CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This study focuses on primary schools in the Thai Education System after the 1992 Educational Reforms. The special emphasis is on curriculum, teaching-learning process and educational management. It compares the primary schools in the Phichit and Suphanburi provinces. Towards this end, the attitudes and opinions of administrators, teachers and students in the two provinces are examined in detail. This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section discusses the concepts of education, curriculum, teaching-learning process and educational management, and the inter-linkages between them. The second section discusses Thailand’s educational system at the school level and its reforms, focusing on the curriculum, the teaching-learning process, the educational management system and the inter-linkages between various components of the schooling process. The third and final section deals with the objectives, the sample, methodology, statistical tools and the terms used in the course of the study.

The International Encyclopaedia of Education defines education as a continuing process throughout life. Its meaning here includes mainly formal experiences designed to provide the young with knowledge, skills attitudes and values for competence in future roles as individuals, citizens and workers (Husen and Postlethwaite 1985:xiii). Education refers to the activity that has its main purpose for the growth, development, and enrichment of an individual. It designates the totality of influences that nature or other men are able to exercise either on our intelligence or on our will. Durkheim defines ’education as the action exercised by the older generation upon those who are not yet ready for social life. Its objective is to awaken and develop in the child those physical, intellectual and moral qualities, which are required of him both by society as a whole and by the milieu for which he is specially destined’. Education makes an individual aware of and responsive to the world in which he is living and develops in him the perfection of which he is capable. Thus, as a process of socialization, education socializes man according to the social requirements. (Durkheim 1956:61)
Education serves the purpose of preserving the equilibrium of social order as well as it is a medium through which social change become possible. The social system of which an individual is a part shapes his ideals, beliefs and values and thus controls his actions. In turn, an individual brings social change. Higher education also contributes to the process of change and innovation in social norms. Education fulfils society’s needs in respect of preserving as well as developing itself.

Besides the tremendous amount of social and cultural benefit that education bestows as indicated by Emile Durkheim, there is a close inter relationship between education and economic development too. This is exemplified in the works of writers like Halsey (1997: 157). Halsey proposes that, to some extent, economic development depends on the knowledge acquired through education when it is applied in the workplace. The vision of competitive and just society derives its strength from education and training opportunities that come along with it. Sustained investment in education and training creates a high value economy as well as solves the problem of unemployment. As Marginson (1993) said “The attraction of human-capital theory is that investment in education and training are viewed as profitable for both the individual and society”.

One can look into the other explanations on education with its functional values as explained by some writers. According to Althussor (1969) education functions as a disseminator of the ideology of capitalism. It can be seen as a part of the ideological state apparatus of capitalism that along with the legal system legitimizes and supplements the repressive state apparatus consisting of the armed forces and the police. In this line of argument Chapman says “Rules of good behaviour inculcate respect for the existing social order and a belief in the fairness of the system, and help in preserving the status quo. Schools employ methods of repression, such as punishment, banishment, selection etc.” (1986: 45). However, Bourdieu argues that if education contributes to improvement of a society, it also breeds the seed of inequality “The educational system plays a significant role in the reproduction of the structure of distribution of what is called cultural capital. The statistics of theatre, concert, and above all museum attendance show a preponderance of those endowed with the means of appreciating these arts, a quality that is gained
through the educational process” (1973: 72). In this context, Bourdieu argues that education is a privilege of only a few.

The function of education as a key element in the formation of a modern state is identified by many experts on education. “There is a close association between politics and education. Education is one of the key elements in the formation of the modern state.” (Vlaeminke 1998:24), According to Aspin, Chapman and Wilkinson (1994:141), there is a crucial link between education and democracy. For instance, in democratic states, the citizens are expected to be committed to reason and to the “fundamental principles of morality” like fairness, liberty etc, to be able to choose the candidates who can run the government. And only when a citizen has a sound education, he or she will be able to contribute his/her best in making the democratic process work well.

A major part of education is usually imparted through the formal institution of school, which acts as an agency in transmitting the culture and ethics of society as well as specific skills and knowledge to children. Keeping in mind the objectives of the area of research one can focus on the primary education and its dynamics. Primary education is the foundation of education which is a key to all kind of development. Primary education has multiple purposes: To produce a literate population that can deal with problems encountered at home and at work and to serve as a foundation on which further education is built. The first priority for primary education should be to increase children’s learning in school so that most students master the curriculum and complete the primary cycle. Second, access to school must be provided for all school-age children (Lockhead and Verspoor 1991:1).

