Household Lifestyle Behaviors affecting Happiness and Satisfactions of Thai People

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Abstract

Objective: The purposes of this quantitative research were to study the household lifestyle behaviors of Thai people and to analyze factors relating to household lifestyle behaviors that affected Thai people's happiness and satisfaction. Method: The data derived from the project "Survey of the quality of life of people in sustainability according to the principles of sufficiency economy 2018" by the National Statistical Office has been used as the secondary data. Data then were analyzed using multivariate correlation regression analysis and presented as percentage, mean, standard deviation, minimum, maximum, and factor analysis. Result: The results revealed that, from the 16 variables of the household lifestyle behaviors, there were three variables including Household Preparatory Behavior Index, Virtual World Knowledge Index, and Smart Knowledge significantly affected to happiness and satisfaction of Thai people (p-value $= 0.05$). Moreover, all variables describe the variation in household lifestyle behaviors affecting happiness and satisfaction of Thai people at 15.6% ($R^2 = 0.156$).

Introduction

The Thai society has nowadays changed rapidly so that guidelines for national development has shifted from its industrialization to its production-driven innovation and technology together with the outnumbers of small-sized families, new family model, income inequality, accessibilities of social prevention, demographical structural shifts, as well as stepping into an aging society in 2021. That is to say, the ratios of population numbers of elderlies of 20% have risen so that there are approximately 11 million elderlies found in Thailand, representing 16.5 percent of the country's population, of which is one-third of the elderlies who earn their lower-income and stay alone (10 percent), and this aging society tends to increase substantially. In addition, the increasing numbers of 1.9 million Thai disabled people registered with government agencies, and those working for labor forces with 49 percent are all taken care of by governmental organizations and workplaces sponsored by the fund for promotion and development of the quality of life of the disabled persons. Not only are different public services facilitated for people with disabilities to live in society, but also Thai people have faced their poverty.

According to the statistics of social service centers via hotline no. 1300, more than 643 cases are caused by their insufficient numbers of income, unemployment, no capital costs served for their career, as well as debts. Furthermore, violent incidents against children and women have accounted for 83.60 percent; otherwise, both family and domestic violence are

also found in terms of their physical impacts. Thus, these social worse events in Thailand are all induced by the Thai people's shifts in consumption behaviors supported for their survival and family.

However, socio-economic situations in Thailand are inevitable so that the household's lifestyle behaviors must be implicated with the concept of sufficiency economy philosophy used as a guideline for living in today's society. Also, the concept of sufficiency economy is an ongoing guideline for living and performing themselves at all different levels -- from the household, community to government levels. Besides, the ways of life together with all different developmental dimensions should be merged for their mental development, as well as best life security focusing on their self-reliance, and community and social cooperation that encompass sufficiency, balance, and sustainability. However, the concept of a sufficiency economy can lead to the Thai people's better and happy life, as well as the balanced national development towards stability, prosperity, and sustainability.

Research Methodology

Study Population and Sample

The major purpose of this project, entitled "A Survey of Thai Citizens' Sustainable Quality of Life Based on "the B.E.2561 Sufficiency Economy" officially organized by the National Statistics Office aimed to collect the data related to databases on the Thai citizens' ways of life in relations to its economic, social, environmental, health, happiness, learning, and cultural aspects. In this survey, heads of family members with their ages of up to 15 were all carried out for data collection.

Study Design

The secondary data used in this quantitative study was derived from the project "Survey of the quality of life of people in sustainability according to the principles of sufficiency economy 2018" by the National Statistical Office. This survey aims to collect information on people's lives in the aspect of economy, society, environment, health, happiness, learning, and culture.

Data Collection

In this study, data were originated from the Survey of Thai Citizens' Sustainable Quality of Life Based on "the B.E.2561 Sufficiency Economy" officially organized by the National Statistics Office. The questionnaire was conducted with 34,892 out of the 69,792 families which has a sampling group age of up to 15 as family members.

