การศึกษาหลากหลายวัฒนธรรมสำหรับประเทศไทย

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บทคัดย่อ

การวิจัยครั้งนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาปัจจัยที่ช่วยส่งเสริม และ/หรือขัดขวางความปรองดอง และความสามัคคีของประชาชนที่อาศัยอยู่ในจังหวัดชายแดนภาคใต้ของประเทศไทย กลุ่มตัวอย่างประกอบด้วยประชาชน 900 คน และนักเรียน 540 คน จากจังหวัดปัตตานี ยะลาและนราธิวาส เครื่องมือที่ใช้เป็นแบบสอบถามและแบบวัดความรู้สึกที่มีต่อตนเอง ผลการวิจัยสรุปได้ดังนี้

1) ความกลัวของประชาชนและนักเรียนโดยรวมอยู่ในระดับต่ำ

2) ความสามัคคีและความไว้วางใจของประชาชนและนักเรียนโดยรวมอยู่ในระดับปานกลาง

3) เจตคติของประชาชนที่มีต่อข้าราชการและครูอยู่ในลักษณะที่ไม่แน่ใจ

4) นักเรียนมีความไว้วางใจครูต่างศาสนาน้อยกว่าครูที่นับถือศาสนาเดียวกัน แต่มีความเห็นว่า ครูปฏิบัติต่อนักเรียนทุกคนเท่าเทียมกัน

5) ความเห็นของนักเรียนในประเด็นที่โรงเรียนยอมรับความแตกต่างทางความเชื่อ ประเพณี และวัฒนธรรมแตกต่างจากประชาชน

6) ประชาชนและนักเรียนเห็นว่าผู้นำชุมชน ผู้นำศาสนา และครูยอมรับความแตกต่างทางความเชื่อในทางศาสนา

7) ความกลัว ความสามัคคีและความไว้วางใจของประชาชนและของนักเรียนมีความแตกต่างกันตามตัวแปรส่วนใหญ่ที่นำมาศึกษา

8) ผลการเปรียบเทียบความรู้สึกที่มีต่อตนเองของนักเรียน แสดงให้เห็นว่า ความรู้สึกที่มีต่อตนเองของนักเรียนที่มีเพศ ศาสนา ระดับการศึกษาและประเภทของโรงเรียนที่แตกต่างกันมีความแตกต่างกันอย่างมีนัยสำคัญ

คำสำคัญ : ความหลากหลายวัฒนธรรม, ความสามัคคี, ความกลัว, เจตคติ, ความไว้วางใจ, ความรู้สึกที่มีต่อตนเอง

Multicultural Education for Thailand

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The purpose of this study was to identify the factors which facilitate and/or inhibit the cultural harmony and social cohesion of the people living in the southern border provinces of Thailand. The sample consisted of 900 adults and 540 students from Pattani, Yala and Narathiwat. The instruments used were the questionnaires and the Coopersmith Inventory. The major findings were as follow:

1) The overall fear of the adults and the students was relatively low. 2) The social cohesion and the trust of both the adults and the students overall were moderate. 3) The adult's attitudes toward government officials and teachers were unsure. 4) The students had less trust in teachers of other religions although they agreed that teachers treated all children fairly. 5) The students' views on schools recognising differences in beliefs, customs and cultures were different from adults. 6) Both the adults and the students agreed in tolerance of defferent religious beliefs among comunity leaders, religious leaders and teachers. 7) The fear, the social cohesion and the trust of the adults and the students were mostly significantly different when compared by the variables used in this study. 8) The comparison of self-esteem of the students showed that the self-esteem of the students with different gender, religion, school level and school type was significantly different.

Keywords : multiculturalism, cultural harmony, social cohesion, attitude, fear, trust

The Problem

There exists at present considerable disruption of social and communal life in the southern border provinces of Thailand. Communal peace and happiness has been shattered by fear, personal and property-related insecurity and mutual suspicion. Arising from death threats, intimidation, bombing and arson. The intensity of these has increased since the burning down of

the Ban Puteh Primary School in Bannangsta District, Yala Province, on 22nd September, 1974, and the burning of schools has become a regular occurrence in Pattani, Yala and Narathiwat since that time.

