CHAPTER III

SURVEY OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

Thailand’s institutions of higher education are increasing in number and growing in size in response to individual aspirations of young Thais and to the pressing needs of the nation. The future of higher education in the country at present is very bright indeed. However, no previous work has been done on the specific problem under study.

3.1 BOOKS

The present investigator consulted the related literature with the aim to study the objectives and philosophy, functions and roles of university education in Thailand. These contents are given under the following heads: i) The objectives and philosophy of institutions of higher education in Thailand; ii) the functions of government universities; and iii) the role of the university academic staff and university students.
3.1.1 The Objectives and Philosophy of Institutions of Higher Education in Thailand

The objectives of higher education in Thailand can be found in the Acts of each institution, but they are not formally declared. What is found in the Acts of each institution is only a statement referring to the functions of that institution. However, the Sub-Committee of Higher Education of The Committee for Establishing the Framework for Educational Reforms proposed the following as the objectives of higher education:

1) the full development of intellectual abilities which facilitate the advancement of technology and progress of mankind;

2) the production of professional manpower capable of serving the expanding social development;

3) the dissemination of knowledge for the benefit of the community by serving as an academic resource centre;

4) the preservation of the cultural and artistic heritage; and
5) the development of man in terms of morality and ethics so that he will contribute worthwhile life to society.¹

In other words, one can say that all the universities in Thailand share the same general objectives: to be an institution for research and study, to offer and promote as many branches of knowledge and professional training as possible, to provide academic services for the public and to maintain the national culture.

On mentioning educational philosophy, it is often related to other important phases of education such as the meaning of education, the aims of education, the method of education, educational policy and educational strategy.²

But in this study, only the philosophy of higher education in Thailand will be dealt with. Thus, it was found that the authorities on university education in Thailand are unanimous on the following point of view:


A university is a community of scholars, of philosophers, historians, scientists of natural and social sciences and scholars in professional fields. Individually and jointly these scholars have a right—if not an obligation—to contribute to the formulation of the goals of their society. ³

On the basis of their expertise they should have an opportunity to study, reflect upon and suggest possible goals and aspirations for future of the nation. ⁴

A university is the supreme source of technical knowledge and intellectual wealth of the nation. ⁵

It is not an "ivory tower" in which academicians can take refuge or simply teach their students. ⁶

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It is an autonomous institution with an atmosphere of academic freedom. Faculty members are therefore not bound by practical rigidities that commonly constrain civil servants. The abilities to view most of the situations with complete freedom enables them to be "new blood" in a society and therefore represent a force that can introduce change.7

3.1.2 The Functions of the Government University

1) Manpower Planning

The functions of the institutions of higher education, i.e., the recruitment, sorting and training of manpower, etc., required by the society, are distinctive. Historically, the establishment of the first institution of higher education in Thailand stemmed from manpower needs and influence from abroad.

The function of manpower training is found in the Act of every university and institute. For example, Chulalongkorn University Act, Section 4, stipulates the following function of the institution:

Chulalongkorn University shall be an educational and research institution providing

higher academic and professional education and preserving cultural heritage.

As revealed in the Act, manpower training is the direct function of the institutions of higher education. This objective emphasizes more upon the implementation of the National Economic and Social Development Plan. In addition, the Second Five-Year National Economic and Social Development Plan (1967-1971) is strongly based upon the following policy:

Higher education will be expanded in the fields essential for economic and social needs of the country. High-level manpower is needed in the following areas: Engineering, Agriculture, Medicine and Science.

The current Plan—the Fourth Plan (1977-1981)—still emphasizes upon manpower training in harmony with the national development. Thus, it will be seen that manpower training is the prime function of universities in Thailand.

2) Development of the Individual

The functions of higher education in promoting development of the individual is implied by the word "education" as stipulated by the Act of each institution.


