


Chapter 14

Solidarity Liquor: Community Wisdom Development for the Growth of Social Business in Thailand

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ABSTRACT

The study is focus on the management of community distilled liquor which is local wisdom and a cultural product in the form of a social business case study. The study explains the origin of liquor in Thailand, as well as the cause of the change in the crisis of the community business and the solutions, and expands the boundaries of knowledge to ensure an understanding about Thai local wisdom, which is a soft power with potential in knowledge from the past to the present along with the importance of using alcohol relevant to Thai traditions. This chapter integrates a social business to find the value to be provided to communities and stakeholders and anticipates business trends by applying a population ecology theory for business survival. Therefore, the benefit represents the ability to expand the soft power of the community distilled liquor to promote cultural knowledge and entrepreneurship, as well as applying the factors to conduct next studies.

INTRODUCTION

Liquor in Thailand can indicate a status and social class. The term solidarity liquor is newly established to show that in terms of cultural tourism, liquor is more than merely a communication to consumers who choose to drink alcohol based on their social status, but it is a spiritual communication that connects to wisdom from the past to the present. The history of traditional liquor production in Thailand has evolved through the history of human beings who have acquired knowledge on rice farming. Humans use rice to ferment beer or liquor to satisfy the mood or momentary thoughts of the drinkers and consumers in order to determine possible behaviors after drinking. As a result, liquor has two roles in society: Something that makes people happy, or it may be narcotics that cause disadvantages to abusers. However, in some

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societies, apart from being auspicious or prohibited items, liquor is considered as one of controlled drugs, otherwise it would have adverse effects on drinkers. Therefore, liquor has a duality that is constantly in conflict in Thai society.

It is difficult to do the liquor business in Thailand due to legal prohibitions. Nevertheless, a social business refers to a business that generates income from all stakeholders in order to utilize profits to meet social missions that require assistance, while being able to contribute and develop their business to be able to survive sustainably. This is a form of business that creates value for society. Therefore, to operate the community liquor business does not expect to maximize profits (Agafonow, 2015). The community wants to inherit the culture and tradition of making liquor for ceremonies or taking part in the community's way of life. This way of life is an adaptation to understand the use of culture to match the behavior of community members or the needs of human life. Community lifestyles motivate consumption through symbolic and cultural media that may be derived from food or social activities (Maycroft, 2004). The engagement of the social conditions presents an expansion of the scope of business. The social business concept has gained popularity because of the non-profit social responsibility trend, philosophy for business sustainability, a not-for-profit community growth based on cultural values, and market dominance as an indicator of sustainable community performance (Herranz, Council, & McKay, 2010). The community must stimulate the grassroots economy and have cultural communication in order to inherit local wisdom for the development of cultural products in the future.

The objective of the study in this chapter is to conduct a case study through various fields of knowledge in order to gain understanding about the origin of the community distilled liquor and crisis arising from community enterprises, raise an understanding that solidarity liquor is a cultural product made from local wisdom in order to preserve the traditions of communities in each region of Thailand, as well as explaining the potential emerge of the distilled liquor economy in the future through the population ecology theory, with the aim of analyzing and finding solutions for the management of the community distilled liquor business in the future.

BACKGROUND

The Transformation of Liquor From a Tool for the Supernatural Mind to the Foundation of Thai Culture

Thai's Spirit Culture

The use of alcohol appears in all cultures. However, in Thailand, liquor is applied to spiritual beliefs. Liquor is mostly used in spirit worship ceremonies as offerings to sacrifice sacred things that may not belong to the beliefs of any religion. Based on the beliefs of Thai people, both ghosts and angels like to drink alcohol for pleasure, and provoke a supernatural mind because while drinking alcohol, the state of mind is imaginary or enters into an unfathomable mental state. As for some Thai people, they believe that a state of mind that is deep enough will be able to communicate with spirits or sacred things. Some people feel so powerful that they assume they have superpowers or wisdom that is superior to others in a normal state. In some communities, rituals involving the use of liquor and spirits are creatively held for community unity, for example, the wedding ceremony of Phu Thai people who use liquor as a tray of gifts (from the groom to the bride's family), Isan people's provocation ceremony for those who are sick,

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