

TITLE PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA
FACEBOOK OF THAI GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

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ABSTRACT

The research "People's Participation through Social Media Facebook of Thai Government Agencies" is intended to 1) study how Thai government agencies use Facebook to interact with people 2) study the causes of the level of Thai government agencies' utilization of Facebook for people's participation, 3) study the effects of Facebook utilization by Thai government agencies on people's participation, 4) analyze challenges government agencies have faced when using Facebook for people's participation and 5) provide recommendations on methods and benefits of Facebook utilization by Thai government agencies for people's participation.

This research is both quantitative and qualitative. On quantitative aspects, the population is the 108 agencies that are department level or equivalent of the 18 ministries. Questionnaire is the tool used in the quantitative research. On the qualitative research, the method used is interviewing a group of executives or representatives from 6 Thai government agencies and 3 academics and social media experts.

The research finds 81.25 percent of surveyed government agencies use Facebook as their social media outlet to engage with the public. Among the Facebook using agencies, 47.92 percent are supporting agencies. About 73.08 percent of them devise a page on the social media. Some 64.10 percent put their page on their websites. All of them use their own staff to

administrate the Facebook page. Only 19.23 percent of the agencies say they intend to use Facebook as a channel of communication / public relations.

The level of Facebook utilization by Thai government agencies for people's participation is mainly through information dissemination. The cause of the level of Thai government agencies' utilization of Facebook for people's participation came from the support of the top policy makers in those agencies. The effect of high Facebook utilization by government agencies is active people's participation. For government agencies that don't utilize Facebook as their source of people's participation, they either have other channels to communicate with the people or don't have sufficient resources to handle the social media. On policy recommendations, government agencies that use Facebook need to constantly make their content up to date and relevant to the people as well as to build capacity of their public relations staff.