Higher education aims at full development of human intellectual abilities to facilitate the advancement of knowledge and technology. It promotes high level academic and professional training manpower for the development of the nation. 10

Srinakharinwirot University states the human development as its goal:

We must make Man a rational being, intelligent and capable of solving problems, prepared to make sacrifices for the community rather than take advantage of it. He must also be sensible, and not conceited or vain. He must be a man of principles, able to discriminate between good and evil, and understanding that we are born to work for a better life for the sake of others as well as ourselves. 11

3) Advancement and Diffusion of Knowledge

Another objective of institutions of higher education is advancement of knowledge through research as also the diffusion of this knowledge. The term "research institution" is commonly described in the Acts so as to describe the goal of the institution. This goal is


mentioned in the Second, Third and the Fourth National Economic and Social Development Plan also. The government is entrusted with the responsibility to support research. The statement first appeared in the Constitution of 1949. The National Economic Scheme B.E. 2520 states that "the Government shall support research in education in order that research results can be utilized in the educational improvement." From these statements, it is apparent that the advancement of knowledge is the explicit objective of institutions of higher education.

4) Community Services

The word "community services" first appeared in the university Act in 1974 when Srinakharinwirot, formerly, The College of Education, was upgraded to a university. Following Srinakharinwirot, the Institute of Agriculture Technology explicitly recognized community service as a legitimate mission under Article 5 of its own Act. Other university Acts enacted prior to 1974 do not explicitly specify this mission.

But community service has for a long time been recognized as one of the important missions of a Thai

university. One of the objectives of the Fourth Education Development Plan is to encourage the institutions of higher education to continue and extend their missions in research, cultural preservation and public service.13

5) Cultural Preservation

This mission is also mandatory. A specific goal of Thai universities is to preserve the Thai cultural heritage. The word "cultural preservation" first appeared in the Chulalongkorn University Act in 1943. Thereafter, it appears in every university Act, except that of the National Institute of Development Administration.

It should be noted that for some universities, the Acts also specify their particular fields of specialization. The Institute of Agricultural Technology, as its name implies, has the mission of education and research in the field of agricultural technology. The preparation of vocational education teachers and educational research in science are the missions

The National Institute of Development Administration is to provide education in the fields of administration and development.

From the above discussion, it can be concluded that the functions of institutions of higher education in Thailand consist of: instruction, research, public service and cultural preservation. At a seminar on the task of Thai universities, the sub-topics for discussion were grouped into four categories corresponding to the four functions, i.e., the emphasis of the universities on teaching and learning process, on research, on community services and on preservation of cultural heritage. The Fourth Plan for the development of higher education was formulated on the basis of these four functions.

3.1.3 The Role of the University Academic Staff and University Students

1) The Role of the University Academic Staff

The formal channel for staff participation in

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15 Ibid., p. 24.
University governance is the Faculty Senate whose members are selected from amongst the academic staff. The Faculty Senate is an advisory and consultative body for the Rector. The idea of the Faculty Senate is quite recent. Chiang Mai University set up the Faculty Senate in 1969 to serve as an advisory board to the Rector on matters relating to academic standards, policies, staff affairs and student activities. Members are elected for a term of one year. All of its 60 members were elected by the teaching staff.

Chulalongkorn University created the Faculty Senate in 1971 to serve as an advisory board to the Rector on matters involving academic standards, policies, staff and student affairs. Members are elected for a two-year term. There are two categories of members, i.e., those elected by members of the teaching staff of given faculties and those chosen by the academics at large. There are 50 members in all.

Nowadays, almost all the universities have Faculty Senates. Membership and function vary slightly from university to university. For example, the Kasetsart University Faculty Senate has 46 members; 30 of them are elected by individual faculties and
the 16 are chosen by the staff.

In general, members of Faculty Senate are organized into many standing committees, e.g., the committee on academic staff affairs, the committee on faculty affairs, the committee on student affairs. Many members also sit on various university committees as representatives of the Faculty Senate. In some universities, a member of Faculty Senate or members are appointed as the members of the university council.

Individual members of the academic staff can also participate in the decision-making process at different levels of the organization through various committees, ad hoc as well as standing, as appointed by the Rector or the Dean. In some cases, members of the academic staff have seats on the Faculty Board which is the executive body of the Faculty.

After the coup on October 14, 1973, members of teaching staff have had quite considerable influence over the appointment of university administrators: Rector, Deans and the Heads of Departments. In some cases, the popular vote by faculty members on choice of administrators was accepted by the university council.

However, after the change of government on
October 6, 1976, the role of the Faculty Senate has been toned down. Especially, popular votes for the administrators were discouraged.

