

COMPLETION REPORT

“On the Abolition of Capital Punishment: A Comparative Study of the Perspectives and Attitudes of Thai and Japanese University Students”

The purpose of this research is to study and compare the perspectives and attitudes of Thai and Japanese university students towards Capital Punishment and its abolition. The reason is that Thailand and Japan are two Asian countries that still practise Capital Punishment while the worldwide trend is moving towards its abolition, and that university students represent the educated youth and therefore the future of both countries.

The research finds that the majority of both Thai and Japanese student respondents share a firm approval of the concept of Capital Punishment and its practice in their own countries, with roughly similar justifications, although the approving Thai group is higher in percentage. In support of Capital Punishment, the reason that ranks first is that those who deliberately commit violent crimes deserve violent punishment, and, secondly, that Capital Punishment can deter serious offences. Ranked according to significance for the Thai student group, Capital Punishment reflects the intimidation of law, retribution for serious offences and an effective crime deterrent. For Japanese student respondents, Capital Punishment reflects retribution for serious offences, a mechanism of the legal system and social safety.

Although the majority of both groups support the retention of Capital Punishment, the minority who think that it should be abolished amount to approximately one-third of the majority who think that it should be maintained. Concurrently, both groups emphasise the value of human life, the significance of both the individual and society, and affirm social responsibility over the actions and development of individuals.

With reference to the prospects for the abolition of Capital Punishment in their own countries, the majority of both groups similarly consider that the chief reasons for its abolition could be the possibility of punishing the innocent, the value of life and the idea that capital punishment is a “band-aid” solution. Looking ahead, whereas most Thai student respondents, albeit not high in percentage, think that it is possible that their society will abolish capital punishment in the future, most Japanese student respondents do not think so. Regarding Thai student respondents, however, the minority of them who do not think that their society will abolish capital punishment in the future amount to one-third of the total. With regard to Japanese student respondents, although the majority of them are quite confident that their society will not change their position on this issue, the minority number who thinks that their society will abolish capital punishment in the future amounts to one-fourth of the total.

The majority of both groups hardly envisage much positive change in their societies as an effect of their opinions regarding Capital Punishment, although the majority of the Thai group have slightly more positive prospects. This may imply that both groups do not regard the idea and the

practice of capital punishment as very important. At the same time, a minority of them, which is not too low in percentage, regard this issue as important, because they envisage certain positive social changes in response to their opinion about Capital Punishment.

In conclusion, most Thai and Japanese student respondents are still in favour of capital punishment and do not accept the concept of its abolition yet. The prospect of the abolition of capital punishment in the two countries is still not too clear at present, although there is a small minority in both Thai and Japanese respondent groups who show positive views about it.

In each country, the data were collected from science and humanities students, in an approximate ratio of 50:50 from five universities in the capital and its vicinity. Then the data were processed and examined with all-through comparison by means of statistical as well as content analysis.

The research comprises 236 pages, including 5 chapters and Appendices.

Publication of the Results of Research Project:

Verbal Presentation (Date, Venue, Name of Conference, Title of Presentation, Presenter, etc.)

Will notify the Foundation at a later date.

Thesis (Name of Journal and its Date, Title and Author of Thesis, etc.)

Will notify the Foundation at a later date.

Book (Publisher and Date of the Book, Title and Author of the Book, etc.)

Will notify the Foundation at a later date.