

## การบริหารรัฐกิจของไทย

## Public Administration of Thailand

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## บทคัดย่อ

การวิจัยเรื่อง “การบริหารรัฐกิจของไทย” มีความสำคัญและจำเป็นอย่างมากในการบริหารการพัฒนาแห่งชาติ ทั้งของประเทศที่พัฒนาแล้วและที่กำลังพัฒนาในกระแสโลกาภิวัตน์ การวิจัยนี้น่าจะยังประโยชน์ต่อทุกประเทศที่ต้องการสมรรถนะระดับสูงทางการบริหารรัฐกิจในมิติต่างๆ ที่เกี่ยวข้อง ทั้งนี้ก็เพื่อที่จะบรรลุเป้าหมายและวัตถุประสงค์ที่พึงประสงค์

ราชอาณาจักรไทยได้เปลี่ยนแปลงมาในหลายมิติ ด้วยภูมิปัญญาที่หลากหลาย สำหรับการอยู่รอดและเติบโตในสภาพแวดล้อมที่มีการเปลี่ยนแปลงอย่างรวดเร็ว ปรัชญาการเกี่ยวกับการบริหารรัฐกิจของไทยได้กระตุ้นให้ผู้วิจัยเกิดแรงบันดาลใจในการค้นหาข้อมูลสารสนเทศที่มีคุณค่าเกี่ยวกับการพัฒนาการบริหารรัฐกิจของไทย โดยใช้การวิจัยเอกสารที่เน้นการศึกษาเชิงประวัติศาสตร์

การวิจัยพบว่า ทั้งห้าราชอาณาจักรไทยได้ช่วยอธิบายการบริหารรัฐกิจและระบบราชการ โดยคำนึงถึงวิธีการและระบบอุปถัมภ์ สมบูรณาญาสิทธิราชย์ และประชาธิปไตย ภายหลัง จึงมีประเด็นวิกฤตบางประการที่ควรได้รับการจัดการเชิงกลยุทธ์ การบูรณาการภูมิปัญญาที่พัฒนาขึ้นมาจากองค์ความรู้หลากหลายอาจจะเป็นกลไกที่เหมาะสมต่อการเสริมสร้างความยั่งยืนในการพัฒนาการบริหารรัฐกิจของไทยในระยะยาว อย่างไรก็ตาม การวิจัยน่าจะกระตุ้นเตือนให้ประเทศไทยและประเทศอื่นใดตระหนัก เข้าใจ และบูรณาการแนวคิด กลยุทธ์ และนวัตกรรมของการพัฒนาการบริหารรัฐกิจ

**คำสำคัญ:** การบริหารรัฐกิจ, ประเทศไทย

## Abstract

The research of “Public Administration of Thailand” has been very important and essential in national development administration of both developed and developing countries in globalization. The research should be advantageous to every country which requires high public administration competencies in related dimensions in order to attain national desirable goals and objectives.

Kingdom of Thailand has changed in many dimensions with various wisdoms for sustainable survival and growth in rapid changing environments. The phenomena of “Public Administration of Thailand” inspired me to find out all related valuable information about public administration development of Thailand by utilizing documentary research with historical study.

The research found out the five stages of the Kingdom of Thailand has shed light on public administration and administrative bureaucracy regarding various methods and systems in paternalism, absolute monarchy, and democracy. After all, there have been some critical issues which should be strategically tackled. Wisdom integration developed from various bodies of knowledge may be an optimal mechanism to enhance sustainability in public administration development of Thailand in the long run. The research should encourage Thailand and other countries to realize, understand, and integrate concepts, strategies, and innovations of public administration development.

**Keywords:** Public Administration, Thailand

## Introduction

The history-based research on Public Administration of Thailand is very important and essential in understanding the national development of the country. The kingdom of Thailand has changed in many dimensions with various wisdoms for sustainable survival and growth in rapid changing environments. The historical phenomena of Thailand’s public administration inspired me to find out all related valuable information about its public administration development by documentary research. In the article, I would mention five eras: (1) Lanna, (2) Sukhothai, (3) Ayutthaya, (4) Thonburi, and (5) Rattanakosin

Public Administration of Thailand has been developed for over the past 700 years. The research has found out some interesting and amazing highlights of public administration development in each

“Lanna”, “Sukhothai”, “Ayutthaya”, “Thonburi”, and “Rattanakosin” kingdom of Thailand, the author will highlight and describe the five kingdoms.

