

# THE INFLUENCE OF EXTERNAL CULTURES ON ART, MUSIC, AND DANCE EDUCATION STUDENTS: A CASE STUDY OF THAILAND AND LAO PDR

Yoothana Chuppunnarat\*, Khanobbhorn Sangvanich,  
Vitchatalum Laovanich, Malinee Achayutthakan,  
Skowrung Saibunmi and Weerakit Suwanphithak

*Department of Art Music and Dance Education, Faculty of Education,  
Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok 10330, Thailand*

*\*Corresponding author: yoothanac2@hotmail.com*

## **Abstract**

This qualitative research aims to analyze cultural influences from both inside and outside the ASEAN Community that have effects on art, music education, and dance students in Thailand and Lao PDR by studying Thai, English, and Lao documents as well as research regarding problems in Thailand and Lao PDR, using a focus group discussion and an in-depth interview. Three groups of participants were drawn using purposeful sampling from Thailand and Lao PDR: policymakers of art, music, and dance education; directors of undergraduate institutions that offer art, music, and dance education; and teachers of art, music, and dance education. There are 18 participants in total (3 persons for each group per country). The findings showed that the cultures inside and outside the ASEAN Community that have had effects on the values and lifestyles of art, music, and dance education students in Thailand and Lao PDR included food consumption, fashion and clothing, the music and entertainment industry, and media and technology. The cultural influence that has had the most impact on students is media and technology, which plays an important role in disseminating information and knowledge about foreign lifestyles. The technology such as basic computer programs, the internet, social media and specialized programs were used as a part of teaching and learning.

**Keywords:** Cultural invasion; art education; music education; dance education

## **Introduction**

Global changes have direct effects on every culture. At the same time, culture influences changes in society as well. Culture is not permanent; it is changing all the time. When different cultures interact with each other, cultural exchange occurs (Liu et al., 2014). Also, when people engage in a culture, their lifestyles will be influenced by that culture (Dodd, 1977).

The study of changes in any culture can be examined through different groups of population. Dodd (1998) stated that the education system of a society can reveal cultural information about its people. Therefore, the understanding of cultural conflict and cultural learning within the higher education system can provide an understanding of higher education. In South-east Asia, regionalization occurs within the continent, as a result of cultural intervention from neighboring countries which causes all culture to be borderless and spreads rapidly (Chutintranont, 2014).

The ASEAN Community includes the ASEAN Political Security Community (APSC), the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC). These three aspects are vital in leading and developing ASEAN countries to unity. The aim of uniting countries from different cultures is quite challenging. Geertz (1973) stated that culture is not only a production of society but also the process of being a part of the society. Hence, the history, society, and culture of each country inevitably causes ethnocentrism.

Changes in the structure of society lead to changes in values and unavoidably affect the lifestyles of people in the society. However, among the changes, if there is no investigation into whether internal or external cultures have affected the host culture, the cultural management of that country will fail with no advantage for the nation. Thus, the analysis of internal and external cultures that affect the host culture is necessary. This study aims to analyze cultures from both inside and outside the ASEAN Community that have effects on art, music education, and dance students in Thailand and Lao PDR. The findings provide qualified information necessary for cultural management in the future.

## **Methodology**

This study is a qualitative research which consists of two sections: 1) a study of Thai, English, and Lao documents regarding cultural invasion from both inside and outside the ASEAN Community as well as research regarding problems in Thailand and Lao PDR, and 2) a focus group discussion and an in-depth interview of three groups of participants that were drawn using purposeful sampling from Thailand and Lao PDR: policymakers of art, music, and dance education; directors of undergraduate institutions that offer art, music, and dance education; and teachers of art, music, and dance education. There are 18 participants in total (3 persons for each group per country).

The instrument used in the study of research regarding cultural invasion were a documentary analysis form and a content analysis form. The instrument used in the focus group discussion and in-depth interview were semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions.

The data collection in the documents part included the study of research regarding cultural invasion from both inside and outside the ASEAN Community from books, research report, academic papers, and research either in online or published formats from ISI, Scopus, and TCI databases. With regard to data collection of interviews in Thailand, after participants were specified, they were appointed two weeks prior to the interviews and the interview questions were also sent. The participants from Lao PDR were contacted via the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Royal Thai Embassy in Lao PDR at least 30 days prior to the interviews. Also, the official letter and the interview questions were sent together. The interviews were recorded and the important points during the interview were noted. After the data was collected, information from articles, documents, research papers, and interviews and focus group discussion results were analyzed and synthesized.

