

## Students' Perceptions About Conflict in The Area of Southernmost of Thailand

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**Abstract:** This is a research paper which describe about students' perceptions about conflict in the area of southernmost of Thailand. Which have the objectives that what are the causes of problems? What are the obstacles of problems solving? And also what are the possible ways. That conflict can decrease? This research set the interview forms to ask students and let them talk and comment the three questions. This research found that there are many people misunderstand about the way that to solve conflict. The official staffs also have conflict inside the area that is a key factor to solve conflict.

**Key words:** Peacebuilding , perceptions, Southernmost Thailand

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### 1. Background

It should be noted at the outset that there are two distinct ways to understand peacebuilding According the United Nations (UN) document *An Agenda for Peace* peacebuilding consists of a wide range of activities associated with capacity building, reconciliation, and societal transformation. Peacebuilding is a long-term process that occurs after violent conflict has slowed down or come to a halt. Thus, it is the phase of the peace process that takes place after peacemaking and peacekeeping (Michelle Maiese, 2003).

Many non-governmental organizations (NGOs), on the other hand, understand peacebuilding as an umbrella concept that encompasses not only long-term transformative efforts, but also peacemaking and peacekeeping. In this view, peacebuilding includes early warning and response efforts, violence prevention, advocacy work, civilian and military peacekeeping, military intervention, humanitarian assistance, ceasefire intervention, and the establishment of peace zones (Michelle Maiese, 2003).

Various internal actors play an integral role in peacebuilding and reconstruction efforts. The government of the affected country is not only the object of peacebuilding, but also the subject. While peacebuilding aims to transform various government structures, the government typically oversees and engages in this reconstruction process. A variety of the community specialists, including lawyers, economists, scholars, educators, and teachers, contribute their expertise to help carry out peacebuilding projects. Finally, a society's

religious networks can play an important role in establishing social and moral norms. (SAIS, 2003)

In conflict-and violence-affected contexts, young people are commonly perceived as either perpetrators or victims of violence with young men usually assumed to be the primary perpetrators and young women the primary victims, especially of sexual and gender-based violence. Yet the lived realities of young people in these contexts are much more complex than these stereotypes suggest. Some young people may be both direct victims and perpetrators of violence; others may be neither, but instead have to use their skills and resources to survive and support themselves and their families. (Practice Note Youth & Peacebuilding - January 2016).

Thailand's Deep South is a conflict area where armed groups of ethnic Malay Muslims have waged an extended struggle for freedom from Thai rule. The area covers the present-day southernmost Thai provinces of Pattani (Patani), Yala, and Narathiwat (Asia 2015).

The peacebuilding efforts in the Deep South of Thailand, respectively in Patani (as many Malay Muslims like to call the region), are a good example for the challenges of peacebuilding in the broader as well as in the more narrow sense. The conflict is one of the internationally less known internal disputes. Although the violence led to more than 6,000 deaths and the injury of more than 11,000 people since 2004, it rarely appears as a topic in foreign media. The reasons are that most of the incidents of violence only affect a relatively small number of victims and perpetrators at any given time, and that there are so far only very few cases of an overspill of the violence to other regions of the country. Nevertheless, the conflict is currently the most

violent one in Southeast Asia and even though the number of victims came slightly down in 2014 in comparison to 2013, there are no indications that this conflict will end soon. (Norbert Ropers 2014).

In the four southern provinces of Thailand that border Malaysia – Narathiwat, Pattani, Yala and Songkhla – a wave of violence in 2004 renewed a long history of resistance from the Malay Muslim population to the authorities in Bangkok. The southern region was only incorporated into the Thai State in 1909 as part of the Anglo-Siamese Treaty negotiated with the British Empire. The region contains more than 65 per cent of Thailand's Muslim population, where the majority speak the Patani Malay dialect, known in Thai as Yawi. The Malay language has shaped the identity of the people, who since childhood have spoken and received religious instruction through it. The language also serves as a link between the people and their past when the area was part of the Patani sultanate. Patani was one of the major centres of Islamic studies in Southeast Asia, and all Islamic texts are written either in Arabic-scripted Yawi or Arabic (UNICEF, 2015).

