

SUFFICIENCY ECONOMY: A HAPPINESS DEVELOPMENT APPROACH

*Kaemthong Indaratna, Faculty of Economics, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand,
kaemthong.i@chula.ac.th*

Theme: Inner Transformation

Research domain: Other subjects : Happiness and Sufficiency Economy

ABSTRACT

Happiness has multi-levels. Most people perceive and understand happiness at the basic level. It is mainly hedonic happiness or short-term, temporary happiness from gaining and receiving both materials and non-materials. This basic happiness is based on basic natural instinct. However, human has higher potential than to act upon basic instinct. Human is capable of being extremely destructive as well as constructive. To promote constructive, peaceful and harmonious living together, human must develop happiness toward higher levels. Sufficiency Economy Approach provides a mind cultivating process that is essential for happiness development toward true happiness that is beyond the basic happiness level. Such a higher level happiness is indispensable to mitigate threats to sustainable development. Human must the naturally granted high potentials positively and constructively with broader and longer perspective. Mind training through Sufficiency Economy Approach considers human as the core of development. It focuses on the strength of human's capabilities and potentials to benefit at all levels, individual, community, national and global. But human's mind, without training to think more broadly and ethically, will be highly self-centered, destructive and unethical. Through the happiness development process, human's mind can draw greater happiness from within. Such happiness is less dependent of external influences, produces positive outcomes with higher efficiency and ethics that are crucial for sustainable development

INTRODUCTION

Even if all of us want to be happy but few thoroughly understand happiness. This paper will explain what happiness is and how it is necessary for human to develop happiness toward true happiness. Therefore, one can state that happiness is a process that human must go through to cultivate the mind. As the mind is cultivated, it is possible to achieve higher levels

of happiness. To promote peaceful and harmonious living in the world, human's mind development toward true happiness is essential. Human must go through happiness development process with an aim to develop true happiness that is beyond the basic, hedonic happiness. The means to reach happiness at the higher levels is mind training basically for right understanding, right thinking and right action. The mind is critically important to determine decisions and actions. The first step for right action is to have right understanding. If happiness is so desirable by all and at all levels, it is fundamentally important to understand clearly what happiness is and the process to develop happiness. The paper attempts to explain the link between Sufficiency Economy practice principles and happiness and to elaborate how Sufficiency Economy generates happiness development process leading to more equitable and higher efficiency in resource distribution and utilization.

Happiness: Levels and Dynamics

It is necessary to understand clearly the concept of happiness. Happiness has different levels, ranging from the basic or the general or temporary pleasure or joy to the deeper and true or long-lasting happiness that is free from external influences. Hence happiness can come from both external and internal sources. In addition, happiness is both a means and an end. Therefore, it can be a process as well as an outcome. Happiness is a tool and a means to develop humans because happiness development process cultivates human's mind. With trained mind, human has great potential to develop happiness further toward the high level of true happiness where it is independent of gains or external influences. Such happiness presents freedom from external negative and positive forces. Once a human being reaches the level, he can enjoy all other lower levels of happiness but with greater mindfulness and prudence. No one and nothing can deprive him of happiness. It is a simple happiness that requires fewer resources for self while he will have greater opportunities and will power to encourage and share with others. Hence, humans must be encouraged to develop happiness from the basic level to ascend to the higher level so that he can be truly happy.

It is envisaged that truly happy humans contribute to just and efficient policy and system designs. Hence the benefits of true happiness are ample because with well trained mind, truly happy humans have right thinking pertaining to right livelihood and action based on ethics, knowledge or right reasoning rather than on patronage, nepotism, bias, unjust views. They will promote fair practice, good governance, social responsibility and rely on evidence/information from research & development for sound decisions makings in favor of the interest of the majority.

For most of us happiness is perceived as pleasure, satisfaction or utility as used by economists. Such happiness usually originated from possessing, consuming or gaining goods, services and wealth. The sources of this happiness are mainly derived from material, hedonic and short-term pleasure. This is the primary level of happiness that originates from the desire

to satisfy human's basic needs of both tangibles and intangibles. The latter include feeling such as loving-caring, friendship, admiration, appreciation, and forgiveness. The primary level of happiness that includes pleasure from gaining or receiving is common among all beings. For humans, having adequate economic conditions: income, employment, ownership of resources are as important as non-economic ones such as health/access to health care, friendships, stable family life, freedom, good environment, safety and fairness. All these constitute basic wellbeing and coincide with sources of human security. Hence wellbeing and human security are highly related to happiness, particularly, happiness at the basic level of life. But when we have more than the basic necessary level, human must learn to be altruistic and share their surplus with others rather than continue to gain limitless for self. The continuation of narrow mind will result in resource competition, and natural resource destruction and environmental damage. If allow to proceed, national and international conflicts and wars will be inevitable.

