

A CONTEXT OF THE EDUCATION MANAGEMENT BASED ON MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION FOR ETHNIC STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS OF NORTHERN THAILAND*

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Abstract: This research aimed to 1) explore current conditions and issues on education management based on multicultural education for ethnic students in higher education institutions in northern Thailand, and 2) consider their expectation of the education management drawn upon the same. A sample group was 356 ethnic students, at their bachelor degree level, in the second semester for the year 2014, in 11 higher education institutions. The data collection instrument was a questionnaire on education management, based on multicultural education, with 3 aspects. The first aspect was institution administration: policy; organizational culture; attitudes, beliefs, and actions of staff; community participation; and language/native language of the institution. The second was curriculum and teaching and learning management: curriculum design and course of study, and institution's learning pattern. And the third was students' quality development: student counseling service and student assistance program. Statistics employed for analysis were frequency, percentage, arithmetic mean, and standard deviation. The findings demonstrated that the ethnic students have, with a statistical significance, the expectation of the education management in all aspects. Further, a new body of knowledge derived was that the education management clearly impacted their learning achievement. In order to enhance efficiency of education management and to elevate learning achievement of ethnic students, therefore, these institutions should design and develop a model of

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education management based on multicultural education, which is necessarily suitable for these students. Given this, however, such a model must be corresponding to and in accordance with the direction of the institution development strategy.

Keywords: Context, Education Management, Multicultural Education, Ethnic Students.

Introduction

According to Thai social and historical contexts, there have been an increasing number of ethnic groups settling in all regions of Thailand. The population of ethnic groups can be divided in accordance with their geographical settlement as follows: northern region: Karen, Hmong, Mien, Lisu, Lahu, Akha, Lua, Tin, Khamu and Mlabri; central region: Lao Phuan, Mon, Tai Berng, Lao Gao, Lao Wiang and Lao Krang; northeastern region: Phu Tai, Kui, Yor, Ka Lerng, Yoy, Phuan, Sag and Mon-Khmer; and southern region: Melayu or yawi (Thai Malays), Orang Laut, Moken or Moklen and Sakai.

As a result of their long-standing existence, a number of ethnic groups continue to increase, and so do those in higher education institutions, in the northern region in particular. These students, however, experience difficulties in acculturation and use of language (Juraiporn Jitpitak, 2553). The issue of acculturation can be attributed to two significant causes: feeling alienated and a lack of recognition among majority students in the higher education society. This, in turn, adversely affects their learning quality and causes a certain number of problems to many individuals: a lack of participation and assertive expression, isolation, a lack of confidence to communicate with their faculty and friends, a lack of self-care and no reception of promotion from the education system which has a single rule from the majority. Such problems and impacts have led to degradation of education quality and reduction of learning capacity of ethnic students themselves.

In this regard, it is clear that ethnic students are one of significant factors that affect the education management system and method, quality development management of existing Thai higher education institutions, as well as security of the state. In order to ensure efficiency and effectiveness of education development and management of the institutions in the north, according to the direction of Thai higher education institutions, in the overall picture, and education management that truly responds to the needs of ethnic students in the area, this study on the context in education management based on multicultural education, therefore, focused on current conditions and expectation of education management for ethnic students under present circumstances and multicultural social context of the northern Thailand.

Research Objectives

There are two objectives for the research:

1. To explore current conditions and issues on education management based on multicultural education for ethnic students in higher education institutions in northern Thailand.
2. To consider their expectation of the education management drawn upon the same.

Literature Review

From a survey of literature relevant to education management based on multicultural education, there were 8 studies associated with this topic: Renn (2004), Banks and Banks (2010), Starr (1989), Gollnick, Sadker and Sadker (1982), Giroux (1989), Suzuki (1980), Shor and Freire (1987), and Philips (1983), while a theory and literature synthesis presented 2 central concepts, as summarized below.

