

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### Background of the Study

South Thailand has been facing considerable insurgency activity for over 7 years now. Both the civilian and army casualties have been high. In this classic type of guerilla conflict the Thai government and the defense forces understand that winning and retaining the hearts and minds of the population is paramount for the conflict to be resolved. This means that the army has to rely not only on the commitment of the soldiers but also that they fully understand their civic duties. The soldiers face considerable dangers as they are the target of the insurgents, therefore it is important to understand the extent to which they retain their commitment to the army and to their civic duties. The Fourth Royal Army is responsible to look after these soldiers, both the military personnel and rangers. Specifically, the rangers who are the important civilian forces designated as the “black men set” by the Thai people, for the purpose of fighting against the terrorists, controlling the unstable situation, and stopping the unrest in the three southernmost provinces (Pattani, Yala and Narathiwat) and four districts of Songkla, Thailand (The Royal Thai Army, 2007, p. 19). It is imperative that the senior ranger regiments’ leadership ensure that their rangers are committed to the organization’s mission and

vision of pursuing success in the operations associated with this war.

Commitment is the bond or link that an employee feels towards the parent organization, its goals, its vision, and its senior leadership's intention on how to achieve specified and implied mission goals. This is not merely empathy towards one's organization. Rather, it exists in multiple, complex forms of resolve to associate with one's organization. Prior research has identified Organizational Commitment (OC) with cohesion of goals, where individuals perceive a personal involvement in their organization and commitment to the programs in which their organization is involved (Pasch, 2008). Organizational commitment represents a strong belief and acceptance of the organization's values and goals. It also represents a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization and a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization (Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982). Thus, the effectiveness of an organization to meet its goals is influenced by the commitment of its employees, to the point that employee commitment to the organization is deemed a critical influence (Mellor, Mathieu, Barnes-Farrell, & Rogelberg, 2001). Moreover, according to Roberts (1994), meeting specific goals and objectives in the face of armed opposition is the way to measure success in the military. Additionally, in the military, the organizational commitment of the unit personnel is the core of the military's strength. When mission support officers perform their daily tasks, their ability to rely on one another and their implicit knowledge that everyone is equally committed to the mission at hand have a direct effect on the results of the overall mission, as well as the well-being of others engaged in the military effort who depend

on the outcomes of their efforts. It is possible that high levels of commitment enable rangers to successfully perform essential duties in the midst of the violent situation and with an uncertain future.

Given the value of Organizational Commitment (OC), it is important that senior leadership understand those factors that influence an employee's commitment, as well as their organizational citizenship behavior. In the course of the last two decades, scholars of organizational behaviors have devoted considerable attention to pro-social behavior in organizations. Special focus has been placed on employees' actions, which extend beyond the formal requirements of the job (Desivilya, Sabag, & Ashton, 2006). Smith, Organ, and Near (1983) coined the term Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) to capture these extra-role behaviors which include altruism, conscientiousness, civic virtue and others. Organizational citizenship behavior is manifested through interpersonal, helpful behavior involved in the context of performing one's work in an organization. Additionally, scholars like Bateman and Organ (1983) recognize organizational citizenship behavior as individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly and explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and in the aggregate, promotes efficient and effective functioning of the organization. Moreover, OCB become important because it facilitates the accomplishment of organizational goals and enhance organizational performance (Organ, 1990; Podsakoff & MacKenzie, 1997). For this reason, organizational citizenship behavior among the rangers is crucial for their military work and for the ranger regiments.

Unfortunately, current academic literature in the field of organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior falls short in its application to organizations like the Royal Thai military. The focus of the present study is to identify the factors related to organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior of the rangers in the fourth army area of the Royal Thai military. With the on-going insurgency in the three southernmost provinces in Thailand, it is crucial that the ranger regiment leadership ensure that their subordinates are committed to the organization's mission in these operations. Moreover, it is important that their subordinates have organizational citizenship behavior contributory to effective organizational performance. The present study will help to give direction to programs aimed at increasing commitment and citizenship behavior of the rangers to their organization. This would affect the rangers' mission and achievement in bringing back sustainable peace to the three southernmost provinces.

### **Statement of the Problem**

This research proposes to identify those factors that influence the degree of commitment and citizenship behavior of the men joining the rangers either as uniformed military personnel or volunteers, as they are a driving force in the Thai Army's success in containing the unrest in the three southernmost provinces. Additionally, this research further proposes to investigate the relationship between demographic factors, organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior. Armed with this

information, senior commanders can focus their energies on those characteristics to ensure the highest level of commitment and citizenship behavior from their subordinates. Another reason for this study is the lack of research in the area of organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior in relation to the rangers in the Fourth Royal Thai Army.

