International Students' Perspectives on University Instructional Practices: A Case of a Thai University

Elvis E. Obaro-Akporo* and Anchalee Chayanuvat

Suryadhep Teachers College, Curriculum and Instruction, Rangsit University, Thailand

*e-mail: elembaro44@gmail.com

Abstract

This survey research aims to: 1) identify the teaching and learning process in the programs taken by international students, 2) explore the expectations and classroom learning experiences of international students studying in the courses at a Thai university and 3) explore the level of satisfaction of international students at a Thai university. The mixed methods approach was used to obtain both quantitative and qualitative data. The population for this study was 107 international students in the Masters of Education in Curriculum and instruction and in Bilingual Education Programs of the research site. By using Krejcie and Morgan, (1970), with the 95% confidence level and 10% errors, 66 returned questionnaires were considered an acceptable sample size. Qualitative data were collected from 12 volunteering interviewees The research was conducted in the first semester of 2019 Academic session. Each questionnaire item was analyzed for the mean score and S.D. Next, the interview contents were analyzed into themes related to the interviewees' perspectives about instructional practices in the programs. The questionnaire data were analyzed with descriptive statistics: the mean score and standard deviation. The top 3 highest mean scores ranking in order were found. The findings from the questionnaires were: 1) The lecturers used IT to support their teaching ($\bar{x}$ = 4.35,

2

S.D.= 0.77), 2) The lecturers encouraged students to work together in small groups ($\bar{x}$ = 4.29, S.D..=0.74); and 3) The lecturers mostly used group-work ($\bar{x}$ = 4.20, S.D.= 0.75) to conduct the activities. As for the qualitative data, the semi-structured interviews revealed four areas: 1) The Lecturer Qualities 2) Engaging Activities and Assignments 3) Supportive Instructional Materials and After-class Consultations and 4) Standard and Good Facilities. The findings pointed out that the teaching and learning process in the programs taken by international students were satisfactory. The lecturers could teach by using the IT facility support and adhere to the student-centred approach by adopting small group work activities. Secondly, the lecturers in the programs were IT literate making classroom activities engaging and using after class consultations to enhance student learning. In addition, in general, students were satisfied with the lecturer quality and supportive facilities.

1. Introduction

International education is currently a crucial flourishing sector (Goswami, 2018). For many countries, it becomes a major revenue earner while for international students, it is a way to earn a university degree outside their own countries based on a variety of expectations (University of Oxford, 2017). In the view of Mazzarol (1998), during the nineteen-eighties and nineteen-nineties, education appeared to be an important economic sector and three major movements in the international higher education sector were recognized. Similarly, the years 1980-1997 were the years Thailand embraced international education, with increasing numbers of students going overseas to study each year (The Bangkok Post, 28 January 2020). Mazzarol, Soutar & Sim (2003) asserted that the first movement was when students proceeded to a host country for educational purposes at a preferred university or academy. The situation became popular at the beginning of the twentieth century and continued to be the same. The second surge was when education institutions accepted relationships or affiliations by means of 'twinning' programs with other academic institutions to maintain an influence in the global educational market. The process is regarded to be further combination around the global educational sector. Recently, the situation transformed to be around the continent of Asia. Students are able to learn for an oversea academic degree in a partner university of the one they registered into. The third and last surge happened at the time fresh subsidiary campuses happened to be established at oversea arenas with informatory and communicatory technology (ICT) applied to take programs online. In a nutshell, regardless of the type of delivery of education, international students persist in the search for the best places for furthering their studies (Mazzarol, 2003). To conclude, education has always been important for all and everyone and students choose the places where their needs can be met with the support of information technology.

Hence, governments have entrusted importance in confirming a continuous flow of learners in higher education. There are various factors to pay

attention to in the education of students. For example, instructional practices signifying what the programs offer and how the lecturers deliver knowledge contribute a significant role to the quality of education (Sokoli and Koren, 2017). Certainly, there are also other advantages for a host country. For example, not only can a country earn some income but also knowledge from good brains, especially international students through quality leadership and high expectations of students and student performance and development (Lynch, 2015). So in order to attract students to the countries, various strategies have been used. Some countries offer a large number of scholarships (Ching and Chayanuvat, 2019), while others relax laws for students to live and work in the countries where they study (Grierson, 2019). An obvious example, the UK administration reformed its immigration strategy to support the UK universities. The new plan permits international students at British universities to live in the UK for two years after graduation, likened to four months previously. Universities in UK educated approximately 460,000 international students in 2018 (EU citizens excluded) by the aim to raise the total to 600,000 over the next 10 years. According to Office of the Education Council (OEC), Ministry of Education, Thailand (2004 pp.148-149), "the 1997 constitution and the 1999 National Educational Act have paved the way for a major educational reform." Despite several laws, rules and regulations amended, the Ministry of Education and the administrative structure reorganized, the teaching-learning process has been improved; and that new concepts and approaches including educational standards and quality assurance have been conducted to make sure the programs offered meet the standards.

