

A Study on the Reasons for the Student’s Dropout of Mahidol University International College (MUIC) Students During the Academic Years 2016/17 to 2017/18

Randa Rujichinnawong*

Abstract

This study focuses on the reasons why Mahidol University International College student's dropout during the academic years 2016/17 and 2017/18. The population group in this study consisted of 40 Mahidol University International College students who resigned during this period. The instrument used in the study was a questionnaire, and the data was analyzed by using the SPSS for Windows program in order to calculate the frequencies, mean, and standard deviations.

The respondents of this study were: 65% of the students resigning were female, and 62.5% of all of the students were aged between 18 to 20. Before studying at MUIC, 47.5% of the students resigning had cumulative GPAs of 2.51 and above; 42.5% of them

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were studying in the Bachelor of Business Administration Program, and 50% of the students resigned during the third trimester of the academic year 2016/17.

Looking at the family status, 72.5% of the total number of students who resigned were sponsored by their father or mother; 50% of the students stayed at the dormitory, condominium, or in a rented house. 70% of the parents of the students were living together, and the highest educational level of 47.5% of the students' parents was a Bachelor's degree. 80% of the parents' occupations were listed as self-employed, or as a business owner. 65% of the parents' incomes as stated in the questionnaire were above 120,000 baht.

The results indicated that: 1) Institutional aspect, the first three low-level causes for student's dropout were that the programs offered are not diverse enough, the institution is located far from home, as well as being inconvenient to travel to, and the major in which they studied was not useful to them. 2) Lecturer aspects, the first three low-level causes for student's dropout were that the students didn't like the teaching methods of the lecturer, the students were dissatisfied with the evaluation methods of the lecturer, and the students didn't receive proper guidance from their advisor. 3) Personal aspect, the high-level cause for student's dropout was that the students

going to study at another institution. 4) Family aspect the low-level cause for student's dropout was due to an internal problem in the family. Lastly, 5) Financial and economic aspect, the first two low-level causes for midway resignation were that the expenses of education were extremely high, and there were problems in the economic status of the family.

Keyword: Student's Dropout



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บทคัดย่อภาษาไทย

การวิจัยเรื่องการศึกษาสาเหตุการออกกลางคันของนักศึกษาวิทยาลัยนานาชาติ มหาวิทยาลัยมหิดล ปีการศึกษา 2559/60 และ 2560/61 มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาสาเหตุการออกกลางคันของนักศึกษาวิทยาลัยนานาชาติ มหาวิทยาลัยมหิดล ประชากรกลุ่มตัวอย่างที่ใช้ในการศึกษา ได้แก่ นักศึกษาวิทยาลัยนานาชาติ มหาวิทยาลัยมหิดล ที่ออกกลางคันจำนวน 40 คน เครื่องมือที่ใช้ในการวิจัย ได้แก่ แบบสอบถามการออกกลางคันของนักศึกษาวิทยาลัยนานาชาติ มหาวิทยาลัยมหิดล วิเคราะห์โดยใช้โปรแกรม SPSS for Windows หาค่าเฉลี่ย ค่าเบี่ยงเบนมาตรฐาน ผลการวิจัยพบว่า

นักศึกษาที่ออกกลางคันส่วนใหญ่เป็นหญิงร้อยละ 65 อายุ 18-20 ปี ร้อยละ 62.50 มีคะแนนเฉลี่ยสะสมเดิมก่อนเข้าศึกษา 2.51 ขึ้นไป ร้อยละ 47.50 ส่วนใหญ่เข้าศึกษาในสาขาวิชาบริหารธุรกิจร้อยละ 42.50 และออกกลางคันในภาคการศึกษาที่ 3 ปีการศึกษา 2559/60 ร้อยละ 50

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เหตุผลในการเลือกเรียนวิทยาลัยนานาชาติ มหาวิทยาลัยมหิดล เพราะสภาพแวดล้อมที่เหมาะสมและชื่อเสียงของวิทยาลัยนานาชาติมหาวิทยาลัยมหิดล ร้อยละ 32