Renn (2004) conducted a study on identity development process of students of color in 6 colleges in central and eastern regions of the U.S. in order to identify education practices suitable for these students due to issues of alienation and a lack of recognition among the majority students, and found a certain number of conclusions which can be applied as a framework for higher education practices. As for higher education institutions that are required to carry out education management under the multicultural social context, as suggested by Renn, the practices they need to develop involve 6 variables as follows: 1) assessment, 2) policy modification, 3) creation of space for welcoming mixed race students, 4) structural diversity, 5) curriculum, and 6) crossing over boundaries.

Also, the underlined conception in Banks and Banks (2010) concerning a model of multicultural education management mentioned at least 3 principles that need to be considered: 1) idea or concept which aims at education for all with equal access to learning in an institution and at best development learners can attain from such an institution, 2) a framework for educational reform in a holistic manner and not restricted to change in curriculums, and 3) education management process based on multicultural education and goals of liberated and fair education management for educational equality of all students. Include, Banks (2012) concerning the total school environment.

(See Figure 1 on the next page)

Multicultural education focuses on how race, ethnicity, class, gender, religion, language, exceptionality, sexual orientation (lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender [LGBT]), and religion influence student learning and behavior. Multicultural education examines the way in which these variables singly and interactively influence student behavior. Multicultural educators use the term *intersectionality* to describe the way in which these variable interact to influence the behavior of students (Grant and Sleeter, 1986; Grant and Zwi, 2012). Teachers cannot comprehensively understand the behavior of a student by knowing only her race or ethnicity. Teachers will gain a better understanding of the student and her behavior if the teacher also knows her primary language, social class, ethnic identity, and the extent to which the student identifies with her ethnic group. The theories found were then synthesized in order to conceptualize a study on a context of education management based on multicultural education for ethnic minority students in higher education institutions in northern Thailand.

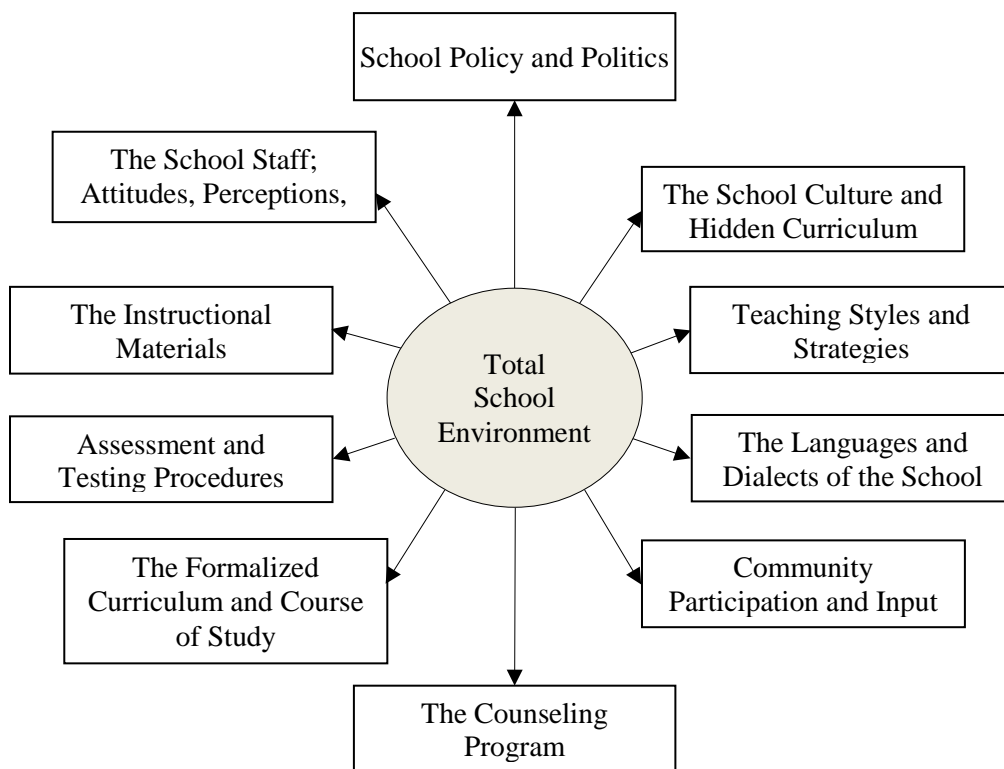


Figure 1: The Total School Environment. Source: J. A. Banks (2012). *An Introduction to Multicultural Education*. (15th Ed.) Washington: University of Washington Press, p.2.

