



## Development of the Traditional Handicrafts Wisdom of the Elderly to Enter to the Standard of Wiang Nuea Sub-District, Wiangchai District, Chiang Rai Province

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Received: 4 June 2019; Revised: 2 August 2019; Accepted: 9 August 2019

### Abstract

The objective of this research was to study the wisdom and develop the traditional handicrafts of the elderly to enter to the standard of Wiang Nuea Sub-District, Wiangchai District, Chiang Rai Province. It was the qualitative and action research. The data was completed by using a purposive sampling technique from the elderly, experts in basket weaving, professional teachers participating in product development and 20 community leaders. The research instruments consisted of an in-depth interview form, participatory behavior observation form, a semi-structured interview form, forum, product design, product development using qualitative data analysis, and content analysis. The research was summarized based on the objectives as follows:

1. The traditional handicraft wisdom of the elderly was inherited from the ancestors from generation to generation. The tools were simple and they consisted of knife, “Krueng Ried” (a kind of tool for making a piece of bamboo equal), bamboo (Mai bong, Mai Porloon, Mai Sang). The handicrafts were used for Kitchen utensils and for ceremonies of Lanna culture such as “Chalom” (a round bamboo basket), baskets, toilet paper box, Baisri tray, Lanna Flag, handmade chandelier. These products also generated extra income for the elderly.

2. Regarding to the product development from the elderly’s wisdom of Wiang Nuea Sub-District, Wiangchai District, Chiang Rai Province, the research was conducted with the elderly group, professional teachers and the community leaders in terms of analyzing, selecting the products and sharing opinions with the experts for product development suggestions, including doing market demand survey and developing the best practice products to enter to the community product standard. The developed product models were: 1) Khan-Tok; a kind of wooden utensil in northern Thailand and the surface of bamboo is grown in denim and the bottom edge on a line with bamboo strips. The tray’s legs were bent down firmly fastened with rattan; 2) Flower vase; it was made with bamboo and pieces of bamboo strips; and 3) Bamboo Flowers; they were used as the decoration in opening the ceremonies. All these products were distributed in the community shops and the elderly center for serving the field trip study groups.

**Keywords:** Handicraft Products, Traditional Wisdom, Elderly, Community Standard

### Introduction

Local wisdom is about knowledge or lifestyle collected from the experience of life in society and in different environment. It inherits to be the culture in any particular area based on the existent potential in human and nature to be useful for living consistent with the nature and folkways (Tantayanubutr, 2008, p. 6).

Handicrafts are inventions of all valuable of things and tools from the wisdom by using natural and materials to become the unique of community and are developed to be “One Tambon One Product of each community (OTOP product) in Thailand. Therefore, the development of “One Tambon One Product is very important for the local manufacturers that they have to present the value of these handicrafts obviously as well as the identity, art and culture of the community and meet the needs of consumers (Patcharametha, 2016).



The development of OTOP products to become sustainable and remain, it needs to create the handicrafts to have 4 basic value consisted 1) Identity Values 2) Material and Process Values 3) Aesthetic Values, and 4) Functional Values. These basic values will be the framework for the creation of handicrafts in each community. It comes with the wisdom and culture of the local identity and can be applied to further development of OTOP products in line with the changes of social context in the future (Patcharametha, 2016).

Local wisdom includes weaving handicraft related with tradition. The cultures of that area are what make the difference. It reflects the concept of lifestyle of the local people as well. At the same time, it creates the identity of culture in each region. Especially the weaving handicraft products of the elderly in Wiang Nuea Sub-District, Wiangchai District, Chiang Rai Province due to the abundant forest area, and most important, it is bamboo forest. Bamboo is the main raw material for production with its unique blend of traditional Lanna, this makes Wiang Nuea's wicker ware striking and very beautiful. The wicker ware is not only used for daily facilities, it is also applied as furniture, baskets, and for decorations. However, it can be adapted to many kinds of products and it is changed from using as household appliances to selling. Nowadays, community business, community enterprise are the manufacturers and the creators of weaving handmade products and process the wicker ware continuously for distribution in domestic and export to over sea markets.