The objective of primary school is to develop basic or higher order literacy and numerical skills. A poor system of primary education compromises the entire system of human capital development, as it produces students who are poorly prepared for secondary and tertiary-level education. It can be argued that young children are entitled to acquire the essential basic skills of literacy, oracy, and numeracy, along with an introduction to wider areas of knowledge. This could be provided through formalised schooling. It is commonly held that a necessary function of primary education is to prepare members of the young generation for what lies ahead in their lives.
“Provision for the education of young children was perceived not only as desirable in itself, but also as part of a bigger investment in their potential as adults. (Moyles and Hargreaves 1998:23) The official primary school cycle in most schools spans six years which is ample time for students to meet the curriculum objectives, which include basic literacy and numeracy and the ability to apply basic skills to new problems. Social influences on primary education are wide-ranging and variegated. “They grow out of a whole range of causal factors, including ideological, political and economic ones, and they are expressed in a variety of outcomes”. (Vlaeminke 1998:19) Improving educational effectiveness must begin at the primary level where students master the core knowledge and skills of the curriculum. Emphasis should be on learning and the number of primary schools should be increased. Improving the quality of education for students in primary schools is a pre-requisite for developing the human resource base required to meet the changing technological demands of the twenty-first century (Lockhead and Verspoor 1991:18).

CURRICULUM

Curriculum is an integral part of the educational process and has different connotations. Curriculum is usually defined as a scheme of study presented in the form of a syllabus. It also refers to the organization of school subjects and the time that is allocated for each subject as represented in the school timetable. Defined in the strict sense, curriculum is a statement or programme of courses of teaching and instruction. A wider definition might be all the experience which a pupil has under the guidance of the school. (Blishen 1969:181) Kerr defines curriculum as all the learning which is planned and guided by the school, whether it is carried on in groups or individually inside or outside the school (1968:16). Strauss (1977:30) defines curriculum as the external manifestation of an underlying conceptual system about the nature and structure of subject matter that is being taught. It includes the children’s conceptions (sometimes preconceptions or misconceptions) of that subject matter, and mechanisms of cognitive change.

According to Saylor and Alexander (1974:36), it is the total effort put in by the school to bring about desired outcomes in school and out-of-school situations. They classified the concepts of curriculum into four categories, viz., the curriculum as the content of the course of subjects and subject-matter, curriculum as educational
experience, curriculum as educational objectives and curriculum as a plan. They also identify the following principles underlying the formulation of curriculum:

Curriculum is dynamic and has to respond in accordance with the change in social strata due to industrial growth, scientific process and social advancement; hence, it needs to be constantly changed with the changing needs from one generation to another. It is related to goals of the people in a society. The different stages involved in the curriculum process are: identifying the objectives, constant experience, organization and evaluation makes the curriculum a scientific process, supported by psychological, philosophical and social considerations. It also involves evaluation. Evaluation is a concept of the traditional examination or assessment, concerned with the results with reference to aims and objectives. Curriculum is a broad and comprehensive process and is much more than classroom instruction and is not confined to four walls of the classroom.

Curriculum is, thus, the subject matter of education. It is an integral part of the realm of educational management. Students learn the content of the curriculum they are taught; the more they are taught, the more they learn (Fraser et al 1987). And management of curriculum is an important task for the educational planners as well as the educational administrators like principals etc. It is important to note other factors influencing the making of curriculum which includes the teachers, the pupils, the teaching methods and organization, the purpose of education and the evaluation process.

While the teachers play an important role in curriculum development, the student too is important in influencing the curriculum. Some of the factors that are taken into account by the educationists while formulating the curriculum are individual differences among the students, teaching methods and imparting experience to the pupils. To a large extent, curriculum development depends on the structure of the social institutions, namely, the family, monastery, the school, the community and the government. The child is a social being within the family itself in the first place and he or she is further socialized in the school as a result of the activities of the curriculum and the social relationships that takes place in the school. A curriculum developer should be aware of the significant role of family in different
cultural situations because the parents' education and their professional background make a lot of difference between one family and another.

According to the needs of the students the teachers plan the curriculum related activities keeping in view the curriculum goals and objectives, select subject matter, choose materials according to the resources in the school, and take into consideration the scope of the course or topics. Oliva further explains the role of the teachers in planning curriculum-related activities. They have to revise the content, decide on types of instructional plans to use, construct the plans, try out new programmes, and create developmental and remedial programmes in reading or other subject matter. They have to seek ways to provide for all kinds of individual differences in the classroom. They also have to incorporate content mandated by levels above the classroom and finally have to develop their own curricular materials to accomplish the curriculum goals (1991: 63).

