



A Non-Alcoholic Religious Ceremony: A Case Study of Grand Litter Parade in Lamphun Province ‘The Only One in the World’

Tipat Sottiwan^{a*}, Kittipong Klinjan^a, Thammasorn Morawan^b and Wiwanda Siricheewanan^c

^aDepartment of Applied Statistics, Faculty of Science and Technology, Rajamangala University of Technology Thanyaburi
Pathum Thani 12110

^bDepartment of Marketing, Southeast Bangkok College, Bangkok 10260

^cResearcher

*Corresponding author. E-Mail address: tipat_s@rmutt.ac.th

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to study the driving process of the non-alcoholic tradition of the Grand Litter Parade Festival in Ban Hong District, Lamphun Province. The research employed qualitative methods with CIPP Model as a study frame. The key informants were three launchers of Non-alcohol of Kae Luang Project, 10 representatives of children and youth, five prototypes of life-time alcohol drinking termination, two representatives of Ban Hong abstaining from alcohol network-Lamphun Cooperation for Liquor, Cigarette and Accident Protection Center, and 56 of people in eight Sub-Districts participating in Non-alcohol Kae Luang Project. The in-depth interviews and focus group discussions were data collection methods. The study found that the driving process of the event included: 1) Acknowledgment of the problem recognition about drinking and community awareness for the effect of drinking. 2) Community participation in drinking solution leads to the creation Ban Hong stop drink network. 3) Community Operation and Evaluation of Ban Hong District Office in the Campaign to Be against Drinking Alcohol. 4) The realization of the people in the community about maintaining the old religious tradition which is the only one in the world. The result information from the study will be applicable to informing the driving process of non-alcoholic tradition festivals or events to other areas by: 1) Identifying areas with supporting non-alcoholic tradition festivals or events from government agencies; 2) Choosing a variety of non-alcoholic activities for children and youth; and 3) Integrating the information into the holding of similar activities such as stop smoking campaigns and alcoholism treatment programs.

Keywords: Alcoholic, Ceremony, Grand Litter Parade Festival, Lamphun Province

Introduction

The trend of drinking alcohol drinks in the whole picture of society and in traditional making merit of Thailand under local culture seems to be in a high level. In some festivals like New Year's Day, Songkran's Day, or even in the functions of Thai traditions, it is known that they are likely to have socialization and alcohol drinks. This relates to the survey of ABAC Research Center which found that there were 81.8% of drunkards used to drink in various festivals (Academic Network for Community Happiness Observation and Research, Assumption University, 2011). This causes accidents, severe affect towards health and loss of property, life and economic. Accordingly, the government and private sectors cooperatively find a way to control alcohol consumption with various defensive measurements. The Ministry of Interior issued the command document no. MoI.0211.3 / Wor.4257 to all provincial governors to support the campaign of no alcohol in death ceremony and no alcohol in making merit festivals since 11 October 2011 to support the King's speech on sufficiency economy. This command is also added in the working plan of Plan and Policy Office of Ministry of Interior. The announcement has supported a new Thai value for Thai society and made many local communities turn to signify more non-alcohol festivals to lower those damages. Thai Health Promotion Foundation and Non-alcohol Drinks Network,



with the cooperation of the regional and local administrators all over Thailand and local people in the areas, support widening the network of non-alcohol drinks in provinces. It pushes non-alcohol drinks policy with the support from all alcohol maker companies in every festival to reduce accidents, including creating social functions as the knowledge for children and the people in the community to practice effectively.

Lampoon Province, located in the north of Thailand, of which the provincial governor and co-workers signify the policy against alcohol drinks by asking the cooperation from every work unit, namely the government sector, the private sector and the people sector, strictly runs the policy under Alcohol Drink Control Act using 21 local areas as the base. Lampoon is one of the provinces with the long history of about 1,343 years (Information and Communication Group, Office of Lamphun, n.d.). Ban Hong is a district which has the yearly conserved tradition as the unique symbol of the world reflecting the value of precious tradition and culture, love, unity, sacrifice and the cooperation to keep and transfer this cultural art to public consistently (Office Lamphun Cultural, Ministry of Culture, n.d.). Traditionally, alcohol drinks are used to be served in making merit festivals in Ban Hong District. However, they become the main cause of quarrels and accidents which led to the loss of life and property. Accordingly, the project of the non-alcoholic tradition of the Grand Litter Parade Festival was launched. Besides, the main purpose for reducing alcohol drink consumption and the conservation of Thai festival symbol are also the other purposes. The non-alcoholic tradition of the Grand Litter Parade Festival has been under the cooperation of Thai Health Promotion Foundation since 2012. There are Lampoon Alcohol Drink, Cigarette and Accident Problem Reduction Center, along with Ban Hong Child and Youth Network and the First Model of Life-Time Alcohol Drink Termination, which help launching the campaign of non-alcohol drink festivals with the cooperation of local government units in Ban Hong District.