2) The Role of University Students

1) The Formal Role

The formal role of the students in institutions of higher education in Thailand is rather limited. Students are not represented through any university council. They could participate in their own affairs through student unions or student organizations. Before the change of government in October, 1976, all universities had these organizations as a formal structure for students to participate in extra-curricular activities. The oldest student union in Thailand was founded in 1926 at Chulalongkorn University. The stated goals were:

1) to promote and exchange knowledge among students;

2) to train students to be responsible for participation in the extra-curricular activities of the University; and
3) to train students to accept self-discipline and responsibilities of their duties.\(^6\)

The student union consisted of two bodies, i.e., the executive committee and the student senate. The former performed executive functions while the latter performed legislative functions. Some universities, such as Kasetsart, Khonkaen and Chiang Mai, had student organization consisting of three bodies, i.e., the student assembly, the student government and the student judicial assembly. Officers of these organizations were elected annually. All major activities, clubs, publications and other campus organizations were under the responsibilities of the student union. All students were obligated to be members of such a body.

Student unions or student organizations were popular in government universities and colleges as well as private colleges. These colleges established student organizations on the pattern of those found in the universities. All student campus activities were under their jurisdiction.

\(^6\)Chulalongkorn University, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 55.
The informal Role

In addition to this formal structure of student government, students in Thailand have used organized protests to bring about changes. After the formation of the National Students Centre of Thailand (NSCT) in 1970, student activities were much more organized on a nation-wide scale for such protests as anti-foreign, internal affairs of the university, and external affairs of the university. With regard to internal affairs of the university, Prizzia and Sinsawasdi cited incidents such as the following:

The example of such protest issues are the 1949 movement to take the campus from the army involving the Thammasart students; the 1970 anti-corruption protest by Chulalongkorn University; the demonstration to change the name of College of Education to "University" in 1973; the protest against the enrolment of air force cadets in Engineering Department of Chulalongkorn University in 1973.17

Student protests against internal affairs were found not only in universities but also in government and private colleges. For example, in 1969, students

if a private institution—Bangkok College—demonstrated against the institute's plan to raise tuition fee. Vocational students staged demonstrations demanding the elevation of their vocational school to "college." Student protests were intensified between October 14, 1973 and October 6, 1976.

During the same period, students in many universities and colleges, organized polls and cast votes for Rectors, Deans and Heads of Departments. They submitted their choice to the university councils for consideration, though the final decisions rested with the council itself.

The role of the academic staff as well as the role of students have changed since October 6, 1976, when the National Administrative Reform Committee assumed power in Thailand. By the order dated October 21, 1976 of the Head of the National Administrative Reform Committee, all policies and regulations concerning student activities were revoked. Only student organizations

concerned with sport and culture were allowed to exist.*

3.2 **GOVERNMENT REPORT**

In 1964 the National Economic Development Board of the Government of Thailand and United States Agency for International Development entered into an agreement with the Michigan State University to provide technical assistance to certain educational agencies in Thailand. It was decided that the core of the assistance would be in the area of educational planning; the planning functions would be carried out by the Educational Planning Office of the Ministry of Education and the National Education Council. A programme of professional publication was made possible by this agreement and has been entitled the "Education in Thailand" series.

The present investigator has studied the "Education in Thailand" series with special attention to the points which have a bearing on university education that will illuminate the present situation and the most important problems for the growth and health of university education in the country.

The significant points have been divided into
three categories. These are: i) about the university staff; ii) about the teaching programme; and iii) about the future of university education.

3.2.1 About the University Staff

From the study of the qualifications of the academic staff seven generalizations were warranted:

1) The academic staff was young. Of those whose age was reported, 64 per cent were under 35 years old, and only 11 per cent were 45 or older. Of those who held advanced degrees, 47 per cent were holders of Master's degrees and 37 per cent of those with doctorates were under 35.

2) They hold relatively few graduate degrees. About one-half have earned only a bachelor's degree. Four out of ten have Master's degrees. One out of ten holds an earned doctorate.

3) They earned advanced degrees abroad. Although about seven out of eight bachelor's degrees had been earned in Thailand, in the case of advanced degrees the ratio was reversed.
4) They used English in their advanced study. Eight out of ten of those who had earned advanced degrees studied in the institutions where English was the language of instruction.

5) Now women are also an important part of the staff of nearly every faculty.