Wicker ware is considered to be the local handicrafts adjacently with Thai ways of life since ancient times because Thai people have lived in an agricultural society that depends on nature, they need equipment and tools in their living such as containers used for packing food and water or equipment for catching aquatic animals to survive. Therefore, Bamboo is used for weaving to become containers and they are used in different situations (Manowang, Sapa, & Lahuna, 2017).

Therefore, this research focuses on the importance of education of the wisdom and the development of weaving handicrafts of the elderly people in order to enter into the community product standards of Wiang Nuea Sub-District, Wiangchai District, Chiang Rai Province. The study aims to inherit the local handicrafts which almost have been disappeared from the community without the inheritance of the process. Although they are common products in the market, are not developed to be modern products. Besides, the elderly also would like to develop the handicrafts continuously to enter the community product standard and community economic for supporting tourism, jobs and income for the elderly and interested people.

### **The Purposes of Research**

1. To study the wisdom of traditional weaving handicrafts of the elderly of Wiang Nuea Sub-District, Wiangchai District, Chiang Rai Province
2. To develop the traditional weaving handicrafts products of the elderly to enter to the standard of Wiang Nuea Sub-District, Wiangchai District, Chiang Rai Province



### Conceptual Framework

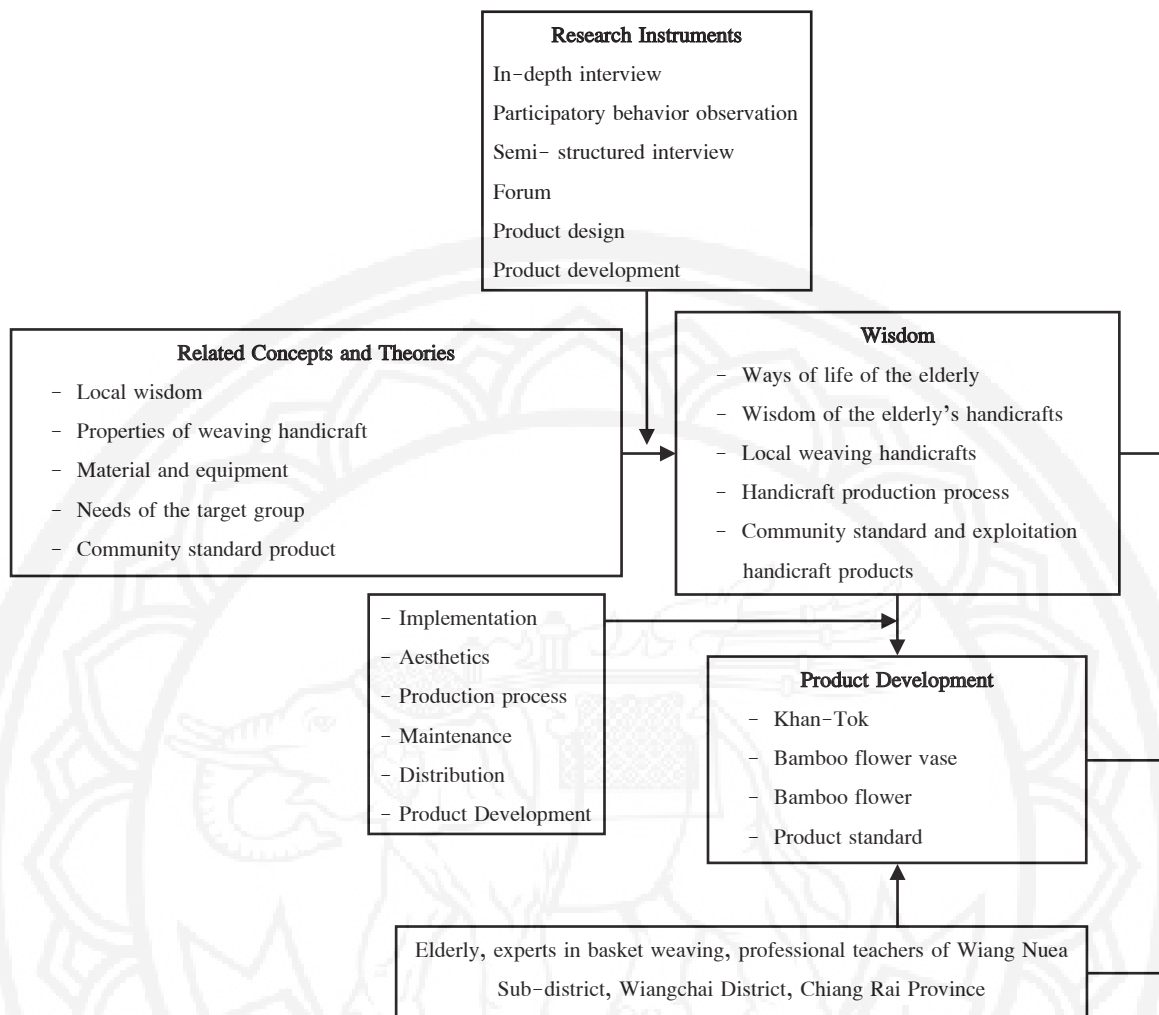


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

### Research Methodology

The qualitative data was done by interviewing the elderly who had wisdom in wicker ware handicrafts of Wiang Nuea Sub-District, Wiangchai District, Chiang Rai Province and they could answer the purposes of the wisdom of wicker ware handicrafts. The data collection focused on friendly and naturally talking buy using an in-depth interview and participatory behavior observation as well as the elderly, professional teachers, and community leaders. In addition, the data was analyzed to find out the product development guidelines to enter to the community standard product including the market need and to select the value added product.

#### Population and Samples

The population was the elderly, experts in basket weaving, professional teachers participating in product development and community leaders who were 60 years old up for 75 people of Wiang Nuea Sub-District, Wiangchai District, Chiang Rai Province.

The samples were selected by using purposing sampling method consisted of the elderly who were 60 years old up both male and female, experts in weaving, professional teachers participating in product development and community leaders for 20 people.

### **Research Instruments**

The researchers designed the research Instruments by focusing on an in-depth interview, participatory behavior observation process with the elderly who had knowledge and experts in weaving product. The instruments used to collect the data consisted of:

1. An in-depth interview form consisted of general data of samples, data involved with wisdom of local wicker ware, procedure and production process
