

## **Good Governance in the Thai Public Universities: A multi case study**

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### **Abstract**

The objective of this research was to study and compare the level of good governance concept acknowledged by the personnel in two classifications of public universities: the northern region government universities under the supervision of the former Ministry of University Affairs and Rajabhat universities in the northeastern region<sup>1</sup>. The Mixed – Method with Integrated Design was applied in this research with the emphasis firstly on the quantitative research and the qualitative research, respectively. 226 participants from the two universities carried out the semi structure interview and questionnaire. The results from the quantitative research showed that the level of good governance in both types of universities was at the medium level. Conversely, the qualitative research shown that the degree of good governance was at the low level or even lack of good governance level, especially in 3 aspects: transparency, equity, and participation. For the aspects of Autonomy, Effectiveness and Flexibility, the results were at the good level. The overall comparison in both qualitative and quantitative research showed that there were differences in some components and aspects in good governance between the two. The results obtained from this research can be applied as a guideline for better improvement on their good governance administration in the future.

### **Introduction**

The term “good governance” has become well known and has spread throughout Thai society after the promulgation of the 1990 Constitution, known as the People Constitution Version. Over that period, Thais faced a severe economic crisis, known as the Tom Yam Kung crisis, and Thailand was forced to seek financial support from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. One of the recommendations given from both organizations to solve the problem was the installation of the good governance concept in the government and private sectors.

Since then, the concept of good governance has been explicitly expanded to various sectors: academicians, government officers, businessmen or even politicians. A number of seminars and meetings were held to disseminate the knowledge about this concept to the public. Both governmental and private sectors seriously took this concept into account and tried to put it into action. As was seen from the constitution, many Articles were related to the concept of good governance such as Articles 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, and 104 respectively.

The concept of good governance was projected as a requirement for the governmental university administration, especially the universities which geared toward a change into a university under the government supervision. As a result, all university personnel and members have focused their attention on the good governance of their administrators. Apart from this, the government universities, according to public expectation, should act as a role model for good governance implementation in both management and knowledge transfer to all sectors of society. Hence, the study about the good governance in the government universities according to the perception and individual point of view plays the important role in the research, since the findings will be beneficial for the good governance based university management. The two types of universities – the northern region universities and Rajabhat Universities in the northeast – were chosen as a major subject in this research. Below were two main research questions:

1. Did both types of universities possess the concept of good governance? If yes, in what aspects poses and to what level?
2. Did both universities differ in terms of good governance? In which aspect did they show the differences?

From the above questions, the objectives of the research were established as follows:

### **Objectives**

1. To study the overview of good governance and six components related to the concept of good governance. In both universities there are: 1. Equity; 2. Transparency; 3. Participation; 4. Autonomy; 5. Effectiveness; and 6. Flexibility.
2. To compare the degree of good governance in both universities.

### **The significance of the study**

The findings of this study will be helpful for:

1. The university administrators in all levels, from departments to the university council.

The results of this research can function as good feedback to review and improve their performance for a better administration.

2. The related sectors in higher education level such as the Transparency and Corruption Prevention Units. They are able to use the results of this research in the decision making process and to install good governance in the university administration.

3. The results can also be used as a guideline for the further research studies on good governance.

### **The Scope of the study**

The research was conducted within a few limitations as follows:

1. In this research, the concept of good governance in the two types of universities depends mostly on the perception. The interpretation and the opinion of the stakeholders in a period of one administration. The context of department, personnel and environment were brought into consideration as well so that the good governance of the two universities were in the form of relative and dynamic rather than in the static form.

2. The good governance of the university in this research was the one found during the period of the stakeholder administration.

3. This study was conducted within the framework of 6 aspects and 43 indicators, proposed by the conference of university instructor council in Thailand. (the Ministry of University Affairs, 2543)

4. The data in this research were not retrieved from the students since they were not able to provide the information on some administrative aspects.

### **Methodology**

1. Methods: The Mixed – Method research with the Integrated Design was employed in this study. The researcher emphasized initially on the quantitative research and then the qualitative one, respectively.