### Objectives of the Research

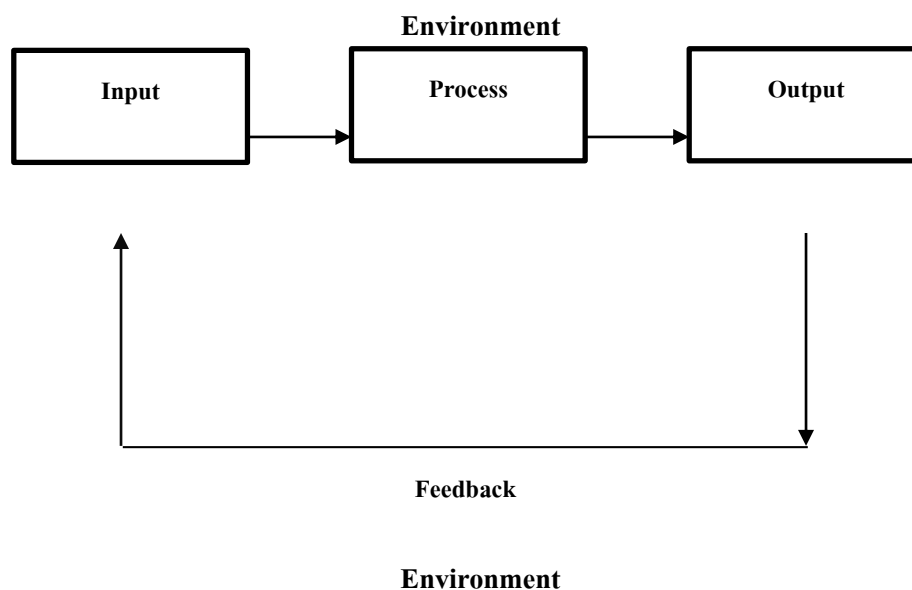
Objectives of the research were (1) to study public administration of the Kingdom of Thailand which has changed and/or developed in many dimensions with various wisdoms for sustainable survival and growth in rapid changing environments, (2) to find out some related valuable strategies, policies, and plans about public administration development of the Kingdom of Thailand, and (3) to propose some possible recommendations for public administration development of the Kingdom of Thailand.

### Analytical Framework/ Hypothesis

Systems theory/ model has been utilized in the research and used to be analytical framework of the research.

Hypothesis of the research:

Survival and growth of the Kingdom of Thailand have depended on various public administration wisdoms of Lanna, Sukhothai, Ayutthaya, Thonburi, and Rattanakosin kingdoms. Wisdom integration developed from various bodies of knowledge may be an optimal mechanism to enhance sustainability in public administration development of Thailand in the long run.



**Figure 1:** Research Analytical Framework

**Source:** Adapted from Shafritz and Russell (2000, p. 204)

An organization has been viewed as an open system. Studying open system enables for organizational understanding. The open system organization composed of core components including Input-Process (Throughput)-Output mechanisms. The system brings energy, information, money, human resource, raw material, etc., as inputs into the organization from various environments, then managerial processes will transform the inputs to organizational outputs. The mechanism works well if an open organizational system can survive effectively.

In case of the research, the researcher has utilized systems model and “Input-Process (Throughput)-Output” to propose that “efficient decision making and/or public policy, as output, of every Kingdom of Thailand depends on its competency of managerial processes in transforming any input, such as demand and/or support, in order to survive in its various environments.

## Research Methods

In order to respond to the research objectives, the documentary research including qualitative and inductive approaches of analysis has been utilized.

In the article, I would mention five eras: (1) Lanna, (2) Sukhothai, (3) Ayutthaya, (4) Thonburi, and (5) Rattanakosin. The first phase the researcher will present some highlights of each kingdom, then the second phase, will use the inductive approach to propose some possible recommendations to public administration development of Thailand.

## Research Results

### 1. Public Administration Development of “Lanna” Kingdom (Kingdom of Million Rice Fields)

“Lanna” kingdom had vast areas, especially farmlands and rice fields, in the Northern Thailand. Chiang Rai and Chiang Mai were the capitals of the kingdom established by King Mengrai the Great.

During the reign of King Mengrai, highlights of administration development of the kingdom were as follows:

1. King Mengrai was highly competent. The king tried to solidify the kingdom.
2. Two strategic alliances were Phraya Ngam Muang and Pho Khun Ram khumhaeng.
3. The king applied and utilized Buddhism in government. The Law of Mengrai was formulated and implemented in the king’s reign.

