CHAPTER IV

THE RURAL FAMILY

The following presentation on the rural family is based on the findings from an empirical study under taken in the village Ban Plong in northeastern Thailand and my own observations and interpretation of the same.

An attempt is made here in this chapter to examine the composition and structure of the family and to give description of the familial life of the village under study and to note changes, if any, occurred in them. With this in view, this chapter deals with the definitions of the family, the universal significant characteristics of the family, uniqueness of the Thai rural family, the family types and size, educational achievements of the heads of the families, the system of inheritance, status positions of the individuals in the family, the division of labour in the family and the position of women, consumption of food items, clothings and the household articles in use.
"Scholars generally agree that the family is the oldest and the most fundamental of human institutions. This consensus is based on the fact that in almost every society the family is the most important primary group for the individual. The intimacy which is provided within the family circle makes possible the fulfillment of certain basic needs for each person in what generally the most satisfactory way possible. The importance of family makes it logical to consider it first in a discussion of the institutions basic to rural society."¹ Therefore, families remain the firm foundation of every society. According to Kolb and Brunner, "families are important groups in any society, but especially in rural society."²

The term 'Family' is defined by Kolb and Brunner "as a genetic group bound by Kinship and

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marital ties. It is a group of father, mother, and children, living together under one roof. Bertrand writes that "the family may be defined as a socially sanctioned grouping of persons united by kinship, marriage, or adoption ties, who generally share a common habitat and intract according to well-defined social roles created by a common culture." The Bureau of Census of the United States defines a family as "a group of two or more persons related by blood, marriage, or adoption and residing together, all such persons are considered as members of one family." In its most universal conception, a family is a social group that is further characterised by ties of kinship among all its members. In other words, a family is united by either biological or marital


bonds among its members as well as by interpersonal identification. These additional ties normally give the family more stability and unity than exists in nonkinship groups. While writing on 'The Thai Rural Family', Harold E. Smith has defined the term family. According to him "the term family designated the kin group members who live together in a single dwelling or in an adjacent dwelling, who share a single hearth and who act as a unit in economic, familial and in other affairs." From this, it seems that it is not necessary for all the members of the family to live under a single roof.

From the different definitions of the family, significant characteristics can be enlisted. Using the source of books of McIver and Page and Burgess and Lock, Bertrand has listed the following


significant characteristics of the family unit.

(1) The family is a mating relationship within the bonds of societal approval.

(2) The family is composed of persons united by ties of marriage, blood, and adoption in accordance with prevailing custom.

(3) The family members typically live together under one roof, although they may not have exclusive use of premises.

(4) The family is a unit of interacting persons, each enacting a role defined by the greater society and strengthened by experience. Much of the interaction is associated with the fulfilment of economic needs, especially those associated with child bearing and rearing.

(5) Family members are identified through a system of nomenclature related to the
method of reckoning Kinship and descent.

From the definition of Harold E. Smith, as given above one more significant characteristic can be added, as follows. The family members do not exclusively live under one roof but they may live in adjacent dwellings. One significant thing needs to be noted that they share a single hearth (kitchen) even though they may live under different roofs. This kind of residential arrangement is governed by their rural norms.

The present study deals with the Family in the village under study in Thailand and hence we use the term family as given above by Harold E. Smith. This is because his definition is based on his study of 'The Thai Rural Family' in Thailand.

According to Thomas Fitzermonts, "The basic socio-economic unit in rural Thailand is the simple nuclear family. It consists of a mother and father, their children, and perhaps one or more grand parents living together with same house or
compound. At times the rural household may become a small extended family including a son or a daughter with his or her spouse and children or a widowed mother and her children ordinarily only one daughter or if there is no daughter, only one son remain in the family household and inherits the house and equipment. If more than one married son or daughter live with the parents, the different families reside under separate roofs within the family compound, since the families of two offsprings of the same household to live in one house is considered unlucky. If the couple have no children the common practise is to take in or adopt a boy or a girl, sometimes a relative to serve as a helper in the house and fields whatever the arrangement. The household remains small averaging between five to six members.  

