



## A Community Model Development on Heet-Kong of Isaan Culture in Mahasarakham Province, Thailand

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**Abstract-** Issaan or Northeast of Thailand is a region known for its excellent Heet-Kong cultural identity, which deserves to be preserved, inherited and adopted as a living practice, especially Heetsibsong-Kongsibsee (12 tradition-14 Government) which can be regarded as a tradition of Isan people who have been practicing, passed down for a long time from generation to generation, Therefore, this research aimed to develop and create a model community according to the principle of Isaan culture to create happiness in the community. This is qualitative research used participant interview and observation. There is target group of 35 people, selected by purposive sampling. Primary and secondary data collection and content analysis. The research results were found that: Development and building a model community in accordance with the Heet-Kong principle of Isan culture to create happiness under the participation of people in the community, namely “Hug-Hang (Supreme Love)” HUG-HANG Model (Happiness United Get Heart Access Nature Giver). The strength of this community is based on the interdependence or community of love where access and happiness can be achieved through the senses that come from the blessings of nature, so the Hug-Hang model is the force that creates to provide the community with family protection, sustainable community and society.

**Keywords:** Heet-Kong, Isan Culture, Happiness Creating

### I. INTRODUCTION

Isaan, or Northeast, is a unique region with a good Heet-Kong cultural identity that deserves to be preserved, inherited, and adopted as a lifestyle practice, especially Heetsibsong-Kongsibsee (12 tradition-14 Government) which can be regarded as a tradition of Isan people who have been practiced, passed down from generation to generation. At present, Thailand, under the 20-year National Strategy, has guided urban development by applying Buddhist principles, wisdom, and culture as a guideline for the development of its local communities, in line with the vision of Thailand 4.0 that is This is the country's development policy vision by defining the mission of driving national reform to improve, organize, adjust the direction and create a path to develop the country to be able to cope with new and rapidly changing opportunities and threats in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Mahasarakham is one of the northeastern provinces that has established a provincial development strategy by introducing the local Heet-Kong as a model for local community development in order to drive into a society for creating family immunity and a community based on Heet-Kong Isan culture. However, from a field survey of problems and needs of communities in Maha Sarakham Province, it was found that The community in Nong Muang Sub-district, Borabue District, is a community that the province wants to support, promote and develop, drive, and build family and community safety immunity based on Heet-Kong Isaan culture, including The situation in the community is faced with many problems, especially social problems such as family divorce, drug epidemic, severe threat in the community, crime and burglary, as well as the conflicts of people in the community, etc.

Due to the importance and problems mentioned above, it is a great opportunity to create a participatory research process to develop solutions and develop communities through research processes on the topic of

the community development model based on Heet-Kong principles of Isan culture to create happiness in Maha Sarakham Province, in order to be the communities with family protection and communities based on Heet-Kong in Isan culture or the creation of sustainable social immunity.

## II. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

To develop a model community according to the Heet-kong principle of Isan culture to create happiness in Nong Muang Sub-district, Borabue District, Maha Sarakham Province, Thailand.

## III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

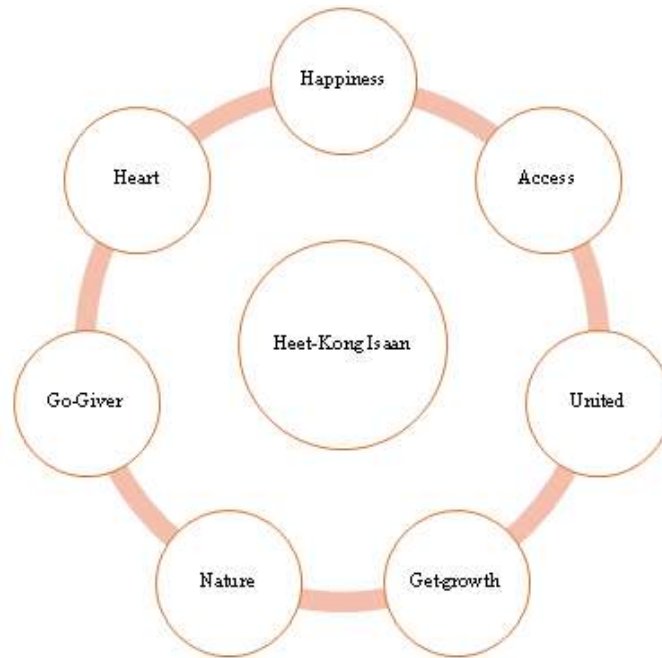
This research is a qualitative research with the following methods of research.

