"Enlightenment Through Education in Thailand:

Thai Education and the Influences of Culture"

Kimberly E. Burstall

Master of Arts

"Saint Mary's University"

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"Enlightenment Through Education in Thailand:

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Approved by Advisor: _R.A. Sargent_

Dr. Robert Sargent

Approved by Dean of Education: _Jerry Piper_

Dr. Terry Piper

For my constant and loyal companion, Charles

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ABSTRACT

This study seeks to explore education in Thailand and the impact of cultural influences. In an effort to examine education and its prevailing influences, thirteen hypotheses about education in Thailand were developed; at large, their proof and/or disproof are as a result of a questionnaire survey. Specifically developed questionnaires were administered to 601 Thai students, teachers and parents in Thailand, in 1992. Three central themes emerged from the results of the survey and the supporting literature, they are: (1) Thai culture, inclusive of the Buddhist faith, is inherent in education in Thailand; (2) The expectations of education are enormous and the regard for education is emminent; and (3) The locus of control resides with the Ministry of Education.

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CHAPTER ONE

The dominant focus of this paper is education in
Thailand - its current trends and developments and how
it is influenced by Thai culture.

Much has been written about culture and education,
especially in the 1970's, and the research appears to
be conclusive that, from a global perspective,
education is highly influenced by culture. As well,
there is no shortage of literature about education in
Thailand. However, literature which deals specifically
with the impact of cultural influences on education in
Thailand is considerably less common.

In an effort to examine the cultural influences,
the fundamental design and operations and to explore
the prevailing developments in education, thirteen
hypotheses about education in Thailand were formulated;
at large, their proof and/or disproof are as a result
of a survey of students, teachers and parents conducted
by the researcher in Thailand in 1992.

The focus is on the public formal education system. Some of the contents are more reflective of elementary school, as opposed to secondary school, due to the fact that the greater majority of students are in this level and the available literature is concentrated in this area.

A number of broader issues are touched upon in this paper, such as education in relation to gender, religion, urban/rural situations and socio-economic concerns. However, these issues are not a main focus of this paper and are discussed only in as far as they reflect on the main focus of culture and education.

METHODOLOGY

Subjects

Subjects were teachers, students and parents in Thailand. There were two distinct groups of teachers. The first group of teachers was divided into two special groups; Group A was comprised of Thai male and female English teachers from various regions of the country who were attending an English as a Second Language (ESL) seminar/methodology training session in Lop Buri (150 km. north of Bangkok) during July, 1992.

There were 91 in attendance; 67 completed the
questionnaire. Group B was comprised of Thai education
administrators, mostly males, from various regions, who
were attending a Leadership Course in Bangkok during
August, 1992. There were 40 administrators in
attendance; 27 completed the questionnaire.

The second group of Thai teachers was made up of
81 male and female participants from various regions of
Thailand who were teachers of grades 5 - 12.

The 355 students were Thai males and females from
various regions in Thailand who were in grades 5 - 12.

The 73 parents in this study were Thai mothers and
fathers of school age children from various regions.

Apparatus

Four written questionnaires of paper/pencil answer
format were developed specifically for this study, two
for teachers (Questionnaire #1 & 2; Appendix # 1 and
2), one for students (Questionnaire #3; Appendix # 3)
and one for parents (Questionnaire #4; Appendix # 4).
See the appendix for copies of the Questionnaires.
Questionnaire #1 was written only in English and was
administered with the help of an assistant/translator.

Questionnaire #2 was written in both Thai and English. Questionnaire #3 was written in English and in some cases both languages. Questionnaire #4 was written only in Thai.

Procedure

The research data developed from the questionnaires in this study was gathered in Thailand, between July and October of 1992. Tremendous assistance was given by the cooperating teachers and the Ministry of Education.[1] The cooperating teachers, who were for the most part previous student/teachers of the researcher, were English teachers and provided translation when necessary. Questionnaire #1 was administered by the researcher and a translator/assistant, to teachers who were enroled in the ESL programme and the administrators in the Leadership Course. The Ministry of Education delivered ten teacher questionnaires (Questionnaire #2) and ten student questionnaires (Questionnaire #3) to schools across the country. The cooperating teachers administered questionnaires #2, #3 and #4 to schools and communities where they lived. Some difficulties

were experienced in obtaining subjects for
Questionnaire #4.[2]

Participation was voluntary and responses were
welcomed in either language. Instructions for all
subjects were the same; subjects were asked if they
would answer a questionnaire requiring their opinion
about education, which was part of a survey being
conducted by a Canadian teacher studying education in
Thailand. Participants were assured of anonymity.

An effort was made to include teachers, students
and parents from all over Thailand, male and female, in
both urban and rural settings so that the results would
be indicative of the country at large. However, the
relatively small sample means that any result must be
treated cautiously.

Most of the questionnaires needed to be translated
from Thai to English; translation was done either in
Ottawa via the services of the Secretary of State or in
Halifax, with the cooperation of Thai people
temporarily living in Canada.

Hypotheses

This research was ultimately designed to focus on

the following main issues. Data have been collected
and/or extracted from the survey questionnaires to test
each of these statements.

1. A rural or urban environment is an influencing
factor in students' future educational and
professional aspirations.

2. Whether a students' professional aspirations
require a university/college degree or not is more
dependent upon their rural/urban environment than it
is whether they are male/female.

3. Thai teachers do not feel adequately
trained/prepared to do their job.

4. Parents expect teachers to be highly educated and
trained.

5. Education in Thailand is very centrally
controlled/directed and the locus of control resides
at the Ministry level.

6. The Head of a school, rather than the classroom teacher, has direct control over content and method of teaching as prescribed by the national curriculum and Ministry.

7. In Thai society, the Buddhist religion (personified by the Temple) is a powerful force in controlling/directing education.

8. Formal education in Thailand espouses a strong moral education which is a reflection of Thai culture and Buddhist philosophy.

9. Thai education is designed to preserve, protect and maintain Thai culture and Thai values.

10. Forces of modernization and Westernization are changing Thai education.

11. Parents are newly emerging as an influential/powerful force in education in Thailand.

12. The current introduction of 9 years of compulsory
schooling (previously 6) may result in Thailand
having more students with a higher level of education
to service the increasing technological, industrial,
entrepreneurial and other demands of a rapidly
developing nation, but there are still many areas of
concern to be addressed in the relationship between
the educational and industrial sectors.

13. In Thailand, the expectations of education are
extremely high.

Notes

[1]. During the summers of 1990 and 1992, this researcher was a member of a Canadian team of volunteer teachers teaching English as a Second Language (ESL), ESL Methodology and Leadership Skills to Thai teachers, under the direction of the Canadian Teachers Federation.

Working with Thai teachers, visiting schools and travelling around a most extraordinary country has been exciting and inspirational. The cooperating teachers mentioned were students of the researcher, or in one case a co-tutor, in either 1990 or 1992.

[2]. A few cooperating teachers expressed difficulty in obtaining parents to complete the parental questionnaire due to its length and the difficulty experienced in answering specific questions regarding education; in traditional Thai society, parents have not played a major decisive role in the public schooling of their children.

CHAPTER TWO

Chapter Two provides general background
information about Thailand. As well, this chapter
gives a frame of reference for education in Thailand;
it is inclusive of an historical background and a
general overview of the system and its administration.

General Information About Thailand

Thailand, known as the Kingdom of Siam until 1939,
is in the heart of southeast Asia, bordered by Myanmar
(formerly Burma) to the west, Laos to the north,
Kampuchea (formerly Cambodia) to the east and Malay
(Malaysia) to the south ("Culturgram for the '90s:
Kingdom of Thailand", 1991).

From a geographical point of view, Thailand can be
divided into four regions, namely, the North, the
South, the Northeast, and the Central region. The
North is mountainous, with large fertile valleys; it is
covered with forests and is home to Chaing Mai,
Thailand's third largest city. The people of this
region speak the Northern dialect. Many groups of
Thailand's well known hill tribe people live in this

mountainous area. The South is also mountainous, with fertile forested land. The people here speak the Southern dialect. In the southern provinces that border on Malay, the people are largely Muslims and speak Malay. The Northeast is a large sandstone plateau; it has a low annual rain fall and some parts suffer from drought. The people speak a Northeast dialect, which resembles the Lao language. In provinces bordering Kampuchea, the people speak Khmer. The Central Region is the basin of the Chao Phraya, Thailand's most important river. This region includes the capital city of Bangkok and is a low lying area near sea level. The basin is one of the best rice growing regions in the world and is considered to be the "rice bowl" of Asia. It is by far the richest and most affluent region in the country. The language spoken here is Central Thai, which is also the language of instruction in the schools. Thailand is a tropical country in which most regions experience three seasons: summer, rainy and winter ("Country Report", 1989, 1.2).

With an area of 514 000 square km. and a population of 57 million, Thailand is about the size of Atlantic Canada but has a population of more than twice

all of Canada. Thailand's population has more than
doubled since 1950; fortunately, family planning
programmes have achieved a reduction in the rapid
population growth (Cook et al., 1985, p. 6). More than
80% of Thailand's population dwells in rural areas and
almost 40% of the land mass is cultivated farm land.
Agriculture plays a vital role in the economy,
employing approximately 60% of the country's working
population. Thailand not only produces enough food to
feed its own people, it actually exports more food than
it imports and is one of the world's largest marine
fisheries and exporters of seafood and fish.

Approximately 95% of Thai people are Buddhist.
Thais practice Theravada Buddhism, which is common to
South East Asia. Evidence of their faith is abundant.
Buddhism is a fundamental institution in Thailand, and
has played a highly significant role in shaping the
history and social behavior over time. For many
centuries, the Buddhist monks were the only teachers,
devoting their lives and denying earthly possessions to
pursue and proclaim the teachings of Buddha and to
teach reading and writing to school age boys.
Until recent years, all schools were built on temple

property.

Thailand's cultural history can be traced back 5 000 years to the famed Ban Chiang culture, one of the oldest bronze age sites known in Asia (Ibid., p.5).

Thailand was governed by an absolute monarchy until 1932, at which time a constitutional monarchy was put in place. The Thai's love, respect and devotion to their King has been a tradition since the Sukhothai kingdom (12th century). The Thai royal anthem, which is performed at most official ceremonies and before the start of every movie, is testimony to the Thai's attitude toward their King. In part, it reads:

> Head of the Thai people, supreme in rank, I draw
>
> comfort from your protection. Because of your
>
> gracious care all the people are happy and
>
> peaceful. We pray that whatever you wish for,
>
> fate will grant you according to your heart's

desire, to bring you prosperity. We salute you!
Such expressions toward royalty are seldom heard in our times, but are a reflection of feelings held by the Thai people with regard to their present king, King Bhumibol the Great, who, with other members of the royal family, works tirelessly on behalf of his people.

The influence of the King was evident during the political crisis in May of 1992. After several days of bloody fighting between the pro-democracy forces and the military, the King spoke and then peace was restored. "No one else could have defused the tension, avoided further bloodshed or ensured that Parliament acted on the demand for constitutional amendments that sparked the crisis." (Manibhandu, 1992, p. 27). The authority that allowed this Royal intervention was "purely moral and stems from His Majesty's own individual merit." (Ibid., p. 28).

Official power lies with the government, headed by the Prime Minister. Legislative power is in the Parliament, made up of the elected House of Representatives and the Senate which is appointed by the King. Legislative matters of national policy must be approved by Parliament and signed by the King before becoming the law of the land.

Thai Education: Past and Present

Education in Thailand is said to have begun in the

middle of the Sukhothai period (1238 - 1378). The year
1283 marks the creation of the first Thai alphabet by
King Ramkamhaeng the Great. Although the alphabet has
undergone many changes, some of the original is still
in use. During the Sukhothai period, education existed
on two levels - that of the Royal Institute for royal
princes and sons of nobles and the education which was
provided by the Buddhist monks for male commoners. The
basic structure and availability of education remained
much the same in the Ayutthaya period (1350 - 1767)
and prevailed into the early parts of the Bangkok
period (1782 - Present), (Thai Education in Brief,
1992, pp. 12-13; Primary Education in Thailand, pp.
1-5).

The capital city of Bangkok was founded in 1728 by
King Rama I (1782 - 1809), who was the first King of
the present Chakri Dynasty. King Rama I reformed the
Buddhist church, thereby impacting the development of
public education (Centennial, 1992, p. 14).

With the arrival of western missionaries and
merchants in the mid 1800's, came the printing press
and for the first time printed books were available in
Thai language. As Western trade and industry increased

in the Far East during the early Bangkok period, English became the lingua franca, the business language. King Rama IV (1857 - 1865) realized the need for reforming the education system, so that adequate education, particularly in English, would be available for future government officials. King Rama V (1868-1910) further modernized education; he realized the need for better trained personal in royal and governmental services and opened the first Thai school in 1871, which was located in the palace and attended by young princes and sons of nobles (Ibid., pp. 12-15).

After opening the first school in Thailand, King Rama V issued the COMMAND DECLARATION ON SCHOOLING, which was the beginning of formal education in Thailand, but it was still essentially for the male elite. Soon after, schools were set up outside of the palace for the education of commoner's children and in 1887, the Department of Education was established to oversee the Kingdom's education and religious affairs (Ibid., p. 15).

The Department was then responsible for the 34 schools in the metropolis and provincial areas, 81 teachers, 1 994 students and four other advanced

schools in the metropolis. Education was on its way to becoming systematically planned and developed (Ibid., p. 15).

April 1, 1892 marked the establishment of the Ministry of Education and control of all schools. The first school for girls was opened in 1897 by Queen Sribajarindra and in 1901 the first government school for girls was set up in Bangkok. In 1913, the first teacher training school for women was set up (Ibid., p. 16).

The current structures of education were established in the first Education Plan in 1898, being pre-primary, primary, secondary and technical education up to higher education. Higher education was established in 1916 with the founding of Chulalongkorn University. The Compulsory Primary Education Act was introduced in 1921 by King Rama VI, making Thailand the second country in Asia, after Japan, to establish universal compulsory education (Primary Education in Thailand, p. 4).

In 1932, there was a change to the administration of education as the national political system changed from an absolute monarchy to a constitutional monarchy.

As a result of this political alteration, education became the responsibility of the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Education. In 1932, the first National Education Scheme was devised which recognized individual educational ability regardless of sex, social background or physical conditions. The National Education Scheme, which is revised when necessary, is the focal point for administering the educational system (Paradorntham, 1987, p. 2). In 1960, compulsory education was changed from six to seven years, but was reverted back in 1977, to the 6-3-3 system of six years elementary school, followed by three years of lower secondary and three years of upper secondary school, which is still in use today.

