

## CHAPTER IV

### INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

In general, the results of this study support the main hypotheses i.e. the second-generation Chinese who used Chinese family names would have a higher degree of identification with Chinese than the second-generation Chinese who used Thai family names, and the second-generation Chinese who attended Chinese school would have a higher degree of identification with the Chinese than those subjects who never attended Chinese school.

The second-generation Chinese who used Chinese family names and those who used Thai family names were shown to be statistically different on both the Assimilation-Orientation Inventory and the D-scores of the social distance scale. The second-generation Chinese who used Chinese family names tended to have a higher degree of identification with the Chinese than those who used Thai family names. This was true for both the Assimilation-Orientation Inventory and the D-scores of the social -distance scale. In addition, as hypothesized, there were significant differences between the means of subjects who attended Chinese school and who never attended Chinese school. For example, the second-generation Chinese who attended Chinese school tended to have a higher degree of identification with the Chinese than those who never attended Chinese school.

It is interesting to note that the second-generation Chinese who used Chinese family names and those who attended Chinese school tended to identify with the Chinese more than those who used Thai

family names and who never attended Chinese school.

This brings to mind two questions: Does the use of the ethnic family name have a particular influence on the identification of the second-generation Chinese? Does mere attendance at a Chinese school play a significant part in the identification process of second-generation Chinese?

As pointed out in Chapter I, Thailand is often considered to be a "loosely structured social system." It is viewed as a society that lacks regularity, discipline, and regimentation. Social mobility is said to be great and can be achieved through wealth and education. The Chinese in Thailand enjoy this freedom under only one condition-- they must behave in a Thai way. Therefore, a Chinese who adopts Thai names and speaks Thai fluently is completely accepted into Thai society.

According to Lee<sup>46</sup>, most Chinese consider themselves Thai for the following reasons: (1) they were born and brought up in Thailand and (2) they have neither Chinese education nor knowledge about China. Therefore, they cannot be considered as Chinese in an ethnic, cultural, or sociological sense. In his discussion for the Chinese assimilation in Thailand, Lee raised a most important question. He said,

"The real question is whether a person considers himself in his heart to be a Chinese or not, (and) if that be the criterion, it is very difficult to define a Chinese,..... because it is impossible to investigate the inner heart of each individual."

In this regard, we might also consider Elegant's statement:<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Lee, op.cit.

<sup>47</sup> R.S.Elegant, The Dragon's Seed, Saint Martin Press: New York, 1959.

".....When the feeling that there is no hope in China, the Chinese as realistic as ever are likely to conclude that they must adjust themselves into the host country. The adjustment will certainly be painful though not as painful as accepting the reality which forces estrangement from China."

This might help to explain why those second-generation Chinese who used Thai family names had a higher degree of identification with the Thai than those who used Chinese family names. In the context of reference group theory discussed earlier, it can be inferred that those who use Thai family names aspire to belong to Thai society. Therefore, this type of Chinese is more willing to accept Thai cultural behavior.

What can we say with regard to the finding that second-generation Chinese who attended Chinese school had a higher degree of identification with the Chinese than those who never attended Chinese school? A possible explanation seems to be that the school reflects the total culture of which it is a part<sup>48</sup>. In short, it transmits the dominant values, mores, attitudes, and ideas of the society. The school is a special environment designed to promote behavior changes which are consistent with the total development of a person as a member of his society. Thus, the second-generation Chinese who attended Chinese school undoubtedly have more knowledge of Chinese values, customs, and ideas than those who never attended Chinese schools. Thus, it is reasonable that the former group should identify with the Chinese more than those in the latter group. This is supported by the writings of Lee who pointed out that most

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<sup>48</sup> Frederick J. McDonald, Educational Psychology, Wadsworth Publishing Company inc., San Francisco, 1960.

Chinese consider themselves Thai because they have neither Chinese education nor knowledge about China. Therefore, this may help us to understand why the second-generation subjects who never attended Chinese school have less identification with the Chinese than those who attended Chinese school.

Looking at the relationship of the R-Scale, F-Scale and C-Scale to the degree of identification, the hypothesis, in general, was not supported i.e. the scores in the R-Scale, F-Scale, and C-Scale will be highest in the high Chinese group, lower in the medium Chinese group and lowest in low Chinese group (See Tables III, VIII). However, further analysis did reveal significant differences between the high and low Chinese groups with regard to the F-Scale. For example, in Table IX, it will be seen that there is a significant difference ( $p < .05$ ) between the means of these two groups, with the high Chinese obtaining a high score on the F-Scale. Therefore, in this case, it appears that a high degree of authoritarianism is associated with a high degree of identification with the Chinese. In Table I, the difference between second-generation Chinese who used Chinese family names and those who used Thai family names was significant at the .01 level. Thus, authoritarianism again appears to be associated with a high degree of Chinese identification, indicated by the use of a Chinese rather than a Thai family name. Thus, it may be that many characteristics of the so-called "authoritarian personality" might conceivably have an effect upon one's identification.

Finally, when comparisons were made between the means for the two sexes with regard to the major variables i.e. use of Chinese

family name, use of Thai family name, attendance and non-attendance at Chinese school, no significant differences were found. Taking this into consideration, it may be that sex has little, if any influence on identification.