

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

#### 6.1 Summary of Key Findings

This study explored how stakeholders in Yala Province—particularly teachers, community leaders, religious figures, and local education officials—perceive public management in relation to educational improvement, with a specific focus on teacher development and community participation. Drawing from in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, and guided by the frameworks of Public Management Theory, Constructivist Theory, and Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR), the study reveals that while decentralization and reform policies exist in form, their translation into practice remains deeply constrained by contextual, structural, and relational challenges.

First, a significant gap persists between national education policies and the realities of implementation in Yala. Many participants expressed that centralized policies fail to recognize the linguistic, cultural, and religious dimensions of the local context. Second, teacher development remains hindered by structural barriers such as unequal access to training, a lack of localized content, and logistical limitations—particularly in rural districts. Third, although cultural and religious institutions hold deep trust within the community, they remain underutilized in official governance processes. Lastly, meaningful community participation is still limited, often perceived as symbolic rather than substantive, contributing to ongoing mistrust in the public education system.

These findings confirm that effective public management in education cannot be achieved through structural reform alone. It requires attention to local perceptions, lived realities, and trust-building processes. In this regard, stakeholder participation must evolve from passive consultation toward shared ownership and co-production of knowledge and solutions.

## 6.2 Recommendations

Drawing from the findings of this study, several strategic recommendations are proposed to enhance public management in education within the context of Yala Province. First, teacher development programs must be contextualized. This means adapting training content and delivery to the linguistic, religious, and socio-political realities of the region. It is essential to ensure that such programs are relevant to multicultural classroom settings and accessible to teachers in both urban and rural areas, possibly through hybrid or decentralized formats.

Second, strengthening local education networks is crucial. Educational authorities should empower district-level and school-based leadership with greater autonomy to tailor policy implementation to local needs. This includes actively fostering collaboration between schools and community leaders in both planning and execution stages of educational activities.

Third, the role of religious and cultural institutions must be formally recognized and integrated into the governance of education. Institutions such as mosques, pondok schools, and community centers possess social capital and trust that can be leveraged to enhance student learning and moral development. Their inclusion in educational planning can bridge cultural gaps between the state and local populations.

Fourth, genuine community participation should be institutionalized. It is not sufficient to invite stakeholders to consultations without ensuring that their input informs decision-making. Mechanisms for community involvement must span the full policy cycle—from design and implementation to monitoring and evaluation—so that local actors feel a sense of ownership and agency in the education system.

Finally, trust-building should be elevated as a governance strategy in itself. Building trust between communities and state institutions requires transparency, responsiveness, and mutual respect. Educational reforms and initiatives must be communicated clearly and inclusively, and feedback from the community must be seen not as a formality, but as a vital input for improvement. These recommendations, grounded in the lived experiences of Yala's educational stakeholders, aim to support more responsive, inclusive, and culturally grounded public management in Thailand's Deep South.

This research affirms that meaningful improvement in Yala's education system hinges not solely on administrative reform but on relational and participatory approaches that respect local identities and realities. By grounding the inquiry in community perspectives, the study not only reveals systemic challenges but also uncovers pathways for renewal through collaboration, inclusivity, and trust. As Thailand continues to pursue education reform in diverse regions, Yala serves as a critical case that reminds us: effective public management must begin by listening.