The present structure of the school system is:

Table 2.1

Higher Education - Graduate Degree

Higher Education - Undergraduate Degree

Upper Secondary Education - 3 Years (Age 15-17)

Lower Secondary Education - 3 Years (Age 12-14)

Elementary Education - 6 Years (Age 6-11)

Pre-Primary Education - Flexible

(Centennial, 1992, p. 36)

Some difficulties ensued from the administrative
design, resulting in the reform of the administrative
structure of primary education in 1980. As a new
department within the Ministry of Education, the Office
of the National Primary Education Commission (ONPEC)
was established and charged with the administration and
management of all government primary schools, with a
few exceptions. As a result of the 1980 reforms, both
academic and administrative responsibilities for
primary education are now under one Ministry, the
Ministry of Education (Primary Education in Thailand,
pp. 7-9).

The new primary system, under the ONPEC, operates
on four levels, that of national, provincial, district
and school cluster levels. At the national level, The
Ministerial responsibility for administering education
at large is divided among four main government
authorities: the Office of the Prime Minister: The
Ministry of University Affairs; the Ministry of
Education; and the Ministry of the Interior (See Chart
2.1 for an outline of Thailand's educational

administration).

Four agencies under the Office of the Prime
Minister are responsible for the planning of education:
The National Economic and Social Development Board
(NESDB) (overall policy in all areas of national
development); the National Education Commission (NEC)
(planning of overall policy for all types of education
administered under separate government agencies); the
Budget Bureau (BB) (financial support); and the Civil
Service Commission (CSC) (personnel support)
(Centennial, 1992, pp. 17-28).

The Ministry of University Affairs is
responsible for higher education, both public and
private institutions.

Chart 2.1

Thailand Educational Administration

Parliament ——————————————— Prime Minister

| Other Ministries | Office of the Prime Minister | Minister of Education | Minister of University Affairs | Min. of the Interior |

Ministry of Defence

Ministry of Public Health

Ministry of Transportation Communication

Regions

Provinces

Districts

Office of the Permanent Secretary

Departments

Schools Colleges

Schools BMA

Schools City of Pattaya

Universities

NESBD — BB

NEC — CSC

NESDB = National Economic and Development Board
BB = Budget Bureau
NEC = National Education Commission
CSC = Civil Service Commission
BMA = Bangkok Metropolitan Authority

Ministry of Education is responsible for all levels and types of education, as well as arts, culture and religious affairs. It is the sole ministry responsible for the administration and academic programming in primary schools. The Ministry of Education has 14 departments/offices and is assisted by the Office of the Permanent Secretary (See Chart 2.2 for an outline of the administration of the Ministry of Education and Chart 2.3 for an organizational outline of the Office of the Permanent Secretary).

Ministry of Interior is responsible for both primary and secondary education in Bangkok, via the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration and in the City of Pattaya.

Specialized areas of education are the responsibility of other government agencies: Military education is managed by the Ministry of Defence; police, border patrol police and seasonal schools for Hill Tribe children are managed by the Ministry of the Interior; and the Ministry of Health is responsible for the management of health education (See Chart 2.1).

Chart 2.2

Administration of the Ministry of Education

Ministry of Education

Office of the Permanent Secretary

Office of the National Primary Education Commission	General Education Dept.	Vocational Education Dept.	Instit. for Vocat'l Educ.

Teacher Educ. Dept.	Non-form. Educ. Dept.	Physical Educ. Dept.	Instit. for Promo. Teaching Sci. &Tech

Office of the Private Education Commission	Curriculum & Instruction Development Dept.	Office of the Teachers Civil Service Commission

Office of the National Cultural Commission	Fine Arts Dept.	Religious Affairs Dept.

The Ministry of Education has 14 departments/offices, plus the Office of the Permanent Secretary. The Minister of Education is assisted by two deputy ministers, the Permanent Secretary, four deputy Permanent Secretaries and the Director General of each department. All departments/offices have equivalent status except the Institute for Promotion of Teaching Science and Technology (IPTST).

Chart 2.3

Organization Chart in the Office of Permanent Secretary

Office of the Permanent Secretary
Permanent Secretary 4 Deputy Permanent Secretaries

Office of the Inspectors-General

Regional, Provincial and District Education Offices

Instit. for Devel. of Educational Administration

Inspection and Report Division

External Relations Division

Finance Division

Educational Planning Division

Legal Division

Personnel Division

General Affairs Division

Educational Management Information System

For the purposes of administering provincial and district education, the country is divided into 12 education regions, each with a Regional Education Office headed by a Regional Education Officer. As well, each of the 73 provinces has a Provincial Education Office headed by a Provincial Education Officer and each district has a District Education Office, headed by a District Education Officer. The Office of the Permanent Secretary appoints all education officers. There is also a number of educational supervisors in each region to provide assistance at all educational levels under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education. School clusters are typically groups of five to ten schools that work together to share information, resources and ideas (Ibid., p. 26). Difficulties and obstacles in the administration of education have been sited by the Office of the National Education Commission (ONEC):

1. **Structure related** Too many agencies responsible for education at each level.

2. **Centralization** The administration system is too centralized to promote efficiency, democracy and participation.

3. **Coordination** In some cases, confusion and overlapping has resulted from a lack of clearly specified roles and functions for the various planning agencies.

4. **Communication** The fragmented and hierarchical design of centralized administration has impeded decision making and confused communications (Structure of the Educational Administration System, p. 6).

These areas are being targeted so as to bring about a decentralized, efficient and effective organization for educational administration.

The Thai Ministry of Education has a wide scope of responsibilities which cover educational, religious and cultural affairs. Currently, there are approximately 11.3 million children, youths and adults receiving educational services in the formal or non-formal systems. Along with administering about 32 106 religious buildings, the Ministry of Education also supervises approximately 4 400 cultural centres and foundations and over 36 000 schools (Centennial, 1992, p. 29).

Due to such a vast responsibility, the Ministry of Education, for many decades, has been awarded a budget

allocation ranging between 18-20% of the national
budget per year, which usually places education in
first or second rank of the total budget. In the 1990-
1991 fiscal year, the Ministry of Education's budget
was the largest, totalling 62 158.5 million baht (about
22 baht per Canadian dollar). Second was the Ministry
of Finance budget, followed by the Ministry of Defence
(Thailand's Budget in Brief, 1991, p.65).
Traditionally, the cost of elementary education has
been three or more times the cost of secondary
education. However, this gap is narrowing as more Thai
students choose to further their formal education and
as the government further implements and accelerates
the plan of changing compulsory education from six to
nine years. The three year increase in compulsory
education began in 1990 and is expected to be fully
implemented by 1995. For the 1991 fiscal year, the
education budget allocated 53.0% of its budget to
elementary education, 19.5% to secondary education,
16.1% to colleges and universities, 6.6% to technical
training institutions, with the remaining 2.7% going to
areas such as adult education and educational research

THAILAND - 1990
EDUCATIONAL BUDGET

Adult Ed
1

Technical
6.6

Tertiary
14.1

Secondary
19.4

Ed Admin
2

Elementary
66
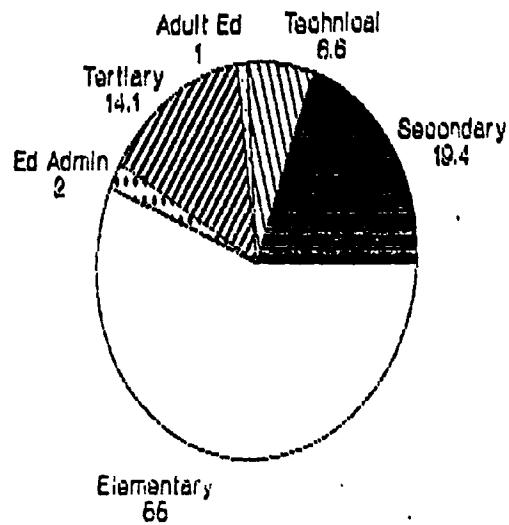
THAILAND - 1991
EDUCATIONAL BUDGET

Adult Ed
1.2

Technical
6.6

Tertiary
16.2

Secondary
18.3

Ed Admin
2.1

Elementary
63
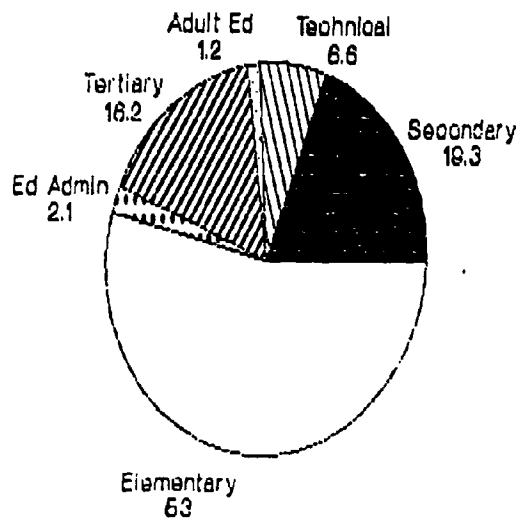
(See Graph One and Graph Two) (Ministry of Education, 6(E), 1992, p. 37).

A recent statistical breakdown of student enrolment for all educational levels in Thailand appears below (Table 2.2). The sharp decrease in enrolment numbers in the progressively higher levels of this structure stems in part from the intense competition for places in secondary and higher education. For example, there is a dramatic drop from elementary (6 955 492 students) to lower secondary (only 1 394 129 students), and a continuing reduction in the numbers of students enrolled right through into graduate level education.

Table 2.2

Number of Students in the Formal Education System, 1990

Total Graduate Degree	24 894
Total Undergrad. Degree	399 082
Total Higher Education	423 976
Total Upper Secondary	833 862
Total Lower Secondary	1 394 129
Total Elementary	6 955 492
Total Pre-Primary	1 292 593
Grand Total	10 900 052

Students as percentage of population (age 3-21) - 46.58

(Centennial, 1992, p. 39)

In the 1990 academic year, the total number of institutions, teachers and students in the formal education system under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education and its departments is as shown in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3

Total Number of Institutions, Teachers and Students

	Institutions	Teachers	Students
Min. of Ed.	36 409	526 201	10 146 007
Dept. Gen. Ed.	1 846	98 969	1 672 289
ONPEC	31 349	338 020	6 676 562
Dept. Vocat'l Ed.	163	15 040	218 599
RIT	30	3 559	59 273
Dept. Teacher Ed.	59	6 393	67 520
Fine Arts Dept.	11	890	6 712
Dept. Phys. Ed.	17	555	5 010
Private Ed. Comm.	2 934	62 775	1 440 042

Notes: The Department of General Education includes secondary and special education schools. ONPEC stands for the Office of the Primary Education Commission. The numbers given for the Department of Teacher Education includes 23 demonstration schools. RIT is the Rajamangala Institute of Technology, which has many campuses. The numbers given for the Private Education Commission include both general and vocational private schools. (1990 Educational Statistics in Brief, 1991, p. 37)

In terms of educational decision-making, the hierarchy, which begins with the teacher in the lowest position of authority, is as follows: Teacher - Head Master - District Education Officer - Supervisors - Provincial Education Officer - Regional Education Officer - Office of the National Primary Education Commission - Ministry of Education - Prime Minister.

Education began in Thailand almost 700 years ago. The Ministry of Education, which celebrated its hundredth anniversary in 1992, is responsible for almost all education in Thailand, except:

- schools in Bangkok and the City of Pattaya, which are under the Ministry of the Interior;

- universities, which are under the Ministry of University Affairs; and

- special training areas, such as the Military, which is under the Ministry of Defence.

In most countries, education is almost always the largest budget expenditure item and Thailand is no exception. Moreover, as the education system comes to implement the transition from six to nine years of

compulsory schooling, those costs might be expected to escalate, particularly as more students enter the system in the lower grades, and stay longer in their formal schooling careers. Finally, it is worth noting that education in Thailand is centrally controlled and very hierarchial in its design and nature of operation, which is a reflection of basic Thai culture and norms.

CHAPTER   THREE

Culture and Education

Culture is a widely accepted influencing factor in
education. In very strong traditional societies, the
influences of culture in education are more apparent.
In some strong traditional societies, the influences of
religion are deeply imbedded in the culture. Education
in Thailand will be discussed in light of both the
influences of culture and religion.

Culture and Education: A Global Perspective

The chemistry and influences of culture are vast,
varied and powerful. Culture, as defined by Merriam-
Webster, is "the act of developing by education and
training... a particular form or stage of
civilization." Margaret Mead offers a more
sociological definition when she describes culture as
being our daily living patterns, how we make a living,

the governing forces, family, and the value attitude
system inherent in daily life (Coming of Age in Somoa,
1961). It is our culture that forms our attitudes,
shapes our values and influences our behaviour.
Culture is one of those highly developed
characteristics that separates humans from other forms
of animal life. Kimball (1974, p. 7) says that despite
the great variety of cultural forms, humanity has
commonly possessed the need to transmit their cultural
heritage to each new generation, thus ensuring their
continuity and establishing the conditions necessary
for continued cultural growth. The stage must be set
for the next generation, so that their performance will
be acceptable, meaningful and contributory. Singleton
(1974, p. 27) states that from an anthropological point
of view, education is cultural transmission. Kimball
(1974, p. 8) goes on to say that only recently have we
realized that success or failure in school learning is
related to the cultural setting of the home and the
pattern of learning acquired within.

Evidence of education as a representative of or an
agent for cultural transmission is readily found in all
corners of this planet. In very traditional societies,

the relationship between the two institutions of
culture and education is more visible. An example of
this may be found in China or Japan, where the intense
disciplines of the culture are evident in their
classrooms in the social and academic regimentations.
Religion in some societies is one of the most dominant
influences in the culture. In some orthodox Islamic
religious countries, for example, inequalities exist
based upon gender - an instance of this is in Iraq,
where the university enrolment ratio is approximately 2
to 1 in favour of men (The World's Women, 1991, p. 52).
An example of cultural changes and their consequent
expressions in education is offered by Coombs (1985,
p. 226), who argues that rapid urbanization in Saudi
Arabia has made a significant contribution to the
erosion of lower education practices for women in urban
areas. Support for this statement is the increase of
female enrolment from 9% of all primary enrolment in
the early 1960's to 39% in 1980, and from a 0% female
enrolment in higher education in the early 1960's to
29% in 1980. Education participation rates for girls
are much higher in urban areas than in rural areas
where religious and other cultural inhibitions remain

much stronger (Ibid., p. 226). Another example of the
strong connection between cultural expressions and
education may be found in traditional communities where
formal education is not available or necessary, so non-
formal education meets the needs of the society and
community, much like on-the-job-training.

What we learn and how we learn it depends upon the
needs of our society and the demands (wants) of our
culture. The needs of the society may be determined by
a multitude of natural indicators, such as geography,
climate, population, resources and food supply, whereas
the demands of the culture can be viewed as being more
of a human construct, such as distribution of wealth
and power, social structure, religion, politics,
attitudes, values, ethics and cultural inheritance.
The domains of societal needs and cultural demands are
not wholly independent of one another; they are
interdependent and selectively compose themselves in
relation to each other as they both endure the change
process. It is through identification of both of these
domains that the guidelines and expectations for all
those involved is determined.

