

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSION, DISCUSSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This chapter presents (1) a summary of the study, (2) a summary of the findings, (3) discussions of the results, (4) conclusions, and (5) recommendations for further research.

#### **5.1 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY**

This section summarizes objective, subjects, materials, and procedures of the study as follows:

##### **5.1.1 Objective of the Study**

The objective of this study was to investigate the parental influence on decisions made by Mathayom6 students studying in Bangkok areas in choosing to enroll in prospective faculties for Bachelor's Degree according to five aspects: parents' income, parents' occupations, parents' levels of education, parents' expectations, and parents' academic support. Furthermore, the study also aimed to explore the attitudes of the students towards their freedom in making those decisions and their parents' participation in helping them choose to enroll in prospective faculties for Bachelor's Degree.

##### **5.1.2 Subjects, Materials, and Procedures**

The population of the study was 200 Matthayom6 students who were studying at St.Francis Xavier Convent School, Streewitthaya School, and Wat Bowonniwet School. The samples were selected by means of random sampling technique. The instrument used for collecting the data was a questionnaire, which consisted of three main parts: demographic information of the samples, attitudes towards issues related to influence of the subjects' parents on their decisions in choosing to enroll in prospective faculties Bachelor's Degree, and personal opinions about the respondents' freedom and participation of their parents in expressing their opinions and making those decisions. After the data collection was completed, the data was analysed by

using SPSS Program for Window version 13. The statistical analysis used in this study included frequency, percentage, mean, and Standard Deviation (S.D.).

## 5.2 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The result of the study can be summarized as follows:

**5.2.1 Research Question 1:** Does parents' income influence decisions made by Matthayom6 students studying in Bangkok areas in choosing to enroll in prospective faculties for Bachelor's degree?

**Finding 1:** Parents income only affects the decisions made by the students whose parents earn monthly income less than 20,000 baht.

**5.2.2 Research Question 2:** Do parents' educational levels influence decisions made by Matthayom6 students studying in Bangkok areas in choosing to enroll in prospective faculties for Bachelor's degree?

**Finding 2:** The students' parents do not want the students to enroll in the faculties they had studied before, so the students would like to choose to enroll in faculties that are different from their parents'.

**5.2.3. Research Question 3:** Does parents' occupation influence decisions made by Matthayom6 students studying in Bangkok areas in choosing to enroll in prospective faculties for Bachelor's degree?

**Finding 3:** The students admire their parents' occupation, but they are not sure whether the faculty they are going to choose to enroll in is strongly related to their parents' occupation or not. Furthermore, the students do not decide whether or not they would like to have the same occupation like their parents do.

**5.2.4 Research Question 4:** Do parents' expectations influence decisions made by Matthayom6 students studying in Bangkok areas in choosing to enroll in prospective faculties for Bachelor's degree?

**Finding 4:** The students agree that their parents' expectations are good inspiration helping them to be determined to choose to enroll in the prospective

faculties their parents expect. Besides, the students with parents who earn monthly income less than 20,000 baht have more pressure due to their parents' expectations than those with parents who earn monthly income more than that.

**5.2.5 Research Question 5:** Does parents' academic support influence decisions made by Matthayom6 students studying in Bangkok areas in choosing to enroll in prospective faculties for Bachelor's degree?

**Finding 5:** Most of the students' parents give supports and encourage them to choose to enroll in the faculty the students like, so most students are certain that they will get academic support from their parents for their decisions in choosing to enroll in any faculty. Additionally, more than half of the students are likely to choose to enroll in the faculty that their parents support.

However, some respondents, whose parents earn monthly income less than 20,000 baht, agree that they may not receive academic support from their parents if they do not choose to enroll in the faculty their parents expect.

**5.2.6 Research Question 6:** What opinions do the students have about their freedom in expressing their opinions and making decisions in choosing to enroll in prospective faculties for Bachelor's degree and about their parents' participation in helping them make those decisions?

**Finding 6:** Most students agree that their parents regularly give them opportunities to express their opinions and make decisions in choosing to enroll in faculties for Bachelor's degree. Although the students' parents have some expectations about their decisions in choosing to enroll in faculties, their parents do not force them to follow those expectations.

Also, the students' parents regularly participate in helping them make those decisions. That participation includes giving advice and providing encouragement.