### **Research Objectives**

In order to accomplish the research objectives and substantive issues raised above, data was collected from rangers in the Fourth Royal Thai Army. Individuals provided data on their organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior. Based upon a review of the relevant literature, hypotheses and research questions were developed and tested.

This study will specifically discuss four research objectives, which are:

1. To examine the differences in the organizational commitment levels based on age, marital status, education, type of ranger, organizational tenure and experience in fighting of the rangers in the Fourth Royal Thai Army Area.
2. To gain a greater understanding of the relationship between organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior of the rangers in the Fourth Royal Thai Army Area.
3. To examine the differences in the organizational citizenship behavior levels based on age, marital status, education, type of ranger, organizational tenure and experience in fighting of the rangers in the Fourth Royal Thai Army Area.

4. To examine whether organizational commitment will significantly predict organizational citizenship behavior.

### **Rationale**

Academic literature reflects organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior in a non-ranger department context, and continues to serve as research material for business and academia. Researchers posit that there are factors that lead to organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior. Their results vary greatly, depending upon the population under study and the research methodology employed (Mowday, Steer, & Porter, 1979; Yousef, 2000; Zeffane, 1995). However, a considerable body of evidence indicates that organizational commitment is related to both retention and other good and important behaviors (Allen, 2003). Likewise, organizational citizenship behavior has a strong positive impact on employee performance evaluations and general career success including military personnel (Borman, White, & Dorsey, 1995; Van Scotter & Motowidlo, 1996). Thus, the organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior exhibited by the rangers in this study that may lead to improved performance in the organization will be analyzed using statistical methods. This result will determine whether there is a positive or negative relationship between organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior. This research study may prove useful in providing the ranger regiment commanders a tool to assess as well as motivate commitment and citizenship

behavior in this unique population. Additionally, it may also help commanders to understand better those factors that motivate their personnel, engender trust in the organization, and acceptance of organizational values and goals during this period of time when the army is focused on defeating an asymmetrical threat to peace in the three southernmost provinces of Thailand.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions will be used in this study to extend previous research:

1. Are there differences in organizational commitment levels in terms of age, marital status, education, type of ranger, organizational tenure and experience in fighting, of the rangers in the Fourth Royal Thai Army Area?

2. Is there a relationship between organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior of the rangers in the Fourth Royal Thai Army Area?

3. Are there differences in organizational citizenship behavior levels in terms of age, marital status, education, type of ranger, organizational tenure and work experience in fighting, of the rangers in the Fourth Royal Thai Army Area?

4. Is organizational commitment significant in predicting organizational citizenship behavior of the rangers in the Fourth Royal Thai Army Area?

### *Hypotheses*

In order to achieve the objectives of this study, substantive hypotheses have been established based upon the above research questions. The following hypotheses were tested at the .05 level of significance.

H<sub>01</sub> There is no significant difference between age and organizational commitment of the rangers in the Fourth Royal Thai Army Area.

H<sub>02</sub> There is no significant difference between marital status and organizational commitment of the rangers in the Fourth Royal Thai Army Area.

H<sub>03</sub> There is no significant difference between educational level and organizational commitment of the rangers in the Fourth Royal Thai Army Area.

H<sub>04</sub> There is no significant difference between the type of ranger and organizational commitment of the rangers in the Fourth Royal Thai Army Area.

H<sub>05</sub> There is no significant difference between organizational tenure and organizational commitment of the rangers in the Fourth Royal Thai Army Area.

H<sub>06</sub> There is no significant difference between experience in fighting and organizational commitment of the rangers in the Fourth Royal Thai Army Area.

H<sub>07</sub> There is no significant relationship between organizational commitment and altruism.

H<sub>08</sub> There is no significant relationship between organizational commitment and conscientiousness

H<sub>09</sub> There is no significant relationship between organizational commitment and civic virtue.

H<sub>o10</sub> There is no significant relationship between organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior.

H<sub>o11</sub> There is no significant difference between age and organizational citizenship behavior of the rangers in the Fourth Royal Thai Army Area.

H<sub>o12</sub> There is no significant difference between marital status and organizational citizenship behavior of the rangers in the Fourth Royal Thai Army Area.

