

Guidelines to Decrease the Funeral Ceremony Expense in Magluamai Community, Sung Noen District, Nakhon Ratchasima Province.

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ABSTRACT

The research was objected to study the funeral ceremony expense of the community and the guideline to decrease the funeral ceremony expense in Magluamai Community, Sung Noen District, Nakhon Ratchasima Province. The research used the mixed-methodology research method. The tool was the questionnaire and the focus group. The 16 informants, who gave the data, were the members of the deaths' family (100% of the deaths' family in 2014) The study found that the funeral rite expense was the highest; the expense of the reception banquet for people coming to the prey for the funeral. Followed by the making merit expense especially the expense of the reception banquet, and the funeral rite especially the donation. The community could decrease the expense of the alcohol , the gambling. On the contrary, they could not decrease the expense of the reception banquet. Thus, the campaign to change the belief and the attitudes towards the expense of the reception banquet and the donation, showing the status of the hosts, should be performed.

Keywords: Funeral Ceremony, Expense

1. Introduction

There was a meeting between the faculty of Management Science and MagluamaiSub-district Administration Organization (SAO), Sung Noen District, Nakhon Ratchasima Province on November 25,20017. The objectives of the meeting were to run the area-based community research and to search for the problems occurring in the area. During the meeting, the head of the SAO; Mr. Somphong Chaichaloem, the consultant of the elderly club ; Mrs.Sapoi Chaiprasert and the head of the elderly club; Mr. Manus Sugumwijit, discussed the problems of the community. A very interesting issue was found, it was the high funeral ceremony expense which was related to the social value. This ceremony became culture of the community. It reflected the luxury of the host instead of the grievances.

The wastefulness of the funeral ceremony expense became common culture and way of life in the community. There was no help from neither neighbors nor the community because they were accustomed to the conveniences of the city life. Money could buy the conveniences. Actually, the help from the neighbors during the funeral ceremony was commonly done in the past. The result was that the host must assume all the expense. This culture melted the patronage society. It became a huge problem occurring in the community.

Communication Arts Program, Faculty of Management Science, Nakhon Ratchasima Rajabhat University, then objected to study “Guidelines to Decrease the Funeral Ceremony Expenses in Magluamai Community, Sung Noen District, Nakhon Ratchasima Province”. This would solve the high expense of the funeral ceremony, based on the appropriate guidelines in the community, with collaboration of the community .

2. The purpose of the research

2.1 Study the expenses of the funeral ceremony in Magluamai Community, Sung Noen District, Nakhon Ratchasima Province.

2.2 Study the guidelines to decrease the expenses of the funeral ceremony in MagluamaiCommunity, Sung Noen District,Nakhon Ratchasima Province.

3. Duration of the research

June – November 2015

4. The scope of the research

3.1 The area scope – The research area scope was Magluamai Community, Sung Noen District, Nakhon Ratchasima Province.

3.2 The population scope – The family members of the elderly club’s members who died since April 1,2015- 26 November 2015. These lived in Magluamai Community, Sung Noen District, Nakhon Ratchasima Province. All of them were 16 people. The research was done with 100 percents of the population (16 people).

5. The concept of the study

The research was done in the context of Thai culture. Then, the research used the concept of Thai funeral ceremony. The expense of the funeral ceremony was studied within the concept of Thai funeral ceremony.

6. Research methodology

This research employed the quantitative research procedures by

1. Study the expense of the funeral ceremony in Magluamai Community, Sung Noen District, Nakhon Ratchasima Province by using the questionnaires.

2. Study the guidelines to decrease the expense of the funeral ceremony in Magluamai Community, Sung Noen District, Nakhon Ratchasima Province by using the questionnaires.

However, most of the informants (16 people) could neither write nor read well because they were rather old. Consequently, the informants were interviewed instead by the research team.