## **Findings**

Over the last ten years (2006-2015), Thailand and Lao PDR have been influenced by cultures inside and outside the ASEAN Community. From the study of documents and research, it was found that there are four areas of

cultural influence that have had effects on the values and lifestyles of people in Thailand and Lao PDR: food consumption, fashion and clothing, the music and entertainment industry, and media and technology. The findings were divided into effects on art, music education, and dance students.

### **Food consumption habits**

Changes in society lead to changes in food consumption habits. In the past, Thai people cooked their own food and dined together but this tradition has changed due to the amount of time spent in commuting and working. Consequently, time for cooking and dining together has decreased. Additionally, there are numerous types of restaurants and more franchise restaurants in Thailand which allow Thai people to dine outside more. From the study, it was found that over the last ten years, Thai people have consumed imported food consistently. According to the Bank of Thailand (2016), Thailand has increased food imports from overseas; in 2006, the import amount was 157,575.89 million baht, while in 2015, the rate was 362,778 million baht. These statistics reflect the changes in consumption of Thai people due to globalization. Also, this food consumption habit affects other areas of culture.

While Thailand accepts foreign cultures, Lao PDR, as a neighboring country that had shared a similar lifestyle and language for a long time, is also impacted. The people of Lao PDR mostly watch TV programs from Thailand, which influences their food consumption behaviors. In the past, Lao people prepared food from home and dined in the forest, field, or at the waterfall as a one-day trip for relaxation. While Lao people nowadays tend to dine outside in restaurants more than in the past (Jutaviriya et al., 2011; Osapirat, 2007).

From the data collection, in the last ten years, there were many foreign restaurants in the downtown and tourist areas of Lao PDR. However, they were not popular among Lao people as in Thailand; these restaurants were only to serve tourists. Notwithstanding, Lao local food is influenced by French food, for example, French bread is adapted to be eaten with vegetable and pork that is cooked in a traditional style. This proves that though French food has had an impact on Lao food, the local food is still primary.

### *Art students*

Food culture influences the lifestyles of art students in Thailand in forms of the designs of restaurants that have changed, in terms of the decorations, tables, dishware, and environments that require artistic skills (Bunnag, 2010). In addition, artistic skills are required to characterize products or services before distribution (Ratcharoenkachorn, 2002). The integration of art and music in creating dining environments have had the effect of passing on Thai knowledge regarding art, theory, and methods of cooking. When the demand is changed, a new way of teaching art needs to be created.

With regard to art students in Lao PDR, the factors that have changed values and culture of the students are dressing, food, and language that is obtained from television, especially TV programs from Thailand (Tummachan, 2016).

Leaopairoj and Senakul (2013) stated that Lao people were originally influenced by French culture which resulted in using and purchasing French products. However, in the present day, they buy products more from Thailand which conforms to Osatapirat (2007) that Lao people value Thai products as the best.

### *Music education students*

Food culture also impacts music education students and music curriculums in Thailand when music becomes a part of dining, especially live music in hotels and restaurants. Music is used to provide a good environment and increase dining time which leads to an increase in food and drinks sales volume. As a result of this consumption behavior, many music students play music to earn extra money and some perform to earn a living. However, this job is mostly in the nighttime, which affects students' studying in the daytime.

*"I play music almost every night. The pay is good, but I need to perform quite late at night. Sometimes I can't get up to study in the morning, but I have to do this because of money. I also enjoy doing what I love."*

(Donjang, 2016)

Music education students in Lao PDR mostly dine at home rather than outside in a restaurant. Dinner time is a family time when everyone can talk and exchange experiences. The food is mostly homemade and local, except on special occasions where Lao people will dine in a restaurant. Though there are many foreign restaurants, for example, Japanese, Korean, and Italian, they are not popular among Lao people; they are for tourists or Lao people who used to study abroad (Bunsukthai, 2016).