H<sub>o13</sub> There is no significant difference between educational level and organizational citizenship behavior of the rangers in the Fourth Royal Thai Army Area.

H<sub>o14</sub> There is no significant difference between type of ranger and organizational citizenship behavior of the rangers in the Fourth Royal Thai Army Area.

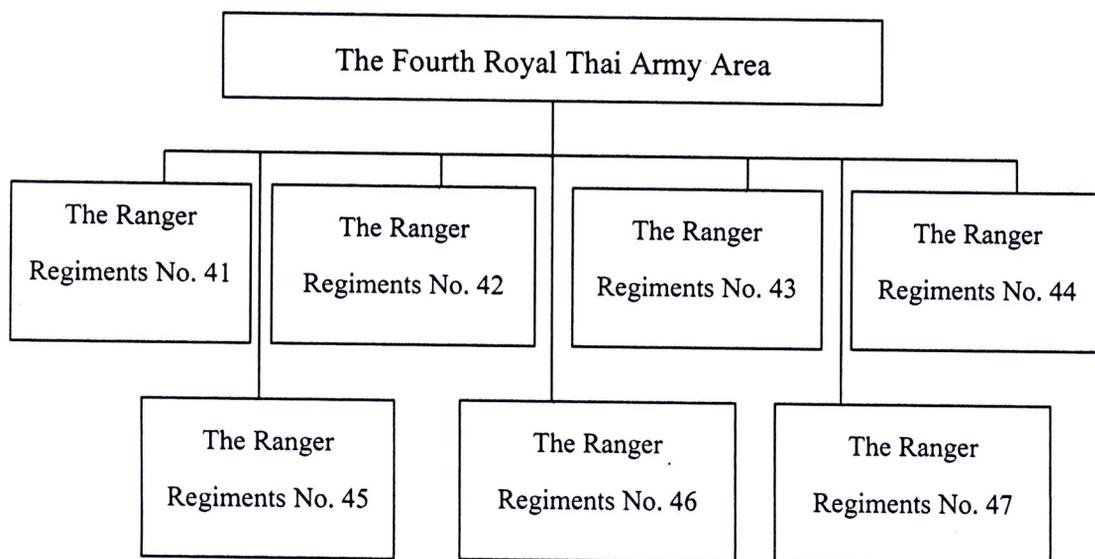
H<sub>o15</sub> There is no significant difference between organizational tenure and organizational citizenship behavior of the rangers in the Fourth Royal Thai Army Area.

H<sub>o16</sub> There is no significant difference between experience in fighting and organizational citizenship behavior of the rangers in the Fourth Royal Thai Army Area.

H<sub>o17</sub> Organizational commitment will not significantly predict organizational citizenship behavior.

## Rangers Organization

The rangers are a paramilitary force nicknamed “people’s military”, because most rangers are local people, who are familiar with the landscape and local traditions. These remarkable characteristics of rangers are good for psychological and intelligence operations and flexibility in their work. On January 18, 1978, The Royal Thai Army organized the ranger force entitled project 513 in order to operate against the communist terrorists. Later in 1984, The Royal Thai Army ordered the set up of 22 ranger regiments under the command of each Thai Army Area. The strategic concept of the ranger regiments includes intelligence, warning, back-up force for border protection and other non-war related military missions. Because the ranger units are small, they are appropriate to reconnoiter, for surveillance and defense of low threat areas. In 2006, the Royal Thai Army ordered the establishment of two additional ranger regiments, for the southern army ranger (The Fourth Royal Thai Army Area), increasing the number of regiments from number 41 to 45. This increase is for the purpose of solving the terrorist problems in the southernmost provinces. In 2007, two more ranger regiments were added, regiment numbers 46 and 47 (The Royal Thai Army, 2007, pp. 5-10). For organizational chart of the southern ranger regiment, see Figure 1.



**Figure 1** The organizational chart of the southern ranger regiment.

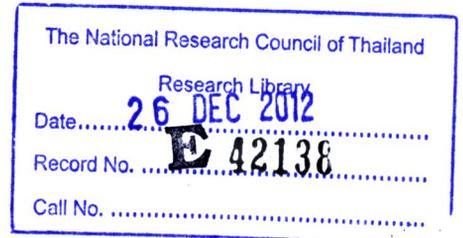
*Note.* From *Ranger Development Master Plan 2007-2011* (p. 10), by The Royal Thai Army, 2007, Bangkok: Author.

