



## The Mahamakut Buddhist University's Roles for Developing the Democratic Citizenship

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**ABSTRACT-** An educational institution is one of the social institutions that promotes socialization to allow members of society to conduct desirable behaviors. Mahamakut Buddhist University is one of the educational institutions responsible for training the competency of national personnel to have knowledge and morality. Democracy is one of the goals that educational institutions have to prepare people to go into society, create society into a livable society. This research paper aims 1) to explore the role of Mahamakut Buddhist University in democratic citizenship development. 2) to create a model for the development of roles at Mahamakut Buddhist University for the development of democratic citizenship. The sample were collected through in-depth interviews with 18 key informants. And a specific group discussion of 12 people: obtained by selecting a specific sample group and analyzing the data by analyzing the content data and presenting descriptive information. The research results were found that; 1. The university's roles in democratic citizenship development include: (1) Situation analysis for citizenship development, (2) the application of Buddhism in the development of citizenship, (3) Driving Citizenship Development, and (4) analysis of trends in democratic citizenship development. 2. A model for developing university roles for democratic citizenship development consist of 2 process; (1) The application of Buddhism for the development of citizenship in democracy is: (a) proactive publicity, (b) integration with Buddhism, and (c) self-practice. (2) The role of the university is shown as; (a) educating and understanding democracy, (b) Development of a conscious mind for democracy, and (c) the development of the democratic way. (3) Trend of sustainable democratic citizenship development These include (a) developing political participation, (b) promoting political interest, (c) promoting faith in democracy, (d) building democracy based on political economy.

**Keywords:** Role; Mahamakut Buddhist University; Development; Citizen; Democracy

### I. INTRODUCTION

In the last 80 years of democracy in Thailand, there are 12 coups and 18 constitutionality, raising the question of why successful overseas democracy has failed in Thailand. But, in fact, countries with a stable democracy today and are known as democratic countries such as the United States, England, France, and Germany, each has experienced problems or failures before. As for the success factors of democracy in those countries are "systems" and "people", but the most important thing is "people". If there is a good constitution in a democracy, but a constitutional person is not or does not respect the constitution, it will eventually cause problems (Tewanaruemitkul, 2012). In the past, the model country of democracy solved the problem by developing people to have "citizenship" or Civic Education until the success of democracy (Second Decade Education Reform Policy Subcommittee In educational development to create good citizenship, 2011). The countries that succeeded in democratic governance, organized civic education and succeeded in creating citizens as an example for other countries, thus, at the present, citizenship education is now a success factor in democracy in countries around the world. The cause of Thailand's democracy problem arises from the fact that people are not "citizens". This can be seen from the fact that people have no citizenship consciousness, for example; the people do not tolerate differences and do not respect each other's rights and freedoms, there is different opinions lead to divisions, the political parties and elections have become what makes society, the community or family split up. In addition, each person exercised his right and freedom regardless of social responsibility. Therefore, a true citizen in a democratic society must have the unique qualities that lead the country to peace through a democratic way that includes freedom, self-reliance, having the right, respect of rights, have the responsibility to the public, respect the country's rules, not violence, have a public mind, etc. Therefore, which country can develop democracy very well depends on a number of conditional factors, including high citizenship.

Solving Thailand's democracy problem is not just a constitutional draft, rather, they need to fix the citizens themselves so they can participate in the administration and be aware of the country's problems that must be addressed together (Laothammatat, 2011), or It can be said that government is a "human" democracy as a country owner must have the ability to govern among themselves to be successful

(Tewanaruemitkul, 2012). In Thai society, however, there is an important factor that weighs against democratic citizenship, that is, a culture of patronage or adult dependence, especially politicians, little-adult culture, older ones, division of the party, failure to comment on the fear that adults will be dissatisfied with or can affect work and personal life, including the lack of awareness of the importance and necessity of public participation in building society and building a nation (Tantisuntorn, 2011; Laothammatat, 2011). In conclusion, Thailand's current democracy problem arises from people who are not "citizens" (Tewanaruemitkul, 2012). It can be seen from the people's lack of citizenship, they are just under the patronage or the newly elected ruling class, most importantly, there was a social divide, people do not tolerate differences and do not respect each other's rights and freedoms, different opinions lead to divisions, political parties and elections thus divide society - community - or family.

From the aforementioned problems, it can be seen that "people" in a democracy must have "citizenship" in order to achieve democracy, there was the members of the society have the right and freedom with responsibility, respect for others, respect for differences, and the rules (Education Reform Policy Subcommittee in the Second Decade Development to Create Good Citizenship, 2011) In other words, citizens are the foundation of democracy, when people are "citizens" they turn from burdens or problems to national power or force, all problems of society will be solved, society will be strong and democracy will eventually succeed (Tewanaruemitkul, 2012; Hua, & Wan, 2011).

