

[DOI: 10.20472/IAC.2015.019.064](https://doi.org/10.20472/IAC.2015.019.064)

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## **DEMOCRATIC CULTURE AND THAI SOCIETAL DEVELOPMENT: CULTURAL VALUES AND CONFLICT PERSPECTIVE ON INEQUALITY**

### **Abstract:**

Democratic culture is the valuable set of cultural elements produced by members of the democratic movements as part of their effort to create democracy (Holden, 2008). Public administration scholars generally agree that democratic culture is a prerequisite to and a keystone of 'new democratic governance', which is now widely accepted as a critical paradigm in public affairs. (Hood, 1991; Rhodes, 1991; Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004; Bozeman, 2007). As Balkin (2004) stated that democratic culture is about individual liberty as well as collective self-governance; it concerns each individual's ability to participate in the production and distribution of culture on democracy. This article aimed to study the level of democratic culture composed in three components, affecting to Thai societal development forwarded on three stages that were perceived by Thai people. It also investigates barriers to democratic culture and to provide determining indicators, which can promote strong democratic culture and advanced democracy among public sphere. Both questionnaires and interview schedule were synthesized from relevant literatures to explore a field. After data collecting, findings are as follows: (a) citizen perception on both democratic culture and Thai societal development are of at high level (mean value 3.51 and 3.64), (b) relationship between democratic culture and Thai societal development were negatively correlated in one way direction at low level ( $r = .599$ ), (c) apparent values and behaviors of democratic perceived culture has disparity from those expected ones in some dimensions, (d) major barriers to democratic culture derived from Thai's culture in historical sociology dimension: inequality rooted upon nepotism, patronage or spoil system, high power distance, pyramid scheme, (e) obstructions to Thai societal development derived from corruption, distrust culture, bureaucracy and parliament intervention, undemocratic and unethical leaders, autocratic rule, and law enforcement deficiency, and (f) alignments or indicators to cultivate democratic culture influencing to Thai societal development are democratic values, empower citizen, democratic and ethical leaders, efficient bureaucracy, ideologies and professionalism of public servant, development of citizen's knowledge, equality of law enforcement, participative management, ethics and governance in society, human capital development and well-being of citizen. The article, although, postulates sufficient evidence to conclude that citizen perception on democratic culture is at high level and highlights where existing measures match the theories, but also shows a number of "weak democratic culture" and barricades of democratization especially over the content of democratic beliefs correlated with societal development and possible alignments for reconstructing democratic culture among Thai citizen.

### **Keywords:**

Democratic Culture, Democracy, Societal Development

## Important of Democratic Culture and Societal Development

Civic society requires citizen's participation in public management so that it will decrease power of centralized government, and redistribute that power to other sectors: private, people, or market instead, so that those sectors can involve and participated with government as '*power partnership*' or called as '*public-private-partnership (PPP model)*'. The mechanism or tools such as privatization - *transfer of government services or assets to the private sector operation to increase efficiency and effectiveness*, decentralization - *redistributing or dispersing functions, powers, people or things away from a central location or authority to strengthen local power* are employing to develop participation state. Besides, educated people who participate in checking policy implementation will help decrease inequality that may occur from wrong or bad management include of corruption, dishonest behavior using of a public position for private gain that violates the trust placed in the government and obstruct the economic investment and exchange. Fair and reliable public services inspire to public trust and democratic culture and create a favorable environment for enterprises, thus contributing to well - functioning markets and economic growth (OECD, 2000). Society with economic virtue is society that has controlled corruption (Rose Ackerman, 2001). The success of government, therefore, is rooted on the confidence of the citizens who have trusted in it, which also reflects good governance of that state. Democratic values, thus, get along with those above critical components and help cultivate better legal state. Considering from this aspect, therefore, democratic culture is not only created by the government which promotes legal justice rooted on legitimacy, righteousness, transparency, accountability to public but also reflects the good governance of state.

Democratic culture makes a demand for the participation of all actors in society: social, economic, political, state, and non-state actors, to design democratic values and behaviors collaboratively. This should be made up on Thai fundamental identity, especially on its cultural, historical, and religious beliefs characteristics. Besides, the development of changing society, turbulent economic, new technology system, and political crisis in Thailand last decade ago had driven many troubled circumstances which appeared to public through media. These problems have come about through several causes: patronage or spoils system, culture of centralization, social inequality, disobedience to law, violence, trust deficiency in society, the problem of corruption in bureaucracy, political and official position employed in self-interest and that of adherent, political power interpose between bureaucratic management process and public service. Lack of true "Democratic Culture" is a major cause of Thai society leading to problems of unethical and lack of governance of public leaders, public sector, and officials.

As for the principle of public administration emerged and widely known as "democratic governance" concept, when government or politicians do public management, actually

they do public trust management which citizens have entrusted them on democratic election process. The public administration of justice and trustworthy would cause the public trust for the government. Trust value truly and entirely promotes democratic culture (Zaufanie, 1998: 146-148). Since trust to others starts by listening, communicating, tolerating, accepting others' differences on the realm of "equality through objectivity perspective", not perceiving others as menace. These attributions lead society to peace, impartiality and reflect democratic culture, which has come out from citizen's participation in society with freedom, understanding of their primary rights and consequently pave society for developing itself to be civic society and culture.

### **How Thai people do perceive democratic culture and Thai societal development**

The political crisis occurred in Thailand such as the problem of fraud and mega-project corruption within bureaucracy and by parliament's intervention, autocratic rules, illegal public policy designed by conflict of interest, the problem of bribe, or the crisis of political conflict among Thai citizen are critically caused by the lack of morality and democratic values. Thai society development is also under constant pressure to bring it integrity measures into line with today's rapidly changing circumstances and realities - including globalization, ASEAN regional integration, citizens' demands for their good quality of lives and better service involved with good performance and accountability of their government.

### **Research Objectives**

On the basis of these concepts, this research studied whether how Thai people, stakeholders who are sharing of their political interests together- consist of political officials, public servants, and people from different career groups, do perceive democratic culture. What level of perception they are. What the causes or factors that obstruct democratic culture of Thai society are. This study aimed to investigate the relationship between democratic culture and Thai societal development from the perception of Thai people due to the importance of building "Democratic Culture", which is at the heart of "public management" in the current public administration. This study also provides guidelines for promoting values and behaviors of democratic culture in Thai society. The critical impact of this study is to offer the indicators which help decrease internal conflict of political culture crisis and cultivate dialogue among Thai citizen in the way of democracy. Thus, citizens can engage to cultivate democratic culture with their citizens' duties, responsibilities, rights, freedom of thoughts and expressions in order to solve internal security problem and create democratic values affecting to Thai societal development in the way of governance approach. In addition, this research will extend the frontiers of knowledge of democratic culture management at level of state organizations and public organizations. Those organizations can learn how to extend their space or sphere to

collaborate with private organizations, community organizations, and all citizens in democratic culture creation.