From 2007 until presently, the Royal Thai Army has 3 ranger regiments with 19 ranger force companies in the First Army Area (responsible for the central, eastern and western regions), 3 ranger regiments with 30 ranger force companies in the Second Army Area (responsible for the northeastern region), 4 ranger regiments with 36 ranger force companies in the Third Army Area (responsible for the northern region), and 7 ranger regiments with 112 ranger force companies in the Fourth Army Area (responsible for the southern region) (The Royal Thai Army, 2007, p. 10).

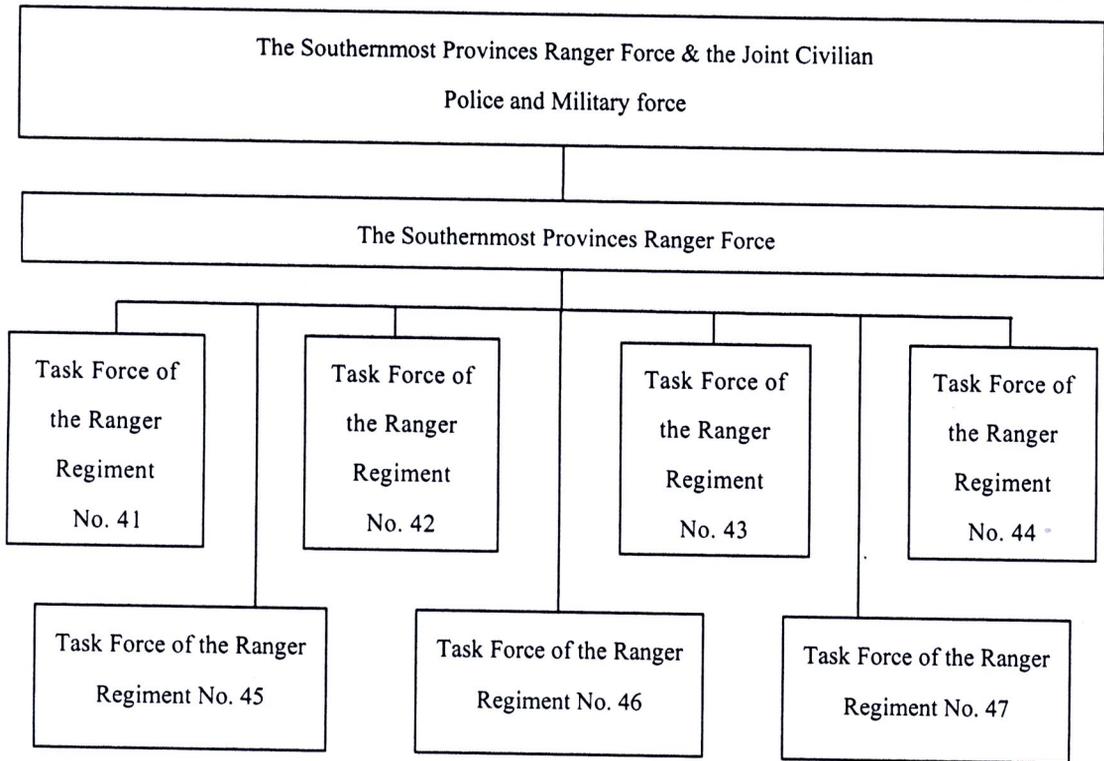
It is noticeable that the southern army area has more ranger forces than all the other army areas in Thailand combined. There are 7 ranger regiments with 16 ranger force companies for each regiment. The ranger staff includes uniformed military personnel and volunteer rangers. The uniformed military

personnel permanently occupy the important positions and are the practical leaders of the volunteer rangers who are the main force of the ranger regiment. The volunteer rangers are recruited from the local area, who are then required to pass a selection system and military training. There is a large number of ranger forces because of the unrest in the three southernmost provinces (Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat) and four districts of Songkla. The violent situation started last January 4, 2004 and is still on-going. In the past 6 years according to the military statistics, violent incidents have totaled 13,058, with 6,515 injuries and 3,804 deaths. The statistics of violent incidents decreased by more than 1% between 2008 and 2009, but the rate of injuries and deaths has increased by 1.7% since 2008 (Isra Institute, 2010). Therefore it is the critical mission of the rangers to control the situation and end the daily unrest in order to bring peace back to the southern provinces as soon as possible

To achieve the ranger regiments' peace mission, each regiment established a task force in the three southernmost provinces under the command of the Southernmost Provinces Ranger Force and the Joint Civilian, Police and Military force. (The organizational chart of the southernmost ranger task force, See Figure 2) The ranger regiments use two strategies- establish security and direct combat. Both strategies focus on five aggressive measures which include intelligence measure, people and resource protection measure, military measure, civil affairs measure and psychological measure. In addition, the ranger regiments aim to build continuing relationships with the local people and to change their attitude and sentiment for them to cooperate with the military. This is the important key to effectively overcome the influence of the



terrorists (The Royal Thai Army, 2007, pp. 14-16).