A need of happiness development process

Humans must develop altruistic mind, kindness, caring and sharing. They can gain happiness by giving which is the second level of happiness. It is natural that most humans concentrate on the primary level of happiness that is the happiness from gaining. But human has higher capabilities than develop happiness from basic natural instinct, they must more fully utilize the potentials to develop the happiness further. By giving and sharing, the benefit will be the normal living together in peace and harmony with others. Such kind and sympathetic practice will promote peaceful and safe living environment. In fact, the principle of kindness is consistent with ethical, just and good governance practice. When altruism spread throughout to all humans across national boundaries, races and religions, it will offer desirable worldwide benefits.

However, this second level of happiness must be reached earnestly without expecting return. It must come from the true caring and well-meaning intention as against from the desire for exchange of commercial or political interests. Hence, both at the individual and national level, this true altruism must be developed. For most practice of kindness, it is mainly giving in exchange of receiving some returns. For example, a developed country either bilaterally or multilaterally may provide technical or financial assistance to gain own business interest as an indirect subsidy to own industry or to gain political favor. The impact may be a destruction of natural resources, an obstacle for local technology development and a high dependence on imports and foreign technology. All results in less self-reliance and independence to determine own national priorities. Sooner or later, the conflicts and discontent in host countries may be intensified and result in conflicts, riots, war and terrorism. Besides, the efforts that are seemingly beneficial will incur high damage and remedial costs. Alternatively, if the return is not responded, there may be threats and retaliation in the form of trade war, coercion and deprivation of rights and opportunities.

Similarly in the care of an individual, giving in expectation of returns may cause disappointment and anger. Hence, there may be punishment and damage on the other individual. Both at the individual and national/international level, the result can be intolerable causing social disharmony, violence, and brutality. Such a situation is by no means as pertains to happiness. Hence, giving brings true happiness if it is not attached to expected return. A person or a country should give because it is a chance of being able to do good and appropriate things out of true caring and sharing objective. If there is no return, or even if there is a negative return, it is neither a matter to be concerned nor to be affected because nothing is expected. But an individual and a country must develop such pure altruism to avoid conflicts and risks of violence. In effect, we must respect others, their values. We must treat them fairly or as equals. We should recognize the interdependence of all beings including natural resources and try to avoid doing harms, exploitation.

Following the second level of happiness based pure altruism potentially paves ways to develop happiness from living in balance with nature. One can regard the third level of happiness as living in balance with nature as an extension of the second level of happiness. It is the happiness from appreciating the value of nature and recognizing the connectivity and interdependence between nature and man. Hence all damages and over exploitation of nature must be avoided. At the same time, humans must respect the value of nature whose services are crucial for all existence. Besides, it is essential to understand the natural characteristics of everything that is governed by the Law of Nature, that is nothing remains unchanged. The highest value in life is to make life useful as no one lasts forever. The mind must be developed to have mindfulness in constantly reminding oneself to make progress in useful life whenever possible. In brief, one must be prudent in spending one's life to lead right and beneficial life. One can feel joy and pleasure from living in balance with nature. Such right living in balance with nature may not receive thanks or material gains. But that is not important as one knows by reasoning and knowledge, that is useful and beneficial.

When one can develop joy and pleasure from inside, that is a progress toward the highest level of happiness, independent of all attachments and external factors. Happiness is deep inside the mind with positive view and higher wisdom or Panya. It is happiness with freedom, peace and calmness. Such happiness is sustainable and can lead to higher happiness of all other former levels. Even reaching happiness at this highest level, it does not stop a person from continuing his life to contribute to others' benefit if his physical and mental capabilities allow.

Sufficiency Economy: A Philosophy, An Approach

Sufficiency Economy Philosophy has originated from a life-long accumulation of knowledge and experiments by His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej. His long devotion to provide a

means toward self and community development has been evident for more than 30 years. He has been concerned with sustainable development so that humans can live in balance with nature and other beings. After the UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan presented a Human Development Life-Time Achievement Award to the King in 2006 and the publication of UNDP Thailand Human Development Report in 2007, his work has become more world-widely known as a means for sustainable development with a great emphasis on human development.

Sufficiency Economy aims to achieve major goals of harmony or balanced living, security, sustainability and resilience, all of which are basic elements of happiness. Hence the approach is basically a means to achieve happiness at the individual, community and country levels because the Sufficiency Economy Approach is applicable to the micro and macro levels. All the principles in the Sufficiency Economy are much related to human development process toward right living, hence right interaction with other beings including natural resources. From this basis, Sufficiency Economy provides a practical tool to develop necessary conditions and to develop human through happiness development process. Sufficiency Economy provides an approach for happiness development by improving human mind. Happiness starts from developing an ability to become self-dependent to satisfy own needs. With the Middle path practice and ethics, human will use resources efficiently and ethically because Sufficiency Economy places importance of the future needs and sustainability of all beings. Therefore, it takes broader and long-term perspectives of development. It draws attention to resource management through the emphasis on ethics and efficiency in resource allocation and utilization. Both ethics and efficiency principles represent a public-minded attitude. The latter is unusual and contrast to business practice. However, Sufficiency Economy does not totally go against profit, wealth and business goals. Rather it emphasizes fairness, good governance, honesty and moderation and non-harmful actions. That is the means of acquiring gains such as wealth, fame, and other materials must not come from unethical means. Besides, it does not discourage globalization, trade and capitalism. Instead, it emphasizes a need for balance, people participatory approach, national security and independence of basic factors of production. Autonomy and freedom of choices remain important and a basic indicator for development. They are also important aspects of happiness.