### **5.3 DISCUSSIONS**

This section concerns the main or key findings of the results and expected or unexpected results as follows:

#### **5.3.1 Overall Attitudes of the Respondents towards Their Parent's Influence on Their Educational Decisions.**

According to the results, most respondents can make their own educational decisions and they think that their parents should not take an important role in making decisions for them in choosing to enroll in the prospective faculties for Bachelor's degree. However, it is found from the findings that parents play profound roles in helping the respondents make those decisions. The respondents accept that their parents are the most significant educational consultants for them, and they have no confidence if they do not consult with their parents before making those decisions. This finding is in agreement with earlier research noting that students usually look for their parents' career advice and approval (Taylor, Harris & S. Taylor, 2004). Additionally, it also states that adolescents are often unwilling to proceed with their career plans if they find out that there is no parental approval or support. Moreover, the respondents usually believe their parents' advice about furthering their education as they view that advice as reasonable and reliable information. These findings are in agreement with Wjitpan (2001) & Khokongkha (2004) stating that parents have a critical impact on their children's development since they were born, and this influence continues well beyond the adolescent years.

#### **5.3.2 Respondents' Attitudes towards the influence of Their Parents' Income on Their Decisions in Choosing to Enroll in Prospective Faculties for Bachelor's Degree.**

As noted in the earlier study by Yamaguchi (2004), some factors such as household economic levels strongly affects students when they have to make their educational decisions. In this study, it is found out that parents' household income affects decisions in choosing to enroll in the prospective faculties for Bachelor's degree of the respondents whose parents earn household income less than 20,000 baht per month. The results show that before making those decisions, they have to take

account of the educational expenses of that faculty and consider whether or not their parents can afford it. Furthermore, this group of the respondents also has pressure in making the decisions as they are often encouraged by their parents to choose a particular faculty their parents can pay educational fees or expenses for. Similar findings have been reported by multiple authors, as noted in the studies conducted by Maneesri & Pitayanuwat (1998); that is, the conditions in the families especially parents' income influences the students' motivation and attitudes in studying. Additionally, this finding goes in line with the study of Wongsasun (1981) finding that parents and students make a decisions on further education considering the household economic levels. A research done by Yamaguchi (2004) also indicates that in the low-middle income family, parents link the children's educational opportunities with the household income. It can probably be interpreted that lower income parents may have some stress from being ranked inferior economic status, and that stress may affect how they teach or instill their attitudes into their children. According to a website of Human Resources and Skills Development of Canada (<http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/cs/sp/sdc/pkrf/publications/research/2001-000178/page05.shtml>), children living in the environment that parents have income stress know that they have some limitations in their educational opportunities.

In contrast to the respondents with lower income parents, the respondents whose parents earn more than 20,000 baht per month have no pressure related to financial problems of their family in making decisions to choose to enroll in the prospective faculties for Bachelor's degree. They can choose to enroll in any faculty both in governmental and in private university without considering much about its educational expenses. Therefore, it is quite evident that income provides the respondents with higher income parents more opportunities to choose to enroll in the prospective faculties for Bachelor's degree.

### **5.3.3 Respondents' Attitudes towards the influence of Their Parents' Educational Levels on Their Decisions in Choosing to Enroll in Prospective Faculties for Bachelor's Degree.**

It is obvious from the findings that most parents always encourage their children to further their studies in a Bachelor's degree. Parents thus place an extremely high importance on the value of education and have a great deal of concern about the future of their children as well. Referring to the findings, most of the respondents' parents whose educational level are both lower and higher than Bachelor's degree neither want their children to enroll in the faculties they had studied nor instill the preferences of studying in the faculties they graduated from into the respondents. As a result, more than half of the respondents are not interested in studying in the same fields or faculties their parents had studied before. Instead, they want to enroll in the faculties different from their parents'. This finding is consistent with previous findings, parents, who are viewed as value socializers, can make their children know the appropriateness of career decisions through their actions (Taylor, et al., 2004). Besides, in other studies (Crockett and Bingham, 2000; Mau and Bikos, 2000; Teachman and Paasch, 1998) cited by Taylor, et al. (2004), career aspirations of children are affected by parents' education and income. From the opinions of the respondents, most of their parents always encourage them to further their studies in Bachelors' degree, particularly parents who complete lower education than Bachelor's degree. Theses findings are in agreement with Berger (2004) stating that parents having not had many educational opportunities are often very supportive of students' education and encourage students to be educated. Nonetheless, although the majority of the respondents' parents with both lower and higher education than Bachelor's degree do not want the respondents to choose to enroll in the faculties they did in the past, their reasons may be different. For parents with lower education than Bachelor's degree, the reasons why they do not want their children to do that may be due to their negative attitudes towards their current occupation that may be viewed as inferior social status or small income jobs. Consequently, they may think that if their children study in the faculties different from theirs, their children may have more chances to be able to work in better organizations, hang in better positions, or receive higher income than they do.