**Figure 2** The organizational chart of the southernmost ranger task force.

*Note.* From *Ranger Development Master Plan 2007-2011* (p. 14), by The Royal Thai Army, 2007, Bangkok: Author.

Given this significant, peace-focused mission within the ranger regiment, it is imperative that the senior leadership of the ranger regiments be assured that the assigned ranger workforce is committed to the organization and their accomplishment of its assigned missions. They need to know whether the rangers' activities assist in the maintenance and enhancement of the social and psychological context that supports their performance of the task. In order to make that assessment, those elements of organizational

commitment and organizational citizenship behaviors that apply to rangers of the ranger regiments must be identified.

## **Significance of Organizational Commitment and Organizational Citizenship Behavior**

Organizational commitment has been shown to be a powerful driving force in the success of a given organization. This is because organizational commitment denotes the willingness of workers to devote their energy and loyalty to an organization (Shirbagi, 2007). It is also described in the literature in terms of congruence of an individual's values and goals to that of the organization in which they are employed (Meyer & Allen, 1991). According to Porter, Steers, Mowday, and Boulian (1974) organizational commitment is the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization. The importance of organizational commitment in management research is supported by empirical findings that show high levels of organizational commitment associated with low turnover (Cooper-Hakim, & Viswesvaran, 2005), limited tardiness, low absenteeism, and in some situations enhanced job performance (Meyer & Allen, 1991; Mowday et al., 1979). Organizational commitment is also positively related to organizational citizenship behaviors (Ricketta, 2002). It is the one important factor which is believed to increase collective outcomes, reduce the need for organizations to devote scarce resources to simple maintenance functions, and free resources for productivity (Organ, 1997).

For the growing significance of organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior that are stated above, it would be extremely beneficial to organizations to study both of them and their relationship to each other. Several research studies on commitment, citizenship behavior and their relationship had been conducted in the past up to the present time. Until recently, however, that research area has received scant examination in relation to the military. Given the size and breadth of its samples, military research has enormous potential to address other substantive gaps in our knowledge of organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior. In order to broaden the existing body of knowledge in this field particularly within the Fourth Royal Thai Army Area, this research was conducted.

This study will evaluate those factors that influence the commitment and citizenship behavior of the rangers in the Fourth Army Area. The results from the research could help senior commanders understand more about their subordinates and gain a better understanding of the impact factors which contribute to organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior. Therefore, senior commanders across the organization can use this information to enhance those traits that will foster improvement in organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior, possibly leading to improved mission achievement. Other government agencies can apply the findings of this research within their own organizations in a similar way, suitable to their own mission, vision, and senior leadership's intent. Likewise, the findings of this research are equally applicable in business and

academia. Moreover, the results of this study could add to the general knowledge and understanding of organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior.

### **Definitions of Key Terms**

This part gives some terms of reference that are used throughout this study. The definition of terms provides a consistent interpretation and a frame of reference. The following definitions apply to the study.

Organizational Commitment (OC) is a psychological link between the employee and his or her organization that makes it less likely that employee will voluntarily leave the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991, p. 67).

Affective Commitment (AC) refers to the employee's emotional attachment to and identification with the organization. The employees remain with their organization because they want to do so (Meyer & Allen, 1991, p. 67).

Continuance Commitment (CC) means that the employee understands that the cost of leaving the organization would be greater than the cost of remaining with the organization. They remain with the organization because they need to do so (Meyer & Allen, 1991, p. 67).

Normative Commitment (NC) refers to an employee's sense of obligation to the organization. They remain in the organization because they ought to do so (Meyer & Allen, 1991, p. 67).

Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) is defined as individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the

formal reward system, and that in the aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organization (Organ, 1988, p. 4).

This research identifies three major behavioral factors or dimensions of OCB: Altruism, conscientiousness and civic virtue.