Data Analysis

In analyzing the informant's demographical information, as well as their happiness and satisfaction, the descriptive data were statistically analyzed using frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, minimum, and maximum. On the other hand, the correlations of independent variables and dependent variables related to factors affecting the Thai people's happiness and satisfaction of their lifestyles were then analyzed using the multivariate correlation analysis to investigate the influence of independent variables influencing dependent variables. Also, variables related to the household lifestyle behavior index created by using the factor analysis method revealed that the household's lifestyle behaviors were classified into 11 indices: 1) Household behavior index on agriculture farming work; 2) Household self-assistance behavior index; 3) Household problem management behavior

index; 4) Membership household lifestyle behavior index; 5) Household financial behavior index; 6) Household preparedness behavior index; 7) Household investment behavior index; 8) Empirical knowledge index; 9) Virtual knowledge index; 10) Smart knowledge index, and 11) Household lifestyle behavior index on community trusts.

Ethical Approval

This study was approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee at Boromarajonani College of Nursing, Nakhon Lampang

Results

The demographical information of the samples related to sexuality, occupation, marital status, educational backgrounds, residential sector, zone of residence, and the number of family members are all presented as follows.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of the samples (n = 34,892).

Characteristic	N	%
Sexuality		
Male	18,265	52.35
Female	16,627	47.65
Main Occupation		
Unemployed	10,070	28.86
Agriculturists/Fishermen	3,444	9.87
Government officers/State enterprise officials	2,383	6.83
Staff/Private company staff	7,746	22.20
Traders/Business entrepreneurs	7,617	21.83
Employees/Laborers	3,447	9.88
Running family's own business with non-Profits	185	0.53
Marital Status		
Single	5,269	15.10
Married	19,948	57.17
Ever married (Widowed/Divorced/De Facto Separation)	9,676	27.73
Educational Backgrounds		
Uneducated	1,822	5.23
Primary education diploma	18,573	53.23
	3,985	11.42
Lower secondary education diploma	4,341	12.44
Upper secondary education diploma	1,424	4.08
Higher Vocational Certificate/Technical Vocational	4,749	13.61
Certificate		
Bachelor's degree or Graduate degrees		
Residential Sector	5,953	17.06
Bangkok	12,184	34.92
	6,001	17.20
Central Thailand (Except Bangkok)	6,905	19.79

	3,849	11.03
Northern Thailand	18,873	54.09
	16,019	45.91
Northern-east Thailand	20,876	59.83
	10,157	29.11
Southern Thailand	3,859	11.0

Zone of Residence
     Inside the municipality zone
     Outside the municipality zone

Numbers of family members
     1-2
     3-4
     More than 5
     Mean = 2.51   S.D. = 1.58
     Minimum = 1 Maximum = 15

From table1, the numbers of unemployed and married male informants holding their primary education level, living in central Thailand and inside the municipality zone, as well as the numbers of family members of 3 were mostly found.

Table 2. Simple and multiple regression analysis of household lifestyle behaviors affecting happiness and life satisfaction of Thai people (n=34,892)

Independent variables	Multi Regression Analysis	
	Beta	t
1. Sexuality (Male informants)	0.016	2.908*
2. Occupation (Unemployed)		
- Agriculturists/Fishermen	0.003	0.449
- Government officers/State enterprise officials	0.016	2.696*
- Staff/Private company staff	-0.044	-6.625*
- Traders/Business entrepreneurs	-0.001	-0.134
- Employees/Laborers	-0.050	-8.949*
- Running family's own business with non-profits	-0.003	-0.591
3. Marital status (Referred Group: Ever married)		
- Single	-0.019	-2.993*
- Married	0.085	13.464*
4. Educational backgrounds (Referred Group: Uneducated)		
- Primary education diploma		
- Lower secondary education diploma	0.024	2.128*
- Upper secondary education diploma	0.032	3.782*
- Higher Vocational Certificate / Technical Vocational	0.064	7.215*
Certificate	0.060	9.046*
- Bachelor's degree or Graduate degrees		
5. Residential Sector	0.128	13.334*
(Referential Group : Bangkok)		
- Central Thailand (Except Bangkok)		
- Northern Thailand	-0.044	-5.701*