The campaign of the Grand Litter Parade Festival in Ban Hong District, Lampoon Province has been running for three years. In 2014, the Grand Litter Parade Festival in Ban Hong District, one of 152 districts of Thailand, was awarded the shield of fame. It becomes a model of stopping alcohol drinks campaign, reducing risk factors and decreasing allurements, which cause ruins under regulations and laws to protect youngsters to touch alcohol drinks – the first step of leading youngsters to drugs addiction. This study aims to make people realize the significance of the Grand Litter Parade Festival in Ban Hong District as the great and unique festival of Lanna community and of the world that the people in the area cooperate in maintaining it as a pure festival worth studying.

The Purposes of the Study

To study the processes which make the Grand Litter Parade Festival in Ban Hong District, Lampoon Province become one of 152 districts in Thailand which received the trophy of fame through stopping alcohol drink campaigns

Limitation of the Study

Limitation of the location: There are five sub-districts in Ban Hong District: Ban Hong, Paploo, Laoyao, Sritia and Norngplasawai.

Limitation of the population: Related people of the Grand Litter Parade Festival in Ban Hong District, Lampoon Province are the key informants: those who started the project; the representatives of child and youth; the First Model of Life-Time Alcohol Drink Termination; the representatives of Lampoon Alcohol Drink, Cigarette and



Accident Problem Reduction Center; and the youngsters and people participating in Non-alcohol Drinks in Krae Luang Project.

Limitation of the Content:

1. The context of the Grand Litter Parade Festival in Ban Hong District, Lamphoon Province
2. The background/beginning of the Grand Litter Parade Festival in Ban Hong District, Lamphoon Province
3. Participation of the people in the area, the promotion towards the budget, measurement, the campaign activities and the public relation
4. The process to push the campaign activities of the Grand Litter Parade Festival in Ban Hong District, Lamphoon Province at the area level
5. The study of the strength, problem and treat towards pushing the Grand Litter Parade Festival in Ban Hong District, Lamphoon Province
6. The result of the organization of the Grand Litter Parade Festival in Ban Hong District, Lamphoon Province at the area level

Research Methodology

The areas of this study were five sub-districts of Ban Hong District; Ban Hong, Paploo, Laoyao, Sritia and Norngplasawai sub-districts. The purposive sampling method and snowball sampling method were used to select key informants: three sheriffs of Ban Hong District during 2012–2015; 10 representatives of child and youth; five members of First Model of Life-time Alcohol Drink Termination; 46 representatives of Lamphoon Alcohol Drink, Cigarette and Accident Problem Reduction Center; and the youngsters and people participating in Non-alcohol Drinks in Kae Luang Project.

The study was conducted through several instruments: guide questions for interview, guide questions for group discussion and investigation form. The group of researchers cooperated with the key informants went to the area to collect the data with the qualitative research methods: participant observation, in-depth interview, focus group discussion, and documentary search. The data was analyzed by making a conclusion, arranging the data from the interview, focusing group discussion, limiting of the main point, following the main point and the minor point, comparing the data from each group and linking the meaning of related data.

