

TESTING THE "NEED FOR ORIENTATION" MODEL: A STUDY OF THAI STUDENTS

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The notion that the mass media set the public's agenda has been one of the most heuristic concepts of the past decade for those interested in the role of mass communication in society. The suggestion that the mass media are able to effect cognitive change and to influence the salience of events in the public mind directed scholarly attention toward the relationships between mass communication and audience awareness.

The agenda-setting concept has been supported by data collected mainly in various United States presidential and gubernatorial election studies which showed that the mass media set the personal agenda for message receivers under certain conditions. Recently scholars have called for investigations of the psychological processes involved in agenda-setting. They reason that if the mass media are to have an agenda-setting impact on the audience, the audience must first be exposed to the message.

Once considered a passive creature, the audience lately has been presented in a much more flattering and optimistic light. Some scholars believe that much of the media exposure behavior of the audience is purposive and planned behavior. These scholars have posited that the audience has a self-generated need to know.

Typically, the "need to know" hypothesis argues that when relevance of certain information to a voting decision is seen as high and there is high decisional uncertainty, there will be much information-seeking and information exposure. When information is perceived to be irrelevant and when the voter feels reasonably certain about the decision, there will be

little information seeking. To the extent that this logic has been tested, some support has been found (Chaffee, Stamm, Gurerrero and Tipton, 1969; Donohew and Palmgreen, 1971; Kline, 1973; Rubin, 1977).

In order to clarify the need to know concept, McCombs and Weaver (1973) have incorporated the psychological factors that other studies offered in their concept of "need for orientation." The two factors they use to define "need for orientation" are (1) relevance of information and (2) degree of uncertainty concerning the subject of the message. Their analyses show that "need for orientation" relates strongly and systematically to frequency of mass media use and also to the agenda-setting effect of mass media. However, the latter relationship is found to be not as strong as the former one.

On the ground of the forementioned reasoning, McCombs and Weaver (1973) present a basic model for their concept of need for orientation. The model, (hereafter, M-W model), is as follows:

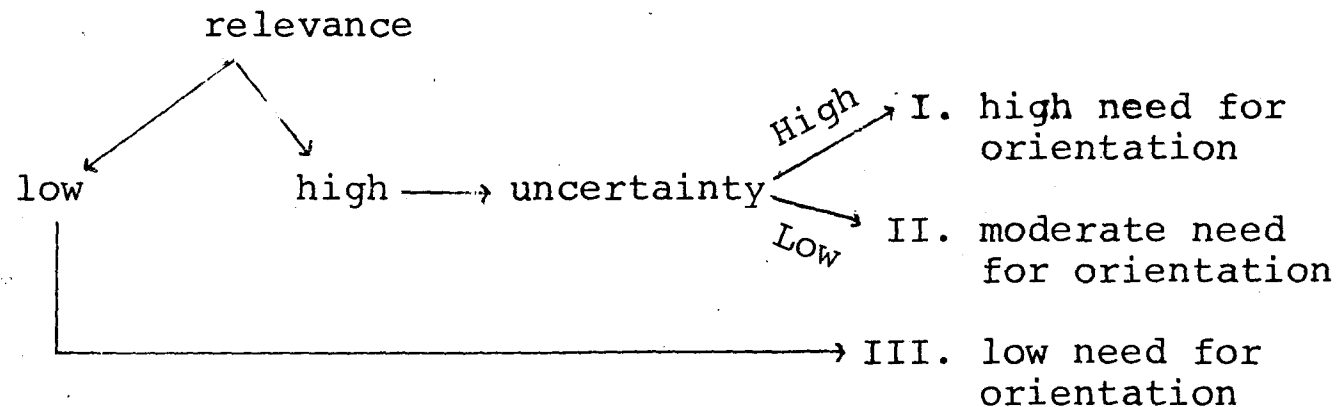


Figure 1

In this model it is asserted that low relevance results in a low need for orientation (Group III), that high relevance and low uncertainty result in a moderate need (Group II), and that high relevance and high uncertainty result in a high need (Group I). There is a positive relationship between the degree of need for orientation and frequency of mass media use.

Notice that in the M-W model people with low need for orientation in the model are those with low relevance, and the degree of uncertainty is disregarded. The argument offered by McCombs and Weaver (1973) for this is that: "relevance must naturally precede uncertainty in time, since it is logically unsound to speak of a person being uncertain about a subject of which he has no knowledge or which is totally irrelevant to him" (p. 4).