Education, be it formal or non-formal, has the

arduous task of integrating the above mentioned
domains. One of its main responsibilities is
socialization - to prepare the children to become
members of a community. Community, as a concept,
starts with the family and expands to neighbourhood,
school, district, province and nation. Of the varied
social institutions found within these communities,
schools bear the greatest burden of the integration
process. Singleton (1974, p. 31) argues that schools
need to be studied as tools or instruments of many
specific functions rather than just what our
educational ideology would claim. In other words, the
formal education system is not purely academic - it is
a multi-faceted institution trying to meet the needs of
the society and the demands of the culture. This
process is by no means a simple one; it is interesting
to realize that Aristotle complained that there was no
agreement as to what the young should learn and
wondered whether education should be a training for
what is useful in life, or in what tends to promote
goodness or in more out-of-the-way (extra) subjects.
Aristotle also noted that although there were
supporters for each of these views, there was no

agreement as to what would promote goodness because all people do not appreciate the same kind of goodness (Burnet, 1967, p.107). Aristotle was referring to cultural perceptions of what is good and most valued; agreeably, this is not the same the world over. Schools mirror societal (cultural) values and an overall national character.

National character may be described as the aspects/foundations of a country's many subcultures that reflect a national flavour. A more pointed definition is offered by Mallinson (1975, p. 263), who describes national character as "those forces of cultural continuity which determine the social behaviour of a nation as a whole...". Mallinson's position on schools as a mirror image of society is apparent when he states, "As is the school, so is society. And as is the teacher so is the school" (Ibid., p.116). We are all products of our schools, hence products of our societies. Further support and clarification for schools as a cultural mirror is offered by Kimball (1974, p. 167) when he states that it is inevitable and proper that countries/societies

should develop the unique institutional designs that
reflect its cultural forms, and that these are likely
to differ from our own culture which we live in.

Culture and Education: The Thailand Perspective

Thailand's Constitution states that "the state
shall maintain and promote our national culture". The
Thai Ministry of Education is responsible for a broad
range of areas which deal with educational, religious
and cultural affairs. Currently, approximately 11.3
million children, youths and adults are receiving
educational services, within either the formal or non
formal systems. About 32 106 religious buildings
(almost 29 000 of which are temples) are being
administered by the Ministry of Education. The
Ministry also supervises approximately 4 400 cultural
centres and foundations (Centennial, 1992, p. 29).

There are two departments in the Ministry of
Education which are directly responsible for the
promotion of culture: the Office of the National
Culture Commission and the Department of Fine Arts.
Culture has always been an integral aspect of Thai life

and pervades all activities of the nation. Culture, in Thailand, is deemed as an essential component of the development process and is considered to contribute to the security of the nation. The Office of the National Culture Commission's promotion of culture, as stated by the Ministry of Education, involves developing the cultural policies, co-ordinating, promoting and supporting cultural activities of both the private and public sectors at national and international levels, and supervising the licensing of voluntary organizations in the forms of associations and foundations. The Department of Fine Arts promotion of culture entails the preservation, promotion and dissemination of national arts and culture (Ibid., p. 100).

Religion plays an integral role in the life of the Thai culture. The Department of Religious Affairs has been a department of its own since the reign of King Rama 1 (1782-1809) and, for the most part, has been under the Ministry of Education. The Department is responsible for upholding the promotion of Buddhism and gives support to all recognized religious organizations in Thailand. With regard to the National Education

Scheme of 1977, the Department is responsible for
providing ethical and religious education as well as
promoting ethical standards in the community.

The transmission of cultural practices, norms and
values is evident during a visit to a Thai school or a
glance at a statement of objectives of Thai education:
Students wear school uniforms (it is compulsory for
students and teachers to wear their Girl Guide and Boy
Scout uniform one day a week, usually on Thursdays);
students have their hair cut to specified lengths
(above the shoulders for girls and crew cuts for boys);
students remove their shoes before entering the
classroom; students bow their heads and raise their
hands in prayer form to show respect to their teacher
and to visitors (this is a traditional Thai custom
called wai'ing and is practised in social and religious
settings when respect is to be paid and recognized);
and students exhibit obvious disciplined behaviour and
appear to follow somewhat rigid rules of conduct. Each
day is begun with the singing of the Thai National
Anthem, the raising of the Thai flag and religious
prayers or chants.

In the past three decades, the Thai education

system has worked on sequential five year development plans, called National Education Development Plans (NEDP). The NEDP's are a means of achieving the larger overall objectives of the National Education Scheme. The National Education Schemes began in 1933, just after Thailand became a constitutional monarchy. The sixth and latest Scheme was in 1977, which was somewhat revised/updated in 1982 and is currently being revised. The cornerstone of change in Thai education took place with the introduction of the fourth NEDP (1977-1981), the 1977 National Education Scheme, and the National Education Commission Act in 1978 (which replaced the National Education Council and plays the major role in overseeing education), which saw changes to the content, methodology, focus of education and the overall planning, administration and coordination of education. The educational objectives of the 1977 Education Scheme are:

1. To promote respect for one's own and other's rights and duties; to promote discipline; to promote respect for and abiding of the law, religion and moral principles.

2. To promote understanding of and arouse

enthusiasm in having a part in the governing of the country under a democratic constitutional monarchy, with unfailing allegiance to the nation, religion and monarch.

3. To inculcate a sense of responsibility for the nation, the community, the family and oneself.

4. To realize the collective sense of being Thai and being a part of humanity; to have national pride; to bear in mind national security; and to have a say in the protection of the country.

5. To uphold equality, integrity and justice.

6. To develop a good personality, good health and hygiene, both mental and physical.

7. To encourage diligence, professional abilities, as well as legitimate co-operation in all enterprises.

8. To develop a sense of communication, mutual understanding and co-operation; to nurture a search for truth; to develop creativeness; to develop the ability to solve problems and conflicts by intelligent, rational and peaceful means.

9. To promote knowledge, understanding and appreciation of sciences, art, culture, nature,

environment and resources to the nation.

<center>(<u>Thai Education in Brief</u>, 1992, p. 16)</center>

One of the main development policies of the Fifth
NEDP (1982 - 1986), was "...to inculcate self
discipline, values, morals, conscience, and
responsibility" (Thai Education in Brief, 1982, p. 49).
A statement of the general objectives of elementary
education in the sixth NEDP (1986-1991) specified four
categories: (1) the development of character which
emphasizes self-reliance, self discipline, diligence,
honesty, etcetera; (2) basic skills for daily living
which include Thai language, mathematics, working
habits, cooperation etcetera; (3) a happy life which
includes adjustment to environmental and social
changes, belief and faith, wise use of leisure time,
etcetera; (4) citizenship with emphasis on democracy
and the Monarch as the Head of State, values in
culture, international understanding, etcetera.

What follows is a broad statement of the
objectives of the Seventh NEDP (1992-1996) which:

> Aims at quality improvement of the citizens on
> ethics, morality, intellect, health, vocational
> knowledge and skills so that they can be self-

reliant and able to lead the course of national

development in the appropriate direction, ...and

bringing forth equilibrium of linkages and

relations among the development in economic,

social and cultural aspects as well as harmony and

mutual benefit between urban and rural areas.

(Objectives, Policies and Measures in Educational

Development Under the Seventh National Education

Development Plan, 1992, p. 16)

Study of the objectives for each the 1977 National

Education Scheme, the sixth (1986-1991) and the seventh

NEDP (1992-1996), reveals a current of continuity. The

reference or inference to honesty, respect, discipline,

ethics, morality, integrity, responsibility, cultural

promotion, nationalism, religion and the monarchy

reside in each of the mentioned statements of

objectives. These same cherished characteristics are

present in the elementary morality curriculum list and

seem to be what Thailand's Secretary General of the

National Education Commission (1990) fears will be

lost in the course of modernization if careful measures

are not taken to preserve them.

Statement of the objectives of elementary
education can be grouped in four categories: (1)
development of character; (2) basic skills; (3) happy
life; and (4) citizenship ("Elementary/Primary School
Curriculum in Asia and the Pacific", 1986, p. 485).
These objectives are the same as those of the Sixth
NEDP (1986-1991). With the implementation of the 1977
National Education Scheme, elementary curriculum was
grouped into four areas: (1) Tool Subjects (Basic
Skills), which encompasses Thai Language and
mathematics; (2) Life Experiences, encompassing
science, social studies and health: (3) Character
Development, which includes physical education, moral
education, music, etcetera; and (4) Work Orientated
Education, which provides instruction in housework,
agriculture, art and crafts. A fifth area, Special
Experiences, was added in 1982 and offers a choice of
either English or Work Education to grade five and six
students (Ibid., p. 484). Examination of the time
allotted for subject areas shows a shift in emphasis
between early and upper elementary in that as the grade
level increases, so does the time allotted for
Character Development and Work-Orientated Education,

whereas the time allotment for Tool Subjects and Life Experiences decreases (See Table 3.1).

Table 3.1

Time Allotment for Subjects per Week Classified by Grades

Subject	Grade					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Thai Language	26	26	15	15	10	10
Mathematics	11	11	11	11	9	9
Life Experiences	29	29	15	15	19	19
Character Development	6	6	19	19	15	15
Work Orientated Educ.	3	3	15	15	22	22
Special Experience	-	-	-	--	15	15

Note: Thai Language and Mathematics belong in the same subject area called Tool Subjects.
("Elementary/Primary School Curriculum in Asia and the Pacific", 1986, p. 487)

Character development has always been a main objective of the Thai education system. In the Thai philosophy, it is believed that character development should be the first concern of the education system and skill/knowledge development second. In a statement

about the culmination of education, the Secretary
General of the National Education Commission (1990)
stated that the basic principles which shape learners
to be ethical, morally sound and able to develop
themselves and to live in harmony with others are a
pre-requisite for developing skills in analytical
thinking, problem solving...and the ability to apply
modern knowledge to the Thai social contexts (Thai
Education in Perspective, 1990, p.12). In addressing
the impact that rapid industrial and economic growth is
having on social attitudes, beliefs, values and moral
development, the above mentioned Secretary General
said:

> As modernization takes its course, society becomes
> more and more open to foreign contacts, which
> consequently lead to cultural transmission. This
> exposure has influenced changes in attitudes,
> beliefs, and values which orient people to lean
> towards urbanized living patterns: for example,
> recognition of individual accomplishment,
> competition, entertainment and consumption-
> oriented behaviour, etcetera.
>
> These characteristics could bring negative

consequences towards individuals, communities and
the nation if they were overemphasized.
Furthermore, a society experiencing such cultural
changes also tends to give rise to many religious
beliefs and diversemoral values. Under such
circumstances, moral principals tend to become
loose while ethical behavior of the people is
inclined to deteriorate. It is likely that the
negative impacts resulting from all the traits
mentioned would be more crucial on the future
if the citizens' moral development has not
been sufficiently strengthened.

(Ibid., p. 9)

The concerns expressed by the Secretary General
are not likely to be the same as concerns which may be
expressed by a person of similar position in the
Western World, given that, in the West, some behaviours
are actually encouraged that Thai society discourages,
i.e. recognizing individual accomplishments.
Singleton's (1974, p. 27) position of viewing education
as cultural transmission is emerging in the information
presented thus far regarding education in Thailand and

will become more evident in the following data and discussion.

The obvious emphasis toward character development is deeply rooted in Thai culture which is itself greatly influenced by the Buddhist faith. As noted earlier, 95% of Thais are Buddhist. In the Buddhist faith, to desire and want for one self brings about hatred, jealousy and ill-will, which causes misery, unhappiness and suffering. Buddhist priests are not to accumulate wealth and are allowed to own but the barest of earthly possessions, such as their robe and begging bowl. The priests have the necessities such as food offered to them by the laity without cost, so they are able to avoid the desire for gains and the ills that accompany (Jumsai, 1980, pp. 2-39). Women may not become priests and priests are not allowed to come in any physical contact with a female, even a child.[1]

It has been customary for all young Thai Buddhist men to become priests once, at least for the three month period of the rainy season; however, this practice is not as strictly adhered to now. Priests are in a special class, members of a sacred order; they are respected above all men, even the King. When

parents see their sons as priests, they must bow down and pay respect to them (Jumsai, 1980, p. 14). The Four Noble Truths and the teaching of the Buddha are: (1) life is suffering; (2) desire is the cause of the suffering; (3) ending desire is ending suffering; and (4) the means to stop suffering is the Noble Eight-Fold Path using wisdom, morality and meditation (Collins, 1982, p. 89).

The Temple does not need to exert its power in an overt fashion because the Buddhist concepts are deeply inculcated in the belief system and attitudes of the Thai people. The Temples, especially in villages, are an integral part if not the centre of social life and they are the place of origin for Thai art and education. Although schools are state-owned, most reside on Temple grounds. Priests are often asked to teach moral and religious education, especially in grades 3-6 ("Elementary/Primary School Curriculum in Asia and the Pacific", 1986, p. 503).

Moral education is compulsory throughout elementary school and is taught as a subject by itself within the framework of character development; teachers are encouraged to integrate the concepts with other

subjects as much as possible (_Ibid._). In secondary school, moral education, values education and religious education are taught in schools both formally and informally (in course content and student activities outside the classroom). In secondary school, moral, values and religious education are integrated in a subject called "social studies" which is compulsory in both lower and upper secondary school and is integrated across the curriculum ("A New Decade of Moral Education", 1990, p. 117). The content outline for moral education for elementary school is given in the form of 30 highly valued qualities to be emphasized. They are:

(1) To abstain from causing harm to human and animal life.

(2) Loving kindness.

(3) Not to covet and not to steal.

(4) Generosity and sacrifice.

(5) Not to violate what others cherish.

(6) To follow the moderate way of life.

(7) Not to tell lies, not to abuse, not to conceal the truth, not to cause enmity among friends and not to use obscene language.

(8) Truthfulness and sincerity.

(9) To avoid harmful drugs.

(10) Mindfulness, self control.

(11) To be reasonable.

(12) To have moral shame and fear of evils.

(13) To be industrious.

(14) Patience.

(15) Courage and self-confidence

(16) Gratitude.

(17) Honesty.

(18) Concentration, self-control and a peaceful
mind.

(19) Unselfishness.

(20) Neatness and carefulness.

(21) Responsibility.

(22) Fairness and impartiality.

(23) Discipline and punctuality.

(24) Willingness to accept changes.

(25) Personal behaviour in terms of eating,
sleeping, using the lavatory, dressing and
relations between the sexes.

(26) Manners for expressing respect, apologies,
thanks, request, refusals, disagreement,

congratulations, sympathy and enjoyment.

(27) To follow principles for living together:
cooperation, sacrifice, forgiveness, generosity,
acceptance of others' ideas and sympathy.

(28) Cultured behaviour.

(29) Loyalty to the nation, religion and
monarchy.

(30) Self-improvement with regard to following
moral codes, law, order and tradition.

("Elementary/Primary School Curriculum in Asia and
the Pacific", 1986, pp. 501-502).

It was reported that deliberate measures were
taken to try to avoid a religious bias in the qualities
to be emphasized. Although this list of
characteristics would likely be embraced, at least in
part, by most cultures, they reflect Thai
values/culture by virtue of the fact that they have
been isolated and emphasized. Collectively they
express the essence of "Thainess".