The chief administrator of the school, the principal, also takes an important part in curriculum development, by serving as curriculum leader or by delegating leadership responsibilities to subordinates. Curriculum development will be doomed to failure without their support. Although some school administrators take the position that they are trying to be instructional leaders, others admit that they are primarily managers (Oliva 1991:106).

The view that the focus of the school curriculum should be on human development is one of several ideologies in the age-old education debate. “Individual development is not likely to be promoted by an off-the-peg curriculum which consists of pre-specified syllabus which all pupils are expected to follow” (Blenkin and Kelly 1998: 34). A curriculum should dictate not a rigid body of subject content to be imposed on all regardless of suitability, but provide broad guidelines and areas of experience which are seen as constituting a proper form of educational entitlement for all. Learning being a social activity, a genuine form of education must be centrally focussed on supporting development on all fronts.

Implementation of intended curriculum depends on the instructional materials which provide information, organize the scope and sequence of the information presented, and provide opportunities for students to put into practice what they have
learned. To enhance student achieved learning materials such as textbooks, teacher guides, computers and other learning aids are used. The use of textbooks in the teaching learning process saw a lot of instructional time because both the teachers and students can copy text on and from the blackboard. “Nothing has ever replaced the printed word as the key element in the educational process and, as a result, textbooks are central to schooling at all levels” (Altbach 1983:135).

**Difference between the curriculum and syllabus:**

The Oxford dictionary (1995:330, 1411) defines curriculum as the subjects that are studied or prescribed for study in a school. Syllabus refers to the programme or outline of course of study, teaching, etc. Husen and Postlewaite (1985:4976) also define that, syllabus is undoubtedly one of the oldest teaching tools in formal education. It is the vehicles by which organization and structure of intended learning are communicated from teacher to teacher and teacher to learner. As a framework, syllabus by definition is the organizing documents in area of instruction.

Thus, we can say that, curriculum is the main structure of the subjects which every school has to follow. The difference is that the syllabus is the detail of the subjects which are organized by the schoolteachers.

**TEACHING-LEARNING PROCESS**

Another aspect of education, which is extremely important is the teaching-learning process. Teaching learning forms an important part of education, as it is concerned and related directly with quality of schooling. It is important to note that to extract the best kind of performance from the teachers, it is extremely important to provide them with a supportive and professionally conducive environment in which to work. A good-quality work life is important for teachers to enhance the quality of their performance, to enable them to pass on their knowledge, values and philosophies of learning to their students. Part of the teachers’ sense of value of the contribution they are making is to help their students achieve a good quality of life and usually comes from a sense of their own professional value and status. Training and provision of quality teachers in school systems are, therefore, very important. Positive efforts have to be made by school systems to attract qualified and responsible people to the profession. Teaching is not a market place activity, and has much more to do with
caring about people. They wanted “to give teaching back to teachers”. Even a good curriculum will not be administered properly, if the teachers and administrators are non-reciprocating. Along with the curriculum, the teacher training programmes will have to be modernized to meet the needs and demands of the curriculum. It is important that the various stakeholders are involved while making the curriculum so that the problems of implementation and acceptance will be reduced and well-trained teachers would be available for the smooth implementation of the curriculum. (Aspin, Chapman and Wilkinson 1994:72)

Teacher Guides that are well integrated with the textbook or other instructional materials can have a positive impact on student achievement. Particularly guides include information on what to teach and how to teach it, diagnostic tests that help teachers monitor student learning and modify the daily lessons accordingly, suggestions on how to manage the classroom, and activities for classroom use. The school system can provide these requirements. It is here that the role of In-Service Education and Training (INSET) comes in. INSET is a programme for training principals, vice-principals and the administrative staffs for school management and for providing training in some specific subjects. This programme intends to impart training to the teachers to apply the new curriculum in the teaching-learning process and to update them regarding the change in the educational policy undertaken by the Thai government.

Schools have the responsibility to provide INSET to their teachers. It is only as a result of effective INSET that teachers are able to continually update their curriculum knowledge and improve their pedagogy and attempt to enhance quality in the achievement of the goals that the community sets for its young. The agenda for professional education and training activity in the field of teacher education should go well beyond the communication of mere operating procedures, rules of the craft, or even tricks of the trade that past experience suggests.

