

Community Empowerment for Enhancing Safety of Life and Property through Participatory Process.

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- **Abstract:** The main objective of this mixed-method research was to empower the community for safety of life and property enhancement through participatory process. The qualitative data were collected through indepth interviews, focus group, and workshops with 16 key informants who were community leaders, community members, and representatives from public, private and academic sectors. The quantitative data were collected with a questionnaire from representatives of 385 households selected with stratified random sampling method. The obtained data were analyzed with descriptive statistics whereas the qualitative data were examined with content analysis. The research area was Ko Samui community, Surat Thani Province. It was found that a significant challenge on safety of life and property in Ko Samui Community was traffic accidents on account of the steep terrain and narrow roads in combination with the lack of traffic discipline among tourists who used motorcycle as a popular mean of transportation. Ko Samui community has potential in community management, internal relation, characteristics of community members and leaders, and resources. The community empowerment program consisted of 4 steps comprising community relation building, community research team and working group building, network building, and change building. The output of actions in the "Community Road Safety program" induced behavioral changes among community members as they demonstrated more compliance to traffic rules and some of them became road safety volunteer. Moreover, the community members and the network partners learned to participate in solving community problems. Success factors included community leaders, characteristics of community members, community strength, reception of support, and acceptance from other agencies.
- **Keywords:** mixed-method research, community leaders, Community Road Safety program