สถานภาพทางครอบครัวบิดา-มารดาเป็นผู้อุปการะร้อยละ 72.50 พักอาศัยอยู่หอพัก คอนโด หรือบ้านเช่าร้อยละ 50 สถานภาพบิดา-มารดาอยู่ด้วยกันร้อยละ 70 วุฒิการศึกษาสูงสุดอยู่ในระดับปริญญาตรีร้อยละ 47.50 ประกอบกิจการส่วนตัวร้อยละ 80 และมีรายได้ตั้งแต่ 120,000 บาทขึ้นไปร้อยละ 45

สาเหตุการออกกลางคันด้านสถานศึกษาอยู่ในระดับน้อย 3 อันดับแรกคือ หลักสูตรที่เปิดไม่หลากหลาย สถานศึกษาอยู่ไกลไม่สะดวกในการเดินทางมาเรียนและชื่อเสียงและสาขาวิชาที่เรียนมีประโยชน์น้อย ด้านอาจารย์อยู่ในระดับน้อย 3 อันดับแรกคือ ไม่ชอบวิธีการสอนของอาจารย์ ไม่พอใจวิธีการประเมินผลของอาจารย์ และการไม่ได้รับคำปรึกษาจากอาจารย์ที่ปรึกษา ด้านส่วนตัวอยู่ในระดับมาก คือ เพื่อไปศึกษาต่อที่อื่น ด้านครอบครัวอยู่ในระดับน้อย คือ ปัญหาภายในครอบครัวไม่ราบรื่น ด้านการเงินและเศรษฐกิจอยู่ในระดับน้อย 2 อันดับแรกคือ ค่าใช้จ่ายในการศึกษาสูงมาก และฐานะทางเศรษฐกิจของครอบครัวไม่ดี

คำสำคัญ: การออกกลางคัน



A Study on the Reasons for the Student's Dropout of Mahidol University International College (MUIC) Students During the Academic Years 2016/17 to 2017/18

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Introduction

Background and Rationale

The educational administration of the country is an investment in the areas of human resources, finance, and equipment which leads to an increase in the productivity of the country as a whole. This investment in education is necessary in order to produce effective manpower for the country. If the investment in education does not meet expectations or serve its purposes, then the investment is wasted.

However, it is not that those who study in higher education will be able to complete their studies, some of them must drop out their studies result to the effect that the academic scholars call "Loss of investment in education" which means that the institution wastes the time in administrative management, waste of resources to invest

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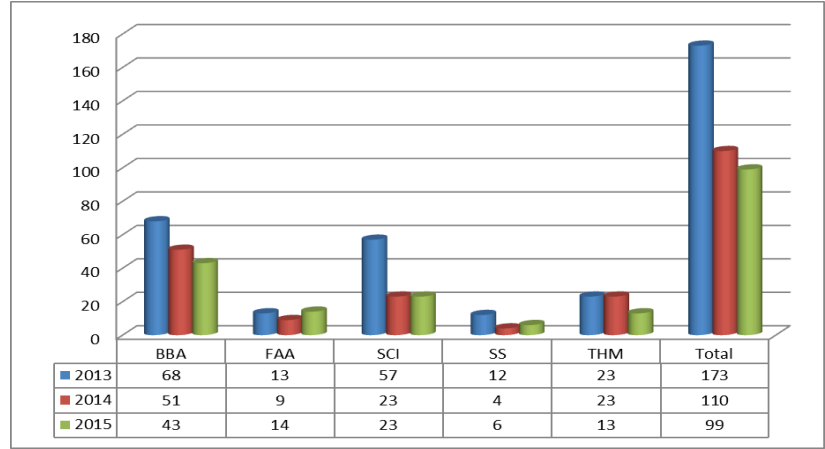
and waste the opportunity to support people while the students waste their time and money as well as the government also needs to allocate a large amount of funding to support higher education. In addition, college dropout reflects the efficiency of the teaching and learning of the institution as well. Hence the college dropout is a problem faced by many higher education institutions, with many factors affecting the dropout. For example, Muangthong Kaset (2001) studied the causes of the college dropouts of Electrical Engineering students, Faculty of Industrial Education, King Mongkut's University of Technology North Bangkok, it was found that the cause of student dropout was at the high level, i.e., the content of the course was not consistent with the previous knowledge, the subject is too difficult. In terms of the studying, basic knowledge for further study is not enough, lack of good study planning, the study time is not appropriate. In addition, the advisor thinks that students have not enough basic knowledge, course content is too difficult, and the students study non-voluntary subjects. Moreover, Saengsakorn Jaroon (1990) found that the cause of student dropout was due to 5 reasons; personal and family, teachers and teaching methods, education, financial, and economic. Most of the causes come from the personal and family aspects of the student. Jones and Clynn (cited from Jaroon Saengsakorn, 1990) conducted a survey on the causes of dropout among adult students in England. The survey found that almost three quarters of this is due to personal and family problems, including poor health, relocation, change of job, family mission and career.



