

Organic Farming: Effectiveness of Policy Implementation in the North of Thailand

Chedsada Mingchai and Pradtana Yossuck

Abstract— This research were to investigate: 1) the context and contents of the policy on organic farming in Thailand and 2) administration factors effecting the effectiveness of the organic farming policy implementation in the North of Thailand. Content analysis was conducted to synthesize the context and contents. The path analysis of the causal model for explaining the direction and the correlation between administration factors effecting the effectiveness was conducted. The results of the study, it was found that the forms of organic farming in Thailand consisted of dual systems: 1) Integrated organic farming production which employed local standard focusing on self-sufficiency and 2) mono crop organic farming production based on international standard focusing on the production for a business group. According to the testing of the five causal equations, it was found that there was a statistically significant ($p < .01$) which could be explained (R^2) differently with the percentage of 61.20, 58.10, 47.30, 26.10, and 24.70, respectively. For the factors having effectiveness on the policy implementation were the “Policy Context” and “Coordination and Collaboration” directly effected the effectiveness in the policy implementation.

Keywords— organic farming policy, organic farming, policy implementation

1. INTRODUCTION

The organic farming policy formulation in Thailand has different factors and conditions based on the context and content of the policy such as the National Social and Economic Development Plan, government policy of each regime, conditions and environment of both inside and outside the country, as well as managerial administration factor. Therefore, it is essential that the process concerning with the formulation of policy on organic farming be investigated. Also, it should have the investigation of managerial administration factor which effects the effectiveness of the implementation of the policy on organic farming. This should be done so that the government sector and concerned personnel will have framework and direction for the policy option of an appropriate alternative for Thailand.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study used the combination of research methodology both qualitative and quantitative researches

such as the research of related documents from the National Economic and Social Development, issues 7-9 (1992-2006); the government proclamation, series 50-55(1992-2006); as well as related research reports and academic articles during the years 1992-2006. Besides, interview was also conducted to policy makers who determined the organic farming policy and executive administration in the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives who involved in the policy implementation. Field trips for data collection with 212 agricultural extension officers in 17 northern provinces was also conducted.

Content analysis was conducted in order to synthesize the context and contents of the policy. The path analysis of the causal model for explaining the direction and the correlation between administration factors effecting the effectiveness in the policy implementation was conducted.

3. RESULTS

3.1 Organic Farming Policy Context and Content

For the results of the study, it was found that organic farming was one of the sustainable agricultural production which was the positive managerial of farming. This held the importance the four dimensions: health, ecology, fairness, and care.

The important initial point of the organic farming policy formation in Thailand was the trend of sustainable development from the world summit at Rio De Janero, Brazil in 1992. This was particularly on the Agenda 21. This was developed into the concept on the

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formulation of the policy on the sustainable agriculture and organic farming.

The policy on organic farming of Thailand during the years 1992-2006 was the public policy managed under the policy determination of the government committee by the political parties and the policy implementation plan by government. In fact, the implementation policy was in the form of uni-centric approach; that was, the center was placed at the political system and the government. This truly was the bureaucracy system which was in the form of top-down approach.

In 2004, there was an important phenomena on the policy concerning with organic farming in which it was declared as *“The National Agenda”* during the time that the government was headed by Prime Minister Dr.Thaksin Shinawatra . It was declared through the speech in the opening ceremony of the organic farming assembly. After that, the policy was raised in the cabinet meeting for the approval of the policy implementation and budget allocation.

Such way of the policy formulation caused the policy implementation depended on the interpretation of personnel who work on the policy modification for a particular form of activity. This reflected guidelines for the perception of a uni-centric policy approach. Its important characteristic was *“The politicians in the central authorities can make a decision about the target and criterion. This begins with the problems raised in the national issue recognized by organizations. The said policy determination might make the policy do not conform to the current context of the country which is complicated, resulting in unsuccessful policy implementation.”*

During that time, there were campaigns about this across the country. The government sector had a policy to make Thailand be the *“Kitchen of the world”* in order to increase the potential of the competition foreign markets under the strong point in food production. Besides, the trend on safe food consumption was another factor supporting the organic farming in various forms.