The reasoning that McCombs and Weaver (1973) gave is not logically sound within the context of their own study. The three measures of relevance used by them were: (1) levels of political interest; (2) the amount of discussion about politics in general; and (3) the amount of discussion about specific political issues. The three measures of uncertainty used were: (1) the consistency (or lack of it) in a person's voting record over the last four Presidential election; (2) the strength of his political party affiliation, and (3) the degree of his certainty about his vote for a presidential candidate. It is not uncommon in this country to find someone with a low degree of amount of discussion about politics in general or in specific to have a high degree of certainty about his choice of a presidential candidate. Where can we accommodate in the M-W model the ticket-splitter who is a heavy media user in his search for a basis for making a decision, has no strong party attachments, and has a low level of political discussion? Shouldn't we differentiate between people with low political interest and high party affiliation and those with low political interest and low party affiliation when we conduct any study on people's political

communication behavior?

This is in line with literature arguing that information utility and relevance are important variables to be considered when studying information-seeking (Westley and Barrow, 1959; Donohew and Palmgreen, 1971). The attempt to put relevance and uncertainty together in a theoretical context carries valuable theoretical meanings, since both relevance and uncertainty have been shown separately to be useful predictors of information-seeking in the mass media. Nevertheless, the theoretical value of the concept of need for orientation cannot be overemphasized until more empirical exploration is conducted.

The issue becomes even more complicated in other political environments. Studies of mass media behavior in different societies have been encouraged by communications scholars for many years because of the importance of cross-cultural underpinnings to theory construction, but such studies of societies outside of the United States are few and undeveloped, concentrating on media consumption and demographics. These studies have ignored the notion of the active audience. If the need for orientation is to be accepted as one of the explanations for variations in media exposure behavior, it should be tested in other societies. Studies in other societies should validate some interrelationships among variables frequently examined in agenda-setting research as well as raise new questions about these interrelationships. The adaptability of the McCombs-Weaver logic in other "less democratic societies" deserves close examination. In societies in which politics is controlled by some elite groups and the public is uncertain about how political policy is developed, it is easy to locate people with a low degree of political participation (low relevance) and a high degree of firmness of choice of political candidates (low uncertainty).

An example of such a political situation might be Thailand, where the data for this study were collected. According to Wongmonta (1978):

Since the 1932 revolution that overthrew the absolute monarchy, Thailand has been ruled by oligarchy, with the preponderant power centered in the bureaucracy and the military. This domination of politics by a few persons resulted from the political passivity of Thai citizens ... the mass remained indifferent toward the government, and was little affected by the change in leadership. (p. 14)

Philips (1958) and Pye (1967) both observed that in Thailand political parties never represented substantial social groups and that in order for a politician to be elected he must rely almost exclusively on his own efforts, even if he belongs to a political party. Politics is irrelevant to the general public when the preponderant power centers in the elite. The public tends to vote from a cultural base rather than a political base, i.e., the public votes for those perceived as good people, people of high status, or commanders of the country. Money, family, background, education, and occupation are criteria for political appeal as well as for class status.

In his dissertation, Wongmonta (1978) speculated on the relationship between relevance and uncertainty, saying:

In the past, it has always been a common belief that the political arena of Thailand accommodated a lot of 'informed spectators' and 'uninformed participants'; that is, those who voted did not know much about the government, and those who knew enough about the government tended not to participate due to their cynical attitudes and apathy developed through

being informed about politics. (p. 9)

Such considerations suggest a modified relevance-uncertainty (R-U model) model.

		relevance	
		high	low
uncertainty	high	A1B1	A1B2
	low	A2B1	A2B2

Figure 2

The proposed R-U model presented in Figure 2 does not have the intercultural drawback of the M-W model, although it remains consistent with McCombs and Weaver's logical framework. In the proposed R-U model, people with high relevance and high uncertainty (A1B1) are expected to have a high need for orientation, which in turn should lead to high media exposure. High relevance and low uncertainty (A2B1) should produce a moderate need for orientation; low relevance and high uncertainty (A1B2) should result in a low need for orientation while low relevance and low uncertainty (A2B2) should result in no need or the lowest need for orientation and media exposure. In order to test the validity of the proposed R-U model, a society outside the United States has been selected.

Another motive for this study is to determine whether the relationship

between relevance and uncertainty is additive or multiplicative. While most previous work appears to proceed on the assumption that the relationship is additive (Weaver, 1977), it is just as plausible to assume that it is interactive.