The next reason is the dissatisfaction with the teaching condition and the attitude of the students themselves. One in four of the dropout who quit studying think that the activity or subject is not as interesting, later they find something more interesting, and do not like some classmates. As for the reason about the subject content, the students drop out because the subject is easier, while some subject is harder, and they prefer the challenging subjects. From the study of the research papers mentioned above, it may be concluded that the college dropout is a very important issue which is one of the problems of education that causes waste in investment for education.

Mahidol University International College is the first of its kind at a public university that offer international graduate studies. In March 1986 the Mahidol University Council officially endorsed the formation of a new international bachelor degree program, designated at that time as the International Students Degree Program (ISDP). The College is primarily responsible for teaching Bachelor's degree in science and liberal arts using English language in teaching. Later on 19 June 1996, with the approval from the Mahidol University Council, ISDP was officially designated Mahidol University International College (MUIC), giving it the full weight and stature of a faculty. The College is a pilot-run agency out of the administration of the University. From 1997 to present, Liberal Arts Education has been designed to provide well-rounded students with a wide range of learning and multi-dimensional learning. The course is taught in 5 disciplines; Business Administration, Fine and Applied Arts, Sciences, Social

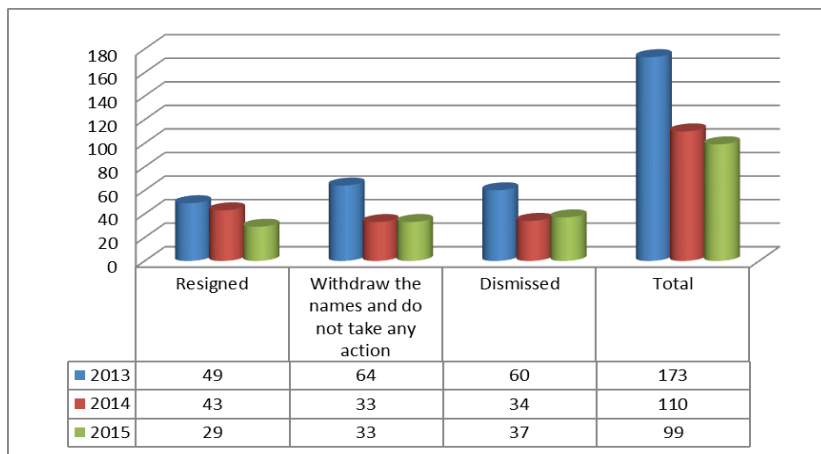
Science, and Tourism and Hospitality Management. According to the survey, the number of college drop out of five programs from the academic year 2013 to 2015, it was found that there is the dropping out in each year as follows:- (cited from International College, Mahidol University, 2017)



Sources:Registrar and Evaluation Unit, Mahidol University International College

Figure 1 : Number of MUIC student drop-out classified by subject from the academic year 2013-2015.

