

An Analysis of Organizational Behavior in Enhancing the Quality of Life of the Elderly within the Subdistrict Administrative Organizations in Khon Kaen Province¹

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Received: 23 September 2024

Revised: 20 November 2024

Accepted: 22 November 2024

Abstract

The purposes of this research were as follows: 1) to examine the internal and external factors that affect the functions that enhance quality of life for the elderly by the Subdistrict Administrative Organizations (SAOs) of Khon Kaen Province based upon Organizational Behavior Theory, and 2) to investigate the correlation between these internal and external factors. This research employed a quantitative method using an organizational level of analysis. The SAOs' chief administrators or those individuals, who have been appointed and who had assumed a relevant role as the representative of each SAO, were the respondents, who totaled 111. Descriptive statistics were utilized in the data analyses, and the relationships between the variables were examined by employing Pearson's correlation coefficient. The research findings revealed a robust correlation ($r = .770^{**}$) between the bureaucratic cultures and the organizations' structural-functional tasks. Nevertheless, the subcultures presented a limited association with both the bureaucratic cultures and the SAOs' structural-functional tasks. The link between the internal and external factors also showed that the external missions had exhibited a weak relationship with both the structural-functional tasks of the organizations and the subcultures. Indeed, there was a very weak relationship between the external missions and the bureaucratic cultures. The low quality of life among the elderly in Khon Kaen Province is partly due to the responses to organizational behaviors in those SAOs that prioritize the organizations'

¹ This article is part of a thesis entitled "the factors influencing the behavior of Subdistrict Administrative Organizations in Khon Kaen Province in carrying out their mission to promote the quality of life of the elderly," Master of Public Administration, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Khon Kaen University

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structural-functional tasks and strong bureaucratic cultures. The organizational behaviors of the SAOs did not align or adequately respond to the external missions, which included the problems or needs that related to the quality of life of the elderly.

Keywords Quality of Life, Elderly, Organizational Behavior, Subdistrict Administrative Organizations

1. Introduction

Currently, Thailand has a rapidly and continuously increasing proportion of elderly population. At the same time, the country has fully become an aging society (National Statistical Office, 2022a; National Economic and Social Development Board, 2019) According to a survey from the National Statistical Office (2022a), it was found that the elderly in the Northeastern Region have the lowest level of happiness in the country. Khon Kaen Province, in particular, has the highest number of elderly people with the lowest levels of happiness in the region (National Statistical Office, 2022b). This ultimately affects the quality of life causing it to be at a low level since happiness and quality of life are correlated in the same direction (Senasu & Singhapakdi, 2014). If elderly people have low levels of happiness, this factor will also have a negative effect on their quality of life (Srikuankaew, Jiawiwatkul, & Thayansin, 2018; Campbell, 1976; Rueanwong, 2014).

Under the aforementioned responsibilities of the local government, particularly the SAOs in Khon Kaen Province, which have a majority of the elderly population within its jurisdiction (National Statistical Office, 2022b), the local administrative organizations must carry out their duties in accordance with their authority and responsibilities under the Tambon Council and Tambon Administrative Organization Act B.E. 2537 and its amendments, version 7 B.E. 2562, Section 67 (6). The law stipulates that the local administrative organizations must have the authority and responsibility to promote the welfare of the elderly in their area of jurisdiction (Office of the Council of State, 2019). Unlike the Sub-district Health Promotion Hospitals (SHPHs), which play roles in health promotion, medical treatment, disease prevention, rehabilitation, and consumer protection (Ministry of Public Health, 2010), the SAOs deliver services in the form of public utilities that cover the various aspects of the lives of the elderly, including healthcare and medical treatment, income, housing, recreation, social security, family, caregivers, and protection, as well as service creation and support networks in accordance with the standard guidelines for elderly welfare put forth by the Department of Local Administration Promotion (Ministry of Interior, 2005). Based on this phenomenon, it can be concluded that the majority of the elderly population in the administrative areas of the SAOs in Khon Kaen Province is facing issues that are related to their quality of life, which may stem from problems in carrying out the missions to promote quality of life for the elderly by the SAOs in providing services in accordance with the conditions of the aforementioned law. The quality of life of the elderly, which is relatively low, reflects issues in the operations, particularly the behaviors of the

organization, which result from the actions of its personnel members (Atthamanah, 2007; Skritsanich, 2009).

The current body of knowledge related to the aforementioned issues has been basic to several approaches, and there were the studies that adopted the following: 1) political science focusing on the influence of missions assigned by the central government to local administrative organizations, such as Kittikunnitiphong, Taesilpasatit, and Chuphen (2018); Wanchanwech (2020); and Saewun (2023); 2) organizational sociology perspectives that placed emphasis on the relationships between organizational structure and personnel performances, e.g. Phungchai (2023); Bunruang (2014); Pinjai (2015); and Modsang (2022); 3) the anthropological approaches that specifically highlighted organizational culture to understand the established practices of the organization, such as Tavarom (2019); Thanananmethee (2016); Chareonsiri, Kenaphoom, and Phosing (2014), and 4) Pronsri's (2015) study, which placed emphasis on psychology to explain the behavior of personnel as expressed during their work. The literature review as such revealed that most of the research studies had only followed a fragmented approach, thereby hindering a more comprehensive explanation of the contextual causes of phenomena.