Finally, this study also will attempt to explore whether the need for orientation is undifferentiated or whether it is related to specific channels. As one wants to know more, does one concentrate one's attention in certain channels of information or does one simply increase, in general, one's information exposure? Research done in the United States indicating a great similarity of political information across channels (Graber, 1976) would support the latter position, but other factors, such as ease of access to one channel over others, would argue for the former position.

Weaver (1977) seemingly supports the first position. He treated the three media--newspapers, television, and news magazines--as one dependent variable, and his data showed that there were positive associations between levels of need for orientation and frequencies of mass media use. However, this may not hold true in every place. For example, in Thailand a television set is considered a luxury by many. In addition, television stations are controlled by the government, it is suspected that people have less faith in television news than do people in the United States. On the other hand, newspapers and news magazines are privately owned. Therefore, there is good reason to suspect that when someone in Thailand wants to know more, he will be inclined to turn toward the more readily available and less "biased" newspapers and magazines. International communication students should be particularly interested in this question of whether the need for orientation is undifferentiated or whether it is related to specific channels. The answer is of considerable theoretical and methodological importance.

HYPOTHESES

To test the possible relationships between the need for orientation and media exposure to political information, two groups of hypotheses were formulated. The first group is based on the M-W model (see Figure 1) proposed by McCombs and Weaver. The other group was based on the R-U model proposed by this author.

H1a. There will be different levels of newspaper exposure for political information among people with different degrees of need for orientation. People with high need for orientation will use newspapers for political information more frequently than those with moderate or low need for orientation. People with moderate need for orientation will use newspapers more frequently than those with low need for orientation.

H1b. There will be different levels of magazine exposure for political information among people with different degrees of need for orientation. People with high need for orientation will use magazines for political information more frequently than those with moderate or low need for orientation. People with moderate need for orientation will use magazines more frequently than those with low need for orientation.

H1c. There will be different levels of radio use for political news among people with different degrees of need for orientation. People with high need will use radio for political news more frequently than those with moderate or low need for orientation. People with moderate need will use radio more frequently than those with low need for political information.

H1d. There will be different levels of television exposure for political information among people with different degrees of need for orientation. People with high need will use television news more frequently than those with

moderate or low need for orientation. People with moderate need will use television for political news more frequently than those with low need for orientation.

Unlike the M-W model which implies that relevance must precede uncertainty and people with low need for orientation are those with low relevance and the degree of uncertainty is disregarded, the proposed R-U model argues that relevance does not naturally precede uncertainty in defining the degree of need for orientation. It is proposed that the need for orientation can be grouped into four levels in terms of both the degree of relevance and the level of uncertainty: high, moderate, low and no need. To test the possible relationship between the need for orientation and frequencies of media exposure, it is hypothesized:

H2a. There will be different levels of newspaper exposure for political information among people with different degrees of need for orientation. People with high need will use newspapers for political information more frequently than those with moderate, low or no need for orientation. People with moderate need will use newspapers for political information more frequently than those with low or no need for orientation. People with low need will use newspaper more frequently than those with no need for orientation.

H2b. There will be different levels of magazine use for political information among people with different levels of need for orientation. People with high need will use magazines more frequently than those with moderate, low or no need for orientation. People with moderate need will use magazines more frequently than those with low or no need for orientation. People with low need will use magazines for political information more frequently than those with no need for orientation.

H2c. There will be different levels of radio use for political information among people with different degrees of need for orientation. People with high need will use radio for political information more frequently than those with moderate, low or no need for orientation. People with moderate need will use radio more frequently than those with low or no need for orientation. People with low need will use radio for political information more frequently than those with no need for orientation.

H2d. There will be different levels of television exposure for political information among people with different degrees of need for orientation. People with high need will use television more frequently than those with moderate, low or no need for orientation. People with moderate need will expose themselves more frequently to television for political information than those with low or no need for orientation. People with low need will use television for political information more frequently than those with no need for orientation.

METHOD

The data reported here were collected in 1977 at two Thai universities--Thammasat University in Bangkok and Chiangmai University in Chiangmai. Thammasat was chosen because it is reputed to have the most politically radical students in the country. Chiangmai University is the largest university that is located outside of Bangkok. Chiangmai has a student body that is more or less equal in size to that of Thammasat University and it is also known as the most active university outside of Bangkok (Wongmonta, 1978).