The range of disruptive activities includes the ambushing of trucks, shooting at teachers and Buddhist Monks, the bombing of railway installations and attacks on trains. In local communities there have been death threats against teachers and local people, and many residents have felt the fear of stand-over tactics not to mention concern at the increase in the incidence of rape and robbery. Between March 1987 and March 1990 there have been more than one hundred recorded incidents of the sort described (Office of the Educational Superintendent, Region 2, 1991, 9-23). Serious events immediately before this study began were the torching of thirty-seven primary schools in three southern provinces during the night in September 1993 and the arson attempt on Yala's Central Mosque on December 19th, 1994.

The problem of the lack of peace and happiness for residents in the southern border provinces needs to be addressed urgently in order to bring stability and harmony. In order for this to occur it is first necessary to identify the reasons for the instability and disruption. Further, not only do the factors or variables involved need to be identified, there is also the need to understand their inter-relationships if cultural harmony and social cohesion is to be attained.

A critical factor in progressing to harmony and cohesion for the present and into the future is the use of education both formal and informal. Once the general factors promoting instability have been identified it is necessary to pin point those aspects of the present education system which are obstacles to the promotion of social cohesion. These need to be corrected and provisions made in the formal curriculum and in community education to provide the best possible setting for education for cultural harmony and social cohesion, and political stability.

Purpose of the Research Project

1. General objectives

1.1 To identify the general factors which facilitate and/or inhibit the cultural harmony and social cohesion of the people living in the southern border provinces of Thailand; and

1.2 To identify the educational factors which facilitate and/or inhibit the cultural harmony and social cohesion of the same people.

2. Specific objectives

2.1 To investigate the level of fear, social cohesion, trust, attitudes towards government officials and teachers, conflict of opinion, recognitition of difference in belief, customs and cultures, and opinion of community and religious leaders of the people.

2.2 To compare the level of fear, the level of social cohesion, and the level of trust of the people by gender, marital status, religion, occupation, level of education, village position, school attended by children, involvement in educational activities, involvement in traditional activities, and involvement in village development.

2.3 To investigate correlation between age, number of children, number of family earning income, family income, fear, social cohesion, trust, attitudes towards government officials and teachers, conflict of opinion, recognition of difference in belief, customs and cultures, and opinion of community and religious leaders.

2.4 To investigate the level of fear, social cohesion, trust, attitudes towards teachers, recognition of difference in beliefs, customs and cultures, and opinion of community and religious leaders of the students.

2.5 To compare the level of fear, the level of social cohesion, and the level of trust of the students by gender, religion, school attended, and grade level.

2.6 To investigate correlation between age, attitudes towards teachers, recognition of difference in beliefs, customs and culture, opinion of community and religious leaders, and attitude to school.

2.7 To investigate self-esteem of the students:

1) To compare self-esteem of the students by gender, religion, and school level.

2) To compare self-esteem of the students by school type, school level, and gender.

3) To compare self-esteem of the muslim students by school type, school level, and gender.

Methodology

This study is a descriptive research. The sample, the instruments, data collection and data analysis are as following.

1. The sample: The sample consisted of 900 adults (community leaders, religious leaders, government officials, parents, education officials, school principals and teachers) and 540 students from the three provinces of Pattani, Yala and Narathiwat.

2. The instruments: The instruments used were the questionnaires and the Coopersmith Inventory.

3. Data collection: The data were collected by research assistants in conjunction with the principal researchers. All research assistants were given training in techniques of structured interviewing and data collection.

4. Data analysis: The statistics techniques for data analysis are arithmetic mean, standard deviation, Chi-square, multivariate analysis of variance and Scheffe' test.

