 1) Risk diversification with a variety of goods

- 2) Self reliance and be interdependent with the counterpart
 - 3) Continual process of CSR
 - 4) Continual development of human resources
- 2.2 The innovation on production development of the SMEs regarding the Sufficiency Economy were
- 1) On-going follow marketing demand
 - 2) Keeps surveying customer's satisfaction and opinions
 - 3) Create own unique product by indigenous wisdom
- 2.3 The SMEs under the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy were able to operate their business with lower cost but still the quality
- 1) Greater emphasis on skillful employment generation
 - 2) Continual process of training on hospitality and manufacturing to staffs
 - 3) Continual development of staff's workmanship
 - 4) Having the local raw material for the manufacturing process
3. Through the degree of awareness of the business under the Sufficiency Economy, it's found that the honesty comes first (Mean = 4.81), secondly utilizing all resources in the most efficient way (Mean = 4.77) and thirdly having scale of production within managerial ability (Mean = 4.74).

8. SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

The research on 'the Study of the results of the SMEs after running the business regarding to the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy' were verified as follows:

1. The SMEs have been run in Thailand (96.66%) at the utmost level because it requires the sustainability take place in either the domestic or the international markets respectively, but that will happen when they are capable and ready. 66.00% out of them have covered the manufacturing industry, since product innovation can better be created in this industry than any other business. Its operational duration approximately consumer 15-20 years which indicate the gradual growth. In addition, it is income and job center for labors, according to number of staff 100-150 people.
2. The Small and Medium Enterprises doing the business under the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy were:
 - 2.1 capable to adjust well. Since the business environment always kept changing such as the fluctuation of gas price and raw materials used in manufacturing process that beyond the control. So, the proper and quick adjustment of the enterprise is necessary in order to still the business in such hard time.
 - 2.2 able to create the distinctive innovation, particularly the research and the product development because the innovation is to value given to customers. So, product development would help respond customer's satisfaction and lead to the achievement of almost all types of the SMEs. Now, the Small and Medium Enterprises are more aware on product development because it is the way adding value to the business and indicators to measure the growth of the SMEs. Roles of Thai marketers in product development regarding to Sufficiency Economy have be aware the importance of product presenting and providing safe service to the consumer such as giving true information of the product and service, unveiling information of problem expected to be happened after use, offering goods in accordance of laws and ethics, and telling all kinds of information that would be beneficial to the consumers before making decision.
 - 2.3 able run the business with lower capital cost but still quality of goods and services. The influenced factor towards the achievement of business is controlling capital that was well-known generally. Through such concept, many cases decided to employ labor with lower wage and low quality machinery, which caused the product lower quality and lower price. Many entrepreneurs misunderstood that goods or hospitality with the lowest price would be able to preserve the most market share. But, it's possible to go bust, lower profit or lose out if the business strategy mainly focused on marketing price. The key factor of successful business at present day is the quality "a good enlargement of product needs low capital but maintain the quality" that would help exist the business as told by Prayoon Boonprasert. (1999: 51). The country with higher development level needs higher quality of goods. Later, some entrepreneurs began to understand the good characteristics of business that make them aware of utilizing cheap technology by technically sound and continual development process of their human resources at the most difficult time regarding to Sufficiency Economy Philosophy. Meanwhile, many industries are having campaign of maintaining the machinery suitably in order to gain more quality and quantity of goods, importantly lessen cost per unit. As such many companies are developing staff's skills instead of low- wage employing.
3. The honesty comes first for the Small and Medium Enterprises whose business running in accordance of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy. The

business would sustainably exist if going along with the honesty and the sincerity and given to the customer, trading partners and stake holder because they would rely both on the goods and the hospitality that was one of the business ethics in the philosophy of Sufficiency Economy. Secondly, utilizing all resources in the most efficient way helped decrease the cost of production but maintained quality of product. In addition, they did not cause any pollutions to the environment which matching the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy, reasonableness. Thirdly, having the scale of production within managerial ability was compatible to the moderation in the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy because all business activities could be done skillfully and effectively within one's capability.

Briefly, the three outstanding results of the Small and Medium Enterprises regarding to the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy were composed of Adapt to change, the Innovation on product development by research and developing indigenous wisdom from generation to generation, and the ethics in business – honesty and ability to maintain quality of product with proper capital cost.

9. SUGGESTIONS

1. Suggestion on the research applied

1.1 In order to be the immunity of the business, the Small and Medium Enterprises should apply the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy in the business with the three keys way that are moderation, reasonableness and immunity.