The Cornell study of the village of Bang Chan near Bangkok quoted by Charles Madge  also stated


the predominance of the independent small family in rural area of Thailand. Sharp et al - (1953) and Wijewardence (1967) refer to the nuclear family (independent small family) as an ideal in Thai rural society.11

Along with the small nuclear family, the other types of family also prevail in rural Thailand. As far the typology of family forms is concerned, Harold E. Smith12 writes that, "Three family household forms that are typical of rural Thai society and one residual category have been identified. These are: (1) The nuclear family, which predominates, (2) The limited extend family and (3) The extend family, and (4) Others., i.e., residual category of family type. The details of these family types are given below:-


Nuclear Family:

The nuclear family consist of husband, wife and offsprings. Occasionally, unmarried blood relatives are also added to this nucleus.

Limited Extended Family or Two-Tier Family:

Harold E. Smith has reported that, "In this pattern the family may be extended beyond the nuclear in either of the ways.

In one way, a family consists of a married daughter or a son and recently married spouse with her or his parents. There is a possibility of the presence of grand children in this family pattern.

The other pattern of family consists of parents who continue to live in their old age along with the youngest daughter and her husband or son in the absence of daughter. The husband of the daughter inherits the house on the death of the daughter's parents.
The traditional customery practise of the Thai society is as follows: When a second child wishes to marry and bring his or her spouse into the house of the parents, the older married sibling has to leave the parents' house and to set up her or his own independent household. In case, if the earlier married sibling is not prepared economically to set up a separate household, either the marriage of the next sibling is postponed or other arrangements of the housing is made. The similar pattern of arrangements are followed of third and subsequent siblings. The people adhere to the traditional pattern of the family because of Thai belief. The Thai belief is that misfortune is bound to occur if two married siblings reside in the parental household simultaneously with their parents. This is because after the marriage of a second son and/or daughter, according to the Thai norms, a separate household is established adjacent to the parental household. This type of family system is referred to as the extended family.
Extended Family:

The extended family consists of two or more married siblings and they are a part of single family household.

This type of family household consists of either married siblings themselves or with parents or other relatives. Their residences are adjacent to each other but they prepare their food in the same kitchen. Thus their dwellings form a kind of cluster.

Residual Category of Family:

The residual category of family type is altogether different from the family types discussed above. This type of family household consists of a single person either male or female with or without relatives.

Polygyny:

The marriages in Thailand are monogamous. The polygyny existed in Thailand in the ancient times. Even today polygyny is practised by some
well-to-do males. But extent of polygyny is very very small. This is because a movement is launched to oppose polygyny during the present century and this led to legal reform. A new family law was enacted in 1935 which required that marriages must be registered and only the registered marriages will be the legal marriages. The law also made provision that the person getting married should not be the spouse of another person. This law was enacted with a view to ban the polygyny. But no provision of imposition of penalty was made for not registering one’s marriage and for practicing polygyny.

Present-day Thai rural families need to be considered against the above early background. This is because one who would understand rural society or would endeavour to change it must know not only those forces and processes related to the past, but also those which can be utilised for the future.\(^13\)

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The size of the Family:

The size of the family in the village under study is discussed here under four categories i.e.

(1) Small family consisting of 2-3 members,

(2) medium size family consisting of 4-6 members,

(3) Large families consisting of 7-9 members and

(4) Very large families of 10 and more members.

Average Number of Members per Family:

To begin with the size of the family, it is seen that the average number of members per family in the village under study comes to 6-9. This generally tallies with the average size of families in Thailand.

The Table No. 4.1 gives distribution of families and number of members in each family size group.
From Table No. 4.1 it is seen that out of the 190 families, 21 families consisting of 4.78 per cent members have only 2-3 members. It is the small family. But of the total families 104 families with 561 or 48.44 per cent members are the medium size of 4-6 members. The very large families of more than 9 members are only 14 and with 132 or 11.42 per cent members. From this discussion it is observed that the medium size families having 4-6 members predominate in the village under study.

