

**Title** : **A Comparative Study on Education Management Between Trimester and Semester Systems**

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### **Abstract**

This institutional research has 4 objectives: (1) to find out the guidelines for developing and improving the tertiary educational administration system relating to the educational reform concept, particularly the co-operative education concept; (2) to compare the semester and trimester systems by their problems and limitations including the solution guidelines with particular relation to the co-operative education; (3) to propose guidelines for system adjustment and impacts that may derive from such system change or adjustment; and (4) to propose the appropriate guidelines for educational administration improvement with relation to the educational reform guidelines of the national education act B.E. 2542.

The researchers applied the cluster random sampling technique to identify the sample groups by geographical areas and types of the tertiary educational institutes. Suranaree University of Technology was determined as the core sample of trimester, while the other samples, representing semester system samples, consisted of Kasetsart University, King Mongkut's Institute of Technology Ladkrabang, Chiang Mai University, Mae Faluang University, Naresuan University, Khon Kaen University, Prince of Songkla's University in Had Yai and Pattani campuses, Walailak University. Three case studies consisting of Rangsit University, Lamphun Technical College, and Chiang Rai Kanjanapisek Technical College were also identified.

This research covered 12 groups of key informants. Those were students, instructors, administrators, the officers responsible for finance and accounting, buildings, library, student affairs, registration, information technology, job supervisors from both the institutes and entrepreneurs in the co-operative education program.

The quantitative instruments were 12 sets of questionnaires and 3 sets of instructed interviewing formats, a part from 2 additional sets of qualitative instruments. Those were a set of focus group discussion items and in-depth interviewing items. The collected data were, then,

analyzed in addition to the documentary analysis results. Frequency distribution, means, standard deviation, t-test, and descriptive analysis were applied in the data analyses.

The results of the study were as follows:

#### 1. The Development and improvement guidelines

The improvement guidelines for the tertiary educational institute's administration system focused on the learner-centered teaching and learning system. The sample groups proposed five guidelines: (1) to accelerate the teacher production process to meet the standard and quality criteria; (2) to reform the teaching and learning process contributing to rational thinking people; (3) supporting research and development for curriculum and teaching and learning improvement; (4) monitoring and evaluating the teaching and learning performance continuously; (5) encouraging more participation between teachers, learners, educational institutes, communities and concerned agencies for teaching and learning reform.

The key informants felt that the learner centered model was necessary, but there were some low performance in participation between teachers and learners, lesson planning, and supporting research for learning and teaching development.

The case study of Rangsit University showed that during the transition of semester and trimester systems, there were a number of managerial problems relating to teaching and learning performance. Those were such as the adjustment of teachers, officials and students, psychological aspect and timing that might affect the learner centered model's principle.

The study on cooperative education as conducted by the trimester and semester institutes were found in good conditions as to supplement the learners' overviews of actual work experiences, and develop their maturity for help.

However, both types of institutes shared common weaknesses in a continuity of personnel development in learner-centered model, lacking of first year students' capacity and readiness evaluation, and teaching and learning performance supporting and coordination inform of academic consortium network, and lacking of clear picture in applying the principles of nonformal and informal education paradigms for their internal and external teaching and learning programs.

#### 2. Comparison between the Trimester and Semester Systems

The research results indicated that either the trimester or semester system had various problems in its teaching and learning, and supporting systems. Those problems were ranked by the key informants from little to medium scales. However, after comparing the two different results as being ranked, no statistically significant difference was found.

### 3. The System adjustment and impacts

Guidelines for system improvement were proposed as follows: (1) integrating the conventional types of teaching and learning system with the modern ones such as distance education, E-learning, self-instructed learning kits, cross-institutional teaching program via teleconference or internet systems. The research found no definite comment from all key informants to change totally from one system to another one between the trimester and semester types. However, they suggested that more than one system could be put in trial for some curricula, but the institute should attach to its original type. A diversity of learning and teaching styles and types facilitating the learners should be welcomed and encouraged, but a feasibility study for such readiness should be conducted.

If there was such above-mentioned change by extending a single type of semester or trimester to a diversity of learning and teaching types, some impacts might be anticipated as follows. Those impacts would be in the dimensions of tertiary educational institutes, social, administrative structure, internal administration of organization, and inputs.

### 4. Guidelines and concepts for the educational administration system

Based on the National Educational Reform act B.E. 2542, the system and patterns of learning and teaching improvement should be in 3 main aspects. Those are to set a guideline and measure to adjust and change from a single teaching and learning pattern to a diversity, develop a set of criteria for such adjustment, and learning and teaching improvement criteria, and then, prepare to conduct an impact assessment in a deep and wide dimensions.