

Yada Wata 2014: Social Engagement in Thai Higher Education: Ideology, Practice and Challenges. Doctor of Philosophy (Human and Community Resource Development), Major Field: Human and Community Resource Development, Department of Human and Community Resource Development. Thesis Advisor: Assistant Professor Suparp Chatraphorn, Ph.D. 572 pages.

A mixed methodology of quantitative and qualitative research was undertaken to analyze ideology and mission on social engagement in Thai higher education and international higher education, and to examine the practice and challenges of social engagement from a case study of Kasetsart University, Kamphaeng Saen Campus. A survey was employed to collect quantitative data from 184 professors and 360 students. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and t-test. In addition, qualitative information was collected through interviews from the key informants - 15 professors and 5 students, obtained by snowball sampling technique. Content analysis was conducted afterwards.

The findings were as follows: 1) Ideology and mission on social engagement in the United States higher education are clearly stated and identified. These are cooperation and collaboration with, partnership with, and responsibility to community and society. Whereas, Thai higher education aims to develop the nation, solving problems, leading and responsible for the society. 2) Social engagement practice is administered in accordance with the university identity. This includes connecting university mission with community as interdependence, responsible for university commitment to community and society, and transferring appropriate knowledge and innovation. 3) Professor's role was consistent to the university mission as teaching, conducting research, and community service. This includes encouraging students to participate in community activities, working as partnership. 4) Leader's role – the university has established new projects for community participation, and promoted researchers to transfer knowledge for the benefit of the community. 5) Student's role – students participated in the community activities. 6) Expectation – Professors indicated that the university should take the role as leader and learning resources, and used their technology to solve community problems. Student's expectation – Graduates were expected to use their knowledge in respond to the need of community and society. 7) Challenges in social engagement faced by higher education were concerning professor's characteristics, lack of university's major plan, and community's faith. Worst of all, university ideology needs to meet community's goals.

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Student's signature

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Thesis Advisor's signature