Conceptual Framework

The study of the success of the project covered all systems. CIPP Model (Context-Input-Process-Product) is the whole point of view of the continual process starting from the Grand Litter Parade Festival in Ban Hong District, Lamphoon Province. The context leads to the goals, the input, efficiency of the input, sufficiency of the resources as the participation of the people in the community and the support of the budget. This also includes measurement and campaign activities, including public relation, to bring about the project, the drive of the Grand Litter Parade Festival in Ban Hong District, Lamphoon Province at the level area. The strength, the problems, and threat to drive the campaign activities and the product which is the result of the Grand Litter Parade Festival in Ban Hong District, Lamphoon Province organization at a local level area, are also taken into account. The conceptual framework to assess the project is CIPP Model as follows:

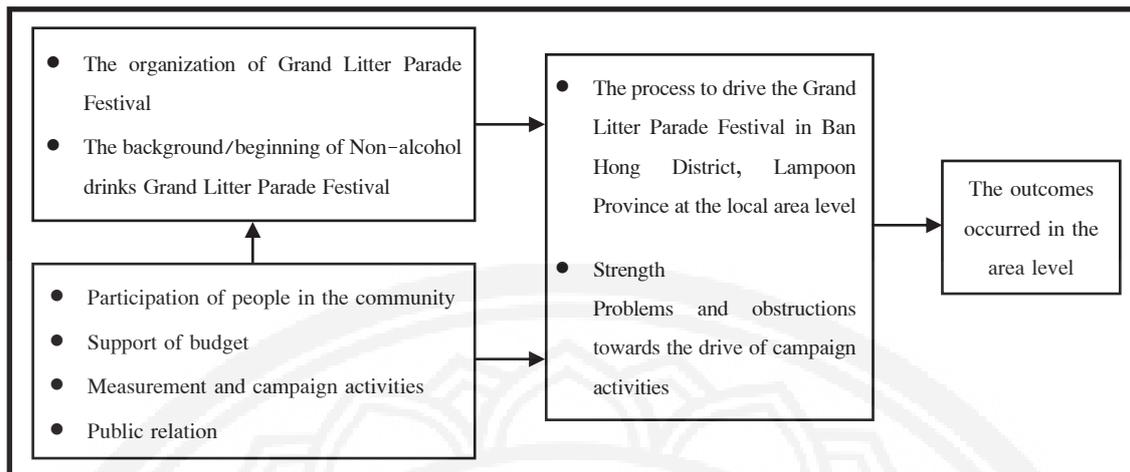


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

Results of the Study

The context of the Grand Litter Parade Festival in Ban Hong District, Lamphoon Province

The Grand Litter Parade Festival has been conserved and continued as the beauty and symbol of Ban Hong District and Lamphoon Province for a long time. In the previous time, people fixed the ceremony to parade taking the “Kae”, a piece of wood for lighting fire, given to the monks in the temple on “Yipeng Day” or the Lunar Moon Day which is one of Loy Kratong days. Every temple organizes the sermon in the early morning for making merits and the ceremony in the late morning for giving food to the monks. At night, people make the “Kae” and decorate it with lamps or other beautiful items. The “Kae” is then taken in parade, given to the monks at the temple where they worship and lit it to make merits. After that, people float “kratong” to apologize the goddess of the river and float evil things into the river tide. For decades, Ban Hong cultural council has cooperated with Ban Hong District Governor, Ban Hong Tambon Municipality, sub-district administration organizations, local government units, the village chief and headman of the village club, private sector organizations, provincial administration organization and other government agencies to hold the Grand Litter Parade Festival in Ban Hong District annually. It is realized that this festival is worth organizing and transferred to youngsters with “Kae Luang” competition in the villages. The competitors are villages, sub-districts, government units and private sectors. The criteria of the competition are the form of the parade, Miss Kae Luang, creation, beauty, etc. There are also other competitions for entertainment and maintenance of the culture such as singing competition, cylindrical shape firework, artificial kratong, sand pagoda making, etc. (Office Lamphun Cultural, Ministry of Culture, n.d.).

The Background / Beginning of Grand Litter Parade Festival in Ban Hong District, Lamphoon Province

Ban Hong District has reorganized the Grand Litter Parade Festival as the signature of Ban Hong annually in front of Ban Hong District Office (Wongyai, 2004). In 2002, Ban Hong District Sheriff and Stopping Drinking Alcohol Drink Network realized that there were campaigns to stop-drinking-alcohol in making merit and festivals, so there should be a stop-drinking-alcohol drink campaign for the Grand Litter Parade Festival of Ban Hong. This is the starting point of Non-alcohol drinks in the Grand Litter Parade Festival of Ban Hong.