Aspin, et al. (1994: 203) propose some measures that can help to promote quality in teaching and learning. These include: an effective preparation, delivery and assessment of materials in ways that it with clearly presented purposes of courses; a clear view of how learning occurs which is compatible with the teaching approach; a willingness to explain learning views and teaching assessment approaches to students;
an urge to share teaching-learning views and strategies with colleagues (to provide and receive feedback); a readiness to reflect on teaching-learning experiences and a preparation to invest time and effort to achieve deeper understanding and improvement.

The learning process should promote quality in students by a concentration on substantive knowledge, appropriate cognitive competence and disciplinary skills, critically reflective powers, empathy and commitment to the norms and values of the schools. There should be effective interaction and collaboration between teachers and students, and an acceptance of the guidance and support of the leaders within the education system. To achieve these ends, school activities need to be oriented to quality teaching. Teachers can provide the model for developing learning attributes in students by setting high standards of professional delivery and assuring quality outcomes. The teachers need to communicate their own experiences of personal engagement in learning, and reveal their skills in the styles of thinking and working in the subjects and disciplines provided by and practiced in the school, from both teaching and learning perspectives.

The agenda for promoting quality in teaching and learning may be carried out and monitored through student evaluation of sessions and courses, opportunities for team teaching and external evaluation of teaching, formative and summative course reviews by the staff involved, and teaching exchanges involving other departments in the school and similar ones in other schools in state, interstate or internationally. (Aspin, Chapman and Wilkinson 1994:203).

In the popular sense, ‘quality’ implies a form of excellence or something that rises above mediocrity. Webster’s Third International Dictionary defines ‘excellence’ as state of possessing good qualities in an eminent degree and to a standard and ‘quality’ as the degree of conformance to a standard (1961:791). However, an examination of various perspectives to explain the meaning of quality will reveal the complexity in defining the concept. Economists, educationists and sociologists use this term differently to mean different things. Economists tend to define the concept in terms of the relationship between inputs and the relevance of outputs to the need for graduates in different sectors of the work force (Velez and Psacharopoulos, 1993). For example, low quality can result from inefficient use of resources or from
maladjustments between the supply of graduates and the human resource needs of the economy. Sociologists tend to view ‘quality’ as the extent to which institutions achieve the goal of attaining a more mobile society, while educationists see ‘quality’ in terms of the richness of the teaching-learning process and the ability of problem solving and to think critically.

Coomb (1985) defines ‘quality’ of education in terms of student learning achievements, traditional curriculum and standards. According to him, quality also pertains to the relevance of what is taught and learned – to how well it fits the present and the future learning needs of the particular learners and their circumstances. It also refers to the significant changes in the educational system or sub-system itself, in the nature of its inputs (students, teachers, facilities, equipment and supplies), its objectives, curriculum and educational technologies and its socio-economic, cultural and political environment. Coombs extends his argument and says that quality and standards are relative matters- relative to the particular place and time and to the particular learners and their circumstances. Thus, the criteria for judging any educational proposal for quality must therefore be: education for whom, for what purpose and under what conditions (Coombs, 1985:108).

According to Cantras (1988), four perspectives on effectiveness are apparent in the literature. The first is the technical production process concept of education, which attempts to combine different factors for producing success together in search for achievement. The second perspective concentrates upon the individual abilities and differences between students and the nature of human inputs rather than the material ones. Third perspective focuses upon the school and classroom organization, while the fourth perspective emphasizes the institutional and symbolic features of school life and the impact of those upon motivation and achievement.

Furthermore, Baumgart and Kaluge (1987) identify ability levels of entering students, the qualifications of staff, research output, publication and citation rates and employability of graduates to differentiate institutions of good quality or excellence. Austin and Reynolds (1990) also sort out the characteristics of good schools. They divide the characteristics of effective schooling into two: (1) organizational characteristics (2) process characteristics.
The organizational characteristics include site management, leadership, staff stability, curriculum and instructional articulation and organization, staff development, maximised learning time, widespread recognition of academic success and parental involvement and support. The process characteristics of effective schooling are collaborative planning and collegial relationships, sense of community, clear goals and expectations commonly shared and order and discipline.