## **Hypothesis**

The hypothesis was that Thai citizens' perception on democratic culture was at a low level, correlated to less societal development of Thailand.

## **Research Questions**

The research is conducted in order to investigate by determining 'democratic culture' and 'Thai societal development' as the following questions: (a) how citizen perceived on the democratic culture, (b) what the level of citizens' perception on democratic culture correlated with Thai societal development is, (c) how relationship between democratic culture of Thai and Thai societal development in citizens' perception is, (d) how different apparent democratic culture competing with those expectation from citizens' perspective is, (e) what major barriers of democratic culture and Thai societal development are, and (f) what indicators to strengthen democratic culture and Thai societal development are. The results of these queries are critical due to the importance of building "democratic culture", which is at the heart of current public administration.

## **Literature Review on Democratic Culture and Societal Development towards Democratization**

Theorists on democracy concept indicated that democracy consolidation will be strongly supported by some kinds of social culture or political culture called participative culture, democratic culture, or pancake culture, which generate values, ideologies, political behaviors, political institutions, and the development of political democracy (Almond and Verba, 1965; Dahl, 1986; Lipset and Linz, 1988, Huntington, 1991). Almond and Verba (1965) introduced the characteristics of pancake culture or participative one, such as a civic society which values on human dignity and freedom of individual, distrusts on using power, and does not conform to power person. As to Lipset and Linz (1988), participative management is the culture that gives strong support to strengthen and consolidate democracy regime in all social. They also suggested that this culture would be created, whenever there were principles and beliefs of the following: (1) the pattern of success focusing on the ability of individuals more than nationality, (2) the seizure of internationalism values, (3) emphasizing on specific duties, (4) valuing to equality, indiscrimination, and justice, (5) the stability of social economic, and (6) democratization must be based on middle class of society. Huntington (1991) concluded in his paper that modernization would affect political participation of people by the process of socialization, economic development, and political culture which encouraged people to well behave in political participation, called "democratic culture". These attributes are opposite to the preference values in

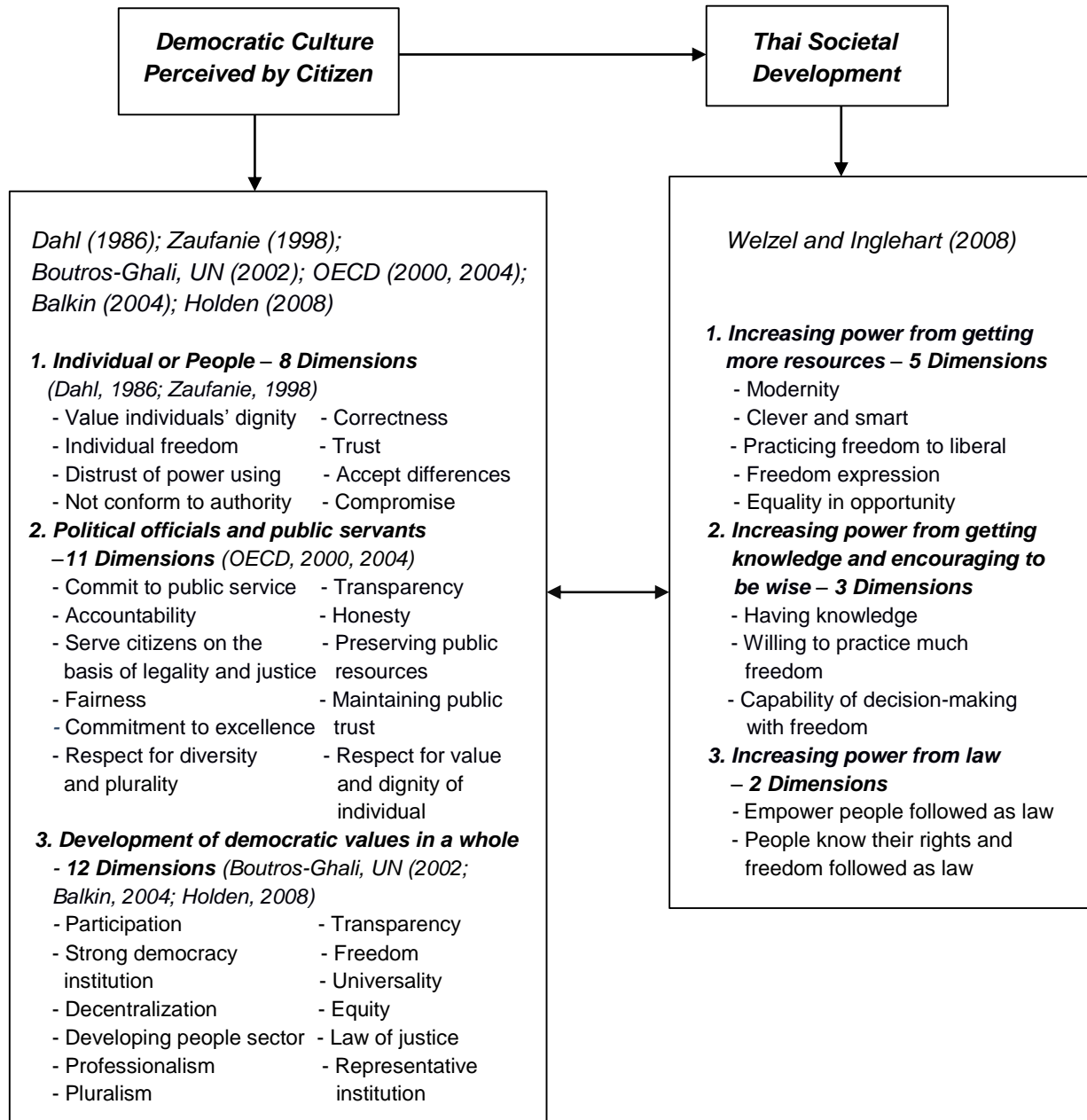
pyramid schemes and were believed to be key success factors of pancake culture leading to strengthen democratization, since they decrease power distance and inequality among groups of different nationalities (Eland et al., 2004; House et al., 2004). Democratic culture stands for disseminated in society rules which oblige every citizen to treat individuals' rights and equal freedom as common shared values. Many cultural theorists have described 'democratic culture' from their perspectives and proposals through various cultural dimensions. The higher of democratic culture the society has, the more level of citizens' perception of their societal development towards democracy exists.