6) More than half of the academic staff holds the lowest academic rank. Although every university seems to use academic rank differently, the fact is that 85 per cent of all the reporting university staff ranks were in the lowest category; instructor or lecturer. Only 6 per cent held assistant professorships, 3 per cent associate professorships and the august title of professorship was held by 6 per cent of the total staff reporting.

7) The target ratio of the members of staff qualification-wise to be achieved is 30 per cent doctorates, 50 per cent Masters and 20 per cent bachelors.
3.2.2 About the Teaching Programmes

A detailed study of the courses offered and required in all degrees programmes reveal some significant conclusions. These are as under:

1) The instructional demands are changing and growing. The idea of setting up an Open University to extend higher education to large sections of population, changes in the internal arrangements within faculties and universities, and instruction of new degree programmes, along with the usual unending change in course requirements, all these factors have wrought changes over years.

2) Most degree-seeking students are in vocationally-oriented programmes. Over 85 per cent of the enrolment in higher education in Thailand is in programmes that are clearly oriented to a vocation. Only 15 per cent are majoring in Arts or some other academic
3) Course requirements in a particular subject and the course-by-course requirements of most of the degree programmes and the specific content of course will tend to fluctuate with the discovery of new knowledge.

4) Present staff is under-educated for the present requirement. However, there are many capable people on present instructional staff. But surely it is only an emergency that can give temporary justification for employing a person who has just earned a Bachelor's degree to teach those who are a year or two behind him in the process. In addition to the necessary upgrading of the staff employed at present, it is a real tremendous task for them to attain their Master's degree along with sound graduate education.

3.2.3 About the Future of University Education

Beyond the significant conclusions that arose directly from the "Education in Thailand" series, there
are a number of implied conclusions. The rest are based on the observations of the investigator and summarized as follows:

1) The universities, particularly the new ones, now face a crisis in staff recruitment. The chief and nearly sole source of new teachers was the current graduating class. In many fields those universities that were graduating the majority were graduating too few for the demand. Many departments have had no qualified teachers on their present staff for the subjects required in their degree programme. Under the best of conditions, with all the training that can be imparted, the crisis will blow over in the next few years. The new universities particularly need help. Emergency measures are required to help them meet the needs of their students with regard to their degree programme.

2) There is an irony in the teacher training
programmes. There is a crisis of quality in universities. When teachers with some teaching experience are sent to acquire a higher qualification, it further deepens the crisis of quality because by sending the more experienced teacher, a raw hand with a bachelor's degree has to be appointed to meet the increasing number of enrolments. Be that as it may, teachers must get more and better training if the quality of education is to be raised. Ways should be explored to make that training more readily available and less time-consuming.

3) The problem cannot be solved by individual departments, faculties or universities, acting alone. Resources are too scarce to be distributed on a basis of the power of a unit to command them. The crisis is so severe as to demand cooperative and coordinated effort on the part of all concerned to get through the present crisis until the planned development
begins to make things better.

4) Opportunities, requirements and support for independent study are rare and little used. In the quantity/quality crisis facing the universities, ways and means might well be found to get the lecturers' words and ideas into the heads of the students through other means than are now used. It is even more important to find ways of inculcating in students the habit of independent study and in instructors the habit of intellectual pursuit.

5) The availability of human as well as financial and physical resources must be taken into consideration in any responsible decision for the expansion of higher education at any level: department, faculty, or institution. It seems almost reckless to authorize or to undertake an expansion without the most careful consideration of the problem of adequate and competent staffing. This is not to justify inaction, but rather to urge that reasonable arrangements for
adequate staffing must be found before moving ahead.

The fourth Regional Conference of Ministers of Education and Those Responsible for Economic Planning in Asia and Oceania organized by UNESCO with the co-operation of ESCAP held from 24 July to 1 August, 1978, summarized the problems concerning higher education in Thailand as follows:

1) The curricula are not properly balanced between general and specialized subjects. This problem is aggravated by the lack of textbooks both in Thai and foreign languages.

2) Lack of research work: most professors and lecturers have very little research potentiality; the administrative and financial systems are not conducive to research.

3) Institutes of higher learning have not rendered sufficient educational services to the community due to lack of planning.
4) The production of certain types of higher-level manpower does not synchronize with the demand of the labour market and the needs for development, and hence unemployment among higher education graduates.