**Family Types and Size:**

It is instructive to note the distribution of family types and family size. Table No. 4.2 gives distribution of family types according to family size. This would help in understanding the size of the families particularly of the joint families. This may also facilitate us to understand whether there is any change in the traditional structure and composition of the families in the village under study.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. Family size No.</th>
<th>Total no. of family</th>
<th>Percentage of family</th>
<th>Total no. of members (population)</th>
<th>Percentage of members (population)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. 2-3 members</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>4.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. 4-6 members</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>54.7</td>
<td>561</td>
<td>48.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. 7-9 members</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>35.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. 9+ members</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>11.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>190</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>1158</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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From Table No. 4.2 it is seen that the medium-size families having 4-6 members predominate in the village. Of the total of 190 families, 104 or 54.7 per cent families belonged to this size. There are more larger families (65 out of 100 or 34.21 per cent) than the smaller families (21 out of 190 or 11.2 per cent).

**Family Types:**

So far as family types are concerned, (Table No. 4.2), it is seen that the extent of the nuclear families is much more in the village. Of the total 190 families, 138 or 72.6 per cent families are nuclear type. Of the total 190 families 52 or 27.4 per cent families are joint families. Of these 52 joint families, 41 and 11 families are limited extended families and extended families respectively.

**Family Type and Family Size:**

In the light of the enumeration of family size and family types, it is instructive to note the relationship between the family types and family size. This would help in understanding the size of
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Family types</th>
<th>FAMILY SIZE</th>
<th>Total and Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Small family</td>
<td>Medium size family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2-3 members.</td>
<td>4-6 members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td><strong>Joint Family</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Limited extended</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td><strong>Joint Family</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>extended family</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td><strong>Nuclear family</strong></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td><strong>Residual</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>category</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total and</strong></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Percentage</strong></td>
<td>(11.2)</td>
<td>(54.7)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
the families particularly of the joint families (limited extended and the extended families). From the Table No. 4.2 it appears that the small families consisting of 2-3 members are of nuclear in nature. Similarly, of the 104 medium size families (4-6 members), 98 or 94.23 per cent families are nuclear in nature and only 6 or 5.76 per cent were joint in nature. Of the 51 large families, the percentage of joint families (limited extended and extended families) is more which is 34 or 66.66 per cent.

As much as 17 nuclear families also belonged to this large size. Likewise, of the 14 very large joint families the extent of very large joint families, is quite high which is 12 out of 14 or 85.7 per cent. Only two nuclear families belonged to this size.

If the normal size of the family is taken as of 4-6 members, the nuclear family mostly conforms to this size and the joint family mostly above this size. The size and type of family seems to be correlated. Likewise, the nuclear family predominates in the village.
The polygyny which was once found to a small extent in rural Thailand, is totally absent in the village under study. The polygyny lowers down the status of the secondary wives and their children. Only first (primary) wives enjoy superior status over subsequent or secondary wives. The absence of polygyny in the village is a welcome trend since the males keep themselves away from practicing plural marriages which are against the human value of equality.

**Education:**

Education is one of the principal concerns of the Thai Government. The Government invests substantial public funds in education and formulates long range plans for educational reform. Because of these efforts, the level of education of the population has risen considerably since 1940's. In 1947 the literacy rate considerably went high. The literacy rate was 61.8 per cent among women and 80.6 per cent among men. The illiteracy among children between ten and fourteen years of age dropped from 39 per cent in 1947 to 14 per cent in
1960. Education is given by the Government through a centrally controlled school system. Education is arranged according to preprimary, primary, secondary and higher levels.

Prior to establishment of a modern school system, formal education was provided mainly by the Buddhist monks, for whom teaching was a regular and important part of their lives. They gave instructions for the many youths who, in accordance with the Buddhist tradition, served for a short time in the temple as novices or as temple boys. Other children, with the exception of the sons of wealthy or well-to-do families, who were privately tutored, has little or no formal training.