Cultural patterns once established, possess considerable autonomy and can influence subsequent political and economic events. The importance of creating "democratic culture" becomes the essential of "public management" in public administration strand at present. Since the citizens of modernizing state have increased expectations that real democratic of political system was not also corrected its dysfunctional by itself but was not imprisoned itself within those institutional perspectives and concepts. That political system has to be elaborated with the culture known as "democratic culture" which defines to having the values of promoting tolerance, respecting to rights of others, accepting plurality, balancing and having dialogues among power or dynamic groups that are composed and constructed to that society (Boutros-Ghali, UN, 2002). For this aspect, democratic culture is not restricted by the traditional concept of many activities, behaviors and values, and knowledge that are confined by the domain of government's control. Democratic advocate Randy Fullerton Sardis, an admirer of Balkin, elaborates: democratic culture is about individual liberty as well as collective self-governance; it concerns each individual's ability to participate in the production and distribution of culture. Removing the political, economic, and cultural elitists from their thrones and allowing everyone a chance to participate in the production of culture (Balkin, 2004). Inglehart and Welzel (2005) demonstrate the usefulness of the effective democracy index in analyzing the relationship between modernization, culture, and democracy. Subsequently, Alexander and Welzel (2008) test the effective democracy index against the six most widely used democracy indices. And Welzel and Inglehart (2008) classified and pointed that the development of a society developing towards democratization can measure by considering the three stages of power that are increasing to its citizens. Those are: 1) increasing power of citizen from getting more resources, 2) increasing power of citizen from getting more knowledge and be encouraging to be wise, and 3) increasing power of citizen from law.

## **Theoretical Framework**

A different social has different ways to give meaning to things, different values and behaviors. Therefore, social or national culture is determined by the values, beliefs, norms, and behaviors which permeate their members and are expressed through the

### **Figure 1: Theoretical Framework**



Source: The author's own elaboration and synthesis (Jittaruttha, 2015) from theories and concepts proposed by Dahl (1986) Zaufanie (1998) Boutros-Ghali, UN (2002) OECD (2000, 2004) Balkin (2004) Holden (2008) Welzel and Inglehart (2008)

words and behaviors of those members in society. This article focuses on democratic culture and Thai societal democracy as they affect the functioning of the democratic state. The author is interested in informal interactions based on affect-based power specially insofar as they substitute for, conflict with, or complement the democratic culture among individuals, officials, government, and citizens. The relationship between democratic culture and societal development in this research are emphasizing on development towards democracy of Thai society. What cultural componenets or factors of Thai society that smoothly companionable with democracy. And what situations these componenets could replace non-democratic characters of

Thai cultural characteristics. How to place democratic values for developing Thai societal development towards democracy is my central concern.

### **Democratic Culture in Further Development of Society towards Democratization**

The level of democracy determines not only our individual development, but also fosters social and economic evolution of the whole communities. Therefore, democratic management is the best solution to develop, however, it is possible only when we act in the atmosphere of freedom where trust culture is commonly acceptable and required by every member of the society. In order to function in democratic culture there are implemented various formal legal remedies. A new democratic government needs to support a citizenry with high levels of democracy with trust in public institutions and with the habit of not relying on inter-personal relations. A deficiency of a culture of democracy is often said to be a serious obstacle for further development of democracy. One essential factor for the development of democracy is generalized trust (Inglehart, 1996; Sztompka, 1999; Uslaner, 1999; Newton, 2001). When we say that someone is trustworthy, we implicitly mean that the probability that he will perform an action that is beneficial or at least not detrimental to us is high enough for us to consider engaging in some form of cooperation with him (Gambetta, 1988).

### **Methodology**

The research methodology used in this study is mixed method by both quantitative and qualitative methods, specifically conducted by theories and concepts of democracy, democratic culture, and societal development proposed by Dahl (1986), Zaufanie (1998), Boutros-Ghali, UN (2002), OECD (2000, 2004), Balkin (2004), Holden (2008), and Welzel and Inglehart (2008). The total number of 2,665 questionnaires was mailed to 13 target groups of Thai people in six regions, employed by multi-stage sampling techniques, as followed: political official, government official, public enterprise official, academic and university lecturer, entrepreneur in business and industry from private sector, worker from private organization, mass media worker, merchant, farmer and fishermen, wage - earner or labor, student, non - governmental organization staff, and the group of other careers from all sectors of Thai society. In addition, personal interviews with 390 informants were purposively drawn, sufficient and specific to explore the emergence of democratic culture scheme that reached a saturation point with this number. Both interview schedule and mailed questionnaire were synopsized from those above theories to explore a field from October 2014 to February 2015.

The article provides a framework of issues for author to consider when designing research based on trust and honesty interaction. This framework is then used to analyze the collecting data from field research. The methodology is mixed method by both quantitative - a *test*, its reliability was ensured by examining two criteria: (1)

internal consistency; Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of the test is 0.937 (Howell, 2007), (2) sensitivity; the test has a discriminatory power to exclude the level of both variables, and qualitative methods – a *semi-structured interview*, designed for probing real opinions of the respondents. Both instruments were modified from theoretical framework, relevant to Thai context and affected to democratic culture building. While a test provides numerical indicator of the observed phenomena, a semi-structured interview sheds light to the causes.

## Selection of Sample

This research is an exploratory attempt. The sample was selected by way of multi-stage sampling that was a blending of a simple random sampling, a purposive sampling, and a quota sampling. First, the population was segmented into mutually exclusive sub-groups based on the stakeholders or interest groups of Thai society. They were grouped by determining the three major groups of people in a political system: official groups, politician groups, and people categorized from major career groups in Thailand. All 13 career groups, then, had purposively drawn from those three major groups of people. The sampling frame, sampling unit, target population, sections of sampling unit and sample size were displayed on Table 1.