With regard to traditional music performances while dining, there are not many of them. The performance occurs in a form of live Western music in foreign restaurants. Lao traditional music is generally performed in a restaurant of a large-sized hotel or in a big event such as to welcome official foreign visitors (Pasuk and Chamanbot, 2016). This means that music students are unable to earn money from performing music in a restaurant or in a pub at night.

#### *Dance students*

Thai dance is also used in restaurants, especially restaurants in hotels, in tourist locations, and on cruises. Thai dance is used to entertain foreign customers in restaurants, which provide both food and culture in the same place. This allows the foreigners to save time in travelling and increase time for dining.

*“Because of this business, Thai dance students mostly work part-time in the restaurants to earn money, though the wage is not high. It provides students with performing and backstage experience which will benefit them in the future.”*

(Kongthavorn, 2016)

The food consumption of dance students in Lao PDR is influenced by French food. However, most of them still like local food because it has been passed on from generation to generation. Moreover, the dance students love to dine with their families, which is still the tradition of Lao people in the present day.

#### **Fashion and dressing habits**

Fashion and dress have changed rapidly with students due to globalization. They are influenced by brand name goods that focus on beautiful

designs and inexpensive prices which are launched in many collections throughout the year. However, the lifestyles of Lao people nowadays have not changed much; they still adhere to inherited tradition. The government encourages youths to dress traditionally. Although Thai media has an impact on Lao people, it does not affect Lao dress culture. Also, the uniform of a female government officer and other employees are quite similar; a sarong with a silver belt.

#### *Art students*

While the variety of fashions has increased, Thai traditional clothing trends have decreased. Therefore, the artists need to create or apply new designs to suit the changing trend.

*“...in the art aspect, Thai traditional art is in a descending phase; Thai painting loses its place in temples and religious places. This discipline is not interesting for students in the present day. Many artists try to apply and combine different patterns of art to reach more people...”*

(Thongsima, 2016)

According to art teachers in Lao PDR, in the present day, Western and Eastern cultures are not different because defensive measures need to be used to protect Lao culture from external cultures. What Lao people can do is to campaign through television and add teaching regarding orderliness, dress, national culture, paying respect, and national language. The art students still dress locally though they obtain foreign culture through various media.

#### *- Music education students*

Some music education students in Thailand dress fashionably, having been influenced by pop stars or celebrities. In the last ten years, clothing trends are either new or have been adapted from previous trends. They are mostly influenced by cultures outside the ASEAN Community; for example, vintage clothing, bohemian styles, and pastel colors. Some students adapt foreign cultures to their uniforms in order to be more fashionable. From the data collection, it was found that freshmen generally dress correctly following the

university's rules but after they pass the first year, they dress more fashionably, which can be inappropriate sometimes. Music teachers from the interviews mentioned that music education and art students tend to dress more fashionably than students in other majors. In addition, some students spend their time and money on buying fashion goods more than studying and practicing music (Prapakdee, 2016; Sasomsin, 2016). Nonetheless, music education students in Thai and Western music majors dress differently. Thai music students dress more politely than Western music students; they do not follow trends too much. This may be because in studying Thai music, it is full of rules and traditions which students need to follow (Kasetsunthorn, 2016; Prapakdee, 2016).

In Lao PDR, music education students acquire fashion and dress culture from cultures outside the ASEAN Community. Music education students also watch TV programs similar to Thai students, but they do not dress fashionably or imitate celebrities. This is because Lao people have simple and not extravagant lifestyles, have no high purchasing power, and low economic disparity (Leopairoj and Senakul, 2013; Pasuk et al., 2016).

From the study, music education students' dress is international; they purchase goods and clothes from Thailand. However, a female student still wears a sarong which is a uniform that represents Lao clothing identity. However, the pattern of the sarong is different in each institution. The parents are responsible for taking care of music students' dress as well as fostering buying habit to spend money only on necessities. With regard to dressing for music performances, music students still prefer to use traditional dress (Chamanbot, 2016).

#### *Dance students*

The fashion of dance students in Thailand has changed according to the trends. From the interview, it was found that dance students dress according to two patterns; general dress and uniform. In general dress, they dress fashionably, following pop stars and trends in order to be accepted by others and to gain confidence when they are in public. In addition, a dance performance is based on beauty, which makes the dance students pay attention to their appearance. In contrast, when they are in university uniform, they dress politely following the rules; they may adjust the uniform to be a little fashionable, due to the trend.