1.2 The entrepreneurs should continual process of business regarding to the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy until it become organization culture; so that, the business would sustain.

2. Suggestion on the research

The comparative study between the Thai SMEs regarding to the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy and the Southeast Asia, particularly Japan and South Korea should be conducted.

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NGO Fieldworkers in Pakistan

Muhammad Haroon Siddique and Mokbul Morshed Ahmad

Abstract— Although NGOs have played substantial role in uplift of society in Pakistan like many other countries in the developing world, their fieldworkers, who are the real actors of change, remain undermined. Job insecurity, poor salary structure, unhealthy working environment and even harassment - especially in case of women – are some of the key problems they face.

Keywords— NGOs, fieldworkers, development.

1. INTRODUCTION

NGO fieldworkers are the ones who carry out field work. This study considers middle level managers and the personnel of NGOs other than INGOs working in field; and personnel of INGOs working in field as fieldworkers. In the absence of an efficient state and intelligent market, importance of NGOs and their fieldworkers is obvious. The works conducted in developing countries show that the situation of the NGO fieldworkers is not good, especially the women. This study aims at viewing the situation of the fieldworkers broadly on the globe and precisely in Pakistan.

Methodology

This study is primarily a secondary research incorporating some glimpses of personal experience in Pakistan. The available print and electronic literature made the body of this study. Conclusions are made in the light of all this and some suggestions are made.

People in NGOs

Ideas are changing about people from ‘personnel’ to ‘human resources’ due to the issues of people and power, and increasing importance of culture and diversity. Leadership is an important aspect where changing views of leadership move from individual qualities to ‘contingency’ theories. According to Korten [1], life cycles of organizations show changing roles of leaders. Studies show importance of charismatic leaders to NGOs – works are there on ‘intelligence’; whereas Wood [2] worked on contextual factors. Problems of succession and delegation are quite prevalent for which recommended is ideal of participatory process, not ‘heroic individual’. Fowler [3] says, “NGOs have a feminine development approach and masculine organizational culture” (p. 79). To him, responsibility for change management must be allocated and indicators of

progress agreed upon. Building gender policies within NGOs are recommendable. Osborne [4] recommends equal opportunities/affirmative action – liberal versus radical perspectives. Rao and Kelleher [5] worked on BRAC’s Gender Quality Action-Learning (GQAL) program where they found tensions between ‘lending money’ and ‘empowering women’.

NGO Staff

NGO management broadly comprises of two tiers - managers and fieldworkers. NGO managers are the ones who carry out managerial activities. This study considers top level personnel of NGOs other than INGOs; and top and middle level personnel of INGOs as managers. NGO fieldworkers are the ones who carry out field work. This study considers middle level managers and the personnel of NGOs other than INGOs working in field; and personnel of INGOs working in field as fieldworkers. There are different types of incentives to NGO staff. Managerial reward to staff for experimentation is an internal factor that encourages innovation. It has both advantages and disadvantages. Beliefs (e. g. conservation, peace and development) are more important incentives than material reward. There are areas of conflict between expatriate and local staff; it is a must to handle them. We believe fieldworkers of NGOs as undervalued rather underused resource. However, in exceptional cases where the top management is sincere and wants to ‘develop’ the country, NGO fieldworkers are valued and well-used resource; here we refer the case of UPAP in Pakistan. Criticisms on pay levels, and staff movements are general NGO staffing issues. Emphasis is on staff ‘livelihood strategies’; also on use of expatriate staff. NGOs are criticized to be structureless and that they put stress on their staff. This is worth to mention here that the ‘People in Aid’ code is a timely step in the right direction to safeguard rights of the NGO staff.

2. NGOs AND THEIR FIELDWORKERS IN PAKISTAN

Present situation in Pakistan shows a scenario where one group seems to be strengthening the hands of the military whereas another seems to be rebellious to it. NGOs are active in Pakistan especially 1980s onwards because

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none else could prove to be useful for the poor. NGOs initiated their operations at quite small scale and the present situation of their enormous number appeared later; especially with disasters including 2005 earthquake. Today civil society is active in diversified ways where religious group is also prominent along with secular. Although it is not possible to see NGOs as autonomous still we may go for some indicators those help us understand autonomy of NGOs in certain aspects being third sector. Negative connotations are also there in Pakistan regarding work of NGOs but it is quite evident that on the whole NGOs have played their role in the 'development' of Pakistan through their fieldworkers. Inefficiency is complained about the efforts made. We need to realize that the major reason for inefficiency of the efforts as most of the experts diagnose is that the individuals and small groups try to pave way but a collective effort on national level as well as a strong push through the commons collectively as a nation is not made bringing major change. Ki-Zerbo [6] highlights potential of individuals considering progress ('development') as fulfilling one's potential as a human being in order to be a broadcaster and receiver of values. NGOs play significant role in 'developing' countries. They have a widespread network in many cases and they have got links to masses - since they understand problems as well as have got moderate solutions so they can very effectively be into the 'development' practice and perform well [7].

