

Chapter 5

Conclusions and Discussions

This chapter includes conclusions from results, discussions, recommendations and suggestions for further research, and limitations of the study.

5.1 Conclusions

This study investigated the rate of transfer of students who were enrolled in a four-year bachelor degree program in one of four faculties within Prince of Songkla University, Pattani between 1999 and 2007. The overall transfer rate was 3.6%.

Muslim male students from the faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences had the highest transfer rate (7.8%) among all faculty-religion-gender groups. Students admitted in 2004 had the highest rate of transfer (7.1%), while the students admitted in 2006 had the lowest (1.0%). Most of the students transferred after they had been studying for 4 or more years.

After adjusting for year of admission and duration of study, we found that Muslim male students from the faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences had a disproportionately higher rate of transfer than other faculty-religion-gender groups. In contrast, male and female non-Muslim students from the faculty of Science and Technology had much lower transfer rates than the other faculty-religion-gender groups. Students admitted in 2005 had lower transfer rates and students who had been studying for 4 or more years were more likely to transfer than were students who had been studying for only 2-3 years.

5.2 Discussions

The previous studies have investigated student transfer rates in universities, and a common finding is that the number of students who transferred is large. The number of transfer students in PSU Pattani is much less than the others this may due to the conditions that must be met for students wishing to transfer, and each faculty has different conditions that must be met. Transfer conditions include grade levels of studies in a specific subject, grade point average, extra tuition fees, and entrance exam scores.

For the faculty-religion-gender variable in our study, we found that Muslim males students from the faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences were transfer their major more than the other faculty-religion-gender groups. This result is similar to a study by Caroline in 2009 who found that males were more likely to transfer than females.

However our study's findings are in contrast with a study conducted by the office of Institutional Research (2004) and Herzog (2005), which found that females had a higher rate of transfer.

For the year of admission variable, we found that students admitted in 2004 were transferring their major more than the other years. This might due to the university curriculum and regulations on transferring major of undergraduate were revised in academic year 2004. PSU regulations on transferring major in 1996, if students transfer to new faculty, student must study in current faculty at least two semesters. If student transfer to new major within the same faculty they must study in current major at least one semester. One of the requirement was the student must had a university admission score more than the lowest score of new major. Otherwise GPA for previous semester was considered. PSU regulations on transferring major in 2004,

transfer students are required to study in the current major for at least one semester, the requirements of transfer depend on each faculty or each major.

For duration of study, we found that the students who had been studying for 4 or more years were more likely to transfer than students who had been studying for only 2-3 years. In PSU, many students cannot transfer in the year that they want to, because their academic results cannot satisfy the requirements for the new degree. Thus, a so-called "lag effect" occurs. These students did not pass some requirements of the faculties where they would like to transfer to such as student need to transfer to faculty of Education, one of the requirements is student must past education foundation course. Transfer student could be able to graduate in the same year after transfer their major because these transfer students have studied all subjects required in the new major before it was approved to transfer. So when the process have approved these students had satisfied all requirements. The University of California, Irvine (UCI) 57% of students who wanted to change their major degree started thinking about it in their first year of study, and 25% in the second year, but there was a time lag before they actually transferred (Shoemaker, 2007).

5.3 Recommendations and Further Research

In order to reduce the rate of transfer for undergraduate students in PSU Pattani, it is important to let the students know the details of the relevant major courses before they enroll in the university. It is important for students to select a major that suits their ability and interest. In the University of California, 16% of all new freshmen undergraduate students claimed to have known about their first major quite a lot, 69% knew something, and 15% knew nothing at all. Some students stated that their father

had an influence on their choice of major. Some students had no idea about any majors (Shoemaker, 2007).

PSU Open Week is a most important activity for high school students, during which the campus allows communities and high school students to visit. These visits provide opportunities for them to learn about the university curriculum.

Thus the university is aware of the importance of various experimental courses by offering teaching programs to interested students. Students should know their interests, motivations and ability before deciding whether to study, and what to study, at university. Moreover, methods need to be introduced to reduce losses caused by transfer of major. The further research on factors related to transferring are needed.

5.4 Limitations

The findings in this thesis are subject to at least three limitations. Firstly, this study did not include investigation of flow, or connections, between majors. For instance, we did not investigate students who transferred from Chemistry to a connected Biology major, or other more significantly different field. Secondly, this study was focused on PSU Pattani, which has a very different cultural and religious background. The results may therefore not be relevant generally to all universities in Thailand. Thirdly, due to secondary data being used for this study, there are quite a few variables that were not considered in this study but which could be included in subsequent studies.