The five commandments of the Buddhist faith are
encompassed in the above qualities. They are:

1. Do not take life.

2. Do not steal.

3. Do not commit adultery.

4. Do not tell untruths.

5. Refrain from all intoxicants.

Pairing the five commandments with five or more of the desired 30 qualities requires little effort; numbers 1,3,12 & 25,7 and 9 respectively are easily identified; others certainly apply as well.

A recurring theme throughout the literature about education and educational goals/objectives in Thailand is the development of moral and ethical attitudes and behaviours. The components of Thai moral and ethical attitudes and behaviours are evident in the 30 qualities, such as honesty, sincerity, gratitude, discipline etcetera The more apparent "Thainess" is expressed in numbers 25 to 30, where specific culturally prescribed behaviours and attitudes are emphasized. Pervasive elements of Thai culture or national character are largely to do with character development and ethical and moral attitudes and behaviours: to practice self control; to be disciplined; to be self reliant; to be well mannered;

to know how and when to show respect; to be generous;
to be unselfish; be loyal to the nation, your religion
and the King; and to maintain a constant strive for
higher moral and ethical standards.

Thailand is said to be one of most Buddhist
countries in the world (Cooper, 1990, p. 78). The
covert influences of the Temple are transparent; much
of the doctrine of the Buddhist faith is contained
within the 30 characteristics of elementary moral
education and the objectives of the education
Scheme/Plans previously stated. During the 1990
conference, "A New Decade for Moral Education", the
paper presented by Thailand about its moral education
stated "Buddhism can be considered as the mainspring of
Thai culture including literature, language, ethics,
arts and education" (p. 119). In the conclusion of
this paper, concern is voiced for the potential erosion
of Thai society due to the effects of rapid
industrialization; reference is made to the five basic
social values issued by the National Culture Committee.
These five basic social values have been instilled in
both the elementary and secondary levels of education
with accompanying teacher manuals, student workbooks.

They are:

    1. Self reliance, diligence, responsibility.

    2. Frugality and endurance.

    3. Self discipline and awareness of the national rules and laws.

    4. Follow and practice religious ethics.

    5. Loyalty to nation, religion and monarchy.

    (Ibid., p. 125)

From this brief analysis, it would appear that Thai culture and the Buddhist faith have married in such depth that a distinction between the two is not readily apparent. As well, it appears obvious that Thai education is a strong reflection of Thai culture and that, in Thailand, at least, education is cultural transmission.

[1]. A broader understanding and approach to Buddhism and its attitudes toward women may be found in Buddhism, Sexuality and Gender, edited by Jose Ignacio Cabezon, 1992.

CHAPTER FOUR

The thirteen hypotheses as stated in the introduction will be individually examined and additionally tested in coherent clusters in an effort to weigh their validity against data collected in the field survey. The following analysis is, therefore, based on the results of the 601 teacher, student and parent responses collected in the questionnaire survey.

The hypotheses seemed to form somewhat natural clusters based on their central themes, therefore, they have been grouped accordingly, and dealt with as more coherent, related aspects of particular defined sub-topics. In the first 'natural' cluster, hypothesis #1 and #2 relate to student aspirations. The second cluster, formed by hypotheses #3 and #4, is concerned with the topic of teacher training - how teachers feel about their training and what training parents expect teachers to have.

Hypotheses #5 and #6 form the third cluster. This focal point considers the locus of control - the power

relations and structure of education in Thailand.

Culture and religion, and the influences these two 'institutions' have on education in Thailand, are the topics of hypotheses # 7, # 8 and # 9, and thus form one of the most significant areas for our analysis.

The final cluster is comprised of hypotheses # 10, # 11, # 12 and # 13. This group considers basic trends and patterns in the rapidly changing formal educational field in Thailand. The discussion focuses on some of the current and proposed evolutions and trends in this national education system.

Student Aspirations

Hypothesis # 1

A rural or urban environment is an influencing factor in students' future educational aspirations.

Although there is support for this hypothesis, it is the opposite of what was expected; rural students have higher educational aspirations than urban students

according to the results of question # 11 (a) and (b)
(See Questionnaire # 3 and Table 4.1). Table 4.1 shows
that according to the percentage of answers given, 99%
of the rural female students reported that they plan to
finish high school, versus 88% of the urban females,
resulting in an 11 point difference between the
percentages of each of the group totals. As for intent
to attend university, 85% of rural females versus 75%
of urban females plan to go to university. For males,
the rural group exceeded the urban group by a 6 point
difference, with 82% and 76% respectively. With regard
to university, 70% of rural males versus 69% of urban
males plan to attend. In this study, rural students
have higher educational aspirations than urban students
and females have higher educational aspirations than do
the males, with rural females ranking the highest in
both intent to complete high school and plans to attend
university. Table 4.2 shows the total responses for
all students who want to complete high school, and wish
to go on to University. It is interesting that in both
scenarios females reveal higher aspirations than males,
suggesting perhaps that they see formal education as
more relevant for their personal development.

Table 4.1, 4.2   Students Educational Aspirations.

11. (a) Do you plan on completing high school?

Urban

	Yes	No
Female	88%	12%
Male	76%	24%

Rural

	Yes	No
Female	99%	1%
Male	82%	18%

(b) Do you plan on attending university?

Urban

	Yes	No
Female	70%	30%
Male	69%	31%

Rural

	Yes	No
Female	85%	15%
Male	70%	30%

N= Urban: Female = 137   N= Rural: Female 68
           Male   = 91   Male   57

Total Male and Female Responses and Total Responses

	Yes	No
11. (a) Female	92%	8%
Male	79%	21%
11. (b) Female	75%	25%
Male	69%	31%
11. (a) Total	86%	14%
11. (b) Total	73%	27%

N = Female = 205
    Male   = 148
    Total = 353

Another possible explanation for the difference in urban/rural results is that in rural areas, non-agricultural jobs are scarce, and a higher education may be perceived as an avenue of escape from the labours of farm work or unemployment and a ticket to the big cities. Therefore, although access to higher education is more limited for rural students, the perception of its value may be higher. In urban areas, the range of job selection is much broader and chances of obtaining a job are much greater. Along with more career options in the city also comes greater access to university alternative training programs that will still provide for a desirable career.

Of the total 423 976 students enroled in higher education in 1990, 47.05% were in the Bangkok Metropolis (1990 Educational Statistics in Brief, 1991, p. 63). As one might expect, the majority of higher educational institutions reside in the Bangkok Metropolis. These figures present a less than bright picture for large numbers of rural students' aspirations of attending higher education. However, these figures do not indicate what percentage of

current students come from rural areas. Consequently, the number of rural students recently attending university may be greater than the figures would indicate, and thus the growing aspirations of the rural population for higher education may be somewhat realized.

If the results from this student survey are at all an indication of future trends in education in Thailand, the percentage of rural students attending higher education will increase significantly in the not too distant future, thereby placing an increasing strain on the system to provide more classrooms, schools, teachers and learning materials. Social demand for more educational places in secondary and tertiary levels is thus potentially one of the greatest challenges for Thailand.

Hypothesis #2

Whether a student's professional aspirations require a university degree or not is more dependent upon their rural/urban environment than it is whether they are male or female.

Results from question # 11 (B) "Do you plan on attending university?" dispute this hypothesis. (See Questionnaire #3) As can be seen on Table 4.1, a higher percentage of rural female and male students intend to go to university than do the female and male urban students. With regard to both of the female groups, the total percentage for the rural group is 15 points higher than the total percentage for the rural group (85% and 70% respectively), while the male students show only a 1 point difference in the total percentage of each group intending to go to university (70% and 69% respectively).

Results from question # 10 "What do you want to be when you grow up?" (See Table 4.3), appear to contradict some of the results from question # 11 (B) shown in Table 4.2. Examination of Table 4.3 shows that more urban males aspire to professional careers that require university training than do rural males (60% and 44% respectively), while more rural females aspire to professional careers requiring university training than do urban females (81% and 74% respectively). A possible explanation for the lack of consistency between question # 11 (B) and # 10 may be

that many students, especially rural males, said they wanted to be something that would not require university training as a rule, but said that they did plan on attending university. For example, some wanted to be a soldier or a movie star when they grew up and they also planned on attending university. There may be confusion on the students' part about the questions, or perhaps they would like to go to university but do not necessarily plan on basing their career on it, or maybe they plan on being university trained professional soldiers and actors. A strongly possible explanation for this apparent anomaly in the data is students' recognition of the reality of the pyramid framework for higher and tertiary education. Examination of the number of students in various levels of the formal education system in 1990 reveals a funnel effect that may make the possibility of attending university unrealistic.

Analysis of the education enrolment for 1990 shown in Table 2.2, in terms of the percentage of students from each level that proceed to the next level, and what that percentage is of the initial enrolment in grade 1, further clarifies the funnel effect.

Table 4.3 Students' Career Choice

Students Choice of Career

	Prof. Univ.	Voc. Spec. Tr	No Further Training	Milit
Urban: Male	60%	23%	8%	9%
Female	74%	17%	9%	0%
Total	68%	20%	9%	3%
Rural: Male	44%	18%	3%	35%
Female	81%	15%	0%	4%
Total	64%	16%	2%	18%
Urban & Rural Total: Male	54%	21%	6%	19%
Female	76%	16%	6%	2%
Total All Stud.	67%	18%	6%	9%

N :
Urban= Male= 89   Rural= Male= 57   Total= Male= 146
        Female= 140   Female= 69   Fem.= 209
        Total= 229   Total= 126   Tot.= 355

Table 4.4

Funnel Effect From Enrolment Ratio Statistics 1990

# Enroled	Grade	% from previous level	% from Gr.1
1 229 255	1		
1 111 272	6	90%	
530 482	7	48%	43%
167 106	10	31.5%	15%
147 416	12	88%	12%
68 700	Univ.	46%	5.6%

According to these statistics, only 5.6% of the students who enrol in grade 1 will go to university.

It is somewhat difficult to speculate on the cause of the apparent confusion, as information can sometimes be lost in translation. However, the results from Table 4.3, show that a higher percentage of urban students choose careers that require university training.

According to the results shown in Table 4.3, some

predictions may be made, such as the likelihood of choosing the military (soldier) as a career is highest for rural males and non-existent for urban females. On the whole, Thai students, in this survey at least, have a much greater desire for professions requiring university than any other occupations.

The aspirations of the female students for attending university and training at university-required careers is impressive. Traditionally, most Thai women have worked in agriculture and, in more recent decades, in factories and commerce, but now more women are being hired in professional capacity positions. Women are slowly entering traditionally male-dominated positions, but are still greatly under-represented in national politics and in senior government and big business positions. In 1976, women were given equal legal rights and the government said that women would be appointed to diplomatic posts. In 1977, the King greatly improved the status of women with his historic decision to name his daughter as a potential successor to the throne, second only to her elder brother, the crown prince ("Country Report", 1990, Sec. 3.0).

The female students in this survey have
demonstrated that they have ambitious educational and
professional aspirations, in fact, more so than the
males; they do not reveal any apparent signs of feeling
less capable or curtailed because they are female.

Hypothesis # 3

Thai teachers do not feel adequately trained/prepared
to do their job.

Question # 5 of Questionnaire # 2 asks, "Do you
feel you had adequate training to perform in your job?"
A breakdown of the responses according to urban/rural
and female/male is as follows:

Table 4.5

		Yes	No
Urban:	Female -	27%	73%
	Male -	21%	79%
Rural:	Female -	54%	46%
	Male -	50%	50%

The majority of these teachers certainly do not.

feel adequately trained to perform in their job. Approximately three quarters of the urban female teachers felt they did not have enough training, while four fifths of the urban male teachers felt they did not have enough training. However, a slim majority of rural female teachers felt they had adequate training, while the rural males were evenly divided.

Further support for this hypothesis may be found in Question # 10 of the same questionnaire which asks "What do you feel the most crucial needs of teacher education in Thailand are?" The most frequent response to this question, given by three of the four groups, was "Teacher training"; the fourth group (rural male teachers), placed "Teacher training" in second place and "Greater knowledge and development" in first place; these two needs are strikingly similar.

Some explanation for this apparent problem may be in the structure and administration of the teacher training colleges and other institutes of higher learning. There are 36 Teachers' Colleges under the Ministry of Education (Department of Teacher Training), and under the Ministry of University Affairs there are 14 government universities, 27 private universities and

2 open universities (<u>1990 Educational Statistics in</u>
<u>Brief</u>, 1991, p. 53). Reportedly, the majority of these
institutions have their own administrative bodies and
they work independently. While the Ministry of
Education controls the teachers' colleges and other
colleges where teachers may train, such as vocational
and technical colleges, the Ministry of University
Affairs controls select universities and open
universities. There is no systematic or authorized
coordinating structure for having these institutions
work and plan together ("Teacher Education: Issues,
Needs and Plans for Action", 1987, p. 34). Some of the
problems and criticisms that have developed because of
this lack of structure are: surplus of teachers;
inappropriate teacher student recruitment (have been
based on entrance examination results and not on
aptitude for teaching); curricula for teacher training
does not correspond with the elementary and secondary
school curricula; and teaching practice has too much
emphasis on theories and is lecture-orientated instead
of being practice-orientated (<u>Ibid.</u>, p. 34).

In a national report entitled "Elementary/Primary
Education in Asia and the Pacific" (1986, p. 491),

problems and issues in elementary education were cited, one of which was that although there are lots of teachers, many of them are not qualified and many do not hold any teaching certificate. In 1987, it was reported that most elementary teachers in Thailand held either a Primary Teaching Certificate, which requires two years beyond grade 10, or a Secondary Teaching Certificate, which requires two years beyond grade 12 (Ibid., p. 487). Currently, teacher training colleges are emphasizing the Secondary Teaching Certificate or the four year Bachelor's Degree in Education.

In 1989, the statistical data showing the qualifications of all teachers in the formal education system (includes public and private elementary and secondary schools, colleges and institutes) by percentage distribution were as follows:

Table 4.6 Qualifications of Teachers in Thailand By
Percentage Distribution.

	All Total	Gov't Elem.	Gov't Second.
Master's degree and higher -	2.09%	0.29%	4.06%
Bachelor's Degree	- 62.75%	61.03%	80.96%
Diploma	- 22.62%	25.40%	11.30%
Lower than Diploma	- 12.53%	13.27%	3.68%

(Report on Educational Statistics, 1989, p. 112)

These data reveal that most public elementary
teachers hold a Bachelor's degree, as was the case for
the educational background of the teachers who
responded to Questionnaire # 2 (See Table 4.7).
Apparently, teachers are becoming more educated, but
still feel that they have not received adequate
training to do their job, which implies that more
practical training could be required in the various
Bachelor of Education programs and, more importantly, a
greater emphasis on in-service opportunities needs to
be considered for the whole country.