2. Participants: The participants in this research were the stakeholders related to the university administration including administrators, ex- administrators, lecturers, and officers (in both faculty and departmental levels). The steps were:

2.1 The selection of the target subjects. The criteria used in the selection process were: 1) the accessibility of the information. The information could easily retrieved from the participants or through personal relationships; 2) contextual differences. The selected universities should have the contextual differences in both their construction development and sites. The two types of selected universities were the northern region universities and the Rajabhat universities

2.2 The selection of participants. The selection of the participants was considered by the distribution of the stakeholder representatives within 2 groups (administrators and officers) and the willingness of information distribution. The participants were classified into:

1. The 226 quantitative data participants. 154 persons were from the northern region universities (63 administrators and 91 officers) and 72 persons were from Rajabhat universities (69 administrators and 3 officers)

2. The 33 qualitative data participants. They were chosen from the quantitative group above through a typical case and extreme case. This group composed of 24 persons from the northern region universities (16 administrators and 8 officers) and 9 persons from Rajabhat universities (7 administrators and 2 officers).

### 3. Research Instruments and Data Collection:

3.1 The quantitative data collection. The 5 leveled Likert scale questionnaire was employed in the study. The researcher himself had designed the questionnaire regarding the components and indicators set by the University Presidential Council of Thailand. The appointments were made and the questionnaires were distributed and collected by the researcher.

3.2 The qualitative data collection. The Semi-Structure Interview was used in the data collection. The interview covered the 6 aspects of good governance. The research himself made and appointment with the subjects and then interviews were conducted.

4. Data Analysis. The descriptive and inferential statistics (mean, standard deviation, frequency, percentage and T-Test) were employed in the quantitative data analysis while the Typological Analysis and Analytic Induction were used for the qualitative data analysis.

## **Results**

In question No. 1 (Did the two universities possess good governance? If so, how much do they have? In what components?), the quantitative data analysis revealed that both universities reached the medium level in the overall and within the 5 aspects, except in the aspect of the effectiveness, which had a high level.

From the consideration of each aspect, the results significantly showed that

In the equity: The level of good governance level was high in two aspects. One was the contract system with fair and clear practices and the definite period of evaluation.

In the effectiveness: The aspects of independency of the presidential administration which caused the high efficiency were at the high level according to the participant opinions.

For the 6 other aspects, they reached the medium level while the significance were found in the following

1. On the basis of good governance, the participants agreed that the university should put more emphasis on participation, transparency, and evaluation, especially in the personnel and budgeting management.

2. It was found that the patronage system still existed in the process of selection and employment. The overlapping between the concept of transparency and the patronage system, which was considered to be a part of Thai culture, proved to be a constraint. The problem concerning the transparency in the promotions was also found, since it was still based on the concept of interpersonal relationship and authoritarianism.

3. The transparency in the participation of the administrator selection. It was found out that the process of the University Council President and a distinguished committee selection was obscure since these positions were appointed or selected by most of the university administrators themselves and that made that belong to the same team. The faculty members proved to have a lack of participation and knowledge about that process. By the same token, the process of the deans or the heads of the department selection was conducted under the supervision of the

president, without the participation in or approval of the other members. This phenomenon was found only in the northern region universities.

4. In the aspect of the autonomy of the Appeal Committee, it was shown that the faculties and their members had freedom to perform their activities except in the matter of the number of undergraduate student admission, which was determined by the university president.

5. In the aspect of effectiveness, it was found that the effectiveness of the university administrators was at a good level. They were able to make progress within several areas in the university clearly especially the scenery, the buildings, etc. The evaluation was conducted periodically according to the criteria of the quality assurance. Each faculty usually conducted the evaluation. The financial and budgeting departments focused on completing documents rather than genuine outputs.

6. In the aspect of flexibility. The inadequacy of flexibility was found in the administrative matter due to the high number of senior faculty members (especially in the Rajabhat universities). Downsizing of the organization was applied for better flexibility and, in return, it produced a greater number of smaller units within the organizations. The intercommunication in the university was provided with a high speed, through various media (e-mails, newsletters, and memorandums).

In question No 2: Its focus was on whether both types of universities differed in good governance or not and in which aspects they were different. The results reflected that from the overview, they were not significantly different, but they were in some aspects such as autonomy and participation. Considering each aspect in detail, it was shown that

1) The equity: The personnel in both universities expressed different points of view with respect to “The representatives of Lecturer Council Committee and officers participating in the evaluation”. Besides this aspect, Differences were not found.

2) The transparency: The participants from both universities had different points of view in 3 aspects: The provision of personnel information announcements to the public, the provision of welfare and service information, and the provision of rules and regulations.