Conceptual Framework

Framework from Figure 2 shows the conceptual framework of the study which are (1) multicultural education idea such as culture idea (Kroeber and Kluckhohn, 1952) and educational management based on multicultural education (Banks and Banks, 2010) (2) the practices they need to develop involve 6 variables as follows: 1) assessment, 2) policy modification, 3) creation of space for welcoming mixed race students, 4) structural diversity, 5) curriculum, and 6) crossing over boundaries. (Renn, 2004) (3) the total school environment (Banks, 2012) combining 10 significant factors are 1) school policy and politics 2) the School culture and hidden curriculum 3) teaching styles and strategies 4) the languages and dialectics of the school 5) community participation and input 6) the counseling program 7) the formalized curriculum and course of study 8) assessment and testing procedures 9) the instructional materials and 10) the school staff: attitudes, perceptions, beliefs and actions.

(See Figure 2 on the next page)

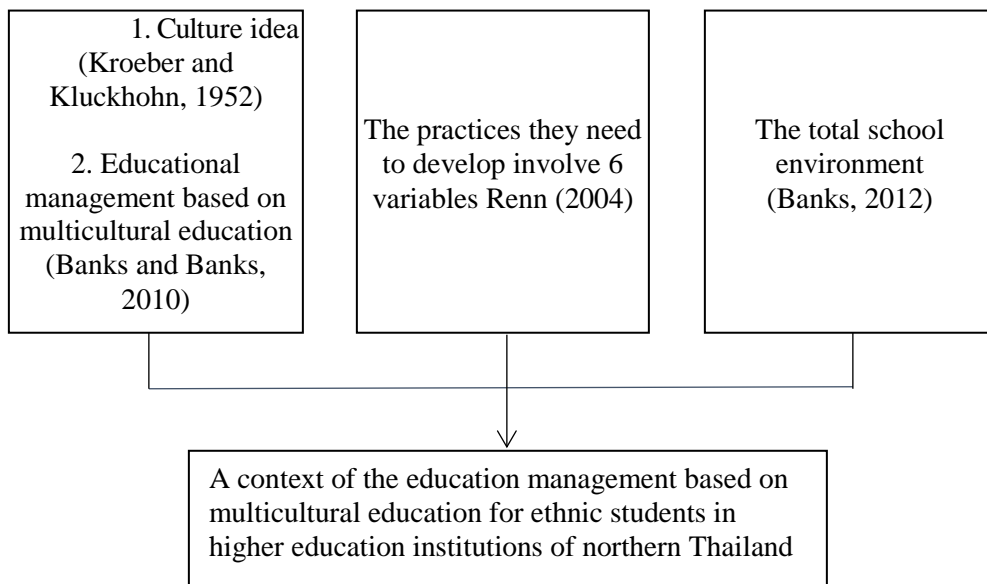


Figure 2: Conceptual Framework of the Study

Research Methodology

Population

The population comprised ethnic students attending at higher education institutions in northern Thailand. These institutions can be divided into 2 public universities: 1) Naresuan University and 2) Maejo University; 3 autonomous universities: 1) Chiang Mai University, 2) University of Phayao, and 3) Mae Fah Luang University; 5 Rajabhat universities: 1) Kamphaeng Phet Rajabhat University, 2) Chiang Rai Rajabhat University, 3) Chiang Mai Rajabhat University, 4) Lampang Rajabhat University, and 5) Uttaradit Rajabhat University; and 1 Rajamangala University of Technology: Rajamangala University of Technology Lanna, Payap Campus.

Sample group

The sample group was ethnic students, at their bachelor degree level, in the second semester for the year 2014, in 11 higher education institutions in the north, derived through the use of simple random sampling. A sample size of 356 students was calculated using Yamane's formula (Yamane, 1973) at a confidence level of 95% and error of ± 5 .