Therefore, educational institutions are essential to the development of citizenship, because academic progress affects economic and social change. It is, therefore, necessary to develop Thai people with knowledge, morals, ethics, and desirable values according to the democratic way that governs Thailand today. A democratic society can exist if everyone is honest, there is a recognition of individual differences based on educational institutions because educational institutions are social institutions that help develop new things and teach everyone to be citizens with desirable qualities. For the reasons mentioned above, the researcher is interested in looking for an answer "What is the university's role in developing democratic citizenship?" This is an educational institution that places importance on the development of human potential to be good, smart, ethical, conscious of their roles and responsibilities, and social responsibility. What is the quality of citizenship in a democratic society, by using the principles of being a Buddhist university by integrating them with the principles of democratic citizenship development to help the human resources of the country to have the character of good citizenship that meets social needs?

## **RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

This research aims (1) to explore the role of universities in democratic citizenship development, and (2) to create a model for the development of roles at Mahamakut Buddhist University for the development of democratic citizenship.

## **II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This research was qualitative research by analysis the documentary sources, in-depth interview, and focus group discussion, the researcher conducted the research as follows.

Research population: the survey of the university's role in democratic citizenship development was carried out by in-depth interview with the semi-structured interview. The sample was selected by purposive random sampling from 18 key-informants. The sample was selected as persons who are qualified according to the researcher, which can be divided into 4 groups as follows; 1) five university administrators, 2) five university teachers, 3) five staff, and 4) three students. To create ways to strengthen the university's role in democratic citizenship development by focus group discussion, Brian storming must listen to opinions and suggestions for common characteristics, including the common conclusion. In order that Establish guidelines for enhancing the university's role in democratic citizenship development by selecting 12 key informants and having the qualifications identified by the researchers, including: (1) 6 experts in the administration of Mahamakut Buddhist University, and (2) 6 experts in research, political science, public administration. The instrument for collecting data: in this research tool, the researchers created in-depth interviews and group discussions as a research tool by conducting research in various dimensions such as Guidelines for the application of Buddhism in the development of democratic citizenship, the university's role in developing democratic citizenship, Analysis of trends and directions for the development of democratic citizenship, etc. the Data collection from an in-depth interview, the researcher requested permission to take notes, record audio and record slides in the research field, before entering the field, during and after leaving the field, and then organize the data files

so that they are ready for further analysis. The focus group discussion: the participants were involved in policy, regulation, university development plan, including academics in political science, public administration, etc. Conducting group discussions on the right day-time-place, which is done by building a strong relationship with the group participants in order to facilitate the depth and completeness of the research objectives. And, to analyzed data using Content Analysis Techniques, inductive analysis, integration, and quality control by Triangulation Techniques.

### III. RESEARCH RESULTS

#### **1. The university's role in the development of democratic citizenship**

1.1 Situation analysis for the development of democratic citizenship: (1) Access to democratic citizenship at Mahamakut Buddhist University is typical because Mahamakut University has an interdisciplinary curriculum covering both secular and moral subjects. Therefore, to reach democratic citizenship, everyone can be perceived, understood, and accessible. (2) Promoting the development of citizenship in democracy in the past was rare. Since Mahamakut Buddhist College was established in the reign of King Rama V, which is still an absolute monarchy, including Siam has recently abolished slavery. The university also conducts classes with a focus on Buddhism and Pali language, so that it can be seen that the promotion of citizenship development in democracy at Mahamakut Buddhist University in the past was hardly visible. (3) Mahamakut Buddhist University has promoted the development of democratic citizenship today: Although in the past this university did not promote democracy, when times change, society changes, everything changes accordingly. Currently, this university has promoted the development of democratic citizenship. As observed from the conduct of activities within the university, it turns out that everyone has the right and ownership of the university, and the development of the university is carried out in a participatory or even the elections of representatives of internal organizations such as the Dean, the president of the student organization, etc. must come from the majority. This means that the University of Mahamakut Buddhist College is already promoting the development of democratic citizenship.