Results of Adult-Questionnaire
1. Degree of fear of the people

The results from the analysis of adult questionnaire indicate that the overall fear of people is relatively low. However, it is interesting that "not getting a good education" and "losing my cultural identity" are rated as a moderate fear. Thus, while fear of physical things is low, fear of culture and education are seen as moderate.

Cross tabulation between demographic data and data about degree of fear of the people showed the following significant results:

Low or no fear is more frequently reported by males than females, married people are more likely than single people to report higher levels of fear, Muslim people report a higher level of fear than Buddhist people, farmers and housewives tend to be evenly divided over their level of fear while labourers, government officials, and to a lesser extent people involved in commerce tend to have a low level of fear, people with only elementary education were more likely to report higher levels of fear than those with higher levels of education, heads of villages and religious leaders report a lower level of fear than other people in the village, people with no children attending school reported lower levels of fear than those with children at school. Although there seems no difference between the type of school attended, people involved in educational activities tended to report a lower level of fear than those who were not involved, people not involved in local traditional activities tended to report levels of fear which are low or moderate while those who were involved tended to be represented at the extremes, either reporting no fear or high levels of fear, there was no difference in fear between people involved in village development activities and those not involved.

2. Social cohesion

The results from the analysis indicate that social cohesion overall is seen as being of a moderate level. Items involving people of the same religion were rated higher than items involving people of different religions.

Male respondents are more likely to report a high degree of social cohesion compared to females, married people report a higher level of social cohesion than single people, Muslim people report a higher level of social cohesion compared to Buddhist people, while government officials and farmers report high levels of social cohesion, other groups are not so sure with responses being divided mostly between high and moderate, no significant differences were found among level of education, the village head and members of the village committee tend to report

a high level of social cohesion while religious leaders are more likely to report a moderate level. People holding no position are evenly divided between high and moderate levels of social cohesion, people involved in educational activities reported a higher level of social cohesion than those not involved, people involved in local traditional activities tended to report levels of social cohesion which were higher than those not involved, people involved in village development activities tended to report levels of social cohesion which were higher than those not involed.

3. Trust

The results from the analysis indicate that the trust of people is moderate overall. However, neighbours, community leaders and school principals of the same religious group were considered to be of higher trust than other categories.

Male respondents are more likely to report a higher level of trust than females, married people are more likely to have higher trust than single people, Muslim people report a higher level of trust than Buddhist people, government officials and people from commerce report a moderate level of trust, while farmers and labourers are more inclined to report a high level, no siginificant differences were found among level of education, heads of villages were more inclined to report a high level of trust with religious leaders being evenly divided between moderate and high levels of trust. People holding no position are more inclined to report a moderate level of trust, people involved in educational activities reported a higher level of trust than those not involved, people involved in local traditional activities tended to report levels of trust which were higher than those not involved, people involved in village development activities tended to report levels of trust which were higher than those not involved, the data for fear, social cohesion and trust can be considered an index of "Peace and Happiness". An analysis of these combined scores shows that the activities and attitudes of males which indicate peace and happiness are higher than those for females, and there is no significant difference for marital status, Buddhist people

report a higher level of peace and happiness than Muslims, no significant differences for occupation or educational level, village heads report a higher level of peace and happiness than religious leaders and people with no position in the village, people involved in educational activities reported a higher level of peace and happiness than those not involved, people involved in local traditional activities tended to report levels of peace and happiness which were higher than those not involved, people involved in village development activities tended to report levels of peace and happiness which higher than those not involved.

4. Attitudes towards government officials and teachers

The results from the analysis indicate that overall, attitudes towards government officals and teachers are unsure. Of interest is that although people are unsure as to whether teachers of other religions are trustworthy, they do agree that teachers of the same and other religions are teaching for social harmony. People also agree that teachers of the same and other religions treat all children fairly. This is not the case with government officials where people view only those of their religion as being trustworthy. This also holds for cases where government officials are responsible for the provision of schools.