The cause of the college dropping out was classified into three categories: 1) Resignation 2) Dismissal 3) Disqualification because students did not attend school and lack of contact with the university. From the academic year 2013-2015, the number of students dropped out due to the following 3 reasons:



Sources:Registrar and Evaluation Unit, Mahidol University International College

Figure 2 : Number of undergraduate students dropping out of Mahidol University International College from the academic year 2013-2015.

For the rationale stated above, the researcher decided to investigate the reasons for students dropping out of Mahidol University International College.

Research Objectives

To investigate the reasons for students dropping out from Mahidol University International College, during 2016 and 2017.

Benefits of the Research

1. To gain knowledge of the problems and causes of students dropping out of Mahidol University International College.
2. The results of the study will give clues on how to reduce the rate of education dissipation, due to bachelor students dropping out of university.

Scope of the Research

Population of the Study

The sample of the study included students at the bachelor's degree level who enrolled at Mahidol University International College, but dropped out during the academic years 2016 and 2017.

Research Variables

Independent Variables – there were two independent variables as follows:

1. Status of the students, which consists of gender, age, prior educational background, and GPA.
2. Family background of the questionnaire respondents, as the sponsor for tuition, giving residency during the students' university study, marital status of the parents, etc.

Dependent Variables – the causes of dropping out were divided into 5 areas as follows:

1. The institute
2. Lecturer aspects
3. Personal aspects
4. Family aspect



5. Finance and the economy

Literature Review

Higher Education Level

Educators have given the meaning of higher education, the summary is as follows.

Srisa-arn Vijit (1985) mentioned that, in general, higher education is a Tertiary Education which is the level after Post-secondary Education. Scope of higher education may be divided into three levels; the first level is lower than the bachelor's degree, namely the Diploma of Vocational Education and the diploma. The second level is undergraduate and the third level is higher than the bachelor degree, which is called graduate level.

Sinlarat Paitul (1977) gave the meaning of higher education that "Higher education is a study for one's age, particularly adolescence or adulthood."

Devahasdin Na Ayudhya Wallapa (1981) concluded the definition of higher education as "Higher education is high level of education designed for students with high maturity and passed high school education. "

From the definition of higher education mentioned above, higher education institutions are the institutions that provide post-secondary education which composed of Vocational College, Private colleges, universities and Rajabhat Universities which offer undergraduate education level upwards.

Research related to the student dropout is summarized as follows.

Dissawat Saowanee (1977) studied the graduation opportunities of Chulalongkorn University students and compared the graduation opportunities of Chulalongkorn University students who possess different backgrounds. The research found that Chulalongkorn University students have the opportunity to complete their studies on time, complete their studies after the deadline, and the drop out was .06, 0.8, and 1.2 respectively. It also found that, male students are significantly more likely to graduate after the deadline and drop out than female students. Chulalongkorn University students whose father are the agriculturists, significantly have higher probability of dropping out than students whose parents are wealthy, officer, trading career or business owner.

Ketpratum Visar (2004) conducted a study on higher education research. One of the findings of this research is that the efficiency of higher education system defined as the maximum amount of the output compared to limited resources and time spent while the efficiency of public universities in terms of teaching varies by the institutions and programs offered. Percentage of graduates in the field of Medicine is considered higher than other majors. But in the field of Science, Engineering, Agriculture and Architecture, the rate of repeat the class and dropout are higher than that of other subjects.

Pongchaikul Sopha (1984) studied the problem of the undergraduate students drop out of the Faculty of Science with



the purpose to study the status and the cause of the student drop out. The samples were students in three higher education institutions, Chulalongkorn University, Mahidol University, and King Mongkut's Institute of Technology altogether 961 students. The research on the status of dropouts found that male students dropped out more than females. Most of the dropout students are domiciled in Bangkok and their parents have their own business.

Anderson Inoz Abiginal (1979) studied factors influencing the student drop out of the adult undergraduate students at the University of Massachusetts School of Medicine, it was found that the most important factor involved in their dropouts was the cost of studying, attitude of family member towards learning as well as duties on their responsibilities. In addition, it was found that, the students' health, knowledge and experiences as well as the teacher's attitude and other students over the adult students of such School are related to the dropout of students. Research by George Sankara Davis Junior, 1964, who studied the factors related to student dropout enrolled in adult education programs of Florida National Guard Volunteer, it was found that the presence of instructors, such as the meetings, equality, and the justice are associated with the student dropout.

