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主 論 文 の 要 旨

論文題目

Roles of Culture in Rural Resettlements in Laos:
A Case Study of Nongxong Village

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論 文 内 容 の 要 旨

In Laos, two major types of rural resettlements have been implemented. One is associated with the state policy and the other is associated especially with the hydropower development. In 1989, the 1st National Conference on the Forestry of Laos adopted a government plan to implement the permanent resettlement of a quarter of the country's population by the year 2000. The resettlement policy initiative was formed to achieve five goals: (1) access and service delivery, (2) opium eradication, (3) reduction of security concerns, (4) eradication of swidden farming, and (5) cultural integration and nation-building. To realize these goals, three resettlement instruments were used: focal sites, village consolidation, and land and forest allocation. Meanwhile, in the 1980s, the hydropower development in Laos started to become active when the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, United Nations Development Program, and Western countries advised the Government of Laos to develop its

hydropower resources to fuel its economic development of Laos (International River, 1998). Since then, the Government of Laos has prioritised the hydropower development and welcomed foreign investments. Some previous studies show that rural resettlements in Laos generate social problems, destroy people's livelihoods, and would bring cultural conflicts. It should be recognized that the common problems of impoverishment or failure of (involuntary) resettlements associated with the hydropower development, still being repeated now in developing countries, should be minimized or should not happen at all in Laos. Giving the fact that Laos is a multiethnic country, more proper planning and implementation of resettlements from the viewpoint of project-affected people's culture should be taken into consideration.

This Ph.D. dissertation aims to clarify the role of culture in the context of rural resettlement implementations in Laos with the following three sub-objectives: (1) to identify cultural elements adopted in the practical implementation of resettlement processes and the sense of value behind such cultural elements, (2) to observe the current status of livelihood adaptations among people who are affected by hydropower development projects, and (3) to determine the characteristics of relationship between culture and the social adaptation of people who have been relocated to the resettlement site.

This Ph.D. dissertation has seven chapters. In Chapter I, the author describes

problem statements in the context of resettlement implementations in Laos and then proposes research objectives for this Ph.D. dissertation. In Chapter II, the author reviews literature related to the proposed Ph.D. dissertation title e.g. “Roles of Culture in Rural Resettlement in Laos”. The literature review comprises (1) hydropower development and involuntary resettlement experiences from three views - global view, regional view, and national view; (2) involuntary resettlement improvement guidelines proposed by well-known scholars and international organizations, and the *Resettlement with Development* concept which is a must for all stakeholders to view (involuntary) resettlements as an opportunity for development; and (3) involuntary resettlement policies of the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, and the Government of Laos. In Chapter III, the author describes the scope of this Ph.D. dissertation, adopted theories, study sites, sampling, and data collections and analyses.

In Chapter IV (responding to sub-objective 1), it is explained how and what culture of project-affected people plays an important role in rural resettlement processes. The results show that the cultural elements such as symbols, heroes, rituals, and beliefs have played a practical and significant role in the consensus formation during the consultation & planning process and the physical relocation process. However, different ethnic groups place different levels of importance on symbols,

rituals, and beliefs, while they place the same level of importance on heroes.

In Chapter V (responding to sub-objective 2), it is examined how resettlers of different ethnic groups respond to each other and to their host villagers in the context of their lives at the resettlement site. The Phong ethnic group has the highest physical adaptation level (93%) and the natural adaptation level (78%) but the lowest human adaptation level (68%); among the three ethnic groups, the Pao ethnic group has the highest social adaptation level (21%) and the human adaptation level (82%) but the lowest physical adaptation level (84%) and the natural adaptation level (48%); and the Hmong ethnic group has the lowest social adaptation level (12%), while their physical adaptation (85%), the natural adaptation (53%), and the human adaptation (77%) levels are the second highest among the three ethnic groups. Among the three ethnic groups, there are statistically significant differences in three aspects of adaptations: social, physical, and natural adaptations. In the livelihood adaptation, physical and human adaptations are not difficult for the three ethnic group members to achieve. Results show that because they have high and similar levels of those two adaptations among those three ethnic groups. However, for all three ethnic groups, the social adaptation is the most difficult aspect for the three ethnic group members to adjust to when entering a new environment of resettlement site as it shows that people have a low adaptation level with the less difference among these three ethnic groups.

In Chapter VI (responding to sub-objective 3), the result shows that the culture of resettlers prohibits them from raising their level of social adaptation. It also shows that two categories of culture - universalism and security - limit the level to which resettlers can enhance their social adaptation. In contrast, the other two categories of culture -benevolence and conformity- promote the formation of friendships in the resettlement site community. Based on these results, it can be concluded that people relocated to a new resettlement site can enhance their social adaptation through the importance they place on values such as benevolence and conformity.

Chapter VII summarizes the main findings from Chapter IV, Chapter V, and Chapter VI with an explanation of the role of culture in rural resettlement project implementations in Laos. It then describes the academic contributions of this Ph.D. dissertation and proposes further research into some remaining issues. After that, it discusses policy implications.

Culture helps in facilitating planning and consultations (process I) and physical relocation (process II). It reduced the psychological damage to project-affected people when the compensation they received for displacement took their culture into account. For instance, house layout (a cultural element of symbols) options that are designed to cater to different ethnic groups. In process III (livelihood restoration), values (the deepest level of culture) influence project-affected people's livelihood adaptation in

various ways, particularly their social adaptation.