Altruism is defined as helping individual co-workers or employees within the organization on a task and courteously alerting others about changes that may affect their work (Organ, 1988, p. 8). It refers to taking time out of one's own schedule to give assistance to someone who needs it. In a ranger regiment, such behaviors may come in the form of helping a comrade and/or commanders in working towards the common organizational goals as well as preparing to risk their life to protect civilians and comrades, and having responsibility to help an injured enemy.

Conscientiousness is defined as behaviors that are indirectly helpful to other people in the organization, but not targeted directly toward a specific recipient. They are organizationally beneficial behaviors that are carried out well beyond minimum required levels (Organ, 1988, p. 4). Conscientious rangers can be expected to have allegiance to the king and country, follow the policies, procedures, and regulations of the ranger regiment, fulfill assigned duties and accept responsibilities for their actions, respond in a timely manner to requests by comrades and/or commanders and also attend to work above what is expected.

Civic virtue means participating in the governance (rules and policies) of how control is maintained within the organization (Organ, 1988, p. 12). Rangers may show civic virtue by supporting ranger regiment-related

functions or participating in and/or helping to organize extracurricular activities.

### **Assumptions and Limitations**

The researcher's assumptions for the present study arose from the review of related literature as well as from logical and rational considerations. These assumptions include: The use of a survey instrument as a research methodology being adequate and valid for collecting such information; the survey sample is representative of the normal distribution of the rangers either as uniformed military personnel or volunteers; the respondents answered truthfully and within the timeframe allotted for the study. The reliability of the results will be dependent upon the respondents' cooperation and honesty in completing the survey, dependent upon their sense of anonymity and perception of their personal participation in the survey. Lastly, the survey instrument accurately measures the intended values in support of their theoretical underpinnings.

The scope of this study is limited to the army rangers both volunteer rangers and uniformed military personnel, all males and work in the regiment task forces of the ranger regiment numbers 41-47 in the three southernmost provinces. Personal characteristics focus on age, marital status, level of education, type of ranger, year of service with current ranger regiment and combat experience. Organizational commitment was scoped into three forms, namely affective, continuance and normative (Meyer & Allen, 1991).

Organizational citizenship behaviors concern the selected three dimensions as follows, altruism, conscientiousness and civic virtue. Research has empirically identified five major behavioral factors or dimensions of OCB: Altruism, conscientiousness, civic virtue, courtesy, and sportsmanship (Organ, 1988, p. 4). This present paper focuses only on the first three because they are universal dimensions of OCB (Farh, Barley, & Lin, 1997). In addition, from the discussions with some of the senior ranger regiments' leadership it had been suggested that due to the unique mission of the military, sportsmanship and courtesy are already strictly incorporated in their military training. So altruism, conscientiousness and civic virtue were deemed as most relevant to the sample under study.

### **Organization of the Study**

This research is covered in five chapters. Chapter I provide an overview and a statement of the problem. This overview includes the rationale, research objectives, significance of the study, the research questions and definitions of key terms. Chapter II provides relevant literature which includes theories and the conceptual framework of the study. The research methodology of the study is presented in Chapter III. The findings and results of the study are discussed in Chapter IV, followed by conclusion and recommendations for further study based upon the findings in Chapter V.

## Summary

This chapter sets the stage for this study. It includes a summary of the rangers' mission in the Fourth Royal Thai Army Area that is to get victory over the guerillas and to bring back sustainable peace to the southernmost provinces of Thailand. According to these missions, the Royal Thai Army added more ranger forces into The Fourth Royal Thai Army area which is responsible for the southern region than other army areas in Thailand in order to accomplish their mission. The rangers know that they are the main targets of attack by the terrorists. Therefore the senior leadership should consider two important factors, namely organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior, with the intention of understanding the extent to which the men retain their commitment to the army and to their civic duties.

Prior research has shown that the effectiveness of an organization to meet its missions and goals is influenced by the commitment and citizenship behavior of its employees. Organizational commitment is a psychological measurement that characterizes the employee's relationship with the organization with its implications for the decision to continue membership in the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991). And organizational citizenship behavior is individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and that in the aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organization (Organ, 1988). Employee commitment and citizenship are deemed critical to the organization's performance and vital for the organization's sustainability. Therefore, this study will add to the body of knowledge by

observing the effects of selected personal characteristics of the rangers on their organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior. in addition, examining the relationship between organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior contributes to our further understanding of the rangers in the Fourth Royal Thai Army Area.