This research study explored how the policies and organizational management of government agencies relate to the quality-of-life issues that the elderly face. This study applied Organizational Behavior Theory, which can reflect the behavior of the organization as a whole, based on interdisciplinary principles (Tonson, 2003; Atthamanah, 2007; Skritsanich, 2009), with the goal of examining the phenomenon of promoting the quality of life for the elderly by the SAOs of Khon Kaen Province. It also helped to fill-in the gaps of organization theory by focusing solely on work methods, organizational structures, and management principles (Phukongchai, 2013). Organizational Behavior Theory is based on the principles of an open-system and can explain the relationships among the internal conditions, such as the organizations' structural-functional tasks, the bureaucratic cultures, and the subcultures within an organization, as well as the external conditions in the external missions (Nityasutddhi & Anusuren, 2023). This research can lead to an understanding of how the SAOs carry out their missions, which result in the poor quality of life for the elderly.

2. Research question

Given the low quality of life of the elderly in Khon Kaen Province, which is at a low level, are organizational behavioral factors of the SAOs able to explain the implementation to promote quality of life for the elderly by the SAOs in Khon Kaen Province? If so, how?

3. Research objectives

(1) To examine the internal and external factors, based upon the Organizational Behavior Theory, which affect the functions to enhance quality of life for the elderly by the SAOs in Khon Kaen Province.

(2) To investigate the correlation between these internal and external factors, which affect the functions to promote the quality of life of the elderly by such SAOs.

4. Literature review

Past studies, which attempted to explain the causes of phenomena related to the quality-of-life issues of the elderly and which resulted from the operations of government organizations, were conducted in a fragmented manner. These studies were unable to explain the contextual causes of the phenomena in a holistic way. Therefore, this research investigated the causes of such outcomes from the perspective of organizational behavior, which may be related to the results that were derived from the target group. Based on the aforementioned research problem, this study employed Organizational Behavior Theory as the model to elucidate the interplay between the internal and external factors (Moorhead & Griffin, 1995) within the SAOs of Khon Kaen Province. The aim was to investigate the role of the organizational behavioral factors in executing the mission to improve quality of life for the elderly. The theory of Organizational Behavior is comprised of two main components. Firstly, there are the internal causal factors of the organization, which encompass the mission in accordance with the functional structure, the bureaucratic culture, and the subculture of the organization. Secondly, there are the external factors, which specifically focus on the laws that define the missions assigned by the higher authorities (Nityasutddhi & Anusuren, 2023).

The mission, according to the organizational structure, is defined as the formal rules that are based on the relationships in task allocation and the assignment of responsibilities to the personnel members (Tonson, 2003; Robbins & Coulter, 2011). This helps to reduce conflicts and complexities in carrying out the mission (Meechat, 2005) and assists in creating clarity in operations so that the organization can achieve its objectives and ultimate goals. This involves executing missions that are based on authority, command lines, task assignments, and the division of work in accordance with specific expertise that aligns with operations (Khecharanan, 2008; Thongsut, 2009). This encompasses

the balance between the workload and the number of personnel members, as well as the appropriateness of personnel for the tasks they are meant to carry out.

According to the organizational structure, the mission often impacts the subculture of the organization since it represents the values that the group members accept and utilize in order to create a shared understanding (Serirat, 1998). The organizational structure then expresses this through behavioral plans for work performance, which mirror the importance of the personnel members' attitudes and beliefs. These values encompass the pursuit of success in their work, as well as the stability of their professional lives and the organization (Rokeach, 1973). Additionally, the benefits received from the organization align with the attitudes of the personnel members regarding their satisfaction with the assigned workload, and their commitment to performing the tasks in accordance with their duties and those duties assigned by external authorities. The results of success hold significant value for the personnel members, as well as their commitment to the organization for which they work. The feeling of being part of the organization's success (Robbins, 2005; Thongsut, 2009) leads to committed behaviors that are dedicated to carrying out tasks in order to achieve the organization's goals.