1. The target group is 35 people consist of persons living in the Nong Muang sub-district, Borabue district, Maha Sarakham province, and related persons.
2. The research instruments were semi-structured interviews, notes, and observations.
3. Data collection is carried out in two ways: 1) the primary data is data from field research processes such as target interviewing, focus group and Brainstorming. 2). the secondary data is information obtained from the compilation of Document Research such as textbooks, academic documents, research reports, including the relevant electronic media, etc.
4. Data Analysis, When the data is gathered from both parts, the researcher will analyze the data in a Content Analysis.

## IV. RESEARCH RESULTS

The research results can be classified according to the research object as follows.

Guidelines for the development of a model community in accordance with the HITKONG principle, Isan culture creates happiness found that the problem condition and potential of the community, whether economy, society, Heet-Kong, culture, local wisdom, natural resources and environment, the original area has been used to create a community development approach according to Heet-Kong Isan culture. Society from the past to the present has maintained its identity, kept the group or the harmonious group (Huk-Paeng), is a kind of kinship society that gives support, generosity, good-naturedness, it is based on local philosophical doctrines that are inserted in the daily routine, especially the twelve Heet such as Ghost beliefs, religious beliefs, folk tales, folk technology<sup>14</sup> Kongs are motto that appears in various lifestyles such as Hīt cĕā khxng khun (King's Tradition: Bureaucrat's discipline), Hī twāḍ khxng sng kh (Temple's Tradition: Monks' discipline), Hīt pĕx khxng mĕ (Father and Mother's role), Hīt khxng khēy (Son-in-law's Role), Hīt pĕw khxng meīy (Spouse's Role), Hīt pŭ khxng yā (grandparents role), etc. These things come from philosophy, proverbs, the motto of Isan people of all levels, from monks, kings or leaders, philosophers to ordinary people. Thus, by considering the mutual relationship of the people in the community with a hug, sharing, can create a model of happiness according to Heet-Kong called "HUG-HANG Model", it consists of Happiness, United, Get-growth, Heart, Access, Nature, Go-Giver, summarized as a model diagram as follows.



**Figure 1 : HUG-HANG Model**

H = Happiness: Living a happy life requires a balance between the body and the mind, creating true happiness has a very important basis for the meaning of life in order to create a happy value. Looking at the world and seeing ourselves is happiness or an idea that we create within our own hearts, which, if we understand ourselves, happiness can be all around us, such a wise man says to control your thoughts, when you can control it, you will realize that happiness is a merit that is created within the mind. However, the relationships between humans and their surroundings affect our minds and feelings, coupled with the changing social conditions they have the opportunity to focus too much on other matters, becoming more important than their own minds such as economy, technology, clothing, money, material things, people around him and other greatness that is too much to do with everyday life. Therefore, in truth, you cannot find happiness in your surroundings, because happiness is based on the simple relationship within yourself.

For consideration to create happiness based on Heet-Kong in Northeastern culture, it will be found that is "Happiness and social relationships" That is to say, the happiness for Isan people that arises in daily life comes from following the doctrine and the socialization especially the teachings in Buddhism that are linked to "Heetsibsong" or Heat Bun tradition of 12 months. In addition to making merit for one's happiness, the activities in the merit-making festival are significant social relations, and the temple acts as the center of the faith of the people in the community. The villagers use the temple as their spiritual center, that is, when the Buddhist holy day, the villagers join together to join the merit-making event, Isaan people believe that merit and sins will affect practitioners without exception. The merit and sins allow animals to be born in a good world when they leave this world. People are born as human beings, so it is no exception to pay for their own deeds, but at the same time, people can define their own lives by creating charity such as doing good works, doing a career, so that all benefits bring good results for a good life. Therefore, such beliefs became the Isan people behaviors about merit and sins appeared in literature as said in the proverb that "Whoever does good deeds, that goodwill become famous; whoever has sinned, it will have its consequences on the day that follows" (Proverbs grandmother teaches grandchildren) "Merit and sin cannot be seen, anyone has sinned immediately sees it, anyone does goodwill appear in this life, these two things depend on the practitioner, sin depends on the wicked as a person who takes a dirty bath, his body becomes dirty with mud."