#### **5.3.4 Respondents' Attitudes towards the Influence of Their Parents' Occupation on Their Decisions in Choosing to Enroll in Prospective Faculties for Bachelor's Degree.**

The findings appear to demonstrate that close to half of the respondents do not decide whether they would like to have the same occupation as their parents do or study in the faculties that can help them do the same jobs as their parents do although the majority of them accept that they admire their parents' occupation. In addition, they are also not sure whether the faculties they are going to choose to enroll in are strongly related to their parents' occupation. These findings, thus, are not consistent with previous research which indicates that parents' occupation is one factor influencing one's career ambition (Trice, 1991 as quoted by Taylor, et al., 2004). Therefore, it is possible that the reasons why the respondents have not decided which faculties they are going to choose to enroll in may be caused by the timing of data collection of this study.

Regarding the 2009 procedure of Central University Admission System (CUAS), Matthayom6 students will take Ordinary National Educational Test (O-net) in mid February 2009 and will do Advanced National Educational Test (A-net) a week after taking O-net test ([http://www.cuas.or.th/document/calendar\\_52.pdf](http://www.cuas.or.th/document/calendar_52.pdf)). The students will be able to choose four faculties they would like to study in for Bachelor's Degree in the same or in different universities after they are informed both their O-net and A-net scores in early April, 2009. However, the data of this study was collected in early December, 2008, which was the time that the respondents did not take any Admission test, and it was quite far from the real period the respondents have to make those decisions. Hence, it may be too soon for them to make exact decisions of which faculties they will choose to enroll for bachelor's degree as they have to take a great account of their O-net and A-net scores before making those decisions.

#### **5.3.5 Respondents' Attitudes towards the Influence of Their Parents' Expectations on Their Decisions in Choosing to Enroll in Prospective Faculties for Bachelor's Degree.**

The findings demonstrate that more than one third of the respondents' parents have expectations of the respondents' decisions in choosing to enroll in the

prospective faculties for Bachelor's degree. For instance, their parents always talk to the respondents about what kind of the faculties they would like the respondents to study in for Bachelor' degree. Moreover, the respondents' parents also expect them to get high scores in the Admission Test in order to be able to study in the faculties their parents expect. Furthermore, it is found that half of the respondents agree that their parents' expectations are good inspiration that help them be determined to choose to enroll in the prospective faculties their parents expect. These findings appear to be consistent with some findings of previous studies. Research conducted by Taylor, et al. (2004) points out that when young adults realize that their education expected by their parents is high, they tend to have higher educational expectations for themselves. Besides, that research also found out that parents' behaviors and interactions with children, which are based on their expectations of their children, can affect their children's educational decisions.

Nevertheless, more than one third of the respondents accept that they are uncertain whether or not they would like to choose to enroll in the faculties their parents expect. This is confirmed by the respondents' opinions expressed in the last part of the questionnaire. Some of them say that they are not sure whether their skills and abilities fit with the faculties their parents expect them to choose to enroll in or not.

According to the findings, more than half of the respondents do not feel uncomfortable if they do not choose to enroll in the faculties according to their parents' expectations whereas more than one third of them are pressured due to those expectations of their parents. It is found out that most of those respondents who are pressured due to their parents' expectations have parents with monthly income less than 20,000 baht. As mentioned in the previous sections, this type of parents may have some stress about their economic status. This thus may lead them to have high expectations of their children' decisions in choosing to enroll in the faculties that can result in their children's better lives and can improve their social and economic status. Therefore, parents' income stress may be the major cause of those respondents' pressure.

On the other hand, most of the respondents who are not uncomfortable though they do not choose to enroll in the faculties their parents expect have parents earning



monthly income more than 20,000 baht. This, therefore, may be interpreted from the respondents' opinions expressed in the last part of questionnaire that although their parents express their desire of what kind of faculty they want their children to study in for Bachelor's degree, they do not set high expectations of their children's decisions in choosing to enroll in the prospective faculties for Bachelor's degree, or they do not force their children to follow their desires or expectations. Hence, the respondents with this type of parents have less stress in making those decisions.

