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Factors Influencing First Year Students' Dropout
at Chandrakasem Rajabhat University

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ABSTRACT

This project is a survey research that is aimed to study the factors influencing on dropout of first-year-student at Chandrakasem Rajabhat University, in order to get the information for setting up the measures and directions to reduce the number of students' dropout. Data gathered by using questionnaire of 171 and in-depth interview of 14 first year students with grade point average lower than 1.60.

The result showed that: factors influencing dropout of first year student were categorized in 5 aspects i.e. 1) learning factors was the most important followed by, 2) instructor factors, 3) miscellaneous factors, 4) friends get together factors and, 5) activities participation factors. Hypothesis testing has found that gender was significantly difference on answering the questionnaire; female students thought that the instructor has more important role on students' dropout, on the other hand male students thought that friends get together was more important role on students' dropout. When categorized by which faculty they are studying it was found that: the students of 1) Humanities and Social Sciences faculties mostly agreed that the 5 mentioned factors influenced on students' dropout followed by 2) Management Science Faculty, 3) Agriculture and Life Science Faculty, 4) Science Faculty, 5) Education Faculty. Recommended measures to reduce the number of students' dropout were strictly checking of class attendance by the instructors, not missing the class if not necessary, selection of activities participation, studying intention, regular reviewing of study lessons, and submit the assignments on time.

Finding from this research can be suggested in several aspects i.e.: studying in general education subjects require participation problem solving from both students and lecturers, students who got grade point average lower than 1.80 should be enrolled less credits than the others. Extra teaching or tutoring should be provided.

Keywords: Students' dropout, Measures and directions to reduce student dropout, Student with low GPA

Introduction

The success of national development is depended on the progressive of socio-economics status, which can be improved by education base planning to provide qualified people. The government should be arranged an appropriate budgets, resources, and supportive factors to support the education, especially in the higher level in order to provide professional personnel for social and economic development of the country thereafter.

Students' dropout is the major problem of many university. Chandrakasem Rajabhat University has

offered both normal and twilight education programs. Large member of students enroll in this university every year. In the year 2009.There was 33.92% of students' dropout which affect on the target number of student graduation and quality of education arrangement.

The causes of students' dropout in the faculty of Industrial Education, King Mongkut University of Technology, North Bangkok studied by Kaset Muangthong (2001) found that the main reasons were context study was not related with previous former knowledge and too difficult; learning aspects were lacking of study plan, improper time arrangement, and students could not adapt to new environment. The opinions of the advisor found that, the students who lack of basic knowledge, too difficult context lessons, and study in dislike field. Hypothesis testing found the opinion of student's dropout causes in each curriculum and field of study were not statistically difference at 0.05 level of significant.

The student's dropout at Chiangmai Rajabhat University in the year 2007 (Rumpueng Poolsuk, 2008) found 47.6% in male and 52.4% in female. The main reasons of students' dropout were entrance in dislike field of study 37.5%, grade lower than minimum level 22.2%, lack of basic knowledge 19.3%, 52.2% of students' dropout received tuition fees from the parents, 33% have no time to attend class because they have to work for supporting themselves. 96.8% of students' dropout pointed out that the instructor performance was not the cause of dropout and 91.4% could be adapted themselves to study in the university.

Wutipong Thongkorn and others (2008) studied at Huachaew University and found that students' dropout was 25.23% from 1,498 n with 66.96% of female and 33.04% of male, freshly students 72.56%; field of study was 94.92% of accounting, Environmental Health 86.21% and at least in Pharmacy (13.95%). No correlation was found among economical, studying, self

adaptation, personnel problem factors and educational management system with grade point of students' dropout.

This research aims to study the factors such as learning, instructor, friend getting together, activities participation, and others which influencing on dropout of first-year-student at Chandrakasem Rajabhat University.

Procedures

This project was a survey research. Data was gathered by using questionnaire and in-depth interview of 171 first year students. And, in-depth interview with student who has grade point average lower than 1.60 of 14 first year students. For the group interview 4-5 persons were in group discussion. Statistical analysis of data were percentage, mean, standard deviation and analysis of variance, significant at P≤0.05.

Results

1. General information of the respondents Respondents were male more than female; age 16-20 years, study in the faculty of Management Science more than other faculties; staying in the dormitory during studying; born in Bangkok and suburb; parents stay together, parents' occupations are government officers, public enterprise, and merchants; monthly expenses employees for students were 5,000-9999 Baht. Financial support mostly came from their parents, GPA from high school were 2.01-3.00, GPA in the first semester were 1.01-1.50.