Data Collection

The researcher submitted a letter, endorsed by the faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University, to 11 higher education institutions in the northern region to ask for permission to collect data. The collection was conducted through a use of a questionnaire, distributed to 356 ethnic students. Then, all questionnaires were

reviewed for completeness. In case of incompleteness, data collection was re-conducted until satisfying the corresponding number.

Data Analysis

An analysis of data was conducted using 1) frequency and percentage for demographic data and 2) arithmetic mean (\bar{x}) and standard deviation (SD) for current conditions, issues on education management and ethnic students' expectation.

Research Procedure

This study is a descriptive research which is divided into 4 steps as followed.

1. Study and analyze concepts, theories, principle, and related researches about education management, multicultural and multicultural education by using books research article Thai and aboard journal and internet.
2. Collect data of current condition and expectation from questionnaire based on multicultural education about the total school environment (Banks, 2012) combining 9 significant factors and 3 aspects are aspect 1: 1) institution administration, 2) institution policy, organizational culture, 3) staff: attitudes, beliefs, and actions, 4) community participation and 5) language/native language of the institution; aspect 2: 6) curriculum and course of study, and 7) institution's learning patter; aspect 3: 8) counseling service and 9) student assistance program.
3. An analyze of current condition and expectation about the education management based on multicultural education for ethnic students in higher education institutions of northern Thailand by questionnaire.
4. Showed the research results of current condition and expectation about the education management based on multicultural education for ethnic students in higher education institutions of northern Thailand.

Research Findings

1. Current conditions and issues on education management based on multicultural education for ethnic students

Table 1: Demographic Data of the Respondents (Categorized by Gender, Year of Education, Institution, Faculty and Major, Ethnicity, Nationality, and Enrollment Method)

Demographic data	Number	Percentage
1. Gender		
Male	304	85.4
Female	52	14.6
2. Year of education		
1	71	19.9
2	122	34.3
3	101	28.4
4	39	11.0
5	23	6.5

Table 1: Demographic Data of the Respondents (Categorized by Gender, Year of Education, Institution, Faculty and Major, Ethnicity, Nationality, and Enrollment Method)

Demographic data	Number	Percentage
3. Institution		
1. Naresuan University	18	5.1
2. Maejo University	15	4.2
3. Chiang Mai University	20	5.6
4. University of Phayao	14	3.9
5. Mae Fah Luang University	29	8.1
6. Kamphaeng Phet Rajabhat University	59	16.6
7. Chiang Rai Rajabhat University	61	17.1
8. Chiang Mai Rajabhat University	69	19.4
9. Lampang Rajabhat University	17	4.8
10. Uttaradit Rajabhat University	40	11.2
11. Rajamangala University of Technology Lanna, Payap Campus	14	3.9
4. Faculty/Program		
1. Health sciences	22	6.18
2. Science and technology	39	10.95
3. Humanities and Social sciences	295	82.87
5. Ethnicity		
1. Karen	83	23.31
2. Hmong	151	42.42
3. Mien	34	9.55
4. Lisu	16	4.50
5. Lahu	38	10.67
6. Akha	12	3.37
7. Shan	22	6.18
6. Nationality		
1. Thai	246	69.10
2. Non-citizenship	110	30.90
7. Method of enrollment		
1. Direct admission of institution/faculty/program	225	63.20
2. Scholarship program for hill tribe students, department of provincial administration, ministry of interior	83	23.32
3. Quota of institution	26	7.30
4. Admission	22	6.18

Table 2: Current Conditions and Issues on Education Management Based on Multicultural Education

Description	Current condition		Interpretation
	\bar{x}	S.D.	
Aspect 1: Institution administration			
1. Institution policy	2.84	1.304	Moderate
2. Organizational culture	2.66	1.345	Moderate
3. Staff: Attitudes, Beliefs, and Actions	3.03	1.335	Moderate
4. Community participation	3.12	1.330	Moderate
5. Language/Native language of the institution	3.00	1.368	Moderate
Aspect 2: Curriculum and course of study			
1. Curriculum and course of study	2.75	1.566	Moderate
2. Institution's learning patter	2.75	1.306	Moderate
Aspect 3: Student quality development			
1. Counseling service	2.89	1.386	Moderate
2. Student assistance program	2.87	1.399	Moderate
Total	2.88	1.371	Moderate

