

Empowerment of the few and disempowerment of the many - disempowerment in thai 'one tambon one product' organizations (OTOPS) / Thomas Diefenbach

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Abstrak

Thai 'One Tambon One Product' organisations (OTOPs) have had considerable economic success since their initiation by the Thai government in 2001. However, in contrast to their ever-increasing economic relevance, OTOps' contributions to social development have been acknowledged and interrogated only very little. In particular the issue of empowerment, a key component of any social development whether within organisations, at community or even societal level, is strangely absent from any discourse about OTOps. This article looks at how far the idea of empowerment is realised within Thai OTOps - or how far it is not realised. For this, a three-dimensional concept of empowerment has been developed and applied. The data show a rather mixed picture with regard to empowerment; only some people are empowered whereas many others are systematically disempowered. OTOps seem to contribute to quite some extent to the further strengthening of existing patterns of social dominance, stratification and inequalities.

Organisasi Thai 'One Tambon One Product' (OTOPs) mengalami keberhasilan secara ekonomi sejak inisiasi yang dilakukan oleh pemerintah Thai di tahun 2001. Namun, meskipun mengalami peningkatan secara ekonomi, kontribusi OTOp terhadap pengembangan sosial dinilai sangat kecil.

Terkait dengan hal pemberdayaan, komponen utama dari pengembangan sosial baik di dalam organisasi, pada tingkat komunitas atau masyarakat masih belum muncul dari wacana mengenai OTOp. Artikel ini melihat sejauh mana ide mengenai pemberdayaan direalisasikan dalam OTOp Thai - atau sejauh mana hal tersebut tidak direalisasikan. Untuk itu, konsep tiga dimensi pemberdayaan telah dikembangkan dan diterapkan. Data menunjukkan adanya gambaran yang bervariasi terkait pemberdayaan; hanya beberapa orang diberdayakan sementara banyak orang-orang yang secara sistematis tidak diberdayakan. OTOp terlihat cukup berkontribusi pada penguatan pola dominasi, stratifikasi dan ketidaksetaraan sosial yang sudah ada.