

THE EFFICIENCY OF PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY BY LOCAL ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATIONS IN WIANG NONG LONG DISTRICT, LAMPHUN PROVINCE

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Abstract

This research aims to: 1) examine the efficiency of public service delivery by local administrative organizations in the same area. The sample group consisted of 16,435 residents in Wiang Nong Long District, Lamphun Province, selected through probability sampling. A questionnaire was used as the research instrument. The statistical methods employed included frequency distribution, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. The findings revealed that: 1) the efficiency of public service delivery was also at a high level, with a mean score of 3.57 when considering each aspect individually, it was found that the highest average score was related to the ease of access to public services provided by local administrative organizations and the satisfactory timeliness of these services, with an average score of 3.72. This was followed by the accuracy and clarity of information regarding available services, which received an average score of 3.69. The lowest average score was found in the area of satisfaction with resource allocation for public services by local administrative organizations, which was rated at a moderate level with an average score of 3.36.

Keywords: Public Service Efficiency, Local Administrative Organization

Introduction

Public sector organizations of the past have been widely criticized as being increasingly inappropriate in the modern context, largely due to outdated administrative practices that failed to address evolving public needs and were excessively large in scale, leading to the inefficient use of resources. As a result, many developed countries initiated reforms to reduce the size of government agencies (Peters, 1994). Furthermore, the scope of governmental responsibility has been increasingly challenged, prompting a transformation in public administration. These

changes have been influenced by Public Choice theory, which applies market behavior principles to explain decision-making processes within the public sector, and integrates political science insights to enhance the management of public affairs. The goal is to improve the government's capacity to efficiently respond to the diverse needs of the population, especially in the face of globalization and technological advancements (Hughes, 2003)

Section 6 of the Royal Decree on Good Governance, B.E. 2546 (2003) stipulates that good governance refers to the administration of state affairs aimed at achieving objectives that bring about the well-being of the people. It emphasizes effectiveness in fulfilling state missions, efficiency, and value for public resources. Good governance also involves minimizing unnecessary procedures, adapting governmental functions to current circumstances, facilitating and responding to the needs of the public, and regularly evaluating performance. Under this framework, the government delegates authority to local administrative organizations, empowering them to manage local affairs autonomously within the legal administrative structure. As a result, local governments are entrusted with the responsibility to oversee and provide public services and activities that benefit local residents, based on the principles of sustainable development. There are four key principles guiding the provision of public services under the decentralization plan to local administrative organizations: 1) Public Interest Principle 2) Local Responsibility Principle 3) Local Capacity Principle 4) Efficiency Principle (Adapted from Supatcha Phanloetphanit, 2012) These principles have increased the role of local governments in delivering public services, aligning with the concept of enabling people to self-govern and manage their local affairs

The concept of New Public Management (NPM) has gained significant attention as a modern approach to public administration. The primary reason for its appeal lies in the belief that adopting NPM principles can enhance the operational capacity of public sector organizations and improve their responsiveness to citizens' needs. However, NPM represents a relatively new paradigm for public administration in Thailand. The application of NPM in the reform of the Thai bureaucratic system aims to improve public sector efficiency and bring administrative practices in line with established standards. This includes transforming traditional workflows, modernizing public service delivery methods, and aligning human resource management systems more closely with those of the private sector. The success of implementing NPM principles largely depends on the cooperation and shared understanding among all stakeholders within the public sector. It requires a shift in mindset, working methods, and organizational culture toward common goals. In the case of Thailand, bureaucratic reform has been guided by NPM principles with the overarching aim of maximizing value and benefits for the public (Wirasak Krea-ngam, 2016)

In 2002 (B.E. 2545), Thailand undertook a major bureaucratic reform by adopting the principles of New Public Management (NPM). This reform blended NPM concepts with the principles of modern democratic governance, emphasizing the development of a bureaucratic system characterized by efficiency and effectiveness. A key component of the reform was the implementation of performance evaluations based on the principles of good governance, along with the integration of modern management tools and techniques. These changes contributed to a notable improvement in the overall capacity and performance of the public sector. The Office of the Public Sector Development Commission (OPDC) has played a central role in driving and coordinating this policy direction (Sorawit Premchuen, 2013)

