

# The Citizen Participation in Preventing Illegal Drugs Program in Bangkok, Thailand

Ratthapong Bunyanuwat

**Abstract**—The purposes of this research were to study the citizen participation in preventing illegal drugs in one of a poor and small community of Bangkok, Thailand and to compare the level of participation and concern of illegal drugs problem by using demographic variables. This paper drew upon data collected from a local citizens survey conducted in Bangkok, Thailand during summer of 2012. A total of 200 respondents were elicited as data input for, and one way ANOVA test. The findings revealed that the overall citizen participation was in the level of medium. The mean score showed that benefit from the program was ranked as the highest and the decision to participate was ranked as second while the follow-up of the program was ranked as the lowest.

In terms of the difference in demographic such as gender, age, level of education, income, and year of residency, the hypothesis testing's result disclosed that there were no difference in their level of participation. However, difference in occupation showed a difference in their level of participation and concern which was significant at the 0.05 confidence level.

**Keywords**—Citizen Participation, Illegal drug, Preventing drug problem, Resolving drug problem

## I. INTRODUCTION

NOWADAYS illegal drugs are one of the most important problems facing Thai society. Illegal drugs are unwanted in every society, but it inevitably exists in every city and province of Thailand. No matter how hard the government tries to suppress, prevent or eliminate illegal drugs, one still hears reports of illegal drugs every day and everywhere, especially in big cities. Moreover, some of the illegal drug activities have changed their way of doing business and have taken advantage of convenient communication and transportation. They organize and build up their networks and spread their activities across the borders of Thailand. Thus, the impact of their activities is greater than before and usually involves more than one country.

The most serious drugs problem in Thailand is illegal drugs trafficking. Thailand is one of a few countries that directly encounter the full scale of criminal activities in the illegal drug trade, from producing, trading, smuggling and the wide use. Illegal drugs and narcotics popularly used in Thailand are methamphetamine or "speed". The reasons are that speed pills are easier to produce and more difficult to catch.

With a simple tool easily found in local markets and a vehicle like a minivan or truck, it can be modified to be a mobile factory of illegal drugs. To make the situation much worse, Thai people tend to have a wrong attitude that speed pills are for fun and not as dangerous as heroin [1]. All of these factors allow speed pills to penetrate schools and universities and every section of society. For instance, students use speed pills, believing that they can stay up all night long preparing for their important examinations and believing that they will never become addicted to them. Truck drivers are the main target for many illegal drugs, For example, believing that they can use speed pills in order to be able to work all day long without exhaustion. Thus, in Bangkok alone, there is news of methamphetamine traffickers having been arrested everyday with more than one hundred thousand pills seized at a time.

The best way to prevent illegal drugs especially, methamphetamine is to educate people and ask them to join or to participate the preventing program. In other words, it is a way to reduce the demand of the illegal drugs in Bangkok [2].

Since it is vital to understand the citizen participation to prevent illegal drugs in the modern Bangkok, the researcher has a quest of understanding an ongoing illegal drugs situation and aimed to study what could be the best way to create the preventing programs.

## II. METHODOLOGY

The population of this study was all citizens who lived in Pranakorn Community, Bangkok, Thailand. The population was about 22,528 people. The random sample for this study consisted of 200 respondents who were interested in illegal drugs problems during March to June 2012. Many small and poor schools and communities were chosen as a main area of study because it is a gate way to drugs problems and therefore more demographic variety would be obtained. The sample size of 200 respondents was determined by Taro Yamane table with a 0.05 level of significance [3]. The data collation was done via a Thai questionnaire to elicit respondents' experience and to obtain their perspective. The validity of each question in the questionnaire was tested using Item-Objective Congruency or IOC index. In addition, 30 respondents were used as a pilot study in order to find ways to improve each question and to get an acceptable Cronbach Alpha Coefficient of more than 0.7 and any question with Cronbach Alpha Coefficient less than 0.7 would be redesigned and retested.

Asst. Professor Ratthapong Bunyanuwat is with Faculty of Humanity and Social Science, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, Bangkok, 10300 Thailand (Corresponding author phone: 66892003478, fax 6621601285; e-mail: ratthapong2498@hotmail.com).

### The Objectives of This Research

1. To study the awareness of citizen participation of the illegal drugs preventing programs in schools and small communities around Bangkok, Thailand.
2. To compare the level of participation of the people based on the demographic information.

### Research Questions

Based on literature survey the following questions have been derived:

1. Do people with different demographic background have different rate of participation in terms of illegal drugs prevent program?
2. Do female with different demographic background have different concerns in terms of illegal drugs prevent program?

### Research framework

Research framework was drawn from many researches and from many high impact papers which offer very interesting theories of female success in the modern world [4]. In addition, a questionnaire was designed by using ideas from Serirut (1999) [5].