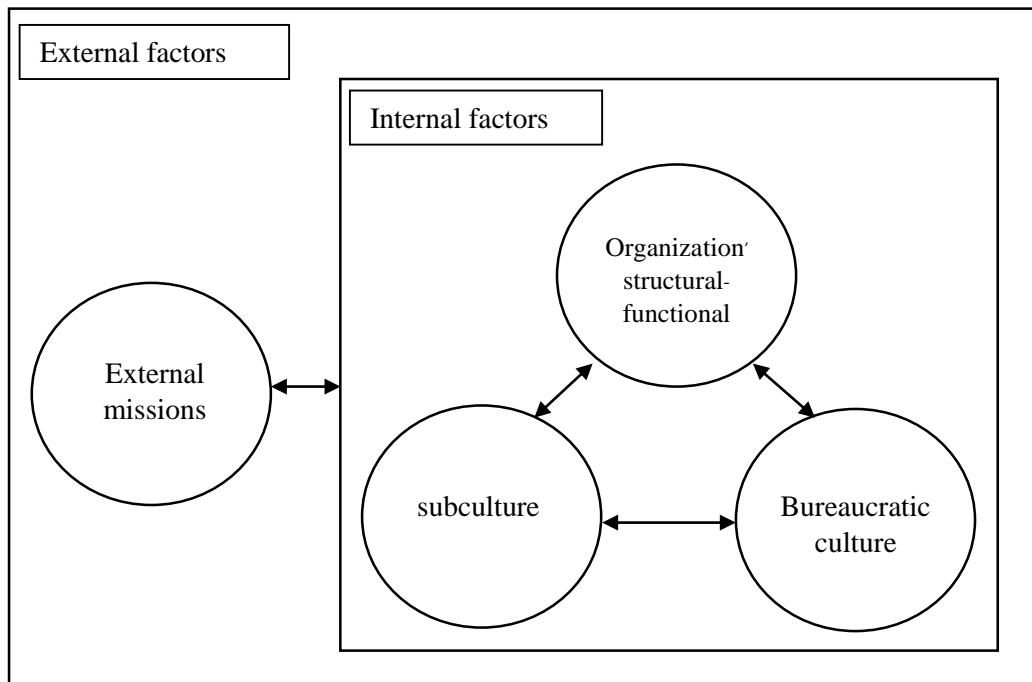
At the same time, organizational culture, as an informal requirement, serves as a mechanism for controlling the work behaviors of the personnel members (Hodge & Anthony, 1988; Ott, 1989). Organizational culture is the integration of personnel with the assigned missions, creating a unified standard that leads to stability within the organization's social system (Jittaruttha, 2013; Robbins, 2005). It raises awareness of roles and fosters collaboration among groups or subcultures within the organization, helping each other in their work (Robbins & Coulter, 2011; Meechat, 2005). This leads to the acceptance of positive values and attitudes in performance.

This research focused on bureaucratic organizational culture because it closely aligns with the context of the SAOs. The SAOs, which holds the status of a government agency, prioritize formality, ceremonial aspects, and regulations in order to effectively manage its workload. They also have a behavioral framework for routine operations that is carried out on a daily basis (Tamronglak, 2010; Daft, 2001). Additionally, the SAOs have created symbols, which define practices and represent the success of their operations. However, the bureaucratic culture still lacks flexibility in its operations, still responds to external conditions in a relatively slow manner, and sometimes resists change. Thus, the culture of bureaucracy focuses on the stability and security of the organization and its personnel as a priority (Tamronglak, 2010;

Khecharanan, 2008) in order to accordingly ensure smooth coordination with the mission structure, with the goal of establishing the organization's success.

If we examine the aforementioned information from a different angle in relation to the research question, we can conclude that the mission of the SAOs in Khon Kaen Province, which was to enhance quality of life for the elderly, has led to a reduced level of life satisfaction. In other words, it can be hypothesized from the research that in accordance with Organizational Behavior Theory, the relationship between the internal and external factors can be used to gain an understanding of whether the outcomes that are experienced by the target group are partly due to the organization's operations. It can be deduced that the conflict among the organizational behavioral variables, both internal and external, could be the root cause since the SAOs in Khon Kaen Province strive to enhance quality of life for the elderly. The literature review above illustrates the conceptual framework for the research through a diagram that depicts the interrelationships between the variables, which follows:

Figure 1: The Conceptual Framework



5. Research methods

The scope of this research was to study the authority and responsibilities in carrying out the mission to promote quality of life for the elderly by SAOs, which is a routine task that must be performed in accordance with the Tambon Council and Tambon Administrative Organization Act B.E. 2537 and its amendments, version 7 B.E. 2562, Section 67 (6) and according to Section 16 (10) of the Act on the Plan and Procedure for Decentralization to Local Administrative Organizations Act B.E. 2537. Having been based upon the utilization of a quantitative technique, the study methods of this research were as follows:

(1) The unit of analysis is at the organizational level, and the research population consists of 140 SAOs in Khon Kaen Province. The 140 respondents are either the chief administrator of the SAO or a designated representative who plays a role in promoting the quality of life for the elderly in each SAO.