Furthermore, the findings showed that Thai dance students tend to dress more politely than Western dance students.

*“Thai dance students tend to dress more politely than Western dance students because the process of teaching Thai dance consist of rules and traditions which make students familiar with those rigors. Also, the instructors always teach manners and discipline in the lessons so that the students can acknowledge and follow.”*

(Rojanasuksomboon, 2016)

Lao people mostly preserve local traditions and religious habits similar to Thai people, such as dressing politely when going to the temple. The dress of Lao people in their daily lives is a sarong, so art students also wear a sarong to show their respect and to follow the tradition. However, fashionable dress can be found only in downtown or at entertainment venues.

*“Though there is some fashionable clothing that opposes Lao tradition, with fostering from families and institutions, Lao students still wear a sarong and dress politely.”*

(Pantawong, 2016)

### **Music and entertainment industry habits**

The foreign music and entertainment industry in Thailand is diversified because the input can be acquired through various channels, for example, mobile phones, televisions, radios, computers, and online platforms (i.e. YouTube, Instagram, etc.). Piyapan (2013) noted that most teenagers use smartphones to access online information more than three hours per day. While the music and entertainment industry of Lao people consists of TV programs from Thailand. A television is an important object that shows the wealth luxury of the family. Watching television together in a family is quite a popular activity in Lao PDR, especially watching the programs from Thailand such as music, series, etc.

### *Art students*

The music and entertainment industry have an impact on art education in Thailand because it leads to new methods of teaching. It also influences the creation of new, creative, and modern instructional media.

*“...the benefit of the entertainment business is to bring new techniques to use in art education, for example, using photographs, videos, art compositions, or new production processes. Another benefit is to help spread art to reach more audiences by using public relations or through different media such as advertisements, music videos, cartoons, etc. However, it may be a backward step rather than an evolution from the viewpoint of conservatives...”*

(Thongsima, 2016)

From the interviews of art teachers in Lao PDR, Lao people, especially teenagers, listen to pop music more than in the past. However, Lao teenagers do not welcome foreign singers in the same way as Thai teenagers.

*“Lao teenagers also love listening to pop music, but they don’t gather together to welcome foreign singers like teenagers in Thailand...Nowadays, Lao people acquire information from around the world, which leads to changes in lifestyles.”*

(Tummachan, 2016)

Moreover, the government encourages young people to practice and study traditional dance. So, people tend to emphasize dance more than art and music (Bunsuktai, 2016).

### *Music education students*

A university plays an important role in providing music consumption opportunities to students. From this study, the opportunities of students in Thailand can be classified into two categories; 1) those who have opportunities

to watch music from both inside and outside the ASEAN Community, and 2) those who have no opportunities to watch any music.

Students in the first category mostly study in the universities with a lot of experience in arranging quality music events, equipped with music auditoriums, and which have their own orchestras or bands. These conditions provide students with musical opportunities and allow students to present and exchange their works abroad in forms of music competitions or music camps. These opportunities allow students to realize and set their goals in music careers clearly. Moreover, these music institutions employ instructors who graduated abroad, so they can share experiences about the lives as well as being able to arrange music classes with the same objectives as in foreign countries. In contrast, students in the second category are totally different; they have no opportunities to watch live music, they only watch online and listen from their instructors. Consequently, they do not understand the processes and feelings of musicians abroad. The differences and opportunities of students from these two categories influence the values and lifestyles of music education students. The students in the first category are always motivated, diligent, creative, and win many prizes, whereas the students in the second category may not be much motivated and creative like those in the first category.

The nature of the music business is that the writers of the songs or musical works are not always reasonably recompensed. Because of copyright laws, the owner of the company is often the one with the power to play an important role in defining beliefs and music ideas in the future. Musical works are often monopolized by a few companies, so music graduates need to produce musical works following the rules of these companies. Nonetheless, in the last few years, technology has caused a change in the business model. This allows students to produce creative works and promote themselves through online platforms. When their works succeed, they can also earn money.

The music consumption and entertainment business culture of Lao students is mostly influenced by Thailand because Lao people watch Thai TV programs primarily. Lao musicians also know Thai music stars like Thai people do. Additionally, they obtain some influences from Vietnam because some Lao music students receive scholarships to study music in Vietnam (Pasuk et al., 2016).