2. A Participatory behavior observation form was used accompany with the observation of the working of the samples. The researchers participated with the interviewees and they were ready to teach the process for the researchers.
3. A semi- structured interview was focused on the ways of life and participation of making wicker ware.
4. Forum was used for data analysis with the target of the elderly, experts in hand-made wicker ware, professional teachers participating in product development and community leaders

### **Construction Procedure of Research Instruments**

**The researchers constructed the instruments as follows:**

1. The academic textbooks, document, journals, academic papers and related research were studied for designing an interview form to cover the purposes of this study.
2. The interview form was checked by three experts on the content validity.
3. The interview form was improved and examined by the experts again for the completeness.
4. The interview form was tried out with the elderly, experts in hand-made wicker ware, professional teachers and community leaders in Nang-Lae Sub-District, Muang Chiang Rai District, Chiang Rai Province for 10 people for testing the appropriateness of the language interpretation used in the instrument.

### **Data Collection Procedure**

**The data was collected as follows:**

1. The basic data was studied from related document about local handicraft and community product standard.
2. A Letter of Permission was sent to the chairman of the elderly and the elderly who had local handicraft wisdom of Wiang Nuea Sub-District, Wiangchai District, Chiang Rai Province to inform the objectives of the research, data collection method and Permission request for collecting data.
3. The forum was arranged for informing the objectives about the implementation on the study of wisdom and wicker ware product development of Wiang Nuea Sub-District, Wiangchai District, Chiang Rai Province.



**Figure 2** Forum for Informing the Research Objectives



4. The related people as presented in Figure No.3 were interviewed. The samples of 20 people were asked to answer the questionnaire in the implementation of “the Study of the Traditional Handicrafts Wisdom of the Elderly to Enter to the Standard of Wiang Nuea Sub-District, Wiangchai District, Chiang Rai Province.



**Figure 3** Discussions with the Related People

5. The data as presented in figure No.4 was collected, including the basic data such as name, address of 20 samples. The target group of Wiang Nuea Sub-District, Wiangchai District, Chiang Rai Province, were visited and asked about the wisdom of local handicraft and production techniques for three months (during 20 October 2018–31 December 2018).



**Figure 4** Implementation and Interview with the samples

6. The samples were interviewed individually at their residence, and the community forum was arranged.

7. A forum was established to confirm the accuracy and coverage of information regarding the history of inheritance, local wisdom and knowledge transferred in the local wisdom handicraft, general information of products, materials, tools, basketry production or production process and product development by inviting 20 samples to participate in confirming the accuracy of the information to get the right information.