3) The participation: The significantly different points of view were in 2 aspects, namely the personnel participation in the chairman of the University Council selection and the

participation in the presidential election. To be more specific, the northern region universities reached a higher level than the northeastern Rajabhat universities did.

4) The autonomy: Both universities showed different points of view toward 2 aspects: the autonomy in revenue management with the same basis and the opportunities provided for revenue plan adjustments in accordance with social change. The northern region universities revealed a higher level than the Rajabhat universities.

5) The effectiveness: No significant differences were found.

6) The flexibility: No significant differences were found.

The quantitative data analysis answering question No. 1 and 2 are shown in Table 1.

The important findings found from question No. 2 in the qualitative research were:

1) The emphasis on the concept of good governance within both universities. It was found that participants from both universities agreed on the emphasized aspect of good governance. That is, the university should possess good governance in terms of participation, equity, and transparency, respectively.

2) The equity and transparency. It was found that both universities had limitations on the transparency in employment and recruitment. The existence of a patronage system and authoritarianism were also found, particularly in the recruitment process. The promotion and reward were problematic because of the impact of the above system. The degree of the above 2 problems were higher in the northeastern region Rajabhat universities than the northern region universities.

3) The transparency and participation in the president, university council committee and dean selection. The northern region universities proved to be more critical than the Rajabhat universities in these aspects. The appointment of these 3 positions seldom gained the unanimous acceptance from the community.

The election process was conducted on the basis of mutual interest. That is to say, when the president's term expired, the University Council Committee together with the chairman of the Lecturer Council Committee elected the new president (always the same president). At the same time, the president appointed the deans of each faculty according to his personal preferences.

This problem was seldom found in the Rajabhat universities since all the selection process was transparently Conducted and the opportunity for the interested person to campaign for the position was fairly provided.

4) The transparency and participation in budget administration and participation in long term project decision making. It was found that the level of good governance in the northern region universities was quite low both at the university and faculty levels. The budget plan and the annual revenue had seldom been disclosed to the public. The expenses and incomes were acknowledged among their own groups. Moreover, in the aspect of participation in the decision making of long term projects, the degree of acknowledgement in this matter was low. Only a few faculties knew about the projects or may just recognize after the completion of those projects. Many new curriculums were implemented without recognition of the faculty members and without planning ahead. This problem had never occurred in the Rajabhat universities.

5) The autonomy of the Appeal Committee and the policy making process at both faculty and subdivision levels. It was shown that the northern region universities had a higher level in the autonomy in their administration than the Rajabhat universities. Each faculty operated one individual faculty according to the vision and policy of the president. The appeal Committee similarly was fully authorized by the president to conduct their performance without sanction of the president or dean. On the contrary, the faculty themselves had no right to determine the number of student admission in each year since the figure had been determined by the university. The criteria of the resources (buildings, teachers, and materials) were used in making decision whereas the university might consider the revenue along with the determination of the number of student admission.

In the Rajabhat universities, lawyers played a crucial role in the Appeal Committee. The incumbent committee seemed to be independent, but it could not perform its duty in full swing. Not surprisingly, no serious punishment was given in the university.



6) Efficiency. The findings revealed that the northern region universities had good performance. They were able to develop themselves in many areas, particularly in what people could physically see. For instance, in building construction and landscape development, after a performance evaluation of administrators based on the university quality assurance policy, improvement was found after getting feedback in staff. On the other hand, the Rajabhat universities focused their efficiency on how the money in the budget was spent. That is, they preferred to do the paper work rather than focus on the actual results. In terms of administrators and staff evaluation, it was not yet carried out.

7. Flexibility. The findings showed that the northern region universities had high flexibility when contacting other division in their universities. In addition, they used a variety of ways to contact one another. However, they had difficulty expanding their organizations or establishing more divisions to deal with their increasing duties. The Rajabhat universities had a number of senior instructors who were soon to retire. So, these people were not interested in developing their own organizations. Needless to say, the Rajabhat universities did not exhibit much flexibility.