- Northern-east Thailand	-0.008	-1.095
- Southern Thailand	0.007	0.842
6. Outside the municipality zone	0.040	6.178*
(Referential group: Inside the municipality zone)	0.008	1.464
7. Numbers of family members	0.046	8.879*
8. Household lifestyle behavior index on agriculture	0.041	4.845*
9. Self-assistance behavior index	0.066	12.533*
10. Index of family members' problem-solving behavior	-0.009	-1.432
management	0.035	4.843*
11. Household lifestyle behavior index on membership	-0.100	-
12. Index of family members' financial behaviors	0.131	15.735*
13. Index of family members' preparedness behaviors	0.037	24.116*
14. Index of family members' investment behaviors	0.057	7.250*
15. Explicit knowledge index	0.103	9.556*
16. Virtual knowledge index	0.109	18.356*
17. Smart knowledge index	-0.031	21.632*
18. Family members' lifestyle behaviors on community trusts		-6.121*

 *Significant at the level of 0.05

Table 2. revealed the simple regression analysis of household lifestyle behaviors. There were 17 variables related to the household's lifestyle behaviors affecting the happiness and satisfaction of heads of households. But the problem-management behavior index was not correlated with the household lifestyle behaviors affecting happiness and satisfaction. In comparison with different

independent variables, it has been found from the analysis of multi-regression that sexuality and occupation (except agriculturists/fishermen), trading / personal business, the non-profits households' business, marital status, educational backgrounds, residential sector (except North and Northeast), number of family members, the index for household lifestyle behaviors in agriculture, self-assistance behavior, membership, financial, households' preparedness, investment, empirical knowledge, virtual knowledge, smart knowledge, and household lifestyle behavior index on community trust were significantly different at the level of 0.05. All the above was relatively correlated with the household lifestyle behaviors affecting the happiness and satisfaction of Thai people.

Table 3 An analysis of multi-regression on the household's lifestyle behaviors affecting their happiness and satisfaction of Thai people (n=34,892)

Independent Variables	Beta	t	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2
Households' preparedness index	0.131	24.380*	0.233	0.054	0.054[1]
Smart knowledge index	0.103	18.315*	0.281	0.079	0.079[2]
Marital status (Married) (Referred Group : Ever married)	0.110	21.744*	0.312	0.097	0.097[3]
Empirical knowledge index	0.085	13.685*	0.333	0.111	0.111[4]
Educational backgrounds (Bachelor's degree or graduate degree) (Referential Group : Uneducated)	0.057	9.547*	0.343	0.117	0.117[5]
Self-assistance behavior index	0.127	13.398*	0.353	0.124	0.124[6]
Index of family members' financial	0.065	12.447*	0.358	0.128	0.128[7]

Independent Variables	Beta	t	R	R²	Adjusted R²
behaviors					
Household lifestyle behavior index on	-0.104	-	0.364	0.132	0.132[8]
agriculture		18.218*			
Central Thailand (Except Bangkok)	0.044		0.370	0.137	0.137[9]
(Referential group: Bangkok)		6.465*			
Numbers of family members	-0.037		0.375	0.140	0.140[10]
Employees/Laborers (Referential group:		-6.284*	0.378	0.143	0.143[11]
unemployed)	0.046				
Staff/Private company staff (Referential		8.945*			
group: unemployed)					
Higher Vocational Certificate /	-0.049		0.381	0.145	0.145[12]
Technical Vocational Certificate	-0.043	-9.476*	0.384	0.147	0.147[13]
(Referential group : uneducated)		-7.457*			
Upper secondary education diploma	0.060		0.386	0.149	0.149[14]
(Referential group : uneducated)	0.064	9.092*	0.388	0.151	0.150[15]
Southern Thailand (Referential group :	0.045	7.271*	0.390	0.152	0.152[16]
Bangkok)	0.037	8.255*	0.392	0.153	0.153[17]
Index of family members' investment	-0.032	7.339*	0.393	0.154	0.154[18]
behaviors		-6.199*			
Family members' lifestyle behaviors on	0.034		0.394	0.155	0.155[19]
community trust membership index		4.970*			
Lower secondary education diploma	0.032		0.394	0.155	0.155[20]
Certificate (Referential group:		3.809*			
uneducated)	0.016		0.395	0.156	0.155[21]
Government officers/State enterprise		2.819*			
officials	-0.019		0.395	0.156	0.155[22]
(Referential group: uneducated)		-2.992*			
Marital status / Single (Referred Group:	0.016		0.395	0.156	0.155[23]
Ever married)	0.014	2.969*	0.395	0.156	0.156[24]
Sexuality (Male) (Referential group :		2.280*			
Female)	0.025		0.395	0.156	0.156[25]
Northern-east Thailand (Referential		2.172*			
group : Bangkok)					
Primary education diploma					
(Referential group : uneducated)					