1.2 Application of Buddhism in the development of citizenship in a democracy.: (1) The role that drives university administration is usually a monk who will adhere to the principles that the Lord Buddha has set as the guiding principles of governing or administration. (2) Using Buddhist principles in the development of democratic citizenship, each member of society remembers one another, generosity, solidarity, ready to cooperate, compassionate, to think good to each other, to share with each other, maintain discipline, have the same precepts, do not persecute each other, follow the rules of the public, and trust and understand the essential principles of shared democracy. (3) Buddhist University Adaptation in Democratic Citizenship Development It is necessary to look at the suitability of being a Buddhist university, whose primary function is to serve as a missionary and political neutrality. (4) The application of Buddhism in the development of citizenship must be based on the principles of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, focus on making everyone know the duties of democratic citizenship on the principles of peaceful means.

1.3 The university's role in the development of democratic citizenship: (1) The development of citizenship in a democratic system of equality, still requires consideration of the fundamental principles of democracy, namely power belongs to the people, by the people and for the people, thus, mean all people are equal. However, Thai society has always held the senior system, which makes it difficult to develop democracy, since subordinates or lower-ranking [students] present ideas that will not be considered. Therefore, the leaders of the country to whom the administrators must give great importance. (2) The development of democratic citizenship in the principles of rights, freedoms, and duties, which are the university's main mission of promoting all parties within the university to act in violation of the principles, regulations, and regulations of the university. (3) The development of citizenship in democracy in terms of the rule of law from the current political situation in 2020, It can be seen that there is a demonstration for democracy, mostly students, as they do not see the rule of law in the law of the country, this shows that all universities value their stance on democratic principles. (4) the development of citizenship in a democratic system of reasoning must show a stand on democratic principles, promote students to live in accordance with the principles of democracy. (5)The development of citizenship in a democratic system of political participation requires everyone to express or participate in non-conflict laws or university regulations, but the reality is when they present their opinions to consider, will not receive attention from the executive authority.

1.4 Trends and directions for the development of democratic citizenship: (1) The development of democratic citizenship will be more characteristic of political observers; this is because the university known as the University College of Buddhism which adopted the principles of peace or the adoption of Buddhism in governing or development rather than focusing on political participation. (2) the citizenship development in political partnerships will be more because the university and the government must

2.A approach to developing roles at Mahamakut Buddhist College for the development of democratic citizenship: Mahamakut Buddhist University is an educational institution that emphasizes the teaching and practice of democratic citizenship that integrates Buddhist principles. However, universities should revise and revise their educational content in a government program that emphasizes constitutional knowledge and politics and government in a democratic regime with a monarchy, including developing teaching and learning processes and operational activities to develop democratic citizenship among learners. Which emphasizes practicing the basic skills of democratic citizenship, listening to other people's opinions, respect for the rights and freedoms of people, respect for differences in opinions, which can organize the content and activities according to the age of the students by following the steps below;

2.1 the 1st Step: Mahamakut Buddhist University as a Buddhist university, it is appropriate to apply Buddhist studies to be applied to benefit society, that is "Guidelines for the application of Buddhism in the development of citizenship in democracy", including; 1) Promoting the University's Role in Democratic Citizenship Development, 2) Integrating Buddhism to Promote the University's Role in Democratic Citizenship Development, 3) Driving the practice of developing citizenship in democracy"

2.2 the 2nd step: the development of the foundation of Mahamakut Rachavittaya University, represents a Buddhist university that requires interdisciplinary integration in social and national development, that is "the university's role in the development of democratic citizenship" includes; 1) Providing knowledge and understanding of democratic citizenship, 2) Development of psychological pathways, citizenship in a democracy, and 3) Development of pathways of democratic citizenship behavior

2.3 the 3rd step: The implementation of the university, both the Buddhist University Principles and the Citizenship Development Principles, has resulted in "Trends and directions for the development of democratic citizenship" It arises from the integration of both inside and outside the university, which will drive development simultaneously in various dimensions including; 1) development of political participation, 2) promotion of political interest, 3) promoting faith in democracy, 4) strengthening Democracy Based on Political Economy or the edible democracy.