NGO fieldworkers in Pakistan

As fieldworkers are the movers and shakers of NGOs so it is worth to conduct research on them. We believe they are underused and undervalued resource [8], [9]; Goetz [10] also terms them so through her intensive research. If their potential is utilized properly, better results are ensured. We agree with Foley [11] who suggests critical or analytical thinking as lying at the heart of any transformative process; and we appreciate him as he further adds that it needs to be allied to something more fundamental and intuitive - to us this is what NGO fieldworkers need to be trained on for better performance. Fieldworkers can really make the efforts worth.

Why NGO fieldworkers are important?

Fieldworkers should be the movers and shakers of NGOs since they actually implement the policies; fieldworkers should be the best people to contribute towards realistic solutions since they are the implementers so they know the problems in the best manner [8]. Seeing NGOs from the bottom up we suggest that fieldworkers should be empowered to make NGOs more effective and more useful to the poor. They are good sources of information on what actually takes place behind the scenes. For instance, one fieldworker exclaims about credit used for dowry as another form of dowry in rural Bangladesh. If fieldworkers are taken into confidence, NGO activities prove more productive - on the part of NGOs and the community. A woman borrower had the problem of procuring repayment installments from her husband who misused the first loan. Next time she took the concerned

fieldworker into confidence that the money should not go into the hands of her husband rather on the day of loan disbursement she took fieldworker to the market along with her husband and purchased cow that she would keep close to her house so that she could have control if her husband tried to take away the cow [12]. We experienced similar incidents in Pakistan where taking fieldworker into confidence was worth to benefit both the community and NGO. However, in such cases the most important aspect is the sincerity of fieldworker otherwise harm can double up - a NGO reports how they evade probable harm. Mommers and Wessel [13] discuss the process of transforming partnership from a conceptual framework into a practical, operational framework for field-level interaction approaching from the perspective of the core values of the partnership concept and the ability of fieldworkers to behave in ways consistent with these core values. Although their work is regarding northern Uganda but the significance of their approach is equally true to address the situation in Pakistan that faces socio-political conflicts. (i) how does change happen? and (ii) what can we do to make it happen in the way we would like it to? Are amongst the prominent questions of NGO fieldworkers [14]. Foley [11] says that:

“The quality of NGO work is hugely dependent on the quality of critical thinking and analysis of poverty among all levels of staff. In particular, the quality of the work in the field - at partner and community levels - depends on an understanding of development processes and on strong facilitation skills, both of which rely on strong levels of critical thinking. While these are innately present in almost everyone, rote learning in education systems and patriarchal and top-down power structures often impede their development” (p. 774).

We believe that if fieldworkers realize their worth, they can do a lot. They also need to equip themselves with the skills those will help them to become more useful for the community they serve - Goetz [10] (p. 30) phrases Montgomery [15] as "...field workers must learn to exhibit a sort of 'local heroism', to act as champions in the interest of the poor". Providing monetary benefits and support is also needed for NGO fieldworkers but another very important need of them is the technical support that includes access to information.

Misperceptions about and over expectations of fieldworkers

NGO managers expect their fieldworkers to do extraordinary activities [8]. The activities were over-expectation. Admitted that the managers might be right in reporting about themselves have done such activities when they worked as fieldworkers but as a matter of fact, all fieldworkers cannot do such special jobs those are beyond their usual capacity.

Effectiveness of fieldworkers in activities of NGOs

We discuss these problems because due to these problems their usefulness is adversely affected. Why we fail in the policies if any, those generate problems? NGO fieldworkers can really make a project success if they are

motivated well and their potential is utilized properly. If they are in a better position, 'development' is quite likely. For instance; Goetz and Gupta observe as well as come to know interviewing fieldworkers that increasing pressure on them prompting to assess creditworthiness of women borrowers make them screen the likely productivity of husbands of borrower women in Bangladesh. They further add fieldworkers assumed that the loan amount would be used by some family members other than borrower woman. We personally observe that even the drivers who take workers to field get strong know-how of the community, let alone fieldworkers. Our experience in Pakistan is that fieldworkers meet men family members before forming groups of women borrowers persuading them to let their wives join the group; Goetz and Gupta say the same regarding Bangladesh.