Research carried out in the field of reviewing quality teaching-learning process has been aimed at finding the best teaching methods. Bennett (1976) and Galton et al (1980) have explored the relative effectiveness of different “teaching styles” or approaches. Whatever the relative merits of different teaching approaches or styles, there seems to be little concrete evidence in favour of one teaching style in terms of overall effectiveness. The major problem in evaluating the effectiveness of different teaching styles with any precision arises from the sheer diversity of teaching situations and contexts (Harris, 1999:36). Despite the extensive literature on theories of teaching backed by investigations (e.g. Anthony, 1979), it seems to be preferable for a teacher to mix different methods appropriate to the topic and the learning capabilities of the students (Hazelwood et al.1988: 71). Thus, it may be understood that the concept of excellence includes and embraces more than which can be measured by qualitative indicators and also that the issue of excellence must not be subordinated to the issues of immediately measurable indicators of excellence.

Lastly, much public attention has been focused on the adequacy of schooling in meeting 'community needs'. A recurring theme in these debates has been the employment of informal, progressive approaches to teaching and learning. These are seen as constituting an attack on the traditional role of the school as a transmitter of both the necessary skills for job performance and, more importantly, the appropriate attitudes towards authority and order.

EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT

There is a new set of agenda for research and development in quality schooling, based upon a new conception of management as evolutionary problem solving and research. Management of education is about the way in which managing people work together most effectively. Human Resources Management (HRM) in
education is a part of the process through which successful teaching and learning takes place in educational settings. In the recent past education management has increased in complexity as more delegation of tasks to individuals and teams within schools is called for (Crawford, et al, 1997:1).

Curriculum development is one of the important aspects of educational management. The curriculum decides the inputs that will go into the students’ minds. Curriculum thus decides the cognitive, psychomotor and affective skills that a child predominately develops, and will be in a position to utilize for his/her society when he/she is grown up. The manner in which the curriculum is executed, as well as the defined focus of emphasis is an important aspect of educational management. Hence the success of the curriculum management depends on how well the curriculum is accepted at various levels i.e. the ministerial level (planning), the department level (imbibing) and the school level (implementation).

Policy-makers now increasingly focus on the need to develop system capacities for educational reforms and changes. This focus on change represents a global response to the widening gap between the traditional capabilities of educational systems and the emerging demands of the information age. Throughout the world, reform policies are reshaping the context for school management and highlighting the role of school level-leaders as “agents of change”. Consequently in England, USA, Thailand, Australia, Singapore, Hong Kong and China, developing the leadership capacities of school administration has taken centre stage as an educational priority (Hallinger and Kantamara, 2000: 189).

The emerging conception of management sees schools as adoptive learning environments that facilitate the exchange of views through transmission of knowledge and through rational argument. Inherent in this vision of organizations and management is the value attached to the integration of substance and process, rather than to the separation of these levels of school administration and learning within the class. This view contrasts with educational management concepts that propose a splitting of substance and process, i.e. a distinction between academic work, teaching and learning, on the one hand, and educational administration, on the other, as embedded in a hierarchical organization resting on a structure of super-ordinate and subordinate authority relations. The earlier model, as Evers (1990) remarks, is
designed to promote consistency and uniformity in the implementation and transmission of centrally produced decisions and in the communication and diffusion of directives. Aspin, et al (1994: 196) point to two inherent defects in this model. Firstly, it requires unquestioning acceptance of centrally made decisions, plans and directives. Secondly, such a notion is against a sense of shared ownership of decision-making and the necessity of bringing all resources to bear in the positive drive towards intellectual, academic and organization problems.

Effective schools have strong principals who devote considerable time to coordinating and managing instruction, are highly visible in the school, and stay close to the instructional process. In many instances, effective principals adopt the management-by-wandering-about style of executives of successful large corporations (Peters and Waterman 1988). At the same time, instructional leadership is in many ways a shared responsibility. Effective leadership engenders a common sense of commitment and collegiality among the staff. Several studies suggest that teachers rate principals with a participatory style of school management as more effective than those who are more autocratic (Baker 1988a; Den Hartog Georgiades and Jones 1989).

In developing countries principals apparently function as the lower link in an organizational chain that extends from the school through district supervisors to the central ministerial staff. Principals are selected mainly for their seniority rather than for their personal traits or performance. They also operate under significant constraints, such as the chronic shortage of materials, operating funds, and staff development resources that make instructional improvement extremely difficult. In addition, principals are overburdened with administrative tasks.