### 2. Public Administration Development of “Sukhothai” Kingdom

Government and administration were in the form of “Paternalism” was accepted by the people. The concept of paternalism was legitimate in both government and utilization of power in the kingdom.

There were prominent innovations in the kingdom, such as Thai language, writing of the king’s activities and events, and dominant cultures in the kingdom.

People of the kingdom were able to appeal and complain their sufferings. The king facilitated and depended on Buddhist monks in socialization to keep governmental security. In addition, the king supported public opinion, political discussion, participation, and consultation without dictatorship.

Centralization and decentralization of power were used in the kingdom. The ancient center of government usually was in the capital or the king’s city. Decentralization of power was found in types of departmentalization of cities--both inner and outer cities, which played their roles in surrounding the capital of the kingdom. (Likhit Dhiravegin, 2004, pp.18 – 19)

### 3. Public Administration Development of “Ayutthaya” Kingdom

The Government and administration of “Ayutthaya” kingdom of Thailand were of absolute monarchy. The king had total or absolute power to rule and administer the kingdom, by “Divine Rights”, “not by Paternalism”.

Two patterns of government were used in the kingdom: central and geographical areas. The central government was used in the capital or the king’s palace of the kingdom, which comprised of four departments: city, palace, treasury, and farm departments. The geographical government was used in the outer rings which were far away from the capital or palace city.

City (or “Wieng”) was governed by the head of the city department, responsible to keep city security and safety.

Palace Department (or “Wang”) was governed by the head of the palace department, responsible to all activities and rituals in the palace, and justice management in the kingdom.

Treasury Department (or “Klang”) was governed by the head of treasury department, responsible for monitoring taxation, keeping valuable things, and overseeing foreign affairs of the kingdom.

Farm Department (or “Na”) was governed by the head of farm department, responsible for farming, food logistics, land management of the kingdom.

The geographical government comprised three patterns; inner city (or “Muang Chan Nai”), bigger city (or “Muang Phraya Maha Nakorn”), and peripheral or colonial city (or “Muang Pra Tesaraj”)

Primary principles of the kingdom were centralization of power, separation of power, and balance of power.

Relationship between the central and the geographical government was in the form of centralization of power with some limitations and unexpectedness, such as poverty, capability of central government officers, and deficiency of city government officers.

We might conclude that declination of Ayutthaya kingdom probably was caused by power expansion of the central government or centralization of power. (H.R.H. Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn, 2006)

#### **4. Public Administration development of “Thonburi” Kingdom**

King Taksin the Great established “Thonburi” as the capital of the kingdom to replace “Ayutthaya”. King Taksin was a great warrior who put all efforts to solidify the Thai kingdom. The kingdom government was of absolute monarchy. Turn-around and geographical architecture strategies were applied in order to invigorate Thai kingdom. The politics and administration of Thonburi were like Ayutthaya.

#### **5. Public Administration development of “Rattanakosin” Kingdom**

##### **5.1 Public Administration Development of the Early Period of Rattanakosin Kingdom**

The administrative system of the early Rattanakosin Kingdom (1782-1852) was divided into central and geographical subsystems. Six departments of administrative system of the kingdom comprised of Military, Interior, City, Palace, Treasury, Farm departments.

The king governed the capital and inner areas. The outer areas were governed by the empowered ministers.

The northern and north-east areas were controlled by “Samuhanayok”, who was responsible for military, civil, economic, defense, and justice departments. The southern area was under “Samuhaphrakalahome”, who was responsible for every mission. The eastern and seashore areas were monitored by the foreign department (Krom Tha).

The peripheral or colonial countries were required to send required valuable gifts to the king, such as golden and silver trees. If the gifts were not delivered within three years, they would be identified as being disloyal to the king. The king took actions like appointing, demoting, and/or impeaching the peripheral or colonial governors.

The early “Rattanakosin” kingdom was obviously traditional or semi-ancient. The government took the public administration pattern after China and India, which handled political, economic, and social issues at some extents or degrees, differently from the western countries which developed more modern organizational structures for their military, science and technology.

### 5.2 Public Administration Development of “Rattanakosin” Kingdom in the Regime of King Chulalongkorn, King Rama V

The causes of administrative development or reform of the kingdom were internal and external issues.

As mentioned, before the reform of administration, Thai kingdom had semi-ancient organizational structure.