(2) The research tool was an interview form, which was designed so that the respondents could explain their reasoning alongside their answers to each quantitative question in parallel. For this reason, the interview form included both closed-ended questions, which quantified the values, and open-ended questions, which allowed the respondents to provide supporting reasons. The questions were categorized into two factors: external factors, including external missions and internal factors, which encompassed the organizations' structural-functional tasks, bureaucratic culture, and subculture. The external missions referred to the laws, government policies, and directives, which defined the tasks that had been assigned by higher authorities or central agencies, including coordination with other agencies related to the missions of promoting the quality of life for the elderly (Nityasutddhi & Anusuren, 2023). The organizations' structural-functional tasks referred to the allocation of workloads and the assignment of roles and responsibilities to personnel according to those regulations and guidelines that should be conducted formally, including the division of tasks based on specialized expertise and the grouping of work, which ensures that the mission execution is coherent and smooth (Tonson, 2003; Khecharanan, 2008; Robbins & Coulter, 2011). Bureaucratic culture refers to a formal framework of values, beliefs, and principles that adheres to the regulations, organizes works and procedures in operations, follows the chain of command, lacks flexibility, tends to resist innovation or change, and that focuses on the stability and security of the organization and its personnel (Tamronglak, 2010; Hodge & Anthony, 1988; Khecharanan, 2008; Ott, 1989). Subculture refers to the values and attitudes that the group members mutually accept and understand, including both terminal values and instrumental

values, as well as attitudes, such as job satisfaction, job involvement, and organizational commitment (Rokeach, 1973; Robbins, 2005; Serirat, 1998; Thongsut, 2009).

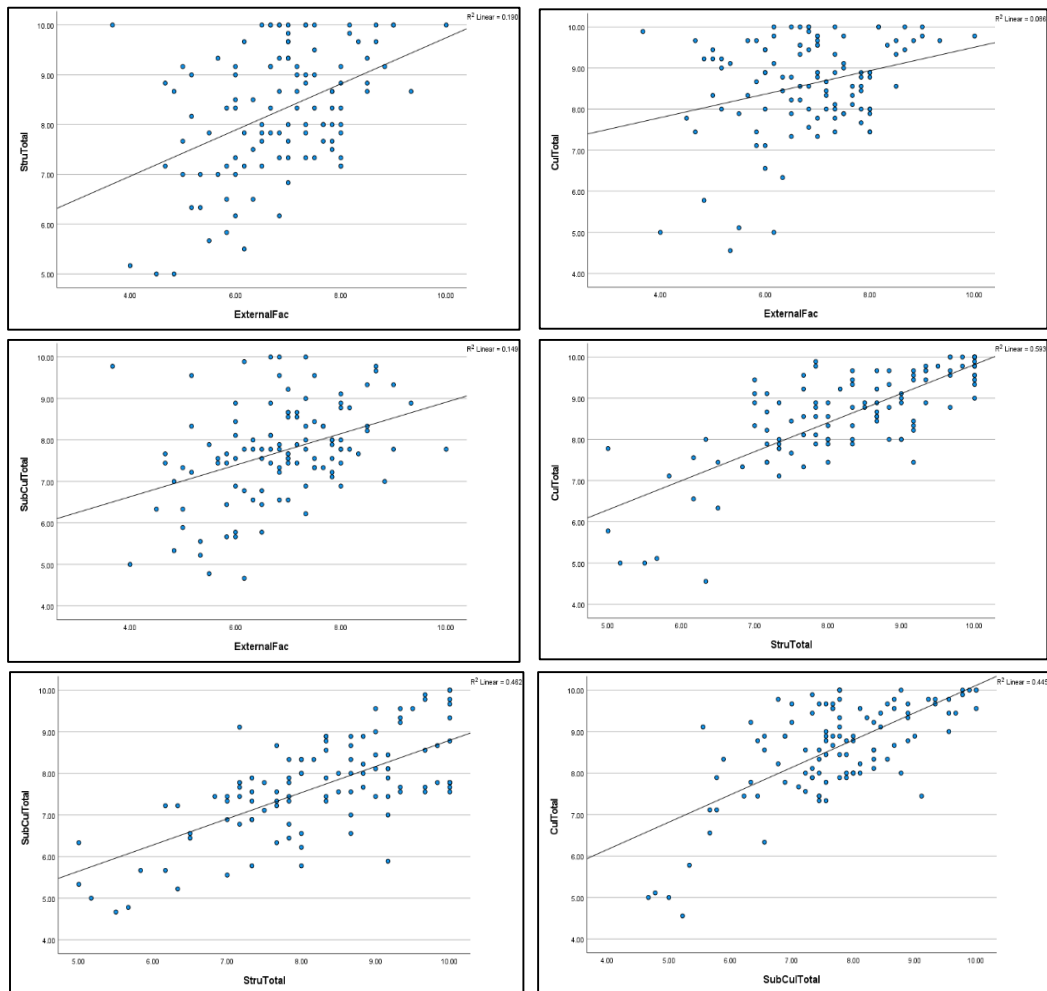
(3) For the quantitative questions, the interval scale of the variable measurement was applied (Siphai, Siphai, & Sakulku, 2022), with values ranging from 0 to 10, in which 0 meant to strongly disagree with the statement and 10 meant to strongly agree with the statement. The interview form was validated by four experts using the method of Index of Item Objective Congruence (IOC). The results of the IOC evaluation were as follows: the external missions' IOC value was 0.75, the organizations' structural-functional tasks' IOC value was 0.70, the bureaucratic culture's IOC value was 0.66, and the organizational subculture's IOC value was 0.80. The finding values, ranging from 0.50 to 1.00, met the standard criteria for usable questions (Rovinelli & Hambleton, 1977).