The Wat Schools and a band of monks who were engaged in teaching activity greatly facilitated the modernization of the education system. This process started in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The King Mongkut (1851 - 68) and his son, King Chulalongkorn (1868 - 1910) took initiative in the development of the educational system. English
tutors were appointed for the royal children. The Government officials and royal princes were sent abroad to further their studies. The encouragement was given for the establishment of private schools by Thai and foreign missionaries. For the education of the general population, every Wat School offered instructions to the children of its locality. Thus the Government showed its concern for the education of the general population in Thailand.

During the earlier twentieth century, the Government took active initiative in building and strengthening up a system of state schools and also assumed some control over the existing schools run by the Wats.

Facilities for higher education were expanded with the foundation of University in Bangkok in 1917.

King Vajiravudh (1910-25) in 1921 made primary education compulsory for the children between the ages of seven and fourteen. Greater emphasis was placed on widespread primary education.
The compulsory education law was enforced more consistently. The Government took the responsibility of providing primary education through its own schools and teachers. Because of this, the monks no longer have any role as teachers. The temple schools began to give only religious education to the monks and novices.

The primary school act of 1921 was gradually modified and in 1935 the primary school education was made compulsory. This has helped in improving the literacy rate in rural Thailand.

Before 1958, the expenditure on education has averaged from 12 to 15 per cent of the national budget. From 1958 onwards, under the leadership of Marshal Sarit and during the Governments that followed him, renewed impetus was given to education. The share of national budget was consistently maintained in the 15 to 18 per cent range.

The System of Education:

The new system of education is as follows:

The programme of education is divided into four years.
(1) The pre-primary level varies from one to three years.

(2) The primary level include grades one to seven. In this programme, grades one to four represent a compulsory general course of education. The secondary level of education consists of two stages -

(a) A three-year lower level of secondary school; and

(b) A two year pre-University course.

Pre-Primary education is commonly known as Kindergarten. The students are taught the rudiments of reading and writing. The preprimary schools are important in the educational system, because a number of primary schools accept only students who have acquired some reading and writing facility.

The Government focused its attention on the strengthening of primary schools, especially in the neglected north and northeast regions of the country.
In addition to the above, there are several kinds of higher education and vocational education at three levels, viz., elementary, intermediate, and advance.

A large majority of schools are controlled by the Government. Besides this, vocational institutes are privately owned and they offered specialized courses.

Each cycle of primary and secondary programmes ends in a competitive examination for admission to the next cycle. This procedure tends to decrease enrolment at successive levels. It has been observed that the largest number of dropouts and repeaters are at the end of the fourth year of primary level of education. This number of dropouts continues to increase after the third year of secondary level of education and at the end of primary course. The competitive examination procedure reflects an effort to single out the students best qualified to continue to higher level of education.
Thus the education was widespread throughout the country of Thailand. Education facilities in taking of salaried jobs, self-employment as crafts and trades etc., and promotes inter-generational and geographical mobility. In the light of this, we may try to understand the educational achievement of the heads of the families in the village.

Accordingly, in the village under study, there is a primary school with eighteen teachers. The monks now are no longer have any role as teachers. As the school is not having its own building, the school is housed in the Wat. This compulsory education has improved the literacy rate considerably in the village. This can be seen from the literacy rate among the heads of the families in the village.

The school teachers in the village play a vital role for the village community. They try to make the villagers understand Government schemes of the development and welfare. They also introduce to the villagers western ideas and products. They thus serve as the agents of change.
Table No. 4.3 gives the distribution of the heads of the families according to their educational achievements.

From Table No. 4.3, it is seen that out of 190 heads of families 21 or 11.07 per cent are illiterate, 98 or 51.6 per cent are having primary education (1-4 grades), 58 or 30.5 per cent are having full primary education of 1-7 grades. The heads of families having secondary education (three-year lower level) constitute 13 to 6.8 per cent of the total heads of families. The educational achievement of the heads of families clearly shows that they have primary education because primary education is compulsory in Thailand. We have early noted that the Government has made the primary education compulsory. Secondly, the literacy rate in the village among the heads of families is high which is 88.94 per cent. This is the result of the compulsory primary education.