3. Make a focus group with the stake holders including with the monks, the community and the officials of Magluamai Sub-district Administration Organization. The purpose was to finally discuss the guidelines decreasing the expense of the funeral ceremony.

7. Research tools

1. For studying the objectives of the research (the expense of the funeral ceremony), the researchers used the questionnaire designed by using Thai funeral ceremony concept as the guideline. The questionnaire was checklist and filling in the blanks. It was divided into 3 parts.

Part 1: Overview

Part 2: The funeral expense

Part 3: The guidelines to decrease the funeral expense

After designing the questionnaire, it was adapted and reviewed the Content Validity by 3 local cultural scholars (to check if the tool was appropriated to the cultural context of the study area) to the IOC (Index of Congruence: IOC) by 0.84 then to determine reliability of the instrument. It had the reliability (Cronbach's alpha coefficient) by 0.831.

2. The other tool for studying the guidelines to decrease the funeral expenses was the focus group. This tool was aimed to let the community to participate in solving the problem. The stakeholders; the monks, the community and the officials of Magluamai Sub-district Administration Organization, were invited to finally discuss about guidelines to decrease the funeral expense.

8. Data Analysis

The quantitative data about the expense of the funeral ceremony and the guidelines of the funeral expense (the data from the members of the deaths' families) was descriptive analyzed by using the Frequency, Percentage, Mean and Standard Deviation. The qualitative data from the focus group discussing the guidelines was synthesized answering the objectives of the research.

9. Results

9.1 The overview

There were 16 informants including with 11 females (68.75%) and 5 men (31.25%). Most of them were more than 60 years old (56.25%). For the education level, most of them were under grade 6 or Prathomsuksa 6 (75.00%) and they were farmers (43.75%).

9.2 The funeral expenses

The income of the funeral ceremony was average 60,000 – 80,000 Baht (25%). The expenses was average 60,000-80,000 Baht (25%), followed by 80,001-120,000 Baht(12.50%). However, there were 3 informants who informed that they spent 20,000 Baht, 60,000 Baht and 210,000 Baht. The expense could be categorized into Table 1

Table 1 The expensess by categories

Category of Expense	%	Mean (Baht)	S.D.
Expense after the death	3.70	6,200.00	6,532.77
Expense for the temple	33.68	56,446.88	45,175.95
Expense for the prayer service	8.72	14,612.50	19,105.53
Expense for making merit	26.22	43,950.00	37,423.75
Expense for the cremation	16.18	27,114.69	22,701.08
Expense for Cremanins rite	8.14	13,639.38	26,723.17
Expense for Scattering ashes rite	3.37	5,656.25	11,388.18

From Table 1, it showed the expense by categories. The highest was the expense for the temple (56,446.88 baht) followed by the expense for making merit (43,950.00 baht) and the expense for the cremation 27,114.69 baht.

For the explanation about the detailed expense by each category, it could be shown in Table 2 - 8

Table 2 Expense after the Death

Expense after the Death	Baht (Mean)	Percentage
The coffin	2,543.75	41.03
The body and the temple management	1,000.00	16.13
The medicine for preserve the body	740.00	11.94
The vehicle for carrying the body to the temple	187.50	2.02

Table 3 Expense for the temple

Expense for the temple	Baht (Mean)	Percentage
Food & beverage during the pray for the funeral (3days)	31,125.00	55.14
The expenses for the temple such as the pavilion at the temple	5,812.50	10.30
The expenses for the materials such as tables, chairs, a bed, a stereo, the offerings.etc.	5,718.75	10.13
The expenses for the photographer and the images	1,509.38	2.67

Table 4 Expense for the prayer service

Expense for the prayer service	Baht (Mean)	Percentage
Prayer service for the death	14,612.50	100.00

Table 5 Expenses for making merit

Expense for making merit	Baht (Mean)	Percentage
Food & beverage for the guests	24,750.00	56.81
Set of monk's robes	8,612.50	19.60
Food & beverage for the monks	6,950.00	15.81
Afternoon refreshments (Pana) for the monks	768.75	1.75