(4) Data analysis was conducted using the SPSS Statistics 29.0.2.0 for Windows software, which tested the statistical conditions for correlation analysis under four sequential conditions as shown in Table 1. The statistical condition tests yielded results that were able to satisfy the specified requirements.

Table 1: Statistical Assumptions for Pearson's Correlation

Statistical Assumptions	Criteria	References
Using a continuous scale for measurement	Using a continuous scale measurement, specifically an interval scale measurement.	Schober, Boer, and Schwarte (2018)
No significant outliers	Considering the p-value of less than 0.001 with Mahalanobis statistics (MD) indicates that the dataset is an outlier. At the same time, if the p-value is close to 0.001, consider the trimmed mean, which excluded the highest 5% and the lowest 5% of scores in comparison to the mean of the dataset. If there was not much difference between them, it could be concluded that the outliers had not significantly affected the overall mean of the dataset.	Ghorbani (2019); Wilcox and Keselman (2003)
Normal distribution	Considering the skewness value, which should not exceed ± 3 , and the kurtosis value, which should not exceed ± 10 .	Kline (2011)
Linear relationship	Considering the scatter plot, which illustrates the characteristics of data distribution in the linear relationship between variables.	Gelman and Hill (2006)

Firstly, the measurement scale used in this research was an interval scale. Secondly, there were originally 113 data sets, but after testing for outliers using the Mahalanobis distance (MD) statistic, two outliers, which had significantly influenced the mean, were found, with p-values of less than 0.001, specifically 0.00002 and 0.00015. Therefore, these data sets were considered and removed, which resulted in the number (N) of respondents being 111 data sets. Thirdly, normal distribution testing met the criteria with skewness and kurtosis values as follows: 1) the external missions' skewness and kurtosis had values of -.165 and -.055; 2) the organizations' structural-functional tasks' skewness and kurtosis had values of -.516 and -.269; 3) the bureaucratic culture's skewness and kurtosis had values of -1.250 and 1.989; and 4) the organizational subculture's skewness and kurtosis had values of -.285 and .129, respectively. Lastly, the linear relationship, which was considered through the scatter plot graph, had met the criteria by showing the characteristics of data distribution in the linear relationship between variables as shown in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: The linear relationship between the variables

Note: ExternalFac = external missions, StruTotal = organizations' structural-functional tasks, CulTotal = bureaucratic culture, and SubCulTotal = subculture

(5) The statistics used in the analysis included basic descriptive statistics for analyzing single variables and inferential statistics for analyzing data at the bivariate level, which indicated the strength and the direction of the relationship between the variables (Angsuchot, 2024) by calculating the Pearson's correlation with the statistical significance at the level of 0.01.

6. Research results

According to statistical criteria, the data collection and quality assessment yielded a total of 111 data sets that had met these conditions, representing 79.3% of the entire research population. The research results consisted of two parts. Firstly, there were the levels of internal and external factors of the SAOs in Khon Kaen Province. Secondly, there was the relationship between the internal and external factors of the SAOs in Khon Kaen Province in carrying out the missions to promote quality of life for the elderly, as outlined in the following details.

(1) The results of the analysis of each question are presented in Table 2. The analysis results were determined to be noteworthy in that the bureaucratic culture variables in the three issues (i.e., strictly adhering to the orders of the commander in carrying out the mission to promote the quality of life for the elderly as mandated by law, adhering to the regulations within the framework of responsibilities in carrying out the mission to promote quality of life for the elderly within the SAO, and implementing the mission to promote quality of life for the elderly as strictly mandated by law) all had very high averages, which reflected that the SAOs have a strong bureaucratic culture. Overall, in the variable organizations' structural-functional tasks, the respondents reflected knowledge in personnel operations, task grouping, workload distribution, task volume, and clear coordination. The subculture variable, as indicated by the survey respondents, pointed to values that focus on achieving success in operations as mandated by law and the organizational structure. In particular, the mission of promoting quality of life for the elderly, whether in accordance with the legal requirements or organizational duties, has a relatively minor impact on the employees' commitment to the organization. Regarding the external mission variable, the respondents indicated that the mission of promoting quality of life for the elderly in accordance with the law is practically feasible within the organizational structure of the SAOs. The external legal compliance tasks are somewhat complex, but they have relatively low changes.