Table 4.7

Statistical Data
Teachers' Questionnaire # 2

	Urban		Rural	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Number of Respondents	11	19	14	37
Average Grade Taught	7	7	6	6
Average # Students in class	32	32	24	35
Average # Students in School	1089	997	597	1006
Average # Years Teaching	20	20	17	15
Average Age	41	41	41	37
Educ'l Background:				
Teaching Certificate	1	1	4	4
Bachelor's B.Ed	7	17	10	31
Masters	3	1	0	2

N - 81

Note: Teachers College used to offer two levels of Teaching Certificates; a T.C. 2 is higher than a T.C. 1. A T.C. 1 is no longer available. In Thailand, a Bachelor of Education Degree is referred to as a Bachelor's Degree and requires four years of either University or Teachers College.

Hypothesis # 4

Parents expect teachers to be highly educated and
trained.

Parents' expectations of teachers' training was
revealed in their answers to question # 12 of the
Parent Questionnaire. The question and answers
(answers are given according to the percentage of the
first and second most popular responses) are included
in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8 Parents' Expectations of Teacher Education.

Pre-school teachers	(1)	69% said Bachelor's degree (and or specialist)
	(2)	13% said Teaching Certificate
Elementary teachers	(1)	72% said Bachelor's degree (and or specialist)
	(2)	11% said Teaching Certificate
Secondary teachers	(1)	65% said Master's degree
	(2)	13% said Bachelor's degree
University professors	(1)	70% said Doctorate degree
	(2)	15% said Master's degree

Parents expect teachers to be highly educated, and they believe that a teacher's level of education should increase with grade levels. Interestingly enough, the teachers' response to the same question yielded an almost identical rank order of qualifications for the various levels. As well, when parents were asked whether they felt that their children's teachers were qualified to do their job (Questionnaire # 4, question # 11), 95% of them answered "Yes".

When this social expectation is compared to the present educational achievement of teachers in Thailand, a slight mis-match can be observed. Parents generally believe teachers should be trained to the degree level, regardless of their placement in the education system. However, as noted in the discussion under hypothesis # 3, the percentage of teachers with such qualifications is relatively low in elementary education (61%). Thus, we can potentially predict increasing pressures for better educated teachers at all levels in the system.

Hypothesis # 5

Education in Thailand is very centrally
controlled/directed and the locus of control resides at
the Ministry level.

Questionnaire # 1 was administered to a group of
ESL teachers and a group of various level
administrators attending a Leadership course (see
Methodology section). Results from this questionnaire
are shown in Table 4.9 and Graphs 1-8 where it can be
seen that both the ESL Teachers and the Leadership
Group rated the Ministry of Education as having the
most influence on education and curriculum. Although
the male ESL teachers rated teachers as having more
influence in education than the Ministry (See Graph 6),
the Ministry rated as # 1 in the overall ESL teacher
ratings of educational influence (See Graph 1).

Table 4.9

Perceptions of Educational and Curriculum Influences

	Educational Influences			Curriculum Influences		
	ESL Teachers		Leadership	ESL Teachers		Leadership
	Male	Female	Group	Male	Female	Group
1	Tea.	Min.	Min.	Min.	Min.	Min.
2	Min.	Tea.	Head	P.M.	P.M.	Head
3	Head	P.M.	Tea.	Head	Head	P.M.
4	P.M.	Head	P.M.	Reg.	Reg.	Reg.
5	Reg.	Reg.	Com.	Tea.	T.A.	Tea.
6	T.A.	T.A.	Tem.	T.A.	Tea.	Com.
7	Com.	Com.	Reg.	Com.	om	Tem.
8	Tem.	Tem.	T.A.	Tem.	Tem.	T.A.

GRAPH ONE
EDUCATION INFLUENCE

Influence Rating
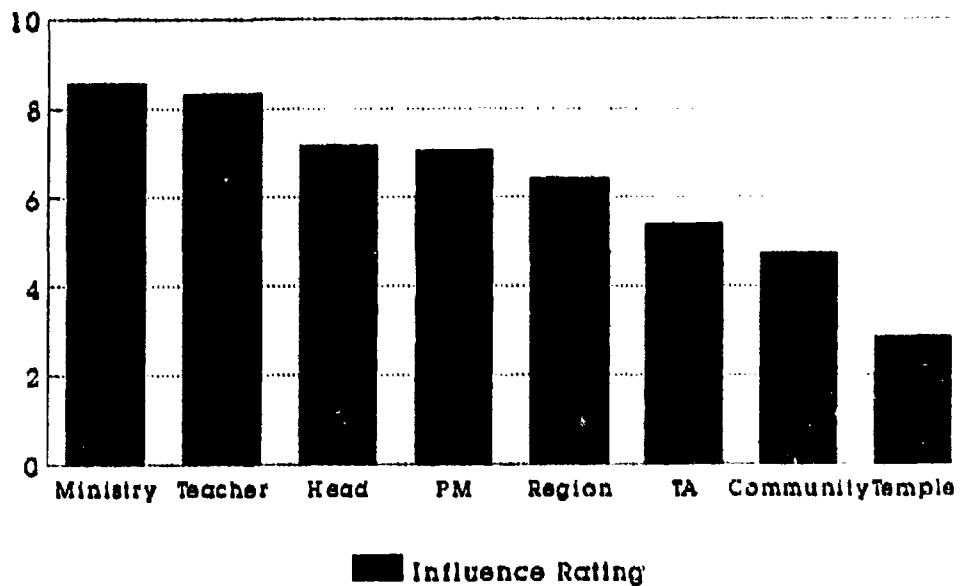
ESL Group - Total

GRAPH TWO
CURRICULUM INFLUENCE

Influence Rating
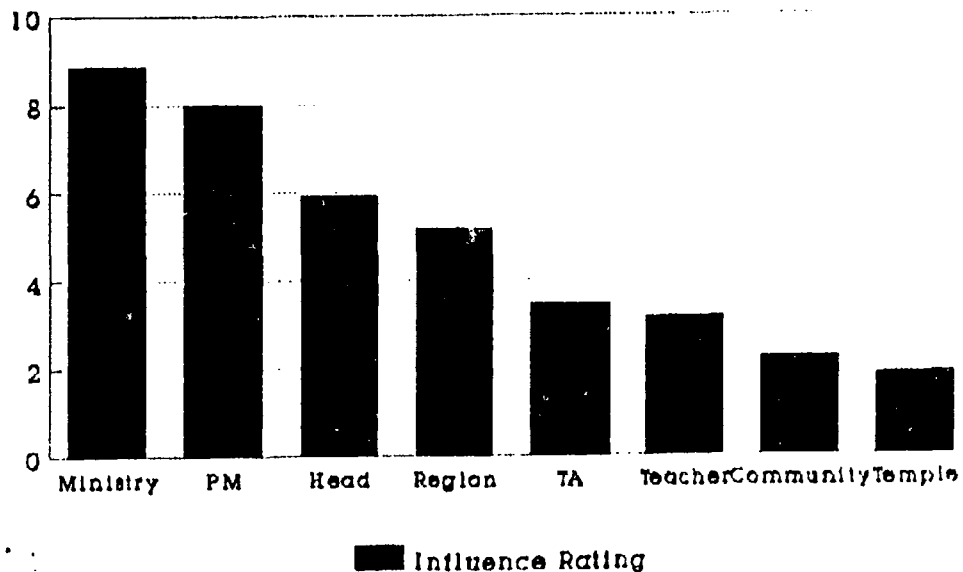
ESL Group - Total

GRAPH THREE
EDUCATION INFLUENCES

Ministry   Head   Teacher   PM   Community   Temple   Region   TA

■ Influence Rating
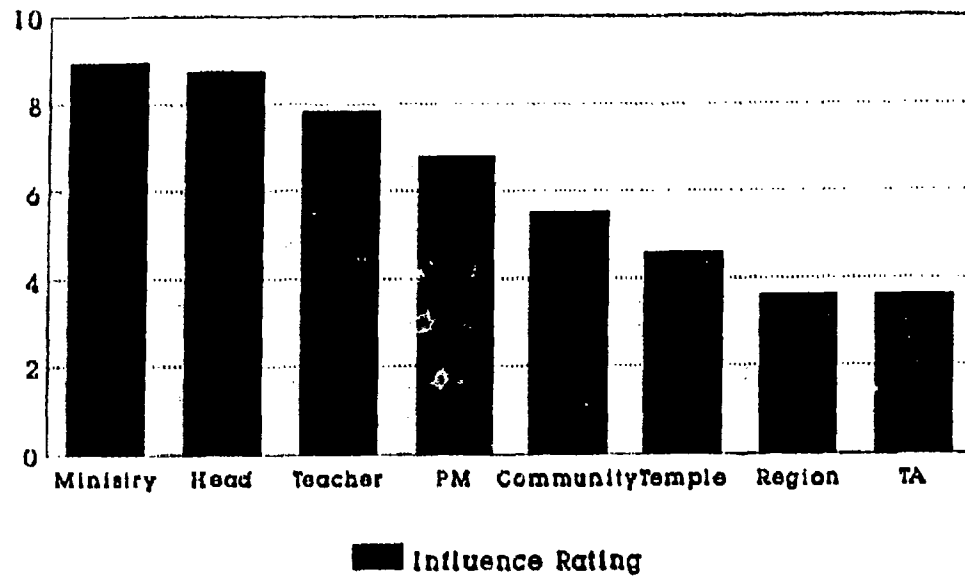
Leadership Group - Total

GRAPH FOUR
CURRICULUM INFLUENCES

Ministry   Head   PM   Region   Teacher   Community   Temple   TA
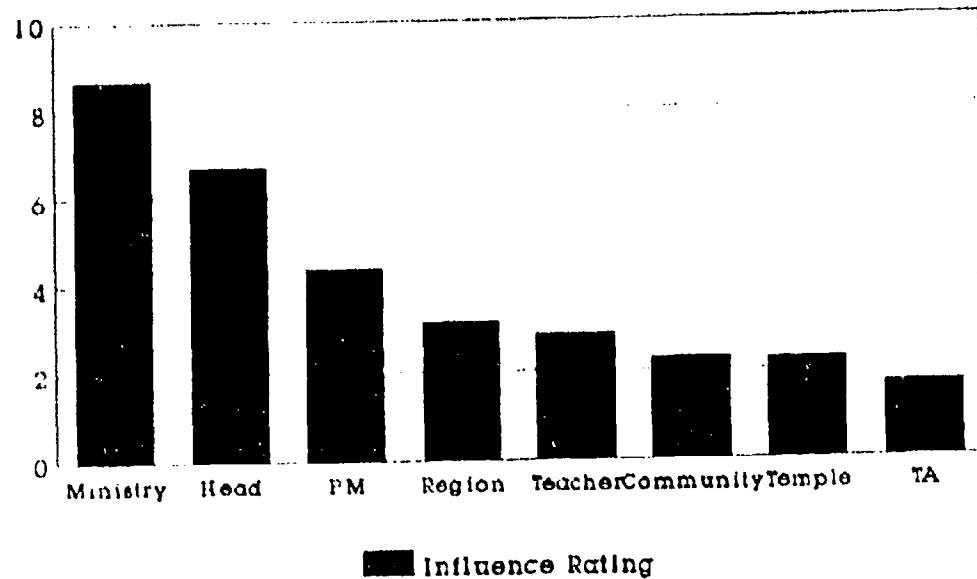
■ Influence Rating

Leadership Group - Total

GRAPH FIVE
EDUCATION INFLUENCES

Ministry Teacher PM Head Region TA Community Temple
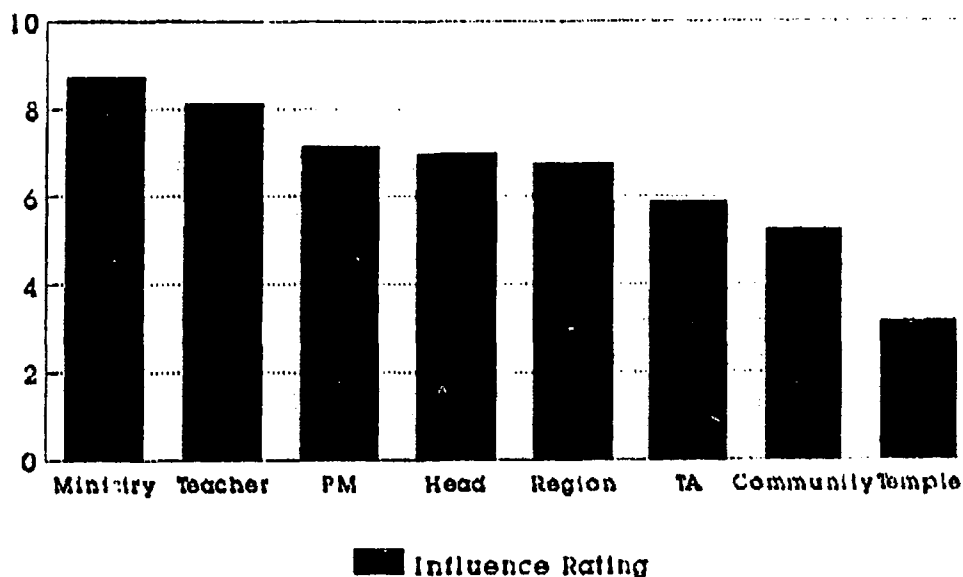
■ Influence Rating

ESL Group - Female

GRAPH SIX
EDUCATION INFLUENCES

Teacher Ministry Head PM Region TA Community Temple
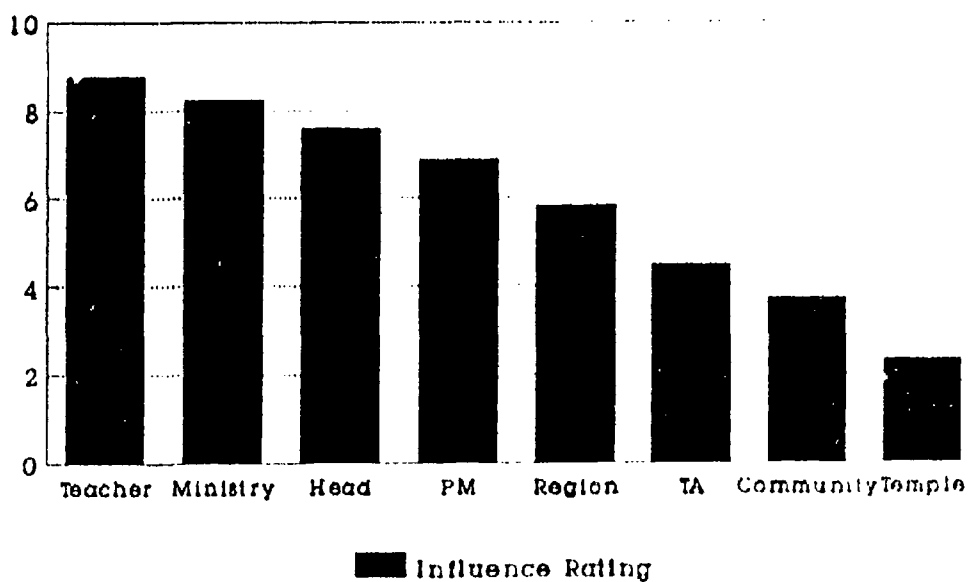
■ Influence Rating