Creating effective schools requires change and changing or improving the behaviour of the smallest unit in the organization. In the education sector, the smallest units are the school and classroom. National decision-makers can establish standards for curricula and examinations, official timetables, teacher certification criteria, and attendance and promotion policies, but they cannot control what happens in each school or classroom. Yet teaching and learning occur at that level. The learning gains associated with the inputs can only be achieved if the inputs are, in fact, available and used in the schools.
School communities should be able to make more efficient and effective decisions through the democratic processes of open, accountable and participatory decision-making. This approach is consistent with the notion of the role of school principals and leaders generally as providers of academic leadership in a joint endeavor to enhance the quality of educational management. The primacy of leadership in creating and maintaining effective schools is also being emphasized in research, policy and practice. This approach can be successful if employed within a process of collegial collaboration and mutual assistance in the identification of problems, the formulation of trial solutions and their implementation, and commitment to the detection and correction of errors, with the aim of improving the quality of schooling. This can enable effective functioning in the leadership and management of learning institutions, and improve the decision-making process and thereby the quality, utility and value of educational policies. Leadership, of course, cannot be exercised except in relation to the other people in an organization. This sets an agenda towards the refinement of theory and the improvement of practice in institutional management in education, in the working of organizations at the system level and in the enhancement of the relationship between education and the broad field of economic, social and political contexts and concerns. (Thailand 2000)

At the school level, authority and responsibilities may be acutely mismatched. with principals being largely excluded from decisions that affect their ability to improve student achievement, curricula being designed centrally, often ignoring the diverse capacities and interests of schools and students, and teachers being appointed, assigned, and evaluated centrally, leaving principals little control over the choice or discipline of their teachers. In many countries, teacher development policies fail to take into account regional (including instructional language), subject matter, or grade-level needs, which undermines the ability of principals to build and maintain an effective school environment. Nor do principals have the authority or resources to organize staff development programmes that address the problems and challenges faced by teachers in their school. At best, they have access to more general programmes created nationally. The dearth of authority at the school level is most prevalent in highly centralized systems, but even in decentralized systems authority may not be delegated below the intermediate level.
School leaders are often severely constrained by centrally administered regulations that require funds raised locally to be submitted to the central ministry or that restrict the purposes to which they may be put. In the absence of testing and monitoring systems that assess performance, schools are generally held accountable for their use basic inputs: enrollment allocations, student-teacher ratios, schedules, time allocations, and reporting requirements. The rules that govern basic inputs may be necessary, but they do not create incentives for schools to focus on the interventions that improve student achievement.

In extreme cases, of course, schools are highly autonomous because financially constrained central ministries and intermediary organizations find effective levels of input delivery and supervision difficult or impossible to establish. Textbooks are not distributed, teacher salaries are months in arrears, inspectors do not visit schools, teachers are often absent, and schools fail to delineate who is responsible for what and to whom. Teachers blame parents for not reinforcing the value of education at home and administrators for setting and enforcing ill-conceived rules and for lacking resources. Parents blame teachers for teaching poorly. Administrators blame politicians for providing inadequate funding and teachers for not doing their job. (Thailand 2000)

Difficulties usually arise when administrators, often operating in response to political pressure and time constraints, but armed with only a limited understanding of the conceptual and methodological problems inherent in the school quality research, translate the findings of research into policy and practice, adopting in some instances simplistic solutions to the complex problems of managing schools for their improvements. The major problem arises from traditional notions regarding the nature of the relationship between the researcher and the policy-maker and administrator. Researchers often see themselves as bounded by methodological and conceptual constraints which structure and define acceptable parameters for their inquiry; policy-makers/ administrators argue that they have to take into account a wider set of considerations that relate to areas of economic and administrative efficiency and political, moral and social desirability.

The absence of strong managerial skills, which is evident at all levels, is particularly glaring at the school level. Principals are required to perform multifaceted
and complex tasks under chronic shortage of materials, clerical support, operating funds, and resources for staff development. In addition, ceilings on rank and salary diminish the attraction of being a principal. In almost all developing countries, principals are selected from among teachers on the basis of seniority and then trained, although systematic training is limited. Training before the appointment is virtually nonexistent, except when a teacher has served as a deputy or assistant principal. Studies in Egypt, Indonesia, and Paraguay have found that a principal's teaching experience and training (number of courses taken) are related to higher student achievement (Fuller 1987; Heyneman and Loxley 1983; Sembiring and Livingstone 1981). It is the same case in Thailand.