From the above verses, it can be concluded that Isan people believe in merit and sin, reborn, hell, heaven, do well get good, do bad get bad, merit and sin do not seed but it stays with the person doing that. In the past, Isan society was an agricultural society from a small family where only fathers, mothers, and children relied

on domestic labor in their occupations. The house is open, one room without a partition, with a wall-mounted Buddha amulet on the east side, called “Hxng peing (the room is located on the side of the house of the main house, it is the place where the ledge is worshipping the ancestor spirits, the ghosts, and the amulet)”, if there are many people, then she married, there will be a room partition called “Swm (bridal room)”, thus, coexistence. Some families are extended families more than parents and children. Each community will have a narrative and a short story about what life is such as the Father-in-law and son-in-law, the brother-in-law and wife's sister, and, etc. These stories illustrate personality, concepts, roles, wisdom, beliefs, phi Fa Phi Tan, occult, and religion. However, Buddhism is considered a practice to create happiness in this life and to the next, it will see that the Isaan way lives in a simple society, relies on natural resources in a career to create happiness through beliefs Heaven, Hell, Angel, etc. storytelling, short stories, folk play, helping each other and the Isaan literature about Sangsinchai, Phra Vessantara Chataka and others.

U = United = the coexistence is a communal society with similar cultures, local traditions, and lifestyles, there is a communication between each other, as well as being able to create signs and alphabet language. Isaan society is a society that is gathered together as a group, having united together to do activities that can be seen everywhere such as the traditional merit-making, important days according to Heet-Kong culture, and important religious days, etc. Isaan society is held together by Heet-Kong as a Norm, acting, as a rule, order for the person to follow, leading to peace and tranquility. Nong Muang community is one of the Northeastern societies that has cultivated, learned, inherited the wisdom culture for many generations under Heet-Kong of all classes, occupations, social status. Therefore, Heet-Kong will be a rule that must be followed because it defines the duties and behavior of all people in society, there will be heavy and light punishments by an agreement called “Community rules” such as if a minor offense has been committed, it may be labeled as “the diagonal person” until the level of migration from society. A family is a small unit of social institution importance, Heet-kong has established how parents and children should treat and husband and wife act each other appropriately. Isaan society praises monogamy, which appears in Hīt phaw khxng meīy (How to treat each other between spouses) to become one, as the motto says “As spouses, do not swear each other, only speak politely all of life” or “Having a husband to honor, having a younger brother-sister to give morale”.

In addition, the Isaan society respects people who are generous, kind to relatives, respect elders and the general public. It is said that if you live in the Isaan area you will not starve, if there is really a shortage, you can ask someone else, just don't steal. The ancient Isaan people taught to be generous, the members of society had to know how to give and receive as the word that “don't pass by the neighbor house, friend's house must visit” or “a glass of unclean water may rust, an unrelenting close friend may become another” or “on the day of visiting-bring souvenirs to friends, returning a friend-giving a gift”, or “Go to the monk-bring things to offer, go to the master-bring the gifts to give” The interdependence of the members has created solidarity in the community, resulting in development in harmony, on the basis of sharing, respect, humility to the elders who have always worked. In addition, the organizations in the community that will be a creative force for development include Sub-district Administrative Organization, School, Sub-district Health Promoting Hospital, Village Headman, Village Health Volunteer, the private sector, shops, and others will drive the community to participate in activities that contribute to participation, unity, and sustainability.

G = Get Growth: the community to achieve economic, social, health, occupational, and cultural growth, at least two components are required: Having local wisdom or Heet-Kong that was once well built, and optimizing the use of external technology and knowledge. At the same time, the government mechanism in local authorities is the main factor driving the balanced transition of both parts. Leaders and people have to be developed with knowledge and competence from folk philosopher, combined with the knowledge that comes from the modern education system. The Heet-Kong culture will be a base for thinking about local wisdom that is waiting for the restoration to develop and develop progress Lifestyle generally adheres to the Heetsibsong framework that revolves throughout the year, whether it be merit, occupation, dependence on nature, coexistence with neighbors, contributes to the management of social systems, economies, and social institutions, especially the temple will grow, which represents strength, unity, love, and the pong dong of the members can survive by interdependence as the saying said: “Lotus lives in water-fish lives in mud, common people live on royalty-wild animals live in the forest-forests inhabit animals, people live in the house - the house is dependent on people if a person escapes from home - the house becomes a forest- the vines will fill the houses, people rely on relatives and friends-they rely us just become to city, Therefore, individuals must rely on each other - no one can be alone.”

