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A Causal Relationship of Living Behavior Based on Sufficiency Economy Philosophy for Thai University Students

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Abstract

The main purpose of this study was to conceptualize and investigate a causal relationship model of Thai university students' living behavior based on sufficiency economy philosophy. The model posits that psychological immunity, family factors, and friend factors influence attitude towards sufficiency economy philosophy which in turn predicts Thai university students' living behavior based on sufficiency economy philosophy. Data were collected by means of self-report questionnaires from 800 undergraduate students in public universities. The structural equation model was employed to examine the causal relationship model. Results revealed that (a) attitude towards sufficiency economy philosophy mediated the relationship between friend factors and living behavior based on sufficiency economy philosophy, (b) psychological immunity had a direct positive relationship with living behavior based on sufficiency economy philosophy, and (c) psychological immunity mediated the effects of family factors on living behavior based on self-sufficiency economy philosophy. Implications for theory and practices are discussed.

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Keywords: Immunity, socialization, sufficiency economy philosophy, attitude

1. Introduction

The philosophy of sufficiency economy has been developed by His Majesty King Bhumipol Adulyadej and has been used as the core principle in 10th and the current 11th National Economic and Social Development Plan (Office of National Economic and Social Development Board, 2010). The philosophy provides guidance on

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appropriate conduct covering numerous aspects of life that will lead to a better quality of life and be able to cope appropriately with challenges arising from globalization and other changes. Sufficiency economy is a philosophy that stresses the three principles (moderation, reasonableness, and self-immunity) and requires two conditions: knowledge and morality. Such a way of life based on three principles with the two conditions, Thai people would be able to live securely in harmony amongst rapid socioeconomic, environmental, and cultural changes in the world. Although the philosophy of sufficiency economy are necessary to be instilled our Thai people life, there are quite limited research studies for understanding the antecedents of living behavior based on sufficiency economy philosophy. Thus to be a better understanding of a way of life based on sufficiency economy philosophy, this study is interested in examining antecedents of living behaviour based on sufficiency economy philosophy. Specifically, empirical evidence is needed to test a comprehensive model of living behavior based on sufficiency economy philosophy. The model posits that psychosocial factors such as self-immunity, family factors, and friend factors influence attitude towards sufficiency economy philosophy which in turn predicts Thai university students' living behavior based on sufficiency economy philosophy. This study will facilitate and extend the body of knowledge in a way of life based on sufficiency economy philosophy.

1.1 Conceptual Framework

Socialization and social cognitive theories (Bandura, 1986) suggest reciprocal causation between behavior, intrapersonal, and environmental factors. Intrapersonal factors include individual background (e.g., age and gender) and psychological characteristics. From the perspective of social cognitive theory, environmental factors are typically limited to those in the social and cultural environment. Similarly, the integrative approach proposes the multifactors of internal and external individuals that contribute to quality of life, well-being, and prosocial behavior (Eisenberg & Fabes, 1998). This is consistent with the philosophy of sufficiency economy stresses that individuals who have self-immunity will have stable and sustainable life quality (Office of National Economic and Social Development Board, 2010). Based on analyzing and synthesizing the philosophy of sufficiency economy and social cognitive theories, the conceptual model illustrated in Fig. 1 consists of direct effects of psychological immunity, family factors, and friend factors on attitude towards sufficiency economy philosophy, and indirect effects of these factors on Thai university students' living behavior based on sufficiency economy philosophy via attitude towards sufficiency economy philosophy. In other words, attitude towards sufficiency economy philosophy is mediated relationship between the three factors and living behavior based on sufficiency economy philosophy.

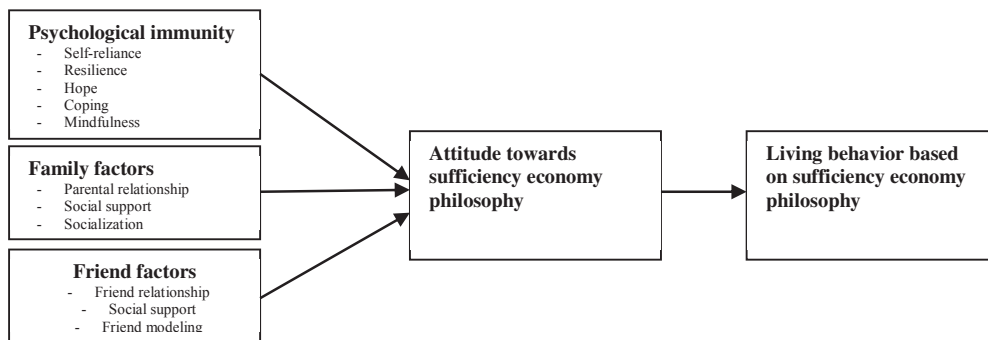


Figure. 1. Proposed conceptual model of a causal relationship of living behavior based on sufficiency economy philosophy

2. Method

2.1. Sample

Subjects were 800 undergraduate students from Kasetsart University, Ramkhamhamng University, Srinakharinwirot University, and Thammasart University. 200 students from 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th year were randomly

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