By paying more attention to the sociocultural consideration of project-affected people in the planning process, conflicts and negative impacts to project-affected people will be minimized. Conflicts over dams have been heightened in the last two decades because of the social and environmental impacts of dams that were disregarded in the planning process (World Commission on Dams, 2000).

The results of this Ph.D. dissertation suggest that all stakeholders must be more aware not only of the social, economic, and environment, but also the cultural impact of (large) dam constructions causing involuntary resettlements. The results from Chapter IV suggest that it should be recognized that in some particular rural communities of Laos a certain belief or tradition of project-affected people is directly associated with the effective implementation of the resettlement project, and plays an important role. By comprehending project-affected people's culture, we can predict the impact on them. In other words, we can mitigate the negative impact on them, and prepare and implement the resettlement properly if we recognize their culture.

As Cernea and McDowell (2000) argue in their impoverishment, risks, and reconstruction model that to mitigate the negative impact of project-induced resettlement on project-affected people, the concept of reversing impoverishment, risks, and reconstruction model of the *self-destroying prophecy* is a very important

safeguarding tool for all stakeholders.

Compared to the existing literature on *rural resettlement in Laos*, this Ph.D. dissertation is unique for two reasons: (1) in terms of methodology and (2) supplementing previous studies. In Chapter VI, it applies statistical analysis in order to provide a clearer picture of the characteristics of relationships or forms of relationships between people's culture and their livelihood adaptation for a particular aspect, e.g. social adaptation. In Chapter IV, the methodology on measuring culture enriches the body of knowledge on how culture is important in the context of rural resettlements, particularly in the processes of planning & consultation and physical relocation. This finding supplements two previous studies: 1) Alton and Rattanaovong (2004) on how heroes are important from the viewpoint of development intervention; and 2) Cernea and McDowell (2000) on how culture is important from the viewpoint of mitigating risk and impoverishment to project-affected people and ensuring livelihood reconstruction for them.

Compared to the existing *literature on involuntary resettlement worldwide*, this Ph.D. dissertation is unique for one reason. The results from this Ph.D. dissertation supplement the impoverishment, risks, and reconstruction model from the viewpoint of the culture of project-affected people. In other words, the results suggest that from the viewpoint of culture, cultural risks could be identified from the

eight common risks given by Cernea and McDowell (2000).

Overall, this Ph.D. dissertation can contribute to improving the policy on involuntary resettlement and improving rural resettlement implementation in Laos, where the culture is diversified, given the fact that this Ph.D. dissertation is systematic study on the whole process of rural resettlement and the culture to comprehend the “Roles of Culture in Rural Resettlement in Laos” in a practical and detailed manner.

The concept of Resettlement with Development does not exist in Laos’s national policy. Detailed procedures and comprehensive guidelines are not currently available in the content of the relevant national policy (No. 561/CPI) of Laos. However, it is actually in current practice through e.g. the livelihood restoration/development plans of the Resettlement Action Plan of the Nam Theun 2 and Theun Hinboun Expansion Projects. It is important that the role of culture discussed above must be taken into consideration when the Government of Laos as well as Asian Development Bank and the World Bank want to amend the necessary involuntary resettlement policy for Laos. Moreover, it should be noted that the current national policy No. 561/CPI of Laos is mainly based on the policies of the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, and lessons learned from NT 2 project experiences. Therefore, it is necessary for the policy makers to consider other cases of resettlement implementation in Laos.

For instance, the case study in this Ph.D. dissertation should be reviewed and learned, and to comprehend how projects involve project-affected people in resettlement processes through their own culture, especially in process I and process II (indicating that Article 2: *Project-affected people* and Article 4: *Consultation* of Laos' National Policy No. 561/CPI are being implemented properly).

Nonetheless, the national policy No. 561/CPI of Laos should be improved with the strong will of the Government of Laos to fill the gap of differences in perceiving involuntary resettlement that the World Bank perceives. The content of the Government of Laos's policy on involuntary resettlement shows that economic improvement or livelihood restoration of project-affected people gains much attention. The imbalance of this policy calls for reconsideration of its amendment, especially from the view point of social rehabilitation, policy on gender, and development of Asian Development Bank involuntary resettlement.

Moreover, recognizing the role of culture in (involuntary) resettlement projects, such amendment should establish a suitable balance between sociocultural, economic, and environmental sustainability.

From the experiences worldwide, contents of policy on involuntary resettlement by all stakeholders (the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, Asian Development Bank, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development,

etc.) are improved with concerns on social, economic, and environmental aspects and become a requirement for borrower countries to follow. But still results from resettlement implementations are criticized. In this regard, it enforces all project owners to cooperate, follow regulations and rules, and share their responsibilities when implementing any resettlement projects. Resettlement policies of both lenders (e.g. the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, International Monetary Fund, etc.) and borrower countries are sensible but implementations do not always guarantee the aims of those policies. Therefore, considering all angles and perceiving the resettlement of the Government of Laos call for policy modifications. In other words, viewing (involuntary) resettlement from all angles is a must. Since 1989, this “angle of livelihood adaptation” is lacking. When the Government of Laos implements the resettlement and initially aims to achieve five objectives (access and service delivery, opium eradication, reduction of security concerns, eradication of widen farming, and cultural integration and national building), the angle of livelihood adaptation is overlooked. Based on results from this Ph.D. research, it shows that the angle of livelihood adaptation of project-affected people should be considered. Inclusion of this angle into policy on (involuntary) resettlement of Laos would help in delivering and securing sociocultural and economic benefits of the state development to both present project-affected people and coming generations.