**Table 1: The sampling selection by way of multi-stage sampling**

Sampling Frame	Sampling Unit (Random Sampling)	Target Population 13 Groups from 6 regions (Purposive Sampling)	Sections of Sampling Unit (Quota Sampling)	n (2,665) Test	n (390) Interview
Thai People In 6 Regions: 1) North 2) North-East 3) Central 4) East 5) West 6) South	Stakeholders or Interest Groups of Thai People in three major groups of political system: 1) Official groups 2) Politician Groups 3) People from All career groups	-Politicians	Members of the Assembly, Senators	205	30
		-Official Groups	Officials, Teachers, Doctors, Nurses, Soldiers, Naval officers, Air Force officers, Policemen	205	30
		-Public Enterprise Officials	PE officials, Public servants in Public Enterprise Organisations	205	30
		-Lecturers	Lecturers in Universities	205	30
		-Entrepreneurs	Businessmen from companies and private organisations	205	30
		-Workers of Private Organisations	Workers from companies and private organisations	205	30
		-Journalists	Workers from Media organizations	205	30
		-Sellers	Merchants and sellers	205	30
		-Farmers	Farmers, gardeners	205	30
		-Labors	Labors	205	30
		-Students	Students from schools and universities	205	30
		-NGOs	NGOs,	205	30
		-General Groups	Housekeepers, Retired Officials, Old groups	205	30
			<b>2,665</b>	<b>390</b>	

Source: The author's own design (Jittaruttha, 2015)

As portrayed in Table 1, the sampling unit was consisted of official groups, politicians, public enterprise officials, lecturers, entrepreneurs, workers from private organization,



journalists and news reporters, sellers, farmers, labors, students, NGOs, and general groups. After purposively selecting 13 career groups of people, the sampling unit was then judged by quota sampling selection from various sources at 2,665 respondents for statistical testing purpose. From those respondents, 390 persons were purposively chosen for interviewing, sufficient and specific to explore the emergence of power distance scheme that reached a saturation point with this respondent number.

## **Data Analysis**

On data analyzing, the process of hypothesis testing of Thai citizens' perception was used by several statistical methods as followed: Percentage, Mean or average, Standard Deviation (SD), F-Test, Two - Way ANOVA operated by using Fixed Effect Model, Paired Sample Test with Fisher's Least Significant Difference (LSD), Pearson's Correlation Coefficient, and T - test. These statistical methods were employed to verify the results for hypothesis and research questions. As for qualitative analysis, factor analysis of dimensions of democratic culture and dimensions of Thai societal development towards democracy were employed as well.

## **Findings**

After data collecting, from October 2014 to February 2015, findings are as followed.

### **1) Citizens' perceptions on democratic culture**

The results showed that the respondents in 6 regions perceived on democratic culture at a high level (mean 3.51 and SD 0.933). The means of perceptions were separately divided into three components of democratic culture: 1) 'individual or people' dimension - at a high level (mean 3.99), 2) 'political officials and public servants' dimension - at a moderate level (mean 3.20), and 3) 'development of democratic values in a whole' dimension - at a moderate level (3.36). The level of perceptions were divided into five orders and arranged in ascending order. Democratic culture in north-eastern region was perceived at the highest ranking (mean 3.62). Next below are the people's perception from western region (mean 3.55), eastern region (mean 3.52), southern region (mean 3.49), northern region (mean 3.48), and people's perception from central region is at the lowest order (mean 3.47).

**Table 2: Comparison of Attitude and perception's level on 'democratic culture' of Thai citizens (Mean, Standard Deviation Value, F value. F prob) N=2,581 - categorized by career and region**

Career	Statistic Value	Region						State 6 regions	F value	F prob
		North	North-East	Central	East	West	South			
1 Politicians	Mean	3.96	3.61	3.67	3.84	3.87	3.41	3.72	9.913	0.000
	S.D	0.395	0.546	0.409	0.657	0.365	0.154	0.463		
	n	25	27	91	20	15	13	191		
2 Official Groups	Mean	3.68	4.21	3.57	4.21	3.96	3.72	3.77		
	S.D	0.650	0.506	0.556	0.608	0.357	0.136	0.576		
	n	25	24	89	20	15	25	198		
3 Public Enterprise	Mean	3.59	3.52	3.60	3.48	3.70	3.19	3.54		
	S.D	0.463	0.467	0.531	0.427	0.345	0.080	0.473		
	n	25	29	90	20	16	25	205		
4 Lecturers	Mean	4.00	4.60	3.52	3.44	3.41	3.38	3.63		
	S.D	0.633	0.299	0.417	0.561	0.486	0.121	0.553		
	n	25	15	89	20	15	25	189		
5 Entrepreneurs	Mean	3.39	3.61	3.38	3.52	3.30	3.56	3.44		
	S.D	0.522	0.442	0.507	0.529	0.342	0.115	0.465		
	n	25	24	89	18	15	25	196		
6 Private org. Workers	Mean	3.06	3.16	3.39	3.22	3.14	3.40	3.28		
	S.D	0.492	0.321	0.521	0.673	0.627	0.140	0.500		
	n	26	30	90	20	15	25	206		
7 Medias	Mean	3.37	3.76	3.40	3.61	3.63	3.22	3.45		
	S.D	0.540	0.406	0.328	0.402	0.426	0.116	0.396		
	n	24	23	90	20	14	25	196		
8 Sellers	Mean	3.37	3.67	3.24	3.03	3.50	3.62	3.37		
	S.D	0.543	0.759	0.534	0.605	0.250	0.161	0.564		
	n	25	30	90	14	15	25	199		
9 Farmers	Mean	3.21	3.65	3.48	3.57	3.58	3.62	3.51		
	S.D	0.465	0.781	0.422	0.661	0.632	0.107	0.528		
	n	25	30	85	20	15	25	200		
10 Labors	Mean	3.30	3.38	3.38	3.50	3.59	3.61	3.43		
	S.D	0.425	0.337	0.473	0.490	0.884	0.082	0.471		
	n	25	30	79	20	15	25	194		
11 Students	Mean	3.11	3.36	3.54	3.33	3.38	3.58	3.43		
	S.D	0.445	0.377	0.579	0.552	0.206	0.355	0.508		
	n	25	30	89	20	15	25	204		
12 NGOs	Mean	3.61	3.33	3.46	3.29	3.56	3.52	3.46		
	S.D	0.635	0.414	0.365	0.546	0.231	0.322	0.428		
	n	25	28	87	20	15	25	200		
13 Others	Mean	3.64	3.83	3.49	3.63	3.59	3.41	3.58		
	S.D	0.391	0.631	0.518	0.226	0.256	0.119	0.475		
	n	25	26	87	20	15	12	185		
All Careers	Mean	3.48	3.62	3.47	3.52	3.55	3.49	3.51	18.951	.000
	S.D	0.580	0.604	0.490	0.600	0.490	0.236	0.511		
	n	325	346	1,145	252	195	300	2,563		
F-value and F-prob on the test of 'Democratic culture' impact cooperated with different careers and regions								5.084	.000	