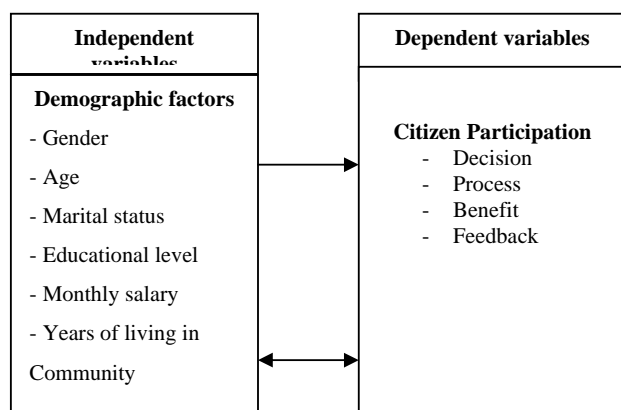


Fig. 1 Conceptual Framework

### III. FINDINGS

The main goals of the finding section in this research paper were to report sample characteristics and the main results of the data analysis used to answer the two research questions. The target group was 200 citizens who show their interest via the drug free programs during March to June 2012.

TABLE I  
SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

	Frequency	Percent	N
<i>Gender</i>			200
Male	95	47.5	
Female	105	52.5	
<i>Age</i>			200
13-25 years old	25	12.5	
26-60 years old	130	65.0	
More than 60 years old	51	25.5	
<i>Income(Baht)</i>			200
Less than 10,000	61	30.5	
10,001 – 20,000	35	17.5	
20,001 – 50,000	32	16	
More than 50,000	61	30.5	
<i>Education</i>			200
Less than High school/GED	93	46.5	
High school	61	30.5	
University	46	23.0	
<i>Have job or No job</i>			200
No jobs	27	13.7	
Job	173	86.3	
<i>Stay in community</i>			200
Within 10 years	32	18.5	
More than 10 years	141	81.5	

Table I exhibited the frequency and percentage of the target group sample characteristics. A demographic profile indicated that more female than male were sampled with the ratio of 48:52. The age group of 26-30 years old made up 65 percent of the sample population and the age group of 13-25 years old made up 12.5 percent. Whereas, the age group of 61 or more, which was senior group, was only 25.5 percent. The sample population, 30.5 percent, had an income in the bracket of more than 50,000 as well as less than 10,000 and about 17.5 percent of them had an income in the bracket of between 10,001 - 20,000 baht. In terms of education, up to 46.5 percent had less than high school degree and 30.5 percent had high school or General Education Development (GED), only 23 percent had an undergraduate degree. For the question of having job or no job, up to 86.3 percent reported to have job while 13.7 percent had no jobs. Finally, for the question of having the period of living in the community, up to 81.5 percent reported to have been living in the community more than 10 years while 13.7 percent have been living in the community within 10 years.

From Table III, the mean score can be used to rank the highest to the lowest concern as follows: 1) Benefit of program, 2) Process of work, 3) Decision Making, and 4) Evaluation. Also, the mean score of all categories is 3.02 with standard deviation of .665 which indicated that the overall level of concern for illegal drugs problem is not very high.

TABLE III  
LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION

	Mean	S.D.	Rank
<i>Level of participation</i>			
1. Decision making	3.03	.713	3
2. Process of work	3.06	.789	2
3. Benefit of program	3.34	.630	1
4. Evaluation	3.02	.789	4
All categories	3.11	.665	

From table IV, to answer hypothesis, one way ANOVA test was performed to test the significance of overall level of concern by occupation. Therefore, this indicates that there are occupation group differences in terms of level of concern. Hence, the hypothesis is answered; there is occupation group difference. Respondent with job or no job has difference in terms of their level of concern.

#### One-way ANOVA: F-test hypothesis

TABLE VI  
ANOVA TEST FOR LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION BY OCCUPATION

Level of concern		SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Overall level of concern	Between groups	7.482	5	1.496	3.774	.003*
	Within group	74.543	188	.397		
	Total	82.025	193			

\* P value is less than 0.05

#### IV. DISCUSSION

The findings of this research revealed a fact that the level of concerns from the respondents was not very high. This indicates that people in the community are very susceptible to the risks of lack of knowledge of the problem of illegal drugs in Thailand. In terms of ranking, the sample showed from the highest mean to the lowest mean as follows 1) Benefit of program, 2) Process of work, 3) Decision Making, and 4) Evaluation. In addition, the mean score of all categories is 3.02 with standard deviation of .665 which indicated that the overall level of concern for illegal drugs problem from the community is not very high.

After utilizing one way ANOVA test, the findings revealed that only occupation showed a level of significant differences with the level of concern. When viewing at the difference between male and female concerns, the majority of the categories showed no association of gender effect and other demographic factors.

#### V. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE STUDIES

The limitation of this paper came from sampling only a small group of people in the communities which may not represent opinions of the mainstream people of Bangkok, Thailand. Therefore, the findings may not be generalized to a big picture of the illegal drugs problems and concern. With

the reason, future research should use random sampling with all larger sample groups. In addition, future studies should cover the reasons that people are concerned or are not concerned with illegal drugs preventing program.

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