The starting point of stopping drinking alcohol among people in Ban Hong was from a meeting among the heads of government units of Ban Hong Districts. In 2012, Mr. Supasit Larkornng, the former Ban Hong Sheriff,



was the president of the meeting accompanied with the community leaders, heads of government units, schools, monks and other work units. After discussing other matters, they turned to talk about the study of the expenses and ways of life of Ban Hong people studied by an educational institution which revealed that the household expense did not get along with ways of life of local people. It seemed that the income could be able to support the family, but it was not enough. It was found out that one part of the expenses which the local people was to pay for was all vices, including the overspending of money for alcohol drinks in the dead ceremony or other making merit ceremonies which make conflicts against sufficient economy. Accordingly, Ban Hong Sheriff decided to support the stop-drinking-alcohol drink campaign in all making merit ceremonies, declared it as Ban Hong Agenda and cooperatively looked for the way to set up a campaign to make the people in Ban Hong stop-drinking-alcohol drinks in both daily activities and all making merit ceremonies. The meeting committee agreed that such a process could help saving money and promoting good health. The campaign of stop-drinking-alcohol drinks was thus added in the next meeting agenda, and there were presentations of several campaigns such as the monitoring of each headman to watch over making merit ceremonies of the local people. If there were such ceremonies, the organizers would be informed to stop giving alcohol drinks to all guests, and the guests would be told the positive points of that. Their first campaign started at a dead ceremony.

“Most of the hosts increasingly cooperated with this campaign, but the guests who were used to drinking alcohol drinks condemned that the hosts were so tough. After the campaign continuously running, there was a comparison of the expenses between the ceremony with alcohol drinks and without them in making merit ceremonies.”

Whereas the leader of the community tried to emphasize the loss and diseases caused by alcohol drinks, the local people realized the benefit of saving money and being healthy, including the idea that the leaders were the good models. The Sheriff followed the progression of the campaign of stopping alcohol drinks from the leaders of the community. If there were a feeding party with alcohol drinks in a village, the leader of the community would be blamed and urged to run the campaign strongly.

The Sheriff warned the people about drinking alcohols in the area visited, and he was sometimes objected about this. This took time to reach the objective of the campaign. In 2013, the Department of Local Administration, Ministry of Interior with the cooperation of the Campaign for Stopping Drinking Alcohol Network Office and Thai Health Promotion Foundation, realized the significance of setting up a non-alcohol district. This policy created an environment in the community and society which made Thai people have sustainable healthiness by using the occasion of stopping drinking alcohol during the Buddhist Lent and other festivals throughout the year. The Sheriff and stop-drinking-alcohol campaigners organized the project to support stop-drinking-alcohol and make a happy society. This made the organizer of Ban Hong stop-drinking-alcohol network consult the Sheriff that the Grand Litter Parade Festival could be the first model of non-alcohol making merit festivals. Therefore, Ban Hong District applied for being part of models in non-alcohol drinking districts and finally became one of 152 districts all over Thailand as a non-alcohol drinking district. The Sheriff revealed in the interview that he did not know before that Ban Hong District would get the award.

The Grand Litter Parade Festival has been continuously organized more than 10 years, but the Non-Alcohol Grand Litter Parade Festival has been seriously taken into account since 2012. It has been run continuously even though 3-4 sheriffs were changed. This is because the leaders of the communities can drive the non-alcohol drinks campaign themselves, and the villagers are willing to cooperate in this matter with the support of the permanent



secretary of Ban Hong District who has had a long working period in the district and supported the campaign together with every sheriff. It can be said that even though there is a change of the Sheriff, the campaign of non-alcohol drinks in Ban Hong District is still running on.

During the study, the organization of festivals, especially for entertainment, usually dealt with alcohol drinks. The interview of youngsters and people about the atmosphere of the Grand Litter Parade Festival before the campaign to stop-drinking-alcohol revealed that the festival was yearly organized. Two nights of the festival started in the afternoon with the stage shows at night. The competition of “Kae” was held by schools or Sub-District Administration organizations, together with the parade of the Grand Litter and cooking competition. There were also food shops, local products and liquor shops which were favorite places for elderly and teenagers. There were frequently quarrels and fights in the festival. Parents and guardians thus did not want their children to go to the festival as they were afraid of being affected by those fights. However, more people came to join the Grand Litter Parade Festival happily after the announcement of non-alcohol drink area of the Grand Litter Parade Festival had been done. The interview of the people at 40s years of age revealed that they did not want their children to go to the Grand Litter Parade Festival because their children might be in danger.