Results of the study revealed that Thailand has organic farming land area of 21,701 hectares or 0.07 percent organic farming land area or 0.01 percent of agricultural land area in 2008 and had 2 forms of organic farming which was different from each other as follows: (Fig.1)

Form 1 Integrated Organic Farming Production. Biodiversity of plants are produced in the same area. This holds the importance on expenditure reduction in daily life activities of farmers and emphasizes on self-sufficiency. Also, food security, health and environment should be taken into consideration. This form of farming has networks and interaction with consumers and the productions are sold through marketing system in the community together with the local standard system of quality controlling. There is the utilization of agricultural science in the yield production. The Department of Agricultural Extension [3] considers this form of farming as the target of the policy on organic agricultural extension in Thailand.

Form 2 Mono Crop Organic Farming Production. This focuses on the potential in competition, niche market, and production system having efficiency control on *“From Farm to Table”*. The yields can be transparency in terms of safety. This form of farming employs technology for the environmental control. There is the establishment of brand and product development to meet the international standard. The producers are in the form of a company or an individual contract farming. This form of farming offers few kinds of products but in a great amount of the products. This due to the principle of an increase of an income based on the belief of capitalism.

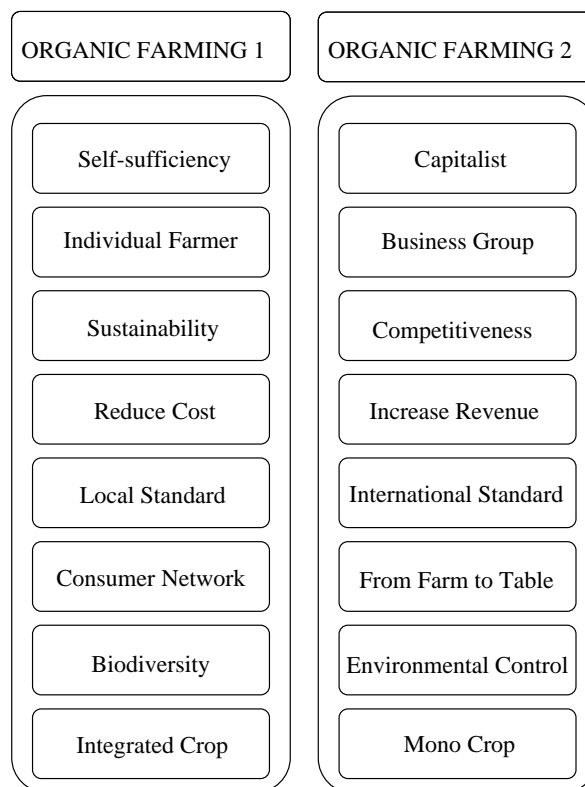


Fig. 1. Organic Farming Form in Thailand

3.2 Effectiveness of the Organic Farming Policy

1) Learning process on organic farming It was found that there was a moderate level of positive change in terms of knowledge and skills in a complete and safe agricultural production. There are a demonstration area and a learning center for knowledge and experience exchange among farmers as well as database construction for the benefits on planning and decision-making. The importance and feedback of consumers about organic farming product are also realized.

2) Collaboration network on organic farming Results of the study revealed that the positive change was in a moderate level for farmers who wanted to obtain suggestions and change the system of agricultural production. Besides, they wanted the correct behavior and the application of local wisdom on farming as well as learning exchange and collaboration on production of their networks.