### **5.3.6 Respondents' Attitudes towards the Influence of Their Parents'**

#### **Academic Support on Their Decisions in Choosing to Enroll in Prospective Faculties for Bachelor's Degree.**

Regarding the findings, the majority of the respondents agree that their parents usually give them advice about making decisions in choosing to enroll in the faculties for Bachelor's degree. In addition, they also agree that they can ask their parents for advice when they have problems related to choosing to enroll in the faculties. Besides, it is found that more than two thirds of the respondents do not think that if they choose to enroll in the faculties their parents do not agree with, they probably get no academic support from their parents. Furthermore, most respondents are certain that they will get academic support from their parents for their decisions in choosing to enroll in any faculties. These findings may be explained as that most of the respondents' parents give the respondents a lot of freedom in making those decisions although a small number of them accept that they may be forced to choose a particular faculty their parents expect otherwise they will get no academic support. Referring to the findings, it is found out that the small number of the respondents, who may not receive academic support from their parents if they do not choose to enroll in the faculties their parents expect, have parents earn monthly income less than 20,000 baht. Since most of the respondents' parents in this study earn more than 25,000 baht per month, it may be interpreted that parents with higher income are likely to give their children more freedom in choosing to enroll in the faculties than parents with lower income do.

Other findings about the academic support of the respondents' parents emphasize the validity of previous findings in this study about parents' expectations

of the respondents' decisions in choosing to enroll in the prospective faculties for Bachelor's degree. It is obvious from the findings that more than two thirds of the respondents' parents are ready to support everything the respondents need to be able to study in the faculties their parents expect. Also, nearly half of the respondents accept that their parents usually find information for them about the faculty their parents would like them to study in for Bachelor's degree.

However, although many respondents' parents have those expectations, it is found out that the majority of the respondents' parents give support and encourage them to choose to enroll in the faculties they like as well. This finding can support the previous findings that although many respondents' parents have expectation of the respondents' decisions in choosing to enroll in the faculties, they do not force the respondents to comply with those expectations. This may occur due to the parents' perception of the respondents about the respondents' desires and abilities or their own influences in controlling their children. Taylor, et al. (2004) states that parents do not think that they can control their children's career development, and they also think that only their children themselves can affect their career path.

Another interesting finding is that more than half of the respondents tend to choose to enroll in the faculties that their parents give academic support for. From this finding the conclusion can be drawn that parents' academic support can influence the respondents' decisions in choosing to enroll in the prospective faculties for Bachelor's degree. Children's career decision-making is found to be affected by their parents' support and encouragement (Taylor, et al., 2004). According to the website of entrepreneur.com, Young (1994) as quoted in Turner, Lapan, & T. (2002) explains that parents are the first persons providing encouragement for their children to reach career goals by acting as examples of career-related learning process. It is pointed out that the ways parents support or encourage their children are various such as through conversations or through reactions. Consequently, children start agreeing with parents' encouragement in order to please them and view their parents' comments as reasonable opinions (Taylor, et al., 2004).

### **5.3.7 Respondents' Personal Opinions about Their Freedom in Expressing Their Opinions and Making Decisions in Choosing to Enroll in Prospective Faculties for Bachelor's Degree and about Their Parents' Participation in Helping Them Make Those Decisions.**

According to the findings, the majority of the respondents agree that their parents regularly give them opportunities to express their opinions and make decisions in choosing to enroll in the prospective faculties for Bachelor's degree. Apart from those opportunities, the respondents also express their opinions that their parents allow them to choose to enroll in the faculties they like. Although they have those opportunities, some of them accept that their parents have some expectations of their decisions in choosing to enroll in the faculties; however, the respondents say that their parents do not force them to follow those expectations. It is noted that parents perceive their influences on their children's career decisions, but they feel that they should not have much influence on those as they view those decisions as something they cannot control (Taylor, et al., 2004). Therefore, this may be the reason why the respondents' parents let them make decisions in choosing to enroll in the prospective faculties by themselves.

Nevertheless, the respondents accept that those expectations affect their decisions in choosing to enroll in the prospective faculties in some ways. Referring to the report of Sylvan Learning Center as cited in Taylor, et al. (2004), parents' attitudes towards career aspirations of their children are in agreement with their children's. Moreover, the report also indicates that both intentional and unintentional reactions of parents can result in children's perception about their parents' expectations about their occupations.