All decisions must be knowledge-based with fair and participatory process. The action guideline is to take the Middle Path approach to avoid serious mistakes and risks. Therefore, all things must be done gradually, and prudently. All actions must be critically assessed to understand the cause and effect, to be aware of the costs and benefits, in short, to apply knowledge-based reasons. As uncertainties are common risks, it is necessary to develop risk management strategies. The whole basic principles of the conceptual frame of Sufficiency Economy [Figure 1], adapted from the UNDP Report 2007 [4] provide practice guidance for

all levels and sectors that operate with the goals of sustainability, balance, security and resilience. With Sufficiency Economy self-reliance, freedom, hence happiness can be achieved.

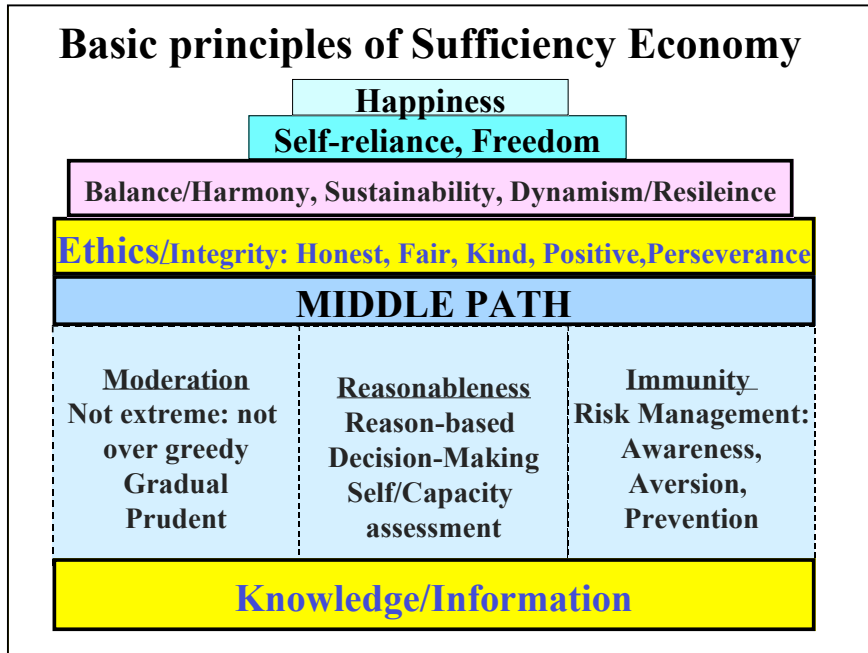


Figure 1 Basic principles of the conceptual frame of Sufficiency Economy

By following the practice guidance of Sufficiency Economy, human can develop mindfulness and wisdom or panya in decision making before taking any action in life. This guidance is, in fact, a common practice principle applicable to all be it an individual, government or business organization. If the training is adopted more regularly, Sufficiency Economy Approach will become an automatic process whenever decision-making is required. Besides, it cultivates patience, calmness and perseverance with kindness/ethics governs actions. Such characteristics are necessary for living in harmony with others including natural resources. A person who has developed patience, kindness, and constructive thinking has strong potential to is a person who can set his mind to be easily happy. As Pra Promkunaporn or P.A. Payutto [3] said, “a truly developed person is one who is happy easily”.

Similarly, the habit of knowledge seeking and development will become a normal practice. The desire to learn and continue to development knowledge is useful for production and for daily living. Life does not have to be attached to materials or by comparing with others but by raising one’s own capability to be more self reliant and to be dynamics for changes. Following the right effort in self development will improve own capacity, hence it is possible

to expand income-earning activities and to contribute more for community development. Hence, it is easy to see that at the individual level or national Sufficiency Economy provides training for prudent but progressive thinking approach.

Sufficiency Economy as Mind Development Approach

Happiness is an ultimate goal of Sufficiency Economy. Evidence from various practice units show that all involved in the application is happy and has developed ethics and mindfulness. This should not be a surprise because the process in adopting Sufficiency Economy Approach is a mind training. It is the types of mind training that generates happiness. The process of happiness development in Sufficiency Economy is dynamic as it starts with the basic level and enhances mind strength toward higher level of happiness. Based on the conceptual frame of Sufficiency Economy practice guidance, the major condition is ethics. Therefore, the mind must adhere to ethics principle that includes moral behaviors, kindness, justice, fairness, honesty, or it can be considered as close to the concept of social responsibility or CSR. Besides it includes the good practice based on perseverance, patience, mindfulness, and Panya. Together with ethics, the other main condition is knowledge-based decisions and actions. Hence, one must use not only ethics but apply knowledge and information in making decision on actions. This reflects an encouragement to be scientific, neutral, unbiased. Besides, it stimulates knowledge application, searching and generating. This knowledge condition is also related to ethics because with unethical mind, decisions can be biased in favor of certain group or self-interest. With information-based decision, there is good governance, transparency, hence unfair damage can be avoided. With these two broad conditions for overall practices, it is possible to ensure less conflict, more efficient and equitable resource allocation.