* At significant difference of 0.05   / No.1 – 25 predicted in equations

From Table 3, the analysis of multi-regression revealed that 16 out of 25 independent variables were found including 1) The household's preparedness behaviors index, 2) Virtual knowledge index, 3) Smart knowledge index, 4) Marital status (married and single), 5) empirical knowledge index, 6) Educational backgrounds, 7) The household's self-assistance behaviors, 8) The household's financial behaviors, 9) The household's lifestyle behaviors on agriculture, 10) Site of residency, 11) Numbers of family members, 12) Occupation (Employees/laborers, staff/private company staff, and government officers/state enterprise officials), 13) The household's investment behaviors, 14) The evaluation of household's

lifestyle management behaviors on community trust, 15) The household's membership, and 16) Sexuality, respectively.

Moreover, the correlations of the Thai people's household lifestyle behaviors correlated with behaviors affecting their happiness and life satisfaction. All variables could be explained in the variation of household lifestyle behaviors affecting the happiness and satisfaction of the Thai people at 15.6 percent ($R2 = 0.156$). The three most important variables have been described the correlations of household lifestyle behaviors affecting the happiness and life satisfaction of Thai people which consisted of the household's preparedness behavior index (5.4%), followed by the virtual world knowledge index (2.5%), and the smart knowledge index (2.2%).

Discussion

. Considering 16 independent variables that can significantly explain the variation in happiness and life satisfaction of the Thai people at 15.60% ($R2 = 0.1560$), our findings showed that three variables were describing the variation in happiness and life satisfaction of Thai people from high to low level. We firstly found that the household's preparedness behavior index affected the happiness and satisfaction of Thai people. These findings are consistent with a study by Atakorn Chayatim Nuanchawee Prasertsuk and Urapdee Bornaimongkol (2018), which found that happiness was high when preparing economic plans, mental health and wellness arising from households in the health care management Financial planning and other expenses by age and time.

Secondly, the virtual knowledge index also affected the happiness and life satisfaction of Thai people. This finding was consistent with Roger's theory of self-acceptance (1974), indicating that if persons had good self-acceptance, they would adjust well, knowing themselves and their worth. Furthermore, having a good attitude, understanding themselves, having a good relationship with other people, being more understandable, and accepting others was one of the attributes that showed good mental health. Therefore, human beings could accept reality under their circumstances and limitations so that this would affect behavioral expressions both physically and mentally.

We thirdly found that the smart knowledge index directly affected both the happiness and life satisfaction of Thai people. This finding is consistent with the sufficiency economy philosophy stating that morality, honesty, and integrity, as well as appropriate ways of life, are all merged with patience, perseverance, mindfulness, wisdom, and prudence to be balanced and ready to handle rapid and extensive changes of object, social, environmental and culture.

Another interesting finding is that marital status is an index that affects the level of happiness and life satisfaction of Thai people. It can be seen that families with parents and children living together are happier than those who are single, widowed, divorced, and separated. Because humans are social animals, they need to learn, exchange ideas, have social activities, support and care for each other. Thus, marital status is one of the indicators reflecting happiness and satisfaction. Additionally, the previous nature of Thai society was an expanded society, causing many members of the household. As can be seen from a survey of the National Statistical Office, the marital status of most Thai people of the working-age is marital status[7]. Social interaction can eliminate stress and promote well-being and quality of life, leading to satisfaction in the life of people.

Conclusion

From this study, it can be concluded that the majority of Thai people have a high level of happiness and satisfaction in life. It shows that Thai people have adapted to the changing economic and social context. Moreover, they have a 1 0 -year plan in economic, financial, physical, and mental health based on the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (moderate, reasonable, knowledgeable).

In addition, having activities to train the brain continuously, volunteering, participating in group activities led to an opportunity to learn new things and share experiences as well as build self-worth and self-esteem. These could help them make good relationships with the others l. Importantly, they have to open their mind to new things especially technology to bridge the gap with the next generation. In particular, generation B (Baby boom) are over 6 0 years old with other generations by exchanging their knowledge with different people, listening with an open mind, accepting the diversity of age ranges, experiences, and social and technology disruption. Altogether makes people feel that they are modernized and greatly enhance the love and understanding of the family.

Acknowledgments

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