Table 6 Expense for the funeral rite (Burning)

Expenses for the funeral rite (Burning)	Baht (Mean)	Percentage
The donation	6,887.50	25.40
Rag-robe for meditating and taking a funeral	4,956.25	18.28
Praying Matiga	3,975.00	14.66
Fuel for the burning	339.69	1.25

Table 7 Expense for Cremains rite

Expense for Cremains rite	Baht (Mean)	Percentage
Making merit in the morning	6,718.75	49.26
Cremains keeping	6,075.00	44.54
Materials for Cremains rite	528.13	3.87

Table 8 Expense for Scattering ashes rite

Expense for Scattering ashes rite	Baht (Mean)	Percentage
Food & beverage for the guests	5,200.00	91.93
Voyage to the scattering ashes rite destination	766.67	13.55
Materials for scattering ashes rite	62.50	1.10

9.3 The guidelines to decrease the expense of the funeral ceremony

According to the questionnaire asking the members of the deaths' families, it could be analyzed in Table 9

Table 9 Guidelines to decrease the expense

Guidelines to decrease the expense	Informants	%
Non alcohol	16	100
Non gambling	15	93.75
Decrease to 4 monks praying in the ceremony	14	87.50
Non music band/ Thai classic band	14	87.50
Non fireworks	14	87.50
Use artificial flower produced in the community	14	87.50
Set team of cooks for charity	13	81.25
Non soda	12	75.00
Donate coffin from SAO.	12	75.00

After analyzing the quantitative data about how to decrease the expense of the funeral ceremony, the focus group was held to discuss among the stakeholders; the monks, the community and the officials of Magluamai Sub-district Administration Organization. They were invited to finally discuss about guidelines to decrease the funeral expense. It could be concluded that they could decrease the expense by

1. Non alcohol

2. Non gambling
3. Non fireworks
4. Use herb drinks instead of soda
5. Make only main course(one dish) served
6. Decrease to 4 monks praying in the ceremony
7. Decrease the days of holding the funeral ceremony

Moreover, it was suggested that the neighbors or people in the community should welcome the guests in the ceremony. This would create the harmony in the community.

10. Discussion

The result showed that there should be no alcohol, no soda , no gambling which was congruent to the research of Burin Rujjanaphan (2008), Sakid Punyaying (2010) and The Office of Culture at Phetchaboon province (2008). It was also suggested not to hire the music band / Thai classic band which was congruent to the research of Abbot Phiphatphong Thannawuttho (2012) who studied “The Changes of Buddists’ Funeral Ceremony: A Case Study of Mun Village, Naprung Sub-district, Pong District, Payao Province” and the work of Ruthairat Kadri and others (2008) who studied “The Guidelines to Decrease the Expense of the Funeral Ceremony by the Community Participation : A Case Study of Umong Sub-district, Mueng District, Lumpoon Province”. However, the very important point was that the community could not decrease the food & beverage expenses (75.00%) They reason was to give honor to the hosts and the deaths.

Suggestion from the result

1. According to the result, it show that the community had the highest expenses for food & beverage. However, the community agreed that they could not decrease it (75%) because it showed the honor of the hosts and the deaths. This attitude must be changed by holding a campaign against this attitude by their opinion leader such as teachers, monks, the leaders in the community, etc.

2. It was found that some informants must loan money from others to hold a big funeral ceremony. Then, the sufficiency economy should be campaigned as the concept of holding the funeral ceremony.

3. The result showed that the donation was the highest expenses in the category of “Expense for the funeral rite (Burning)”. Consequently, the guests should help the hosts by donating the useful materials/objects for the public (Instead of

donating money by the hosts showing the honor).

Suggestion for further research.

1. The study of “Community Participation in Decreasing the Funeral Expense” should be studied to solve the problem by the community collaboration.

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