Table 2: The Minimums, Maximums, Mean (μ), and Standard Deviations (σ) of the Internal and External Factors

N=111

Bureaucratic Culture	Minimums	Maximums	μ	σ
1) Strictly adhering to the orders of the commander in carrying out the mission to promote the quality of life for the elderly as mandated by law.	4	10	9.23	1.21
2) Adhering to the regulations within the framework of responsibilities in carrying out the mission to promote the quality of life for the elderly within the SAO.	5	10	9.1	1.22
3) The implementation of the mission to promote the quality of life for the elderly as strictly mandated by law.	5	10	9.06	1.21
4) The implementation of the mission to strictly promote the quality of life for the elderly according to the regulations under the internal organizational structure.	4	10	8.97	1.35
5) Adhering to the guidelines in carrying out the missions to promote the quality of life for the elderly within the framework of responsibilities in order to achieve stability in work.	1	10	8.85	1.49
6) Adhering to formal procedures in carrying out the mission to promote the quality of life for the elderly in accordance with the structured responsibilities to achieve operational success.	2	10	8.48	1.58
7) Adhering to formal procedures in carrying out the mission to promote the quality of life for the elderly in accordance with the structural roles to achieve job security for the personnel.	1	10	8.41	1.9
8) Having new techniques to achieve success in the mission of promoting the quality of life for the elderly in accordance with the functional structure.	0	10	7.77	2.05
9) Having new techniques in carrying out the mission to promote the quality of life for the elderly in order to achieve success as mandated by law.	0	10	7.56	1.95
The Organizations' Structural-Functional Tasks	Minimums	Maximums	μ	σ
1) The personnel have knowledge in performing duties under the framework of responsibilities to promote the quality of life for the elderly as mandated by law.	5	10	8.52	1.45

The Organizations' Structural-Functional Tasks	Minimums	Maximums	μ	σ
2) The personnel are satisfied with the continuous performance of their duties in promoting the quality of life for the elderly in accordance with the job structure.	0	10	8.42	1.55
3) The personnel are satisfied with the clarity of the coordination between the organization and the external agencies at the local level to foster the implementation of the mission in order to promote the quality of life for the elderly.	5	10	8.27	1.47
4) The personnel are satisfied with the workload according to the duty structure in carrying out the mission to promote the quality of life for the elderly as prescribed by law.	2	10	8.23	1.57
5) The personnel are satisfied with their work due to the appropriate distribution of tasks in carrying out the mission to promote the quality of life for the elderly according to the functional structure.	3	10	8.21	1.72
6) The personnel are satisfied with the clarity in the division of work in accordance with their duties in performing the mission to promote the quality of life for the elderly under the functional structure.	1	10	8.03	1.77
Subculture	Minimums	Maximums	μ	σ
1) The values focus on the success of carrying out the mission to promote quality of life for the elderly as mandated by law.	5	10	8.95	1.28
2) The values focus on the success of missions to promote quality of life for the elderly in accordance with the internal organizational structure.	4	10	8.76	1.37
3) The values focus on job security in carrying out the mission to promote quality of life for the elderly as mandated by law.	5	10	8.73	1.42
4) The implementation of the mission to promote quality of life for the elderly, as mandated by law, affects the commitment to the work performed and the perceived value of the contributions of the personnel.	2	10	8.57	1.67
5) The implementation of the mission to promote quality of life for the elderly, as assigned in accordance with the structural duties, affects the commitment to the work performed and the perceived value of the contributions of the personnel.	1	10	8.46	1.57

Subculture	Minimums	Maximums	μ	σ
6) Values focus on job security in accordance with the mission to promote quality of life for the elderly under the framework of responsibilities	5	10	8.44	1.48
7) The allocation of tasks, which is based on specialized expertise in carrying out the mission to promote quality of life for the elderly, affects attitudes in terms of the sense of the organizational commitment to the tasks being performed.	0	10	8.34	1.67
8) Among the personnel, the allocation of tasks in accordance with the structural duties in carrying out the mission to promote quality of life for the elderly affects the organizational commitment until a request to transfer to another organization is received.	0	10	4.92	3.63
9) The allocation of tasks to personnel in carrying out the mission to promote quality of life for the elderly as mandated by law affects their organizational commitment until a request to transfer to another organization is received.	0	10	4.24	3.54
External Missions	Minimums	Maximums	μ	σ
1) The implementation of the mission to promote quality of life for the elderly as mandated by law is, in practice, feasible according to the functional structure of the SAO.	3	10	8.22	1.63
2) SAO has received support from central agencies in continuously promoting quality of life for the elderly according to the functional structure.	1	10	7.85	2.14
3) The law that defines the mission to promote quality of life for the elderly from external agencies is consistent with the division of tasks in accordance with the organizational structure of the SAO.	0	10	7.55	2.05
4) Coordination and collaboration requests from external agencies at the relevant local level are consistent with the division of tasks in accordance with the SAO's structure.	0	10	7.23	2.36
5) The implementation of the mission to promote quality of life for the elderly as mandated by law is complex in practice in accordance with the functional structure of the SAO.	0	10	5.36	3
6) The implementation of the mission to promote quality of life for the elderly as mandated by law changes frequently.	0	10	4.83	2.58