Based on a study by Chien (2015), there are seven major reasons for students who choose studying abroad. They are political reasons, economic reasons, personal reasons, educational reasons, cultural reasons, informational reasons and environmental reasons. In another study, 80.65% stated that they were pleased with the quality of education (Yilmaz, 2017).

Currently, many higher institutions are faced with various challenges of low international students' enrollment due to several reasons leading to reduced income, a situation that can make some higher institutions unable to survive. Besides, non-traditional host countries now develop a broad range of strategies to develop the appeal of their higher education sector to foreign students and scholars with the aim of increasing international visibility (University of Oxford, 2017). Among some of the reasons for low enrollments in many countries, including Thailand is the population trend, with low birthrates, leading to numerous available university seats.

In the case of Thailand, international education is now a major factor that most universities pay attention to. Previously, Thailand had no serious concern about the trend of international students' enrollment in the country due to the fact that Thailand is a country with a strong mother tongue. To offer international programs, universities must be ready in terms of the knowledge and personnel, especially since English is used as the medium of instruction. The nation decided on reform in the educational sector of the country to adopt the new trend. For the 1997 economic crisis, analysts declared that inefficiency in the provision of education was one of its causes. Accordingly, the report indicated that "more and more people seem to agree that it was high time for the nation to push forward educational reform." There was also the belief "that if the educational reform initiatives are not achieved, not only will Thai people be educationally disadvantaged and thus unable to achieve a competitive edge, but also the country may be subjected to another round of economic crisis." Improving education quality, therefore, is a major goal to achieve and as a result, some universities such as Chulalongkhorn University, Thammasat University, and Mahidol University have improved themselves to accommodate both Thais and foreigners by becoming Thailand's best universities in many areas (Office of the Education Council (OEC), Ministry of Education, Thailand, 2004 pp.148-149).

The country's reform of the educational administration and management has been implemented in respect with the 1999 National Education Legislation as well as the 2002 Bureaucratic Reform Bill. Accordingly, the key and most paramount target was the improvement and efficiency through the application of faster and simpler working system in the process of the reforms. This situation led to the integration of three government owned corporations, among which are, "Ministry of Education, the Ministry of University Affairs and the Office of the National Education Commission." In this regard, the named corporations were restructured to fit into one ministry, named the "Ministry of Education" Office of the Education Council (OEC), Ministry of Education, Thailand (2004). As for the internal organization of the program improvement, various mechanisms have been adopted, such as the introduction of the Thai Framework Qualifications to standardize all programs. Therefore, instructional practices have a crucial role to play in effectively implementing the courses and thus attracting international students.

Instructional practices consist of specific instruction techniques that direct interaction in the classroom as well as the learning process that caters for the learners' growth. They are closely related to professional development and student achievement with a firm belief that a carefully aligned curriculum implemented can produce the expected results (Hoge, 2016). Thus, the players in the scene are no other than the lecturers. For instructional practices, the instructors will plan lessons, assemble materials for instructional purposes, design individual and group assignments with appropriate use of study materials. Instructional practices enhanced the effectiveness of the classroom process which should cover areas, for instance, providing the course description, class requirements, the course curriculum plan, for which learners will improve their abilities and skills expected in each semester, while textbooks, materials, teacher guidelines and facilities are favorable (Holly, 2019). Instructional practices in brief deal with what the lecturers do and make use of to achieve the intended results.

Besides, instructor clarity is important. When an instructor initiates a fresh element of study or assignment with learners, the instructor explains the purposes and educational aims, and offers clear principles on how learners can be effective. According to Macsuga-Gage, Simonsen and Briere (2012), 'successful teachers expertly weave together academic, behavioural, and social threads to achieve a unique classroom tapestry". This means what happens in the classroom should be well planned and organized. Alber (2015) suggests that instructors need to regularly step backstage and support whole class discussion. This lets learners study from one another. Also, countless chances for instructors to formatively measure (through observation) how well learners are clutching the new content. Classroom discussion along with individual feedback (on paper or spoken) is necessary to offer whole-group responses and share their knowledge. Learners also need to offer feedback to the instructor so that the instructor can modify the education process, tools, and instruction consequently. While instructors also need to provide learners with operational and accurate feedback, instructors need to assess regularly and frequently where learners are in relation to the part of study's education aim or goal (communal assessment). Instructor content understanding leads to effective instructor classroom performance (Beach, 2011). Educators may perhaps have to transform their perception from topmost instruction approaches that should be applied in the classroom (Hattie, 2012). The best teaching may require the ability to alter instruction based on reflective practices between instructors and students. In brief, instructional practices are a major interactive factor in the teaching and the learning process.