Wiang Nong Long District was originally part of Pa Sang District. The government later separated the area to establish Wiang Nong Long as a minor district (king amphoe), in accordance with the announcement of the Ministry of Interior dated February 7, 1995, which

took effect on April 1 of the same year. subsequently, the district was upgraded to a full district (amphoe) by Royal Decree on August 24, 2007, effective from September 8, 2007. Wiang Nong Long District comprises three local administrative organizations: Wang Phang Subdistrict Municipality, covering the entire area of Wang Phang Subdistrict; Nong Long Subdistrict Municipality, covering the entire area of Nong Long Subdistrict; and Nong Yuang Subdistrict Municipality, covering the entire area of Nong Yuang Subdistrict (Royal Gazette, , 1995)

The application of these principles within organizations or agencies, aligned with contemporary societal trends in public service management, has led to a growing interest in studying New Public Management (NPM) models and their impact on public service delivery in Wiang Nong Long District, Lamphun Province. this study aims to gather public opinion regarding the implementation of NPM and the provision of public services in the district. It seeks to assess the feasibility, effectiveness, and outcomes of such management practices, examining whether the adoption of NPM has had a tangible effect on public service delivery in Wiang Nong Long District. the findings will contribute to the development of a localized NPM model that aligns with the specific needs and context of local public service delivery. Furthermore, the results are expected to support the enhancement and reform of local governance, promoting greater efficiency and responsiveness in the public sector at the local level

Objectives

1. To study the efficiency of public service provision of local administrative organizations in Wiang Nong Long District, Lamphun Province

Methodology

1. Population and Sample / Informants

The population for this study consists of residents in Wiang Nong Long District, Lamphun Province, totaling 16,435 individuals, (Department of Provincial Administration, 2023)

The sample group used in this research comprises 390 individuals selected from the district population. The sample size was determined using Taro Yamane’s formula (1973), as follows:

$$n = N / (1 + Ne^2)$$

Where:

n = sample size

N = total population

e = acceptable margin of error, set at 0.05

Substitute values into formula:

$$n = \frac{16435}{1 + 16435(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{16435}{42.0875}$$

$$n \approx 390$$

Based on the sample size calculation, the researcher obtained a sample of 390 individuals. For selecting the sample, the researcher used probability sampling

1) Research Instruments

The instruments used in this study include a Questionnaire, which is divided into four sections as follows:

Section 1: Demographic Information of the sample group. The questionnaire in this section consists of closed-ended questions in the form of a checklist, with 5 items: gender, age, education level, occupation, and residential area.

Section 2: Questionnaire on the Efficiency of Public Service Delivery by Local Government Organizations in Wiang Nong Long District, Lamphun Province. This section contains a total of 10 items. The questionnaire in this section uses a 5-point Rating Scale, as follows:

- 5 = Excellent
- 4 = Good
- 3 = Average
- 2 = Poor
- 2 = Very poor

2. Research Procedures

2.1 The researcher developed the questionnaire by reviewing relevant literature and having experts evaluate the questions using the Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) method. The questionnaire was then pilot-tested with a group of 30 individuals similar to the sample group. Based on the results, the questions were revised to ensure their suitability

2.2 The researcher conducted data collection from the population in Wiang Nong Long District, Lamphun Province, with a sample size of 390 individuals. Data collection was carried out by visiting the local government organizations in the district. The questionnaire was distributed to the sample group, who were then asked to complete the forms for data collection

2.3 Once the data were collected, the researcher reviewed the completed forms to ensure their accuracy and completeness

2.4 The data were then processed and analyzed using statistical software

3. Data Analysis Method

To describe personal factors and social engagement factors, descriptive statistics were used, including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation

Results

The majority of the study participants were female, accounting for 53.85% of the total sample, followed by males at 46.15%. Most participants were aged between 20 and 30 years, representing 48.72% of the total, followed by those aged 31 to 40 years at 33.33%, and those

aged 41 to 50 years at 17.95% in terms of occupation, the largest group consisted of students, accounting for 33.33%, followed by government officials and general workers at 25.64%, and farmers at 15.38% regarding educational background, the highest proportion had completed upper secondary school or vocational certificate level (38.46%), followed by those with a bachelor's degree or higher vocational certificate (35.90%), and those with education lower than upper secondary level (20.51%) the majority of the participants resided in the Nong Long Subdistrict Municipality, accounting for 33.33%, followed by Wang Phang Subdistrict Municipality at 30.77%, and Nong Yuang Subdistrict Municipality at 28.21%