(2) The research findings indicated that the internal factors of organizational behavior had consisted of bureaucratic culture at the high level, with an average score of 8.60. Following this, the organizations' structural-functional tasks were also found to be at the high level, with an average score of 8.27. The subculture had been at a relatively high level, with an average score of 7.71. Regarding the external factors, external missions were determined to be at a relatively high level, with an average score of 6.84, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: A Summary of the Minimums, Maximums, Mean (μ), and Standard Deviations (σ) of the Internal and External Factors

N=111

Internal and External Factors	Minimums	Maximums	μ	σ
1) Bureaucratic Culture	4.56	10.00	8.60	1.16
2) The Organizations' Structural-Functional tasks	5.00	10.00	8.27	1.27
3) Subculture	4.67	10.00	7.71	1.17
4) External Missions	3.67	10.00	6.84	1.19

(3) Overall, the internal factors had shown high and low levels of interrelationship, while the relationships between the internal factors and external factors had been at low and very low levels. In accordance with the organizations' structural-functional tasks and bureaucratic cultures, the missions had shown a high level of correlation ($r = 0.770$). The structural-functional tasks of the organizations and the subcultures of the organizations had shown a low level of correlation ($r = 0.680$). The relationship between the bureaucratic cultures and the subcultures of the organizations had expressed a low level of correlation ($r = 0.667$). The external missions and the organizations' structural-functional tasks had shown a low level of correlation ($r = 0.435$). The external missions and the subculture of the organizations had indicated a low correlation level ($r = 0.386$). The external missions had shown a very low correlation with bureaucratic culture ($r = 0.293$), as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: The Correlation Coefficients (r) and the Interpretation of the Levels of Correlation between Variables

N=111

Variables	(μ)	(σ)	1	2	3	4
1) External Missions	6.84	1.19				
2) Organizations' Structural-Functional Tasks	8.27	1.27	.435**			
3) Bureaucratic Culture	8.60	1.16	.293**	.770**		
4) Subculture	7.71	1.17	.386**	.680**	.667**	

Note: ** means that the Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) is statistically significant at the 0.01 level or confidence level of 99%.

7. Discussion

According to the above analyses, it is reasonable to consider the findings using the following discussion:

Firstly, in all variables, the internal factors of organizational behavior had the high average values, reflecting that the SAOs had precisely focused on carrying out their missions in accordance with the organizations' structural functions, adhering firmly to the regulations, and placing great importance on formality. Notably, bureaucratic culture had the highest average value. According to the reasoning that the respondents provided, their mission to promote the quality of life for the elderly by the SAOs adhered to the operational guidelines within the structural framework of their responsibilities and complied with the orders of their superiors while also maintaining formality in their practices. The research findings were consistent with other studies, which found that local government organizations have an intense level of hierarchical or bureaucratic organizational culture, which is characterized by a defensive and passive organizational culture that places emphasis on relying upon and agreeing with superiors, adhering to regulations, and making efforts to avoid being assigned unfamiliar tasks (Tavarom, 2019; Rungmee & Jittaruttha, 2021). As Ejersbo and Svava (2012) noted, local government organizations continue to incorporate conventional bureaucratic structures and hierarchies as integral components.

The organizations' structural-functional tasks also had a high average. According to the reasoning that the respondents provided, the execution of the missions follows the procedures under the functional structure, which has clearly

defined methods of operation and an appropriate balance between the workload and the personnel members, as well as the specialized expertise of the staff members. This finding was consistent with Sutthananun (2021) and Kongkaew (2023), who indicated that local government organizations should clearly define their organizational structure according to the powers and responsibilities of each department, with a well-defined chain of command, and with personnel positions that are appropriately allocated in harmony with the organization's capabilities and missions.

Based upon the reasons given by the respondents, the subculture had a relatively high average in that two dimensions of the SAOs' subcultures had consisted of values that focused on the following: 1) success and work stability, 2) attitudes, 3) work satisfaction, 4) the employees' degrees of engagement toward their organizations, 5) willingness, and 6) an awareness of their responsibilities. This was consistent with findings from Sutthananun (2021) and Kongkaew (2023), who indicated that the duties of the personnel members are characterized by their specific roles, by working with dedication and commitment, and by fully cooperating to support each other in order to achieve success.

External missions have a relatively high average given that the missions of promoting the elderly's quality of life exist in the form of laws that have been mandated by the central government and originate from the coordination and collaboration requests from the relevant agencies at the regional level. This aligned with the findings of Kittikunnitiphong et al. (2018), who indicated that some aspects of national and local policies were consistent with each other. When putting this into practice, considerations are given to support regulations, personnel, and budgets, which are the main factors that ensure appropriateness and sufficiency when carrying out the missions.