When universities wish to make their presence in the international scene, the university in the study is also in the competition to attract international students to the university to prove to the world that it offers quality education following the same standards as universities in other countries have adopted (Rust and Kim, 2012). Although there are two major important responsibilities of Thai universities, namely, preparation and production of Thais for the 21st century and

apply the knowledge and innovation in country development (Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation (MHESI, 2019), this study is aimed at studying the quality of production of graduates in terms of investigation of instructional practices within the selected programs.

The researcher, therefore, conducted a study entitled "International Students' Perspectives on Instructional Practices: A Case a Thai University," which focuses on the teaching and learning in the programs that foreign students have taken, their expectations as well as their classroom learning experiences. The research results were expected to throw light on instructional practices in the chosen Thai international programs and reveal the benefits to improving the teaching and learning process at the university that matches the needs of international students.

2. Objectives

1. To identify the teaching and learning processes in the programs taken by international students

2. To explore the expectations and classroom learning impressions of foreign students studying courses at a Thai University

3. To explore the rate of impression of international students at a Thai University

3. The Study

3.1 Location of the Study

This study was carried out at a top private university in Thailand. The university "has an enrolment of over 28,000 students in 134 degree courses (87 undergraduate degrees, 36 master degrees and 11 doctoral degrees). This university

has approximately 1,611 foreign students from different nations around the globe (University, 2019).

3.2 Population and Sample of the Study

The study population comprises 107 international students currently studying at the graduate level from the Faculty of Education. The sample group was calculated by Krejcie & Morgan, 1970 formulae, so 66 returned questionnaires were considered acceptable as a reliable sample size. Random sampling was utilized to choose questionnaire respondents. Qualitative information was collected from 12 volunteer interviewees. Interviews could not be done with all the questionnaire respondents. "Most qualitative studies use a small number of individuals and cover material in depth (Lichtman, 2013, p.193).

3.3 Data Collection and Data Analysis Techniques

This research is a survey research. The investigation used a mixed-methods procedure as both quantitative data (from responses to the questionnaires) and qualitative data (from the interviews). were collected (Creswell, 2005, p.510). Survey questionnaires were sent to the sample group. The questionnaire items were structured around instructional practices that they had experienced such as the teaching and the learning process, the teachers' abilities and methods of teaching as well as the learners' way of learning. Altogether, the questionnaire was in two parts. The first part was a close-ended on a Likert Scale of 1 to 5 under 6 categories: Lecturers' Teaching Abilities, the Approaches/Process, General Perception, Personal Characteristics, Environment, IT Support and Integration. There was only one open-ended question on Suggestions but no answers were obtained. The scores in the Likert Scale were interpreted following Best (1981) as shown below:

4.21-5.00 = highest

3.41 -4.20 = high

2.61-3.40 = moderate

1.81-2.60 = low

1.00-1.80 = lowest

The researcher met interviewees face to face at a location agreed to by both parties. As for the interview, the following 8 questions were used. The questions were constructed based on the objectives of the study to find out what the students thought about instructional practices which included the lecturers' qualities, the teaching and learning processes/approaches, general perceptions, personal characteristics and environment.

1. Where are you from? What faculty are you studying at?

2. What do you think about the lecturers' abilities? Do their abilities meet your needs?

3. What do you think about the learning process? Does it meet your needs?

4. What do you think about the materials used in the courses? Do they meet your needs?

5. What do you think about the supporting facilities? Do they meet your needs?

6. What do you think about the overall environment/atmosphere?

7. Please describe your learning style for the program.

8. Any suggestions about instructional practices in general?

The data collected in the form of interviewed scripts were analyzed question by question and similar themes that emerged were grouped together based on Lichtman's Technique of 3 Cs Data Analysis of Codes-Categories- Concepts (2013, p. 253) as shown below:

Codes	Category	Concepts
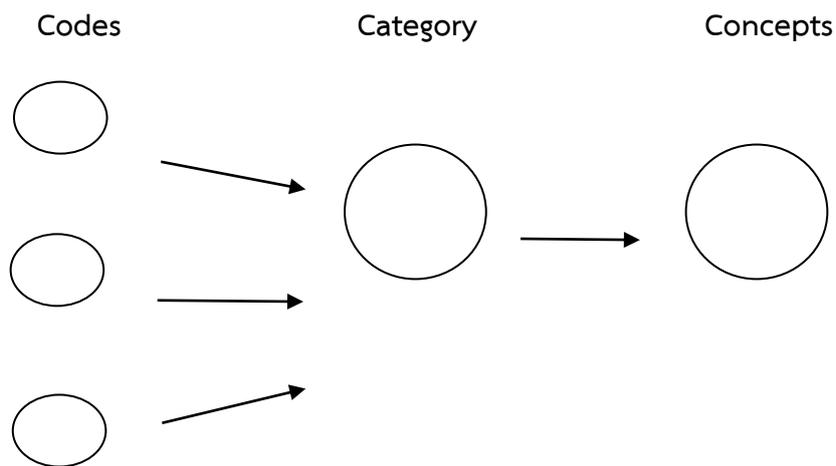
4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Findings from the Questionnaire Responses