Description of NGO fieldworkers in Pakistan

Before going into the details of fieldworkers' description in Pakistan, it seems quite appropriate to read the following understanding pre-British colonial south Asian society – Pakistan is part of it:

“A self-sufficient, village-based agriculture carried on with a 'primitive plough' and bullock power, and handicrafts made by means of simple instruments, was a basic feature of pre-British colonial south Asian society. A village was almost self-sufficient regarding the raw materials needed for its artisan industry. Another characteristic of the village community was that a rigid caste-structure determined the occupation of its members. Since castes were based on the principle of heredity, occupations also became hereditary” [16] (p. 177) in [8].

Astonishingly Naschold [17] remarks even about higher education as not being able to change income inequality in rural Pakistan although it is generally considered to be driving change. However, mentioning a prominent name in success stories - Urban Poverty Alleviation Program that initiated their operations in June 1996 in the twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad [18], we believe NGO fieldworkers can be good actors.

Fieldworkers of urban poverty alleviation program

UPAP deputed a local woman fieldworker with around ten years of schooling, one non-local man fieldworker and one non-local intermediate twelve years education (or preferably a graduate with fourteen years education) branch manager at its field offices. Local woman fieldworker's knowledge about the community helps identifying target group properly, non-local man fieldworker deals with men of the clients in addition to doing assignments those might include going outside the settlement; non-local branch manager selects good borrowers resisting local pressures. Such a system further enriched with honest professional practices controls financial corruption incidences (those should be acceptable in a 'developing' country that has a high corruption rate overall). A very dedicated management worked at the grassroots initiating UPAP that has been

through the ground realities understands their fieldworkers' situation. We support the following comments of the pioneer of 'development' in Pakistan and Bangladesh Dr. Akhtar Hameed Khan after his visit to UPAP in December 1998 [18] (p. 31):

“UPAP is a model, which is likely to establish. It is viable and sustainable. This is a creative work and not replication of the Grameen Bank. You are rather close to OPP. UPAP will grow as it is addressing the dire need of the poor. No business will be run without credit. People are being crushed by the capital and they will be redeemed only if they acquire it. You are the only hope to provide this facility to the poor. There are three key points that ensured the success of this model:

1. low-cost mohalla (settlement) offices
2. low-cost local female staff
3. expansion within the supervisory capacity”

Fieldworkers in Pakistan and Bangladesh: Compared

Remarkable works are done on NGO fieldworkers regarding Bangladesh (works of Ahmad and those of Goetz being the most prominent). These works in Bangladesh show almost similar results as we find in Pakistan; with certain exceptions those might include the following:

- To us since NGOs mushrooming in Pakistani society is not as dominant as reported about Bangladesh so the number of fieldworkers in Pakistan is estimated not as high as might be in Bangladesh.
- A woman using bicycle or even motorcycle is absolutely out of question in Pakistani society. It impedes mobility of women fieldworkers resulting in less effectiveness of their endeavor or even facing regrets from NGO management regarding those jobs that demand use of bicycles or motorcycles.
- There are a substantial number of jobs in market in Pakistan due to which youth does not have as high tendency to get a government job as might be in the case of Bangladesh, in the absence of which they have to go to NGOs those monopolize them. In Pakistan fieldworkers are not in that much bad situation, so far.
- Sisters contributing money for sending their brothers abroad is not popular in Pakistan in contrast to what is reported about Bangladesh. So, women fieldworkers are working for themselves in Pakistan and not to support their brothers.

Case Studies

Regarding position of NGO fieldworkers in Pakistan, almost a million NGO workers (including volunteers) are mostly an undervalued asset. They include high and medium education profile belonging to both men and women of different ages (pre-dominantly young ones). In the absence of efficient state and market, NGO fieldworkers are the only hope for the poor of Pakistan to

get onto the road towards 'development'. Microcredit is a popular field of interest where most of fieldworkers are engaged. Regarding incentives offered to fieldworkers to join there is found a mix of the feelings that they are going to do something for betterment of their country-fellows (especially in the events of disasters) and the salaries (those are low, yet attract the unemployed youth). There are different views about fieldworkers in different parts of Pakistan depending upon the nature of work they carry out and perception of the people about that particular activity – broadly speaking, field workers who work for sensitive issues like family planning are not seen positively almost throughout the country whereas women fieldworkers are not encouraged in northern Pakistan.