The reform focused on “modernization”, “solidification”, and “unity of command”, and “sovereignty” of the country/ kingdom. Moreover, the best administrative reform should prevent Thai country/ kingdom from colonialism which came from western countries/parts of the world.

In order to respond to the summit strategies, the king tried to omit some traditional socialization, such as slavery, and other uncivilized manners.

There were some reforms of education, military, treasury, justice, law, road building, canal digging, establishing power of electricity and telephone.

The modernized reforms affected the country/ kingdom. They prevented country/ kingdom from being a colony of other western countries which put their efforts to manipulate Thai kingdom in the regime of the king.

The king concentrated on administrative reforms. By applying centralization and other developments that could strengthen and empower the Thai state. Especially, taxation system which would be brought positively changes to the country/ kingdom and quality of life to Thai people.

The new administrative system called “Thesaphiban” government system. A “Monthon” composed of Provinces, Districts, and Communes. The organization design was admired by distinguished

academicians the masterpiece of Thailand that could strengthen, securitize, and civilize Thailand. (Campbell, 1902)

The reforms began with central government by benchmarking with Britain government. The outputs of structural reform policy were twelve expanded departments: Interior, Military, Foreign, Palace, City, Treasury, Farm, Justice, Land and Navy, Education, Construction, and Palace Administrative departments.

### 5.3 Administration Development of “Rattanakosin” Kingdom in the Regime of King Rama VI and King Rama VII

King Vajiravudh, King Rama VI implemented King Rama V’s modernization policies and strategies. In addition, King Rama VI developed administration and government systems in the following:

- 1) Tried to test government process of democracy, by creating “Dusit Thani” model that represented the political participation.
- 2) There was atmosphere of argument, discussion, and public opinion of Thai people in this regime which indicated the extent of political participation.
- 3) The outside atmosphere of the country was serious, Manchu Dynasty was revolted. That event affected and demonstrated to a lot of Thai people’s democratic political perspectives.
- 4) There were some campaigns and protests of nationalism, especially, the establishment of Scout organization and against- Chinese policy which indicated Chinese economic manipulation.
- 5) There was a rebellion which tried to change Thai government. That event reflected some political movements which might be outcomes of modernization policy in the King Rama V’s regime.
- 6) The growth of Thai bureaucratic organizations and active popular participation. Thai society has changed, especially, political and administrative thoughts among modern Thai bureaucrats to modernized country. That state brought to the unavoidable destruction of power base as well as privilege of old social status and system.

King Prajadhipok, King Rama VII tried to establish parliamentary democracy and would like to give people the constitution, although there were some constraints and resistances from consultant and other pressure groups.

However, democracy stream was in flood, a group of people called “Khana Ratsadon” (the People’s Party) asked for the constitution. So, on June 24, 1932, the king kindly gave Thai people the constitution.



### 5.4 Administration Development in the Time of Democracy of Thailand

Since the political change or revolution of Thai government on June 24, 1932, Thailand has faced with many military coups. Those coups actually were due to elites' power competition rather than other causes. Primary reasons of every coup were "corruption" of the government, disorder of the society, and chaos of political atmosphere, which might affect security and development of the country.

Anyway, the research tried to analyze visions and public policies under administration of some prime ministers, the results were in the following:

1 ) Thai government of Gen. Prem Tinsulanonda. Highlights of Prem's government were visions and policies of securitization and stability of the kingdom. The political parties accepted him as the symbol of national security.

2) Thai government of Gen. Chartchai Choonhavan. Highlights of Chartchai's government were visions and policies of "changing battle to trade fields", and "strengthening of social and economic growth instead of military stability", so the budgetary allocation in this government focused on social and economic rather than military functions.

3 ) Thai government of Mr. Anand Panyarachun. Highlights of Anun's government were visions and policies of "privatization strategy", by reducing government roles and increasing private sector roles in economic and social activities of the country. In addition, he tried to reform laws and regulations of kingdom of Thailand.

4) Thai government of Mr. Chuan Leekpai. Highlights of Chaun's government were visions and policies of downsizing of public organizations and public service development.

5) Thai government of Mr. Banharn Silpa-archa. Highlights of Bunharn's government were visions and policies of service development in order to satisfy people. Public services should be speedy, transparent, responsive, equitable, efficient, and satisfactory.