Table 1: Research results to answer research questions No.1 and No.2

	Items	Two Classifications of universities		Levels of good governance	Public Universities		Rajabhat Universities		t-value	Sig.
		X	S.D		X	S.D	X	S.D		
<b>1</b>	<b>Equity Aspects</b>	<b>3.19</b>	<b>0.68</b>	<b>moderate</b>	<b>3.20</b>	<b>0.72</b>	<b>3.17</b>	<b>0.58</b>	<b>0.372</b>	<b>0.711</b>
	1.1 The universities make fair and clear contracts with people	3.71	0.79	high	3.71	0.81	3.71	0.74	-0.005	0.996
	1.2 The universities set the time to carry out an evaluation appropriately.	3.79	0.82	high	3.78	0.82	3.81	0.82	-0.226	0.822
	1.3 The universities motivate their staff to work in full swing	3.22	0.86	moderate	3.18	0.84	3.31	0.90	-1.061	0.290
	1.4 Staff are able to appeal to the committee if the superiors treat them unjustly	2.94	0.97	moderate	2.95	0.97	2.90	0.98	0.374	0.709
	1.5 The appeal committees have autonomy to make their own decisions without being controlled by any groups.	2.91	0.90	moderate	2.97	0.96	2.79	0.98	1.276	0.203
	1.6 After an evaluation is carried out, staff are			moderate						

	Items	Two Classifications of universities		Levels of good governance	Public Universities		Rajabhat Universities		t-value	Sig.
		X	S.D		X	S.D	X	S.D		
	informed of their strengths and weaknesses.	2.94	1.00		2.90	1.04	3.03	0.89	-0.981	0.328
	1.7 Staff representatives or the instructor council take part in an evaluation.	2.85	1.04		2.95	1.05	2.65	1.00	1.998*	0.047
<b>2</b>	<b>Transparency Aspects</b>	<b>3.04</b>	<b>0.78</b>	<b>moderate</b>	<b>3.01</b>	<b>0.83</b>	<b>3.12</b>	<b>0.67</b>	<b>-1.004</b>	<b>0.316</b>
	2.1 The universities set clear criteria to promote staff and instructors.	2.80	1.15	moderate	2.90	1.19	2.60	1.03	1.828	0.069
	2.2 The universities set and inform salary range to their own communities.	3.30	1.21	moderate	3.29	1.21	3.32	1.20	-0.158	0.875
	2.3 The promotion process is clear.	2.51	0.98	moderate	2.56	1.00	2.39	0.93	1.259	0.209
	2.4 The universities inform people in their own communities about types of personnel development.	3.09	1.04	moderate	2.92	1.00	3.44	1.03	- 3.620**	0.000
	2.5 The universities have clear criteria to recruit new			moderate						

Items	Two Classifications of universities		Levels of good governance	Public Universities		Rajabhat Universities		t-value	Sig.
	X	S.D		X	S.D	X	S.D		
staff and make announcements of their decisions to the public.	3.17	1.09		3.08	1.10	3.36	1.04	-1.790	0.075

2.6 The universities inform their staff about their rights and fringe benefits.	3.31	0.98	moderate	3.21	0.97	3.51	0.95	-2.218*	0.028
2.7 The universities inform their staff about university's orders and regulations.	3.48	0.98	moderate	3.38	1.00	3.69	0.93	-2.233*	0.027
2.8 The universities make an announcement about recruitment to attract high qualified candidates.	3.28	1.06	moderate	3.22	1.07	3.40	1.03	-1.207	0.229
2.9 The universities set clear job descriptions and evaluations.	3.27	0.93	moderate	3.25	1.01	3.32	0.73	-0.560	0.576
2.10 Superiors and subordinates have a two-way communication.	3.14	1.05	moderate	3.11	1.11	3.21	0.92	-0.653	0.514
2.11 The universities have a clear way of budgeting			moderate						

	Items	Two Classifications of universities		Levels of good governance	Public Universities		Rajabhat Universities		t-value	Sig.
		X	S.D		X	S.D	X	S.D		
	and evaluating assets and liabilities.	3.07	1.08		3.03	1.11	3.15	1.02	-0.819	0.413
	2.12 Focusing on financial stability, the universities have a long term fiscal policy.	2.86	1.04	moderate	2.84	1.09	2.90	0.92	-0.439	0.661
	2.13 Focusing on outputs, the universities have a budget evaluation.	2.84	1.12	moderate	2.80	1.16	2.93	1.01	-0.870	0.386
	2.14 The universities have a budget evaluation by and independent evaluation committee.	2.65	1.12	moderate	2.63	1.18	2.69	0.99	-0.429	0.668
	2.15 The universities have a committee to inspect financial administration.	2.89	1.11	moderate	2.90	1.17	2.88	0.96	0.133	0.894
<b>3</b>	<b>Participation Aspects</b>	<b>3.08</b>	<b>0.80</b>	<b>moderate</b>	<b>3.01</b>	<b>0.87</b>	<b>3.23</b>	<b>0.62</b>	<b>-2.220*</b>	<b>0.028</b>
	3.1 Staff and instructors take part in forming the university council.	3.22	1.25	moderate	2.87	1.27	3.97	0.79	-	7.993**
	3.2 Staff and instructors take part in recruiting faculty deans.	3.20	1.24	moderate	2.81	1.21	4.04	0.81	-	9.005**

