

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Personal values of individuals in our society play a vital role in determining the nature and direction of our civilization. One only has to consider the extent to which art, drama, music, literature, philosophy and religion have concerned themselves with values. Indeed, many behavioral scientists have become convinced that values, attitudes, beliefs, and ideals play an even more vital role in shaping the behavior of individuals and groups than do facts which have been established empirically.

Purposes of the Study

In Thailand there has been little research which seeks to determine the values of their college students. The primary purpose of this study is to gather data from students selected from eight different colleges or universities in Thailand which included both private and public institutions. Specifically, the objectives of this research project are as follows:

1. To conduct a normative study of the values held by college and university students in Thailand;
2. To study the relationship between values and other relevant variables, such as:
 - (a) sex of student
 - (b) type of institution
 - (c) grade level of student

3. To establish a baseline for a continuing study of values in Thailand--the study of value shift through time. This requires that the instrument and method of sample selection lend itself to use at a later point in time.

Statement of the Problem

The basic problem of this research project is to investigate the values held by college and university students in Thailand. The specific problem of this study is three-fold:

1. To conduct a normative study of the values held by college and university students in Thailand with a translated version of the Polyphasic Values Inventory (PVI). This involves the determination of the distribution of the responses to each of the 18 translated items on the Polyphasic Values Inventory; for the total student sample, the total male student sample, and the total female student sample.
2. To study the relationship of responses on the Thailand version of the Polyphasic Values Inventory to sex of the respondent.
3. To study the relationship of the 18 responses on the Thailand version of the Polyphasic Values Inventory to institution attended by the respondent.

Thailand Polyphasic Values Inventory

The Thailand translated version of the Polyphasic Values Inventory (hereafter referred to as the TPVI) used in this study is a translated version of 18 out of 20 items used by Teglovic (1968) and is the final form of the instrument designed by Roscoe (1965). Roscoe's 1965 version of the PVI is a 20-item, multiple-choice instrument with five possible Likert-type responses distributed along a liberal-conservative continuum; each item is value based, not factual. That is, each response is philosophically defensible and one response cannot be determined to be "better" than the others by arguments based upon empirically verified facts (Roscoe, 1965a, p. 5; Teglovic, 1968, p. 4).

There is no attempt to get a composite score for the 20-item PVI as each of the items is considered a separate entity. The PVI, according to Teglovic, attempts to cover the following seven value dimensions: philosophical, political, economic, educational, personal-moral, and religious (1968, p. 4). Roscoe identified only five dimensions, combining philosophical and educational areas with one or more of the other dimensions (1965a, p. 7). The Thailand translated version of the PVI (TPVI) was designed specifically for research with college and university students in Thailand and the average college student should be able to complete the TPVI in 30 minutes. For political-social reasons in Thailand, items three and seven were not translated from the PVI in the TPVI.

Anticipated Contributions of the Study

Contributions of the study are expected to be a better understanding of the college and university students in Thailand and the things they believe. Results of the study should be of great interest not only to educators in Thailand but to the students themselves. In addition, the normative study is especially important because of its relationship to future research, as it provides a descriptive data baseline for subsequent comparative analysis. For example, one could compare Thailand college students with American college students on several different dimensions of the instrument at several different points in time.

Definitions

The definition of terms in this study is of particular importance, because many of the terms are specific to the TPVI and the prior studies

that used it. The first three terms relate directly to assumptions supporting the TPVI, and Roscoe's (1965, pp. 6-7) definitions are quoted:

Values. Personal and social ideals, attitudes, beliefs or standards which may be used to evaluate and regulate the actions of the individual and society.

These involve that element of choice based on belief or opinion (as opposite to fact upon which all individuals might be expected to agree) about what is good, right, desirable or true.

Values are recognized as bases for action, but the possibility of inconsistency between the values and the behavior of a given individual is also recognized. It is presumed that values may indicate an aspiration somewhat higher than life as it is lived.

Conservatism. A value position based on loyalty to tradition and stressing the importance of established authority, class structure, standards of conduct, and religion.

Liberalism. A value position based on progress and change as opposed to conservatism.

Institution. An accredited private or public college or university in Thailand having a coeducational student body that grants baccalaureate and/or graduate degrees.

Student. An individual who attends one of the selected institutions for this study during 1978-1979.

Norms. This will refer to the normative distribution of responses on the 18 items of the TPVI, as established in this study.

Sample. This will refer to the students sampled for the purposes of this study, from the eight colleges or universities in Thailand.