Sufficiency Economy encourages an adoption of the Middle Path for practice. There are three components that allows a practice along the Middle Path: Moderation, Reasonableness or Cause-Effect or Reasoning/Analysis, and Immunity development. In general the Middle Path reflects a self-restraint behavior that is contrast to the natural instinct of humans that tend to desire more to be satisfied. Such self limiting desire is possible and sustainable only by mind development to appreciate moderate living as against living with more by substituting living with less. Hence moderation essentially requires reducing greed and being easily satisfied with less. But one must clearly understand the importance and benefit of moderation. Therefore, reasoning becomes necessary to develop moderate living life styles. Such reasoning represent a development of critical thinking that is useful for research, development and knowledge seeking. The knowledge condition as explained above will facilitate the practice of reasonableness. But seeking and generating knowledge requires concentration, perseverance and patience. Hence, the mind is passing through another training for right understanding and thinking. At this point a person will understand the interdependence and connectivity of all beings as he understand the reasons for moderation.

As moderation will reduce harms, exploitation of all beings. It will reduce waste and unequal distribution of resources. Hence, moderation is connected to both ethics and efficiency issues. Moderation and reasonableness practice will broaden the scope of thinking which benefit human analyzing capability.

In addition, moderation introduces the need for prudence and gradual action or step-by-step planning. Hence, it teaches humans to become mindful and careful before making decisions, not basing on emotions, ignorance. It helps to prevent taking too high risks in all sectors' decision such as in business investment, personal matters, in agriculture and so on. The mind developed by practicing moderation and reasonableness is well aware of uncertainties and dynamism of all things. Such understanding of the natural law is useful to generate a development of immunity for sustainable/normal or risk-minimizing living. Some information and knowledge is necessary. Having networks of friends, experts and experienced persons whom one can rely to share knowledge and other helps in time of needs is useful. At least, friendly or moral support is already psychologically useful. Social capital is a form of immunity. Besides, cooperative types of resource management will promote trusts and sharing. Such forms of social networks will train humans to have social responsibility and develop community participatory approach for community development. The mind will learn a necessity of sacrifice and to place community or social benefit before self benefit. In addition, to administer such cooperative or self-help groups or networks, there is a need for transparency and honesty, or in modern term, good governance. Humans have opportunities to learn to act as groups and to develop individual responsibility for the society. Another type of immunity is one for financial insecurity that can happen with debts. An immunity at the individual as well as business level is to be careful in spending and to accumulate some savings..

Accumulate saving and careful spending are closely linked with moderate practice and reasonableness. Saving will not be possible without moderation and reasonable spending. Therefore immunity development strengthen the training of two other elements in Sufficiency Economy practice principles. At the same time, it is applies ethics and knowledge conditions. But savings and careful spending are among the practical tools for mind development. Other tools such as the mentioned cooperative-like organization and the "New Theory" [4] which provides step-by-step management technique are additional instruments that all levels and sectors can apply to ensure security, social beneficial, and sustainable development.

Sufficiency Economy as a Happiness Development Process

In the earlier section, it is demonstrative that Sufficiency Economy leads to mind development. Such mind development is important to happiness process. With respect to different levels of happiness, Sufficiency Economy provides happiness for all levels. Sufficiency Economy recognizes the necessity to develop the basic level of happiness that

requires a development enough income or capacity for self-supporting life. At the basic level it provides guidance on how to become self-reliant by income-or resource generating means, by cutting unnecessary expenses, by developing social capital and networks of friend who can help, share and work together for self-help actions. For all practices under Sufficiency Economy approach, an emphasis on living in balance with nature is required. Kindness and fairness to environment and nature must be appreciated in apply Sufficiency Economy. Therefore, ethics is extended to nature and all other beings. Such happiness from appreciating nature and understand the nature of everything is likely to be developed during the practice of Sufficiency Economy. Such happiness without greater consumption and demand for more goods and services provides mind training to become less self-centered and material concerned. One can feel relaxed, peaceful and satisfied without possessing more. Another word, one discovers another type of happiness that is simple and less resource requirement. Besides, such happiness encourages more ethical behavior in production and consumption with regards to natural resources and ecology.

With Sufficiency Economy, after the basic happiness level is met. If the production or income-generating capacity is in excess of needs, then Sufficiency Economy encourages sharing capacity or products with others to give them opportunities to develop themselves. Sharing knowledge and production or extra capacity brings the second level of happiness, that is happiness from sharing and giving. However, Sufficiency Economy always reminds that sharing must intend to help others to help themselves or to encourage them to be dependent as Sufficiency Economy emphasizes a need to be self-supporting, not necessarily totally. Hence, this is the kindness not expecting return, only by an intention for others to become stronger. Such happiness is from pure kindness will train the mind to be independent of external factors and to be free from attachments of appreciation or complements.