Items	Two Classifications of universities		Levels of good governance	Public Universities		Rajabhat Universities		t-value	Sig.
	X	S.D		X	S.D	X	S.D		
3.3 The presidents take people's comments and suggestions into account, particularly in university policies and administration.	3.17	1.04	moderate	3.12	1.08	3.29	0.96	-1.176	0.241
3.4 Faculty/department's plans come from staff and instructors' participation.	3.04	1.03	moderate	3.03	1.11	3.06	0.84	-0.222	0.824
3.5 The presidents are accepted by the majority in their own communities.	3.48	0.97	moderate	3.45	1.04	3.53	0.82	-0.527	0.599
3.6 The presidents are supported by the majority in their own communities.	3.50	0.98	moderate	3.47	1.05	3.56	0.82	-0.628	0.531
3.7 Staff and instructors are able to attend training sessions and pursue a higher education.	2.90	1.09	moderate	2.86	1.10	2.97	1.06	-0.698	0.486
3.8 Teamwork in emphasized	3.25	0.99	moderate	3.29	1.00	3.18	0.97	0.743	0.458
3.9 Staff and instructors have a chance to inspect university administrators as to whether their	2.62	1.02	moderate	2.65	1.08	2.56	0.89	0.642	0.522

	Items	Two Classifications of universities		Levels of good governance	Public Universities		Rajabhat Universities		t-value	Sig.
		X	S.D		X	S.D	X	S.D		
	performances are congruent with the university policies.									
	3.10 Staff and instructors know university problems.	2.80	1.03	moderate	2.82	1.11	2.75	0.85	0.461	0.645
	3.11 Staff and instructors participate in problem solving.	2.68	1.01	moderate	2.70	1.10	2.62	0.78	0.599	0.550
<b>4</b>	<b>Autonomy Aspects</b>	<b>3.31</b>	<b>0.82</b>	<b>moderate</b>	<b>3.41</b>	<b>0.83</b>	<b>3.10</b>	<b>0.77</b>	<b>2.751**</b>	<b>0.006</b>
	4.1 The university councils focus on policy making.	3.31	1.03	moderate	3.29	1.06	3.37	0.96	-0.609	0.543
	4.2 All faculties/departments are able to make more income for their organizations. However, they have to follow the same standard.	3.14	1.06	moderate	3.36	1.02	2.65	0.98	4.936	0.000
	4.3 Faculties, divisions, and centers have freedom to set their own policies and administration to fit university policies without being controlled by the presidents or vice presidents.	3.46	1.10	moderate	3.53	1.09	3.29	1.11	1.544	0.124

	Items	Two Classifications of universities		Levels of good governance	Public Universities		Rajabhat Universities		t-value	Sig.
		X	S.D		X	S.D	X	S.D		
	4.4 The universities are able to change their plans to fit social changes.	3.34	0.94	moderate	3.49	0.94	3.01	0.85	3.820**	0.000
	4.5 All expenses are averaged out to different categories.	3.32	1.03	moderate	3.40	1.03	3.15	1.02	1.667	0.097
<b>5</b>	<b>Effectiveness Aspects</b>	<b>3.51</b>	<b>0.81</b>	<b>high</b>	<b>3.51</b>	<b>0.71</b>	<b>3.50</b>	<b>0.67</b>	<b>0.132</b>	<b>0.895</b>
	5.1 The presidents have administrative autonomy to bring efficiency to the universities.	3.87	0.86	High	3.84	0.87	3.93	0.84	-0.757	0.450
	5.2 Not all steps of president recruitment are revealed to the public.	3.41	1.07	moderate	3.42	1.07	3.38	1.08	0.307	0.759
	5.3 There are many administrative lines to ensure that accuracy and fairness are established.	3.38	0.93	moderate	3.41	0.95	3.31	0.88	0.778	0.437
	5.4 Administrators participate in instructors' academic evaluation	3.40	1.00	moderate	3.39	1.07	3.43	0.82	-0.287	0.775
	5.5 There is a top-down administration to bring			moderate						