8. A forum was organized to find ways to develop products, including the market demand and selected products with the target groups related to the research, namely, the elderly, knowledgeable people in handicrafts, basketry, wisdom teachers and community leaders

### **Data Analysis**

Using qualitative data analysis, content analysis from interviews, forums, and data obtained from research studies, books, journals, and academic articles.

## The Result of the Study

The research on “A Study of the Traditional Handicrafts Wisdom of the Elderly to Enter to the Standard of Wiang Nuea Sub-District, Wiangchai District, Chiang Rai Province” is a qualitative research to study the local wisdom of the elderly and develop the products according to the local wisdom handicrafts of the elderly in order to meet the standard of the community products in Wiang Chai District Chiang Rai province by collecting data from the elderly with wisdom in handicrafts, local wickerwork which the researchers presented the results as follows:

### 1. Local Wisdom of the Elderly in Wiang Chai District, Chiang Rai Province

1) Regarding to the context of the community’s way of life of the elderly, the research was conducted in an in-depth interview with the target group in Wiang Chai District, Chiang Rai province. The result showed that Wiang Nuea Sub-District was mostly Lanna lifestyle, and I-san was dependent on each other. The temple was the center of the mind of the villagers. There were leaders honored and respected by the villagers. Traditional occupations were farming, gardening and wickerwork. The members of the household were inherited from the ancestral basketry. To be a model of folk wisdom that generates income for children, descendants of arts and crafts from the past to the present. The important activities of the elderly that must be held every year were the Wai Kru Ceremony, where the elderly helped to invent Phan Wai Khru to be a student of Wiang Nuea Elderly College. Wiang Chai District, Chiang Rai province



**Figure 5** Pedestal Tray for Paying Respect the Teacher of the Elderly

**Reference:** Elderly College, 2018



**Figure 6** Finger Nails Dancing of the Elderly

**Reference:** Elderly College, 2018

2) Wisdom of folk handicrafts that teachers of wisdom have performed at the present, namely, Chalom basket, tissue box, Phan Baisi Tung, and hanging cloth lantern. From the above wisdom, the target groups were interviewed in the area, and it was found that a local philosopher was Mr. Wing Sankwan, 68, living at VillageNo.6, Wiang Nuea Sub-District, Wiangchai District, Chiang Rai Province. His main occupation is rice



farming. In his free time, he produces basket products. He has been doing it for 10 years and has learned how to produce wicker products from neighbors. Each product will be produced at leisure after farming. The bamboos used for producing products are brought from the paddy field. The products produced and distributed include 30-Baht baskets and 15-Baht Chalom with different sizes and prices. The small size is 15 baht. The medium size is 20 baht and the large one is 25 baht. For the production of bamboo wickerwork, he told that

*“.... The village is the rich village. The bamboo sticks are brought to make basketry from the rice fields in our community. We do not have to buy so we save our cost....”* (W. Sankwan, interviewed, December 25, 2018)