Dulniak, 1982 studied the characteristics and the estimation on student dropout among 1,159 students at Montana State University in the academic year 1977 – 1979, it was found that male students have higher dropout rates than female students, students with low academic performance have a high proportion of dropouts, and

students who have not yet selected majors have a higher dropout rate than students who have already selected their majors.

Methodology

The process of the research undertaken is shown below:

Population and samples

Research tools

Data collection

Data processing and analyzing

Population and Samples

The population of the research consisted of 40 bachelor degree students at Mahidol University International College (MUIC), who dropped out during the Academic Years 2016 and 2017.

Research tools

The research tool used in the study were questionnaires, which were distributed to bachelor degree students dropping out of Mahidol University International College (MUIC).

The questionnaire used to find out the causes of students dropping out of MUIC during 2016 and 2017 was divided into 4 phases, namely:



Phase 1 Consisted of general questions about personal information, such as gender, age, prior education, GPA, major, etc. in a form of a checklist, and filling in the blanks; altogether a total of 9 steps.

Phase 2 Contained questions about the family status of the students such as sponsorship, address during study, marital status of the parents, etc; a total of 6 items altogether.

Phase 3 Was concerned with the causes of students dropping out of MUIC in 2016 and 2017, divided into 5 areas; 11 items on the educational institution, 7 items on the teaching personnel, 11 items on personal affairs, 6 items on family status, and 3 items on finance and the economy. Altogether there were 38 items using a rating scale as follows:

5 represents	greatly agree
4 represents	very much agree
3 represents	moderately agree
2 represents	slightly agree
1 represents	least agree
0 represents	no reason given for dropping out.

Phase 4 Consisted of open-ended questions about suggestions on the educational administration of Mahidol University International College.

The process of creating the research instrument

1. The related concepts, documents, research, gathering ideas and patterns related to college dropouts were studied.
2. The questions that covered the objectives of the research were compiled.
3. The questionnaire was submitted to MUIC for any wording corrections and for checks on its accuracy. Then the suggestions received from the experts were implemented, and the questionnaire was revised.
4. To check on the questionnaire's reliability, the researcher tried it out on 30 students from Mahidol University International College; and it was analyzed for reliability using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient, which yielded a result of .916.
5. The finalized version of the questionnaire was printed out after one final check for its correctness, before being used for data collection.

Collection of Data

The researcher collected the data from bachelor's degree students studying at Mahidol University International College, who dropped out during the academic years 2016 and 2017. They were selected from each college year, and from five majors which comprised of the Bachelor of Business Administration, Fine and Applied Arts, Science, Social Science, and Tourism and Hospitality Management. The data was collected between April 2016 and April 2017, from 40 questionnaires.



Data Processing and Data Analysis

After the questionnaire had been collected from the 40 research samples, they were analyzed by using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences: (SPSS).

The general information of the students was analyzed using percentages; following which the opinions of the students on the causes of early withdrawal from MUIC were analyzed using a rating scale, and a frequency distribution of the answers of each question, in order to find the mean (\bar{x}) and standard deviation (S.D.) of all areas, and by each item. The data was then presented in a table for ease of presentation.

The interpretation of the calculated mean, representing the opinions of the causes of early withdrawal from MUIC, is based on a 5 rating scale as follows:

4.51-5.00	represents	Greatly agree.
3.51-4.50	represents	Very much agree.
2.51-3.50	represents	Moderately agree.
1.51-2.50	represents	Slightly agree.
1.00-1.50	represents	Least agree.