Source: Results of data analyses from data collection (questionnaire) in field research (October 2014-February 2015)

Stratifying by their occupations, most respondent in 13 career groups perceived on democratic culture at a high level (except merchants group and workers from private organizations who perceived democratic culture at a moderate one), but were slightly different by mean values measurement. Government officials group perceived on democratic culture at the highest order (mean 3.77). Next below are the political officials group (mean 3.72), academic and university lecturers group (mean 3.63), people's perception from the group of other careers (mean 3.58), public enterprise officials (mean 3.54), farmers and fishermen group (mean 3.51), non-governmental organization staffs group (mean 3.46), mass media workers group (mean 3.45), entrepreneurs in business and industry from private sector group (mean 3.44), wage - earners or labors group (mean 3.43) - at the same level of students group (mean 3.43), merchants group (mean 3.37), and workers from private organizations perceived on democratic culture at the lowest order (mean 3.28).

The results of statistical test by Two-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) with fixed effects model revealed as followed: in a factorial experiment with "career factor" - the *difference* between two career groups about perceptions on democratic culture is statistically *significant* (p-value <0.05) and variance = 18.951, in a factorial experiment with "regional factor" - the *difference* between two regional groups about perceptions on democratic culture is statistically *significant* (p-value <0.05) and variance = 9.913. The correlation test between career and regional factors is statistically *significant* (p-value <0.05) and  $r=5.084$ . This means interaction between career and regional factors has affected to the level of perceptions on democratic culture. The conclusion illustrated that different career groups in different regions have influenced to different levels of perceptions on democratic culture.

## **2) Citizens' attitudes and perceptions on Thai societal development**

The results showed that the respondents in 6 regions perceived on Thai societal development at a high level (mean 3.51 and SD 0.933). The means of attitudes and perceptions were separately divided to three components of Thai societal development: 1) stage 1- 'increasing power from getting more resources' - citizens' attitudes and perceptions on this stage are at a high level (mean 3.58), 2) stage 2 - 'increasing power from getting knowledge and encouraging to be wise' - citizens' attitudes and perceptions on this stage are at a high level (mean 3.79), and 3) stage 3 - 'increasing power from law' - citizens' attitudes and perceptions on this stage are at a high level (mean 3.53). The level of attitudes and perceptions were divided into five orders and arranged in ascending order. Thai societal development in southern region was perceived at the highest ranking (mean 3.99). Next below are the people's perception from north-eastern region (mean 3.64), eastern region (mean 3.62), central region (mean 3.60), northern region (mean 3.58), and people's attitudes and perceptions from western region is at the lowest order (mean 3.47).

**Table 3: Comparison of Attitudes and perceptions' level on 'Thai Societal Development' of Thai citizens (Mean, Standard Deviation Value, F value. F prob) N=2,581 - categorized by career and region**

Career	Statistic Value	Region						State 6 regions	F value	F prob	
		North	North-East	Central	East	West	South				
1 Politicians	Mean	3.99	3.57	3.88	3.96	3.90	3.85	3.86	22.833	0.000	
	S.D	0.447	0.611	0.595	0.785	0.214	0.509	0.584			
	n	25	27	91	20	15	13	191			
2 Official Groups	Mean	3.73	4.08	3.60	4.24	4.17	4.38	3.88			
	S.D	0.747	0.424	0.544	0.669	0.499	0.248	0.619			
	n	25	24	89	20	15	25	198			
3 Public Enterprise	Mean	3.75	3.37	3.61	3.40	3.46	3.31	3.52			
	S.D	0.58	0.72	0.63	0.37	0.30	0.22	0.57			
	n	25	29	90	20	16	25	205			
4 Lecturers	Mean	3.97	4.65	3.78	3.45	3.32	4.22	3.86			
	S.D	0.716	0.188	0.589	0.680	0.857	0.172	0.669			
	n	25	15	89	20	15	25	189			
5 Entrepreneurs	Mean	3.66	3.68	3.66	3.80	3.30	4.20	3.72			
	S.D	0.626	0.532	0.517	0.529	0.477	0.244	0.545			
	n	25	24	88	18	15	25	195			
6 Private org. Workers	Mean	3.14	3.27	3.43	3.22	3.37	3.43	3.35			
	S.D	0.784	0.422	0.584	0.743	0.747	0.242	0.597			
	n	26	30	90	20	15	25	206			
7 Medias	Mean	3.54	3.43	3.31	3.74	3.56	3.28	3.41			
	S.D	0.792	0.522	0.498	0.444	0.598	0.145	0.534			
	n	24	23	90	20	14	25	196			
8 Sellers	Mean	3.44	3.74	3.37	3.29	3.25	4.38	3.55			
	S.D	0.564	0.705	0.783	0.692	0.488	0.204	0.749			
	n	25	30	88	14	15	25	197			
9 Farmers	Mean	3.22	3.70	3.68	3.76	3.65	4.45	3.73			
	S.D	0.555	0.722	0.800	0.789	0.696	0.229	0.763			
	n	25	30	85	20	15	25	200			
10 Labors	Mean	3.25	3.31	3.56	3.61	3.64	4.46	3.61			
	S.D	0.539	0.208	0.928	0.572	0.742	0.152	0.769			
	n	25	30	79	20	15	25	194			
11 Students	Mean	3.24	3.48	3.70	3.51	3.53	3.85	3.60			
	S.D	0.757	0.496	0.682	0.527	0.443	0.549	0.641			
	n	25	30	89	20	15	25	204			
12 NGOs	Mean	3.74	3.33	3.50	3.48	3.17	3.95	3.53			
	S.D	0.719	0.568	0.531	0.700	0.284	0.469	0.593			
	n	25	28	87	20	15	25	200			
13 Others	Mean	3.83	3.77	3.67	3.62	3.53	4.16	3.72			
	S.D	0.568	0.718	0.728	0.492	0.411	0.162	0.648			
	n	25	26	87	20	15	12	185			
All Careers	Mean	3.58	3.60	3.60	3.63	3.53	3.99	3.64	15.789	.000	
	S.D	0.702	0.637	0.670	0.669	0.597	0.515	0.661			
	n	325	346	1,142	252	195	300	2,560			
F-value and F-prob on the test of 'Thai Societal Development' impact cooperated with different careers and regions								4.713			.000

Source: Results of data analyses from data collection (questionnaire) in field research (October 2014-February 2015)

Stratifying by their occupations, most respondent in 13 career groups perceived on Thai societal development at a high level (except workers from private organizations who perceived Thai societal development at a moderate one), but were slightly different by mean values measurement. Government officials group perceived on Thai societal development at the highest order (mean 4.03). Next below are the academic and university lecturers group (mean 3.90), political officials group (mean 3.86), people's attitudes and perceptions from the group of other careers (mean 3.76), farmers and fishermen group (mean 3.74), entrepreneurs in business and industry from private sector group (mean 3.72), wage - earners or labors group (mean 3.64), merchants group (mean 3.58), students group (mean 3.55), non-governmental organization staffs group (mean 3.53), public enterprise officials (mean 3.48), mass media workers group (mean 3.47), and workers from private organizations perceived on Thai societal development at the lowest order (mean 3.31).