The research was designed as a survey. The questionnaire used was designed into 2 parts: Part 1 to collect Personal and Demographic Information of the respondents as shown in Table 4.1 (There were more female than male students.), Table 4.2 (Most students were in the age range between 21-30 years old followed by 14 between 31-40 years old.), Table 4.3 (Most students were Chinese, followed by 18 Bhutanese), Table 4.4 (The majority of the respondents were single.), Table 4.5 (The majority were bachelor's degree holders.), Table 4.6 (Most students had an income/allowance of 30,000 and lower.), Table 4.7 (Most students were in Thailand up to two years.) Table 4.8 (More respondents were from Bilingual Education Program as shown below.

Table 4.1 Gender

Gender	Number (person)	Percentage
Male	21	31.8
Female	45	68.2
Total	66	100.0

Table 4.2 Age Range

Age	Number (person)	Percentage
20 years and lower	1	1.5
21-30 years	49	74.2
31-40 years	14	21.2
41-50 years	2	3.0
Total	66	100.0

Table 4.3 Nationalities

Nationality	Number (person)	Percentage
Chinese	43	65.1
Thai	2	3.0
Myanmar	1	1.5
Bhutanese	18	27.3
Indian	1	1.5
Australian	1	1.5
Total	66	100.0

Table 4.4 Highest Educational Level

Highest Educational Level	Number (person)	Percentage
Bachelor's Degree	53	80.3
Master Degree	13	19.7
Total	66	100.0

Table 4.5 Marital Status

Marital Status	Number (person)	Percentage
Single	49	74.2
Married	17	25.8
Widow/Divorced	0	0.0
Total	66	100.0

Table 4.6 Personal Monthly Income

Personal Monthly Income	Number (person)	Percentage
30,000 THB and lower	52	78.8
30,001-40,000 THB	8	12.1
40,001-50,000 THB	3	4.5
50,001-60,000 THB	1	1.5
60,001-70,000 THB	2	3.0
70,001 THB and higher	0	0.0
Total	66	100.0

Table 4.7 The Length of Time in Thailand

Time staying in Thailand.	Number (person)	Percentage
Higher than 6 months but lower than 1 year	31	47.0
1 to 2 years	23	34.8
2-3 years	3	4.5
More than 3 years	9	13.6
Total	66	100.0

Table 4.8 Program of Study

Major of study	Number (person)	Percentage
Bilingual Education	37	56.1
Curriculum & Instructional	27	40.9
Not Answer	2	3.0
Total	66	100.0

4.2 Findings from the Questionnaire Responses on Students' Perception towards Instructional Practices

Each table below shows what students thought about the category under instructional practices they experienced. The items are presented in order of the average mean score. In this way, interpretation about the scores can be made.

Table 4.9 Teaching Abilities (Lecturers' Quality) in Order of $\overline{X}$ from the Lowest to the Highest

Items Separated in Categories	Result		
	$\overline{X}$	S.D.	Interpretation
1. Lecturers' Qualities			
1.4 The lecturers' teaching abilities need improvement.	3.53	0.98	High
1.2 I attend classes because I am impressed by the lecturer's teaching abilities.	3.85	0.79	High
1.6 The lecturers explore new knowledge to teach students.	3.92	0.85	High
1.9 The lecturers teach clearly.	3.94	0.75	High
1.8 The lecturers explicitly explain the related theories.	3.95	0.75	High
1.1 The lecturers' teaching abilities meet my expectations.	3.95	0.75	High
1.3 The lecturers' teaching abilities enable me to improve my course content knowledge.	4.03	0.86	High
1.5 The lecturers in the program I am studying are knowledgeable.	4.11	0.66	High
1.7 The lecturers elaborate all important points with examples in their experiences.	4.15	0.83	High
TOTAL	3.94	0.72	High

This table reveals that students see the lecturers' quality at the high level. The top scores go for 1.3 ($\overline{X}$=4.15), 1.5 ($\overline{X}$=4.11) and 1.7 ($\overline{X}$=4.03). However,

1.2 ($\overline{X}$ =3.85), 1.6 ($\overline{X}$ =3.92), 1.8 ($\overline{X}$ =3.94) reveal that there is room for improvement of the lecturers' teaching abilities that are helpful for student learning improvement.