Table 1: The Efficiency of Public Service Delivery by Local Administrative Organizations in Wiang Nong Long District, Lamphun Province

Public Service Delivery Efficiency	\bar{x}	S.D.	interpretation	series
Satisfaction with the quality of services provided by local administrative organizations	3.51	.748	Good	7
Satisfaction with the timeliness of services provided by local administrative organizations	3.72	.750	Good	2
Transparency and fairness in service delivery by local administrative organizations	3.56	.983	Good	6
Accuracy and clarity of information regarding available services	3.69	.790	Good	3
Courtesy and professionalism of local administrative organization staff	3.59	.809	Good	5
Services provided by local administrative organizations meet community needs	3.67	.729	Good	4
Ease of access to public services provided by local administrative organizations	3.72	.816	Good	1
Satisfaction with resource allocation for public service delivery	3.36	.833	Average	10
Efficiency and responsiveness in handling complaints and suggestions	3.49	.874	Good	8
Continuous development of service quality by local administrative organizations	3.41	.927	Good	9
Overall	3.57	.633	Good	

According to Table 2, the efficiency of public service delivery was found to be at a high level, with an overall average score of 3.57. when considering each aspect individually, it was found that the highest average score was related to the ease of access to public services provided by local administrative organizations and the satisfactory timeliness of these services, with an average score of 3.72. This was followed by the accuracy and clarity of information regarding available services, which received an average score of 3.69. The lowest average score was found in the area of satisfaction with resource allocation for public services by local

administrative organizations, which was rated at a moderate level with an average score of 3.36 overall, the efficiency of public service delivery by local administrative organizations in Wiang Nong Long District, Lamphun Province, based on the 10 evaluation indicators, remains at a high level across all items

Discussion

1. The efficiency of public service delivery by local administrative organizations in Wiang Nong Long District, Lamphun Province, was found to be at a high level. The indicators of public service delivery efficiency were all rated highly, which may be attributed to the fact that these local administrative organizations have applied New Public Management (NPM) concepts, as proposed by Christopher Hood, a scholar who introduced the concept of New Public Management. Hood emphasized the importance of improving efficiency and utilizing resources effectively by adapting concepts and methods from the private sector to the public sector in managing organizations. This approach has resulted in greater effectiveness, which can be observed through the satisfaction of the public using the services, the quality of management, and the outcomes and efficiency of service delivery. This finding aligns with the study conducted by Wipapat Thinochai, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Somkiat Keawcharoen, and Dr. Rangsang Intchan (2019), who researched the factors related to New Public Management practices that influenced the success of village headmen in Roi Et Province. Their research found that the factors of New Public Management had a significant impact on the success of the village headmen's roles and duties, with an overall high level of implementation

Recommendations

1. Policy Recommendations

1.1 Local administrative organizations should collaborate with the private sector in developing public services. This could include providing services in areas such as healthcare, education, or the development of products and services related to community development, in order to benefit from the experience and expertise of the private sector

1.2 Local administrative organizations should allocate resources, including budgets, personnel, and facilities, according to the needs and importance of each project. This should be done through proper evaluation and prioritization to ensure the most efficient use of resources

2. Suggestions for Future Research

2.1 Future research should focus on identifying the most appropriate public service delivery models for the people of Wiang Nong Long District, Lamphun Province

2.2 Additional studies should investigate the economic and environmental impacts of sustainable resource use in local administrative organizations, such as the use of renewable energy or waste management practices. This research would help local organizations develop more sustainable resource management practices

2.3 Future research should consider changing the outcome variables from simply evaluating public service delivery in various areas to measuring social impacts. This could include assessing the social impact on citizens receiving services, studying the effects of technology use in service delivery processes, or evaluating the environmental performance linked to service operations

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