3.3 Similar Studies

In 1973, Kroeker studied "The Relationship Between Faculty, Student and Administrator Perceptions of Goals and Practices of a State Four-Year Institution." The basic problem of this study was to determine if there were any relationships among the faculty, students and administrators on the perception of institutional goals and institutional practices in a State four-year institution of higher learning.

The faculty, students and administrators of one State four-year institution were sampled. The participant samples answered two questionnaires covering...

twenty goal scales and twenty function scales. The three participant samples were then compared on the basis of their perception of the importance attached to institutional goals and emphasis being given on institutional functions as measured by the Institutional Goal Inventory (IGI), and the Institutional Function Inventory—University of Oklahoma Modification (IFI-UOM).

The analysis of the data indicated that significant differences existed among the faculty, students and administrators of this one subject institution in the perception of the importance attached to institutional goals and the institutional functions. Faculty and administrators tended to agree on the perceptions in both goals and functions, but the students' responses were divergent.

The relationship between perceptions of goals and functions was also analyzed as an indication of "appropriateness" of the institutional goal position. Positive correlations larger than the critical value were observed in each of the twenty scale areas.

The study indicated that the institution's functions were consistent with the institution's goals.

In 1971, "Role Expectations and Role Conflict in
University Faculty Work Activities was studied by Banard. The principal findings are limited to the sample studied, and are useful primarily as bases for further research. These findings include the observation that contrary to the general views, the faculty considers instructional activities as the most important of all their activities. They attach more importance to it than do the students. Role expectations for faculty work activities differ according to the respondent's status and his membership in organizational structural-functional sub-systems.

Faculty judge much more accurately how graduate students rate faculty work activities than how undergraduate students rate them. Faculty very accurately judge how students rate those faculty work activities of most direct relevance to students (e.g. teaching, counselling). Faculty tend to underestimate student's ratings of other faculty work activities (e.g. research, counselling, service).

Research and writing are associated with the highest levels of faculty subject role conflict. Faculty

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experiences most subjective role conflict concerning those work activities of greatest importance to faculty themselves and to the school administration.

In 1973, Saylor studied the "Students' Expectations and Perceptions of the University Environment at the Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University." The purpose of this study was to determine what students of the Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University expected and perceived to be characteristic of their institutional environment.

The result of this study suggested that the entering freshman's expectations of the environment are exceedingly high when compared with the perceptions of the upper-class students on all scales except one. The one expectation was the quality of teaching and faculty relationship scale. The upper-class students varied in their perceptions of the university. The sophomore students had higher perceptions than the juniors and seniors on all scales except scholarship and quality of teaching and faculty-student relationships. The juniors had higher perceptions than the sophomores or seniors on

these two scales. The seniors' perceptions of the university environment was lower than the sophomores and juniors on all the seven scales.

Moreover, the study deals with the perception of the goals and practices at a large, multi-purpose university by the faculty. The difference in perception of goals and practices among ten disciplinary groups was examined by Lockwood in 1973. His study showed that whereas there was congruence between the present goals and practices of the university in eighteen of twenty goals/practice areas, there was congruence only in eight goal areas between present goals and ideal goals. The faculty was satisfied that the university was fulfilling its present goals, but indicated that selected goals were not given the right emphasis.

Certain goals/practice areas appeared to be more controversial than others. There was much difference across the scales for the following goal/practices areas: meeting local needs, the need of accountability/efficiency, and advanced training and community. These areas are sources of potential conflict.

In addition, in 1976 the study entitled "A Comparative Study of the Perceptions of Students, Faculty, Administrators and Government Authorities on the Role of the University System in the National Development of Libya" by Bubtana

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Bubtana23 showed the following conclusions:

1) Government officials who responded to the questionnaire appeared to be uncertain in their perceptions of the relationship between university functions and the development process in Libya;

2) significant difference in perceptions of the four groups on issues provided by the questionnaire items were attributed to two main reasons: i) the pattern of response of government officials; and ii) difference in the respondents' range of "agreement" or "disagreement" with the items provided by the questionnaire;

3) there was agreement among the respondents that some policies followed by the Libyan system of University education are ineffective and should be changed; and

4) the questionnaire suggested some new policies that should be adopted by the Libyan university system in order that it became more responsive to national development needs.

The findings of this study indicated that the four groups of respondents who formed the main constituencies of the system tended to agree that the new suggested policies should be considered by the system.