A sample of 640 students was drawn by the equal interval method using a random starting point on lists of all junior and senior class students. Sample size yielded 95 percent confidence limits with 4 percent tolerated

error.

Self-administered questionnaires instead of face-to-face interviews were used because consideration had to be given to the sensitivity students probably felt about the political situation in Thailand at the time of the study. Face-to-face interviews likely would have elicited less than candid responses.

Questionnaires were administered by instructors in whose classes the selected students were enrolled. This procedure was chosen because it was expected to yield a higher return rate. The questionnaires were distributed at approximately the same time at the universities. Of 640 questionnaires distributed among the subjects, 491 (76.7 percent) were returned. Of the 491, 472 were usable. The sample profile is shown in Table 1.

Two measures were used to define an individual's level of need for orientation: a measure of relevance and a measure of uncertainty. Relevance was constructed from responses to five questions dealing with: (1) the degree to which the respondent believed it was important for him to be informed about government decisions and operations; (2) the degree to which the respondent believed it was important for him to be informed about public affairs; (3) the extent to which the respondent cared about the form of government or kind of political ideology Thailand adopts; (4) whether the respondent cared about being governed by a military or civilian government; and (5) how important it was for the respondent to be informed about international affairs. Similar questions were used in Wongmonta's 1978 study of relevance in Thailand.¹

In the same study four questions were used to measure the degree of uncertainty held by the respondents. They asked: (1) how sure the respondent was that the present government would last until the next election; (2) how certain the subject was of the success of the sixteen-year-old democratic

experiment in Thailand; (3) how certain the subject was that the military group in power would voluntarily leave the political scene in Thailand; and (4) how certain the subject was that, given the success of the October 6, 1976 coup, a military group would always be a major force in the government of Thailand. However, when factor analyzed two factors were produced, with questions 1 and 2 loading highly on the first factor and negligibly on the second factor. Questions 3 and 4 loaded highly on the second factor and negligibly on the first factor.² Whereas Wongmonta (1978) simply blended the four scales into a single index, it was decided to use two indexes of uncertainty in the present study. One index of uncertainty was constructed from questions 1 and 2, and the other one from questions 3 and 4.

In this study, the value used to split degree of relevance and level of uncertainty are the median score of each indexes. That is, in order to test the first group of hypotheses, people with score of Relevance (the sum total of scores from five questions dealing with relevance) greater or equal to the median score of Relevance were defined as people of high degree of relevance. Respondents with Relevance score smaller than the median score of Relevance were grouped as people of low degree of relevance. The same method was used in grouping people of high or low degree of uncertainty.

Questions employed to measure the respondent's levels of exposure to political information were: (1) how often do you watch television evening news; (2) how often do you listen to radio news; (3) how many editorials in the newspapers do you read per day; (4) how many news about public affairs in the newspaper do you read; (5) how many news about government decisions and operations in the newspaper do you read; (6) how much do you read news about government decisions and operations in magazines; and (7) how much do you read news about public affairs in magazines.³

In the present study, in order to test the possible relationships between the need for orientation and media exposure to political information, two groups of hypotheses were formulated. The first group is based on the M-W model which contains three levels of need for orientation: high, moderate, and low based on relevance and uncertainty (see Figure 1). One-way analysis of variance was used to test the first group of hypotheses.

The second group of hypotheses is based on the proposed R-U model which is an elaboration of the M-W model. The elaboration adds an additional cell (see Figure 2), and changes the analysis from one of comparing three variables (three levels of need for orientation) into four variables (which are the Various combinations of the two original independent conditions--relevance and uncertainty). Two-way analysis of variance was used in order to test the simultaneous effects of relevance and uncertainty. The Scheffe procedure was used to test all possible comparisons between groups.

FINDINGS

Hypothesis 1a predicted that different levels of need for orientation as defined by McCombs and Weaver would be positively related with levels of newspaper exposure to political information. There is a positive relationship between the degrees of need and levels of exposure to political information in newspapers. All six possible tests resulted in F values significant at the .001 level. People with low need tend to use newspapers for political information less frequently than those with high and moderate need, with differences significant at the .05 level. However, people with high need do not use the newspaper for political information differently than those with moderate need under the M-W model definition. These figures are given in Table 2.