6) Thai government of Gen. Chavalit Yongchaiyudh. Highlights of Chavalit's government were visions and policies of economic growth, internationalization, and administrative transparency which were inconsistent to globalization. Critical monetary policy was "managed float policy" which affected the economic crisis" in the year 1997.

7) Thai government of Chuan Leekpai (2<sup>nd</sup>). Highlights of Chaun's government were visions and policies of efficiency of administrative systems, downsizing, economic crisis resolutions by International Monetary Fund (IMF), and research of increasing monetary system of the kingdom. (The committee of efficiency increase of national monetary system management, 1998)

8 ) Thai government of Thaksin Shinawatra. Highlights of Thaksin's government were visions and policies of reorganization or restructuring of public organizations, privatization, Anyway, faith crisis occurred due to conflicts of interest of the government.

9 ) Thai government of Surayud Chulanont. Highlights of Surayud's government were visions and policies of administrative system development in behavioral dimension, by focusing on people and administrative ethics.

10) Thai government of Samak Sundaravej. Highlights of Samak's government were visions and policies of constitutional reform and social welfare as well as popularity.

11 ) Thai government of Somchai Wongsawat. Highlights of Somchai's government were visions and policies of constitutional reform and social welfare as well as popularity.

12) Thai government of Abhisit Vejjajiva. Highlights of Abhisit's government were visions and policies of collaboration, national stability, and conflict resolution of the kingdom. (Sriboonnark, 2018)

13) Thai Government of Yingluck Shinawatra, Highlights of Yingluck's government were visions and policies of populism, collaboration, national stability, income distribution, social equality, and conflict resolution of the kingdom. (Sriboonnark, 2018)

14 ) Thai Government of Gen. Prayuth Chan-o-Cha Highlights of Gen. Prayuth's government were visions and policies of national stability and security, collaboration, quality of life, and conflict resolution of the kingdom. (Sriboonnark, 2018)

#### 5.5 Directions and Trends of Public Administration Development of Thailand

National economic and social development plans have strengthened the kingdom of Thailand in the following: (The Committee of Efficiency Increase of National Monetary System Management, 1998).

National development plans, vol.1-3 concentrated on economic development, infra structure development, increase of national income, capital accumulation, and national security which were inconsistent with theory and concept of modernization or industrialization of the country. (Rostow, 1967)

National development plans, vol.4-5 also concentrated on economic development, reduction of income gap, equitable generation of income. (Seers, 1979).

National development plans, vol.6-7 focused on human development, quality of life, environments, and natural resources, by using human basic needs theory.

Basic needs theory has been used to fix up failures and weaknesses of modernization or industrialization or westernization, turn around to pursue self - development approaches and reduction of foreign dependency. Three indicators, such as poverty, employment, and social equality were important meaning of development. (Seers, 1979)

National development plan, vol.8 focused on administrative development, by encouraging private sector to public interest, human and environmental development, economic stability, economic security and equilibrium.

National development plans, vol.9-11 focused on Philosophy of Sufficiency Economy which belongs to King Bhumibol the Great, King Rama IX, in order to be the principal theory to manage economic crisis for survival, security, and sustainable development of Thailand. Philosophy of Sufficiency Economy has been integrated with other concepts and approaches of development in order to manage globalization crisis and conflict.

### 5.6 National development plans, vol.12 and the 20-year national strategy, 2017-2036.

The implementation of the 12th Plan will begin on 1 October 2016 and will continue until 30 September 2021. The Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board reported that the 12th Plan was worked out in accordance with the 20-year national strategy, 2017-2036. (The Committee of Efficiency Increase of National Monetary System Management, 1998)

The 20 -year national strategic plan consists of six areas, six primary strategies, and four supporting strategies. The six areas include (1 ) security, (2 ) competitiveness enhancement, (3 ) human resource development, (4 ) social equality, (5 ) green growth, and (6 ) rebalancing and public sector development. (The Committee of Efficiency Increase of National Monetary System Management, 1998)

The six primary strategies seek to enhance and develop the potential of human capital; ensure justice and reduce social disparities; strengthen the economy and enhance competitiveness on a sustainable basis; promote green growth for sustainable development; bring about national stability for national development toward prosperity and sustainability; and enhance the efficiency of public sector management and promote good governance.

As for the four supporting strategies for efficient national development, they involve infrastructure development and the logistics system; science and technology, research, and innovation; urban, regional, and economic zone development; and international cooperation for development. (The Committee of Efficiency Increase of National Monetary System Management, 1998)

The 12th Plan will continue to focus on the Philosophy of Sufficiency Economy, which had become the guiding light of the country's development since the Ninth Plan, beginning in 2006. The philosophy aims to change the priority of economic policy from "growth" to "social development. The main objective is to bring about happiness and the people's well-being.