Secondly, the interrelationship between the internal factors significantly and positively correlated at 0.01. However, the correlation strength was low, with the exception of the relationships between the SAOs' structural-functional tasks and the bureaucratic cultures, which exhibited a strength of high correlation. The SAOs, which focused on carrying out their missions in accordance with their structural-based duties, exhibited a high bureaucratic culture that aligned in the same direction. Strict adherence to the SAOs' regulations for performing tasks is to ensure the organizations' stability and that of their personnel (Tavarom, 2019; Panphichit, 2020). Additionally, the organizations' structural-functional tasks showed a low level of association with the organization's subculture, which was similar to statements from

Kittikunnitiphong et al. (2018) and from Manopkham (2018), who noted that this may be due to a mismatch in workload and personnel numbers, as well as the specialized expertise of the staff. This mismatch could potentially diminish the values and attitudes of the personnel in carrying out their tasks. Furthermore, the bureaucratic culture had shown a low level of alignment with the subcultures of the organizations. Panphichit (2020) similarly found that the implementation of missions to promote the quality of life in local administrative organizations had strictly adhered to inflexible regulations and had not responded to the needs of the elderly (Chareonsiri et al., 2014). This may have diminished the attitude stemming from a sense of value towards the work. However, due to the values related to job security among the personnel members, there was a tendency to maintain formality as a practice in order to demonstrate performance.

Lastly, the relationships between the internal factors and the external factors showed low to very low levels of correlation, indicating that the organizational behaviors of the SAOs did not align with or respond to the external missions. According to the functional structure, the external missions had a low level of alignment with the tasks. The SAOs' functional structure, which may not support the implementation of the external missions very well, consisted of the following: 1) the mismatch between the workload and the personnel members, 2) the competencies of the workers, and 3) the budgetary constraints related to the inadequacy to complete missions. As Kittikunnitiphong et al. (2018); Wanchanwech (2020); and Saewun (2023) stated, the missions in question did not align well with the division of labor within the organization and given the limitations of the budget and personnel in carrying out the missions, were not suitable for implementation in accordance with the potential of the SAOs. Furthermore, there was little interaction between the external missions and the SAOs' subcultures. This was similar to the findings of Pronsri (2015) and Modsang (2022), who stated that the personnel responsible for these missions continue to lack sufficient knowledge and understanding. The execution of external missions might occasionally be intricate, which could potentially erode the attitudes and values of the workers in their professional roles. This has led to delays and inconsistencies in providing services to the target groups (Kaew-inta, 2013). Importantly, the external missions had a very low level of alignment with the bureaucratic culture. As noted by Thanananmethee (2016) and Chareonsiri et al. (2014), there is a strict adherence to laws and the acceptance of orders along the chain of command within such a culture. Simultaneously, there is a tendency to resist innovations from outside the organization (Panphichit, 2020). These findings suggested that the

inconsistency between the internal and the external factors elucidates organizational behavior and impedes the SAOs' ability to fulfill their missions of enhancing the quality of life for the elderly since the SAOs remain attached to obsolete approaches and do not respond to the needs of the elderly in the area.

8. Conclusion

In order to better understand the situation of a low quality of life among the elderly, which may be related to government operations, this study used Organizational Behavior Theory to explain the implementation of the mission to promote quality of life for the elderly by SAOs. There was an explanation of the relationship among the internal factors, such as the organizations' structural-functional tasks, the bureaucratic culture, and the subculture, as well as the external missions as the external factors under the execution of the said mission. The significant research findings indicated that having a strong bureaucratic culture is an obstacle to meeting the needs or complexities of the mission in order to promote quality of life for the elderly. Furthermore, the bureaucratic culture has a high level of intense relationship with the organizations' structural-functional tasks, which may be due to adherence to the laws that define missions and regulations, as well as placing an emphasis on formality in the practices of carrying out tasks that promote the quality of life for the elderly. In other words, even though the SAOs may carry out their missions within their authority, the ultimate goals of the missions might not be achieved, which are to improve the quality of life until satisfaction in the quality of life for the elderly can be created.

9. Recommendations

By applying Organization Behavior Theory, the key contribution of this research was uncovering how internal factors can hinder the SAOs' ability to improve quality of life for the elderly. Addressing these difficulties has been deemed to be essential for the SAOs in Khon Kaen to serve the needs of the elderly in an adequate and effective manner. This research study recommends the following:

(1) The research findings indicated that the SAOs in Khon Kaen Province have had a high level of bureaucratic culture that has focused on internal stability and has strictly adhered to familiar laws and regulations. This is inconsistent with the external missions in that the organizations should adapt their responses to the changing contexts of the area. Therefore, the SAOs should cultivate and support an organizational culture by way of emphasizing changes or adaptation and by focusing on proactive practices to which the specific target groups in the area can comprehensively respond.

(2) For future research, this study focused on examining the relationship between the variables within the Organization Behavior Theory. However, a limitation of this study was its inability to explain the dependent variables that indicate the performance outcomes of the mission that promote quality of life for the elderly. For future research, a research model should be developed that can investigate the effects of independent variables under the Organization Behavior Theory on dependent variables, which are related to such performance outcomes. An analysis of Organization Behavior Theory revealed its exclusive emphasis on SAOs as service providers. Future research should focus on target groups, especially the elderly, in order to better understand other factors that affect their quality of life. Importantly, promoting the quality of life for the elderly may involve multiple sectors. In the future, research should be conducted on the cooperation or interaction between agencies as policy actors.

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