Hypothesis 1b predicted that different levels of need for orientation

under the M-W definition would be positively related with levels of exposure to political information in magazines. This is supported and all four possible tests resulted in F values significant at the .001 level. There is a positive relationship between the degrees of need and levels of exposure to political information in magazines. People with low need use magazines for political information less frequently than those with high and moderate need, with differences significant at the .05 level. However, people with high need do not use magazines for political information differently than those with moderate need. These figures are given in Table 2.

Hypotheses 1c and 1d are rejected. There are no significant differences among people with different levels of need and their exposure behavior to television and radio news. See Table 2.

Hypotheses 2a and 2b are retained on that there are positive relationships between levels of need under the R-U definition and levels of exposure to political information in newspapers and magazines. However, people with high need do not use newspapers and magazines for political information differently from those with moderate need. Only people with no need for orientation tend to use newspapers and magazines for political information less frequently than those with high and moderate need, with differences significant at the .05 level. Seven of the ten possible tests show that people with high and moderate need use newspapers and magazines for political news more frequently than those with low need and the differences are significant at the .05 level. The other three tests show that people with high and moderate need expose themselves more frequently to newspapers and magazines for political information than those with low need under the R-U definition. Nevertheless, the differences are not significant at the .05 level for those with high need and those with low need. People with moderate need read editorials in newspapers and news on government decisions and operations in

magazines more frequently than those with low need, and the differences are significant statistically at the .05 level. These figures are given in Table 3.

Hypotheses 2c and 2d predicted levels of need in terms of R-U model definition are positively correlated with levels of exposure to television and radio news. They are rejected by the data. There is no relationship between levels of need and amount of television and radio news consumption of the respondents. These figures are given in Table 3.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Political communication behavior of 472 Thai university students was examined to test the hypotheses postulating that there are relationships between degrees of need for orientation and exposure to mass media political information. The need for orientation is defined in terms of both the M-W model proposed by McCombs and Weaver and the R-U model proposed in this study.

Self-administered questionnaires were distributed among 640 students randomly selected from lists of junior and senior students at Thammasat University in Bangkok and Chiangmai University in Chiangmai, Thailand. The final sample size for analysis was 472.

Need for orientation, as measured by the degrees of how relevant the students viewed the political development in Thailand to be to their lives and, of how certain the students were of the course of political development in Thailand, were found to be positively related to exposure to political information in newspapers and in magazines. People with low need for orientation in terms of the definition of the M-W model use the print media for political information less frequently than those with high and moderate need for orienta-

tion. The differences among these people are statistically significant at the 0.5 level. However, people with need do not use newspapers or magazines for political information differently from those with moderate need for orientation defined by the M-W mode. People with different levels of need do not use radio television news differently from each other, no matter whether the need is defined in terms of the M-W model or of the proposed R-U mode.

When need for orientation was defined in terms of the R-U model, it was found that there is a relationship between levels of need and degrees of exposure to political information in print media. People with high or moderate need use print political messages more frequently than those with no need. In seven of the 10 possible tests, people with high or moderate need use print political messages more frequently than those with low need. Two of the remaining tests show that there are statistically significant differences between people with moderate and low need and their exposure frequencies to the selected print media. However, people with high need do not use the print messages differently from those with moderate need. People with low need tend to use the selected print messages more frequently than those with no need, nevertheless, these differences do not bear any statistical meaning.

It is argued that the proposed R-U model (Figure 2) may be a better one than the M-W model in explaining the relationship between levels of need for orientation and amount of mass media exposure for political information. The R-U model suggests that people with low relevance and high uncertainty existed in societies where politics has been dominated by a small group of elites. It is also expected that people with low need (low relevance and high uncertainty) will use mass media more frequently than those with no need (low relevance and low uncertainty). The current study fails to shed light statistically on this aspect. However, unlike the M-W model, which implies that the low relevance-high uncertainty cell in the R-U model is an empty one, this study found that the cell is not empty. Actually, more than 55

percent of those originally grouped as people of low need under the M-W model definition, i.e., with low level of relevance and disregard the level of uncertainty, were found to have high uncertainty. In seven out of the ten possible tests, data of the current study indicate that people with low need use the selected print media messages more frequently than those with no need. Unfortunately, these differences do not bear any statistical meanings. Nevertheless, based on the analyses of this study, the adaptability of the M-W model proposed by McCombs and Weaver should receive further examination. Until further studies are conducted, no theoretical assertion on the need for orientation--defined by the relevance and uncertainty--proposed by McCombs and Weaver as the major psychological variable in mass media agenda-setting can stand firmly. The present study provides evidence for this speculation.