Table 4.10 Approaches and Processes in Order of $\overline{X}$ from the Lowest to the Highest

Items Separated in Categories	Result		
	$\overline{X}$	S.D.	Interpretation
2. Approaches/Processes			
2.10 The lecturers use old knowledge to teach students.	3.24	1.08	Moderate
2.2 The lecturers mostly used teacher-centred instruction.	3.52	1.06	High
2.6 The lecturers use teacher-directed approach.	3.70	0.86	High
2.7 The lecturers use student-centered approach	3.74	0.75	High
2.5 The lecturers plan the lessons very well.	3.85	0.75	High
2.8 The learning process of each course has been well-designed.	3.88	0.87	High
2.11 The lecturers give appropriate feedback on my studies.	3.88	0.87	High
2.1 The lecturers have ways to attract me to study the courses.	3.95	0.69	High
2.9 The lecturers encourage students to use self-directed learning.	4.09	0.84	High
2.3 The lecturers mostly use group work.	4.20	0.75	High
2.4 The lecturers encourage students to work together in small groups.	4.29	0.74	Highest
TOTAL AVERAGE:	3.85	0.84	High

This table reveals that students valued the teaching and learning processes or the approaches at the high level. They tended to believe that the lecturers were using the right approaches in teaching them but the scores obtained in 2.6 and 2.7 point out that students did not know the differences between student-centred approach and teacher-centred approach. The top three scores go for 2.4 ($\overline{X}$ =4.29), 2.3 ($\overline{X}$ =4.20) and 2.9 ($\overline{X}$ =4.09). These items show that students prefer to work in small groups. However, 2.10 ($\overline{X}$ =3.24) shows that not all the students were very sure in expressing that the lecturers used old knowledge to teach. The findings of this section reveal that there is room for improvement of the lecturers' learning process and approach management that are helpful for student learning improvement.

Table 4.11 General Perception in Order of $\overline{X}$ from the Lowest to the Highest

Items Separated in Categories	Result		
	$\overline{X}$	S.D.	Interpretation
3. General Perception			
3.3 The lecturers aim at the 21st Century skills as the course major outcomes.	4.06	0.68	High
3.1 The lecturers are aware of the significance of student learning.	4.09	0.84	High
3.2 believe that I am learning something valuable to my future career.	4.11	0.66	High
TOTAL AVERAGE:	4.09	0.73	High

Table 4.11 reveals that the students had general positive perception towards instructional practices. From the items under this heading, it is clear that the

students rated the attitude of the lecturer towards student learning at the high level. They believe that the lecturers care for student learning enhancement by aiming at achieving the 21st Century skill learning outcomes. In this way, it can be concluded that the lecturers in these programs are able to catch up with the changes or expectations of the field of education that are driven by changes.

Table 4.12 Personal Characteristics

Items Separated in Categories	Result		
	$\overline{X}$	S.D.	Interpretation
4. Personal Characteristics			
4.2 The lecturers prefer some students more than others.	3.45	1.06	High
4.4 The lecturers are supportive of my studies.	4.06	0.78	High
4.5 The lecturers treat me like grown-ups.	4.09	0.78	High
4.6 The lecturers allow time for me to see them outside class for further explanation on the point I do not understand.	4.05	0.87	High
4.1 The lecturers take good care of all students.	4.05	0.88	High
4.3 The lecturers are ethical.	4.09	0.76	High
TOTAL AVERAGE:	3.97	0.86	High

Based on Table 4.12, students found their lecturers with acceptable personal characteristics. They are highly ethical and behaved in a professional way.

Table 4.13 Environment in Order of $\overline{X}$ from the Lowest to the Highest

Items Separated in Categories	Result		
	$\overline{X}$	S.D.	Interpretation
5. Environment			
5.1 I feel studying here is like studying in my own country.	3.82	1.05	High
TOTAL AVERAGE:	3.82	1.05	High

Table 4.13 shows that students feel that studying at this university is like studying in their own countries. They rated this category at a high level.

Table 4.14 IT Support/Integration in Order of $\overline{X}$ from the Lowest to the Highest

Items Separated in Categories	Result		
	$\overline{X}$	S.D.	Interpretation
6. IT Support/Integration			
6.2 The lecturers are good at using technology in class.	4.12	0.77	High
6.1 The lecturers use IT to support their teaching.	4.35	0.77	Highest
TOTAL AVERAGE:	4.24	0. 77	Highest

Table 4.14 reveals that the lecturers at this university are good at using technology and use it to support their teaching. It can be said that the lecturers have high professional standards. When the world needs to move towards the use of IT, they can also do it very well (rated as highest by students).

Table 4.15 below shows the total mean score and S.D. of the total number of 15 items in this study.

Table 4.15 Total Perspectives of All Questionnaire Respondents on University Instructional Practices

Perception	Result		
	$\overline{X}$	S.D.	Interpretation
Total perception on University Instructional Practice	3.99	0.83	High

4.2 Findings from the Interviews

Content analysis was utilized to interpret uncountable from the 8-question interviews from 12 volunteers who willingly agreed to take part in the study.