ESL Group - Male

GRAPH SEVEN
CURRICULUM INFLUENCES
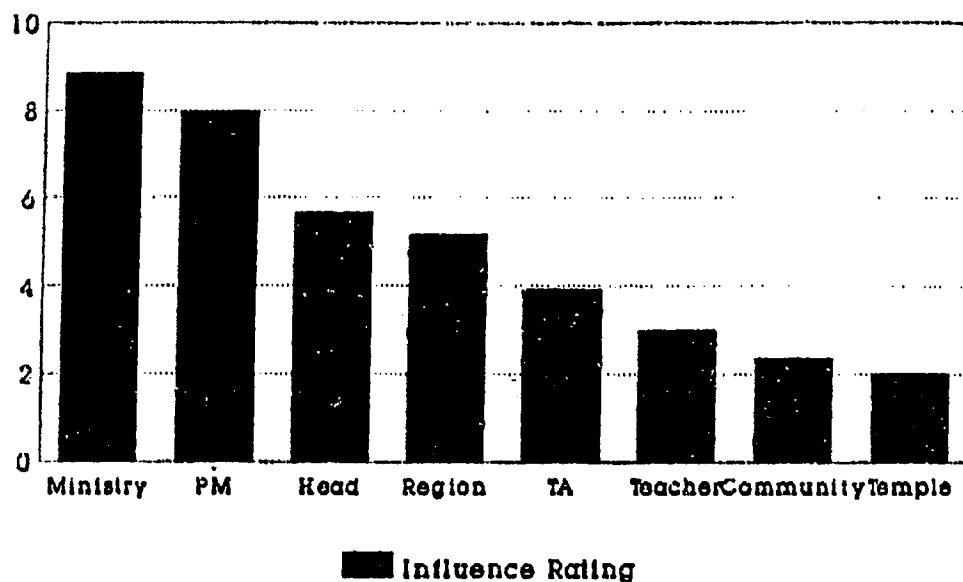
Influence Rating

ESL Group - Female

GRAPH EIGHT
CURRICULUM INFLUENCES

Influence Rating
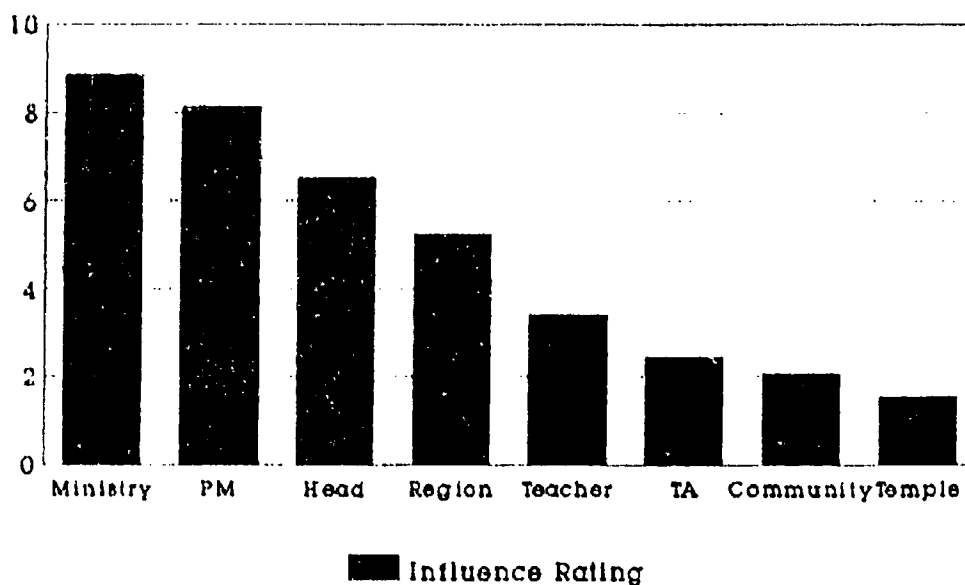
ESL Group - Male

In tabulating the results of Questionnaire # 2, the teachers were grouped according to location and sex. This questionnaire was administered to teachers in various regions of Thailand. Statistical data on this group of teachers is available on Table 4.7. Question # 3 asks, "If you were able to suggest changes for the educational system of Thailand, what would they be?" Three of the four groups listed "Regional control and regional curriculum" as their most common concern; the fourth group, rural females, listed "More relevant curriculum" as their most common concern. Perhaps a more relevant curriculum would be possible if there was greater regional control and regional curriculum.

Anderson and London (1985, p. 780) report that decision-making within the Ministry of Education is extremely centralized and, because of this, the distribution of resources largely reflects the decisions and policies of the Bangkok elites. When an education system is highly centralized, it is not surprising that the policies and curriculum would be reflective of central office and that there would be unequal distribution of resources, with a very high proportion of these resources going to service the

central schools. The Office of the National Education Commission (ONEC) recognizes that there are regional disparities of educational development in Thailand and that students in Bangkok and the Central Region have consistently obtained the highest scores ("Elementary/Primary School Curriculum in Asia and the Pacific", 1986, pp. 489-490).

Of the problems and difficulties in administering education that have been identified and addressed by the ONEC, centralization seems to be a number one concern. The ONEC stated that the administration system is too centralized to promote efficiency, democracy and participation ("Public Teachers Development Project", 1992). A brief review of the structure of the centralized educational administration helps explain why some problems exist. There are four main Ministries responsible for education; of these the largest, by far, is the Ministry of Education. Within the Ministry of Education there exists: The Minister and two Deputy Ministers; the Office of the Permanent Secretary which contains four Deputy Permanent Secretaries and seven divisions of the Office of the Inspectors General; the Institute for the Development

of Educational Administration and the Educational
Management Information System Centre; and then 14
departments, each of which is headed by a Director
General (See Charts 2.1, 2.2 & 2.3). With this amount
of central administration, it is not difficult to
understand why the government and others report that
the administration of education is too centralized,
resulting in problems with the structure (too many
agencies), coordination (confusion and overlapping of
roles and functions) and communications (fragmented and
hierarchical design has impeded decision making and
confused communications). Efforts have been and are
being made to decentralize and restructure education in
Thailand.

An article entitled "Questioning Compulsory
Education" (October 28,1992, Section C) in The Nation,
one of Thailand's two national newspapers, approached
the topic of relevant education and quotes Dr. Saneh
Chammarik, the director of the Local Development
Institution, as saying "Instead of having students
learn impractical things that will never be used in
daily life, they should be taught more relevant things.
The Education Ministry should not monopolize the

setting of the curricula...". According to the results of this survey, the teachers involved would heartily agree with this statement.

Hypothesis # 6

The Head of the school, rather than the classroom teacher, has direct control over content and method of teaching as prescribed by the national curriculum and Ministry.

The results show that, in terms of curriculum influence, Heads were ranked considerably higher than teachers. Heads were ranked third by both the male and female ESL Teachers and were ranked second by the Leadership Group (consisting mostly of Head Masters). Teachers were ranked as fifth and sixth most influential by the male and female ESL Teachers respectively and in fifth place by the Leadership Group (See Table 4.9 and Graphs 2,4,7 & 8).

Educational administration in Thailand is admittedly very centralized and hierarchial. Within such a system, it seems natural that head masters rank above teachers and control educational administration

and decision making within the schools. Much of their
actions would likely be reflective of the directions
given to them by the multi-layered upper levels of the
administration. For more information regarding the
structure of educational administration in Thailand,
refer to the Structure of Education section of this
thesis.

Hypothesis # 7

In Thai society, the Buddhist religion
(personified by the Temple) is a powerful force in
controlling/directing education.

If we accept that many aspects of Thai culture and the
Buddhist faith are inseparable, and then accept that
education is cultural transmission, we can speculate
that the Temple is a powerful force in
controlling/directing education in Thailand. Thus,
Buddhism is the central cultural force in Thailand.
This is not to say that Buddhism (or the Temple) is a
force entirely unto itself; the force is in the Thai's
interpretation and integration of the Buddhist faith.
It is likely that another Buddhist society would not be

a replication of Thai Buddhist society, but would
possess its own unique characteristics. One does not
need to venture far in search of other such examples;
much religious diversity exists in different Islamic,
Hindu and Christian societies. This point is made
rather eloquently by Clifford Geertz (1968, pp. 2-3)
when he states:

> What a given religion is - its specific content -
> is embodied in the images and metaphors its
> adherents use to characterise reality...But such a
> religion's career - its historical course - rests
> in turn upon the institutions which render these
> images and metaphors available to those who thus
> employ them.

Interestingly enough, the Temple's rating in terms
of importance in education as rated by students and
parents (see Table 4.10), and in terms of educational
influence and curriculum influence as rated by the ESL
Group of teachers and the Leadership Group (see Table
4.9), was the lowest of all groups. In fact, the
Temple was rated last by all groups but the Leadership
Group.

Table 4.10

Mean Scores of Ratings by Students and Parents

	Urban Students	Rural Students	Parents
Ministry	2.6900	2.8254	2.0141
Teacher	3.5395	3.5873	4.0141
Head	2.1266	3.1508	2.8732
Temple	1.8734	1.5238	1.6338
Parents	4.7642	3.9286	4.3380

N = 518
Ratings are according to perceived importance in education.

Position of Importance - Ratings by Students and Parents

	Urban Students	Rural Students	Parents
Ministry	3	4	4
Teacher	2	2	2
Head	4	3	3
Temple	5	5	5
Parents	1	1	1

N = 518
Ratings are according to perceived importance in education.

A possible explanation for this could be found in the later pages of the Culture and Education chapter where it was concluded that Thai culture and the Buddhist faith have married to such a degree that it is difficult to distinguish between the two. Perhaps the Temple has been (and remains) so influential that it no longer needs to be out on the front line because it is the base line from which all else develops. This seems very believable if not blatantly obvious in light of the following facts: Temples were the original home of schools and monks were the original teachers; schools reside on temple property; monks are invited to teach moral and religious instruction in schools and may often be seen leading morning prayer; the monks are highly visible all day long, especially as they walk through the town or village every morning with their begging bowls; religion is a way of life in Thailand; the Ministry of Education is responsible for administering tens of thousands of religious buildings, most of which are Temples; and the Department of Religious Affairs is administered by the Ministry of Education.

There is no separation between church, state or daily life in Thailand. The Temple's covert powers and influence permeate daily existence and operations.

Hypothesis # 8

Formal education in Thailand espouses a strong moral education which is a reflection of Thai culture and Buddhist philosophy.

Morality is defined as the principles of right and wrong and is synonymous with terms such as virtuous, righteous and ethical. Moral comes from the root word mores which is a Roman word meaning traditional manners, customs, habits or characteristics - distinguishing standards or norms of a group. Leonardo de la Cruz (1990, p. 122) of UNESCO says that morality may be defined as a group's system of values. He furthers the conceptual framework of morality/values when he says "Values are the crucial element of a people's culture. An act is regarded as legitimate, that is normally acceptable, when it is in harmony with accepted values of society." (Ibid., p. 122)

Strong evidence for the Buddhist influence in Thai culture has been presented and discussed as has the

focus on moral education, formally and informally, in the formal education system. Moral characteristics all but dominate the objectives of the National Education Scheme (1977) and at least the Sixth (1986-1991) and Seventh (1992-1996) National Education Development Plans (See Chapter 3). The objectives of these three documents focus on highly desirable characteristics/values which are deemed to be of utmost importance in Thai society. Examples of such characteristics are: respect for self, others, law, religion and monarchy; discipline; allegiance to the nation, religion and the monarch; diligence; cooperation; honesty; responsibility; self reliance; ethical behaviour; and moral behaviour. In light of Leonardo de la Cruz's (1990, p. 122) conceptual framework of morals/values, morally acceptable behaviour in Thailand would encompass all of the above listed (and many more) desirable characteristics.

The obvious role that religion (Buddhism) plays in a Thai's daily life is evident wherever you go. It is common for any Thai driver, taxi drivers included, to take his or her hands off the wheel so they can wai while passing a Wat (Thai Buddhist Temple). Religious

symbols, particularly Buddhas, are abundant and often
worn as pieces of gold jewellery and are also present
in most Thai homes. There are over 400 Wats in Bangkok
alone, many of which are exceptionally elaborate
structures-monuments to the Buddhist faith.

The fact that the Department of Religious Affairs
is under the Ministry of Education and that the
Ministry of Education administers many tens of
thousands of religious buildings and many thousands of
cultural centres and foundations clearly depicts the
harmonious relationship between the Temple, Thai
culture and education. Much of the development of Thai
culture "reflects the influence of the Buddhist
tradition; indeed, Thailand's culture can not be
separated from its religion...Buddhism is the historic
well-spring from which flow the nation's art,
literature, education, ethics, morality, and social
system" ("Country Report", 1990, Sec. 3.0). The
literature supporting the bond between Buddhism and
Thai culture is abundant. For the purposes of this
paper, a final example of the bond between the Buddhist
faith and Thai culture may be found in the national
flag of Thailand which contains two outer red bands

symbolizing the Nation, two inner white bands which
represent the purity of the Buddhist faith and a wide
blue band in the centre representing the Monarchy.

An accurate summary of the Thai's attitude toward
teaching moral education is given in a report entitled
"A New Decade for Moral Education" (1990, p.120):

> The expectations for the future trend on teaching
> moral education, values education and religious
> education in Thailand will be a crucial point for
> the development of the educational system. And
> thus it will upgrade the quality of Thai people's
> lives and develop economic and social status in
> our country accordingly.

Hypothesis # 9

Thai education is designed to preserve, protect and
maintain Thai culture and Thai values.

The evidence presented and discussed concerning
the prominent reflection of Thai culture/values in
education is abundant. Once again, attention is drawn
to the objectives of the 1977 National Education
Scheme, the Sixth National Education Plan (1987 1991)
and the Seventh National Education Plan (1992 1996),

and their obvious advocation of Thai culture and
values. Further support is found in: The statement of
the objectives of elementary education (briefly - (1)
development of character; (2) basic skills; (3) happy
life; (4) good citizenship); the 30 highly desirable
characteristics listed for moral education in
elementary school (see Chapter 3); the prominence of
values, religious and moral teaching in the school
curriculum, i.e. a child in grade three receives 15
twenty minute periods per week in Thai Language, 11
periods of Math, 15 periods of Life Experiences, 19
periods of Character Development and 15 periods of Work
Orientated Education (see Table 3.1) - the greatest
amount of time is allotted for Character Development
which is the curriculum area for moral and specific
cultural education; and, finally, promotion of
traditional culture can be experienced during a visit
to a Thai school, where a visitor may well be treated
to traditional dance, music and/or art performances or
exhibits by the students.

Thailand's constitution states that "...the state
shall maintain and promote our national culture." As

mentioned earlier, culture in Thailand is deemed as an
essential component of the development process and is
considered to contribute to the security of the nation.
The preservation, protection and maintenance of Thai
culture and values is deeply and deliberately imbedded
in the Thai education system.