The mother tongue of the village is Khmer. It is a dialect. When the villagers deal with each other they speak Khmer language. The official
## Table No. 4.3

Table showing the distribution of the heads of families according to their educational achievements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Educational achievements of the heads of the families</th>
<th>Total number of heads of families</th>
<th>Percentage of heads of families</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Illiterate</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>11.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Primary Education (1-4 grades)</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>51.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Primary Education (1-7 grades)</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>30.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Secondary Education (Three year lower level)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>...</strong></td>
<td><strong>190</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
language is Thai language. Those who are literate as shown earlier, can speak, read and write this language. The illiterate ones only speak the same.

**Inheritance:**

Family inheritance in the village comes through father, who is normally the head of the family. It is the practice that both the sons and daughters as reported by the heads of the families inherit rice land equally. But the house and house compound are inherited by right of succession by the daughter with her husband. There is a custom in the village that one married daughter remains in the house of the parents and inherits the family household. In the north of the Thailand such a custom is widespread, and in other parts of Thailand this system of inheritance is weaker.

**Status Position:**

The status position of an individual in the family is governed by age and sex, in rural Thailand. The children in the family are generally taught to
show and give respect to their elders. "Given names are rarely used in conversation, except for older family members talking to younger ones. Respect relationships are formalized verbally by the use of the terms Phi (elder sibling) and mung (younger sibling), both within the family, among brothers and sister and, by extension, among age-mates, cousins and friends." 14

In day-to-day conversation by the youngers the word "elder" is used before uncle, aunt, grandmother and grand parents. The unrelated youngers also address the old persons in the same manner.

The heads of the families were asked to state the criteria used for assessing the status position of persons in the family and the village. Their replies are given in Table No. 4.4.

From this Table, it is seen that the status position of the persons are assessed on the basis

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### Table No. 4.4

The criteria of ranking persons in the village and family.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Criteria of Ranking</th>
<th>Number of family</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Wealth</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Power</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Religious roles or religious participation</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Governmental role</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Parent-child relations</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Teacher-student relations</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
of number of criteria. It appears that real superiority or prestige seem to arise not namely from age but for other reasons. Of the total heads of the families, 107 head of the families give weightage to religious roles or religious participation for ranking the status position of the persons. The other basis of ranking the persons' prestige according to the heads of the families in order of rank are knowledge (97) parent-child (94) teacher-student (94) governmental roles, power (80) and, wealth (77). The bracked figures show the number of heads of the families. From this, it may be noted that the age is not the principal criterion of ranking the persons in the families and the village. The other criteria are used in the ranking the persons or assessing their prestige.

Frank J. Moore also writes that "superiority and genuine prestige seem to arise not principally from age, but from such values as wealth, knowledge, and religious participation, or from specific relationships, such as parent-child or teacher-student."

Apart from this status positions in the village, the monks and the novices are designated by special terms of respect. The monks have greater prestige than the common villagers. The wife address her husband who has served as a novice as pee noi.

The farming of rice the prestigious occupation in the village. Wealthy farmers are often thought of important persons in the village. It may be noted that the ownership of land alone is not essential for prestige. The poorest person in the village by virtue of service as a monk rank well above a rich farmer.

The Division of Labour in the Family and the Position of Women:

With a view to understand the nature of the division of labour in the family and thereby the position of women in the family at present the heads of the families were asked to state as to who looks after the household tasks such as cooking, cleaning and washing, etc., and care of children and other types of work in their families. An understanding of this, may help us to know whether the division of
labour in the family is based on age and sex and also the position of women in the families.

It has been reported by the Heads of the families in the village under study that the housewife and girls of the family generally prepare meals. By the time the girls is ten years old, she is trained to cook rice with a view that she may be helpful to her mother in the preparation of meals. The boys also learn simple methods of cooking by watching. They assist their mothers, if their help is needed, in the preparation of meals. The cooking is not regarded as man's task. But sometimes and on some occasions men by necessity are required to participate in the preparation of meals. At ceremonial feasts men do participate in the cooking activities. But generally cooking is done by the females.