Though Lao music consumption culture is quite similar to Thai, Western musical instruments are not commonly used in a Lao contemporary performance.

*“I don’t know about other countries, but in Lao PDR, Lao music and Western music is separate; we don’t mix them together. Lao music performers are hired occasionally to perform in religious ceremonies.”*

(Pasuk, 2016)

From the study, the Arts Education College of Lao PDR tries to create a music consumption culture for students. Due to the fact that some students come from rural areas and receive a scholarship from the government, some students do not have a lot of experience in music. Some students cannot even play a musical instrument; they have to start from the beginning. So, teachers at the college try to create a music consumption culture for these students by focusing on Lao music first. Nevertheless, there is a limitation in the budget, which obstructs students from acquiring quality music, as well as the fact that the college has no music auditorium for students to present their creative performances.

With regard to the entertainment business, most of the music students are not interested in this because graduate students will work as government officers and earn a permanent salary. There is a belief that a government officer is a secured career. So, when the government starts a campaign that supports a production of arts teachers, the number of music students is increased. However, a lot of budget support is required. Regarding music careers, music bands are hired regularly to perform in religious ceremonies which help music teachers and students earn extra money. People who hire music bands are mostly in a high-class society. Moreover, Lao people are fond of making merit, so music bands that can perform in religious ceremonies still get good pay. From the interviews, music teachers have good feelings about businessmen and people in the high-class society treat people in lower class equally (Chamanbot, 2016).

### *Dance students*

From the study, universities play an important role in creating musical culture for dance students by using and adapting music in various kinds of dance such as applied Thai dances, contemporary dances, and creative performances.

*“In many subjects, students need to search for different types of music that provide different emotions to use in different creative performances. Moreover, in the present day, there is more music used in media such as movies or TV series that is presented by pop stars or celebrities. These are platforms that bring different cultures closer.”*

(Sangsittiwong, 2016)

Additionally, the entertainment industry provides either part-time or full-time jobs for dance students, for example, as a dance teacher (i.e. Thai dance, ballet, jazz dance, tap dance, hip hop, and cover dance), a choreographer, a director of cultural performances, or a dancer (i.e. in a concert, pub, event, etc.). Dance education is involved in these careers and students also earn a lot of money from these.

However, movies and TV series often present Thai dance in a negative way such as when a ghost or mystery film includes Thai dance. This makes people, especially young generations, think that Thai dance is mysterious and intangible. Nonetheless, they are more interested in foreign dance culture like a cover dance or imitating foreign artists. As foreign dance culture becomes more common, the value of Thai dance is gradually decreased. Thai students nowadays do not appreciate dance education; they only study what is provided in the curriculum. Unfortunately, this means that Thai dance is being ignored.

In Lao PDR, music is the most popular media because it can reach audiences easily everywhere and on every occasion. It also adheres to people's lives from birth until death. Moreover, dance students mostly listen to Thai music because Lao PDR and Thailand are neighboring countries.

As time passes, however, new types of music from external cultures are still not popular among Lao people. The role of foreign music in Lao PDR is restricted in some areas to downtown tourist attractions such as entertainment venues and foreign restaurants. (Pantawong, 2016)

## Media and technology

Technology has become a part of people's lives nowadays; it is a part of studying, working, and relaxation. Most information is disseminated through online platforms. People in Thailand spend more than 80% of their time on social media, which affects their lifestyles. Technology has become the medium which brings other elements into society which causes changes in of cultures such as food consumption, dress, and education.

With regard to Lao PDR, after becoming a member of the ASEAN Community, it has been developing as a country. One aspect of this developments is the information technology has become a necessity in people's lives and help in communication and acquiring information. This leads to changes in people's lifestyles.

### *Art students*

Media and technology have changed both people's ways of receiving information and art education itself. For example, using a Photoshop program to create art works, using the Interactive art to move objects, or using technology itself as a medium by creating a program and getting people involved (Polprasert, 2016).