5. Conflict of opinion

The results from the analysis indicate a negative attitude to violence as a means to resolve conflict. Of particular interest is that while people are unsure about violent measures being used in some circumstances, they agree that schools, police stations and health centres are not appropriate targets.

6. Recogintion of differences in beliefs, customs and cultures

The results from the analysis indicate that people agree that schools should recognise differences in beliefs, customs and cultures. However, while people agree that school officials should allow students to withdraw from activities on religious objection, they are unsure that parents should have this power to withdraw their students. It is interesting that while people agree

that different religious customs should be respected, the two questions which provided examples (food preparation and ways of dressing) received an "unsure" response.

7. Opinion of community and religious leaders

The results from the analysis indicate a consensus in tolerance of different religious beliefs among community leaders, religious leaders and teachers. People view teachers as teaching equality of students of different religions.

8. A number of conclusions drawn from correlation matrix (variable set 1) are as the following

Increasing age is related to greater trust, peace and happiness, families with larger number of children report greater fear but higher social cohesion and trust, a larger number of family earning income is related to higher social cohesion, a higher family income is related to a lower level of fear and higher feelings of peace and happiness, lower levels of fear are related to higher feelings of peace and happiness, trust is directly related to both social cohesion, peace and happiness, more favourable attitudes to government officials and teachers are related to higher trust, social cohesion and peace and happiness but interestingly are also related to higher levels of fear, conflict of opinion results indicate that violence is not seen as an appropriate method for trust, social cohesion, peace and happiness, recognition of other beliefs, customs and cultures is related to higher levels of trust, social cohesion, peace and happiness, opinions of community and religious leaders are perhaps the strongest influence in the way in which people feel about fear, trust, social cohesion, peace and happiness.

Results of Student Questionnaire

1. Degree of fear of the students

The results from the analysis of student questionnaire indicate that the overall fear of students is relatively low. However, it is interesting that like adults, for students "not getting a good education" was rated as a moderate fear. Unlike adults, fear of physical things was higher

with rape, robbery and destroying of property being considered moderate.

Cross tabulation between demographic data and data about degree of fear of the students showed the following significant results: Low or no fear is more frequently reported by males than females, Muslim students report a higher level of fear than Buddhist people, students attending Muslim school reported a higher level of fear than those attending State schools, although this may be due to the factor of religion, and there were no significant differences in fear among students of different grades.

2. Social cohesion

The results from the analysis indicate that social cohesion overall is seen as being of a moderate level. As was the case with adults, items involving people of the same religion were rated higher than items involving people of different religions.

There were no significant differences for gender in reporting of social cohesion, there were no significant differences for religion in reporting of social cohesion, students attending State schools reported a higher level of social cohesion than those attending Muslim schools, and students from higher grades reported higher social cohesion.

3. Trust

The results from the analysis indicate that the trust of students is moderate overall. However, like adults students view neigbours, community leaders and school principals of the same religious group as being more trustworthy than others.

There were no significant differences for gender in reporting of trust, there were no significant differences for religion in reporting of trust, there were no significant differences between students attending State or Muslim schools, and trust was reported as highest for students attending Mathayom 3 compared to those at Prathom 6 and Mathayom 6.

4. Peace and happiness

The results from the analysis suggest that, for students, there is a moderate level of

peace and happiness.

Female students are more likely to rate peace and happiness as moderate compared to boys, there were no significant differences for religion in reporting of trust, students attending State schools tend to rate peace and happiness higher than those attending Muslim schools, and peace and happiness was more frequently reported as moderate for students attending Prathom 6 compared to those from Mathayom 3 and Mathayom 6.

5. Attitudes towards teacher

The results from the analysis indicate that students have less trust in teachers of other religions although they agree that teachers treat all children fairly. This is a view which is similar to that of adults. Of interest is the finding that students are unsure that teachers understand students.

