

Sufficiency Economy ... Application to the Education Sector¹

“...good education will be the foundation of and a factor for creativity. Thus, it shall necessarily be supported by other areas of education. That is, education teaches everything; thinking, emotion, and behavior. This will be the important factor in training and disciplining individuals to have thoughts, intelligence, and strength in becoming reasonable, honest, careful, and responsible people. They will know how to make the right decisions. More importantly, they will be equipped with diligence and industriousness, and attempt as much as they possibly can to achieve their goals by themselves. Therefore, those involved in education must be aware that they have to provide the best and most well-rounded education to the youth of today. Students must understand that studying hard for such a long time brings success and prosperity to their life in one part...”

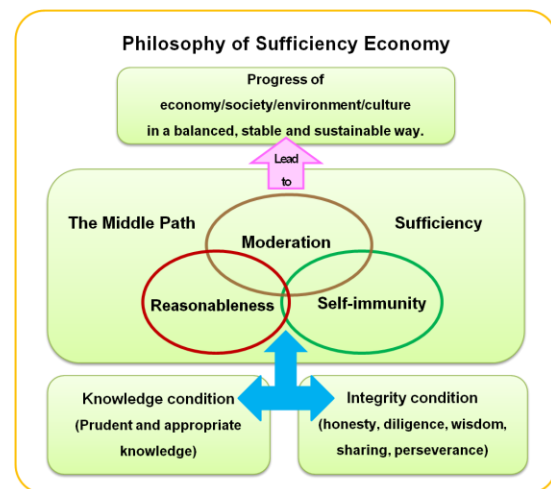
Royal Speech given to teachers and students attending awards, 11 July 1979

The Sufficiency Economy philosophy contains 3 key components: moderation, reasonableness, and a self-immunity system. To successfully apply such philosophy involves the principles of theoretical knowledge, morality, and way of life. There are 3 steps in applying this philosophy.

Step 1: thoroughly study Sufficiency Economy in order to realize its values and to have faith in applying this philosophy.

Step 2: all sectors, from the household to the national level, must work together in driving the philosophy into practice.

Step 3: regularly use the philosophy in leading one's life so that it becomes part of the Thai lifestyle.



The Role of teachers

Teachers must be a role model for students by first practicing a sufficient way of life before transferring such experiences to students, so that they truly understand and are able to apply the philosophy into their daily life.

Leading a sufficient life must begin with the realization of people living together harmoniously within an ecological system. People must truly understand the principle of sufficiency economy so that they realize that such principles and approaches will strengthen a peaceful, balanced, and sustainable society. In addition, people will live together in harmony and

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Practice for themselves the principles of morality, honesty, and consciousness in leading their lives and performing duties on the basis of reasonableness and moderation in every capacity and circumstance. One must also continue developing knowledge in order to ensure self-immunity against any changes.

Having a significant role in imparting knowledge to students, teachers must ensure careful acquisition of knowledge appropriate to each geographical society.

Driving Sufficiency Economy in Academic Institutions

The Ministry of Education's Center for Promotion of Sufficiency Economy Theory in Schools is the key agency in moving the Sufficiency Economy philosophy into academic institutions. The Center set up the Committee, chaired by the Education Minister, to promote Sufficiency Economy theory in schools. The center has formulated this strategy since 2007 by working closely with concerned agencies, such as the Office of Basic Education Commission (OBEC), Office of Vocational Education Commission (OVEC), Office of Private Education Commission (OPEC), and the Office of Non-Formal and Informal Education Commission (ONIE). In addition, the Center cooperates with local administrations and private firms, such as the Crown Property Bureau and the Siam Commercial Foundation, in formulating curricula based on the concept of Sufficiency Economy, case studies on Sufficiency Economy, and dissemination of the philosophy to academic institutions at all levels.

In evaluating academic institutions under the strategy to promote Sufficiency Economy in schools (2007 – 2011), there are 5 sectors, 17 components, and 62 indicators. The 5 sectors are 1) administration, 2) curriculum and teaching management, 3) learners' development activities, 4) schools' human resources development, and 5) results/success of the implementation.

As for curricula based on Sufficiency Economy, the subject is part of the core curriculum of basic education in 2008 under the social education, religious, and cultural groups. By completing this subject, students will have learned to manage resources necessary for production and consumption, efficiently make use of limited resources, as well as understand the philosophy of sufficiency economy so that one leads balanced life.

Case studies

Suksasongkraw Nang Rong Welfare School, Nang Rong District, Buriram Province

The school supports 10 types of disadvantaged students from primary grade 1 to secondary grade 6, as well as vocational certificates on textile and metals. The school aims at taking care of disadvantaged children and building up their opportunities for learning, self-improvement, and preparing children to become high quality citizens in the future.



The school administration is efficient, able to reduce expenditures, and able to generate more income. Resources have been efficiently utilized. The concept of Sufficiency Economy is widely taught throughout the school, together with related activities in order to create a new way of teaching.