They were 3 males and 3 females from Curriculum and instruction, while 2 males and 4 females were from Bilingual Education. There were more females in Bilingual Education Program. In all, six interviewees were from Curriculum and Instruction, while six were drawn from Bilingual Education. The majority of the students were Chinese as they made up the largest percentage of foreign students in the two programs. The others, the second largest group were from the Kingdom of Bhutan. Others were from Australia, India. Some of the Chinese students could speak Thai language, while some of them also doubled as part-time Chinese language teachers in Thai schools.

The interviews concluded into five keywords: 1) Education for Job Opportunities, 2) Lecturers' Qualities, 3) Approaches and Processes, 4) Instructional Materials and 5. Facilities. From the interviews, although students were highly satisfied with all the factors, more in-depth information was given as to where improvement could be made, namely the lecturers' teaching styles and the English proficiency of the lecturers.

Sample responses from the respondents are as follows:

"I am Chinese student, 26 years old. And I major in Curriculum & Innovation. When I graduated from my bachelor's degree, I was selected by the Chinese government to come to Thailand to teach Chinese language, I became a Chinese teacher in Thailand. So now, I am studying for my master's degree."

" My name is… . I'm pursuing M.Ed majoring in (Curriculum and Instruction) from Rangsit University (Pathumtani) Thailand."

"I am currently a masters' in education in Curriculum & Instruction. I am a lecturer of General Education subjects for pre-college students."

With regard to the perception of the lecturers, the majority of them agreed that the lecturers' abilities met their needs at the 'high' level, while one agreed that the performance of lecturers were at 'highest' level but suggested that lecturers could or should do more than that. A few were of the view that their needs were not totally met, and that about half of the number of instructors did not perform to their expectations. A few of them posit that lecturers possessed various teaching styles and methods, whereas some were still too traditional in their teaching styles. Some of the respondents precisely were of the opinion that, while the contents knowledge of some of the lecturers were good, they observed that there were some issues with English proficiency of some of the lecturers on some occasions.

With regard to learning experience, the majority of the respondents agreed that they have learned a lot through group assignments and group presentations. Overall, the majority of the respondents submitted that they were/are satisfied with the lecturers and that their needs were met, while a few were of a different opinion. Another stated that she hoped the institution would have more professional lecturers in Bilingual Education, then they could learn better. There

were comments about the students' wish to have increasing number of expatriate teachers and lecturers with professional titles in the programs.

" Well I must say that all the lecturers in my faculty are highly qualified professionals. They all try to deliver their lessons up to the best of their capabilities and as per the course requirement. However, I must admit that at times communication skills hinder the teaching and learning process."

"I think some meet my needs, not all meet my needs. Associate professors teaching meet my needs not those that are not well qualified. I like to have teachers from America and UK and other foreign countries who are English speakers, not just having only lecturers from Thailand to teach every course."

" We have a few excellent lecturers in our program. And they have different teaching styles. Some lecturers are humorous and some lecturers are traditional. I have to say that the personal ability of the lecturer is pretty great. But maybe sometimes, because we are too young that we already accept too many new things, I feel that some teacher's lecture is too traditional."

The majority of the respondents were of the view that the teaching and learning process was mostly lectures, class discussions with teamwork, group presentations and take home assignments. All of the respondents are of the belief that the lessons, activities actually help them to engage more in learning. One of the respondents was of the opinion that everything regarding the learning and teaching were well-organized. Another respondent is of the viewpoint that the learning process/method stands clear and structured. Four of the respondents believe that the lecturers mostly used student-centered methods in the teaching and learning

methods. They also felt that the processes of learning and teaching were fair. They seemed to be highly satisfied with the student-centred activities.

One of the respondents suggested that, usually, teachers taught in the same manners, organized class group discussion, designed also homework and assigned presentation, and further opined that she learned a lot, gained knowledge, but suggested that she wished the authorities could set up some extra-curricular teaching activities which could integrate theory with practice. Overall, all were satisfied with the learning process/methods.However, students suggested using Power points less and recommended more books to read. Below are some of the statements from the research participants:

"*More teaching based on power points, lecturers do not usually use textbooks but rely too much on power points reading as teaching. I think lecturers should recommend more textbooks for students to use as references for further reading.*"

"*My lecturer is knowledgeable, and the class is fun and interesting, it shows the lecturer is the master of the classroom with first class academic ability.*"

"*All the lessons, activities and assignments actually helps us to engage ourselves in learning more. It involves the approach of student-centered learning which makes the learning process and active learning with rapid engagement. So, I feel that the process of teaching and learning is fair.*"