There are many universities in Thailand have fieldworks or activities in this area. Each university has project and do it by himself. Some project in each university has complex fieldwork. It does not have discussion or meeting before do each project (Kumpee 2013)

## 2. Problem statement

Education is the first step to develop human resources. Country development starts from giving knowledge and skills to people in countries. The youth are the best factor to develop. They will be new generation for countries. They can learn problems that happen in countries and collect data to adapt or apply or and solve problems the future. The youths are mechanism to shift and resolve problem to be a good situation or improve situation after they got a good knowledge good skills (kumpee 2013). Moreover, the youth can become peace ambassador of their respect countries, promoting exchange programmes in education, culture, science and technology (Ewunee, 2013).

## 3. Research Question

1. What are the causes of problems.
2. What are the obstacles of problems solving.
3. What are the ways that conflict can decrease.

## 4. Research Methodology

### Samplings

A purposive sampling strategy was 24 Students Peace Program, Thaksin, University, Songkhla, Thailand.

### Data Collection

Data collection consisted of 24 individual interviews.

### Data analysis

Descriptive analysis

## 5. Findings

The results of this study indicate that

- i. The causes of conflict problems are different Economic Culture and Social Structures Because of their different Religious, Language and Culture make them have different perception.
- ii. They misunderstanding about the fact of problems which lead them make conflict and escalate to protracted conflict.
- iii. Also, people lack of communicate and discuss about problems.
- iv. In another way, the secession situation between state and separatist is the important opinion.
- v. Government lack of justice and unbalance power.
- vi. Government does not focus on the core of problem and careless people inside the areas include education social and Culture.
- vii. Policy from central or from Bangkok cannot use in the area.
- viii. Government officers don't have justice to work inside area and look people different level and disbelieve people in the three border provinces.
- ix. Government don't concern and carefulness in the part education social and culture.
- x. Government don't pay attention to develop the area and some policy cannot use in the area.
- xi. Government officers don't focus on the root of custom way of life and culture inside the area.
- xii. Melayu ethnicity aggravate people inside the areas to respect their race.
- xiii. Government use the violence to solve problems; takbai and kruse situations.
- xiv. Distortion includes historical distortion.
- xv. People's suspicion in the official units. There are difference in the ethnicity, social environment, beliefs, Ideas and culture.
- xvi. They want to win between two parties; government and separatist.

- xvii. Right to get power. Interest and power History, governance.
- xviii. The main points that can summarize are discord, human right, inequality, discrimination, insincerity to solve problems.

The obstacles of problems solving:

- i. Each party has their own ways to solve the problems.
- ii. Government has to have sincerity to do it. People don't have space to present their way.
- iii. Each party avoids discussing and negotiating the conflict resolution.
- iv. Government cannot find the separatist leader.
- v. Historical dimensions.
- vi. Government officer have bias to solve the problems.
- vii. Bangkok Policy cannot success because it cannot integrate with way of life.
- viii. People's participation and Coordination.
- ix. People entrusts in the policy that central government set up.
- x. In the real time, it have brought to use inside the conflict areas cannot success.
- xi. The government office have corruption problem.
- xii. The Lacking of Corporation between the religious leaders, private school sectors and *pondok* teacher.
- xiii. Martial laws and Weakness of civil society organization.
- xiv. Politicians and elites Interest

## 6. What are the ways that conflict can decrease?

Learn the different of ethnical diversity and pay respect each other. Review the pragmatic roof of problematic conflict. Government solves problems without weapons.

Dialogue and peace talk. Polices and militaries have to show their mind to solve conflict. The cops also have to trust people inside areas, too.

## 7. Discussions

Southernmost Thailand's violence situations are the big problems that Thai government faces a very hard dilemma. The government has many processes to do it, some process establishes new public unit in the area, some process spends budget to create project and program and some creates collaborative activities among local people, official staffs and

the religious leaders between Muslims and Buddhists. But the badly, situations still go on and do not have tendency to settle it. The youth also are the important factor to support peace process to southernmost Thailand.

## 8. Recommendations

The conflict resolution that is the most suitable can be used in community is the compromise and integration of problem solving. The research interviewed only the village headmen because of the time to do research. For the next, researcher should interview the other

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