6. Recognition of differences in beliefs, customs and cultures

The results from the analysis indicate that students' views on schools recognising differences in beliefs, customs and cultures are different from adults. Whereas adults agreed that schools should take account of different religious beliefs, that the school curriculum should take account of differences and that school officials should respect certain religious objections to activities, students were unsure about these issues.

7. Opinion of community and religious leaders (secondary students only)

The results from the analysis indicate a consensus in tolerance of different religious beliefs among community leaders, religious leaders and teachers. Students view teachers as teaching equality of students of different religions. These views are the same as those of adults.

8. A number of conclusions drawn from correlation matrix (variable set 2) are as the following

Older students report higher levels of social cohesion, more positive attitudes towards teachers are related to higher levels of social cohesion and trust, recognition of different beliefs is related to higher levels of social cohesion and trust, higher opinions of community and religious leaders is related to higher levels of trust and social cohesion, and a more positive attitude to teachers is related to lower levels of fear and higher levels of trust and social cohesion.

Results of the Coopersmith Inventory

The Coopersmith Inventory is a questionnaire which is designed to measure how people feel about themselves. That is, does a person feel 'good' about who they are, do they feel 'bad' about their self-image or somewhere in-between these two positions. 'Self-esteem' is the term which is generally used in the research literature. Most researchers agree that self-esteem will vary depending upon the context in which the person finds himself or herself dealing with.

The Coopersmith Inventory, student version was chosen since it provides measures. Of self-esteem for school and home environments. Of interest to this study was the question of religious and school differences in how Thai Muslim and Thai Buddhist students feel about themselves, in school settings, the home environment, and as social beings.

The Coopersmith provides a series of questions whereby a self-esteem measure can be obtained for different contexts.

The research literature indicates that there are developmental processes which affect scores on the Coopersmith and a major limitation on results presented here is that questions used by the Coopersmith Inventory were developed in Western-Christian countries. Thus some questions, even though translated into Thai language, may have a different meaning to Thai people when compared to westerners.

Problems with the uneven sampling of Muslim and State schools has resulted in a situation where school type (Muslim or State) cannot be included in the overall multivariate analysis since it results in too many missing cells for the calculation to be made. As a result, three different types of analysis are presented.

The first analysis compares gender, religion and school level for the different scales of

the Coopersmith Inventory. The second analysis compares, school type, school level and gender. The final analysis is one which compares Muslim students studying at different types of schools, different levels and for gender.

Analysis of Gender, Religion and School Level

The L-scale indicates the extent to which a person may be giving answers that are seen as socially desirable rather than responding honestly. In this study, the L-scale scores may not be meaningful since religious differences between Muslims and Buddhists may be masking any other differences. However, for the sake of, completeness, the L-scale results are presented below: The multivariate analysis of variance indicates a number of significant differences for L-scale scores.

There are significant differences for gender, religion, school level, gender by religion and gender by school level as the following :

Boys score significantly higher than girls on the L-scale. Muslim students score significantly higher on the L-scale than Buddhists the analysis shows that the difference in L scores between Muslim and Buddhist students is greater for boys than it is for girls, Scheffe′ tests indicate that significant differences exist between Primary and Upper Secondary and between Lower Secondary and Upper Secondary there was no significant difference between Primary and Lower Secondary and for girls, L-scores decrease steadily from Primary Level through Lower to Upper Secondary Level. However, for boys, L scores increase from Primary Level to Lower Secondary Level, and then decrease dramatically at Upper Secondary Level.

1. General self

This score can be considered as an overall or average measure of an individual's self-esteem.

The results of a multivariate analysis of variance indicate that there are no significant differences for any major factor or interactions. The importance of this finding is that further analysis demonstrates significant differences in

context dependent measures of self esteem. Thus, the use of an average measure of self-esteem is not sufficient for investigating an area such as that carried out in this study.

2. School academic

This score can be considered as a measure of an individual's self-esteem within a school or academic context. It provides a measure of how students feel about themselves at school.