**Figure7** Mr. Somkid Moonwong and Mr. Wing Sankwan

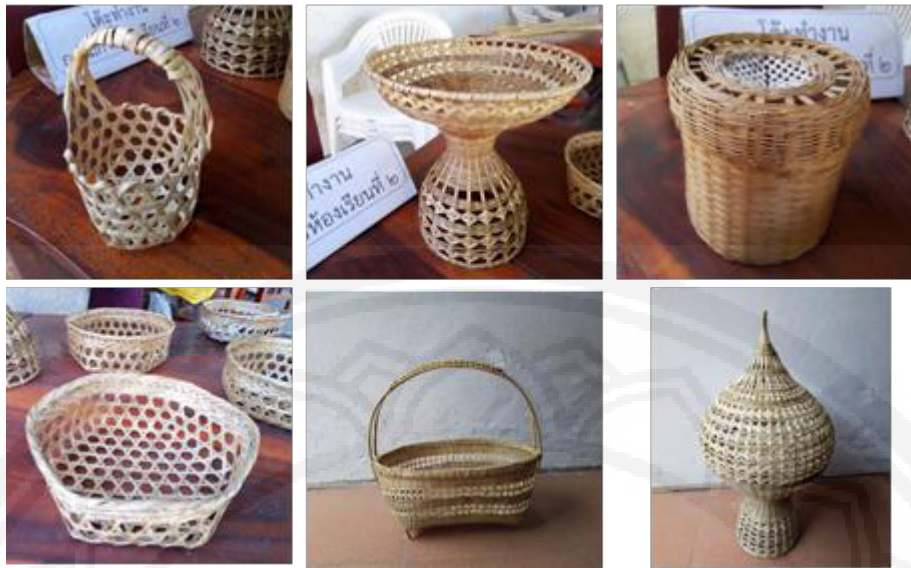


**Figure 8** Chalom Basket

Mrs. Young Panyo is 64 years old. She has lived at Village No.6, Wiang Nuea Sub-District, Wiangchai District, Chiang Rai Province. She loves making Chalom basket, tissue box, Phan Baisi Tung, and hanging cloth lantern. She has 30 years experiences and learns the method of making the products by joining the festivals of many communities. Each product is used in the auspicious ceremonies and exhibited in the Elderly College. Besides, the products are also distributed at Jinda Panich Shop. She told us that:

*“....In my daily life, I like handicrafts since I was young because the handicrafts were beautiful. I watched a glimpse of them in the exhibition and I imitated and could do them. As for the wickerware, I like to do pieces of bamboo by using a tool called Krenng Ried....”* (Y. Panyo, interviewed, December 25, 2018)

3) The traditional wicker ware products of Village No.6, Wiang Nuea Sub-District, Wiangchai District, Chiang Rai Province are produced by order from the tourists or the people who are interested in using for activities such as Chalom basket, tissue box, Phan Baisi Tung, and hanging cloth lantern.



**Figure 9** The Traditional Wicker Ware Products

#### 4) The process of traditional wicker ware products

From the data, it showed that most products were produced for using as decorations and souvenir. The feature of wicker ware was making the raw materials as stripes to be suitable for weaving. The feature of splitting was different or to split the bamboo was called “Tok” as shown on figure no.10. To split was considered to be the procedure of preparation for materials. It was the first step. The products made from bamboo stripes were as follows: Chalom, tray, basket, flower, lantern, and vase and so on. The researchers interviewed and brought the tools such as knife, Kreung Ried as shown on figure no. 11 (Bamboo, Mai Phai, Mai Bong, Mai Sang). Before producing the products, there was bamboo preparation as follows:

##### **The Preparation of Bamboo**

Choose a trunk that is straight, long, segmented, smooth and glossy. After cutting from the clump, it must cut the eyes that are attached to the bamboo joint. When it is used, it can be cut to the desired size, cut and then split them as stripes to dry in the sun.

##### **Weaving**

After preparing the raw materials for the basketry work, the weaver must know that which pattern should be used. For each type of wickerwork, such as weaving Chalom, it will be used Ta-Laew or Cha-Laew. It is used as basic pattern.

##### **Weaving Procedure**

##### **Method of Splitting**

1. Splitting “Puen” is done by dividing the bamboo into pieces. According to the desired size, use a knife to hammer out the inner parts (sawdust). Split the rest into thin lines and then sharpen and dry them.

2. Splitting “Ta khaeng” is prepared the basic step as “Puen” but to split is make the material smaller than splitting “Puen” and then sharpen and dry them.

##### **Weaving**

Weaving is very difficult step and requires delicacy. The most exquisite starts from the bottom of the





base with two types of bamboo stripes; “Tok Yuen” (Tok Tang) which has the middle of the neck, different from the general stripes and “Tok Non” (Tok Sarn) which are the same width and normal stripes. The reason that the “Tok Yuen” is unique because when it is weaved completely, we could get a basket with a small base and gradually bloom up at the mouth of basket.

### Fumigation

This is the final step of weaving in order to increase the strength and beauty of the wickerwork. This step will enhance the wickerwork more beautiful as well as preventing mold and insects.