One of the guiding motives behind this study was to determine whether the relationship between relevance and uncertainty is additive or multiplicative. Analyses in this study show that the degree of relevance was what made a difference in the amount of exposure to political information among the selected Thai university students. How certain they were of the political development in Thailand did not make that much of a difference by itself. But considered together with levels of relevance as determinants of need for orientation, the data collected support all the possible relationships between levels of need and frequencies of selected print messages exposure. It could have been that in an unstable political situation, such as the one in Thailand, even those who were certain than others could not afford to ignore any print political information. There was a coup in which the civilian authorities were ousted by the military a few months before the data of this study were collected. It could be how relevant the students perceived the political development in Thailand to be to their lives that determined how much they would seek from reportage on public affairs, government operations and government decisions in newspapers or magazines. More

more representative samples of "real people" in other societies are urgently needed for clarification of the need for orientation concept.

This study also attempts to determine whether the need for orientation is undifferentiated or whether it is related to specific channels. Data collected indicate that in Thailand, as students want to know more, they tend to concentrate their attention on political information reported by newspapers and magazines. People with different levels of need do not use television or radio news differently from each other no matter which need for orientation models was used.

Further analyses of the collected data also show that people with different degrees of need, in terms of the M-W model definition or of the R-U model, do not use various mass media differently from each other.⁴ People with higher degrees of need do not read more copies of newspapers or magazines or listen to more radio programs than those with lower degrees of need for orientation. Neither do people with lower need watch less television than those with higher need. The differences in quantities of mass media exposure in general for people with various levels of need for orientation do not have any statistical meanings. These figures are given in Tables 4 and 5.

There are several possible explanations for this. One is that television was considered a luxury by many Thai people, and television sets were not available in dormitories where most of the students reside. Radio and television were used mainly for entertainment purposes. Second, sampled students can be considered as people who are more aware of problems and can define problems in more sophisticated ways. In other cross-cultural study, people of this kind have been found to consider print media the most useful sources for political information (Edelstein, 1975). It is plausible that when other samples are selected, electronic media might be more important sources of political information than print media for those who want to know more.

From a cross-cultural perspective, this study has validated some of the posited relationships between the need for orientation and communication behavior as well as raising serious questions about the validity of models of this concept proposed by American scholars.

While many postulated relationships between the need for orientation under different definitions and amount of specific message use were found to be significant, further investigation is needed in societies with different degrees of political stability and public participation in politics. The dimensions of need for orientation in some less developed societies are different than those found in western societies. Studies of these questions holds considerable theoretical and methodological importance for students of communication, especially students of international communication.

FOOTNOTES

1. Five questions designed to measure relevance were: (1) Would you say that you _____ what form of government or what kind of political ideology Thailand adopts? (2) Would you say that you _____ who would be in power in Thailand? (3) Would you say that generally it is _____ for you to be informed about public affairs? (4) Would you say that generally it is _____ for you to be informed about government decisions and operations? and (5) Would you say that it is _____ for you to be informed about international affairs? The five possible answers given for questions 1 and 2 were: (1) don't care at all, (2) don't care, (3) are indifferent to, (4) care, and (5) care very much. Answers for questions 3, 4, and 5 were: (1) not important at all, (2) not important, (3) somewhat important, (4) important, and (5) very important. All scores of five questions on relevance loaded highly in a single dimension, factor loadings were .60, .70, .66, .73, and .62 respectively

2. Four questions designed to measure uncertainty were: (1) How certain

are you that the present government will be in power until we can have another election? (2) How certain are you of a success or failure (as you now see it) of the sixteen years' experiment of democracy in Thailand? (3) How certain are you that the military group will remain in power until it voluntarily leaves the political scene of Thailand? and (4) After the coup in October, how certain are you that a military group will always be a persistently major force of the government in Thailand? Answers provided were: (1) definitely certain, (2) certain, (3) don't know, (4) not certain, and (5) definitely not certain. When factor analyzed, using a principal components method with varimax rotation, two factors were given with questions 1 and 2 loaded highly on the first factor (.77 and .80 respectively) and negligibly on the second factor (.10 and -.001 respectively). Questions 3 and 4 loaded highly on the second factor (.84 and .85 respectively) and negligibly on the first factor (.09 and .02 respectively).