Participation of people in the Community

The organization of the Grand Litter Parade Festival was an integrative work cooperated by every work unit in Ban Hong District: government units, private units, headmen of the village, local people of Ban Hong District, group of monks, Lampun Provincial Administration Organization, Ban Hong Cultural Council, District Public Health Center, Ban Hong Tambon Municipality, Sritia Tambon Municipality, Wiangkarn Sub-district Administration Organization, Laoyao Sub-district Administration Organization, Parploo Sub-district Administration Organization, Norngplasawai Sub-district Administration Organization, Northern Network of Stop Drinking Organization, Center of Alcohol Drink, Cigarette and Accident Problem Solving Cooperation, and Ban Hong Village Headman Club.

Formerly, the Grand Litter Parade Festival had been rotationally held in the place of work units. Then every part agreed that Ban Hong District area should be the place of holding the Grand Litter Festival with the financial support of government agencies and private sectors until now. People not only came to the festival, but also participated in cooking and other competitions and watched over alcohol drinks sellers.

Financial Support

Ban Hong District had a regular sum of money to organize the Grand Litter Parade Festival, but it was not a big sum. Other work units helped supporting the budget to organize the Grand Litter Parade Festival.

The Measurement and Campaign Activities

The organization of the Grand Litter Parade Festival without alcohol drinks at the area level involved an exhibition booth that provided knowledge about danger of alcohol drinks towards health and wasteful expenses or the law of alcohol drinks that people should know. The youngsters in stop-drinking-alcohol campaign networks took part in giving advice in the booth. Besides, the first model of stop-drinking-alcohol network helped provide steps of stopping drinking alcohol permanently. The group of the model was willing to reveal themselves and proud of stopping drinking forever. They claimed that, to stop drinking alcohol entirely, one must have a strong mind. The result of public relation campaign to give knowledge to people about the laws controlling alcohol drinks, including the punishment, became greater. Most people lacked the general knowledge such as the meaning of alcohol drinks, the place for free alcohol drinks, the person who was forbidden to sell alcohol drinks to the area or the free alcohol drinks area. After perceiving that knowledge, they felt safe to go to the fairs, especially with



the family. This created a good atmosphere of attending the festival fairs for both local people and others and sustainably conserved the old tradition of Lanna.

The process to prevent selling alcohol drinks in the Grand Litter Parade Festival was organized by the group of governing officer sectors and the local police to make an agreement with other government agencies to help watching over alcohol drink sale. This process was also in the cooperation with other non-government agencies. The most interesting action was to ask youngsters to persuade adults to avoid drinking alcohol in the festival because the adults might felt awkward and shameful to continue drinking. There was a strong idea that there would be no acceptance of sponsors from alcohol drink companies.

Public Relation

Ban Hong District had a public relation for non-alcohol drinks in the Grand Litter Parade Festival through a channel of personal contact, closed circuit loudspeaker and community radio to make people receive more information. Most people revealed that they got the stop-drinking-alcohol information from the Grand Litter Parade Festival campaign via public relations: a closed circuit loudspeaker, an area visit of officers dealing with stop-drinking-alcohol campaign in the Grand Litter Parade Festival.

Besides, there were meetings of work unit heads, the first model of stopping drinking alcohol drinks, and the youth to prepare the public relations for the Grand Litter Parade Festival of Ban Hong. There were exhibition booths, voice recordings for public relations not to sell alcohol drinks in the festival. Every cooperative part helped keep watching over the area of the festival strictly to prevent drinking alcohol in the area.

The process to drive the Project of non-alcohol drinks of the Grand Litter Parade Festival of Ban Hong District, Lamphoon Province at the Area Level

The performance of non-alcohol drinks in the Grand Litter Parade Festival of Ban Hong District, Lamphoon Province at the Area Level was considered effective. It was cooperated by several networks of stopping-drinking-alcohol organization, Ban Hong Hospital, Ban Hong Public Health Center, Leaders of communities, the first model of stopping drinking alcohol drinks network, and people.