	Items	Two Classifications of universities		Levels of good governance	Public Universities		Rajabhat Universities		t-value	Sig.
		X	S.D		X	S.D	X	S.D		
	unity.	3.48	0.92		3.49	0.93	3.44	0.90	0.373	0.710
<b>6</b>	<b>Flexibility Aspects</b>	<b>3.06</b>	<b>0.85</b>	<b>moderate</b>	<b>3.07</b>	<b>0.91</b>	<b>3.02</b>	<b>0.71</b>	<b>0.443</b>	<b>0.658</b>
	6.1 The universities downsize their workforce.	2.96	0.97	moderate	2.97	0.98	2.96	0.94	0.067	0.947
	6.2 The university council committees are downsized to bring effectiveness to the universities.	3.15	0.92	moderate	3.18	0.99	3.08	0.75	0.828	0.409
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3.20</b>	<b>0.61</b>	<b>moderate</b>	<b>3.20</b>	<b>0.65</b>	<b>3.19</b>	<b>0.52</b>	<b>0.169</b>	<b>0.866</b>

## **Discussion**

Research results revealed the following interesting points.

**First**, good governance in the Thai public universities should have focused on people participation, transparency, and accessibility. In terms of personnel and budget administration, the research results were compatible with those of Ratchada et al (2544: 90-93) and Suwakit Sripadtha (2545). That is, good governance (Ratchada used the term 'good administration') promoted accessibility, accountability, participation, and transparency. The reason might be the nature of organization. Even though state universities were a type of public organization, they had unique characteristics. Other public organizations might reveal that the chain of command was based on rules of law. In university administration, on the other hand, administrative positions had specific terms of appointment. Like university administrators, most university staff were instructors and had educational degrees or academic titles. In other words, most administrators came from the ranks of instructors. As a result, personnel and budgeting administration were based on feasibility rather than on the power of command. Because participation in the university was important, transparency and accessibility played a crucial role in university administration. Thus, equity rather than rules of law became the major tool in running the universities. This practice corresponded with Charan Suwanwela's (2546: 211).

"Participation in universities in various affairs is associated with trust and understanding between sections in university. Reason, transparency, and fairness play a crucial role..."

**Second**, research findings showed that personnel recruitment had allegations of unfair treatment and no transparency because personal connections or the patronage system was widely found. This reflected the Thai cultural roots from the agrarian times, which placed personal connection at the top of the relationships. That is, people in a higher social status needed to protect those in a lower one, who needed to do something to show loyalty to the superiors in return. To be more specific, they had to do something to gain favor and to get protection from the superiors. It was true that the structures of the Thai university administration and instructors pursued higher education in different disciplines along with the western curricula. Our cultural roots, particularly the practice of nepotism and the patronage system, conflicted with current public university administration. This became an enormous challenge and stumbling blocks to

the Thai universities. Bowonsak Uwanno (2542) mentioned the problems of and solutions to nepotism and the patronage system and how they had an impact on good governance.

“...The concept of good governance in standard practices cannot put into action in full swing due to the nepotism and the patronage system, which have had a long deep root since the ancient times. Thus, Thailand still has democracy with nepotism and capitalism with class hierarchy. Many sections in Thai society have been under the influence of nepotism and the patronage system. So, to establish good governance in standard practices like other countries, many things need to be changed and adjusted. ... It is a good idea to adapt the patronage system to fit modern world and maintain some advantages such as gratefulness, seniority, and the humbleness when personal connection is required without any mutual benefits. If a good relationship is established, people should take public rather than personal interests into account...”

**Third**, the findings revealed that the northern region universities had problems in good governance, particularly in participation and transparency when recruiting top ranking positions- the President of the University Council, the University Council committees (especially senior members), the university president, and deans of faculties. These results were different from those of Ratchananan et al (2544: 90-100), which people in universities would like to participate in finding the University Council committees (especially outsider members) thorough people’s recommendation process. They believed that people in the university community should have a chance to take part in an important policy making process. University administrators should ask for their opinions before launching any new policies. In the presidential recruitment process, the University Council should play a role in application and screening processes. The Council must be objective and fair. All steps in the processes must be transparent and be able to be checked. These ideas should be used in the faculty dean recruitment process as well.