Figure 10 Bamboo Stripes



Figure 11 Kreung Ried

## 2. The Product Development from the Elderly’s Wisdom of Wiang Nuea Sub-District, Wiangchai District, Chiang Rai Province

The researchers had conducted the research together with the elderly group, professional teachers and the community leaders to find the guideline of product development as shown in figure no.12 for analyzing, selecting the products and sharing opinions with the experts for product development suggestions, doing market demand survey, and analyzing exist product problems. Then, analyze, synthesize, and compare the design possibilities, product design to make a prototype product Experiment to sell in community stores. There are products as follows:

1) **Khan-Tok**; a kind of wooden utensil in northern Thailand and the surface of bamboo is grown in denim and the bottom edge on a line with bamboo strips. The tray’s legs were bent down firmly fastened with rattan. It is used as a container to place food with rice. It is commonly used in the north but a rattan Khan Tok is commonly used because a bamboo Khan Tok is hard to find in the northern area. When they are put and set up, the family members or guests who come home will sit around to eat. In addition, Khan Tok is not only used for placing dishes, it is also used as a container for other things, such as placing flowers, incense, candles instead of a bowl of flowers, and a basket or a fruit tray. Sometimes, “Kra Dong” or a threshing basket is used for placing dishes. In addition, it is called Khan Tok if there are not any food bowls on it. But, when the food bowls are placed on Khan Tok, it is called “Khan Khao” or a food set (a tray usually containing dishes or bowls of savors and condiments for eating with rice). Khan Tok product also helped support the elderly to use the raw materials in the community and found sources of cheap raw materials with good quality to support those who visited the community to increase incomes from the visitors.



**Figure 12** Analyzing for Finding Guidelines to Develop Product Together with Research Team and the Elderly Group



**Figure 13** Khan Tok for Placing Dishes

## 2) Flower Vase from Bamboo and Bamboo Stripes

The bamboo stripes were weaved into flowers in a long line. It is 15 baht each. It was used for decorating various containers, places, or in opening the ceremonies as shown on figure no. 14. In addition, the researchers recognized the importance of the waste to be recycled and increased the value of the remaining bamboo pieces by making the mold into a ball by mixing with latex glue to become a lump.



**Figure14** Bamboo Stripes



**Figure 15** Flower Vase Made from Bamboo

## Discussion

The results of this research could be discussed the important issues on the wisdom of the traditional wicker ware and the development of the traditional handicrafts of the elderly to enter to the standard of Wiang Nuea Sub-District, Wiangchai District, Chiang Rai Province as follows:



**1. The wisdom of the traditional wicker ware.** The key to sustainable lifestyle included the wisdom, existed potential and knowledge for practical work, all of the above were very significant in our life. To make a living, the elderly must start from the wisdom. It was used for applying in real situation as well as the potential to obtain products, which most of the elderly inherited from weaving from the past to the present. The tools used for production were simple such as knives, Kreung Ried, bamboo (Mai Bong, Mai Por Loon, Mai Sang). These were produced as the house-hold products, namely, Chalom, basket, tissue box, Phan Baisi Tung, and hanging cloth lantern. After using, they were distributed with cheap prices. The result was consistent with Kobayashi (2012) “a study of knowledge management of local wisdom in wicker products from water hyacinth Of Tom Dong Village, Ban Tom Sub-District, Mueang District, Phayao Province”, it was found that the problems of the handicraft wicker products group was lacking of the knowledge collection of the wisdom of water hyacinth basketry in every step of production and lack of exchanging knowledge between handicrafts, basketry groups and water hyacinth products, including product quality development. All the above problems, it caused the producers lack of income and motivation in their career which was a part of local wisdom. The study was also in line with Treeaekanukul (2018), “Potential of Community Capital for Being Tourism Special Economic Zone of Wiang Chiang Saen Municipality, Chiang Rai Province”, this study revealed that the community philosophers have brought wisdom to handicrafts such as banana leaves, wickerwork, lantern making, carving, and broom making and these products were created obviously and were sold and brought careers and income for people in the community.