Countries, such as China, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, and Thailand, have addressed the need to improve school management, primarily by establishing institutions to train principals (Den Hartog Georgiades and Jones 1989). Such institutes face three problems. First, they cannot accommodate the number of new principals needed to run the burgeoning number of schools. Second, no consensus has been reached about what the curriculum should reflect and who should provide the training. Staff often transplant curricula and methodologies derived from their overseas training without adapting them to the sociocultural context and needs of their country and community. Third, the national policies for training administrators are not coherent, which hinders the effectiveness of these institutes. Malaysia and Thailand, however, are leading the way in developing coherent policies.

**EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS IN THAILAND**

In this section a brief discussion on Thailand educational system at the school level along with its reform which focus on the curriculum, teaching learning process, the educational management system and its inter-linkages will be undertaken. These aspects will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

Till the 19th century, education in Thailand was a privilege enjoyed by the residents of royal palace and the inmates of monasteries. Realizing the importance of education for all the Thai government opened 34 schools in the metropolitan and provincial areas in 1887. This entailed a departure from palaces and temples based on
educational system to a more organized educational system, with specifically trained teachers and a well planned designed curriculum. By 1921 the government made education compulsory for children upto class IV.

Structural changes took place in the traditional education system in Thailand with the replacement of absolute monarchy by a constitutional monarchy in 1932. Significant educational development was the launching of the First National Education Scheme which made education could avail of education of sex and social background. During the year 1956 and 1977 changes were made to adjust to the changing need of the economy and society of Thailand. Notably in 1956 secondary schools were set up in every district. In 1977 six years of primary schooling was made compulsory for all children.

But the most crucial change and step was undertaken in 1992 which is reflected in the National Educational Development Plan. The main pattern of this educational development plan included the agenda of reshaping the educational system to enable the students to keep pace with the rapid change taking place all over the world, recognized education as a fundamental right of the citizen. It also encouraged the private sector and provides free and flexible education at all levels.

In the pre-1992 period, curriculum for schools was entirely formulated by the Ministry of Education which was mandatory for the entire country. It was pre dominantly theoretical with title or no emphasis on practical basic skills. The authorities involved in formulating the curriculum hardly took into consideration the fact that each province and each district had varying needs due to their different demographic and geographical profiles. The management at the school level was under the strict control of the district and provincial authorities.

However, the post 1992 educational policy formulated and launched by the government contained major structural changes. Some of these are as follows:

THE SEVENTH NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN, 1992

The Seventh National Education Development Plan (1992) is a part of the Seventh National Economic and Social Development Plan (1992) that emphasizes upon equality of access to education and quality of education. It was expected that
this people-centric policy of basic education would lead to economic development of the country and enable the people to keep pace with the rapid changes happening all over the world. The Seventh National Education Development Plan (1992) has an agenda of developing inter-linkages between the employing agencies, the community and the school along with an effective role for the media in increasing the school enrolment. The government made the child labour laws strict. The child labour laws not only exist on paper but they also are implemented and the defaulters are punished. Thus, holding power of the schools increased.

POST-1992 EDUCATION SYSTEM EDUCATION IN THAILAND:

As per the post-1992 curriculum, the teachers have to train the pupils to carry out skill-based activities and have used new methods and techniques in the teaching learning process. The pupils have become the centre of the schooling process and have been motivated to express their ideas about what they would like to study. The teachers supervise and advise them in these matters. The students now have more skill-based activities in school and have become proficient in basic skills. Regarding educational management in school the principal and vice-principal have been empowered to take decisions on providing education according to the pupils’ needs and requirements. They could manage their school activities, work plans, budget, academic matters and so on.

The educational reforms of 1992 made certain parts of the curriculum including the general subjects compulsory for all schools in the country. With regard to the optional subjects it was realized the each province and each district had different needs and, therefore, a number of optional subjects were introduced, which were predominately skill-based. The school education committee consisting of school teachers, school administrators, parents and community leaders designed the optional subjects which were suited for their areas. This benefited the students, as the teaching process became more child-centered rather than teacher centered.

An earlier study made by the researcher had compared the pre-1992 and post-1992 curricula in Thailand focusing on the vocationalisation/skill orientation at the primary level in Phichit province with the objective of assessing the post-1992 primary level education system. Conducted at two schools, one urban and the other
rural, the study examined the impact of the 1992 reforms on enrolment and retention of students in school and focused on the perceptions of students, teachers and administrators, attempting to assess their attitudes and reactions to the policy and implementation of the new curriculum after 1992. The study also investigated the direct and indirect benefits of the new curriculum and looked into whether the new curriculum had led to increase in, and retention of the reduction of dropouts in schools. The study had found that the political will and determination on the part of the Royal Thai government has been a key factor in promoting primary education in the country and has contributed to the success of Thailand's campaign for achieving universal primary education.