2. Factors influencing on students' dropout Student opinions on the factors influencing of students' dropout (Table 1) found that:

Learning factors: the student lack of learning techniques was the first priority factor followed by too crowded of central classroom and too difficult of studied subjects.

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Instructor factors: teaching techniques was not interesting, operation skills of audio visual aids, modernization of audio visual aids preparation, and friendly behave to student influenced on students' dropout in almost the same level.

Influence from friends: especially in the aspects of lack of friend to be tutor for not understand subjects got the highest influence score followed by copy homework assignment from friends and lack of close friend aids in studying,

Activities participation in the aspect of activities arrange by university quite often are at the same time of class attendance and participated activities not support on learning outcome, were rated at the same level followed by working for self support and no time to attend class.

Miscellaneous factors such as students keep on talking during studying, technical services provided by the university out of date, and students absent from class quite often were the major causes of students' dropout.

Table 1 Mean and standard deviation of factors influencing on students' dropout

No.	Item	n	$\overline{x}$	S.D.
	Learning factor			
1	Classroom environment not suited for studying	171	3.08	0.868
2	Too crowded of central classroom	171	3.40	0.884
3	Lack of good preparation of audio visual aids	171	3.07	0.933
4	Too difficult of studied subjects	171	3.29	0.852
5	Student lack of learning techniques	171	3.44	0.827
	Instructor factor			
1	No operational skills of audio visual aids	171	3.35	0.878
2	Teaching techniques not interesting	171	3.38	0.862
3	Modernization of audio visual aids preparation	171	3.36	0.823
4	Too friendly to students	171	3.27	0.964
5	Iregularization on teaching schedule of instructor	171	2.86	1.008
6	Advisor do not advice on how to register	171	2.99	1.012
7	Not enough advisor	171	2.92	0.961
8	Advisor lack of techniques to advice students	171	2.86	0.929
	Influence from friends			
1	Playing computer games with friend much more than studying	171	2.64	1.107
2	No help from friends from difficult subject	171	3.13	0.992
3	Skip the class	171	2.57	1.000
4	Copy homework assignment from friend	171	3.03	1.020
5	Let friend do and submit homework	171	2.50	1.031
6	Going out for drinking and partying	171	2.50	1.119
7	No help from friends	171	2.77	1.150

Table 1   Mean and standard deviation of factors influencing on students' dropout (Continue)

No.	Item	n	$\overline{X}$	S.D.
	Activities participation factor			
1	Have to work for self support	171	2.60	1.146
2	Senior assign too much activities	171	2.50	0.884
3	Activities did not support on learning outcome	171	2.71	0.937
4	Activities arrange by university quite often are at the same time of class	171	2.73	0.944
	Miscellaneous factors			
1	No chance to select interested major	171	2.66	0.989
2	Studied subjects not interesting	171	2.88	1.069
3	Need to re-entrance in the other major/university	171	2.51	1.119
4	Insufficient services provided by the university	171	2.90	1.038
5	Technical services provided by university out of date	171	3.04	1.042
6	Students absent from class quite often	171	2.95	1.089
7	Students keep on talking in class	171	3.26	0.980

3. For individual factor, male students are caused more students' dropout than female students, faculties which students studied were significantly interact with learning, instructor, friends get together, activities participation and miscellaneous factors; parents' occupation also significantly interact with friend get together; students' grade received from high school significantly interrelate with learning, instructor, friends get together, activities participation and miscellaneous factors (Table 2).

Table 2   Individual factor (sex) and interactions influencing on students' dropout

Sex	N	$\overline{X}$	S.D.	t	Sig
Male	105	3.048	0.570	-2.360	0.019*
Female	66	3.285	0.739		

	F	Sig
Faculty VS Learning	2.944	0.022*
Faculty VS Instructor	2.604	0.038*
Faculty VS Friends get together	7.222	0.000*
Faculty VS Activities participation	4.911	0.001*
Faculty VS Miscellaneous factors	6.892	0.000*
Parents' occupation VS Friends get together	3.464	0.010*
High school grade received VS Learning	6.494	0.000*
High school grade received VS Instructor	9.859	0.000*
High school grade received VS Friends get together	5.581	0.001*
High school grade received VS Activities participation	3.802	0.011*
High school grade received VS Miscellaneous factors	3.691	0.013*

* Significant at $P \leq 0.05$.

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4. Directions and measures to reduce number of students' dropout were presented in Table 3.