In addition, the view of the Isan people with the view of the Isan people, together with that person who is well-behaved, honest, diligent, diligent, honoring those who do good without expecting any return, no matter who knows or sees, which These things will be the qualities of the Isan people who have accumulated and taught their children all the time that has come to the growth in the Isan land until now.

H = Heart: There is a saying that if something is successful, it must be determined, it is not enough, it must be done with a willing mind. The quality of Isan people since ancient times, apart from being a hardworking person, is a word that does something with sincerity. Nowadays, the Isan economy is difficult, so many Isan people have left their homeland to large cities and abroad to find work, the highlight is that no matter what the job looks like, Isaan people will actually do it, because thinking of the people behind who have been waiting for the return with the money saved. In this regard, the townspeople and the villagers say that they are different classes because the townspeople have an advantage and are therefore more fortunate than all the villagers, as the saying said "Notable people in the countryside-not as much as the poor in the city" Therefore when experiencing hardship, try to enter the city because there is a better way to make a living than the countryside as saying that "Lack of water to run to the mountains-lack of livelihoods must enter to the city".

A = Access: Access to natural conditions is an important aspect of human life that today many people of Isaan are inaccessible to natural reality, they are so often in search of property and money that they do not have time to access nature and the truth that they are is "spiritual reach". Although almost everyone in Isan society has access to merit making or attending a temple to listen to dharma, it cannot be said that they understand their own mind, it is a happiness that arises, accessing the truth in all impermanence.

N = Nature: Isaan people are a rural society, their access to nature and life is all close to nature, the drought of the natural environment, wood is a hindrance to the Isaan people, they can adapt through proper farming. However, natural or subsistence agriculture which uses simple tools has been developed in place of more advanced agriculture, modern technology has been introduced, such as tractors, E-Tan vehicles, chemical fertilizers, pesticides. Settlements tend to be located at rivers, creeks, swamps, marshes, or in forest areas where Isaan people believe people have to depend on nature forever because the fertile condition of nature creates confidence, pride in life, nature is a source of livelihood. In addition, nature is a factor that determines imagery or habits, for example, the seasons determine a person's activities be in accordance with their natural state, and Some natural phenomena to forecast what will happen in the future for both you and harm people/animal and tree plantings.

G = Go-Giver: Considering the sacrifice of something for others may not return, giving sometimes with a greater expectation of return may not feel as good. The sacrifice that does not hope in return is called "Go-Giver", because the more you give, the more you always get, whichever way you get it is equal to giving in that way. Isaan people consider giving to be important, since giving teachings, giving knowledge-reminders, giving objects, giving opportunities, including giving good feelings, prayer and compassion for all beings, sacrificing a little happiness for the needy are all merit. It can see that the traditions in the Heet-Kong Isaan, whether it be a merit-making ceremony with ghosts, people, monks, angels, shamans, or beasts, appear in the twelve-month Heet tradition. However, 14 Kong is such a practice such as Khxng ̄xn chāw bān (Villagers' self-practice methods) "When getting new products, do not just eat it, take it to the merit ceremony first, offering first to ethical people, then their own and should be shared with relatives."

The study of cultural social sciences sees that every society has one of the basic rules of thumb that is "Taboo", for Isan people called "Khal ̄ (Taboo)" refers to the prohibition or omission in a notice in Isan society, whether it is a form of poems, songs, teachings, literature, various stories. Persons who violate Taboo are labeled homosexual and socially disgusted, calling them "Khwng (diagonal)". For Khal ̄ (Taboo) for specific people such as newly born women, sick people, superstitious people, etc. The model will reflect the administrators of local governments and other agencies involved in community development should follow the ancient teachings that "If getting a high rank, don't forget the people, then, if people don't support, your face might be miserable." "Thinking to develop anything should ask the opinion of the people first if the people do not support it will not be able to develop the city".

The above statement shows the doctrine to the administrators of the state that once they become great, do not forget the people, because the country will prosper with the cooperation of the people sitting by themselves.

## V. DISCUSSION

In this research, there the interesting issue can discuss the findings as follows.

1. Problems and potentials of natural resources and environment, economy, society, Isan local wisdom in Nong Muang sub-district.