Hypothesis # 10

Forces of modernization and westernization are changing
Thai education.

The forces of modernization are largely a result
of economic growth because it is through economic
growth that modern ideas, ideals and materials are
affordable. Westernization and modernization are
fairly synonymous in this context because much of the
new economic and educational ideals, materials and
models are Western, at least in their nature.

Thai society is exposed to Western trends,
fashions, ideals and attitudes through mass media.
This exposure is influential, especially on young
people - students. The students are faced with a new
set of role models. These new role models may soon (if

not already) dominate the air waves, television and the magazine racks. They are very popular, and students often aspire to be somewhat like them. In response to question #14 on their questionnaire, "What changes would you like to make to the education system in Thailand?", the students most popular answer was "I don't know"; other popular responses were: Don't change anything; more educational equipment such as computers; no more hair length rule; and start to learn English in grade one. The second part of the same question reads "What would you keep the same?". The most popular response was "English", followed by "Keep everything the same". These responses certainly reveal a very strong sense of maintaining the status quo, but also reveal more than mere threads of modern/Westernized influence.

As Philip Altbach (1989, p. 21) informs us, the influence from the English language alone, in at least the higher levels of education, must be evident in that over one half of the world's 100 000 scholarly journals are written in English. The use of English links Thailand's academics to research material, data, books and journals from major Western nations using English;

use of English builds academic networks. Professors
and teachers who have studied and taught abroad, have
usually done so in English-speaking Western nations.
There has also been considerable impact from expatriate
professors from Western nations who have been teaching
in Thailand's universities (Ibid.).

In terms of curriculum, one of the major areas of
change is the thrust for development in science and
technology education. Due to Thailand's economic
growth and efforts to become a Newly Industrialized
Country, the curriculum must be altered and developed
to meet the new needs of the labour force. As a result
of these demands, the Institute for the Promotion of
Teaching Science and Technology has recently been
installed; it enjoys state enterprise status (unlike
other departments/offices in the Ministry of Education)
and has considerable freedom of administration (See
Chart 2.2).

Thailand has enjoyed tremendous economic growth in
the past few decades - with much of the past decade
showing growth of 8-9%, which has resulted in many
changes. Some of the major changes have been: A spread
of mass education; a shift from an agricultural to an

industrial based economy; rapid urbanization; a
fertility decline; and a broad exposure to foreign
influences which have been impacting on Thai society,
culture and education.

To further demonstrate the above point, reference
will be made again to the statement in the government
document Thai Education in Perspective (1990,p. 9):

> As modernization takes its course, society becomes
> more and more open to foreign contacts, which
> consequently lead to cultural transmission...
> Furthermore, a society experiencing such cultural
> changes also tends to give rise to many religious
> beliefs and diverse moral values.

In an effort to thwart the ills of economic growth and
modernization, the Ministry of Education has been
promoting and advocating the maintenance of Thai
culture and values, evidenced in the National Education
Scheme of 1977, the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh National
Education Development Plans (For further information,
see Chapter 3).

In recognition of the changes and challenges, Dr.
Panom Pongpaibool, Secretary General of the National
Education Commission in 1990, says:

Evidently, there have been changes in the national socioeconomic, political and cultural conditions; science and technology competence; and manpower (sic) needs. Many problems have arisen which demand serious attention, particularly those related to people's attitudes and behaviour concerning moral principles, political awareness and environmental protection. To keep pace with modern trends and developments as well as to best respond to the future needs of individuals, communities and the country, it is essential that the educational system be appropriately revised and modified.

(Ibid., p. 6)

In light of the view that formal schooling is an important factor in the decline of traditional social, political, and cultural institutions which can impede modernization, it is certainly an awesome task to try to develop an education system which maintains the best of both worlds. However, it is a task which has been assumed, as is revealed in this statement from the Ministry of Education's document Centennial, (1992, p. 125).

Our Thai society has never experienced such a
rapid pace created by a move from an
agricultural-based to a semi-industrial society as
we are experiencing now. As a result, culture
wavers most. And to this culture, our children
have to learn to adapt themselves. To help them
to adjust, to select, and to retain and preserve
the best qualities of Thai society, has become
one of the major responsibilities of the Ministry
of Education.

Throughout history, Thai culture has been shaped
and reshaped. Despite the current impacts of
modernization and Westernization, Thai education and
culture still maintain a uniqueness, a "Thainess",
which was discussed in Chapter 3 of this thesis.
Activities and exhibits celebrating Thai history, art,
religion and culture are thriving. Moral and cultural
education remain the main objective of education in
Thailand, unlike most Western countries. Thai culture
and education will make the necessary changes and adapt
to the forces of modernization and Westernization
because being able to adapt is an essential element in

the equation for survival.

Hypothesis # 11

Parents are newly emerging as an influential/powerful force in education in Thailand.

It should be noted that historically, parents have not played an overly active role in their children's education in the formal school system.

Question # 7 in the Teachers' questionnaire # 2 asks, "Do you feel that parents should be more involved in education? Why?" The teachers unanimously answered "Yes". The most popular answers as to why parents should be more involved in education were: Parents are the students first teachers; parents have a lot of influence with their children; and parents could give valuable support to their children and the school to help promote the importance of education. Question #14 of the Parents' questionnaire asks, "Do you feel parents should be more involved in making decisions about their children's education?" To this question, 86% of the parents responded "Yes". The most popular reasons why parents feel they should be more involved

are: Parents can give guidance; parents can give moral support to children; and parents want their children to have a good education and a good future. The teachers' and parents' reasons as to why parents should be more involved in education are relatively similar; both groups recognize the positive effect that parents can have on their children's education.

Question # 13 of the Students' questionnaire and question # 15 of the Parents' questionnaire read "Please rate the following from 1 to 5 in terms of their importance to your (your children's) education. Ministry - Head - Teacher - Temple - Parents" The urban and rural students and the parents rated Parents as being the most important (See Table 4.10).

There was not a lot of agreement between the students' and the parents' responses to questions # 7, # 8, and # 9. These questions dealt with parental involvement with homework and communications with the teachers/school. Student responses indicated that parents do not frequently assist them with their homework, contact the teachers/school, or get contacted by the teachers/school. However, 76% of the parents said that they "Sometimes" help their children with

their homework; 84% said they are in contact with the teachers/school; and 78% said that they are contacted by the teachers/school: The frequency of contacts varied from twice a year to several times per month. Perhaps the parents are in more contact with the schools/teachers than the students are aware of. As for the difference between the two groups regarding homework, an explanation may be in the wording of the questions. The question for students reads, "Do your parents help/assist you with your homework?", while the parents question reads "Do you regularly, sometimes or never help your children with their homework?" The students were not given the "Sometimes" option, which may explain at least some of the discrepancy between the responses of the two groups.

In Thailand's report for the Asian and Pacific regional workshop, "A New Decade for Moral Education" (1990, p. 118), it was stated that among the institutions that influence a child's development, the family or parents are the most important, from the very beginning of a child's life. That family has a undeniable effect on student outcome education has been well documented, however the effect varies in different

situations. According to Lockheed, Fuller & Nyirongo
in (1989, p. 254), in developing nations, the family is
a greater influence than is the quality of the school
in student achievement in subject areas that are more
common (i.e. language) and less so in foreign subject
areas (i.e. science). As well, their findings indicate
that as some families in developing nations gain status
within the modern sector, the value of formal schooling
increases and parents encourage their children to be
successful in this modern institution (Ibid.). The
fact that the Thai parents who participated in this
survey have high educational expectations for their
children is demonstrated in their response to question
3, which reads "Do you think you children will
complete high school ___ or university ___ ?" A clear
majority - 85% - of the parents said they expected
their children to complete university. These appear to
be exceptionally high expectations for any nation in
any part of the world. However, these expectations,
although slightly higher, are reflective of the
students response to basically the same question (See
Table 4.1).

The Ministry of Education is placing new emphasis

on involving parents and the community in education so
as to instill a sense of shared responsibility
(Centennial, p. 151). This growing involvement may
also reflect a new role in the social norms of Thai
society and, as the next generation of better educated
Thais become parents themselves, their powers will no
doubt accelerate dramatically.

Hypothesis # 12

The current introduction of 9 years of compulsory
school (previously 6) may result in Thailand having
more students with a higher level of education to
service the increasing technological, industrial and
entrepreneurial etcetera demands of a rapidly
developing nation, but there are still many areas of
concern to be addressed in the relationship between the
educational and industrial sectors.

Somporn Heng in "Questioning Compulsory
Education"(The Nation, October 28, 1992, Sec. C)
reports that although most critics agree that the plan
to extend compulsory education is good in theory,
alone, it is not enough. Some of the current debate

regarding increased compulsory schooling in Thailand is based on economic factors - mainly, can lower income families afford to send their children to school for an additional three years (even with free tuition, there are still the costs of books and uniforms and the lost revenues from not working) and of how much benefit would an additional three years of formal schooling be to children from upcountry? Other concerns raised in the above mentioned article are: A large number of children, especially in small villages, do not attend primary school because the first priority of the parents is to provide food and shelter for their children; there is a need for government subsidies for poor families so their children may be able to go to school; realizing that increasing the number of compulsory years in school won't stop the estimated two million employers who use child labour from continuing to do so because the child's income is needed to help support the family; and a need for more relevant curriculum and regional control.

According to one national report, the problems of failure and dropout are closely related to the problems of poverty of rural and slum areas; the reported

survival rate (completion) of elementary school
children in 1986 was 64% ("Elementary/Primary School
Curriculum in Asia and the Pacific", 1986, p. 490).
Other problems cited by this report are that although
there are now enough teachers, many of them are not
qualified and the quality of elementary education is
not up to the standard required by the national
curriculum - policy and practices on quality
improvement are badly needed (Ibid., p. 491).

When the teachers in this survey (Questionnaire
2) were asked if they felt adequately trained to do
their job, the majority said no. When the same group
of teachers were asked what changes they might suggest
for the education system in Thailand, one suggestion
that ranked in the top four most popularly given
responses for male and female, urban and rural teachers
was "Equal opportunities for students". As well, when
these teachers were asked what they felt the most
crucial needs of teacher education in Thailand are
(Question # 10), the most popular response for three of
the four groups was "Teacher training", the remaining
group listed "Teacher Training" in second place.
Question #2 asks "What do you feel the main problem in

education in Thailand is?" Each of the four groups
listed "Need for more effective administration" in the
top four most popular responses, and three of the four
groups listed "Not enough funding". There appears to
be a high degree of agreement between the teachers in
this survey and the above mentioned article and report.

Another major question in an effort to produce a
more highly educated and trained population is what to
give in terms of education or training. In a country
with such a growing industrial workforce, it seems that
vocational training would be a practical avenue.
However, as the following table reveals, among those
who have sought higher than a primary education, the
highest unemployment rate is those who have vocational
training:

Table 4.11

Characteristics of Unemployment by Levels of Education

Level of ed.	Employed	Seeking Employment	Waiting for Placement
Primary Ed.	24 834 500	95 700	520 700
Lower Second.	1 707 200	34 000	45 700
Upper Second.	633 900	25 300	28 800
Vocational	1 161 200	65 100	51 100
Teacher Ed.	572 300	9 400	22 700
University	555 100	16 400	14 300
Total	29 464 200	245 900	683 300

(Thai Education in Perspective, 1991, p. 9.)

Apparently, the high level of vocational and technical unemployment is due to a discrepancy between technical and vocational training and the required standard of quality by the labour market (Ibid.).

From the discussion so far, there appears to be a need for more highly and/or appropriately trained teachers. Support for this finding is given in a

document prepared by the Teachers' Civil Service
Commission (TCSC) ("Notes on Career Structure and
Classification of Teaching Posts", 1992). Figures from
the TCSC show: there were 522 123 public teachers in
1991; there were 473 vacant posts, 17 225 applicants,
14 544 of the applicants wrote exams and of these
examinees, 36.92% passed. With such a surplus, one may
fairly expect that the teachers being hired now are
very qualified and suited to their positions. Some of
the fields of study in which teacher shortages exist
are:

At the Bachelor's degree level - Engineering

 - Industrial Science

 - Computer Science

 - Statistics

 - Geology

At the Master's degree level - Engineering

 - Industrial Educ.

 - Industry Science

 - Computer Science

 - Statistics

 - Architecture

 - Animal Science

- Food Technology

- Chemistry

- Biology

- Business Admin.

- Marketing

- Finance

- Journalism

At the Doctorate Level   - Every major field

(except pre-primary and

primary levels)

Due to a tremendous population growth in the past, 45% of Thailand's population is under the age of 15 ("Country Report", 1990, Sec. 3.1). With the introduction of nine years of compulsory school, far greater numbers of students will be going to at least lower secondary school, and a great number of appropriately trained teachers will be needed to meet the educational demands. It should be noted that many of the problems and concerns expressed in this discussion have been identified by the Ministry of Education and many have been priorized in the Seventh National Education Development Plan, 1992 - 1996.

The discussion for this hypothesis is by no means

an argument against increasing the compulsory school
requirements. It is intended as a effort to look at
the larger picture and to examine some of the obstacles
that, if left unattended, may impede the success and
expectations of furthering formal education.

Hypothesis # 13

In Thailand, the expectations of education are
extremely high.

In the Seventh National Education Development Plan
(NEDP) (1992-1996), the objectives plus ten policies
and their accompanying measures were stated. The plan:

> Aims for quality improvement of citizens so they
> will: be self reliant; contribute to national
> development; help facilitate a smooth transition;
> establish an equilibrium of linkages and
> relations; achieve harmony and mutual benefit
> between urban and rural areas.

The ten policies and measures include:

> 1. Policy on Education for Individual
> Development. Promote and support cooperation of
> educational and other social institutions; and

improve the teaching-learning process, self development, basic and specialized skills and cultural appreciation etcetera.

2. Policy on Science and Technology Education. To improve the content and the process; make math and science compulsory until upper secondary; and encourage and support the study of and research and development in science and technology etcetera.

3. Policy on Distribution of Educational Opportunity. Expand educational services and/or opportunities for the economically and socially disadvantaged (poor, culturally different, women and the elderly); and tailored instructional methods etcetera.

4. Policy on Basic Education. Improve curriculum content and process; establish a credit transfer system among educational institutes and between the formal and non-formal systems; and establish an effective public relations system.

5. Policy on Education for All and Learning Network. Provide an integrated learning network between formal and non-formal systems; greater

cooperation and networking for all involved in research and development; promote the role of religious institutions; and promote the use of mass media for transmission of knowledge and information etcetera.

6. Policy on Vocational Education. Develop personnel in accordance with local and national needs; encourage greater communication and linkages between educational institutions; encourage upgrading; and provide funds through economic cooperation of public and private sectors etcetera.

7. Policy on Teachers and Educational Personnel. Reform teacher training; urge related agencies to undertake research and development activities; encourage teachers to develop the teaching profession through research and community service; and set standards and criteria for the teaching profession etcetera.