The results of statistical test by Two-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) with fixed effects model revealed as followed: in a factorial experiment with "career factor" - the *difference* between two career groups about attitudes and perceptions on Thai societal development is statistically *significant* ( $p$ -value  $<0.05$ ) and variance = 15.789, in a factorial experiment with "regional factor" - the *difference* between two regional groups about attitudes and perceptions on Thai societal development is statistically *significant* ( $p$ -value  $<0.05$ ) and variance = 22.833. The correlation test between career and regional factors is statistically *significant* ( $p$ -value  $<0.05$ ) and  $r = 4.713$ . This means interaction between career and regional factors has affected to the level of attitudes and perceptions on Thai societal development. The conclusion illustrated that different career groups in different regions have influenced to different levels of attitudes and perceptions on Thai societal development.

### **3) Relationship between democratic culture and Thai societal development**

The results revealed that democratic culture - an independent variable, which was perceived by the citizen was negatively correlated with Thai societal development - a dependent variable and statistically *significant* ( $r = .599$ ). Their relationship was in the opposite direction at a low level. Besides, they were relatively in one-way relationship. If citizen's perception on democratic culture is at a high level, their attitude and perception about societal development will not necessary to be at a high level. On the other hand, if their perception on democratic culture is at a low level, their attitude and perception about societal development will not necessary to be at a low level, too. The statistical conclusion also revealed that correlation between these variables is at a low level.

Besides, the result from statistically test by F-test, Two-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) at statistically *significant* 0.05 also provided the conclusion as followed. As for democratic culture factor - at least two different groups of people perceived the level of democratic culture differently. People in different regions perceived the level

of democratic culture differently. The co-effect of factorial experiment between career factor and regional one of this factor showed statistically *significant* ( $r = 5.084$ ) of their correlation. As for Thai societal development factor – at least two different groups of people perceived the level of Thai societal development differently. People in different regions perceived the level of Thai societal development differently. The co-effect of factorial experiment between career factor and regional one of this factor showed statistically *significant* ( $r = 4.713$ ) of their correlation. (See Table 4)

**Table 4: Correlation between ‘democratic culture’ and ‘Thai societal development’ of citizens’ attitudes and perception(r, t-prob) N=2,581 - categorized by career and region**

	career		Individual		Officials		Whole Democratic Culture		Thai Societal Development		region	
	r	t-prob	r	t-prob	r	t-prob	r	t-prob	r	t-prob	r	t-prob
<b>career</b>			.008	.673	-.146**	.000	-.147**	.000	-.086**	.000	-.007	.717
<b>Individual</b>	.008	.673			.196**	.000	.311**	.000	.409**	.000	.081**	.000
<b>Officials</b>	-.146**	.000	.196**	.000			.734**	.000	.535**	.000	-.052**	.008
<b>Whole Democratic Culture</b>	-.147**	.000	.311**	.000	.734**	.000			.599**	.000	-.050*	.010
<b>Thai Societal Development</b>	-.086**	.000	.409**	.000	.535**	.000	.599**	.000			.129**	.000
<b>region</b>	-.007	.717	.081**	.000	-.052**	.008	-.050*	.010	.129**	.000		

\*\*statistical significant at the level of 0.01 (two-tails)

Source: Results of statistical analyses

#### 4) Values and Behaviors reflecting apparent democratic culture VS those expectations of citizens

The results portrayed disparity between apparent democratic culture and desirable democratic culture that has been expected by the people at a high level. Citizens’ expectations on democratic culture were prioritized in five dimensions as followed: (1) ‘individual or people’ dimension – the result is at a high level (mean 3.99) and nearly meet with citizens’ expectations, particularly on the perceptions of individual rights and freedom that respect to those of others. Interviewees of 91.2 % had strong agreement and satisfaction with this matter; 2) ‘political officials and public servants’ dimension - the result is at a moderate level (mean 3.20) and not so much respond to citizens’ expectations, particularly on the trust to officials. Interviewees of 70.8 % were not confidential that public resources were effectively, efficiency, and properly used by political officials. Interviewees of 51.2 % perceived that daily public service operations

for business were not responsive and active, but rather operated in paralyzing process; 3) 'development of democratic values in a whole' dimension - the result is at a moderate level (3.36). The results revealed both dissatisfaction factors and those that meet citizens' expectations and with similar proportion and different proportion as well.

From above results, the level of perceptions were arranged in ascending order and categorized into five indicators. Those indicators that nearly meet with citizens' perceptions are correctness, value individuals' dignity, not conform to authority power, individual freedom, and acceptance of differences in plurality. But the factors that far away from their expectations are fairness, impartiality and public trust maintaining, transparency, preserving resources with effective using, equity, and commitment to excellence of public service.

### **5) Powers reflecting existence of Thai societal development towards democracy VS those expectations of citizens**

The results also portrayed disparity between apparent Thai societal development towards democracy and those expectations of the people at a high level. Citizens' attitudes and expectations on Thai societal development towards democracy were prioritized in five dimensions as followed: firstly, stage 1- 'increasing power from getting more resources' - citizens' attitudes and perceptions on this stage are at a high level (mean 3.58), and rarely meet with citizens' expectations, particularly on corruption problem. Interviewees of 87.8% had strong dissatisfaction with this problem that exploited enormous public resources that should have been used for citizens as following reasons - corruption was occurred very long time ago and rarely hard to be eliminated (27.3%), corruption is bad behavior that must be eliminated (21.8%), there is more perceived corruption by people but scandals are usually covered up by politicians (14.6%), law enforcement dysfunction to punish officials who did wrong (14.3%), autocratic or oligarchic governments are based on cooptation and spoil system (9.8%). Next, interviewees of 87.6% had less confident of getting more resources, using better public services, and having modern and well- being life as following reasons – quality and regularity of getting resources are due to each public organization or situations (33.7%), selfish of authorities who emphasize on their personal interest rather than public interest (27.1%), government does not well plan in allocating resources for sustainable public interest (26.8%).