While many of the reforms have been successfully implemented, others have met with a limited degree of success, and some are still in need of practical application.

In the present doctoral thesis, the researcher attempts to find answers to some of the questions raised in the M.Phil dissertation, and find reasons to explain lacunae, if any, in the new curriculum and its implementation process. It will also present a comparative study of the three aspects mentioned above on Phichit and Suphanburi provinces in Thailand. The reason is that Suphanburi is an urban and industrial province having sugar, shoes, melamine crockery factories. On the other hand, Phichit is an agriculture-based region where only farming is prevalent. Therefore, the curriculum implementation ought to be different. Hence the study will try to see how the curriculum caters to the local needs.

The students studying in Suphanburi province or the nearby capital city are likely to get more information, news, and have more access to technology, etc. than those who study in a rural area like Phichit province. So Phichit and Suphanburi provinces have been selected for this study to enable a comparison between a rural and an urban area. It is also found that the budgetary allocation for education in Suphanburi (Baht 82,465,862) is more than in Phichit (Baht 60,180,686) (Thailand 2000). This would mean that the level of educational infrastructure is expected to be better in Suphanburi than in Phichit. The comparative study between Phichit and Suphanburi provinces is also vital to give an insight into the difference in curriculum content and its implementation.
OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are:

1. To study the differences in the curriculum in class VI in Phichit and Suphanburi provinces.
2. To compare the teaching-learning process in the schools of two provinces.
3. To study the similarities and differences in the educational management of schools in these two provinces, and
4. To study the inter-linkages between curriculum, teaching-learning process and the educational management in the schools of the two provinces.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

The specific questions that follow these objectives are:

1. On the Curriculum:
   1.1 How do the teachers communicate the curriculum to the students?
   1.2 Does the curriculum give basic skills and knowledge to prepare skilled workers for future life?
   1.2 Are the optional subjects different in the two provinces? What are the differences, if any?

2. On Teaching-learning process:
   2.1 How is the curriculum transacted from the teachers to the students?
   2.2 What is the teaching approach of the teachers?
   2.3 What are the emphasis in the teaching-learning processes with respect to:
      - teachers as curriculum communicators
      - teachers’ use of effective teaching aids and media

3. On Educational management
   3.1 What type of school organization enhances quality in schooling?
   3.2 How is the curriculum implemented in the school?
   3.3 What role does school principal play in curriculum development and teacher training?
   3.4 What kinds of teacher training programme have been developed?

4. Inter-linkages between curriculum, teaching-learning process and educational management.
   4.1 What is the extent of support available to teachers and principals for the improvement in the quality of schooling?
4.2 What are the inter-linkage between the interaction between components of the school system and classroom the quality of education the policies and actual classroom practices?

4.3 What kinds of pressures are the teachers and the principal facing with regarding to the current changes, policies, curriculum and teaching-learning process.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

SAMPLE

The sample for the study has been taken from 4 selected schools in the Phichit and Suphaburi provinces. Out of the 4 schools selected, 2 are from urban areas and 2 from rural areas, i.e. 1 urban and 1 rural school of each province has been taken. From Phichit province the selected schools are Anuban Phichit Urban School (APUS) and Thalor Phichit Rural School (TPRS), while from Suphanburi we have Suphannaphum Suphanburi Urban School (SSUS) and Dangchang Suphanburi Rural School (DSRS). The sample includes students, teachers and administrators selected from these schools, i.e., a total of 184 students, 44 teachers and 11 administrators. The distribution for each school is shown in the following table.

Table 1.1 showing distribution of the overall sample:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Phichit Province</th>
<th></th>
<th>Suphanburi Province</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
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<td>19</td>
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</tr>
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<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrators</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TOOLS AND DATA COLLECTION

The data were collected from the teachers, the students and administrators through questionnaires.

Questionnaires were constructed:

1. For the students to know the impact of curriculum, and teaching-learning process.

2. For the teachers to know the impact of curriculum, teaching-learning process and educational management of the school problems.

3. For the school administrators to know the impact of curriculum, teaching-learning process and educational management of the school problems.

The next chapter throws light upon the historical background of the Thai traditional system of education and discusses the factors influencing primary education reform in Thailand.