Knowledge

- The learning process according to the Sufficiency Economy philosophy is arranged for teachers who will transfer such knowledge to students. Teachers are evaluated according to their practice of the philosophy.

Morality

- Students must hold to 8 morality codes and complete a learner's quality

development form. The school is administered according to good governance principles, and has implemented project to promote the Buddhist path to those interested.



Moderation

- Activities among all units in school are integrated in order to avoid duplication. Sufficiency Economy principles are included in learning and daily life (life skills) contexts. A school bank project has been introduced, so that students realize the importance of saving.

Reasonableness

- The school produces good, intelligent and happy students. The principle of Sufficiency Economy is integrated within the school curriculum and inserted into students' daily life. Accordingly, students know and understand themselves and others.

Self-Immunity

- Teachers' and students' self-development is promoted. This is accomplished via training, seminars, academic competitions, and study visits. Knowledge and experience thereby gained will improve life skills, enable participants to consciously solve problems, and to survive well in modern society.

Chulapornrajawittayalai Petchaburi School, Cha-am District, Petchaburi Province

Chulapornrajawittayalai Petchburi School is a middle-sized secondary school. It is a co-education and boarding school, teaching secondary grades 1-6.

Vision on the management of sufficiency schools

From the start of its operation in 2005, the school was selected by the Office of National Economic and Social Development Board as a pilot school experimenting with Sufficiency Economy



practices. The school director and teachers are the core parties in driving the project.

Sufficiency Economy principles are applied in 5 working groups. Each working group reflects and transfers the philosophy to its student, so sufficiency principles will automatically be instilled into their behavior. The idea of 5 groups is derived from the school's vision that the school can be compared to 5 key rivers (the Ping, Wang, Yom, Nan, and Pasak rivers) that flow and merge into Thailand's most important river, the Chaopraya.

Each group deals with issues relating to school administration, teaching and learning arrangement, student development, learning center arrangement, and life in



boarding schools. Each group brings the philosophy of Sufficiency Economy into their practice. Such practices will gradually be imparted into the program's primary target: the students. Accordingly, they will be able to automatically apply this philosophy to their daily lives.

Prince Royal College School, Muang District, Chiang Mai Province.

Under the supervision of the Office of Private Education Commission, the Prince Royal College School is an example of an urban school that applies the Sufficiency Economy philosophy to the school administration system. Having learned and recognized such philosophy, students have changed their behavior and practiced living self-sufficient lives. In addition, students have been taught the importance of saving as the way to future security. They learn the concepts of personal finance, such as how to earn, spend, and save money. Occupational training is also promoted so that students learn how to generate income. Furthermore, students will be instilled with the right attitudes towards life and work, such as honesty, diligence, tolerance, and sufficiency.

One Person, One Job, One Occupation: Sufficiency Family

This is an activity that encourages students to use their time effectively, by searching for a job that they are capable of performing, such as grocery store employee, dish-washer, growing vegetables, and making handicrafts. The purpose is to encourage students to earn extra income for their family during their free time. As part of this activity, certain values have been emphasized, such as diligence, hard work, and frugality. This is one of many activities that promote self-learning.

Bottle Bank

This project integrates the Sufficiency Economy concept with the school's 8 core learning concepts. The idea is derived from the huge amount of bottles students use each day, which then become garbage left around the school. The project encourages students to collect those bottles and put them into the bottle bank. This way, they will take

part in environmental protection and be able to earn extra money at the same time.

Reduce global warming by the sufficiency path: from green classroom to green school

A series of campaign and public relations activities have been implemented so that all school members are aware of the impact of global warming. The project includes the following activities;

1) Sustainable travel: Students are encouraged to ride a bicycle or to walk to school instead of riding a motorcycle.

2) Energy saving: Students in primary education grades 1-3 run campaigns to promote electricity and energy saving.



3) Garbage reduction: Students compete in finding solutions to reduce garbage, such as making books from recycled paper, bringing bottles of water to school instead of buying them every day, global warming reduction campaigns, and making organic fertilizer from leftover vegetables and fruits.

4) Expanding the green area: Students in secondary grades 4 and 5 plant trees in the school in order to expand the green area.

Yothinburana School, Bangkok

A large-sized, coeducational school with 3,800 students in secondary grades 1-6 based in the urban Bangkok area, Yothinburana School divides its teaching system into 3 categories: 1) regular classes, 2) English Program and 3) International Program. As it located in an urban area, the school does not have space for agricultural study. Only related knowledge has been transferred via a voluntary program. Students are encouraged to work and help each other, as well as those

outside the school. Therefore, they are able to live cooperatively with other people in society.

The process of making sufficiency school

Having realized the significance of Sufficiency Economy, the school has brought such philosophies into their operations since 2005. The school believes that the Sufficiency Economy principle will develop students' livelihood, and create students who will be well-adjusted, productive citizens.



