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SUPATRA VIRAPALIN : A STUDY OF ACADEMIC COOPERATION BETWEEN PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS.

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The objectives of this research were to study the current status, problems and obstacles of the academic cooperation between private higher education institutions and international organizations; and to make recommendations on nurturing further cooperation.

The results of the study revealed that most agreements made with private universities were at the institution to institution level. The United States of America and Japan were found to be the first two countries which had rendered most cooperation with Thai private higher education institutions. The types of cooperative activities mostly undertaken were the exchange of lecturers and staff, and awarding of scholarships and grants for lecturers respectively. The activities with the least cooperation were the awarding of grants for students, and funding support. In relation to future cooperation, it was found that Thai private education institutions wished to enter into agreement with foreign agencies in every part of the world, stressing the teaching-learning process via satellite. On the benefits gained from international cooperative activities, the study showed that Thai higher education institutions were able to build up their reputation. The obstacle confronted was mainly the lack of language proficiency of their staff members.

It was then recommended that the Ministry of University Affairs serve as the central coordination and information dissemination unit. It should also represent private higher education institutions to negotiate and seek cooperation with both government and private agencies within and outside the country. Moreover, seminars, meetings and training courses for staff concerned ought to be organized. As regards private higher education institutions themselves, they should be formed into a group or association in order to carry out international cooperative activities, and to develop new international curriculum, which will eventually lead to institutional development with academic excellence.