A larger number of the respondents agreed that materials met their needs. One respondent opined that before class, the instructors usually sent some articles, online books and other materials for reading which support to better

understand the course during the class. And that the school has a good library which can also be assessed online, Similarly, after-class consultations help think better. Six of the respondents opined that lecturers mostly use power points in teaching the lesson by mostly reading, and that there are no exact course books and that at one time, one of the courses did have a course book which eased their work. One of the respondents suggests that it is important to have such types of books and references. Another respondent was of the opinion that the courses offered were definitely in line with the program requirements, but suggested that considering the current times, some of the courses could have been emphasized more. An instance is Research Methodology, which is the most vital area of a master's program, Further suggestion was that the course would benefit learners now and in the future which could reduce meeting times with advisors. One of the respondents' believed that students had very few course materials at their disposal since course materials usually came from the lecturers' power points or copies, which was not conducive for students reading and reviews after class. While another respondent feels that the course materials were mostly helpful for her learning, another believed that using technology more to show power points is conventional and wished lecturers could explain more without reading from power points. Below were some of the statements from the participants.

" Course materials usually come from the teacher's power point or copies. Students have very few course materials which is not conducive to students' reading and review after class."

" The course material is mostly close to my learning and helpful for my learning."

" The teachers use technology more to show power point, books, and computers."

Almost all of the respondents agreed that the university and the faculty ensured that everything that was required for the efficient teaching and learning process was catered for in a very efficient manner, conducive classrooms, free refreshments) and the instructional needs (Internet with free Wifi, projectors) were available. One of the respondents was of the view that facilities were good but that there were issues with numbers of power outlets in classrooms. Three of the respondents had various views: one of them stated that facilities like the tables were not very comfortable and another respondent stated that that the facilities were the same with others found elsewhere and that nothing was special. On a general note, a greater number of respondents concurred that the facilities met their standards. Below are some of the statements from the interviewees:

"The school facilities are very good, beautiful and comfortable."

"Our university is really beautiful, the garden design, architecture, and even the school bus are very beautiful. The multimedia equipment in the classroom, as well as the snacks, coffee, fruit, etc. behind the classroom, are great also. However, sometimes compared with Chinese universities, the facilities are different. But I understand that different countries have different cultures."

" The facilities are good, but there are issues with the numbers of power connectors."

5. Conclusion and Discussion

The study aimed to 1) identify the teaching and learning process in the programs taken by international students, 2) explore the expectations and classroom learning experiences of international students studying in the courses at a Thai university and 3) explore the level of satisfaction of international students at a Thai university. The instruments used in this study: The Questionnaire and Semi-Structured Interview. The analysis of Part 1 of the Questionnaire under the heading of Personal and Demographic Information revealed that this group of students were mostly young and single and in the study age. They did not earn a big income but it was normal, indicating that they could afford their master's level education. Part 2 revealed the students' perception about the instructional practices in six categories. However, there were no responses for the open-ended question which only asked for further suggestions. Thus, the responses from the collected questionnaires pointed out that the teaching and learning process in the programs taken by international students were the lecturers' qualities ($\overline{X}$=3.94, S.D.=0.72), approaches/processes ($\overline{X}$ = 3.85, S.D.=0.84), general perception ($\overline{X}$ = 4.09, S.D.=0.73), personal characteristics ($\overline{X}$ = 3.97, S.D.=0.86) and environment ($\overline{X}$=3.82, S.D.=1.05), and IT support/ Integration ($\overline{X}$=4.24, S.D.=0.80). That means the questionnaire respondents rated the programs as of "high" quality although the program managers may have wished them to be of the "highest" quality by scoring between 4.21-5.00, with room for improvement. The lecturers were found to have a high teaching quality, use the right teaching approaches, making students convinced that they can land in a good teaching career after graduation. The most outstanding feature of instructional practices found was IT support/integration at the highest level. That means the programs see the significance of the use of IT in lessons and the lecturers are able to teach using IT. This finding corresponds to the studies by Cennamo, Ross & Ertmer (2010); Xu and Chan (2016); Hoge (2016); Yilmaz (2017) and Hartmont, Townsend and Jackson (2019), which state that well-designed curricula, instructional materials, delivery and technology have been part of teaching and learning together.

Education cannot, therefore, remain the same without integration of IT into the lessons. The lecturers in these two programs were found to be IT literate. This is the reason why this item was ranked the highest.

The lowest 3 mean scores were found at 2.10) the lecturers use old knowledge to teach students which was found in the moderate perception; 4.2) The lecturers prefer some students more than others; and 2.2) The lecturers use teacher-centered instruction. These items got low scores, which means the lecturers caught up with new ideas to teach, used student-centred approach and were ethical in treating students, pointing out to the fact that the lecturers in the programs were of high qualities.