Moreover, media and technology have affected the method skills of an art teacher as follows:

*“...new type of media has had an impact on the art teacher's methods. An art teacher nowadays needs to be up-to-date, be able to create digital instructional media, edit videos, and know how to sell a photograph online in order to inspire students. Another obvious example is in printing. Many instructors use an inkjet machine instead of the old generation machine to produce a new kind of work. In the future, students' needs will change constantly and new technology will exist. This will result in a revising and changing of art education...”*

(Thongsima, 2016)

### *Music education students*

In Thailand, music education students use technology in their studies, for example, recording what instructors teach instead of memorization, observing music via YouTube, using music notation programs instead of handwriting, or establishing home studio to produce their own music.

One problem is that the convenience of technology causes students to impatient. This is opposed to the principle of music practice which requires patience, discipline, and repetition. Some students want to perform a difficult piece but do not want to spend enough time on practicing, so they cannot succeed (Laithong, 2016).

Another problem from technology that impacts the lifestyles of students is health problems. Many students are injured from using too much technology, for example, neck pain, shoulder pain, and myopia. In addition, spending too much time on the internet which is a waste of time for music studies (Panwaratorn, 2016; Laithong, 2016). Actually, technology should be brought in to develop musical skills in a similar way as in sports science (Laovanich, 2016).

Music education students in Lao PDR use media and technology in a similar way to Thai music students. They acquire information through Thai TV programs and obtain foreign culture from Facebook and websites, which results in the spread of foreign culture to Lao society. Teenagers spend more time on social media and games, but they are still under their parents' control. With regard to music education, media and technology are used in learning, for example, listening to music on Youtube and using music programs. These make students more interested in music (Pasuk, 2016; Chamanbot, 2016).

However, this technology still does not reach the majority of people which allows Lao people to strongly preserve their lifestyles and culture. This leads to the existence of a traditional music identity that remains unchanged.

What the participants of this study concern is that in the future, technology will enter Lao society with great impact, but to what extent will Lao people will be able to cope with it. In the present day, the technology that has arrived has already affected education, for example, since students own mobile phones, they do not focus on studying and they spend their time on their phones instead of reading books or practicing music (Pasuk, 2016).

### *Dance students*

From the interview of a dance teacher in Thailand, limitless communication can result in an overload of foreign culture.

*“Fast technology plays an important role in young people’s daily lives. They absorb too much foreign culture and ignore their own culture as well as not realizing their own arts. They value foreign cultures but devalue Thai culture.”*

(Chansuwan, 2016)

If technology is used in the right way, it can help students access information for their studies, which can reduce time and cost.

*“Everything can be found on YouTube; it is no longer necessary to meet the teacher in person”*

(Pandee, 2016)

Nonetheless, this can have negative results because students will lack intention, delicacy, notice, and memorization. Watching the video clip is a one-way communication which lacks a teacher’s techniques (Chalanukrao, 2016).

Dance students in Lao PDR acquire media from Thailand, for example, music, series, TV programs, and magazines. Although the Lao government tries to prevent Thai influences by creating its own cultural media, it has to admit that creating its own media is not worthwhile due to the small number of the population. Media from Thailand is more interesting and attractive. Due to the fact that Lao people can understand Thai language, they make choices, which means that the Lao media cannot compete with the Thai media. When Lao people watch Thai media, they also gradually absorb Thai culture. For example, Lao people use Thai language instead of Lao, which leads to language invasion, which results in the control of language by the government (Manager Online, 2007). It may be harmful to Lao cultural identity.

The borderless communication brings the external culture to the Lao people. The media selection of each person is different, especially in children



and young people who still lack proper reasoning. Though media is a platform for borderless communication and learning, acquiring media without consideration can have an impact on students (Inthawong, 2016).

## **Discussions**

There are both similarities and differences between the cultures from inside and outside the ASEAN Community that have an impact on the values and lifestyles of people in Thailand and Lao PDR. Art education, music education, and dance education are all impacted by cultural invasion.

The type of cultures that affect the people of Thailand and Lao PDR are all "cultural activities". According to Dodd (1998), the cultural activities include 1) cultural objects (food), 2) arts aesthetics (fashion and dress), 3) communication patterns (music and entertainment business), 4) media and technology. These four factors are vital variables in the changing of values and people's lifestyles.

According to the study, it was found that Thailand and Lao PDR were influenced by these four factors because they share four similar social contexts and cultures: language, experiences, intellectual skills, and vision (Dodd, 1998).