Unlike the majority of the students, it is found from the findings that a very small number of the respondents have only a few chances to express their opinions and make decisions in choosing to enroll in the prospective faculties for Bachelor's degree. Those respondents express their opinions that the faculties they are going to choose to enroll in are the faculties their parents chose for them. In addition, they say that their opinions about the faculty they would like to choose to enroll in are different from their parents'. Their parents think that the faculties those respondents prefer cannot help them work in stable and high income jobs after they graduate. Thus, their

parents think that it is better for their children to choose to enroll in the faculties they have already checked for their career outcome.

Regarding to the levels of participation the respondents' parents have in helping them make decisions in choosing to enroll in the prospective faculties for Bachelor's degree, those findings appear to demonstrate that the majority of the respondents agree that their parents regularly participate in helping them make those decisions. According to the findings, the ways their parents are involved are various. The respondents' parents are most likely to be involved in informal activities whereas few of them participate in active and formal activities. Those ways can be divided into two main ways: giving advice and providing encouragement. For the first way, giving advice, the respondents express their opinions that their parents usually give them advice and suggestions about how to choose to enroll in the faculties fitting their abilities. Moreover, their parents are good consultants especially when the respondents have problems about pursuing their career plans. Also, the respondents say that their parents compare advantages and disadvantages of faculties the respondents are interested in and of faculties their parents would like them to choose to enroll. However, after giving advice and information about those faculties, their parents then let them consider the advice and compare by themselves without forcing them to choose to enroll in a particular faculty.

For another way, providing encouragement, the majority of the respondents say that their parents usually give them both verbal and nonverbal support and encouragement, particularly when they feel disheartened or when they are confused about which faculty is the most appropriate for them. In addition, their parents also motivate them to read textbooks and pursue their career plans.

In contrast to the majority of the respondents, a small number of the respondents accept that their parents hardly or even never participate in helping them make decisions in choosing to enroll in the prospective faculties for Bachelor's degree. Some of them say that their parents lack knowledge about how to choose to enroll in the faculties while some express their opinions that they believe in their own decision making as their parents always give them freedom in making any decisions about themselves. These findings go in line with previous research. For instance, Taylor, et al. (2004) found out that the feelings of parents who think that they should

not intervene in their children's career decisions may be caused from insufficient knowledge about careers, the installation of children's independence, or undesired feelings of being dictatorial parents.

## 5.4 CONCLUSIONS

The following conclusions can be drawn from the discussions above:

5.4.1 The respondents' parents play profound roles in helping the respondents make those decisions.

5.4.2 Income provides the respondents with higher income parents more opportunities to choose to enroll in any faculties for Bachelor's degree.

5.4.3. Parents place an extremely high importance on the value of education and have a great deal of concern about the future of their children as well.

5.4.4 The respondents' parents whose educational level are both lower and higher than Bachelor's degree neither want their children to enroll in the faculties they had studied nor instill the preferences of studying in the faculty they graduated from into the respondents.

5.4.5 The respondents have not made decisions whether or not the faculties they are going to choose to enroll in are strongly related to their parents' occupation.

5.4.6 The respondents' parents earning lower income have more expectations of their children's decisions in choosing to enroll in the faculties for Bachelor's degree than those earning higher income.

5.4.7 The respondents tend to choose to enroll in the faculties that their parents give academic support for although their parents do not force them.

5.4.8 The respondents' parents with higher income are likely to give their children more freedom in choosing to enroll in the faculties than parents with lower income do.

5.4.9 The respondents' parents just give their children advice and information about how to choose to enroll in the faculties, and then let the respondents make those decisions by themselves.

## **5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY**

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are made for future research:

5.5.1 For further research, there are some recommendations to achieve minimal limitations. Firstly, the subjects for further study should include a larger number in order to gain more accurate results and better represent Mathayom6 students studying in Bangkok areas. Other variables that may relate to the influence of parents on those students in choosing to enroll in the prospective faculties for Bachelor's Degree such as the warmth in their families or how much time their parents spend with them should be considered.

5.5.2 Questions about the faculties or study fields their parents had studied and the faculties the respondents would like to choose to enroll in for the prospective faculties for Bachelor's Degree may be added in the questionnaire so that another researcher will be able to get more accurate results that may explain whether or not the parents' education affects the respondents' decisions in choosing to enroll in the perspective faculties.

5.5.3 This study measures the parental influence on decisions made by Mathayom6 students studying in Bangkok areas only in choosing to enroll in the prospective faculties for Bachelor's Degree, so it is recommended that the areas of the further study should be expanded to the upcountry areas. Also, there may be two main study areas such as Bangkok and a province upcountry so that the researcher can compare the results gained from those two areas.