

Political Education Creation for the Development of Western Economic Corridor in Thailand

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ABSTRACT

The research on “The Promotion and Creation of Political Education for the Development of Western Economic Corridor” is considered crucial for the improvement, development and learning process of political education in response to university’s policy, labor market, society, students’ need and want and national development. Since there are many important factors that have impact on the use of political education to promote, develop and improve teaching and learning processes based on the need of the students and stakeholders, this research has been aimed to 1) study the guidelines to promote and create political education for the development of western economic corridor, and 2) apply political education for the development of western economic corridor. The quantitative and qualitative research methods were utilized by statistically analyzing and comparing the data obtained from the questionnaires in which they were answered by people whose age is between 20-60 years old, and by analyzing, interpreting and summarizing the data collected from the interview of those administrators at both regional and local levels. The research found that the guidelines to promote and create political education for the development of western economic corridor included: international learning standard, teaching and learning process is focused on the need and interest of the students, first-hand experience to encourage self-learning process and skills, the ability to academically analyze and apply political knowledge in international political phenomenon, course content is in line with social trend, and the inculcation of morality, honesty and public-mindedness. The study also discovered that sex, age, educational level, monthly income, occupation, and resident have relationship with the promotion and creation of political education for the development of western economic corridor at the statistically significant of 0.05. For the promotion and creation of political education for the development of western economic corridor, the research revealed that the lecturers should be continuously trained and developed in the field of political education, there should be an appropriate budget for the lecturers’ training, there should be an enough number of lecturers, and there should be a development of lecturers’ code of ethics. For the application of political education, there should be an arrangement for the students to widen their professional perspectives in order to increase the occupational opportunity in the labor market and to engage the students in various social and community activities to characterize them with the spirit of teamwork and sacrifice.

Keyword: Political Science, Political Education, Local Development, Western Economic Corridor of Thailand and Development Administration

INTRODUCTION

Western Economic Corridor of Thailand (WECT) covers five provinces that are Tak Province, Kanchanaburi Province, Ratchaburi Province, Phetchaburi Province and Prachuap Khiri Khan Province. It connects to Thai-Myanmar border and it is an economic zone. It is a part of the megaproject is the east–west economic corridor and it is a land bridge that link between the Pacific Ocean and India Ocean. The east-west economic corridor project will also link four countries are Myanmar, Thailand, Laos and Vietnam. So, the project will make benefit and value greatly for Thailand and Indochina sub-region (ADB 2010).

Political education is sciences, learned method and teaching method of politics, government and governmental processes. The political education has a difference in learned method and teaching method such as age period (primary school, middle school, high school, bachelor degree and etc.), people groups (children, teenage, women, local people, businessmen etc.), majors (government, international relation, public administration, public law etc.) and etc. So, political education is a huge academic area and it overlaps with political science. But, political education is not attended by political science and education scholars (Alan Rosenthal, 1969). So, the political education develops inconsistently and it impacts with this area and society.

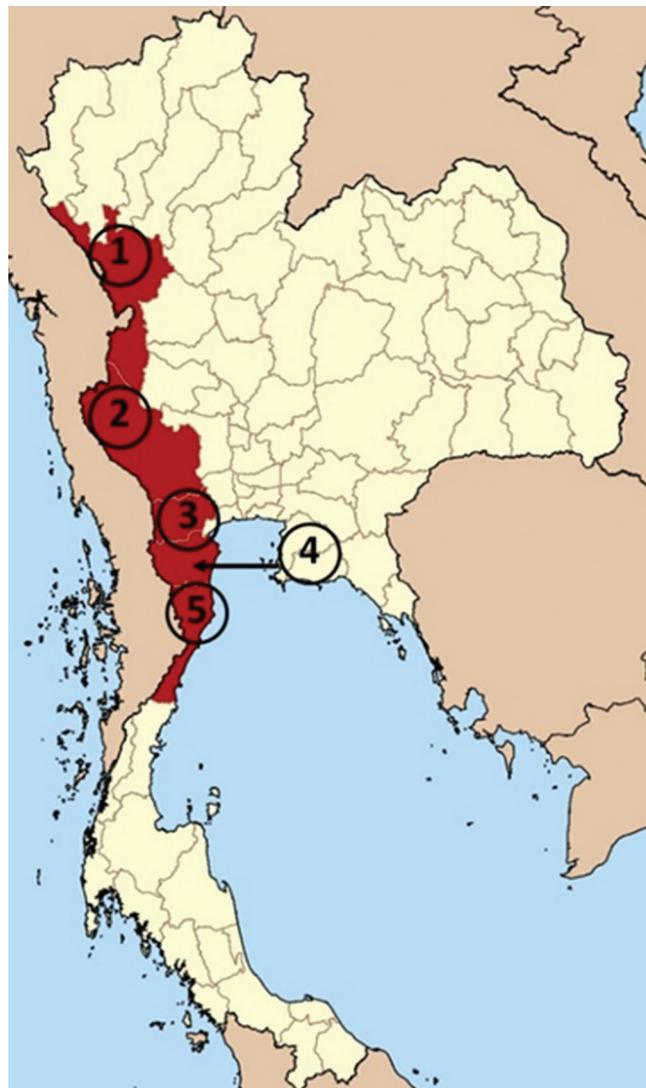
People lack knowledge and understanding of politics, political science, government, political changes and political ideological changes because of these reasons (Byron G. Messialas, 1969).