It has been followed as a shared value by the Thai people, guiding the transformation to a new national management system, based on the goals of efficiency, quality of life, and sustainability. (The Committee of Efficiency Increase of National Monetary System Management, 1998)

The 12th Plan is geared to reduce income disparity and poverty, strengthen the Thai economy and enhance the country's competitiveness, promote natural capital and environmental quality, and further boost the confidence of Thailand in the international community.

It consists of 10 strategies for national development. In the first strategy, human capital will be enhanced and its potential will be developed. The second strategy seeks to ensure fairness and reduce social disparities. The third one involves the strengthening of Thailand's economy on a sustainable basis. The fourth strategy involves green growth.

The fifth strategy seeks to promote national stability and the sixth one to combat corruption and promote good governance in Thai society. The seventh strategy involves infrastructure and logistics development. The eighth strategy seeks to develop science, technology, research, and innovation. (The Committee of Efficiency Increase of National Monetary System Management, 1998)

The ninth strategy calls for urban and economic zone development and the tenth strategy involves international cooperation for development. (The Committee of Efficiency Increase of National Monetary System Management, 1998)

The researcher found that there have been some critical problems or issues of Thai administrative system, such that some aspects of human resource management have not been "Merit System", which affect to administrative development, crisis and conflict of Thailand. (Sriboonnark, 1996)

In addition, there have been some ethical behavior issues in administrative development which affect to undesirable results, such as conflict of interest and other unethical behaviors. (Sriboonnark, 1996)

### 6. Conclusion

The research found out the five stages of the Kingdom of Thailand has shed light on public administration and administrative bureaucracy regarding various methods and systems in paternalism, absolute monarchy, and democracy. After all, there have been some critical issues which should be strategically tackled. Wisdom integration developed from various bodies of knowledge may be an optimal mechanism to enhance sustainability in public administration development of Thailand in the long run.

### 7. Recommendation: Public Administration Development Strategies

In order to improve and develop public administration systems, the researcher would like to propose some strategies including: (Cohen and Eimicke, 1998; Sriboonnark, 2012)

1. Reengineering
2. Total Quality Management
3. Benchmarking
4. Privatization
5. Strategic Planning and Management
6. Team Management
7. Generic Building Blocks of competitive Advantages
8. Ethical behavior development

#### **Reengineering**

This strategy concentrates on organizational processes for radical change, from old to new processes. Its results are cost reduction, better and speedy services.

#### **Total Quality Management**

Total Quality Management or TQM is a kind of quality management that concentrates on organization-wide working atmosphere improvement. Employees and customers can get involved in most activities of the organization, continuous improvement for better quality and competitive advantages.

#### **Benchmarking**

Benchmarking is a systematic process of pursuing “the best practices”, “creative thinking” and “effective operational processes”. It can increase better organizational outputs and performance. By studying and making researches “the best practices” from other organizations then applying for better organizational operations.

### **Privatization**

Privatization is a strategy of reduction of government's roles and increment of private sector's roles in the process of capitalist economy. Such as contracting - out, deregulation, franchise, etc. In order to gain more efficiency and effectiveness of the public organizations.

### **Strategic Planning and Management**

Strategic planning used in economic and social development planning and management processes, public policy formulation, in both public and private organizations. By considering internal and external factors of the organizations, in form of "SWOT" (S= Strengths, W= Weaknesses, O= Opportunities, and T= Threats)

### **Team Management**

Effective teams produce results far beyond the performance of unrelated individuals.

This is a strong strategy applied for response to changing environments, including multiple decision-making, mutual development, and task forces.

### **Generic Building Blocks of competitive Advantages**

Generic Building Blocks of competitive Advantages comprise of efficiency, quality, innovation, and responsibility. Public and private organizations which would like to gain more competitive advantages have to run in the mode of efficiency, quality, innovation, and responsibility.

### **Ethical behavior development**

Ethical behavior development programs or projects should be set up in every country because these are too essential to develop desirable administrative behavior and good governance, especially, transparency dimension of public administration.

Anyway, wisdom integration model which developed from various bodies of knowledge should be an optimal mechanism to enhance sustainable public administration development of Thailand in globalization, easternization, and ASEAN community.

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