

Drug Use Reporting by a Sample of Thai Students

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OBJECTIVES :

1. To provide prevalence and incidence figures on drug use by Thai students.
2. To determine the general characteristics and knowledge about drugs of the Thai student drug user and non-user.
3. To provide background data for later work designed to help infer whether there is a relation between Thai drug use and friendship with Americans.
4. To better understand how certain Thai women view their relations with Americans. This will provide additional information to help interpret other research studying the relation between drug use of these two specific populations.

The present report describes research which is designed to study the use of drugs by Thais. The purpose of this work is to contribute to the effort to prevent heroin and other drug abuse in the local population, in order to disrupt the Thai drug use which operates to provide primary support to drug growing, distribution, and American drug use in Thailand. It is the intent of the Department of Army that drug abuse prevention and control be a comprehensive community effort which includes education, law enforcement, and community action. It is hoped that the present research can be utilized by the local community to help make decisions concerning what drug education, prevention, and treatment programs appear to be most relevant.

The topic of study described in this report is the survey of drug use by the Thai student or partner.

Drug use of the following populations will be surveyed :

- 1) One school system will be selected which is in proximity to a large American base and presumably in a community which has a large amount of contact with American soldiers.
- 2) A second school system will be studied in a large city in which there are relatively few Americans. Contact with Americans is presumably low.
- 3) The third population to be studied is made up of bar—girls and entertainers (partners) from a small town in proximity to two large American military installations. These women are normally in daily contact with U.S. servicemen.
- 4) The fourth population, juvenile delinquents in the Bangkok area, is small but presumably at high risk for drug use. These will be surveyed at a local juvenile home.

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5) The last population to be studied is students attending an upper middle class demonstration school run by Chulalongkorn University. This population is probably more like that which attends the International School of Bangkok (ISB) on socioeconomic variables and acceptance of western values than other school populations in Thailand.

METHODS: Stratified random sampling will be used to select high school students in Korat and Chiang Mai. This will be based on grade, school size, type of school, and type of curriculum. In Korat twenty schools will be selected and about 40 students per school surveyed. In Chiang Mai, about 15 schools will be selected with 50 students per school to be surveyed. Every student age 13 or older attending the Chulalongkorn Demonstration School will be surveyed (about 400), and every juvenile at the detention home will be surveyed (about 600). The partners will be selected from 300 women who report to a venereal disease health center. Each consecutive woman who reports on a given interview day will be surveyed.

RESULTS: The project was begun on 1 February 1973. Preliminary data necessary for school sampling have been collected in Chiang Mai and Korat. Students will be selected and assembled to fill out the questionnaire as soon as summer vacation ends. Data for each population will be tabulated and presented as frequency and per cent counts. This will be done for all subjects, as well as separately for those identified as "drug users" and "non-users". The definition of these terms will await data collection.

SUMMARY: A survey of drug use will be administered to several populations in Thailand. This will provide a large data base to estimate the total amount of drug involvement by students in Thailand. In addition, drug use by local partners who have specified relations with Americans will be studied. This will allow speculation as to possible inter-relations between drug use of the US soldier and Thai drug use.