The political education in Thailand is similar with the phenomena in the other country because most of political science and education scholars interested in political issues and few scholars interested in political education. So, the communication, learning and teaching in politics and political science in Thailand have been chaotic since Siamese revolution of 1932 (Sane Chamarik, 1978). Although political science in Thailand develops successively, political education progresses unsystematically. It affects with politics, education, development and society inescapably.

This research tries to develop political education in the context of western Thailand for WECT development. It integrates between geological characters, political sciences' theories and local people's views. Moreover, this research is a few academic work of political in Thailand and it tries to create an educational innovation for the local development. The major beliefs is that every area of Thailand has difference economic, geography, culture, political culture, politics and social character, so the design of political education should depend on those specifications.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research of political education creation for the development of western economic corridor in Thailand used mixed method that is qualitative and quantitative methods. The qualitative method is a document and in-depth interview methods. The quantitative method is a questionnaire and statistic methods.



Figures 1: Five provinces of WECT, Tak Province (number 1), Kanchanaburi Province (number 2), Ratchaburi Province (number 3), Phetchaburi Province (number 4) and Prachuap Khiri Khan Province (number 5)



Figures 2: East-West Economic Corridor's Project

The sample of this research is a citizen in five provinces that are Tak Province, Kanchanaburi Province, Ratchaburi Province, Phetchaburi Province and Prachuap Khiri Khan Province. The sample is 425 persons of citizen in western provinces. The researcher used in-depth interview and questionnaire with some sample and it depended on occasion and sample character (400 persons in questionnaire method and 25 persons in in-depth interview method). Beside, the data processing and analysis are the integration the political theory, local people opinion, political educational concept and WECT plan.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data analysis from questionnaire show that people in western region want some higher educational institutions in western region has political science's education. The political science's course should develop local region and WECT. Moreover, the course should support human resource development, labor development, social development and advanced education. Most of the answers show that this course should enlighten pundits should have political moral and ethics. The opinion of western citizen presents the political sciences' course should connect between academic area and practical area.

The data study in in-depth interview method presents that if university in western region has the studies of political science, the political science's course should focus on student can apply the theory to practice because most of political science's course center on pure theory and it cannot solve political and social problems. Furthermore, the teacher should teach the integrated method between pure theory and current issues. The political science's lecturer should develop political theory in Thai and western region's contexts because most political theories are western countries' theory and they are not fit in Thailand. Besides, the political education should support developing plan of WECT because this project has many contexts relate with political science such as international relation, national security, governmental administration, local government and political geography. Besides, the political education should build the spirit of teamwork and sacrifice because they can increase the occupational opportunity in the labor market and they are the good habits for governmental working. However, academic institution in western region should be a center of WECT because it is think tank and knowledge bank of this region.

From Thai western people's opinion, the data shows the political education is an important factor for WECT development because it is a knowledge and science for national administration and development. The graduate should not have only the knowledge of political science but they should also have the political moral and ethics. The lack of political ethics is the big problem in politics and it is not simple teach in the school because we have too many cases in the mass media relate with the lack of political ethic (Charles F. Andrain, 1970). However, we can train the political ethic and public mind through extracurricular activities and it is better than the class lecture (A.B. Hodgetts, 1968). Thus, the political course should have three types of educational method that is theory study, theory applying study and extracurricular activity (D.B. Heater, 1969).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The WECT is a strategic plan and policy of Thailand and ASEAN because it can open the new market and new raw material source: Republic of the Union of Myanmar (ADB, 2010). The development of WECT is under many conditions such as Thai – Myanmar relationship, economic benefit, stakeholder's wants, international politics and etc. Moreover, the WECT is a part of the east–west economic corridor's project that is under construction in some part. Human development for this project supporting is necessary, especially political study and public affairs.

The political education's creation befits with the WECT development is challenge for political sciences' professor because production of graduates have knowledge and merit in same time. It is hard task because we have too many questions about political morality in Thailand such as who should set political morality, which is political morality, what is a goodness or badness in political morality and etc. It has been a dilemma in political education in Thailand since 2005 – 2006 Thai political crises. So, the political education creation for the development of western economic corridor in Thailand will be still a pondering for Thai citizen.

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