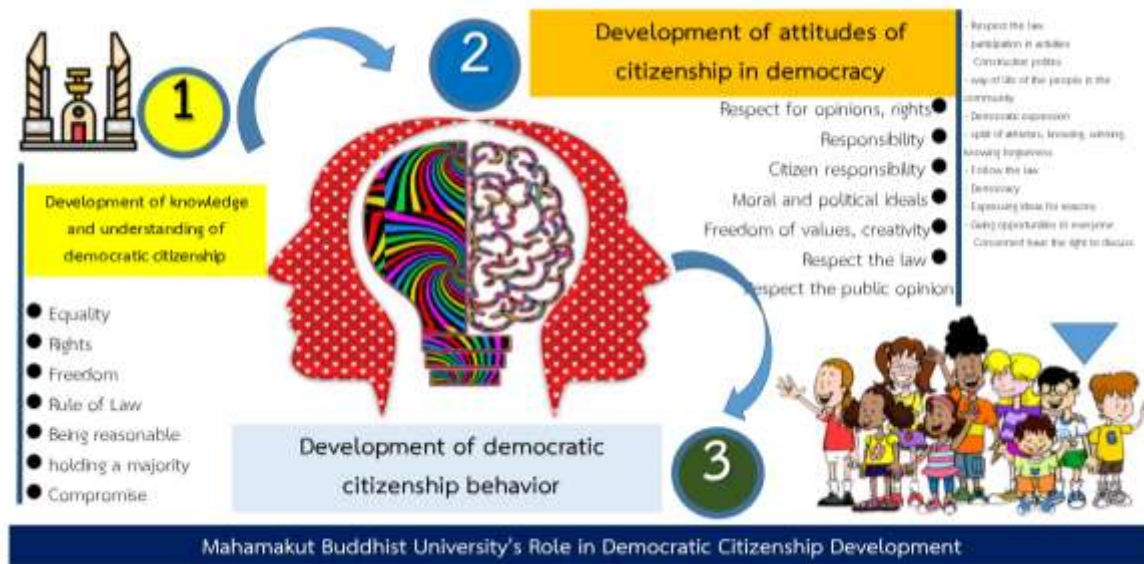


Figure 1: Mahamakut Buddhist University's Role in Democratic Citizenship Development

#### IV. DISCUSSION

1. Access to democratic citizenship at Mahamakut Buddhist University is typical because Mahamakut University offers an interdisciplinary curriculum covering both secular and moral subjects, thus, to reach

democratic citizenship, everyone can perceive - understand - and approach, that is citizenship in democracy (Tewanaruemitkul, 2012) It means being a member of a society that has freedom coupled with accountability, rights and freedom coupled with duty, with the ability to accept differences and respect the rules of coexistence, as well as taking part in the possibilities and solving problems in their own society, which is consistent with the research results of Paiboonthitipornchai (2010) Found that students in Vocational certificate Year 1-3 has a citizenship at a high level, the individual factors including gender, field of study and different academic performance, had a statistically significant difference in good citizenship at the .05 level. In addition, the supporting factors of self-confidence and democratic upbringing were positively correlated with good citizenship as well.

2. Guidelines for Developing the Role of Mahamakut Buddhist University for Democratic Citizenship Development: Democracy has its roots in Greek, *Demokratia*, which comes from the combination of *Demos* for People and *Kratia*, derived from the verb *Kratien*, or *Kratos*, which means To Rule, so *Demokratia* means Government. by the People (Phachupet, 2012). Therefore, Mahamakut Buddhist University is a university that shows political neutrality, maverick parties, applying Buddhist principles in administration and as a guideline for the development of personnel and students to realize their role as citizens in democracy in order to recognize their roles and duties as a citizen in a democratic system as The University's Role in Developing Suitable Citizenship.

However, the conditional factors that affect the development of citizenship in the democratic regime are effective for many factors which are consistent with the project "The Australian Temperament Project" (Smart, et al., 2000) studied child development in Victoria, Australia from 1983-2000 found that one of the key parameters that can predict political awareness of citizenship among adolescents is the social and economic status of the family. In other words, it is an environment that is vital to the development of adolescent citizenship awareness in this area, especially for families with high socioeconomic status. This may be due to the fact that families with high socioeconomic status behave as a good example for teenagers in participating in political activities. However, when considering "citizenship in Thailand" by Burikul, et al. (2012) which studied with 1,500 voters across Thailand found that the top 5 citizenship features of the highest priority are: Honest work, having pride in being Thai, Voting, Willingness to pay taxes, and Legal compliance. While Thais have the top 5 qualifications of citizenship which are; having pride in being Thai, honest work, voting, being willing to pay taxes, and legal compliance. But what is the difference between the desirable citizenship qualifications and the physical properties of citizenship was being able to analyze and express political views, and have knowledge of political politics.

## V. SUGGESTIONS

Suggestions for applying the research results: 1) Universities should provide teaching and learning with a focus on building democratic citizenship for social responsibility. 2) Universities should aim to develop students' self-social responsibility through problem-based learning activities. 3) Universities should train students to analyze the causes of social problems, which may consider themselves as part of the problem and the root cause. It also encourages students to take part in solving social problems, starting with self-development that will not cause social problems and, most importantly, promote and develop students to create citizenship in terms of social responsibility.

Suggestions for the next research: Research and development should be carried out through a variety of educational tools to keep pace with social change, and to compare democratic citizenship between universities in Thailand and abroad.

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