A study on current conditions and issues on the education management demonstrated that the institutions provide qualified structured teaching and learning system that enables students to gain full knowledge and skills which, in turn, can be applied to development of their domicile, together with convenient arrangements, student assistance program and education funding program (32.30%). The existing education management, however, is still based on curriculums, passive learning. This, thus, discourages students from expressing assertively with their own capacity. Also, curriculums that revolve around extending understanding of ethnicity are still limited, while access to ethnic students of mainstream students is also restricted. Together, it results in little understanding of ethnic groups among other students (19.94%). The institutions provide standard student welfare, education services and facilities, as well as technologies that support learning environment of all ethnic students in which teaching and learning is appropriate for enriching their development. Further, the institutions offer educational opportunity to the uneducated and the underprivileged (16.85%). The institutions treat these students as equally as they do towards majority students, with the same standards. Their education management is quite open to ethnic students, and there are certain working units which offer assistance as well as counseling service, rendering the management satisfactory. In other words, the institutions maintain no bias and do not judge students by their social and economic status, language, or background, but rather supply them with equal access to education. These result in that ethnic students do not feel different from others, but rather they feel they are Thai who are as equally eligible as those in the mainstream (15.17%). Despite of this, however, some staff still have negative attitude towards ethnic students. This sometimes becomes pressure on their self-development and renders consultation with some staff less approachable. There is also no establishment of positive understanding of ethnic students among majority students. Seemingly, some still use inappropriate language with ethnic students, and often make fun of their accent. Some of them also

have a misconception about culture, tradition, and beliefs of ethnic minority students (9.00%). Equally, some faculty, staff or even their counterparts have not accepted ethnic minority groups, and do not have well-established understanding of ethnic culture, tradition, and ways of living (6.74%).

2. Expectation of education management based on multicultural education for ethnic students in higher education in northern Thailand

Table 3: Expectation of Education Management Based on Multicultural Education

Description	Expectation		Interpretation
	\bar{x}	S.D.	
Aspect 1: Institution administration			
1. Institution policy	3.28	1.327	Moderate
2. Organizational culture	3.22	1.360	Moderate
3. Staff: Attitudes, Beliefs, Actions	3.37	1.430	Moderate
4. Community participation	3.53	1.376	High
5. Language/Native language of the institution	3.25	1.346	Moderate
Aspect 2: Curriculum and teaching and learning management			
1. Curriculum and course of study	3.13	1.407	Moderate
2. Institution's learning pattern	3.26	1.461	Moderate
Aspect 3: Student quality development			
1. Counseling service	3.44	1.270	Moderate
2. Student assistance program	3.35	1.286	Moderate
Total	3.31	1.363	Moderate

According to a study on expectation of education management based on multicultural education for ethnic students, these students would like their institution to provide broader space for a gathering of ethnic students because at present there are few activities that promote recognition of ethnicity. Such gathering which interested individuals, regardless of ethnic groups, can participate aims not only to organize activities that carry a message of ethnic identity, but also to benefit the public at large and to develop ethics and social contribution among students. For instance, there should be an ethnic student club to promote culture of ethnic groups to outsiders so they can learn and appreciate such diversity, such as clothing, language, literature, and ways of living. Due to sensitivity and variation of each tribe, there should be more attention to these issues to promote a sense of unity to live together in peace and harmony (31.46%). As for student assistance program, counseling service, and student welfare for ethnic students who are qualified, yet are not able to attend a program, due to financial reason or academic performance, and consequently drop out, The sample group would like the institutions to pay more attention to such matter by providing education funding program, student welfare, educational and counseling services, and being more open to ethnic students (21.65%). Another requirement is cooperation between their institution and the Ministry of Interior to increase admission quotas of ethnic student in order to broaden educational opportunity as

currently access to higher education of some ethnic groups is not extensive, and thus requires further opportunities and channels (18.26%). Moreover, the institution should offer courses that ethnic students can apply in their education and future career in order to open up or create opportunities for ethnic groups. This can be done through a survey of actual need for content in which ethnic students are interested in order to accurately respond to their culture and ways of living and to create specific space for their own group so that these students will be able to recognize problems and the need for solutions, to develop a sense of attachment to their community and to encourage them to return to their community to take part in community development, instead of waiting for aids from the public sector. In addition, the institutions should offer a course of a third language, English and Chinese, for example (16.57%). The institutions should manage the teaching and learning system in accordance with a number of learning hours that are more suitable for each main subject so as to enhance effectiveness of teaching and learning. Also, there should be an improvement on learning environment, such as installing an air conditioning unit in every classroom and setting a clear and concrete learning period (12.36%).

(See Table 4 on the next page)

Results

The results of the research on a context of education management based on multicultural education for ethnic students in higher education institutions of northern Thailand can be summarized, according to the objectives, as follows:

1. Level of opinions on current conditions and issues on education management presents an arithmetic mean as follows: the first aspect: institution administration = 2.92; the second aspect: curriculum and course of study = 2.75; and the third aspect: student quality development = 2.88.

2. The findings on the expectation of the education management showed that that the level of expectation is higher than that of current conditions and issues on the education management in relation to institution administration: institution policy with statistical significance of 0.01 ($t=5.046$, $p=0.007$), organizational culture with statistical significance of 0.01 ($t=4.269$, $p=0.003$), community involvement with statistical significance of 0.05 ($t=3.975$, $p=0.011$), and language/native language of the institution with statistical significance of 0.01 ($t=11.023$, $p=0.001$); curriculum and teaching and learning management: curriculum design and individual subjects with statistical significance of 0.01 ($t=7.791$, $p=0.001$) and institution's learning pattern with statistical significance of 0.01 ($t=6.819$, $p=0.001$); and student quality development: student assistance program with statistical significance of 0.01 ($t=4.444$, $p=0.004$). All figures are shown in Figure 3.

(See Figure 3 on the next page)

Table 4: A Comparisons between Current Conditions and Expectation Concerning Education Management Based on Multicultural Education for Ethnic Students

Description	Current conditions		Expectation		t	p
	\bar{x}	S.D.	\bar{x}	S.D.		
Aspect 1: Institution administration						
1. Institution policy	2.84	1.304	3.28	1.327	5.046	.007**
2. Organizational culture	2.66	1.345	3.22	1.360	4.269	.003**
3. Staff: Attitudes, Beliefs, Actions	3.03	1.335	3.37	1.430	8.278	.000
4. Community participation	3.12	1.330	3.53	1.376	3.975	.011*
5. Language/Native language of the institution	3.00	1.368	3.25	1.346	11.023	.001**
Aspect 2: Curriculum and teaching and learning management						
1. Curriculum and course of study	2.75	1.566	3.13	1.407	7.791	.001**
2. Institution's learning pattern	2.75	1.306	3.26	1.461	6.819	.001**
Aspect 3: Student quality development						
1. Counseling service	2.89	1.386	3.44	1.270	7.969	.000
2. Student assistance program	2.87	1.399	3.35	1.286	4.444	.004**
Total	2.88	1.371	3.31	1.363	9.514	.000

Note: * $p < 0.05$ refers to significance level of 0.05

** $p < 0.01$ refers to significance level of 0.01

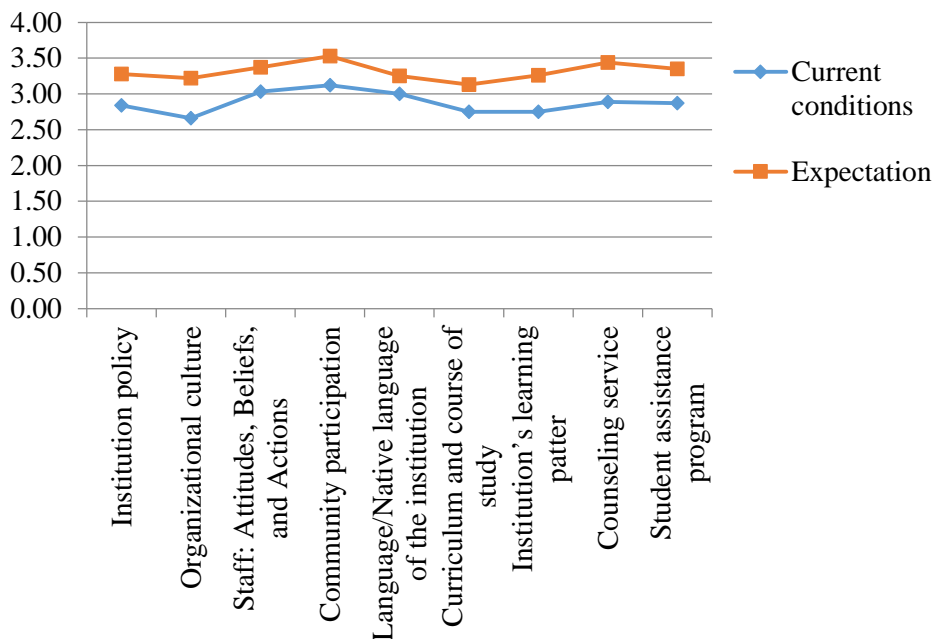


Figure 3: A Comparisons between Level of Actual Conditions and Level of Expectation of Education Management for Ethnic Students in Higher Education Institutions in Northern Thailand

Discussion and Conclusion

A study on education management context based on multicultural education for ethnic students in higher education institutions in northern Thailand demonstrated that the ethnic students have, with a statistical significance, the expectation of the education management in all aspects. This indicates that education management based on multicultural education is a key reinforcement of the education system. Development of knowledge and skills of ethnic students, in particular, is an education in which all students have equal opportunities, and can be successful in their education at their own capacity. This education can be achieved through educational reforms and changes in a number of aspects: organization values, organization policy, organization structure, institution's rules and regulations, curriculums, instructional materials, and assessment, as well as organization administration that foster a model of multicultural and intercultural education. This conception of such simultaneous developments corresponds to a framework for higher education practices under multicultural social context proposed by Renn (2004). Renn (2004) conducted a study on identity development process of students of color in 6 colleges in central and eastern regions of the U.S. in order to identify education practices suitable for these students due to issues of alienation and a lack of recognition among the majority students, and found a certain number of conclusions which can be

applied as a framework for higher education practices. As for higher education institutions that are required to carry out education management under the multicultural social context, as suggested by Renn, the practices they need to develop involve 6 variables as follows: 1) assessment, 2) policy modification, 3) creation of space for welcoming mixed race students, 4) structural diversity, 5) curriculum, and 6) crossing over boundaries. This is also consistent with Banks and Banks (2010) concerning a model of multicultural education management which mentioned at least 3 principles that need to be considered: 1) idea or concept which aims at education for all with equal access to learning in an institution and at best development learners can attain from such an institution, 2) a framework for educational reform in a holistic manner, not restricted to change in curriculums, and 3) education management process based on multicultural education and goals of liberated and fair education management for educational equality of all students.

Recommendations

1. Recommendations from research results

1.1 Higher education institutions in northern Thailand should conduct a study from this research results in order to develop a model of education management based on multicultural education for ethnic students.

1.2 Higher education institutions in northern Thailand should conduct a study specifically to each faculty: Humanities and social sciences, Health science and Science and technology

1.3 Higher education institutions in northern Thailand should conduct a study on application of the research results to develop strategies and tactics in education management for ethnic students.

2. Recommendations for further research

2.1 Higher education institutions should conduct a study on a context of education management in relation to ethnic students in other regions.

2.2 Higher education institutions should conduct a study on education management in relation to other groups of ethnic students or a particular ethnic group.

2.3 Higher education institutions should conduct a study on a model of education management for ethnic students in comparison with that for students of color in foreign universities or in universities with ethnic diversity.

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