

## **ABSTRACT**

**Topic:** Factors Affecting Motivation for Further Education at Graduate Studies Level at Mahidol University in the Academic Year 2008

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The purposes of this research were to study factors affecting motivation of students to pursue further education in graduate studies level at Mahidol University, to study the expectations of students of Mahidol University, and to study problems and obstacles in the university's admission and selection procedures in order to find ways to improve them..

The study surveyed 1,200 students who were admitted to study in the Faculty of Graduate Studies and who reported to the faculty in Academic Year 2008. The results are as follows:.

1. Factors which motivated students to further their education were divided into 3 aspects: academic factors, self-expectation factors, and other factors. The students reported that motivation for further education relating to academic aspects and motivation relating to self-expectation were both at a high level. Other factors were at a moderate level.

2. There was a statistically significant relationship ( $p=0.05$ ) between personal status on the one hand and academic and self-expectation motivation factors on the other.

3. Student perceptions of the academic quality of the courses revealed that after graduation from a master's degree a majority of students (61.8 percent) expected to get a job. A very large majority (91.8 percent) perceived that, concerning their quality as graduates, they expected to gain academic knowledge in their study major while 70.3 percent expected the faculty to constantly update and improve the curriculum. On the other hand, the major negative factor for a significant minority (22.1 percent) was that they would have to write a thesis in English.

4. On economic issues, the main sources of capital for students' further education were their families. In considering their major area of study, students would rarely consider labor market demand and educational fees in deciding to study at Mahidol University, but they hoped to receive scholarships and assistance from university and government sources and from the Faculty of Graduate Studies during their studies.

#### 5. Development of admission service

In terms of application in person, a majority of students who applied directly for admission through officers of the faculty pointed out that they received very good service (56.2 percent), followed by fair service at 33.7 percent. A slim majority considered that the place of application was appropriate (51.2 percent) and almost a third reported that they found no problem in the application process (30.3 percent). In addition, the most convenient channels of application were reported to be application in person (33.5 percent) and application form purchase from the Faculty of Graduate Studies (37.6 percent).

In terms of online application, the majority (84.4 percent) of students had computers that could access the internet and a smaller majority perceived that online application was convenient (61.7 percent). A slight majority were very satisfied (50.4 percent). A majority (55.3 percent) of students agreed to the proposition of the faculty having online application as the only channel of application while 43.0 percent disagreed either because they did not have a computer and Internet access or because they preferred application in person.

In general, student motivations centered on academic concerns and expectations of themselves. There was a large degree of satisfaction with the admission procedures and services but a degree of concern about moving to a completely online system.