The network of stopping-drinking-alcohol organization was the important part for supporting the campaign. The volunteers in this project revealed that they became the volunteers because the people in the family drank alcohol drinks seriously, and this reason was the drive to work in stopping drinking alcohol drink campaign. Youngsters in Ban Hong District participated in the campaign with the agreement of their parents since they had great intention to work for their homeland. The people in other provinces like Chiang Mai and the provinces nearby also agreed to allow their children to take part in this campaign. These youngsters express their various ideas of joining the campaign as follows (from the group interview with the Youth Network for stopping-drinking-alcohol campaign: 5 November 2016).

“I want to learn how to do useful activities for society.”

“My father drinks alcohol drinks, so I want to help doing the activity for stopping-drinking-alcohol campaign. Then my father can see this and stop drinking it.”

To start with, public health units and their staff in Ban Hong District worked together to stop drugs and cigarette in the area. This was the same target as that of the stopping-drinking-alcohol campaign among community leaders, village headmen and shop owners. The action made them join the work on drugs and cigarette protection and stop-drinking-alcohol activities. Those who wanted to stop drinking alcohol were sent to the hospital under the



supervision of professional nurses to help them stop drinking alcohol in their daily lives and turn to live normally after the program.

In the section of area visits, the shops selling alcohol drinks were asked and persuaded to stop selling those drinks. For the first time, the sign for stopping drinking alcohol drinks was posted at the shops. Then the laws for controlling alcohol drinks were notified, for example, no selling alcohol drinks to children, no selling alcohol drinks at the fixed time (Group discussion among the representatives of the network of stopping drinking alcohol drinks organization in Ban Hong on 6-7 October 2016).

The community leaders or the headmen of the village were the important key persons. They were respected and relied on by the villagers as long as they acted as a good model. Some of them used to drink hard, but gave up drinking entirely now.

The process to run non- alcohol drink of the Grand Litter Parade Festival of Ban Hong District, Lampoon Province used the official mechanism in organizing the festival as follows:

- The meeting to plan running the job and fix the forms of activities
- The appointment of committee
- The cooperation with the related work units
- The integration of organizing activities
- The conclusion of the assessment and result report

According to this study's data analysis towards the organization of the non-alcohol Grand Litter Parade Festival, the processes made Ban Hong awarded like other 152 districts in Thailand as shown in the flow chart below:

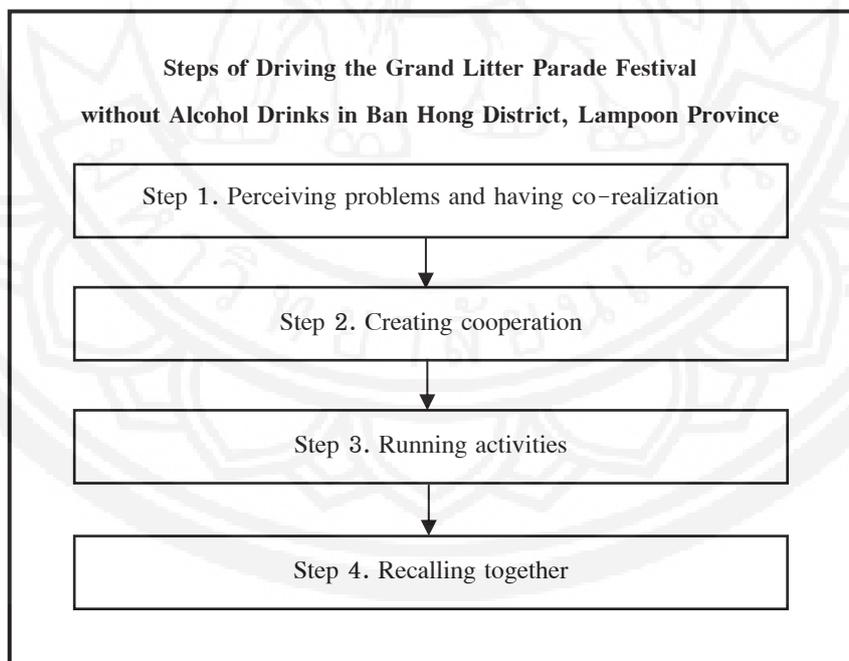


Figure 2 Steps of Driving the Grand Litter Parade Festival without Alcohol Drinks in Ban Hong District, Lampoon Province