It has also been reported by the head of the families that some family tasks fall into a taboo category for meals. The males in the family are not expected to mill the rice, fetch the water from the wells, clearing up after meals and washing of
plates. When the housewife is ill or when there are no girl in the family, a neighbouring women's help is sought to mill the rice. If the services of the neighbouring women are not available for one or the other reason or if such services are not desired, the rice is taken to the rice mill for milling. In case of emergency, the men and boys fetch the water from the wells. Likewise, the women generally wash clothings and if necessary also iron them. But in this case there is no strict division of labour. But men and boys wash their clothes themselves if the families situation demands. The custom strongly forbids men and boys to wash women's clothings, and particularly the Pasin skirts (inner wares) because they might be contaminated by menstrual blood. The menstrual blood is considered unclean and dangerous to the health of men.

The small children help their mother in looking after the younger siblings, and perform lighter household tasks. The older persons also perform lighter household tasks.
From above account it may be noted that the household tasks such as cooking, cleaning, washing, etc., is generally performed by women and girls of the family. The girls are particularly trained in the task of cooking to enable them to perform the same independently after their marriage. The boys learn cooking by watching and help their mother if their services are needed.

Men by necessity are required to participate in the preparation of meals on certain occasions. The certain tasks such as milling the rice, fetching water from the wells, cleaning up after meals, and washing of plates fall into taboo category for males. Generally women wash clothes. The men sometimes fetch water and wash their clothes if the family situation demands. But female clothes and inner-wares are not washed by the males. The small children help their mothers in looking after the younger siblings. The older persons stay at homes and looks after small children.
The basic form of meal is similar in all parts of Thailand. The glutinous (sticky) rice in the North and Northeast including the village Ban Plong is the basic staple food of the people. Thai language places food in two categories, i.e., Khao (rice) and Kab Khao (with rice) i.e., all food items other than rice. The word kin (to eat) is commonly used in compound form Kin Khao meaning to eat rice, no matter what is actually eaten. The Ban Plong villagers usually eat two meals a day. The rice is the indispensable food item. With rice, either curried fish, vegetables, meat or chicken is taken. The villagers believe that rice is the food of health and strength. The rice will remain the staple food of the villagers. This is because rice is their principal crop. Improvement in diet, therefore, depends upon improving the nutritional quality of the rice consumed and increasing the consumption of vegetables, meat, fish, eggs and fruits. The prosperous villagers frequently use the latter items in their food. They also use coconut, sauces, curries and sweets. The villagers have not acquired Western food habits so far. A considerable
portion of household expenditure is used for food. From the above discussion it may be noted that there is no change in basic form of meal in the village under study. The villagers still eat glutinous (sticky) rice along with other items. The prosperous villagers, however, frequently eat fish, chicken, meat, eggs and spices because they are able to afford the cost of these items.

Clothings:

The socio-religious and cultural norms generally govern the types of clothes that the persons may wear in the village. This, however, depends upon the age of the person, education, occasions, seasons and economic position of persons. On the occasions of the performance of the religious rites, festivals, ceremonies such as marriage, top-knot, etc., the villagers generally wear customary clothes.

Generally on the religious ceremonies the males wear traditional clothes. The names of the clothes are - Sarong, Pa-Tiew, White Shirts, White Sarong, Pa-Kiao-ma, and females wear - Patung, Panung, White Shirts, Sabai Cheang (dupatta).
On the occasions other than the religious ones, males of young age wear Western style clothes such as shirts, pants, trousers and shoes. The boys wear loose and light jean pants, shirts, T-shirts, and silk shirts. Some of the boys in the village today have adopted exotic hair style. Some of the boys in the village wear the "Panung", the Siamese version of the Indian Dhoti which is loose "Sarong" whose ends are tucked between the legs and fastened at the waist in the rear. But the use of this old garment is fading away, rapidly. The traditional clothing that still persists among men is a bathing cloths which is a versatile piece of cloth consisting of a narrow piece of cloth five and half feet long and 27" in width of variety of colours. This cloth is wrapped around the waist and serves as a Sarong which men wear over their inner-wares in the privacy of their homes and use while bathing. It is also used as a towel or a turban and can be twisted to form an emergency rope for leading water buffaloes and other animals. Therefore, this piece of cloth is a multipurpose cloth.
The school children are required to wear school uniforms when they attend the school. The school uniform is modern in style. The school boys are required to wear white shirts, pants and shoes. The school girls wear white shirt and a gray short pants. The girls allow to grow their hairs upto semi-shoulders.