In the light of the study conducted so far, using scarcely available secondary data and information, fieldworkers are not happy with their salary structure; unhealthy environment at work is another major problem for most (especially women). Insecure jobs are also a threat to fieldworkers in Pakistan that has resulted in even physical illness in some cases. Let us see the following case studies those may help us to get an insight to what is actually happening with them.

1: *Sobia, twenty-five, had fourteen years education and was an area manager (lower level management position) in the microcredit program of NGO A working in district 3. She earned rupees three thousand and five hundred (US\$70 in 2000) per month as her salary. She reported about a congenial environment in NGO where she was well-heard and it encouraged her to work better. Despite her official working hours of 8:30 A. M. to 4:30 P. M. she always started her work at least an hour earlier and worked till two hours later than the timings. When the work demanded she would work even longer than that, including sometimes working in the weekends. She reported only the element of low salary as a negative aspect for which she said that her seniors listened well to it but clarified that they wanted to keep overheads low in contrast to typical notorious NGOs (her seniors also accepted their salaries lower than equivalent positions in similar NGOs, she admitted). Rest of the things were just positive those included strong encouragement both from NGO and the clients, regard from the clients, transparent system, caring environment, good atmosphere at work, provision of relaxing and enjoyment and an overall congenial environment due to which she wanted to continue with this NGO.*

2: *Nazia, thirty, had fourteen years education and was a coordinator with NGO B that worked on adult literacy in the district 1. She earned rupees five thousand and five hundred (US\$95 in 2004) as her monthly salary and was supposed to start and look after adult literacy centers in the peri-urban areas. She enjoyed the supportive attitude from her seniors and even the employer. She mentioned secure and healthy environment in NGO both at the office and the field. She was happy with the provision of all necessities for field work those were possible within*

the limited resources of district level NGO. She was worried only about the lower salary structure of NGO that was not enough to meet her family needs nor were there any promotion prospects due to which she was afraid she might have to quit; still she admitted that such environment she might not find elsewhere. Despite a congenial environment, involvement of fieldworkers in planning was nil.

3: *Tahir, thirty-four, had twelve years education and worked for microcredit provision in the rural area of district 2 with NGO C. He had previously been working in different capacities both in corporate and NGO sectors. He complained about humiliating attitude of his seniors who preferred women fieldworkers and overburdened men. He also complained that donors gave huge funds to NGO but most of it was wasted one way or the other; and there were no promotion prospects even if one worked hard. He earned rupees seven thousand (US\$110 in 2005) per month as his salary. Corrupt ownership/management never asked fieldworkers to suggest something how to plan for their activities.*

4: *Noreen, twenty-nine, had fourteen years education and worked as social mobilizer in district 4 with NGO D where she was supposed to carry out reproductive health services in the rural areas. She was earning rupees nine thousand (US\$150 in 2005) per month but complained of problems including harassment both from NGO staff and the community. Since she had to run her family expenditure (she was a divorced with two girls, five and three) so she had to bear with it otherwise she did not like the experience – to her, the job provided her just enough money to meet her family needs otherwise she was tense throughout her work. NGO never offered fieldworkers to participate in the planning process.*

The key feature appearing in the afore-mentioned case studies is that fieldworkers are not happy with the salary structure. Hindrance in the way of promotions is another big issue. Unhealthy working environment is also seen a common problem. Women fieldworkers have even complained about harassment.

Benefits enjoyed and problems faced by fieldworkers

In the discussion on fieldworkers the most prominent is as to what problems do they face due to which their efficiency is adversely affected. As a matter of fact, if they are provided benefits they can do a lot more for the uplift of community in a society like Pakistan where political instability has hindered the proper running of state and market - those two if ran properly even then their limited resources do not allow their outreach to access the poorest of the poor and the marginalized. We may say here that the secretive approach of NGOs to conceal realities about most of the aspects regarding their working has kept their problems unrevealed and the poor fellows – fieldworkers - are thus forced to keep working with their miseries unintervened or quit in worst situations. In Pakistan NGO fieldworkers are facing so many problems due to which their capabilities are not

utilized properly resulting in a far lesser pace of 'development'. Contrary to the advice of Suzuki [19] and Fowler [3] fieldworkers are rarely consulted during the policy-making. Hereafter are highlighted some acute problems.