Sufficiency Economy encourages self development based on knowledge and information to gradually improve capacity, expand income and wellbeing. But all must be done by ethical means. Such effort will train a person to be patient, perseverant, knowledge-based and information seeking. That person will find joy in self-development. With ethical mind, a higher capacity will allows greater opportunity to do more to strengthen others: community, networks, society. Hence, happiness arrives initially from self-improvement and then from opportunities to share and help others. Such work practices and attitude are useful for happiness development. They help divert and reduce happiness from greed and materials to happiness from self-development. The latter also yields life satisfaction and making life worthwhile, without depending on materials or consuming more goods and services. If self development is performed without a desire for fame or even award or appreciation, a person has a high capability to develop true happiness that is sustainable and allows higher happiness from all other levels.

On the economic or efficiency basis, Sufficiency Economy promotes happiness with less resource requirement both at the micro and macro levels. Hence, Sufficiency Economy Approach increases efficiency and equity in production and consumption. For the world with increasing resource limitation, Sufficiency Economy Approach offers a viable alternative for both sustainable production and sustainable consumption. This can be illustrated as Teerana Happiness-Efficiency Curve [1]

Evidence of Sufficiency Economy as Happiness Development Approach

Happiness is an ultimate goal of Sufficiency Economy. With the Approach, happiness progresses from the basic to higher levels as human's mind develops along the Middle Path practice in adherence to ethics and knowledge-based decisions. Various people, communities, business and agricultural sector as well as public and private agencies have adopted Sufficiency Economy Approach both before and after the announcement of the National Social and Economic Development Board (NESDB) to base the development strategies of the 10th National Social and Economic Plan (BE 2007-2011). The commitment of the NESDB has activated extensive applications of the Approach, in all sectors. Individuals are encouraged to follow the guidance, particularly with regards to financial management, Schools and educational institutes have developed curriculum to properly introduce the concepts and promote good practices for sufficiency life that will live to balance, secured and happy living.

Such wide application demonstrates clearly that Sufficiency Economy is not confined to agricultural sector or rural people. Nor it inhibits business operations and international connections. In fact, the Approach reminds all to be more prudent in decision-makings. All decisions and actions must seriously base on the Middle Path, ethics and knowledge. These practice components are essential to attain the goals: security, sustainability, balance/harmony in all courses of action. However, even if Sufficiency Economy Approach is totally against the normal business, and consumption practices, it remind all to become more moderate and ethical so that we can avoid unnecessary damage on natural resources, ecology; inefficient and wasteful use of energy; overproduction of goods and services. Since resources are limited, without ethical basis, resource allocation will be inequitably and unfair distributed. The outcome will not lead to security nor balance, sustainable development. Finally, development will not be able to make society and most people happy. But to make all happy, all must be trained to develop happiness.

All evidence suggests that those who follow some practice guideline of Sufficiency Economy are happier in all aspects. They have developed toward true happiness which is beyond materials and wealth, but the inner happiness. They are happy that they have contributed to social and others' benefits. Their business progresses and expands. They see the real value in their business and in what they do in life. It is clear that the principle of "Doing Well by Doing Good" is true. Among the people, business, communities that have adopted

Sufficiency Economy are those that appear in UNDP, Thailand Human Development Report. There is enough evidence of Sufficiency Economy application leading to higher self-reliance, happiness development and balanced living. Here are some the examples:

Business:

Chumporn Cabana
Thai.Com
Siam Cement
Siam Hands (Tang MoTextile) Com
Lemon Farm

Communities:

Natong Village, Prae Province
Nafai Village, Maharakarm Province
Community Community Ban Nathong Prae Province
Community Nngya Kaonok Khonkan
Community Ban Na Esan Chacheungsao

Individuals/Local Mentors/Philosophers:

Por Liam Butchantha, Ban Na Esan (Agriculture)
Puyai Viboon Kemchalem (Agriculture)
Khun Prayong Ronnarong (Farmer)
Khun Varison Rakpan (Business:Chumporn Cabana)
Khun Pipat Yodprethikan (Business:Thai.Com)
Khun Boonchai Benjarong (Business:UCOM, DTAC)

The most common elements of all those who have adopted Sufficiency Economy are

- 1) they have experienced the first basic level of happiness and moved toward the second and higher happiness levels. They have found true happiness that is less or no dependence on external factors.
- 2) they are ethical in various aspects such as with regards to environment, labor and consumers,
- 3) they are moderate, prudent, reasonable in their decision-making and action
- 4) they continue to develop themselves based on knowledge and expand share their knowledge with others,
- 5) they have developed networks, they are willing to share and help others to develop.
- 6) They develop immunity and resilience against risks, uncertainties and globalization
- 7) they have security, sustainable and balance living/operations
- 8) they take care of natural resources and environment

- 9) they refrain from exploitative and harmful acts upon other beings including natural resources,
- 10) they are more careful with spending, particularly on unnecessary and immoral items such as gambling, cigarettes and alcohol drinks,
- 11) Relationship in family, work and community improves.