The village women of above middle age have not adopted Western style clothing to a greater extent. They generally wear the basic costume which is known as 'Pasín' (skirt). It is a piece of cloth sewn in a tube and folded at the waist and held in place by a belt. A bodice like blouse without sleeves is worn with the 'Pasín'. This is a common attire for women in the village.

The village girl above sixteen years of age generally wear Western style dress on festive occasions. Her wearing rouge, powder and lipstick has long been accepted by the elders in the families and community.
The cultivation of fields require heavy labour besides hired labour. The farming families who invest heavy labour for cultivation of fields generally take meals three times a day. They take meals in the morning before they leave for work, in the noon when they are off the work for some time and in the evening/night when they return to their homes. The farming families in the village generally follow the schedule of taking the meals.

In the village under study the same practice is generally followed. The non-cultivating families generally take meals twice a day.

Other Articles:

The modern articles of daily use are sold in the city stores. Some of these articles are also available in the village stores. The articles include tooth brush, tooth paste or powder, soaps of various varieties, cosmetics, lipstick, body-lotion, razors, blades, radios and transistors, T.V. sets. The families in the village those who can afford to pay the costs use these articles.
Even some of the medicines are also available in the village stores. The articles which once were available in the city markets are now seen available in the village market for sale and the villagers buy them when they need them. It may be interesting to know the names of the articles used by the families in their houses. Table No. 4.5 gives details such as the names of the articles and the number of families using them.

From this Table it is seen that the families use either T.V., radio, tape recorder or record player for the purpose of recreation. Of these articles, radio seems to be the most popular means of recreation and comparatively it is cheaper in terms of cost than the other above articles of recreation. Of the total 190 families most of the families (148 or 77.89 per cent) use radio for the purpose of recreation. A small number of families use tape recorder (21) Television (8) and record player (3). The bracketed figures show number of families. Television is the latest invention. The same is used by some of the families though small in number. The Television and Radio parti-
**TABLE No. 4.5**

The household articles in use.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>The names of household articles</th>
<th>Number of families</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Television (TV)</td>
<td>08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Record Player</td>
<td>03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Tape Recorder</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Freezer</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Steel Cupboard</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Wooden Cupboard (small and big)</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Wooden tables and chairs</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Mixer-grinder</td>
<td>06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Iron</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Table Watch</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Wall clock</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
carily are also the means of educating the people.

Some of the village families also use the labour saving devices like mixer-grinder and freezer. Of the total families 6 and 5 families use mixer-grinder and freezer respectively.

The home ironing of clothes is cheaper than the market charges and hence 67 or 35.26 per cent families of the total iron their clothes in their houses. These families have purchased irons for this purpose.

The use wrist-watch is common in the village. Besides this, 41 and 13 families of the total use wall-clocks and table watches for the purpose of knowing time.

The village families use cupboards for keeping household articles safe. Most of the families (143 or 75.26 per cent) use wooden cupboards (small or big) for keeping household articles safe. The wooden cupboards are cheaper than the steel cupboards. Only 15 or 7.89 per cent families use steel cupboards.
Of the total families 77 or 40.52 per cent families use wooden tables and chairs for writing and dining purposes. Tables are also used for ironing the clothes.

The possession of the articles such as Television, Radio, Tape Recorder, Freezer and Mixer-grinder are thought by the families as prestige items.

Stressing the importance of the family as a basic unit of any society, this chapter has discussed some of the definitions of the family and enlisted the universal significant characteristics of the family as a unit. Among other characteristics of the family, one significant universal characteristic is that the family members typically live together under one roof. But the Thai rural family slightly differs in this respect. The family members (kin group members) do not exclusively live together in a single dwelling but they also may live in an adjacent dwelling in the house compound. This is because the Thai family norms of residence or dwelling govern the residential
pattern in rural Thailand. Thai rule of residence is that if more than one married son or daughter lives with the parents, the different families reside under separate roofs, within the family compounds since the families of two offsprings of the same household to live in one house or under a single roof is considered unlucky for the family. The traditional rule of residence is still practiced in the village with this in view the present study used the term of the 'family' as given by Harold E. Smith. This is because his definition is based on his study of "The Thai Rural Family in Thailand."