Managers sometimes advise the fieldworkers to go for easy procedures; for instance, Goetz and Gupta give the reasons for disbursing loans to women borrowers since women have better intention to repay as it is their limitation to retain community contacts in contrast to men who may develop contacts elsewhere quickly, women are easy to trace being their lesser likelihood to move evading contact with field workers, and women may be persuaded to repay with little pressure in contrast to men. Managers have their own mind sets due to which they undervalue the rational suggestions even; we cite Goetz and Gupta here who mention a prospective borrower woman whom fieldworker proposed for a loan disbursement but management refused saying as to how would she run her business when she had neither husband nor a son. To Goetz [10] mass clientele programs deserve limits on the personal discretion of fieldworkers to ensure the delivery of standardized services package. But in 'development' spirit - blended with variety in local conditions to respond flexibly - field workers are actually in the best possible position to interpret changes in their clients' needs as well as responding appropriately. She interprets Grindle and Hilderbrand [20], Jain [21], Tendler [22], and Tendler and Freedheim [23] as follows:

"Recent literature on institutional capacity-building in development is witnessing a revival of interest in the conditions for creating a commitment to public service, the creation of trust between fieldworkers, management, and clients, and the creative use, consequently, of local-level discretion" (pp. 21-22).

She further interprets Arce and Long [24], Long [25], Long and Ploeg [26], Schaffer [27] and Wood [28] as:

"There is another, less prescriptive and more critical tradition of analyzing the interactions between service bureaucracies and their clients which investigates how these interactions – mainly struggles over authority and resources – create meanings or challenge or reproduce dominant social relationships" (p. 22).

We strongly agree to what she suggests after referring these works that welcoming program clients' participation to establish decisive interpretation of their needs, this approach searches for expanding the space to allow constructive use of fieldworkers' discretion. However, giving respect to the fear (to some) of probable losses to different stakeholders if fieldworkers' discretions are incorporated so abundantly, we add that a mid-level check can be appropriate that will ensure the benefit and avoid losses if any (those will be due to their lesser broad horizon, not due to their insincerity).

Gender specific problems

"The study of gender and development is an area of inquiry fraught with tension between 'theoretical' and

'practical' concerns" [29] (p. 900). We appreciate that Goetz found different perspectives and behaviors of women and men fieldworkers addressing credit needs of women program clients in Bangladesh. This difference results in different problems for both men and women fieldworkers. Let us now try to see the problems for women and men.

Women fieldworker have got their special place since they can help 'development' efforts to reach women who make up more than half of the society (including children under their custody and supervision). Although many donors now emphasize on more participation of women in NGOs where they are really needed to bring about change in the society, still most NGOs do not seem to be conscious about the importance of this aspect. Highlighting the potential of women's empowerment Paterson [30] offers strategies to empower women based on experiences in the conservative and religious tribal environment of Balochistan province in Pakistan. It is heartening that a cadre of women activists was built in addition to minimizing resistance among families and communities as well as encouraging participants to build their communities' strengths as recommended by mainstreaming gender and development (MGD). However, it is also important that aptitude should be weighed more than socio-economic status when we invite women fieldworkers, this is a view of Paterson and similar to Clark and Michuki [31] regarding Jordan we find highly educated women working as fieldworkers in Pakistan (we must realize low literacy rate in Pakistan) - sometimes to look for a career and in most cases NGO goals attracted them. Goetz found (and we agree to her findings):

"Like many people studying development, I saw non-governmental organisations (NGOs) as arenas of freedom in which new approaches to development, new ideas; new patterns of organizing staff and work were being experimented with. Non-governmental organisations have been places where people with a strong commitment to equality, to alternative paths to development, have been free to work. However, my interactions with feminists from these organisations revealed that they can be just as male-biased as large state or multilateral bureaucracies" (p. 13).

Women fieldworkers are not seen positively in most parts of Pakistan, where women are not supposed to work outside their homes. Those working for women's empowerment are suspected of making women disobedient to their men (father, husband and other kin). Goetz has very rightly points out that:

"Women working for women in development have to make a special kind of difference in their work – they often have to challenge their own internalised sense of inferiority while also challenging the gender-related subordination of their women clients" (p. 14).

We found in Pakistan some women fieldworkers interested to engage in women specific gender issues beyond their assigned work; those issues included domestic violence, reproductive health, children's well-being, and property-ownership rights (Goetz reported

similar findings regarding Bangladesh). Goetz suspects that gender biases in the organizational cultures and structures limit women's capacity to use their discretion in field or to impact intra-organizational decision-making. It is not different in Pakistan either – a culture similar to Bangladesh.