In general, some of those who have adopted Sufficiency Economy in their life and business activities cannot not immediately adjusted all operations according to the full components of Sufficiency Economy Approach. But they have progressed and attempted to improve their practice, to sustain their operation under this guidance, principally because they have found what they have done yields benefits and happiness beyond the usual business gains. Their business is more worthwhile when they can contribute to community and human development. The social benefit is well linked, and in balance with business operations. Particularly, when a company follows Sufficiency Economy Approach, the business is in line with CSR. But they start from the right thinking, inside the mind rather than from the outside rules or regulations. This is true that CSR components already exist in Sufficiency Approach. All evidence in adopting Sufficiency Economy indicates that the major common ground of practice is ethics, not only to humans but also to natural resources and environment. This is a positive sign because it show decision making is along right thinking based on cause-effect and long-term analysis. Sustainable development is not possible unless natural resources, the sources of factors of production, income, natural life supports and leisure, are in the development and business equations.

Evidence from research by Dr Sooksan Kantrabutr [2] confirmed that business leaders who are successful and have good business records have adopted principles directly related to the practice guidance of Sufficiency Economy. Similarly, the forum organized by Kenan Institue Asia (KIASIA) suggested that Sufficiency Economy is good for business. In this Forum, Dr Pipat [5], the Director of Thaipat Institue, a non-profit organization with Thai and multinational business networks, maintained that the Sufficiency Economy Approach is useful for business's adaptation to globalization, because it minimizes risks while increasing potential. It also helps business optimizes their profit-making capability so that growth is more sustainable and risk is further reduced. Sufficiency Economy serves all stakeholders both internal and external while it cares for environment and ecology. Hence, Sufficiency Economy encompasses corporate governance, corporate social responsibility and good corporate partnerships with supply chains, clusters, customer relationships and management. All these desirable business characteristics are based on ethics or integrity.

Unlike ethics under the conventional corporate social responsibility and good governance approach, ethics under Sufficiency Economy Approach must originate from the own conscience of what is right and wrong. Another word, the mind realizes a need for ethical

practice for interaction with others because the mind has right understanding of the interdependence of all beings and the natural truths of everything., that no one really owns anything or selflessness, nothing is totally satisfied, nor permanent. Therefore, one must try to be prudent and focus on the current time that provides an opportunity in committing to right effort for right actions that are beneficial to self and others. When the mind is developed in such a manner, it will manage the action accordingly. Hence, in a country where law and enforcement is weak, and the majority do not have equal access to all basics for living, there is a critical need for mind development effectively through informal or life activities. This no means implies that law and enforcement is unimportant. If there is effectiveness of fair legal and general life-supporting systems, Mind development and happiness process can come about later once the happiness level has reached a high level.

Public policy for happiness development

Government can design public policy and development strategy to ensure well-being of the majority. The basic life supporting factors are crucial to enable people to feel secured, and satisfied. A priori, the state must provide access to education, health care, housing to all, particularly those who have less ability to pay. Employment and income policy must ensure adequate standard of living. Labour protection policy and laws must be developed to balance both employees and employers' benefits. Labour health and safety standard and laws must be effectively enforced. Fiscal and monetary policies must be designed for social fairness and efficiency. The tax system must be structured to improve social inequalities and inefficiency. Innovative subsidy and supporting systems are necessary to establish a more caring society. Labour policy must encourage mother-child and family life. It is evident that family relationship is crucial to happiness. Employment policy must promote family stability.

The principles of taxing those who impose social cost and support those who provide social benefits or Pigouvian Tax Principle, must be seriously considered in public policy design and actions. Public policy can apply tax measures to encourage social responsible organization, business and producers. For example, the emphasis on food safety by means of supporting organic agriculture, and producers employing production techniques with health and environment concern. At the same time, tax or price policy can be used to discourage and raise production cost of producers that potentially put health and environment at risks. Good environment is important to happiness. There must be supports for various initiatives for natural resource and environment protection.

Various social policy or welfare policy such as old-age savings or health insurance or even health promotion schemes can be developed for old age security. As health is an important element of happiness, public policy for good health is fundamental. Public policy must respond to total aspects of health. With risks associated with globalization, aging, drugs,

additions, mental health has become a worldwide problem. Various public policy and mental health promotion programs need supports. Therefore, financing must be seriously considered. Emphasis must shift toward more social venture and socially responsible investment projects. Hence both financing and investment policy must shift toward public goals. In addition to environmental impact assessment, more social impact assessment must be a requirement for investment and financing.