**Fourth**, this study also paid attention to financial administration, particularly the income budget, which people in the university community did not have a chance to examine how the budget was used. To spend all budgets according to the plans must have all documents for verification. The study results were different from Ratchada’s in terms of the principles of good public university management (2544:106-107). To bring about transparency, the university

auditor should be autonomous, but it could be under the University Council rather than the university administrative team. This could promote balance of power in the administrative team and the focus should be placed on the final results or the outputs rather than on paper work. In addition, all university departments, divisions, and sections should know that when drawing up the budget they have to pay attention to transparency, fairness, and careful actions. These practices also applied to the annual budget and current public accounting.

### **Suggestions and Recommendations**

From the research results, There are two major suggestions.

#### 1. Suggestions for installation of good governance.

In terms of university management, public participation is a must. Information can easily be accessed and the community can be involved in the decision making process in significant issues, especially if they have widespread effects on people in the university. To show accountability, university administrators must be ready to be examined on their performances. Other stakeholders in personnel and budget administration must be transparent and easy to examine. The reason behind this suggestion is that good governance in public universities is still an issue.

In terms of personnel recruitment, it is found that the patronage system still exists. To solve this problem, a recruitment committee should be set up. In the appointment of people to be committee, all members must not gain/lose benefits from the recruitment. For this to materialize, all committee members cannot be administrative personnel; in contrast, university instructor representatives and senior representatives from different faculties should comprise a good proportion of the committee. As a result, nepotism cannot take root. No groups have absolute power to select their own people. Furthermore, the recruitment should be open to the public and all steps in the recruitment process, namely setting applicant qualifications, providing interviews, etc can be examined by the public.

As mentioned earlier, the recruitment process of university administrative personnel was not transparent and included public participation. To solve this problem, possible solutions are given below.

In the selection of the President of the University Council and university committee senior members, people in the university community should take part as much as possible. All steps in

finding qualified candidates must be transparent and easy to examine such as the search stage, the contact stage, the screening stage, and the final selection stage. In the screening process, no administrative personnel should be in the recruitment committee since there might be some conflict of interest.

In the selection of the university president, people in the community should propose the names of prospective candidates. However, the written qualifications for the job are posted and the public should be informed. After collecting all presidential candidate names, a public announcement is made. The next step is to contact those potential candidates gaining at least 10% support from the public. Then, a special meeting is set up to have candidates express their visions and answer questions from the floor. Then, the public votes for the qualified ones. The number of the final qualified candidates can be 3-5. The next step is to have the recruitment committee select at least 3 candidates and propose them to the University Council to find the most qualified one. Note that candidates have to express their vision and answer questions from the recruitment committee and the University Council. No recruitment committee members must be the university administrative personnel in order to assure fairness and equity. For instance, they might come from capable outsiders, qualified ones from state enterprises, instructor representatives, alumni representatives, and student representatives. To sum up, all steps and processes in selecting the university presidents must be transparent and possible to examine.

In the selection of faculty deans, the screening process should follow the same pattern as that of the president. That is, potential candidates' name are proposed. This may include candidates from general application. Then, the faculties approach the prospective candidates who gain at least 10% votes from people in the faculties. The next step is to have selected candidates reveal their visions on how to run the offices and answer questions from the floor. Then, have people vote for possible final candidates. When counting the ballots, the public must have a chance to see this process. After having the finalists (it should have more than one final candidate), the screening committee will pass on the name of them to the University Council Committee to make a final decision. However, all processes from beginning to the end must not have administrative personnel involved to avoid any types of influence or nepotism.

This study found that the Thai universities were lacking in good governance, transparency, public participation, particularly in budgetary administration. As a result, the university should

provide a budget report to allow people in the university community to know how money is spent and what the current balance is. It can be either a monthly report or a semester report. In addition, the university financial budget committee should be autonomous. Whenever the universities have to spend a large amount of money on certain projects which have a significant impact on people in the community, the universities should allow the public share their ideas, and make comments and suggestions.

2. Suggestions for future studies on good governance in Thai universities.

More universities should be included. The focus can be placed on the universities which represent specific regions, the sizes, and special characteristics of universities.

It would be better if future studies pay attention to some factors or cause variables which have an impact on good governance in universities.

Future studies can focus on how to develop good governance.

In-depth research should be conducted to determine the causes and problems and on what kinds of difficulties Thai universities are focusing.