Findings

Section 1: General information of the college dropouts

The majority of the dropouts were female (65%), whereas 35% were male; 72.5 percent were in their first year of college, followed by second year students who constituted 20%; 62.5% of the respondents were aged between 18 to 20, followed by 22.5% of

respondents aged between 21 to 23 years old; and students with a high school GPA of 2.51 and higher constituted 82.5%. Reasons given for enrolling at MUIC were because of the atmosphere and reputation (32%); students with parents who wanted their children to attend MUIC (16%); and students who wanted to follow their peers, and students who lived near MUIC (10%).

Section 2: General information about family

Only 72.5% were reported as being sponsored by their parents; 50% lived in flats, condominiums, or rented houses during their study, followed by living with parents which constituted 45%. 70% of the respondents were students with undivorced parents, and students with parents with only bachelor degrees constituted 47.5%. Those with parents who owned a business constituted 80%, and 45% of parents had an income of 120,001 baht and above.

Section 3: The results of the analysis on opinions of causes of early withdrawal of the students from MUIC 2016 - 2017

The opinions on the causes of early withdrawal of the students from MUIC in 2016 and 2017 revealed that the students slightly agreed ($\bar{x} = 2.0$) on the educational institute being a cause of dropping out.

When considering each item, it was revealed that students slightly agreed ($\bar{x} = 2.3$) that the reasons for dropping out were that the programs offered were limited ($\bar{x} = 2.2$), and also that the location of the school is far and inconvenient for traveling, the reputation and programs are not very useful, and the college has too many activities



($\bar{x} = 2.05$). Students also slightly agreed that the teaching personnel was a cause of dropping out ($\bar{x} = 1.77$), as was the students disliking the teacher's teaching approach ($\bar{x} = 2.00$).

Also slightly agreed upon were dissatisfaction with the teacher's method of evaluation and not receiving advice from their advisors ($\bar{x} = 1.88$); the teacher had inadequate knowledge to teach ($\bar{x} = 1.8$); the teacher did not try to understand the students' problems and feelings ($\bar{x} = 1.7$); the teacher had a negative attitude towards the students ($\bar{x} = 1.63$); and the teachers did not appropriately conduct themselves at work ($\bar{x} = 1.53$).

The overall opinions of the students from MUIC in terms of personal reasons being a cause of dropping out was also slightly agreed upon ($\bar{x} = 1.79$).

The results show that the desire to study elsewhere ($\bar{x} = 3.73$) was very much agreed upon; whilst receiving low grades ($\bar{x} = 2.08$) was only slightly agreed on; being unable to adjust to the college environment and the community ($\bar{x} = 1.7$) and being indecisive about a major selection ($\bar{x} = 1.68$), also proved to be slightly agreed upon. Not studying hard was the least agreed upon ($\bar{x} = 1.45$) as were health not being conducive to higher education ($\bar{x} = 1.33$) and in terms of overall family status ($\bar{x} = 1.34$). However, students slightly agreed on some family issues as being a cause of dropping out ($\bar{x} = 1.63$).

The question of the values the parents placed on the education institute and parents having a negative attitude towards MUIC

were least agreed on ($\bar{x} = 1.33$); as were parents or family members not supporting them or moving away with their parents or their sponsors ($\bar{x} = 1.28$); and helping the parents to earn income ($\bar{x} = 1.25$). Finance and the economy as a cause on the other hand, was slightly agreed upon ($\bar{x} = 1.61$), as were the high cost of education ($\bar{x} = 1.9$); the family's financial background ($\bar{x} = 1.65$). The least agreed upon was not having a sponsor ($\bar{x} = 1.3$).