3. The possible answers for questions 1 and 2 were: (1) never, (2) rarely, (3) sometimes, (4) 3 or 4 times a week, and (5) every day. Answers given in the questionnaire for question 3 on how many editorials in the newspapers did the respondent read were: (1) none, (2) one to four, (3) five to nine, (4) ten to fourteen, and (5) fifteen or more. Answers given for questions 4, 5, 6, and 7 were: (1) not at all, (2) very little, (3) some, (4) a great deal, and (5) quite a lot.

4. Four questions were employed to measure the extent to which specific media were used regularly for general purposes by the respondents. These questions dealt with (1) how many newspapers the subject read; (2) how many magazines the subject read; (3) how many radio programs the subject regularly listened to; and (4) how many television programs the subject regularly watched. The subject was asked to put the specific names down for their answers.

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The maximum number was 4 and the minimum was 0. The zero-order intercorrelations among all the mass media variables are in appendix 1.

TABLE 1
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS' DEMOGRAPHICS

	<u>Thamnasat University</u>			<u>Chiangmai University</u>			Total
	Male	Female	Subtotal	Male	Female	Subtotal	
Junior	74 (56.9%)	67 (47.2%)	141 (51.8%)	55 (60.4%)	48 (44.0%)	103 (57.5%)	244 (51.7%)
Senior	56 (43.1%)	75 (52.8%)	131 (48.2%)	36 (39.6%)	61 (56.0%)	97 (48.5%)	228 (48.3%)
Total	130 (100.0%)	142 (100.0%)	272 (100.0%)	91 (100.0%)	109 (100.0%)	200 (100.0%)	472 (100.0%)

TABLE 2

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NEED FOR ORIENTATION OF THE M-W MODEL AND
FREQUENCIES OF MASS MEDIA EXPOSURE TO POLITICAL NEWS

		editorials newspaper	pub. affairs Newspapers	govt. decision newspapers	pub. affairs magazine	govt. decisions magazine	TV	RADIO
Need for Orientation One ^a	HIGH (n=208)	2.28*	3.65*	3.81*	3.00*	2.91*	3.27	3.89
	MODERATE (n=106)	2.21*	3.64*	3.87*	3.06*	3.08*	3.37	4.00
	LOW (n=158)	1.98	3.18	3.28	2.62	2.50	3.13	3.82
Need for Orientation Two ^b	HIGH (n=169)	2.24*	3.65*	3.77*	3.02*	2.96*	3.27	4.07
	MODERATE (n=145)	2.27*	3.65*	3.90*	3.02*	2.98	3.35	3.76
	LOW (n=158)	1.98	3.18	3.28	2.62	2.50	3.14	3.82

- a. Questions designed to measure uncertainty were: (1) how certain are you that the present government will be in power until Thai have another election; and (2) how certain are you of a success or failure of the sixteen years' democratic experiment in Thailand.
- b. Questions designed to measure uncertainty were: (1) how certain are you that the military group will be in power until it voluntarily leaves political scene of Thailand; and (2) how certain are you that after the coup on October 6, 1976 that a military group will always be a persistently major power of the government of Thailand.
- c. People with low need use the selected medium message differently from those with high or moderate need and the differences between two groups are significant at the .05 level.

TABLE 3
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NEED FOR ORIENTATION OF THE R-U MODEL AND
FREQUENCIES OF MASS MEDIA EXPOSURE TO POLITICAL NEWS

		editorials newspaper	pub. affairs newspaper	govt. decision newspaper	pub. affairs magazine	govt. decision magazine	TV NEWS	REAIO
Need for Orientation one ^a	HIGH (n=208)	2.28	3.65	3.81	3.00	2.91	3.27	3.89
	MODERATE (n=106)	2.21	3.64	3.87	3.06	3.08	3.37	4.00
	LOW (n=89)	2.01	3.20#	3.32#	2.63@	2.49#	3.17	3.78
	NO (n=69)	1.94*	3.16*	3.25*	2.61*	2.51*	3.09	3.85
Need for Orientation Two ^b	HIGH (n=169)	2.24	3.65	3.77	3.02	2.98	3.27	4.07
	MODERATE (n=145)	2.27	3.65	3.90	3.02	2.96	3.35	3.76
	LOW (n=96)	2.02@	3.22#	3.25#	2.60#	2.51#	3.10	3.82
	NO (n=62)	1.92*	3.13*	3.32*	2.66*	2.48*	3.17	3.81

a. Questions designed to measure uncertainty were: (1) how certain are you that the present government will be in power until Thai have another election; and (2) how certain are you of a success or failure of the sixteen years' democratic experiment in Thailand.

b. Questions designed to measure uncertainty were: (1) how certain are you that the military group will be in power until it voluntarily leaves political scene of Thailand; and (2) how certain are you that after the coup on October 6, 1976 that a military group will always be a persistently major force of the government of Thailand.