There are three family household forms that are typical of rural Thai society. These forms are (1) the nuclear family, (2) the limited extended family, and (3) the extended family. There is also one more category of family i.e., residual category of family type. The nuclear type of family predominates in rural Thailand.

In the village under study also the above three family household forms are found. Among these the
nuclear family form predominates in the village. The residual category of family form is not found in the village. This shows that the village adheres to the traditional norms of family forms prevailing in rural Thailand.

With a view to understand the size of the families and particularly joint families, family size and types are discussed. It is observed that the medium size families having 4-6 members predominate in the village under study. If the normal size of family is taken as of 4-6 members, the nuclear family mostly conforms to this size and the joint family mostly above this size. The size and type of family seems to be correlated.

The polygyny which once was practiced to a small extent in rural Thailand and still in some parts of rural Thailand it is practiced to a small extent by well-to-do peasants, is totally absent in the village. The polygyny lowered down the status of the secondary wives and their children. Only first (primary) wives enjoyed superior status over
secondary wives. The absence of polygyny is a welcome trend because the practice of polygyny is against the human value of equality. Hence a significant social change has occurred in the village in respect of forms of marriage.

So far as the educational achievements of the heads of the families extent of literacy is high in the village. The Thai government has made primary education compulsory in Thailand. Because of this compulsion, most of the heads of the families have taken primary education in the village. The mother tongue of villagers is Khamer. It is dialect of the villagers whiling dialing with each other mostly speak is Khamer language. The official language is the Thai language.

The Thai custom of inheritance of the ancestral property is seen continued in the village. Both the son and the daughter inherit the rice land equally. But the house and its compound is inherited by the daughter and her husband.
The status position of an individual is governed in the family by age and sex of the family members and due respect is shown to the persons senior in age. The traditional practice of the status ranking among the family members is seen continued. So far as the status positions of the families and the persons in the village are concerned, number of criteria are used to determine the status positions. The most important criteria used for assigning status positions are - religious roles of the persons, knowledge, the governmental roles and power, the teacher and the taught relationships. Here also the method of traditional ranking of the families predominates in the village. A slight change in assigning the status position to the persons in the village has taken place. The Thai society is a democratic society and hence secular criteria are also used for assigning status positions to the persons holding governmental positions and thereby having the power to summon and address the villagers.

The division of labour in the family is generally based on age and sex of the family members.
Some of the family tasks fall into a taboo category for males. During difficulties, helps for household work are first of all sought from the females in the neighbourhood. If the efforts of seeking help are failed, then only the males of the families come forward to render their helping hands.

The traditional practice of the consumption of food items is seen continued in the village. Therefore, there is no change in the basic form of meals in the village. However, the families those who are able to afford the cost eat non-vegetarian food.

The socio-religious and cultural norms generally govern the types of clothes that the persons may wear on different occasions. Generally on the occasions of the religious ceremonies the persons wear traditional clothes. On the occasion other than the religious ceremonies the persons are free to wear western types of clothes. The women above the middle-age still adhere to the practice of wearing the traditional clothings. However, the young girls and boys wear the western style clothings and no restrictions are imposed on them.
The modern articles of day-to-day use are seen available in the village stores for sale. These articles include tooth paste, tooth brush, powder, soaps, cosmetics, lipstick, razor blades, radio, transisters, etc. The families in the village those who can afford to pay the costs of these articles use the same. Likewise some of the families in the village use radio, transisters, T.V., for the purpose of recreation. Some of the families in the village also use labour-saving devices such as mixer-grinder and freez. The use of wrist watches is common in the village. The possession of the articles such as television, radio, freez and mixer-grinder are thought by the village families as prestige items.