The results of a multivariate analysis of variance indicate that there is a significant difference in scores for school level.

3. The comparison of the mean values for the different school levels

Scheffe′ tests indicate that students' feelings about themselves in a school environment steadily decrease in a significant manner from Primary Level through Lower to Upper Secondary Level. This important effect shows the steady decline in how students feel about themselves in school. From Primary to Upper Secondary Level.

4. Social self

This measure gives an indication of how student's feel about themselves when interacting with others in social settings. That is, it is a measure of how they see themselves as a social being. A multivariate analysis of variance shows that. There is a significant difference for the factor of school level. The comparison of the mean values for social self for the different school levels: Social self scores are lower at Primary Level than at other Levels. Scheffe′ tests indicate the score for Primary Level is significantly different from that at Lower Secondary and at Upper Secondary Level. This is not a surprising result since social skills are developing over time.

5. Home parents

This measure gives an indication of how student's feel about themselves in their home context. It is a measure of how they perceive themselves as an individual in the home and with family.

Results of a multivariate analysis of variance indicate that there is a significant difference for the factor of religion. Comparison of the

mean values for this factor: A Scheffe' test indicates that scores for the home parents scale are significantly higher for Muslim students than for Buddhist students.

This finding is of interest since there were no significant differences for the factor of religion for the school context or for the general scale score. This would suggest that Muslim students are getting some additional support from the home environment.

Analysis of School Type, School Level and Gender

Due to problems of sampling, it has not been possible to analyse the data in a complete multivariate design. This is due to the relatively small numbers of Muslim students attending Muslim schools who were included in the sample. This analysis combines both Muslim and Buddhist students to examine any effects of the factor of school type and its interaction with other factors. Thus, in this section, State and Muslim refer to State run school and Muslim run schools.

The L-Scale indicates the extent to which a person may be giving answers that are seen as socially desirable rather than responding honestly. In this study, the L-scale scores may not be meaningful since religious differences between Muslims and Buddhists may be masking any other differences. However, for the sake of completeness, the L-scale results are presented below: The results of a multivariate analysis of variance indicate that there are significant differences for the factors of school, school level and gender and for the school by school level by gender interaction as the following:

Scheffe' tests indicate that L-scores for students attending Muslim schools were significantly higher than students attending State schools there is no difference between Primary and Lower Secondary Levels but that Primary Level students score higher than Upper Secondary and that Lower Secondary students score higher than Upper Secondary boys have significantly higher L-scores than girls.

The interaction between school, school level and gender was also significant. This significant interaction can be explained by the following. In Muslim schools, boys have consistently higher L-scores than girls at each school level while in State schools, boys and girls have similar scores at Primary Level, boys are higher at Lower Secondary but lower at Upper Secondary Level.

1. General self

This score can be considered as an overall or average measure of an individual's self-esteem.

Results of the multivariate analysis indicate no significant differences between factors for scores on the general self scale.

2. School academic

This score can be considered as a measure of an individual's self-esteem within a school or academic context. It provides a measure of how students' feel about themselves at school.

Results of a multivariate analysis of variance indicate that there are significant differences for the factors of school, school level and the interaction between school and gender as the follownig.

Scheffe' tests indicate that scores for school academic are higher among students from Muslim schools than from State schools significant differences occur between each level. There is a significant decrease in school academic self-esteem as students progress from Primary through Lower Secondary to Upper Secondary, the significant interaction indicates that school academic self-esteem across Muslim and State schools is different. Among girls, scores are slightly higher in Muslim schools while for boys, scores from Muslim schools are much higher. This would indicate that the effects for school academic scores are largely due to differences among boys.

3. Social self

This measure gives an indication of how student's feel about themselves when interacting with others in social settings. That is, it is a measure of how they see themselves as a social

being.

Results of a multivariate analysis of variance indicate a significant school level factor and is to be expected given that this reflects increasing age which would result in increased social activity and development of social skills.