*. People with no need for orientation use the selected message differently from those with high and moderate need and the differences are significant at the .05 level.

#. People with low need for orientation use the selected message differently from those with high or moderate need and the differences are significant at the .05 level.

@. People with moderate need for orientation use the selected message differently from those with low need and the differences are significant at the .05 level.

TABLE 4

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NEED FOR ORIENTATION OF THE M-W DEFINITION
AND NUMBERS OF EXPOSURE TO MASS MEDIA GENERAL PURPOSES

		newspaper	magazine	radio	television
Need for Orientation One ^a	HIGH	3.09	2.07	1.67	1.77
	MODERATE	3.08	2.36	1.94	1.96
	LOW	2.87	1.94	1.67	1.72
Need for Orientation Two ^b	HIGH	3.04	2.08	1.69	1.84
	MODERATE	3.13	2.26	1.87	1.83
	LOW	2.87	1.94	1.67	1.72

- a. Questions designed to measure uncertainty were: (1) how certain are you that the present government will be in power until Thai have another election; and (2) how certain are you of a success or failure of the sixteen years' democratic experiment in Thailand.
- b. Questions designed to measure uncertainty were: (1) how certain are you that the military group will be in power until it voluntarily leaves political scene of Thailand; and (2) how certain are you that after the coup on October 6, 1976 that a military group will always be a persistently major power of the government of Thailand.

TABLE 5

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NEED FOR ORIENTATION OF THE R-U DEFINITION
AND NUMBERS OF EXPOSURE TO MASS MEDIA FOR GENERAL PURPOSES

		newspaper	magazine	radio	television
Need for Orientation One ^a	HIGH	3.09	2.07	1.67	1.77
	MODERATE	3.08	2.36	1.94	1.96
	LOW	2.82	2.00	1.76	1.74
	NO	2.93	1.89	1.55	1.68
Need for Orientation Two ^b	HIGH	3.04	2.08	1.69	1.84
	MODERATE	3.13	2.26	1.86	1.83
	LOW	2.81	1.89	1.70	1.72
	NO	2.95	2.03	1.61	1.71

- a. Questions designed to measure uncertainty were: (1) how certain are you that the present government will be in power until Thai have another election; and (2) how certain are you of a success or failure of the sixteen years' democratic experiment in Thailand.
- b. Questions designed to measure uncertainty were: (1) how certain are you that the military group will be in power until it voluntarily leaves political scene of Thailand; and (2) how certain are you that after the coup on October 6, 1976 that a military group will always be a persistently major power of the government of Thailand.

TABLE 6
ZERO-ORDER CORRELATIONS AMONG THE MASS MEDIA VARIABLES

Media Variable	X1	X2	X3	X4	X5	X6	X7	X8	X9	X10	X11
Number of newspapers read (X1)	--	.30 ^c	.12 ^b	.27 ^c	.21 ^c	.03	.14 ^c	.15 ^c	.13 ^b	.03	.08 ^a
Number of magazines read (X2)		--	.27 ^c	.30 ^c	.07	.10 ^a	.07	.33 ^c	.22 ^c	.11 ^b	.04
Number of television programs watched (X3)			--	.26 ^c	.00	.05	.10 ^a	.11 ^b	.13 ^b	.52 ^c	.04
Number of radio programs heard (X4)				--	.90 ^a	.05	.09 ^a	.09 ^a	.09 ^a	.12 ^b	.36 ^c
Level of exposure to newspaper editorials (X5)					--	.29 ^c	.37 ^c	.26 ^c	.31 ^c	.07	.03
Level of exposure to news about public affairs in newspapers (X6)						--	.37 ^c	.42 ^c	.24 ^c	.05	.05
Level of exposure to news about government decisions in newspapers (X7)							--	.23 ^c	.50 ^c	.21 ^c	.20 ^c
Level of exposure to news about public affairs in magazines (X8)								--	.61 ^c	.10 ^a	.07
Level of exposure to news about government decisions in magazines (X9)									--	.13 ^b	.12 ^b
Level of exposure to television news (X10)										--	.11 ^b
Level of exposure to radio news (X11)											--

^a_p<.05

^b_p<.01