This is pity that although voices are raised for women empowerment but the strategies adopted are not actually empowering women. So, Garikipati [32] emphasizes on challenging patriarchal hold on productive assets in order to empower women. She arrived at it examining loan-use data and borrower-testimonies in rural India. Our experience in Pakistan is similar that women empowerment efforts need refining. This is equally true for women as beneficiaries of projects and women as fieldworkers. We strongly support Joireman [33] who argues defining as well as protecting property rights of women explicitly and not merely considering them as household members only - they are active participants in the economy.

There are certain problems specific for men fieldworkers. In most areas of Pakistan women clients do not welcome men. This is the most prominent professional problem for men. Goetz and Gupta report about their research regarding Bangladesh that mothers-in-law attend scheduled meetings of the borrower groups in lieu of their young daughters-in-law (the actual borrowers) where fieldworker in question is man. We witness similar cases in Pakistan; however this tendency is lesser in case of urban areas. We would also like to add that some NGOs make special arrangements for such instances including not to send men to such groups so that the group activity might perform as designed. Similarly, many NGOs are reluctant to recruit men fieldworkers due to preferences of donors those encourage to recruit women even if a project demands more men for its proper implementation. Most interestingly, men in the community criticize men fieldworkers working for women empowerment. This demands them to have faith in the truth of their approach – apt men fieldworkers go for authentic knowledge of Islam where equal rights are given to women and they are valued well to shoulder overall 'development'.

In a developing society like Pakistan the wisest approach is to understand the importance of gender balance since most effective actors in 'development' are women – both as fieldworkers as well as clients. Understanding women is a must. Let us try to understand women as a woman [34] (p.120) expresses in the following words:

“Finding an appropriate balance between our experience of our unique selves, our common experience as women, and our common experience as human beings and negotiating this balance through the pursuit of various development goals are the challenges that face us in development communication”.

Giving due weightage to strength and weaknesses of both INGOs and local NGOs is sensible. MCC staff enjoyed the best package for women fieldworkers in Bangladesh; international management and missionary

values are major reason for such better benefits; large national NGO offer good package for men fieldworkers [8]. Salaries offered by local NGOs to their fieldworkers in Bangladesh are less than one third that of international and large national NGOs; our experience about Pakistan is similar. Saying about local NGOs that these offer very few formal and informal benefits for their fieldworkers we generalize appalling disparity in Bangladesh; it is not different in the case of Pakistan.

Donors substantially influence the activities of NGOs. Fieldworkers suffer ultimately in the absence of an understanding as to how to cope with such undue influence. 'People in Aid' code – that is in fact the first attempt in result of a long struggle by NGO fieldworkers - is a step in the right direction to safeguard their benefits. However, very sadly most NGOs have not signed it yet; only two hundred and eighty-nine NGO were the signatories to the 'People in Aid' code till 2005 [35]. Major reason for this poor feedback from NGOs might be the fact that it is available in English and French languages only due to which most NGO people who do not understand any of these languages are not even aware of it. In a society like Pakistan where women prefer to engage in traditional occupations those are consistent with their domestic roles and can be performed in the home [36], enforcing such a code will help women fieldworkers do better.

Some people might have confusion as if fieldworkers misuse NGO resources; but reality is different. In such instances actually managers and owners are culprit, not fieldworkers – “some senior officials of certain NGOs have used loopholes to become affluent” [8] (p. 13). This is equally true in case of fieldworkers in Pakistan where if certain instances ever happened were only exceptions and even many of such exceptional cases were just intervened and money so embezzled was recovered fully or partially [18]. Bano [37] finds “a strong correlation between aid and rise in material aspirations among NGO leaders and lower organizational performance” (p. 2297). Her finding clarifies that culprit are NGO leaders, not fieldworkers; that is our point here.

Prime movers influence community decisions in CDD (community-driven development) operations – these are those having local social capital; this is a pity that households with their members proactive in communal activities present their preferences in the community proposals [38]. This is on the basis of work in Philippines but the situation is not different in Pakistan – another developing country like the one cited about (Philippines).

Just to elaborate how benefits are reaped by all when workers' rights are pursued (although it may not appear to have a direct link to our topic here), we find Ahmed and Peerlings [39] arriving at results that an increased minimum wage for workers negatively impacts economy, let alone workers. Whereas, improving working conditions at workplace and services to workers increases incomes of workers in addition to welfare; owners also enjoy higher incomes and improve.