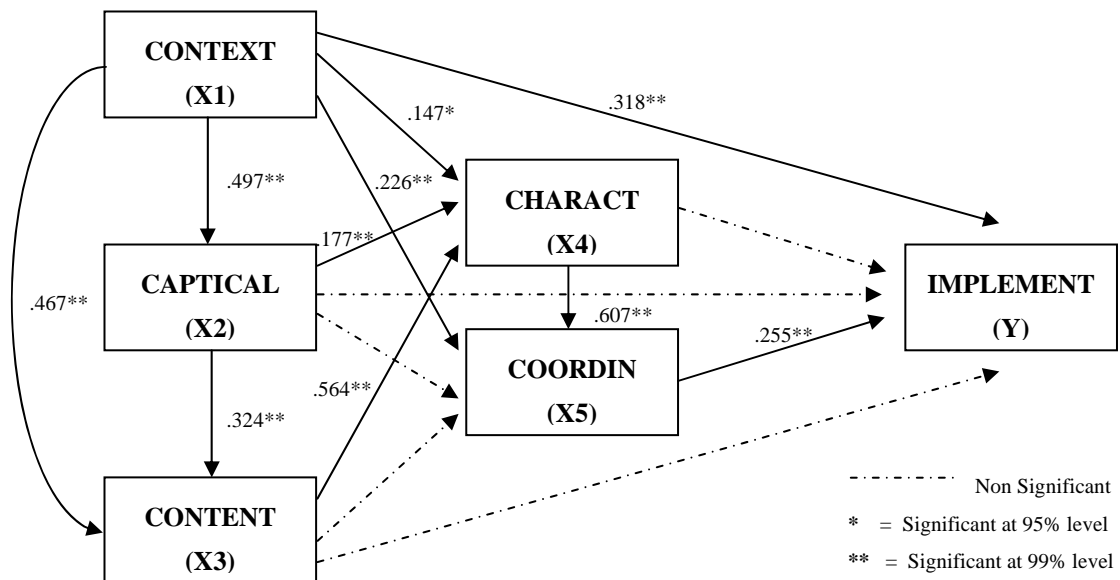


Fig. 2. A Path Model of Factors Affecting Effectiveness of Organic Farming Policy Implementation

3.3 Factors Affecting Effectiveness of Organic Farming Policy Implementation

For the second objective of this research based on an analysis of the structural equation model for the explanation of the size and direction of the relation between the administration factor effecting the effectiveness in the policy implementation, it was found that all variables had a positive correlate which conformed to the research hypothesis.

For the factors on relation cause having effectiveness on the policy implementation which could be the indicator of success, Policy Context (X1), Coordination and Collaboration (X5) directly effected the effectiveness in the Policy Implementation (Y). The Policy Context (X1), Policy Captial (X2), and Policy Contents (X3) were factors having correlate cause and the direct effect toward the Organization Characteristics (X4). This led to the Coordination and Collaboration (X5) and, eventually to occurrence of the effectiveness in the Policy Implementation (Y). (Fig.2)

According to the testing of the five causal equations (Table 1), it was found that there was a statistically significant ($p < .01$) which could be explained (R^2) differently with the percentage of 61.20, 58.10, 47.30, 26.10, and 24.70, respectively.

Based on an analysis of the relationship between the cause and results (Table 2), it was found that the Policy Context the cause influence towards the effectiveness of the Policy Implementation in a highest level (0.466). This was followed by factors on the Coordination and Collaboration (0.255), Organization Characteristics (0.154), Policy Content (0.087), and Policy Capital (0.055), respectively.

Table 1. Testing of the Five Causal Equations

Dependent	Independent	Path Coefficient	R ²	F
CAPITAL	CONTEXT	0.497**	0.247	68.928**
CONTENT	CONTEXT	0.467**	0.473	93.908**
	CAPITAL	0.324**		
CHARACT	CONTEXT	0.147*	0.612	109.409**
	CAPITAL	0.177**		
	CONTENT	0.564**		
COORDIN	CONTEXT	0.226**	0.581	145.136**
	CHARACT	0.607**		
IMPLEMENT	CONTEXT	0.318**	0.261	36.929**
	COORDIN	0.255**		

Table 2. Direct, Indirect and Total Causal Effects of Independent Variable

Independent Variables	Source of Causation: IMPLEMENT (Y)		
	Direct	Indirect	Total
CONTEXT	0.318	0.148	0.466
CAPITAL	0	0.055	0.055
CONTENT	0	0.087	0.087
CHARACT	0	0.154	0.154
COORDIN	0.255	0	0.255

4. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the policy of organic farming in Thailand during the years 1992-2006 was the policy determined by the government. This was carried out through the bureaucracy system. The trend on safe food was an important condition in the determination of the policy. Indeed, the factors on Policy Context, Coordination and Collaboration were the ones having the direct cause-result relationship towards the implementation of the policy on organic farming leading to the success of the policy on organic farming. Thus, the application of the organic farming policy in other regions of Thailand should emphasize on the environment of the policy as the priority. This can make people in the society accept and understand the policy and then they will support the policy rather than implementing the policy only by the organization who has determined the policy. Besides, coordination and collaboration are another factors of the success in the policy implementation. This means that participation process of agencies or organizations who implement the project in the form of policy driving party must integrate working performance in all dimensions of the policy.

While guidelines and direction on the development of the organic farming policy, it needs the creation of the new concept of the alternative development in public policy. This must be done through the systematic point of view or policy network connecting with production and other systems. Then integrates it with local wisdom and global knowledge. Everyone must accept the difference in one's opinion towards agricultural development. Therefore, the next step of the development of the organic farming policy needs to adjust itself to be pluricentric approach and making decision about the target and measure on networking. However, the government sector is one of concerned parties who have roles in the policy. Besides, those who have the role in networking can initiate and support the policy implementation on agricultural farming. The government sector should not determine the policy or making decisions about its alone.

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