Secondly, stage 2 - 'increasing power from getting knowledge and encouraging to be wise' – although citizens' attitudes and perceptions on this stage are at a high level (mean 3.79), but most interviewees did not satisfy with social justice and fairness because they perceived that officials show unequally authoritarian values and unfair treatment for people (70.8%). As for the contribution of government to strengthen civil sector and democracy institutions, interviewees respond to this issue both in satisfaction (53.3%) and in dissatisfaction (43,2) as well but slightly different in confident proportion. Lastly, stage 3 - 'increasing power from law' - citizens' attitudes

and perceptions on this stage are at a high level (mean 3.53) and most interviewees satisfied with getting their opportunities on education policy (67.9). Most interviewees are also willing to practice their freedom by constitutional law which can lead to liberal values (86.2).

From above results, the level of attitudes and perceptions were arranged in ascending order and categorized into five indicators. Those indicators of power that nearly meet with citizens' perceptions are capability of decision-making, willing to practice much more freedom, freedom expression, practicing freedom to liberal values, and equality in opportunity. But the power factors that far away from their expectations are modernity, clever and smart, empower of knowledge, empower of justice law's knowledge, people know their rights and freedom followed as constitutional law.

### **6) Major barriers of democratic culture affecting to Thai societal development**

The results reveal factors which are barriers of democratic culture affecting to Thai societal development, consisted of: 1) patronage system's values, 2) distance of power, 3) non-democratic spirit's leader, 4) inefficient bureaucracy, 5) lack of public servant's value and professionalism, 6) insufficient knowledge of people, 7) inequality of law enforcement, 8) lack of people's participation, 9) corruption crisis, 10) lack of promoting human capital and good quality of life of people. The interesting finding of this research is the citizens' attitudes and perceptions on *'political officials and public servants' dimension*, which show the negative attitudes and perceptions at a moderate level, especially on corruption problem which is the major cause of weak democratic culture. The results from both questionnaire and semi-structure interview are congruent and relevant to obstacle of Thai societal development towards democracy. The conclusion reveals people's dissatisfaction about their power from getting more resources because of corruption problem, deep rooted in Thai society values: patronage value, power value, patron and client system, nepotism, and spoil system. Those above values which create corruption problem decrease trust in government, bureaucracy, political officials, and public servants. Sample unit from all 13 career groups in 6 regions strong agreed that corruption was the major cause affecting to Thai societal development towards democracy.

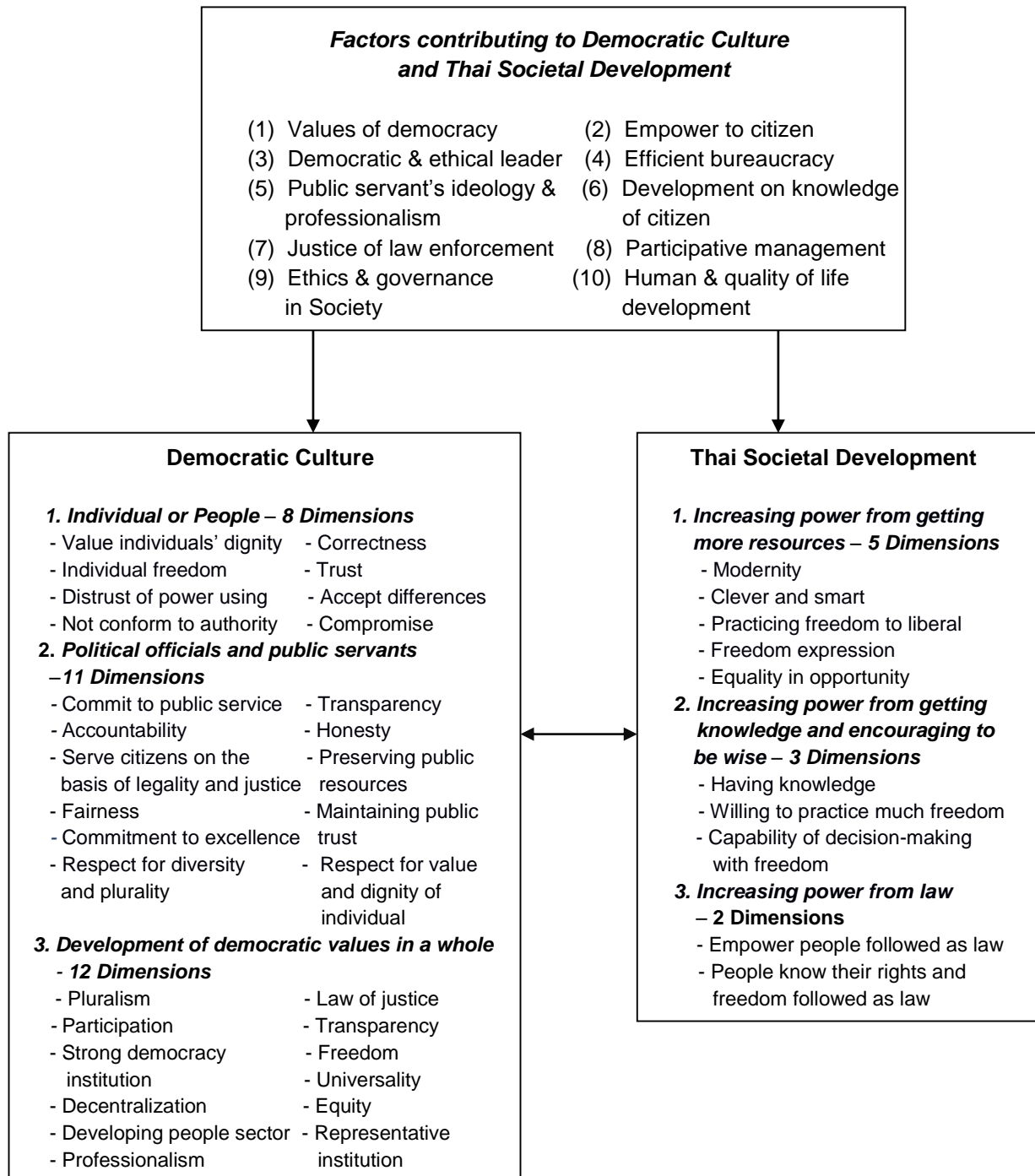
### **7) Determinant factors to strengthen democratic culture affecting to Thai societal development**

The results reveal ten determinant factors to promote democratic culture which can affect to Thai societal development towards democracy as followed: (1) values of democracy, (2) empower to citizen, (3) democratic and ethical Leader, (4) efficient bureaucracy, (5) public servant's ideology and professionalism, (6) development on knowledge of citizen, (7) justice of law enforcement, (8) participative management, (9) ethics and governance in society, and (10) human and quality of life development.