4. School level

Scheffe' tests indicate that social self scores from Primary Level students are lower than those of Lower Secondary and Upper Secondary but that there is no difference between Lower and Upper Secondary.

5. Home parents

Results of a multivariate analysis of variance indicate that the factor of school is significant.

6. School

Scheffe' tests indicate that students at Muslim schools have significantly higher home parents scores than students attending State schools.

This finding might indicate that a stronger link between school and home life exists in Muslim schools than in State schools.

Analysis of Muslim Students by School Type, School Level, and Gender

Previous analyses have attempted to explain differences in scores among both Muslim and Buddhist students attending State and Muslim schools. This comparison is somewhat unbalanced since only 3 groups exist (Muslim students attending Muslim schools, Muslim students attending State schools, and Buddhist students attending State schools). There are of course no groups of Buddhist students attending Muslim schools.

In order to further understand what is happening and to overcome this imbalance, a final analysis is presented. This analysis is of Muslim students only; those attending Muslim schools and those attending State schools.

The L-scale indicates the extent to which a person may be giving answers that are seen as socially desirable rather than responding honestly. In this study, the L-scale scores may not be meaningful since religious differences between Muslims and Buddhists may be masking any other differences. However, for the sake of completeness, the L-scale results are presented below: Results of a multivariate analysis of variance indicate that there is a significant difference for the factors of school level and gender.

Scheffe' tests indicate that there is no difference in L-scores between Primary and Lower Secondary although Primary scores are significantly higher than Upper Secondary and Lower Secondary is significantly higher than Upper Secondary and L-scores for boys are significantly higher than those from girls.

1. General self

This score can be considered as an overall of average measure of an individual's self-esteem.

Results of a multivariate analysis of variance indicate that the interaction between school and school level is significant as the following.

Muslim students attending Muslim schools show a steady decrease in general self scores as they progress from Lower to Upper Secondary while the pattern of scores for Muslim students attending State schools show a large decrease from Primary to Lower Secondary followed by an increase in Upper Secondary.

One possible explanation for this effect is that Muslim students who continue through to Upper secondary are those who have a high self-esteem while those who have lower self-esteem drop out at an earlier stage.

2. School academic

This score can be considered as a measure of an individual's self-esteem within a school or academic context. It provides a measure of how students' feel about themselves at school.

Results of a multivariate analysis of variance indicate that the factors of school and school level are significant.

Scheffe' tests indicate that school academic scores are significantly higher for those Muslim students who attend Muslim schools rather than State schools. There is no significant

difference in school academic scores between Primary and Lower Secondary however scores for Primary are significantly higher than those of Upper Secondary and scores for Lower Secondary are significantly higher than those of Upper Secondary.

This finding is important since it suggests that Muslim students' feelings about school and academic activities become more negative as they progress from Primary through Lower Secondary to Upper Secondary.

It is difficult to interpret precisely what this result means since the study is not a longitudinal one. However, it is important to further investigate this since it suggests that Muslim students studying in State schools enter Primary school with high self esteem for study and school but that this decreases at higher levels.

3. Social self

This measure gives an indication of how student's feel about themselves when interacting with others in social settings. That is, it is a measure of how they see themselves as a social being.

Results of a multivariate analysis of variance indicate that the only significant factor is school.

Scheffe/ tests indicate that social self scores are higher for Muslim students who attend Muslim schools rather than State schools.

This result may be due to the difference in the cultural context of Muslim and state schools. Muslim students in State schools would need to interact with both Muslim and Buddhist students whereas Muslim schools are attended only by Muslim students. Thus, Muslim students may feel more comfortable in their social relationships in the mono-cultural environment of Muslim schools.

4. Home parents

This measure gives an indication of how students feel about themselves in their home context. It is a measure of how they perceive themselves as an individual in the home and with family.

Results of the multivariate analysis of variance indicate that the only significant effect is for the factor of school.

