

Abstract

This study is entitled "Transformation Process toward Sustainable Real Estate Development: From Egocentric to Integral Paradigm." It investigates the emergence of sustainable real estate, as a social phenomenon of both global and local perspective. Accordingly, it covers the phenomenon in the United State of America in North America, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands in Europe, and Thailand in Asia.

This study is motivated by the realization that the ways commonly used for real estate development are unsustainable because they are under the egocentric paradigm, which holds to the growth of wealth based on physical pleasure of human only. So, this paradigm had contributed to various critical problems significantly, in both spiritual and physical dimensions. In response to these problems, the United Nations urged the use of "sustainable development" paradigm, which has stimulated a lot of results supporting sustainable development in various aspects. However, most of those results have failed to emphasize consciousness transformation although experts in every area have consented the consciousness transformation is crucial for the time being as sustainable development concepts are so limited, especially in real estate sector, while all crises remain prevail.

Therefore, this study is done under the integral paradigm, stemming from the insight into the core of Buddha's teachings, "the Law of Nature" that is the endlessly dynamic and conditional interconnectedness of everything. This includes the interconnectedness between all human and all natural environments being in the same system, or holding "The Same Oneness"; so strongly that if any part is missing, this system will not function as normal. The integral paradigm in this study also stemmed from the insight into the teaching that encourages human to think holistically, in taking the world back to the normal stage, which critically requires the transcending self that possesses the "new consciousness", or the "consciousness evolution". Accordingly, this study argues that the transformation process toward sustainable real estate development is an evolutionary process in an integral manner, with the consciousness

evolution as the influencing factor. This argument will lead to a confirmation of the potentiality of Buddha's teachings in explaining the real estate phenomenon and in contributing to the reduction of global crises, caused by the real estate development.

In the research design, not only the Buddha's teachings, but also other integral ideas; namely Arthur Koestler's "a part of the whole" or "holon" concept, and Ken Wilber's "All Quadrants/All Levels" concept, in his Integral Theory, were utilized. The case and field study research was conducted in the context of each country, including six middle-high class residential developments, by means of in-depth interviews, documentary researches, observations, and questionnaire surveys, with the analysis and the synthesis according to Don Beck's Spiral Dynamics integral theory. As a result, it reveals the followings:

1. The root of the sustainable real estate development problems is that the consciousness evolution does not widely spread. Therefore, the general populations are not conscious that the conditional interconnectedness between spiritual dimensions and physical dimensions is highly important.

2. There exists the conditional interconnectedness between consciousness, behavior, culture, social systems and environment, as well as the integral evolution of these dimensions to the higher levels.

3. In the real estate sector, the paradigm shift, as a result of consciousness evolution, from egocentric to eco-centric, even to integral one has occurred and become the key factor supporting the emergence of sustainable real estate.

4. "Consciousness evolution" is the result of various prevailing factors that differ from society to society. Despite this variety, some crucial factors commonly exist in all societies are the search for knowledge and self-practice, the action of those with close relationship, local culture, books and media, nature, and social movements.

5. The degree of sustainability in the design of real estate depends mainly on the developmental quality of architects, while that of any community depends on the developmental quality of its residents.

6. Sustainable community, which tends to minimally impact the Nature while highly giving holistic happiness, shall be at the "integral" level of development.

These findings support the integral idea that facilitating the transformation process toward sustainable real estate development does not rely only on the social system improvement, but also rely on the improvement of every key dimension connecting to human life. It is especially crucial to note that only with maturity of mind lifted above own ego, could human see the holistic realm of the phenomenon, including the advantages and disadvantage of every sciences and everyone. This seeing, in return, would enable human to integrate all advantages in a balance manner, resulting in appropriate approaches to take the world out of the crises. As per the findings, some key recommendations are purposed as follows.

For the public sector: The definition of 'integration' used by the state should be revised to include all key dimensions of life, while the term 'real estate' should be broadened to encompass the whole production process. In parallel, the implementation of policies and measures should take into consideration the levels of consciousness, and worldviews of target groups. In addition, the authorities should create conditions stimulating consciousness evolution widely.

For Civil Society: The environmental network of middle class should include more issues pertaining to environmentally-friendly housing and ways of living, with support from architects and engineers, as well as international and local cooperation.

For academic sector: It is very essential to reform research and education system, especially in the architectural field. In each class and each research program, there also must be linkages between all key aspects of life and take into account the levels of consciousness, and worldviews of target groups. Cultivation of consciousness transformation among students and lecturers must take priority in every conduct.