

Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to study the perception that the district officers and the police officers have on the chao phor. Since these officers are responsible for keeping law and order in the most fundamental units of government administrative organization of the country, their perception and attitude toward the chao phor should be examined in order that we can understand the phenomenon of chao phor more clearly.

Questionnaire is a tool for survey research employed in this study. 1,600 copies of questionnaire were sent to the district chiefs and the heads of police stations at the district level throughout the country, and 67.00% of them were collected between 1991 and 1992.

The study finds out the following conclusions.

1. The phenomenon of chao phor stems from the socio-cultural basis of Thai society itself.
2. A chao phor is generally perceived as a person exercising an informal power in parallel with those formal powers of the state and economy.
3. Behaviours and images of the chao phor are viewed as not necessarily involved only with negative or illegal aspects.
4. Several dimensions of the chao phor are still left unclear such as involvement in illegal business transactions, acceptance and respect received from the local people, and their magnitude of power in comparison with the other forms of formal power in Thai society.

Apart from studying the perception of the chao phor from the points of view of government officials as this thesis did, a further study should explore the same phenomenon from the viewpoints of the others such as local people, teachers, and elected local politicians.