Scheffe/ tests indicate that Muslim students who attend Muslim schools have higher home parents scores than those Muslim students who attend State schools.

This result would suggest that attendance at a State school has a negative impact on how Muslim students feel about themselves in their home and personal environment.

Conclusions

A number of conclusions can be drawn from these results. The major conclusions relevant to changing the educational environment are as follows:

It is clear that the opinion of community and religious leaders are the strongest influence in the way in which people feel about fear, trust, social cohesion, peace and happiness. Educational officials might consider using these persons as conduits for explaining educational policies and practices. Findings indicate that with regard to religious customs, there are inconsistencies between what people believe should happen at school and what they understand is happening. One example is the way in which students dress for school. This problem (of inconsistencies) may be alleviated by better communication practices. While students perceive teachers to be fair to students of different religious, it is also clear that Muslim students perceive the educational environment in a more negative way than do their Buddhist peers. Muslim students commence school with high feelings of self worth but this feeling becomes more negative as they continue through schooling. This effect is strongest among Muslim students studying in State schools. This is particularly the case for how students see themselves as 'students'; that is, their perceptions of themselves in a school environment. It is clear that this negative perception is coming from the school environment since the same effect is not seen for their feelings of self worth in the home

environment.

As a result, it is clear that Muslim students in State schools are experiencing a negative climate. Their attitudes to teachers are, however, positive. Thus, the negative experience which Muslim students experience is not due to the way in which teachers treat them. The results as a whole indicate that the cause of this negative experience is likely to be the perception among Muslim students that their religious customs are not acknowledged and given appropriate value in the curriculum and activities which constitute the educational experience. Findings of this study indicate that greater flexibility is required in the curriculum and activities of schools, particularly at higher levels, so as to allay these perceptions.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are provided to guide follow-up work to this project:

1. Investigate processes to enable greater and more effective involvement of community and religious leaders in the educational process, and to utilise their influence actively in the school setting, for example as para-teachers.

2. Educational administrators need to take more notice of the hidden curriculum; for example, dress codes, eating practices, and to identify how these impact on the educational climate of the school, and to identify measures to overcome such hidden influences.

3. The negative perception of the school by Muslim students needs to be addressed with further study (preferably a longitudinal study), and analysis of what is creating this negative perception.

4. Given the existing positive attitude to teachers, a study should identify and analyse the significant factors in producing this relationship so that it can be promoted and strengthened, particularly within teacher education programs.

5. With greater flexibility required in the school curriculum and activities, a further study should be made of the existing curriculum and activities to identify modifications and improvements.

Postscript

The contents of this report were the subject of scrutiny at a meeting of some forty distinguished educators, community leaders and concerned parents from southern provinces, at a meeting held in Pattani on 7 February, 1998.

The participants agreed in principle with the research findings, especially those related to the effect of social status and recommendations and offered a number of reactions, some but not all of which are embraced in this report. In particular, the particpants were concerned that;

1. The curriculum content in some subject areas did not accdord with Islamic principles;

2. Some curriculum activities were not appropriate from the Islamic perspective, such as some boy scout activities, some physical education activities and dress, the content of some songs taught, and some practices in dramatic arts;

3. The hidden curriculum veiled unacceptable practices related to food, dress and forms of addressing teachers and students in the school:

4. Community participation in curriculum develpment and implementation has not been consistently utilised;

5. some treatment of students was less favourable than suggested in the report.

Receiving support were considerations such a:

1. The foresight of National Muslim leaders in providing information to teachers on suitable practices;

2. The pilot project on multiculturalism introduced by teacher Prasit at Katong School in Yala;

3. home visits by teachers to further trust, understanding and co-operation;

4. follow-up activities to develop these and other points made at this meetings and to address the issues and recommendations raised in the report.

Reference

Office of the Educational Superintendent, Region 2. (1991). **States of problems and events affecting educational organization in educational region 2.** Document No. 72/1991.