As all humans have potentials to develop. Public policy with regards to all educational sources (reading materials, TV, Radio station, internet) must lead to social investment in close collaboration business. More balanced investment for technical intelligence and mind intelligence/integrity or ethics is essential. This balance requires a shift of educational system that can integrate the technical and the mind capabilities to make possible sustainable development. There are quite a few countries in Europe such as Germany, Switzerland that have somewhat successfully developed such balanced education. However, by and large, when it comes to business in the international investment and technical assistance, most countries in the developed world place business and country's interests a priority, leaving cost of environment and health on the host countries. So there remains a problem of ethics at the international level which must be tackled in the world is to be fairer and more caring. Here Sufficiency Economy can have an effective role if all parties developed ethics and integrity to a higher level in order to enjoy a higher level of happiness, that is happiness from giving without expecting return. It is the happiness from seeing the host country's ability to develop own technical capacity and freedom from technical and financial dependence. Similarly, the host countries must be prepared to invest to strengthen own capacities. Only then, development aids can render true happiness and sustainable development. In brief, to produce a better (fairer and more caring) world, all parties must shift from the usual business to the unusual business, That is to move the goal from the primary level of happiness to the secondary level of happiness.

Ethics at the international level

Humans usually seek to satisfy above the basic needs for survival. While pursuing over self satisfaction, their happiness by possessing and gaining can deprive others of necessary resources and may impose harms, suffering to others. Similarly when a country or a business aggressively pursues own priorities regardless of how natural environment or other countries or other beings are damaged, harmful conflicts are bound to happen. Damages can raise anger, retaliation and negative impacts that can increase threats to peace, security, and sustainability not only to the countries in conflicts but the whole world. Therefore, remaining or overpursuing happiness at the primary level is undesirable and dangerous to human and all existence. The negative results can be devastating, leading to global conflicts, global climate changes, and a total insecurity which are threats to worldwide happiness and well-being. Currently, all of us have experienced such a situation. Therefore, all countries and

people must learn to develop happiness to reach its higher level. This second level of happiness is attained by caring and sharing based on altruism.

Once a country is well developed or an individual gains more than what he has satisfied the basic needs, it is necessary to think of others by giving and sharing. Through altruism, the pressure toward conflicts and destruction will be mitigated. However, such altruism must be genuine and without expecting return. If return is a condition in giving, problems and conflicts will arise later. This cannot really bring about happiness because such return may not happen or may be denied. As a result the donor and investing countries may be dissatisfied. Besides, the exchanged conditions may be harmful to recipient countries. Development AID and other technical assistance that is conditioned or tied with trade or business benefits is similar to an individual donor who gives in order to take. The donor cannot really feel happy. To be really happy at this second level, it is necessary to give without taking. However, economists usually remind us that there is “no free lunch”. It seems that is how the real world functions. Yet, donor individual/countries must play parents’ role. That is to give so that they can become stronger and self-dependent rather than become enslaved by foreign business and technological power. If this message is not heard, there is no way that the UN poverty reduction, unfair/unequal trade under WTO and may other multilateral or bilateral efforts/initiatives can significantly improve anything. They become just a façade development AID rather than real effort to help without expected returns.

In various cultures and traditions, giving to really help others to survive and to give other future opportunities is bliss. No return is expected. Such a society has experienced long-time peace and social harmony. In such countries people tend to be happier. But when modern values and commercial forces become widespread and adopted, the peaceful trend and harmony has faded. Environment quality deteriorates due to ecological destruction and imbalance, increasing all types of pollution, reduction in bio diversity, all of which are important elements of happiness. Therefore, it is necessary to develop the second level of happiness, to give and share without expecting return. That is to be happy just to be able to give and share others’ burden and to help them to continue with opportunities.

For a person to arrive at the second happiness level, he must train his mind to be genuinely kind and feel happy to give. Usually, most of us give in expectation of tangible and intangible returns. The latter are such as praise, admiration, love, names/fame, status and recognition. It is more difficult to find those who give anonymously without expecting anything, even the word of thanks. That means the person must train his mind to be truly kind and selfless. Not all of us can do that. But it is more important that we develop an effort and mindfulness to train ourselves toward that direction if we want to be truly happy. With expectation, when it does not happen accordingly, we are bound to suffer and feel painful. Similarly, if it is a

donor country, it may retaliate and cease all other necessary support. This can cause conflict in the international relations.

Therefore, altruism must not be in disguise of national, business or self interest. If one gives in order to take, the happiness level degrades to the happiness from gaining which is not sustainable. However, when the 2nd level of happiness is achieved, it is necessary to develop happiness further to the third level where happiness is independent of gaining or giving. It is the happiness from within. This is particularly applicable to individuals. Human can continue to make his life useful and beneficial to others without expecting return and continuously develop himself to be more self-reliant, to live within his means and undisturbed by external factors. He has freedom to live beneficially and rely on himself to satisfy basic needs. A man can develop such happiness from within when he is capable of understand the nature of everything and can manage to position his mind above all good and bad come and goes.

