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# THE DEVELOPMENT OF THAI TRADITIONAL MEDICINE CURRICULUM IN 3 DECADES.

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## ABSTRACT

Driving the mechanism of education in Thai traditional medicine over the past 3 decades has developed and became more prominent. There has been a rapid development, which includes education management at the bachelor degree level, and graduate degree level. It is shows that the Thai society is more alert with the study of Thai traditional medicine, which reflects the value of Thai medicine that is more beneficial to society, and nation. The curriculum of Thai traditional medicine at various level has developed more academic, personnel, and management styles. Data analysis from documentation, and in-depth interview the lecturers, who had worked in Thai traditional medicine, and Applied Thai traditional medicine institutes. It was found a total of 19 institutes teaching in Thai traditional medicine at bachelor degree level (certified by the council of Thai traditional medicine), and was found a total of 10 institutes teaching in Applied Thai traditional medicine at bachelor degree level (certified by the council of Thai traditional medicine). Driving mechanism for management, and academic support considered as an important form that affects the development of Thai traditional medicine. For example, the health service area management mechanism in collaboration with the mechanism of district health insurance system is decentralized management process, and related areas are involved in job development. Establishing guidelines, and standards for health services is a central tool that encourages each health service unit to develop guidelines for service standards in each area. Propulsion in health service units, and pilot of Thai traditional medical hospital considered an important strategy for finding a model for the development of quality service units, and find the dimensions of the health service unit for the people. There are currently 26 institutions of the knowledge building unit, clinical operation unit of Thai traditional medicine, and the practice place of Thai traditional medicine students. Course management is based on standards, qualifications in each profession, but there may be differences in teaching and learning in each context of institutes.

**Keyword:** Development, Curriculum, Thai traditional medicine

## INTRODUCTION

Thai traditional medicine (TTM) is defined by law as “the medical processes dealing with the examination, diagnosis, therapy, treatment, or prevention of diseases, or promotion and rehabilitation of the health of humans or animals, midwifery, Thai massage, as well as the preparation, production of Thai traditional medicines and the making of devices and instruments for medical purposes. According to TTM which is based on Buddhism, the human body is composed of four elements (‘taht’ in the Thai language), i.e., earth, water, wind, and fire. When the four elements of the body are in equilibrium, it will be healthy. In contrast, if an imbalance in these elements occurs, i.e., if there is a deficit, an excess, or

disability in any of the four elements, a person will become ill [1]. Traditional Thai medicine is a system of methods and practices, such as herbal medicine, bodywork practices, and spiritual healing that is indigenous to the region currently known as Thailand. In the early-1900s, traditional medicine was "outlawed as quackery" in favor of Western medicine, however by the mid-1990s traditional medicine was once again being supported by the Thai government. The Seventh National Economic and Social Plan for 1992-1996 stated that "the promotion of people's health entails the efforts to develop traditional wisdom in health care, including Thai traditional medicine, herbal medicine, and traditional massage, so as to integrate it into the modern health service system." In 1993 the government of Thailand created the National Institute of Thai Traditional Medicine, under the supervision of the Ministry of Public Health. The goal of the institute is to "systematize and standardize the body of traditional Thai medicine knowledge", to "gather knowledge, revise, verify, classify, and explain traditional Thai medicine knowledge", and to "compare and explain the philosophies and basic theories of traditional Thai medicine and to produce textbooks on traditional Thai medicine"[2]. According to the literature "Scholars differentiate between two forms of TTM, namely the Royal or literate tradition espoused by medical schools and supported by the Thai government, and the unregulated Folk practices which are passed orally from generation to generation by individual healers. As official policy strives to centralize and unify TTM and raise medical practice standards, the Royal Tradition is growing increasingly dominant. The Royal Tradition is a formal medical discipline learned in universities. Aspiring professionals need take up only herbal medicine and massage, but they must be licensed to practice. Courses run from 3-4 years. Shorter classes are also available and popular among tourists. It is this form of traditional medicine that is taught in schools throughout the kingdom, and it is what's represented in the vast majority of literature on the subject [3].

This study was aimed to survey the amount of institutes that teaching bachelor degree level in Thai traditional medicine, and Applied Thai traditional medicine. Analysis of the curriculum development in 3 decades (2003-2027).

## **OBJECTIVE**

This article was aimed to investigate as follows:

1. Collecting the amount of institutes that teaching Thai traditional medicine, and Applied Thai traditional medicine at bachelor degree level
2. Analysis of the curriculum development in 3 decades

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Data source**

It was obtained from documents [4-10], and in-depth interview from the lecturers of the Thai traditional medicine, and Applied Thai traditional medicine institutes.