3. CONCLUSIONS

Main point to consider in the situation of Pakistan is how great a role the NGO fieldworkers have played in creating awareness, which in most cases is the main concern of their work. Obviously, their contribution has not been very disappointing although there is still room for improvement. This study has been based solely on secondary data and some past case studies carried out by us; this dearth of literature does not support presentation of much statistical information. Nonetheless, the following conclusions can be drawn regarding NGO fieldworkers in Pakistan, which subjectively address the specific objectives:

- Fieldworkers are actually the frontline staff of NGOs. They are an undervalued and rather underused resource. There are different views about fieldworkers in Pakistan depending upon their activities and gender.
- Their major incentives are to work for their countrymen and to earn a salary.
- Most belong to the group of youth with high- and medium-education profiles.
- They are good sources of information on what actually takes place behind the scenes. Fieldworkers are the only hope for the poor.
- Although voices are raised for women's empowerment, the strategies adopted are not actually empowering them.
- Highly educated women are working as fieldworkers - sometimes to look for a career and in most cases NGO goals attract them. Some women fieldworkers are interested in engaging in women-specific gender issues beyond their assigned work; those issues include domestic violence, reproductive health, children's well-being, and property-ownership rights.
- Microcredit is a popular field of interest where most fieldworkers are engaged.

As far as problems faced by fieldworkers are concerned we see that:

- Job insecurity is the most prominent. Harassment is another major problem faced by women. Inconvenient working environment is also a major problem in many cases. Salary and benefits are non-satisfactory in most cases. Misperceptions about and over expectations of them are also big problems.
- Secretive approach of NGOs to conceal realities keeps problems of their fieldworkers mostly unrevealed – forcing them to live with miseries or quit.
- Non-practical implementation of limits on personal discretion of fieldworkers hinders the benefits from reaching the poor. Managers sometimes advise them to follow easy procedures, which are impractical and result in benefits not

reaching the target group. Fieldworkers are rarely consulted during policy-making.

- Gender biases limit women fieldworkers from benefiting the target group. Women fieldworkers are not seen positively in most parts of Pakistan, where women are not supposed to work outside their homes. Those working for women's empowerment are suspected of making women disobedient to their men (father, husband and other kin). They get lower salaries and fewer benefits than men.
- Women clients do not welcome men fieldworkers in most areas of Pakistan. Many NGOs are reluctant to recruit men fieldworkers due to preferences of donors that emphasize recruiting women (even if a project demands more men for its proper implementation). Men in the community criticize those who work for women's empowerment.

These problems and some others such as local languages vary in acuteness from area to area and from situation to situation. Concluding the discussion, we may synthesize that NGO fieldworkers, those are undervalued and under-utilized now, may do better if they are facilitated more in terms of salary and benefits, job security, encouragement and an overall security especially to the women fieldworkers without which the benefit cannot reach all strata at the grassroots.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is evident that NGO fieldworkers are the frontline staff in the execution of the development work in countries like Pakistan. Their importance has tremendously increased with the recent devastating floods. Since fieldworkers are expected to work more for uplift of the poor so we recommend the following to improve the situation:

- Fieldworkers should be empowered to make their efforts in NGOs more effective and more useful to the poor. Providing monetary benefits and support is needed for fieldworkers. Another very important need is the technical support that includes access to information.
- Critical or analytical thinking allied to something more fundamental and intuitive is what they need to be trained on for better performance. In establishing decisive interpretation of the needs of clients, the approach of incorporating fieldworkers' discretion should be adopted as it makes room for constructive use of their discretion. A mid-level check, however, can be appropriate to ensure benefit avoiding probable losses.
- Misperceptions about fieldworkers should be rectified. Over expectations should not be made from them. Social capital should be used since social cohesion, creativity and resilience all can do a lot.

- 'People in Aid' code should be translated in other languages so that fieldworkers may at least understand what is there in a document that exists for their betterment. There should be made some procedure to implement documents those favor them.
- Women's empowerment efforts should be refined in Pakistan.
- Appreciating NGOs those made special arrangements for gender specific issues we recommend replicating elsewhere. Appreciating also that apt men fieldworkers go for authentic knowledge of Islam where equal rights are given to women and they are valued well to shoulder overall 'development', we suggest all to follow it.

Participation, governance and stakeholders as well as social sustainability – though touched slightly – could make the study more interesting if done more, we admit.

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