

Thesis Title : Administering School-Community Relations  
in Semiurban/Semirural Secondary Schools under  
the General Education Department in Chiang Mai  
Province

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#### -Abstract

This research represented efforts to examine, analyze, synthesize and evaluate one area of work of secondary schools under the General Education Department, Ministry of Education, i.e., school-community relations. This work area, when superficially seen, did not appear very important. Other areas, especially that involving academic affairs administration, usually were more predominant. However, the facts that school was situated within the community and that some teachers and students were members of that community made it very unlikely or almost impossible for school to go about doing its routine business, no matter how internal it might be, in

a social vacuum or in isolation from the surrounding community. In other words, what was argued in this research was that school would not be able to accomplish its other areas of work, especially its academic mission, without effective and successful school-community relations mission.

The unique aspect of schools studied was that they were all located in communities considered semiurban, semirural. These communities were in districts, immediately bordering Muang Chiang Mai district with physical, economic, social and cultural characteristics neither totally rural nor urban.

Data collected from principals of all 8 such schools and some 120 teachers as well as from participative observations, informal conversations revealed quite clearly that in the overall sense schools actually conducted their school-community relations work in a variety of ways and forms. Principals and teachers were even able to give concrete examples of activities and accomplishment. Nevertheless, upon closer scrutiny and via other data sources and channels things turned problematic. The number and quantity of work activities reported became ranging from small to almost nill. As far as quality of work was concerned, findings were quite clear that it was still very much far from the mark even judged against the Department of General Education own criteria. School principals, teachers and the community and its members in varying degrees were all who were to blame. Unique semiurban, semirural characteristics of communities obviously made school work in

this area much more difficult. Thus, improvement of this important area of school work clearly depended on both quantitative and qualitative changes of these 3 critical actors/parties.

Therefore, if the Department of General Education still sees the critical value of school-community relations work to its schools' major mission accomplishment, it must urgently join hands with other relevant parties in coming up with necessary measures rallying school principals and teachers to stand firmly for school-community relations work, encouraging them to search for practical, specific and appropriate strategies and methods for effectively carrying out the assignment and in order for both school and community to most benefit from the work as well as for school to make good use of this area of school work in the process of achieving its major mission, quality education for children of the community.