**2. The development of the traditional handicrafts of the elderly to enter to the standard of Wiang Nuea Sub-District, Wiangchai District, Chiang Rai Province.** The researchers together with the elderly groups in the community together analyzed and looked for guidelines to develop products including the needs of the market, selecting products, adding value for products, strengthening the elderly group members to participate in the creation of modern works and taking the products into the community product standard. However, the elderly still lacked expertise in product development in a new modern pattern. Therefore, it required much more time to develop. As for product development, there must be experts with knowledge of the ability in analyzing, synthesizing, and suggestions on innovative products that matched the buyers. The developed products must be local and unique according to the wisdom of handicrafts development based on materials used in the production of wickerwork, namely, bamboo, must be a natural resource existed within the local community in order to reduce production costs and be self-reliant with development guidelines with consideration to 1) The local identity that the ancestors had accumulated and passed on from generation to generation without abandoning the traditional culture by adhering to the original values 2) The Usage must take into consideration the resources of the community and the potential of the elderly that must be continuously developed 3) The new products must have exquisite quality and add techniques to make the difference from the original product or the original shape.

The developed handicraft products included: 1) Bamboo Khan Tok products: it was sold at 699 baht per piece. It was weaved with bamboo. Its floor was made with bamboo as a double-layered paving pattern, making the bottom edge of the upper edge with a bamboo line. Its legs or feet were used bamboo to bend up and down. Then it was fastened with rattan 2) Vase of flowers: it was made from bamboo and stripes sold at a price of 750 baht per set and 3) 15 baht per piece of bamboo flowers, invented as a line for opening ceremonies on various occasions to be developed into products to support those interested in studying and observing. These products were able to support the community, especially the elderly, to have additional income and have



continuous income every month. The result was consistent with Kitiwong & Ratanasanguanvong (2018) “Action Research for Empowering the Community-Based Producer Working Group of Basket Weaving in Ban San Chok Pok, Phayao Province through the Concept of Participatory Rural Appraisal”. The study revealed that the product development resulted in a variety of basketry styles, higher value and more modern by strengthening the Occupation Group of Basket Weaving in Ban San Chok Pok. The study focused on giving the group members have freedom to create a new style of work for each piece of wickerwork in terms of identity, and the members also designed patterns using colorful bamboo stripes and created the development of wisdom in the development of the machine.

### **Summary and Recommendations**

The research results could be summarized as follows:

#### **1. Local wisdom of wickerwork and local textile**

The researcher conducted an in-depth interview with the target group in Wiang Chai District, Chiang Rai province. It showed that Wiang Nuea Sub-District was mostly Lanna lifestyle and I-san was dependent on each other. The temple was the center of the mind of the villagers. There were leaders honored and respected by the villagers. Traditional occupations were farming, gardening and wickerwork. The members of the household were inherited from the ancestral basketry. There were many kinds of products as the house-hold products, namely, Chalom, basket, tissue box, Phan Baisi Tung, and hanging cloth lantern. After using, they were distributed with cheap prices.

2. The development of the traditional handicrafts of the elderly to enter to the standard of Wiang Nuea Sub-District, Wiangchai District, Chiang Rai Province The researchers together with the elderly groups in the community together analyzed and looked for guidelines to develop products including the needs of the market, selecting products, and adding value for products such as

1) Bamboo Khan Tok product: It was weaved with bamboo. Its floor was made with bamboo as a double-layered paving pattern, making the bottom edge of the upper edge with a bamboo line. Its legs or feet were used bamboo to bend up and down. Then it was fastened with rattan.

2) Vase of flower: it was made from bamboo and stripes sold at a price of 750 baht per set

3) Bamboo flower: it was invented as a line shape for opening ceremonies on various occasions to be developed into products to support those interested in studying and observing. These products were able to support the community, especially the elderly, to have additional income and have continuous income every month.

#### **Suggestions**

1. The local wisdom obtained from in-depth interviews from the elderly and all wisdom teachers should be gathered as textbook about lifestyle, production process of handicraft products, wickerwork and can be published.

2. Product design and development should have other materials to apply appropriately with the products in order to be modern, exotic, and match with the customers ‘need and usage.

3. The elderly groups of Wiang Nuea Sub-District, Wiangchai District, Chiang Rai Province work together every day and do activities continuously as well as product development of wickerwork, having income and using free time as advantage.



### Expected Benefits from Research

1. To gain knowledge and wisdom on handicrafts, traditional wickerwork of the elderly in Wiang Nuea Sub-District, Wiang Chai District, Chiang Rai Province, distributed to communities, organizations and schools
2. To develop the work of handicrafts, wickerwork to generate income for the elderly in Wiang Nuea Sub-District, Wiang Chai District, Chiang Rai Province
3. To promote handicraft products, traditional wickerwork for the elderly to meet the standard of community products

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