### **- Similar language**

The reason why Thai and Lao languages are similar is that both languages are classified in the same category (South-Western Tai) and the speakers of the languages share similar characteristics. This language category is influenced by the Southern Chinese who emigrated to Southeast Asia. With the similarity of the language, when Thailand or Lao PDR acquire any changes in culture, it can transmit to the other country easily. For example, there are many CDs of music, series, and movies with Thai audio sold in Lao markets and a great number of fashion goods from Thailand. These show the language intimacy of Thailand and Lao PDR.

### **- Similar experiences**

The experience that Thailand and Lao PDR have in common is the entering of foreigners. These foreigners came with new innovations, culture, and influences that have had an effect on developing the country. Hence, Thailand and Lao PDR are similar in that the local cultures were forced to be more civilized.

When considering the number of foreigners that visit Thailand and Lao PDR in the present day, the ratio of the foreigners and population in both countries is 1:3. The two countries do not only have a similar history and a close relationship but also a similar number of tourists. Therefore, the cultural exchange and the impact of foreign cultures between Thailand and Lao PDR are predictable phenomena.

- Similar intellectual skills

From the intelligence quotient (IQ) survey, Thai and Lao people have similar intellectual skills. These similarities derive not only from similar ethnic but also similar food cultures, communication between each other, acquiring similar media, etc. All of these conform to the four cultural invasion that can be found in Thailand and Lao PDR.

- Similar vision

Developing countries mostly have developed countries as a model. In the same way, people in developing countries view sculptures, technology, and the culture of developed countries as a norm of civilization. Hence, the cultural activities of developed countries can disseminate easily to developing countries. However, if citizens of any society can accept foreign cultures that are combined with their local culture, it leads to the creation of a third culture. Though the acquiring of culture of Thailand and Lao PDR consist of similar factors, the level of acquiring is different due to the different visions.

Thailand invites Western culture directly because Thai people are fond of Western countries and do not feel that Thailand falls behind or has had bad experiences with Western countries. Thai people do not have a perception or recognition that Thailand became a colony of Western countries. So, Thailand tries to develop the country hastily following the Western methods and adapts Western culture as the third culture of the nation.

In contrast, Lao PDR lost its territory to the West, so Lao people may have a bad feeling for Western countries. Consequently, when Lao PDR became independent, building strong local culture was the most important strategy in developing the country. Moreover, the government also promoted the local culture to be a national culture that everyone had to follow. Thus, some Western

customs were accepted only to show the civilization, not accepted and adapted as the third culture of the nation, like in Thailand.

## **Conclusion**

Over the last ten years, there have been four areas of cultural influence from inside and outside the ASEAN Community - food consumption, fashion and clothing, the music and entertainment industry, and media and technology - that have affected the values and lifestyles of students in art education, music education, and dance education in Thailand and Lao PDR.

In Thailand, the cultural influence of food consumption of students in all disciplines is similar. Students are fond of eating foreign food which can show the taste and help to build relationships within a group. Some students perform music and Thai dance in the restaurants to earn extra money. Fashion and dress are also similar among students in each group. They generally dress fashionably but dress politely in a uniform, especially Thai music and Thai dance students. With regard to the music and entertainment industry, art education brings music and new ways of teaching and creating new things. In music education and dance education, there are various types of music involved in these disciplines which being about an exchange of knowledge and the creation of greater variety in performances. Media and technology have an impact on students in all three disciplines. They play an important role in disseminating information and knowledge. Moreover, they are used as a part of teaching and learning, and students are always interested in new technology.

In Lao PDR, all of these areas of culture have an effect on the lifestyle and studies of students in art education, music education, and dance education. Nevertheless, they do not have the same impact as in Thailand. Lao PDR acquires cultural influence mostly from Thailand. The food consumption culture of students in all disciplines is similar; they mostly dine together with their families at home. The food is mostly local and homemade, except on special occasions when they will dine outside in a restaurant. With regard to fashion and dress, they are similar among students in each group; they dress internationally, use fashion goods from Thailand, dress politely in a uniform, and female students wear sarongs as a uniform. As for the music and

entertainment industry, they listen to music from Thailand, music culture is similar to Thailand, and foreign musical influences are acquired through the media. The students' emphasis is on dance education rather than art and music education. Media and technology have an impact on the lifestyles of Lao students in all three disciplines. Students use technology in their learning, but their lifestyles are still the same, with little change due to globalization.