Five directions were ranking by percentage as more attention on studying, regular reviewing of studied lessons, do homework regularly and submit on time, more interesting in studying, tutor the studied lessons with friend more often.

Five measures were also ranking as class absence control, class attendance control, activities participation screening, regularly submit assignments, summer enroll starting in the first year, including instructor aids learning.

Table 3 Directions and measures to reduce number of students' dropout

Item	%
5 Directions rank by percentage	
(1) More attention on studying	39.80
(2) Regular reviewing of studied lessons	10.20
(3) Do homework regularly and submit on time	9.18
(4) More interesting in studying	6.12
(5) Tutor the studied lessons with friend more often	5.10
5 Measures rank by percentage	
(1) Class absence control	5.94
(2) Class attendance control	5.90
(3) Activities participation screening	4.95
(4) Regularly submit assignments	2.97
(5) Summer enroll starting in the first year	2.97
- Instructor aids learning	2.97

5. In-depth interview in three aspects as university environment, causes of getting low score, and corrective actions. The result found that: the students feel proud to study in Chandrakasem Rajabhat University which has a huge area and good environment, lot of friends, the instructors are friendly and pay attention to students, good advice, and tuition fees does not high. Causes of

getting low score due to wake up late then can not attend morning class on time, some students have to work for self support, instructors assign too much homework, some students accumulate homework then can not finish on time. Some students do not interesting in studying, get together with no good friend, seldom meet advisor, some subject context is too difficult to understand, some students are the athlete who need to practice quite often then can not wake up early in the morning, some students absent from class quite often in order to participate in many activities, some students have pressure to study the difficult subject, result in no inspiration, not intend and interest to study, need some case studies or activities in between of lecturing. The corrective actions can be done by attending class on time in every subject, get together with good friends, follow up technical information from internet, advisor aids learning is required, optimize time arrangement, self responsibilities, moral support from the family are also require for studying.

Discussion and conclusion

Factors influencing on students' dropout in several aspects were studied; the first is learning aspect which can be ranking as student lack of learning technique was the first priority factor followed by too crowded of central classroom and too difficult of studied subjects which were the same direction of Renu Poolsawat (1982) studied in 9 universities and found the causes of students' dropout was lacking of learning techniques, also the study of Kaset Muangthong (2001) found the main reasons were context study was not related with former knowledge and too difficult; learning aspects were lacking of study plan, improper time arrangement, and could not adapt to new environment. Instructor factors were categorized as teaching techniques not interesting, operation skills of audio visual aids, modernization of audio visual aids

preparation, and friendly behave to the student influenced on students' dropout in almost the same level which were in correspond with the study of Umpai Intaraprasert and others (2009) found the causes of students' dropout at Rajabhat Suandusit University were the instructors lack of teaching techniques, assign too much work, and seriousness of the instructor.

Friends get together factor, especially in the aspects of lack of friend to be a tutor for not understand subjects got the highest influence score followed by copying homework assignment from friends and lack of close friend aids in studying, which quite similar to the study of Umpai Intaraprasert and others (2009) who found that dropout of students caused by too much class absence to allow to take an examination and lack of friend to be advisor.

Activities participation in the aspect of activities arrange by university quite often are at the same time of class attendance and participated activities were not support on learning outcome were rated at the same level followed by working for self support and no time to attend class, which were the same direction of Rumpueng Poolsuk (2008) studied who found the main cause (33% of total causes) of students' dropout was no time to study because they have to work for self support.

Miscellaneous factors such as students keep on talking when the lecturer lecture, technical services provided by the university out of date, and students absent from class quite often, were the major causes of students' dropout which correspond with Wutipong Thongkorn and others (2008) and Umpai Intaraprasert and others (2009) studied miscellaneous causes of students' dropout and found that the students need to improve the services and computer system provided by the university.

Suggestions

1. Policy suggestion to the university:

- Improve teaching techniques to be more interesting, more modernize, easy to understand, polite talk, and credit transfer system to be more up date and quicker.

- Improve the roles of instructor and advisor to assist the student in adapting themselves to the new environment and learning techniques.

- Arrange senior assistant to be a tutor of new students who cannot caught up the class lecture.

- Improve activities provided by the university to be more useful and relax.

- Improve services and computer systems provided by the university.

2. Suggestions for the students

- Students with GPA lower than 1.80 should enroll less credit than the others. Provide additional lecture or tutor to the students.

- The students should pay more attention in studying, review studied subjects regularly, do homework and submit on time, self responsibilities, not absent from class, consult advisor as needed, and intend to be a good person.

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