Discussion

Interesting points from the research results worth discussion are as follows:

The Institute

The research indicates that the education institute itself can be a cause of early withdrawal from school. Effective school administration encompasses the curriculum, lesson plans, teaching methods, activities that are important for developing intelligence, social skills that affect students' learning, meeting the needs of the labor market, and providing a good opportunity for future employment. In addition, educational institutes are responsible for laying a strong foundation for students at the beginning of the first term, by having students take prerequisites in order to help them adjust and adapt to learning at a university level. This will result in students having a better understanding of subject contents and better academic achievements. Educational institutes must focus more seriously on the instructors via monitoring and evaluating, and should reward



instructors who come up with successful teaching approaches; together with changing teachers' perspectives, attitudes, and behavior so that teaching and learning can be carried out more effectively. Teachers should base their lessons on the psychology of teaching when preparing lessons, bearing in mind the differences of the students, and center on the students. New teaching techniques, that are fun, and interesting, and useful learning activities that are current and able to stimulate an interest in learning should be adopted. The students who dropped out, therefore, believe that the administration of MUIC has an influence on learning that can lead to success or failure. In addition, good management can also give students the confidence that they can enjoy college life in a society that is moving towards Thailand 4.0.

Lecturer Aspects

The research results also suggest that college students who drop out believe that teaching staff are a factor for students dropping out, because the educational institute is responsible for training students to have necessary skills that meet expected outcomes. Therefore, teachers or lecturers play a vital role in preparing good lessons that stimulate students to want to learn and to study hard, as well as in creating a relationship of trust between students and teachers, and amongst students themselves. Moreover, teachers must prepare and provide appropriate learning content and activities that satisfy students, and are most learning-effective. However, MUIC has a good reputation and has produced a large number of

graduates for many years, and has a curriculum that allows students to develop in all areas, based on the capabilities of the individuals. Hence, MUIC is a highly trusted institute in the country and is highly recommended by the labor market; and as such the problem of the teaching staff has little effect on MUIC dropouts.

Personal Aspect

The research reveals that the college dropouts believe that the personal aspect of students dropping out arises from a desire to study elsewhere, in Thailand and abroad. Therefore, the college should offer courses that make students the focus of learning, and schedule courses to match the convenience in terms of time and needs of the students. A study by Pithiyanuwat Somwong (2010), which was about early withdrawal from university stated that the causes of dropping out were a failure of time management, not working hard at school, having a negative attitude towards the subjects and majors of study, not having the required knowledge to complete the courses, and not being able to adjust to college life and the workload.

Family Aspect

The study revealed that the college dropouts believe that family issues are a problem that can lead to an early withdrawal from school. This may be due to the family being the first ones to encourage students to study hard, and to encourage them to learn. The family's relationship, encouragement and support have a great impact.



Sarapradit Kittisak (2006) summed up the importance of the family as follows:

- 1) A positive stimulus for academic outcomes
- 2) Academic advice
- 3) Good work ethics
- 4) Development support of the students' intelligence
- 5) Enthusiasm of the family

Finance and the Economy

The research shows that college dropouts believe economic and financial problems are a major factor and greatly affect students' learning. Because students from families of low socio-economic backgrounds are impelled to work to survive, this significantly impacts the time they spend at school and on completing school tasks. This is a significant trend, those with low-social economic backgrounds are more likely to drop out than those with a better economic and financial status.

Recommendations

1. Recommendations for the units and the persons involved.

1.1 The university should take into account the causes of college dropout considerations and set clear policies of the admission along with the guidelines for teaching and learning or budget allocation for the development of educational institutions to be ready to produce students.

1.2 The instructors should develop new instructional systems or teaching methods by using psychology method to comply with the difference between individuals. The instructors should seriously pay attention to the students and learn more about the nature of students.

1.3 Teaching technique and evaluation for instructors should be developed.

1.4 Students should consider their ability to know what they are capable of. When there is a problem with the study, it is advisable to consult a parent or counselor. Students should focus on the outside world and should participate in the activities organized by the university to establish student relationships. The most important thing is to pay attention to learning and do not miss the class unnecessarily.

1.5 Basic adjustments for the courses must be provided prior to the studying including the supplementary courses for the students with grades less than 2.00

2. Recommendations on the operation-based method

2.1 There should be a study on college students' dropouts in order to know the correlations of variables affecting college dropouts of Mahidol University International College.

2.2 Research in each student's program of study should be conducted in order to study and realize the real reasons on college student drop out which will be the solution to the problem.



2.3 There should be a causal study on the opinions of the instructors about the reasons of students' dropping out.

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