CONCLUSION

Happiness development is crucial for human development because it provides a mechanism and process to improve human mind, the way of right thinking, hence raising the level of decision-making capability toward ethics and right actions. Sufficiency Economy Approach for human development, based on His Majesty King Bhumibol's Sufficiency Economy Philosophy, provides a process for happiness development applicable to all levels of practices: an individual, a community, a business entity and a country. It recognizes the basic level of happiness that must be a priori developed so that human has sufficient means of livings. But it also emphasized ethics, particularly with the focus of kindness, sharing, fairness and honesty in the interaction with others. Personally, ethics include prudence, mindfulness, self-improving, perseverance, and patience. Through adopting Sufficiency Economy Approach by following the main practice guidance of the Middle Path, all units and levels can develop higher economic and social security as well as capacity to respond to changing environments. The security and capacity to understand and manage uncertainties are both important for happiness both at the micro and macro levels.

But human is the key drivers for changes, social and economic development. They make decisions in resource allocation, mobilization and utilization. Efficiency and equity pattern depends on human mind and ways of thinking. They develop and use technology. They influence how the economy and society operates. Therefore, human mind and decision-making capability is highly important to govern an economy. If a country or the world is to move forward in peace and harmony, human's mind must be polished and cultivated with the happiness development process where ethics is the core of human development. Evidence of Sufficiency Economy practices in living, in business, in agriculture/rural as well as urban life

reveals that economic and social conditions have improved of practice unit and those related develop higher capacity for self reliance; they are more secured in all aspects and happier. Even if none of them becomes much richer, they are sustainable with sufficient means for normal living and operation. They have developed some capacity as immunity against risks/uncertainties. Most importantly, they are keen to contribute to broader benefits. They have developed balance and harmonious living with nature and other beings. The most commonly finding is they see the real value of what they do which is beyond the joy or happiness based on financial and material wealth. Most of them have reached higher level of happiness, from giving, from living in balance with nature, from inside. Their happiness does not depend from external sources. They have higher will power to do more for others. They apply ethics and efficiency principles in what they do. All of them have enough for living, good living environment, opportunities and higher capacity to share and help others. They have friends and good relationships within family and at work. But their success comes out of right understanding of Sufficiency Economy, right effort, right focus, great perseverance, patience and family/friends' support.

If increasing more humans can develop the mind to appreciate higher level of happiness where ethics is crucial, it is possible to re-establish safe, peaceful and productive society. We can avoid much more severe natural disasters, reduce ever rising crimes, violence and conflicts. More life-styles-related health problems, mental illness as well as premature deaths can be prevented. Resources can be shifted to areas where real benefits can be obtained. Efficiency and equity should have gone hand in hand. In effect, Sufficiency Economy Approach demonstrates that equity and efficiency are consistent and complementary.

Main references (appearing in the paper)

1. Indaratna, K. (2007) Provincial Economics Indicators for Sufficiency Economy, Thailand Research Foundation, Bangkok
2. Kantrabutr, S. (2007) Development of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy in the Thai Business Sector: Evidence, Future Research & Policy Implications, in press
3. Payutto, P.A (2003) Sustainable Development, Komolkeemthong, Bangkok
4. UNDP Thailand Human Development Report (2007) United Nations
5. Yodprudtikan, P. (2007) An interview with The Nation, May 13, 2007 and later published by Kenan Institute Asia (www.kiasia.org)

Other related references

1. Buddhadasa Bhikku (2005) Handbook for Mankind, Thammasapa, Bangkok
2. Buddhadasa Bhikku (2006) The Right Way to Learn Dhamma, Sukkhapapjai, Bangkok
3. His Holiness The Supreme Patriarch of Thailand (NA), The Present Life is So Important, Thammasapa, Bangkok.
4. Indaratna, K. (2002) Development with Consciousness: An Alternative Development Approach, a paper prepared for Chulalongkorn Academic Forum, Bangkok. (unpublished).
5. Indaratna, K (2006) Sufficiency Economy: An Approach to Mind Cultivation, a presentation in Body and Mind, Science and Spirituality Perspectives, An International Conference, 6-8 December 2006, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand
6. Indaratna, K (2006) Happiness and Development: A Thai Perspective, a presentation in CASID Conference on Happiness and Development: Making A Link?, 1-3 June 2006, Toronto, Canada
7. Indaratna, K. (2006) Economic Benefits of Palliative Care, the 2nd National Conference on Hospice and Palliative Care, Thai Hospice and Palliative Care Foundation, Bangkok, 7-8 October 2006
8. Layard, R. (2005) Happiness: Lesson from a New Science. Penguin Book, London
9. Payutto, P.A. (1994) Perfect Life, Buddhatham Foundation, Bangkok
10. Payutto, P.A. (2005) Handbook for Living, Thammasapa, Bangkok
11. Payutto, P.A. (2005) Suffering to See, Happiness to Be, 8th ed., Sahadhammik, Bangkok
12. Payutto, P.A. (2006) Happiness: The Buddhist Approach. Thammasapa, Bangkok
13. Schumacher, E.F. (1993) Small is Beautiful, Vintage, London.
14. Thanasiri, C. (2007) How to Live Longer and Happier, Nanmeebookk, Bangkok.