

ABSTRACT

This research has demonstrated that certain research techniques developed in the West can also be used to study Thai civil servants' attitudes toward agricultural cooperatives. Two composite attitude scales, measuring independent dimensions of the civil servants' attitudes toward the cooperatives - attitude toward cooperative benefits and attitude toward cooperative weaknesses - were carefully constructed by combining methods of Fishbein's salient beliefs, Likert's item analysis, and factor analysis. The independent variables of this research comprise four groups of factors, i.e., socio-demographic, proximity, organizational climate, and a perception of "task" environment. The socio-demographic factors are composed of eight variables, namely, sex, age, birth-place, educational level, field of study, father's occupation, position classification level, and salary. Four proximity indicators are rural life experience, having close friends or relatives in agriculture, cooperative course attendance and cooperative work-relatedness. For the organizational climate factors, they are the perceptions of organizational constraint, responsibility, warmth, support, reward, conflict toleration, performance standard, identity, and moderation in risk-taking. Finally, it is a perception of clients which constitutes the only "task" environment factor in this research.

It was found that variables in all four groups of the variables were related to the civil servants' attitudes. Age, educational level, field of study, father's occupation, position classification level, salary, having close friends or relatives in agriculture, and all

organizational factors were related to attitudes toward cooperative benefits. At the same time, sex, educational level, position classification level, salary, cooperative course attendance, and eight out of ten organizational factors, except warmth, and identity, were found to be related to attitudes toward cooperative weaknesses.

It is apparent that the findings also confirm the researcher's contention that knowledge from various social science disciplines can be utilized to enhance our understanding of the bureaucracy. In addition, since this study is narrowly focussed on the civil servants' attitudes toward agricultural cooperatives, the findings are expected to be relevant to policy making as well as implementation concerning the cooperative activities. Especially, it was suggested that the organizational factors could be controlled and changed.