These cultural dimensions will also sustain and strengthen democratic values and behaviors among citizen in Thai society as a figure illustrated below.

**Figure 2: Factors Contributing to Democratic Culture and Thai Societal Development**



Sources: Results of data analyses and syntheses from data collection (questionnaire and structured interview) in field research (October 2014 - February 2015)

**Conclusions**

This research postulates that there is sufficiently empirical evidence to conclude that

1. Citizen's perception on Thai democratic culture is at a high level.
2. Both variables of 'democratic culture' and 'Thai societal development' are at a low level correlation, in negative relation, and in opposite direction.
3. Democratic culture and Thai societal development that people perceive in daily life are very different from those that they expect.
4. The selection of possible means for contributing democratic culture and Thai societal development is based upon these followed determinant factors: values of democracy, empower to citizen, democratic spirit and ethical leader, efficient bureaucracy, public servant's Ideology and professionalism, development on knowledge of citizen, law of justice enforcement, participative management, ethics and governance in society, and human and quality of life development. These cultural dimensions will help sustain and contribute democratic culture among Thai citizen stronger.
5. Democratic culture values orientations that encourage the individual to seek for dignity, freedom, fairness, and equality will lead to the shared values of democracy at the collective level. Getting these values, one should take into consideration to what supportive preconditions of promoting democracy factor, which are safeguarded by macro-level factors, with regard to public interest and quality of life for all stakeholders of Thai citizen.

The conclusion and recommendation give support to theories and concepts of democratic culture and society development that proposed by Dahl (1986), Zaufanie (1998), Boutros-Ghali: UN (2002), OECD (2000, 2004), Balkin (2004), Holden (2008), and Welzel and Inglehart (2008). Democratic culture among citizen allows people to see other members of the community not as enemies or strangers, but as fellow citizens; it encourages tolerance for pluralism and a variety of ways of life. Its ultimate outcome is devotion to promote and provide value of freedom and equal dignity of mankind.

## **Discussion**

Culture that deeply opposes democracy will intercept wide-spread of democratic normative in society, or refuse legitimacy of democratic institutions, and create much complexity. Huntington (1991) pointed that cultural theory and society's democratization can emerge in two patterns. The restricted scheme offers that only western culture can propose fundamental elements that fit for democratic institutions development. But the cultures of non-western countries are vividly seen as the enemies of democratization. The critical issue which scholar should pay attention is that any principal cultures of any nations do have some components which are suitably companionable with democracy principles. Protestant and Catholic culture are the good examples of cultures that have components of non-democracy values. Interesting issue for discussion is what cultural components or factors of Thai society that smoothly companionable with democracy. And what situations these components

could replace non-democratic characters of Thai cultural characteristics. In addition, there has an issue of cultural influence to change societal behaviors beneath power of distance dimension. Because in the countries which have 'high' power of distance: Philippines, Venezuela, and China, tyrant leaders or dictators usually try to change everything and command by using top-down management style. If people can get more power, thus, this factor reflects to societal development towards democracy of that state.

The discussion provides two critical issues. Firstly, *democratic culture*, it concludes that democratic culture required four values as followed: 1) democratic values in society, 2) democratic spirit and ethical leader, 3) purified bureaucratic culture, 4) public servant's ideology and professionalism. The author (as same as Putnam: 1973) agreed with Almond and Verba (1965), two scholars who proposed civil culture's concept. Their important finding is that suitable civic culture is vital factor of democracy consolidation. Their study also challenges general thought that culture is maintaining identity and regulations and also consolidating democracy. This proposal has influenced many theorists who strong agreed with them that appropriate culture was most important factor cultivating democracy among the other cultures. Because it can defeat bias derived from ethnocentrism that western culture is more proper with democratic values than other cultures. Lastly, *Thai societal development towards democracy*, it concludes that leading Thai societal development towards democracy, it required six values as followed: 1) empower to citizen, 2) development on knowledge of citizen, 3) justice of law enforcement, 4) participative management, 5) ethics and governance in society, and 6) human and quality of life development. The author agreed with the conclusion about democratic culture proposed by Boutros-Ghali, UN (2002) that true democratic culture exists and goes beneath structure of ethical institutions. It means tolerant and respectful thought to the others. These attitudes urge plurality and balance of power through the importance of citizens' participation. As followed by the attempt of UN to stimulate democratic culture in world society, they suggested five values and behaviors reflecting democratic culture: 1) participation, 2) plurality, 3) strong democracy institutions, 4) decentralization, and 5) development of people sector (Boutros-Ghali, UN, 2002: 176). Since the interaction between democratic culture and world society development within this conceptual frame can be applied universally, though each society has its specific contexts with different social, economic and cultural environments. Moreover, this proposal has objectivity and give first priority to contribute the way of equality.

## **Implication and Further Study for Democratic Cultural Management**

The research gives an overview of democratic culture which is relied both upon the values and behaviors reflecting in freedom of individuals and shared valued of governance in society as well. Besides the research emphasizes on the importance of individuals' participation to shape and distribute democratic culture. In addition, it also draws attention to empower Thai citizen into the stage that leads to highest development of Thai society, increasing power of citizen from law (Welzel and Inglehart, 2008). Societal development by law will happen when citizens have their power increasing from law which can use to measure advancement within the conditions of democratic society. It highlights democratic culture as a critical issue in managing public organizations which could also be applied to business corporations. It shows that, in the process of building strong democratic culture among individuals, officials, public organizations, or citizen in governance state and in the process of applying facilitation strategies to support democratic culture, those ten indicators described above should be first prioritized taken into consideration.

Notwithstanding the research regarding the links between democratic culture and Thai societal development towards democracy, including social value of democracy and equality, the crisis issues relevant to democratic culture and its influence on public governance have not been systematically explored in current public administration literatures. Consequently, the following question arises: *“Should governments that consider culture in their approach to democratic culture management and adjust facilitating strategies be more successful in achieving expected results of organizational culture than those governments which neglect culture in their democratic approach?”* This query should be addressed in further empirical study.

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