

Chapter IV

SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

As our sample of the civil servants might, to a certain extent, represent the population of Thai development administrators, the description of their sociological attributes might contribute toward a better understanding of their profiles. Nowadays, it has been increasingly recognized that the bureaucracy or the civil servants is not only the indispensable machine of the state, but also one of the most politically powerful institutions. It is found that, even in the Western countries, the bureaucracy is performing almost all functions of the political system (1). Therefore, any study that can throw a light on the bureaucracy and the bureaucrats is useful. In the following pages of this chapter, various important aspects of the Thai development administrators shall be examined.

1. Sex

Data on sex can indicate whether both sexes are treated as equal within a given society. Although it has frequently been maintained that Thai women have considerable roles in both public and business circles, one study of senior civil servants reports only 10.84 percent of the special grade female officials. Among the first grade officials, the same research indicates that the female officials account for only 22.64 percent (2). As for the middle and the lower class officials, my data show a slightly larger proportion; the female officials comprise approximately one third of the sample.

(Please see Table 5 below).

Table 5: Sex of the Civil Servants

Sex	Number	Percent
Male	624	67.9
Female	296	32.1
Totals	922	100.0
Missing data = 1		

2. Age

The mean age of our officials is 34 years, while the median and the mode is 32 and 28 respectively. However, when these officials are grouped into the low, medium, and high age groups, the result is tabulated in Table 6.

Table 6: Age of the Civil Servants

Age Group	Number	Percent
Low (below 30)	339	37.5
Medium (30 to 39)	331	36.6
High (40 to 60)	235	26.0
Totals	905	100.1*

Missing data = 18

* rounding error

3. Birth-place

The data on the birth places are useful for the study on social mobility of Thai bureaucrats. As an overwhelming majority of the Thai bureaucrats are found to be born outside of Bangkok, the capital of the country; it might, therefore, be interpreted that the bureaucracy serves as an instrument of upward mobility for the Thais who were born in rural areas (please see Table 7).

Table 7: Birth-place of the Bureaucrats

Birth-place	Number	Percent
Bangkok	139	15.2
Outside Bangkok	778	84.8
Totals	917	100.0
Missing data	= 6	

In comparison with a study on Malaysian development administrators, it was found that, from the sample of the bureaucrats who worked at the federal, state and district levels, 76.3 percent of them originated from the rural areas (3).

4. Educational Level

The majority of this group of Thai development administrators are found to have relatively low levels of education. While a research on Indian development administrators reported that 50.7 percent of them received not less than a bachelor's degree (4), only

25.1 percent of the Thai counterparts attained that level of educational background.

Table 8: Educational Background

Level of Education	Number	Percent
Not higher than junior high school	334	37.2
Senior high school, vocational certificate and diploma	339	37.8
Bachelor's degree or above	225	25.1
Totals	898	100.1*

Missing data = 25

* rounding error

5. Field of Study

For those bureaucrats who report to have educational backgrounds not less than the diploma level (three years in college), 55 percent were trained in social sciences and humanities, whereas only 13.9 percent were educated in sciences. For further details, please see Table 9.

Table 9: Fields of Study

Educational Field	Number	Percent
Social sciences and humanities	170	55.0
Pure & applied sciences	43	13.9
Both areas	21	6.8
Others	75	24.3
Totals	309	100.0
Missing and non-applicable data = 614		

6. Father's occupation

The occupation of the civil servants' fathers is another important socio-economical factor. First, since it is true for Thailand that the civil service seems to be one of the few occupations through which sons of farmers and craftsmen have upgraded their status, the data are by all means useful for the study of social mobility within the country. Secondly, the data might also reflect the degree of inbreeding within the bureaucracy; the fact which has frequently been found in many less developed countries. These two aspects of the bureaucracy shall be checked with my sample of development administrators in the following Table 10.

Table 10: Occupation of the Bureaucrats' Fathers

Occupation	Number	Percent
Civil servant	292	34.4
Employee of public enterprise	28	3.3
Employee of private Sector	61	7.2
Owner of small business	130	15.3
Farmer	291	34.3
Laborer	11	1.3
Others	36	4.2
Totals	849	100.0
Missing data	= 74	

It is apparent from the Table 10 that the bureaucrats with civil service and agricultural backgrounds comprise the two largest groups of our sample. It is also interesting that only 1.3 percent of the bureaucrats came from a labor family background. As 34.4 percent of the bureaucrats came from the civil service families, a considerable degree of inbreeding within the occupation can be said to exist. In addition, it is by all means clear that the civil service occupation serves as a source for upward mobility within the country. This finding agrees with the data from other less developed countries;

namely, 42.7 percent of the Malaysian development administrators came from bureaucratic families (5), and two-thirds of the civil servants in Pakistan shared the same occupation with their fathers (6).

7. Grade or the Position Classification (PC)

At present, as mentioned before, Thai bureaucrats are ranked according to their positional classes, which range from class one, the lowest, to class eleven, the most senior. This research surveys only the attitudes of the lower and middle level bureaucrats whose positional classes are not higher than level six. The position classification distributions of these bureaucrats are shown in Table 11.

Table 11: The Buraucrants' Position Classification

Positional Class	Number	Percent
1	205	22.7
2	153	17.0
3	268	29.7
4	116	12.9
5	140	15.5
6	20	2.2
Totals	902	100.0

Missing data = 21

8. Salary Level

43.9 percent of these bureaucrats report earning salaries not higher than 2000 baht (approximately US\$ 100), while the mean is almost 3000 baht. When the salary level responses are collapsed into the low, medium and high groups, the outcomes are tabulated as in the following Table 12.

Table 12: The Bureaucrats' Salaries

Salary earning	Number	Percent
Low (up to 2000 ฿)	405	43.9
Medium (between 2001 to 4000 ฿)	436	47.3
High (more than 4000 ฿)	82	8.9
Totals	923	100.1*
* rounding error		

Note for Chapter Four

- (1) Please see Gabriel A. Almond and G. Bingham Powell, Jr., eds., Comparative Politics Today; A World View, 2nd ed. (Boston and Toronto: Little, Brown and Company, 1980), pp. 10-14.
- (2) Likhit Dhiravegin, "The Bureaucratic Elite of Thailand: A Study of Their Sociological Attributes, Educational Backgrounds and Career Advancement Pattern." (Bangkok: Thai Khadi Research Institute, Thammasat University, 1978), pp 94-96.
- (3) Mavis Puthuchear, The Politics of Administration: The Malaysian Experience (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1978), pp. 67-68.
- (4) V. A. Pai Panadiker and S. S. Kshirsagar, Bureaucracy and Development Administration (New Delhi: Centre for Policy Research, 1978, p. 169.
- (5) Puthuchear, The Politics of Administration, p. 69
- (6) Ahmed Muneer, The Civil Servant in Pakistan (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 53.