Thailand and Lao PDR have few differences in lifestyles due to the fact that the lifestyles of Lao people have remained relatively unchanged. Regarding food consumption, Thailand is quite heavily influenced by foreign food and Thai people dine in restaurants more than Lao people, although they still eat Thai food. Lao people, on the other hand, dine together with their family at home and consume local food. The fashion and dressing habits of two countries are quite similar because Lao people are influenced by Thai culture; they purchase products from Thailand. However, the students' uniforms are different and Lao female students wear sarongs with different patterns depending on the institution. With regard to music, there are various types of music that have entered Thai and Laotian culture, as well as various types of music performances. However, the entertainment business in Lao PDR is not as popular as it is in Thailand. Media and technology of both countries play an important role in disseminating information and knowledge which allow students to adapt their learning styles.

## References

- Bank of Thailand. (2016) *The statistic of export and import products between 2006-2915*. [Online URL: <http://www.bot.or.th/statistics/ReportPage.aspx?reportID=50& language=th>] accessed on March 17, 2016.
- Bunnag, T. (2010) *Fashion: Cocktail of Life*. Bangkok: Udompanya Publishing.
- Bunsuktai, W. (2016, August 29) Personal communication.
- Chalanukrao, S. (2016, April 20) Personal communication.
- Chamanbot, P. (2016, August 29) Personal communication.
- Chansuwan, S. (2016, May 23). Personal communication.
- Chutintranont, S. (2014) *Nationalism in Thai textbook*. Bangkok: Matichon Publishing.
- Dodd, C. H. (1977) *Perspectives on cross-cultural communication*. Iowa: Kendall/Hunt.
- Dodd, C. H. (1998) *Dynamics of Intercultural Communication*. Fifth Edition. Boston: McGraw-Hill.
- Donjang, T. (2016, August 20). Personal communication.
- Geertz, C. (1973) *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*. New York: Basic Books, Inc.,
- Inthawong, B. (2016, August 30) Personal communication.
- Jutaviriya, K., Sannhavong, K., and Inthiphon, K. (2011) Consumption of local food and social changes in Vientiane in the era of globalization. *Journal of Mekong Societies* 7(2): 49-73.
- Kasetsunthorn, C. (2016, November 8) Personal communication.
- Kongthavorn, K. (2016, November 9) Personal communication.
- Laithong, W. (2016, September 23) Personal communication.
- Laovanich, M. (2016, September 1) Personal communication.
- Leapairoj, K. and Senakul, B. (2013) *Asian Krapao Tung*. Bangkok: Amarin Printing & Publishing Public Company Limited.
- Liu, S., Volcic, Z., and Gallois, C. (2014) *Introducing Intercultural Communication: Global Cultures and Contexts*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Los Angeles: Sage Publication Ltd.

- Manager Online. (2007) *Thai influences destruct Lao language, the government is blamed for not taking care*. [Online URL: <http://www.manager.co.th/IndoChina/ViewNews.aspx?NewsID=9500000016984>] accessed on September 15, 2007.
- Osapirat, P. (2007) The traveling of modern products in Lao PDR. In *The Traveling of Modern Products*, edited by Tanet Wongyannawa. Bangkok: Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre.
- Pandee, N. (2016, October 30) Personal communication.
- Pantawong, C. (2016, August 30) Personal communication.
- Panwaratorn, M. (2016, September 20) Personal communication.
- Pasuk, K. (2016, August 29). Personal communication.
- Piyapan, T. (2013) *Digital values and online communication behavior of Thai children and youth*. Master's Thesis. Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok.
- Polprasert, A. (2016, October 31) Personal communication.
- Prapakdee, C. (2016, September 5) Personal communication.
- Ratcharoenkachorn, S. (2002) *Coffee shop: the meaning in Consumerism of Thai culture*. Bangkok: Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre.
- Rojanasuksomboon, A. (2016, November 4) Personal communication.
- Sangsittiwong, T. (2016, November 15) Personal communication.
- Sasomsin, S. (2016, October 30) Personal communication.
- Thongsima, S. (2016, November 13) Personal communication.
- Tummachan, W. (2016, August 29) Personal communication.