The method by which students will automatically absorb such concepts into their way of thinking involves repeated and regular practice. Instead of merely being taught by teachers, students work together in a participatory process to thoroughly study the essence of the philosophy that is blended into each subject. In other words, such learning methodology can be thought of as an 'explosion from within'. As a result, students will deeply and intimately understand the concept of Sufficiency Economy. Then, they will jointly initiate and implement activities suitable for their age.



Roong-aroon School, Bangkok

Based on Buddhist principles, Roong-aroon School has applied a holistic approach toward teaching and learning. It is based on the belief that education is itself a learning process. Such processes will develop learners in all aspects and lead them to prosperity. There are 2 components. There are external factors, e.g., true friends who are teachers. Internal factors



include the students' nature; e.g., a learner's desire to learn. These 2 components form the source in designing a new curriculum, namely, "Integration of Life".

Under this curriculum, self-learning is promoted by beginning with issues surrounding learners' lives; their way of life (eating, being, seeing, and listening), environment, and incidents surrounding themselves are connected to other contexts to simultaneously improve life skills, learning skills, knowledge, and values. In that sense, learners are developed so that they understand themselves, are studious, and have a way of thinking that connects to value in a holistic manner, and are therefore self-reliant and happy due, to obtaining true understanding and being able to appropriately respond when faced with any phenomenon.

The school's teaching and learning process corresponds to the philosophy of Sufficient Economy in 2 ways: by integrating into the school's normal practice and by integrating into specific activities/projects in order to solve problems or develop specific practices.

1. School's normal practices. This involves activities which normally occur in everyday life. These practices will build up the relationship between environment and individual in a supportive manner. This is an environment where persons, students, and parents will learn and absorb preferable paths through life, such as living in harmony with nature.

2. Specific activities/projects. Such specific activities and projects are learning processes that provide access to value and self-reliance. Such projects include a waste segregation project that turns waste into resources, a recycling center, an organic produce market, chanting and meditation, and so on.

3. Project-based learning: Such learning processes encourages students to draw their energy into works appropriate for their age. Students are assigned work which reflects real problems of the 21st Century, then work together as a team to solve them. The school will create a learning environment through sensible trial and error practices. They will be able to test and evaluate without being overly concerned with whether an answer is 'right' or 'wrong,' as this learning process is only to test students' way of thinking.



4. Cross-Cultural Understanding. Students will learn how to work with communities both inside and outside the school in order to create 'cross-cultural' learning. This way, students will realize the value of cultural roots and respect others cultures. Students also work jointly with agencies or other institutes so that they learn from each other.

5. Communication Information and Media Literacy. Students will have a chance to present and disseminate their works widely in international languages via modern technology.

6. Cross Value Competency: Having worked on education topics that are based on true social contexts, students will have a chance to learn both academic contexts and life-skill subjects. In addition, teachers and students will learn other important issues behind their work, such as realizing the significance of the interconnectedness of things.

Wangklaikangwon Industrial and Community Education College, Hua Hin, Prachuapkirikhan Province

Under the supervision of the Office of Vocational Education Commission, Wangklaikangwon Industrial and Community Education College produces and develops quality human resources on vocational education.

1) Administration. To drive the Sufficiency Economy philosophy, a college development plan and annual action plan are formulated. Those policies include personnel development,



places and buildings, budget allocation, teaching and learning management, and community services. In academic issues, teaching and learning activities are developed according to the Sufficiency Economy philosophy. The budget is supported by the college itself and by private firms. In addition, the college builds up a relationship with communities by providing a wide range of services, such as the Fixit Center Project, Vocational Education Helping People, 108 Occupations, and Arts and Culture activities.

2) Curriculum, and Teaching and Learning Methods. Teachers prepare a teaching plan focusing on occupational skills under the sufficiency economy philosophy aimed at strengthening skills so that students may apply such skills in their daily lives. The philosophy is incorporated into all subjects. Students have a chance to participate in teaching and learning processes. Learning-aided media is developed in order to facilitate the learning process. In addition, Sufficiency Economy-related knowledge is disseminated to communities so that the public at large is able to apply such information to their everyday lives.

3) Learner development activities.

There There school has implemented student guidance and supervision systems, as well as occupational skill promotion activities with participation from students. Students are encouraged to develop theoretical knowledge related to projects or inventive products. In addition, the college is working with communities in promoting the application of local wisdom, culture, and religious teaching into their own teaching and learning process.

4) College's personnel development.

Seminars, training and study visits are regularly conducted in order to raise awareness and understanding of Sufficiency Economy principles. Students are taught how to apply such principles to their way of life, such as knowing their potential, volunteerism practices, maintaining the Thai way of life, and participating in natural conservation.

Furthermore, there is monitoring and evaluation of personnel development under Sufficiency Economy principles twice a year, with an 8-member-committee formed by executive and teacher representatives. The results of this evaluation will be the indicator for annual promotion and awards. The college also disseminates concepts and performance of its implementation to all staff so that the philosophy is widely recognized and practiced.

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