### **Data analysis**

- 1) Analysis from documentation, and interviewing
- 2) Verify the accuracy and integrity of information
- 3) Data were analyzed as separate issues, according to the objectives of the study

## RESULTS

Data analysis from documentation, and in-depth interview the lecturers, who had worked in Thai traditional medicine, and Applied Thai traditional medicine institutes. It was found a total of 19 institutes teaching in Thai traditional medicine at bachelor degree level (certified by the council of Thai traditional medicine), and was found a total of 10 institutes teaching in Applied Thai traditional medicine at bachelor degree level (certified by the council of Thai traditional medicine).

Curriculum development in 3 decades as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1**  
**Curriculum development of Thai traditional medicine, and Applied Thai traditional medicine**

Curriculum	First 10 years 2003-2007	Second 10 years 2008-2017	Third 10 years 2018-2027
1. Bachelor of Thai traditional medicine	Each course does not have the same standard.	There was standardized curriculum together. There was standard of the Thai traditional medicine profession.	There is more application of Applied Thai traditional medicine in the curriculum. There is a joint consultation between Thai traditional medicine personnel and Applied Thai traditional medicine personnel.
2. Bachelor of Applied Thai traditional medicine	There was Ayurvedic medicine course which was the foundation of Applied Thai traditional medicine.	There was a program of Applied Thai traditional medicine and taught at university level. There was a standardized framework for Applied Thai traditional medicine. There was a curriculum at the graduate level.	There are more research studies. There are more international conferences.

From Table 1, it was found the curriculum of Thai traditional medicine has developed more academic, personnel, and management styles.

List of Universities that teach Thai traditional medicine are as follows: Petburi Rajabhat University, Surin Rajabhat University, Ubon Ratchathani Rajabhat University, Chiangrai Rajabhat University, Bansomdejchaopraya Rajabhat University, Moo Ban Chombeung Rajabhat University, Ramkhamhaeng University, Prince of Songkla University, Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University, Sirindhorn College of Public Health Phitsanulok,

Sirindhorn College of Public Health Chonburi, Sirindhorn College of Public Health Yala, Taksin University, Patumthani University, Kanchanabhishek Institute of Medical and Public Health Technology Nonthaburi, Rajamangala University of Technology Isan Sakon Nakhon, Rajamangala University of Technology Sriwichai, Rangsit University, and Dhurakijpundit University. List of Universities that teach Applied Thai traditional medicine are as follows: Mahidol University, Maharakham University, Thammasat University, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, Naresuan University, Mae Fah Luang University, Burapha University, Rajamangala University of Technology Thanyaburi, Phranakhon Rajabhat University, and Phayao University.

Driving mechanism for management, and academic support considered as an important form that affects the development of Thai traditional medicine. For example, the health service area management mechanism in collaboration with the mechanism of district health insurance system is decentralized management process, and related areas are involved in job development. Establishing guidelines, and standards for health services is a central tool that encourages each health service unit to develop guidelines for service standards in each area. Propulsion in health service units, and pilot of Thai traditional medical hospital considered an important strategy for finding a model for the development of quality service units, and find the dimensions of the health service unit for the people. There are currently 26 institutes of the knowledge building unit, clinical operation unit of Thai traditional medicine, and the practice place of Thai traditional medicine students. Course management is based on standards, qualifications in each profession, but there may be differences in teaching and learning in each context of institutes.

## **CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORK**

It was found a total of 19 institutes teaching in Thai traditional medicine at bachelor degree level, and was found a total of 10 institutes teaching in Applied Thai traditional medicine at bachelor degree level. From the number of institute shows that Thai people are interested in Thai traditional medicine, including more integrated health care. Institutions have to adjust the teaching to be consistent in many ways, such as diagnosis, treatment, health promotion, rehabilitation, Thai massage, and Thai traditional medicine products. Conducting research to support clinical treatment, study trip, and practicing in institutes with expert advice. There are currently 26 institutions of the knowledge building unit, clinical operation unit of Thai traditional medicine, and the practice place of Thai traditional medicine students. Course management is based on standards, qualifications in each profession.

Thai traditional medicine course is a medical process that started from diagnosis, treatment, health promotion, rehabilitation, Thai midwife, Thai massage, the use of drug to treat patients, including the production of Thai traditional medicine. Applied Thai traditional medicine course is a joint integration of Thai traditional medicine and modern medicine, and requires the use of Thai traditional medicine procedure and use some tools of modern medicine to assist in the diagnosis for the most effective treatment for patients. In further study, it should have a collection of Thai traditional medical research for future use.

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