1.1 Problems and potential of Isan society relies on natural resources as a basis for their occupation with wisdom to manage, improve and develop quality of life. The former community economy relied on nature to sustain subsistence farming, Nowadays, it has been developed into an industrial society, mainly in monoculture. (Sugar cane, cassava) in order sent to Factories for processing into products and services that satisfy the consumer lifestyle (Mass Production) which was correspond to Phrasukhee Jāgaradhammo (Srimart) (2010) said that the family system, family, kinship, education system, public health system, belief system and tradition as well as recreation and entertainment, all have an effect on social changes caused by external and internal factors. As the same way of Taweesak Yiemjareon (2010) ที่ That suggests natural resource conditions deteriorate, while lifestyles become more dependent on facilities, technology, belief in the supernatural, which is not very consistent, due to the condition of Nong Muang society is changing to urbanization, However, with the purpose of life, economy, society, local wisdom plays an important role in linking the villagers together, creating a unity that results in the community self-reliance and social solidarity or “Stay comfortable, Eat delicious”. Therefore, it can be considered that Heet-Kong has the effect of making society peaceful.

1.2 The Heet-Kong local Isan culture, the conduct of other societies is not much different, But for Isan, there is one unique thing that is “Heetsibsong-Kongsibsee (12 tradition-14 Government)” because it is both the principle of goodness, it is valuable to life and also creates peace and tranquility for those who have lived in this land for a long time, according to the research of Taweesak Yiemjareon (2010) found that The relationship between the Heetsibsong-Kongsibsee tradition and the way of life of the people and the relationship with nature is dependent on almost every aspect, Know the value that gives life to oneself, in the activities of merit-making ceremonies often find things about water, rice, forest, and animals such as Rice Welcome ceremony, Buffalo Welcome ceremony, Rice farming start ceremony, Worshiping ceremony for the ghost of the field, Grandfather Ghost Ritual, Songkran Festival, Cleaning traditions, etc. In particular, Buddhism plays an important role in Heet-Kong according to the research of Praepat Yodkaew (2019) said that the Heetsibsong tradition is the tradition directly related to Buddhism because the way of life of the Lao people is in accordance with the Buddhist beliefs that have been passed down from ancestors.

2. To develop and create a model community according to the principles of Heet kong Isaan culture to create happiness found that to create happiness according to Heet-Kong Isan culture is a model that proposed under the participation of people in the community “Hug Hang” HUG-HANG Model (Happiness United Get Heart Access Nature Giver). However, the strengths of this community are based on the community, interdependence, or community of love which was accessing and creating happiness is through the senses that come from the blessings of nature in accordance with Chaniya Jindamon (2006) found the Heetsibsong tradition was a means of conveying thoughts, beliefs, values that relationship with Buddhism, spiritism, family and kinship relationship system, and agricultural production path for villagers. Particular religious beliefs Vajaravara Vongkanha (2012) found the religion that the villagers respect each other from nature, spirits, and Brahmin beliefs and Buddhist beliefs. In particular, beliefs in Buddhism are combined with local beliefs, which are consistent with the research of Kanchana Khampha and Ratchadaporn Ketanon Naewheangtham (2018) Saranya Wipatchawatee (2017) Lungsith Somnue (2010) said in the same way, those who play a key role in building a strong and sustainable community in the Isan cultural context are: Elderly people, children and youth, where happiness, well-being and participation in Isan culture are the same. As the same way of Watcharaporn Jantanukul and Sanya Kenaphoom (2020) found that the socio-cultural characteristics in the lower Isan region (Lower Northeastern Region), generally, are similar but appearing to have mixed ethnicities especially in Sisaket province which has different cultural, linguistic, and lifestyle characteristics such as dressing, spoken language, food, etc. However, the traditions of people also adhere to the twelve heat (12 traditions) and XIV Kong (14 government method). In addition, the local traditions of each province which are classified according to the category of local wisdom heritage are as follows. 1) The Social practices, Rituals and Festive Events including the traditions and the annual festivals. 2) The Traditional Craftsmanship were the fabric piping and fabric products, the wickerwork, the woodwork, and

the metalwork. 3) The Knowledge and Practices Concerning Nature and the Universe, including food and nutrition, and the natural resource management for conservation and sustainability. And 4) the Performing Arts were the performing arts and local shows.

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