Step 1: To perceive and realize the problems altogether is the first step that makes the community know the problem and danger of drinking alcohol drinks. People need to cooperate in dealing with the problems on drinking alcohol in the festival or other making-merit ceremonies. They should also realize the danger of liquor that it does not give an instant consequence, but a bad one in the future or an economic loss from supporting alcohol drinks. The next step is to point out the value of the Grand Litter Parade Festival which is the only one festival left in the north of Thailand.

Step 2: Creating a cooperation in this step helps people take part in planning and solving problems together, including investigating and assessing. This will establish the network in every communal part automatically. The government units are the hosts in holding the meeting, reviewing the problems and opening the floor to allow people to participate and exchange ideas leading to the practice. This will help promote an integration of knowledge through campaigns to cure of alcoholics, or stop-drinking-alcohol campaign among youth in educational institutes.

Step 3: Running activities created by the cooperation of every section makes the Grand Litter Parade Festival with non-alcohol drinks successful such as the campaign of community leaders, the watch over alcohol drinks by people, government's policy, including the follow-up and assessment.

Step 4: Recalling together is a way of gathering people to drive the community in a desirable direction without waiting for the outsider to conduct. Local people have their knowledge through learning together. Even though the leader of the governor units is changed, people in the community can run the stop-drinking-alcohol campaign by themselves. This makes the Grand Litter Parade Festival have no alcohol drinks continuously.

Conclusion

The case study of the Grand Litter Parade Festival in Lamphoon Province 'The Only One in the World' is to examine the driving processes of non-alcohol Grand Litter Parade Festival in Ban Hong District, Lamphoon Province which receives a trophy award with other 152 districts all over Thailand. The conceptual framework follows the CIPP Model to study the festival's context through its background, the participation of the people in the community, the support of the budget, measurement and campaign activities, public relation, the driving process of the project at the area level, the strength, problems and threats in driving the project, including the result of the Grand Litter Parade Festival without alcohol drinks at the area level.

The area of this study was Ban Hong District comprising of Ban Hong Sub-district, Parploo Sub-district, Laoyao Sub-district, Sritia Sub-district and Nornngplasawai Sub-district. The 61 key informants were the pioneers of the Grand Litter Parade Festival without alcohol drinks project, composed of the representatives of children and youth in Ban Hong District, the original model of life-time stopping drinking alcohol drinks in Ban Hong District, the coordinators of saying no to alcohol organization in Ban Hong District, including people participating in the project.

The study revealed that the festival was the only one festival in the world without alcohol drinks, cooperated by the people in the area, the support of budget, the measurement and campaign activities, and public relation. The factors comprise of: 1) the perception of the problem and realization of the danger of alcohol drinks; 2) the way to support the participation to set up the campaign of stopping drinking alcohol drinks; 3) the creation of the activities towards stopping drinking alcohol drink campaign; and 4) the co-realization of the people in the community to conserve the old and only one festival in the world. The campaign of the Grand Litter Parade Festival without alcohol drinks at the area level made the local people realize the danger of alcohol drinks towards health



and finance, and gain the knowledge of laws about liquors. As there were more people who wanted to give up drinking alcohol drinks, the idea of rejecting sponsors from alcohol drink business could build up an example of non-alcohol festivals for other areas.

Suggestions

This project should be introduced to any area organization which establishes making-merit festivals around the country to present the symbol of the festivals and sustainably maintain them by considering the following factors:

1. The area to expand the results
 - 1.1 Government units/local government organizations which support the campaign of stopping drinking alcohol drinks
 - 1.2 Five precept villages; the campaign will be easily successful if their people follow ethics.
 - 1.3 Communities where leaders realize the danger of drinking alcohol drinks and act as a drive of the campaign
2. Organizing Activities in the Making-Merit Festival which
 - 2.1 create the value of joyfulness without alcohol drinks for youngsters through various channels of media in the area more often.
 - 2.2 utilize several non-alcohol cultural art to draw children's attention.
 - 2.3 allow children and youth to participate in the campaign through educational institutions.

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