8. Policy on Educational Administration and resource Mobilization. Reduce the role of central office in policy making and planning by offering greater authority to regional offices; encourage

participation of businesses, industries, NGO's and
local groups; encourage educational institutions
to pool various financial resources; and promote
appropriate and equitable allocation of resources
to all types and levels of institutions etcetera.

9. Policy of Private Education. Support and
assist private sector investment; encourage
business to provide educational and training
services; and revise rules to facilitate
private sector involvement.

10. Policy on Educational Information System.
Create a multi-level educational and data
information networking system; promote the
importance of the information system; and provide
the necessary equipment for the information
system.

("Objectives, Policies and Measures in Educational
Development Under the Seventh National Education
Development Plan", 1992)

These objectives, policies and measures are
largely as a result of: Trying to respond to the needs
of society; requests and criticisms by the various

public education interest groups; problems that the Ministry had identified; and many have been carried over from previous plans.

Following the Fourth NEDP (1977-1981), several crucial problems were identified by the Ministry. Equality of educational opportunity; mobilization of educational resources; quality of education; and the responsibility of the private sector ("Thai Education in Brief", 1982, p. 31). Hopeful solutions to these mentioned problems are contained in the policies and measures of the Seventh NEDP (1992-1996). According to the Ministry of Education, an evaluation of the Sixth NEDP (1987-1991) reveals successful growth in the quantity of education - more people as receiving education, however, in terms of quality, the results show math and science achievements to be still below the expected standard - as is students' awareness of their natural environment and their impact upon daily living (Centennial, 1992, p. 40). Policies addressing these concerns are contained in the Seventh NEDP (1992-1996).

One of the common goals or policies of the NEDP's is to promote equal quality education and equal

educational opportunities. The concern for equality of education and opportunity has been expressed for many years by many groups, and was expressed by the teachers in this survey. Question # 3 (Questionnaire # 2) asks, "If you were able to suggest changes for the educational system in Thailand, what would they be?" Each of the four groups (female/male and urban/rural) commonly listed "Equal opportunities for students". One of the most common requests made by the parents in this survey was to have greater financial support for rural schools. The disparity in educational quality and opportunity between urban and rural schools seems widely recognized by society at large.

Dissatisfaction with the ability of the existing education system to deal with the problem of disparities in rural areas has prompted the search for alternatives to formal education. In a published report of a UNESCO regional study group meeting ("Relevance of Education to Rural Development", 1986, pp. 1-3), "integrated rural development" was viewed as a means of reaching and serving the rural population. The basic characteristics of integrated rural development would require a comprehensive change to

social, economic and cultural structures; keeping
change at an even pace in all sectors; networking
diverse agencies etcetera to enhance development; and
active participation by the community and the larger
society. The group identified the causes of
educational underdevelopment in rural areas: Poverty;
transportation and communication factors; population
explosion; language difficulties (multilingualism);
inadequate educational policy for rural development;
inadequate provision of educational services;
irrelevance of curriculum to rural needs; low quality
of teaching (not enough experienced teachers or support
services for teaching); and lack of parental or
community support.

The problems of the rural poor are very real.
During a World University Service of Canada (WUSC)
seminar in Thailand in 1985, it was estimated that 20%
of the villages had access to the media in the form of
newspaper, radio and television. The remaining 80% of
the villagers obtained information rapidly through
their traditional means of visits to the local temples,
celebrations and during cooperation in maintaining
irrigation canals (Cook et al., 1985, p. 31). Much of

the plight of the rural people seems to be as a result
of poverty and isolation. In terms of communication,
for the rural poor the radio seems the only relatively
affordable and potentially relevant form of mass
communication, whereas the relevancy of a Bangkok
newspaper would be minimal, at best, and television is
too expensive. Not to be forgotten in this scenario is
the variety of rural languages and dialects which can
cause a communication breakdown even among the
villages. Communication is but one of the identified
factors in rural education underdevelopment.

The Ministry of Education, through the Office of
the National Primary Education Commission (ONPEC), has
instituted various programs in an effort to overcome
some of the obstacles and factors which have lead to
rural educational underdevelopment. The school lunch
program, initiated by the royal family and endorsed by
the Ministry in 1982, provides every child in Thailand
with an opportunity for at least one nutritious meal
per day for a minimal, or in some cases, no fee. This
programme, which in many rural areas is typically
managed by teachers, who also purchase, prepare and
serve the food, is currently operating in all state

primary schools. Other programmes designed to assist
the delivery of education in some of the rural and or
impoverished areas are: The Textbook Lending Project
for Needy Pupils; Bicycle Lending Programme for Pupils
in Small Primary Schools; Education for Community
Development in Rural Areas (part of the non-formal
education system; currently 13 000 of the 31 398
primary schools have become community development
centres - it is expected that under the Seventh NEDP
(1992-1996), all ONPEC schools in rural areas will
operate as such centres); Self-Reliant School Project,
where boarding facilities are provided for
disadvantaged children; and the Teacher-On-Horseback
Project, which is a mobile school unit and operates in
the northern province of Mae Hong Son, where many
remote mountainous areas, inhabited by different groups
of hill tribes, would not otherwise have any access to
formal schooling (however, there are still over 12 000
school age children in 175 small villages of Mae Hong
Son who do not have access to formal schooling)
(Centennial, 1992, pp. 68-72).

The task of attempting to provide effective
primary and lower secondary education to the many

millions of Thai school-age children in the many
diverse and remote villages of the country as well as
those in urban areas, appears to present a multitude of
barriers and an unsurmountable challenge. In a country
of 57 million people, with more than 80% of the
population living in the more than 42 000 villages, the
challenges facing any education system would be
extreme. In a centrally designed, governed and
controlled system of education, the above obstacles may
be that much more difficult to overcome.

The expectations for education of the Ministry,
teachers, parents, students and the general publics are
extensive. All of these educational interest groups
seem to have an amazing amount of faith in the
education system. Although it may not be entirely
realistic, the merit and worth that Thais place on
education is illustrious.

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusion

Throughout these discussions and data analysis, a number of common elements have emerged. The first of these points is that Thai culture, inclusive of the Buddhist faith, is not only a powerful influence in education, but the three "institutions" appear to have fused and stand inseparable from a functional point of view. The result of this is an implicit but overt relationship which permeates every facet of Thai life. Particularly relevant is the way it quietly dominates the structure, operations and curriculum of the education system.

The second major point is that shared among the educational interest groups are enormous expectations of the education system. These expectations include: The salvation and preservation of morality; development of students who possess attitudes and behaviours which

demonstrate respect, self control and discipline; a
better life through educational advancement; meeting
the needs of the labour force; meeting the needs of the
academic - research and development world so as to
promote and provide for national self sufficiency;
produce individuals who are industrious and self
reliant; upward socio-economic mobility; a reduction in
the disparities between the urban and rural population;
honest, happy, healthy and intelligent individuals who
are able to live in harmony with one another; and to
develop and maintain citizens who pledge unfailing
allegiance to the Nation, the Monarch and the Temple.

The third prevalent point about education in
Thailand is the difficulties and impediments which
arise as a result of a highly centralized and multi-
levelled hierarchically designed system of education.

Within the context of the stated hypotheses, a
number of noteworthy comments should be made as a
result of the ensuing discussion and data analysis:

(1) Rural students do not appear to have lower
educational expectations or professional aspirations
due to the constraints of their environment.

(2) Students' educational expectations and aspirations

are admirable, but may not be realized in light of the current availability of higher education, especially for rural students.

(3) It seems that, on a national level, many teachers in the past few years have upgraded their skills, but the majority of teachers in this survey feel they do not have adequate training to perform in their job.

(4) Although the great majority of parents reported that they felt their childrens' teachers were adequately trained, the parents expect the teachers to be more highly educated than they currently are.

(5) The central control and administration of education results in a number of operational difficulties and a communication breakdown in the process.

(6) Due to the hierarchial design of the system, a Head Master has more control than the classroom teacher over the curriculum content and methodology.

(7) The Buddhist faith not only influences education, but it permeates daily life in Thailand.

(8) The main objective of education in Thailand is moral and personal development.

(9) Education in Thailand, by design and by content,

is a reflection and maintenance of Thai culture and values.

(10) Forces of modernization/Westernization are definitely having an impact on education in Thailand. There are changes in curriculum development and professional training to meet the needs of technological and industrial development; however, there is a concerted national effort to maintain "Thainess".

(11) The involvement of parents in the education system/process is being encouraged and is likely to continue to accelerate with each new generation of more highly educated parents.

(12) An increase from six to nine years of compulsory schooling will provide Thailand with more highly educated individuals, but the value of this higher education may not be fully realized unless it is appropriately planned, designed and delivered in accordance to local, national and international needs.

(13) The expectations of education by all involved parties may be somewhat unrealistic. However, the extraordinary value placed on education in Thailand is both admirable and inspirational.

During a time of surging economic growth, Thailand
is faced with the growing pains and invasions a country
endures as it enters the world of industrialization and
global economic circles. The demands on the education
system are likely to increase at a more rapid rate than
the system can fairly be expected to achieve. However,
that great efforts will be made to meet these
challenges is not in question.

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APPENDIX A

Teachers Questionnaire # 1

Region   Urban or Rural

Grade Level

Number of students in you class

Number of years as a teacher

Your educational background

Male   Or   Female

Your present age

Your religion

Please rate the following questions on a scale of 1 to
   10.   1 = very low, 10 = very high.

   1. Do you have the authority to choose
       lessons/topics that you think are important and
       teach them to your students?
       1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

   2. Does the Head Master/Mistress have control over
       what lessons you teach?
       1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

   3. Do the parents in your school's community have
       control over what lessons/topics you teach?
       1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

   4. Does the Temple have control over what
       lessons/topics you teach?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

5. Does your teacher association have control over what lessons/topics you teach?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

6. Does your regional office of education have control over what lessons/topics you teach?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

7. Does the Ministry of Education have control over what lessons/topics you teach?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

8. Does the Office of the Prime Minister have control over what lessons/topics you teach?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

9. Rate the following according to how much influence you feel they currently have on education.

The Temple

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

The Office of the Prime Minister

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

The Ministry of Education

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Your Regional Education Office

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Your Head Master/Mistress

    1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

The Families in your school's community

    1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Your Teachers' Association

    1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

You, the Teacher

    1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

10. Are you told what teaching techniques/methods to use? Yes or No Who decides?

11. Are you given curriculum guidelines? Yes or No If yes, who gives the guidelines to you?

12. How much power do you feel individual schools have in determining the curriculum?

    1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comments:

Appendix # 2, Questionnaire # 2

Survey to Study Education in Thailand

Teacher Form

Region   Urban   or   Rural

Grade Level/Position

Number of students in your class ...   in your school?

Number of years as a teacher?

Your educational background?

Male   Female

Your present age?

Your religion?

1. What do you feel the main goal/focus of the educational system in Thailand is?

2. What do you feel the main problem in education in Thailand is?

3. If you were able to suggest changes for the educational system in Thailand, what would they be?

4. What educational background do you feel the following should have?

   Pre-school teachers

   Elementary teachers

   Secondary teachers

   University Professors

5. Do you feel you had adequate training to perform

in your job?

6. What do you feel the responsibilities of the
   following are:

   Teachers

   Students

   Parents

   Ministry of Education

   Federal Government

7. Do you feel that parents should be more involved
   in education? Why?

8. Are you encouraged by your administrators or
   Ministry of Education to upgrade you teaching
   skills? If so, how and in what form?

9. Do you feel you can progress in the educational
   system? (i.e. from a teacher to Department Head,
   Head Master, Supervisor etc.)

10. What do you feel the most crucial needs of teacher
    education in Thailand are?

Appendix # 3, Questionnaire # 3

Survey for the Study of Education in Thailand

Student Form

Age_____

Grade Level_____

Region_____ Urban_____ or Rural_____

Male_____ or Female_____

Religion_____

1. What is your favourite subject in school?

2. What do you think the most important subject in school is?

3. What do you think the least important subject in school is?

4. Are there subjects that you can not have, but would like to have in school?   If so, what are they?

5. How many nights a week do you have homework?

6. Do you attend extra study classes?
    If so when?

7. Do your parents help/assist you with your homework?

8. Do either of your parents contact your teachers/school to discuss your education?
    If so, how often?

9. Do any of your teachers contact your parents to

discuss your performance/behavior in school?

10. What do you want to be when you grow up?

11. (a) Do you plan on completing high school?

    (b) Do you plan on attending university?

    If so, what programme would you like to enrol in?

12. Do you feel that boys and girls are treated differently in school?

    Please explain.

13. Please rate the following from 1 to 5 in terms of their importance in your education.

    (1 = most important) _____ Ministry of Education

    _____ Teachers

    _____ Principal/Head

    _____ Temple

    _____ Parents

14. What changes would you like to make to the education system in Thailand?

    What would you like to keep the same?

15. If you could design a perfect school, what would it be like? Please describe the physical structure and the curriculum. Timetable etc. may be included.

Comments:

Thank--you for your help and cooperation.

Appendix # 4, Questionnaire #4

Survey for Study of Education in Thailand

Parent Questionnaire

Age

Male   Female

Number of Children: Boys & grade level; Girls & grade level.

Region   Urban   or   Rural

Religion

1. Why do you feel education is important for your children? (Please check one or more of the following)

(a) Learning to read and write and do arithmetic

(b) Learning at a higher level

(c) Discipline

(d) Preparation for higher education

(e) Social development

(f) Preparation for a job/career

(g) Military training

(h) Other

2. Do you feel the current education system is meeting your children's needs for the future?

3. Do you think your children will complete high school or university?

4. (a) What do you hope your daughter(s) will be when she is grown up?

    (b) What do you hope our son(s) will be when he

is grown up?

5. Do you feel that boys and girls are treated differently in the education system? Please explain.

6. Approximately how many nights a week do your children have homework?

7. Do you regularly, sometimes or never help your children with their homework?

8. Do you contact or meet with your children's teachers concerning their education? If so, how many times a year?

9. Do the teachers contact you or your spouse concerning your children's education? If so, how many times a year?

10. Do you feel comfortable in asking teachers questions about you children's education? Yes or No Are you comfortable with making suggestions about your children's education? Yes or No

11. Do you feel that your children's teachers are qualified to do their job?

12. What educational background do you feel the following should have:

Pre-school teachers -

Elementary teachers -

Secondary teachers -

University professors -

13. Do you feel the education system is lacking in any way? If so, please explain.

14. Do you feel parents should be more involved in making decisions about their children's education? Why?

15. Please rate the following from 1 to 5 in terms of their importance in your children's education.

> Principal/Head

> Teacher

> Ministry of education

> Temple

> Parents (you)

16. In terms of education, what do you feel the responsibilities of the following are:

Teachers -

Students -

Parents -

Ministry of Education -

The Temple -

17. If you were to suggest changes for the education system in Thailand, what would they be?

What would you keep the same?

Comments: