

# **Evaluation on Rajabhat Institute in Thailand <sup>1)</sup>**

## **— A Case Study of Rajabhat Institute Surin —**

SATO, Yasuyuki and SRISAMAI, Siwaporn <sup>2)</sup>

### 1 General Information of Rajabhat Institute Surin

#### 1.1 History

Throughout Thailand, there are 36 Rajabhat Institutes. Rajabhat Institute Surin is located in Surin province, where has been considered as one of the poorest areas of Thailand. Rajabhat Institute Surin (hereafter called RI Surin) was found in 1973 and at first served Surin's community and connected provinces as Teachers' College. Following the Teachers' College Act of 1975, RI Surin was aimed to provide academic knowledge and training qualified lecturers to the bachelor's degree level. The institute was also required to conduct research, to promote the qualities and status of the lecturers and administrative personnel, to maintain and conserve national culture as well as national identity, and to provide academic services to the community.

In 1984, the Teachers' College Act of 1975 was revised so that the roles of Rajabhat Institutes have been changed. The curricula were changed to train a manpower in fields other than education. The areas of various subjects were offered in Teachers' College. On the job training the opportunities were also extended.

On February 14 1992, His Majesty the King conferred the name "Rajabhat Institute" on Teachers' College. RI Surin since then adopted this auspicious name. The institute's functions, however, are not dramatically changed. The main six areas of the institute's roles were as following, first to provide educational programs at all degree levels, second to conduct the research for rural development, third to preserve and promote art and culture, fourth to promote the academic and professional status of lecturers and educational personnel, fifth to use and apply advanced technology to enhance instruction and improve academic efficiencies and finally to provide academic

services to the surrounding community.

## 1.2 Organizational Divisions

According to Rajabhat Act year 1995, RI Surin was officially divided to 11 offices as followings;

1. President Office
2. Faculty of Education
  - 2.1 Office of Faculty's Secretariat
  - 2.2 Demonstration School
3. Faculty of Industrial Technology
4. Faculty of Humanities and Social Science
5. Faculty of Management Science
6. Faculty of Science and Technology
7. Office of Research and Academic Service
8. Office of Student Affair
9. Office of Planning and Development
10. Office of Art and Culture
11. Office of Academic Supporting

## 1.3 Curricula

### 1.3.1 Study Programs

RI Surin's curricula were designed in accordance with the philosophy of the Office of Rajabhat Institute Council, Ministry of Education. At present RI Surin offers some degrees ranged from associate's degree to master's degree:

1. Associate's Degrees.
2. Two-year courses of study leading to bachelor's degree.
3. Four-year courses of study leading to bachelor's degree.
4. Master's degree.

Degrees Offered

Associate in Education ( A.Ed. )

Associate in Science ( A.S. )

Associate in Arts ( A.A. )

Bachelor of Education ( B.Ed. )

Bachelor of Science ( B.S. )

Bachelor of Arts ( B.A. )

Master's Degree (Educational Administration) (M.Ed.)

Master's Degree (Social Science for development) (MA.)

The degrees offered at Rajabhat Institute Surin, under three major subject areas that are Education, Sciences and Liberal Arts. Within three subject areas, faculties can be classified as followings;

- Educational branch comprises Faculty of Education
- Scientific branch comprises Faculty of Science and Technology and Faculty of Industrial Technology
- Liberal Art branch comprises Faculty of Humanities and Social Science and Faculty of Management Science

### 1.3.2 Personnel

Staffs at RI Surin are divided to two categories that are lecturers (permanent and temporary positions) and administrative staffs (permanent and temporary positions). The fulltime and permanent employees are considered as government officers and get welfare from the government.

Temporary lecturers are recruited year by year. In 2000 RI Surin has 36 temporary lecturers.

There are two foreign lecturers reporting to Foreign Language Program. The foreign lecturers contract with RI Surin for 12 months and the contract can be renewed every year.

Administrative staffs are employed in three different types; tenure, permanent employees and temporary employees.

Table 1 Salaries Classified by Educational Degree

Educational degree	Salaries per month (baht)
High school certificate	3,300
Associate's degree	4,900
Bachelor's degree	6,360
Master's degree	7,780
Doctoral degree	9,040

Note: 43 baht is approximately equal to 1 dollar in 2000.

Resource: Information from Personal Office, Rajabhat Institute Surin, August 2000.

Permanent kind of employees is awarded their salaries depending on their education and the salary will be increase up to number of working year. However, temporary employees' salaries are flat rate and do not increase.

### 1.3.3 Lecturers

On number of lecturers, RI Surin employs 206 positions of full time lecturers in year 2000. However, the precise number of the lecturers who are currently teaching is less than 206 persons because some of lecturers are on leave to continue higher education or move to other Rajabhat Institutes.

On educational qualification, at RI Surin the Institute gives opportunities to students who graduated from RI to be recruited as lecturers in areas of several subjects that were in urgent conditions to expand. Under the urgent conditions, there are 41 lecturers who secured bachelor's degree. In general the lecturers are master's degree graduated. Some may be admitted as lecturers after they finished their master's degree but some pursued their master's degree after they have worked at RI Surin. Some lecturers gained their Ph.D. in their mid-career.

Table 2 Lecturers at RI Surin Classified by Degree

Degree	Number of people	%
Doctor	12	7
Master	121	69
Certificate higher than bachelor	1	1
Bachelor	41	23
Total	175	100

Resource: Information from Personal Office,  
Rajabaht Institute Surin, August 2000.

Table 3 Lecturers at RI Surin Classified by Academic Positions

Academic positions	Number of people	%
Lecture 1	61	35
Lecture 2	60	34
Assistant professor	49	28
Associate professor	5	3
Professor	0	0
Total	175	100

Resource: Information from Personal Office,  
Rajabaht Institute Surin, August 2000.

The rate of lecturers classified by degrees shows in Table 2. The rate of number of lecturers got master's degree is 69%, the most. The rate of doctoral is a little. Some of lecturers got bachelors are continuing master's degree.

And the rate of academic status shows in Table 3. Most of lecturers (69%) are ordinary lecturer without academic status. 31% of the lecturers obtain academic status as assistant and associate professors but none of staffs reach the status of professor.

Lecturer 1 and lecturer 2 are specified for a different level of salary that the lecturer 2 gains higher salary. Filling application form along with successive 2 years working experience and being evaluated by the institute committee, lecturer 1 will be

promoted to lecturer 2. Lecturer 2 benefits approximately 120 baht more salary than lecturer 1 in the same level.

#### 1.4 Budget

RI Surin gains fund allocated from Office of Rajabhat Institute Council. Budget is allocated in fiscal year beginning from October 1 and ending in September 30 next year. Budget distributed to RI Surin is in different amount from year to year.

Table 4 Budget of RI Surin from 1998 to 2000

Fiscal year	Budget allocated to RI Surin (baht)
2000	100,799,510
1999	165,337,490
1998	127,740,510

Resource: Information from Office of Planning and Development, Rajabhat Institute Surin, August 2000.

## 2 Purpose of Research

### 2.1 Quality Assurance

Quality Assurance is a new paradigm involving an evaluation of RI Surin's performance. Quality Assurance, referring to RI Surin case, was started from assigning each Faculty to perform Pre Self-Study-Report (Pre SSR). Most of the reports are done by the institute's staffs so that all the information reflected in Pre SSR are based on internal staffs' opinions. As a result, this paper has another point of view regarding to Quality Assurance done by a foreign expert to broaden perspective of Quality Assurance for RI Surin. Researchers hope that information provided in this paper will be benefit RI Surin's Quality Assurance.

The interviewees included in this paper were not random samplings. The researchers deliberately selected 15 representatives from the member of 5 faculties and then approached to all of them to have in-dept interviews. A sampling group was

finally 10 lecturers as the limited of time and the interviewee's inconvenience. 2 administrative staffs and 2 students are also added to case studies.

## 2.2 Method of Research

The 12 case studies were interviewed by the authors. The numeral concludes two unofficial interviews that yielded useful information. The information got from the interviews was then transcribed and concluded. The foreign expert who is familiar with Thai higher education system compared RI Surin with other Thai Universities, especially Chulalongkorn or Thammasart University, and Japanese University, especially Niigata University, which is one of the largest national Universities in Japan.

## 3 Conclusions from 12 In-dept Interview Cases

### 3.1 Types of Employment

The 12 cases included 8 permanent employees who are considered as government officers, 3 temporary employees and 1 foreign contract lecturer.

### 3.2 Working Experiences with RI Surin

The cases are 7 males and 5 female staffs, ages ranged from 26 to 65 years. Ages do not correlate with number of year working with RI Surin. The lowest length of time working with the institute found in this group case is 1 year and the longest time is 25 years.

### 3.2 Educational Backgrounds

The lecturers' degrees are consisted of 10 cases of master's degree graduated, 1 doctoral degree graduated, and 3 bachelor's degree graduated. Two cases were graduated from abroad and the rest studied in Thai Universities and Institutes.

### 3.3 Faculties and Departments

The cases were from 5 faculties and 2 administrative departments.

### 3.4 Workloads

Workload in this paper specifically refers to number of teaching periods (lecturers only). On the other hand administrative staffs usually work from 8.00 a.m. to 4 p.m. from Monday to Friday.

Lecturers are expected to respond to two kinds of responsibilities; academic and supporting positions. Moreover, RI Surin offers classes 7 days a week. There are weekday courses for full time students and weekend courses for on-the-job degree. Thus RI Surin's staffs tend to work for 7 days a week.

According to the sampling cases, the highest teaching period per weekday is 27 periods and the lowest is 16 periods: mean is 19 periods per week. The lecturer whom taught 16 periods per week added that 16 periods were unusual for him (as usually, he has taught 18-20 periods per week). For weekend workload, the highest working period is 17 periods and the lowest is 12 periods (this information excluded foreign lecturers, as they do not work on weekend).

In addition to the numbers of teaching periods, each lecturer teaches 3-5 different subjects per semester. Therefore lecturers must spend times to prepare lesson as well.

### 3.5 Supporting Positions

Referring to 10 cases of the lecturers that were interviewed, all of them hold the 2-3 supporting positions such as director of the office, head of program, secretary to office and etc.

### 3.6 Instructional Styles

Referring to the interviews with 10 lecturers regarding to their instructional style



used in classes, the researchers found that lecture lesson is the most popular method (one lecturer per one class). Second is teaching by group working. Lecturers assign topic to students to read textbook or do research and students then get together in group to discuss.

There are other kinds of teaching style found as followings;

- assigning students to summarize the lesson
- giving intensive lecture in first month of semester then take the rest of the semester for workshop
- giving students questions and ask them to brain storm for answer
- usage of games.

However, each lecturer applies more than one teaching style in his/her class.

There was one case from 10 cases that used to have team teaching in class. The reason for team teaching, therefore, was to assist new lecturers in handling class.

### 3.7 Textbooks

Lecturers of 8 cases have not written textbooks for their class, but they compiled information for each lesson from various textbook, sometimes simply copied other books. Lecturers printed the lesson in sheet of papers and distributed to students in class. There was a case that a lecturer assigned students to buy main textbook that he recommended and used the textbook in class through the semester.

There are 2 cases that they composed or wrote textbook for subjects that they have taught.

### 3.8 Academic Research Experiences

There are 6 cases from 10 have not had any opportunity to do research while they worked at RI Surin. There are 4 cases that have research experiences and 2 from 4 lecturers gained supporting budget from RI Institute while the other 2 secured fund outside the institute.

### 3.9 Papers Published in the International Journals

None of 10 cases have had research paper published in international journal. There are 2 cases had their papers publish in Thai academic journal. These 2 cases are lecturers who have academic status as associate professor and assistant professor respectively.

### 3.10 Opportunities to Attend International Conferences

None of 10 cases have had official opportunity to attend international conference. They had chance to attend conference, seminar, workshop which were held in Thailand.

### 3.11 Expectation to Continue Higher Degree

There are 8 lecturers in the group who gained Master's Degree, one case gained Ph.D and Bachelor's Degree respectively. Consequently, higher degree mentioned in this paper mainly refers to Doctoral Degree.

Expectation to continue to get higher degree depends to age and marital status. Young lecturers wish to continue Ph.D. while over 50 year-old lecturers are not interested in pursue Ph.D. The married lecturers prefer to study in Thai University, but single lecturers do not mind to study in Thailand or abroad.

### 3.12 Problems that Impede the Staff's Work

Opinions reflected from the 14 in-dept interviews were varied. These following statements were quoted from the interviews;

- Budget for purchasing teaching equipment is insufficient.
- RI Surin lecturers need to improve new technology skills such as computer literacy and Internet.
- Number of student is so overwhelming so that the lecturers' workload is too

heavy.

- Instructional aids such as overhead projector, amplifier, and whiteboard are not sufficient.
- The numbers of supporting staffs to run day-to-day job are insufficient therefore lecturers have to run errand by themselves. This makes it an effect the teaching performance of lecturers.
- Facilities such as rest room, hallway, and building are dirty.
- RI Surin main library possesses obsolete books and limited volumes.
- Computers for service students need to be increased in number.
- Parking spaces are unorganized.
- Lecturers who are interested in doing research do not have enough funds.
- Working procedure at RI Surin is not clear. There is no written guideline or handbook to study.
- There is weakness in new students' recruitment because the Institute have admitted students without screening. And it causes difficulty in managing lecturers, classes and other resources.
- Lack of learning environment such as study rooms, chairs, recreational areas.
- Ratio of lecturers to students is improper.
- Lack of standardized examination
- Difficult to check validity of teaching quality
- In some programs lecturers have never discussed to other colleagues about classes and contents of the classes.
- Meeting time for one class is too long (for example 3-4 periods). Student may lose their attention easily in the third or fourth period. Moreover, since classes meet once a week, it is difficult to connect the students to last week's content.
- Institute should provides information and encourage lecturers to run research in the international level.
- The Institute should offer scholarships for lecturers to pursue higher degree.

### 3.13 Roles of Rajabhat Institute Surin

According to the ideas of lecturers, the Institute gives the knowledge, and they go to work in local area to be of useful for rural people. Some Lecturers expect the Institute to make local lives of people to develop. For instance, concretely, how to think, how to live, prosperity of materials, and others should be in a global standard.

### 3.14 Activities of Students

The students are doing some activities of groups; such as groups to develop rural areas, to learn computer, and so on. These have spontaneously set up owing to ideas of some students at first. The Institute financially supports the activities, 3000 baht per year to each group. There are cases that students bring their money to the activities as the budget is often lack. Some of these groups are useful to rural people as well as their learning. Due to their activities the budgets provided to the groups may be flexible.

## 4 Problems and Suggestions to Initiate Improvements of RI Surin

### 4.1 Conditions of Lecturers

The number of teaching periods for each lecturer should be decreased. Most lecturers have many classes of 30-40 periods per week. These periods are too much compared with other cases of universities. The lecturers of Thai University usually have 9 periods at the maximum. Even in the high school in Shikorapoom province, lecturers have 24 periods per week, though president and vice president do not have any periods. For RI Surin, in any cases, teaching period of lecturers should be decreased. The lecturers then will be able to do research.

On the other hand, if the number of lecturers does not increase, the number of students should not increase at least. The workloads are so very heavy that the lecturers cannot research and write papers. This will bring qualities of lecturers down, and it will end to deteriorate the quality of the Rajabhat Institute.

#### 4.1.2 The Institute Should Encourage Lecturers to Research

The lecturers should do more research in future. One of the important reasons was caused by the adoption of unity regulation of education in world, which require lecturers to do research continuously. The constant attempt to do research and publish the research result to publics will enhance the qualities of lecturers and so does the Institute. If it can be arranged for the lecturers to decrease the workload in number, they will be able to write a paper. The RI Surin should sufficiently assist the budget for training or participating in any seminars so that the lecturers could encourage themselves to learn.

#### 4.1.3 Employment of the Institute

The institute recruits its staff based on performance and academic background and announcement of the recruitments is opened to public. Information about the employment is open to everyone due to the regulation of the Ministry. This is based on an open competition among scholars that is the same throughout the country. It is very good system compared with a standard of world.

#### 4.2 Openness of Information

Every office of government should open its information. It is important for the office to enhance the quality by allowing publics to investigate organization's policy and activities. In this meaning, the policy of the RI Surin should be opened for everybody, or not only lecturers and students, but also people. Information of RI Surin may be distributed by Internet (homepage) and pamphlet in English as well as in Thai. And policy of every Faculty also should be opened to access as well. If a new lecturer comes to work with RI Surin, they had better have a book on the regulation including the policy. If not, he/she cannot easily and speedy understand the system of the Rajabaht. The policies should be made for both a middle and a long terms. The policies, for the highest benefit, should be discussed and derived

from staffs in every level.

#### 4.3 Rajabhat Institute Surin's Journal

Most of lecturers have not any paper or article published. To respond to this problem, the Rajabhat should publish the Institute's Journal. Each Faculty should then issue the Journal of Faculty. Thai Universities such as Chulalongkorn, Thammasart, Srinakarinwirot Universities and the others have the Journal of each Faculty or each Major. The quality of Journal needs to be meet the international criteria as well. The editors of Journal should be the qualified lecturers, or invite visiting editors from another university.

#### 4.4 Trainings

The lecturers need to have chances to participate in international conferences or training. Due to the fact that information and knowledge are changing constantly, proliferating needs to write a paper or research in the international level, lecturers need to have opportunities to learn new trend in their fields. It needs to promote the international exchange among foreign Universities. The quality will enhance through the experiences of staffs exchange and international conferences.

#### 4.5 Classes

What the lecturers lecture to the students one sided is boring for the students. If possible, this style should be corrected. The lecturers should adopt the following style to lecture: they do not only lecture to students, but also students can participate classes. For the test, the lecturers should adopt a written test rather than multiple choices test.

#### 4.6 Foreign Lecturers

The long and short standing policy of foreign language should be shared among all lecturers of the Rajabhat. For one of reasons both English and Japanese will increase to demand in future. The policy adapted to new time will be important. In that meaning, Japanese course should make it much more in the future. All Rajabhat Institutes start to open Japanese language course from 4 years ago unlike Thai Universities did from more than 10 years ago.

On the classes of foreign language, as we will see it later, the lectures should be arranged in one period every other day instead of in three periods once a week. With regards to the incomes of foreign lecturers, they should be equally decides on the regulation.

Two Computers in foreign language program are operative but the portion of the computer and staffs are improper. The computer should be filled more and one should have Japanese font for typing and print out.

#### 4.7 Library

Many books should be arranged and added to the library. Chulalongkorn or Thammasart and others have a variety of books in book's collections and lots of books in number, but books are low in volume at the Rajabhat Library. Parts of the budgets should be assigned to buy new books. In the Rajabhat Library new books are limited. The students complained this matter. For that reason a lot of budgets should be assigned to buying the books.

The computer, OHP and others could be arranged in most of classrooms. And the facilities of lecturers' rooms are not sufficient.

Parking space should be arranged in a block according to zone and separated among car, motorcycles and bicycles. The increasing number of cars and motorcycles causes traffic stuck so that to resolve this traffic trouble the institute should plan for parking space.

#### 4.8 Curricula

As concerns expansion of Japanese language course in foreign language curriculum, one Thai lecturer should teach Japanese language at least. Japanese person might be good to assist teaching Japanese too. For there are day-by-day more chances to use Japanese language, as people are increasing to be employed by Japanese companies in Thailand.

The number of continuous class should be decreased. The long-period class brings both lecturers and students bored. For that reason their learning capabilities do often deteriorate. The number of the long-period class should be decreased. For example, most of Japanese University limit teaching period for 90 minutes.

#### 4.9 Administrative Staffs

The full-time administrative staffs are 61 people in number but temporary staffs are 250 in positions. The portion is about 1 to 4. This figure means that the staffs are almost temporary workers, and full-time workers are a little. Some of temporary workers have been engaged in same job for a long time, and then had working skills. They are only evaluated, but this does not propose any promotion. It may be said that the staffs have not been encouraged to work. In this respect they should be encouraged; for instance after working for some years, the Institute should introduce the institution could promote their positions such as promoting them to permanent position. With the reward and stable employment, the institute will be able to decrease number of staffs that often resign because their positions are insecure.

It should, in another way, stop the regulation that all temporary workers get the same amount of income only owing to the position. The amount of incomes should differ according to their capabilities, skills, engagement period, and age. By introducing these competitive systems, temporary staffs could be encouraged to work. Referring to the students' feedback, the works of administrative staffs are often unsatisfying for them, and then often cause problems for students. The works and services of staffs should be achieved faster; for instance transcript, tuition and fee



payment and library services.

### Acknowledgement

We are grateful to the President of Rajabhat Institute Surin, Dr. Achara Phanurat, who gave us a chance to research on "Quality Assurance of Rajabhat Institute Surin" from September to October in 2000.

### Notes

- 1) This paper is a rewritten version of "Quality Assurance of Rajabhat Institute Surin" submitted to the President of Rajabhat Institute Surin at November in 2000.
- 2) Ms. Siwaporn SRISAMAI is a lecturer of Rajabhat Institute Surin.