The findings from the interviews reflected similar perceptions of the students towards instructional practices. Generally, they were satisfied with the programs but from in their views, further improvements could be made in the areas of lecturer quality enhancement and more appropriate materials that met their needs. Also, there is room for improvement of the supportive facilities. If the lecturers can deliver their lessons in a way that students are happy with what happens in the classroom, their learning will be effective. This reflects what Macsuga-Gage, Simonsen and Briere (2012) state, 'Successful teachers cleverly combines academic, behavioural, and social threads for a desired teaching and learning process. The lecturers' qualities, the lessons offered, the appropriate materials, the timing feedback and the proper treatment given to the students as well as the IT facilities provided all contribute to the satisfaction of the students (Beach, 2011; Hattoe, 2012; Rust and Kim, 2012; Sokoli and Koren, 2017; Holly, 2019). In brief, based on the findings of the study, it can be said that the students' needs for instructional practices have been met.

7. Recommendations to Future Research

There are a number of possibilities for future research: 1) More studies may be conducted on similar groups of participants at other universities in Thailand in order to see if the results of the study will corroborate or be different with this study. Such findings can confirm further about the international students' perspectives on university instructional practices; 2) Impending investigation should scrutinize the relationship concerning learners' perception, teaching and learning processes and their understanding of education; 3) Future investigation should be carried out for prolonged period so as to determine the impact of instructional practices on learners, instructors and institutions; 4) Future investigation can be done on the teacher-student relationship as this area requires investigations.

Instructional practices enhanced the effectiveness of the classroom process which should cover areas, for instance, providing the course description, class requirements, the course curriculum plan, for which learners will improve their abilities and skills expected in each semester, while textbooks, materials, teacher guidelines and facilities are favorable (Holly, 2019).

8. Acknowledgements

9. References

Alber, R. (2015), *5 Highly Effective Teaching Practices*, Retrieved from https://edutopia.org. on 26 February 2020.

Best, J. W. (1981). *Research in Education (4ᵗʰ ed)*, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Cennamo, K. R. (2010). *Technology Integration for Meaningful Classroom Use: A Standards-based Approach.* Wadsworth: Cengage Learning.

Chien, Y. G. (2015). International Postgraduate Students in Britain: Reasons for Studying Abroad and issues Related to Adjustment. *International Journal of Technology and Inclusive Education (IJTIE)*, Special Issue, Volume 2, Issue 1, pp. 7254-736.

Ching, Y. C. and Chayanuvat, A. (2019). Factors Influencing International Students' Decision to Study at Taiwanese Universities. *Proceedings of the 3ʳᵈ Suan Sunantha Graduate School Conference*, Vol. 3 (1), pp.1-4.

Civinini, C. (2018, September 14). *thepienews.com/analysis/the-lure-of-work-rights-international-students-act-1-policies/*. Retrieved from www.thepienews.com: https://thepienews.com.

Creswell, J. W. (2005). *Educational Research-Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research*. Pearson Education International: Singapore.

Document indicating Missions of the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation (MHESI), (2019). Retrieved on 5 April, 2020 from www. mhesi. go.th.

Education in Thailand, Document of Office of the Education Council (OEC), Ministry of Education, Thailand (2004) pp.148-149. Retrieved from http://www.onec.go.th.

Facts and Figures (2017). Document of University of Oxford. Retrieved on 4 April 2020 from http://www. ox.ac.th.

Gomes and Murphy. (2003). An Exploratory Study of Marketing International Education Online. *International Journal of Educational Management, Vol. 17(3),* 116-25.

Goswami, R. (2018). Popularity of Overseas Education. In *The Statesman*, 5 April 2018. Retrieved on 5 April 2020 at the statesman.com.

Grierson., J. (2019, September 11). *www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/sept/11/uk-work-visas-for-foreign-student.* Retrieved from www.theguardian.com: https://

Hartman, R. J., Townsend, M.B. and Jackson, M. (2019). Educators' Perception of Technology Integration into the Classroom: A Descriptive Study. In Journal of Research in Innovative Teaching and Learning. Vol. 12 (3), pp. 236-249.

Hattie, J. (2012). *Visible learning for teachers: maximizing impact on learning,* London: Routledge.

Hoge, D. M. (2016). The Relationship between Teachers' Instructional Practices, Professional Development, and Student Achievement. A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Education in Environment Administration of the Graduate College of the University of Nebraska.

Holly, K. (2019, June 26). *Instructional Practices/Practicum in Education & Training.* Retrieved from https;//chs.cleburne.k12.tx.us/apps/pages/index.jsp/uREC_ID=379782&type=u &REC_ID=497899

Krejcie, R.V. and Morgan, D. W. (1970). Determining Sample Size for Research Activities. In Educational and Psychological Measurement, Vol 30 (3), 610-617.

Lichtman, M. (2013). *Qualitative Research in Education-A User's Guide*. SAGE Publications, Inc.: Thousand Oaks, California.

Lynch., M. (2015, December 15). *www.theedadvocate.org/what-factors-make-a-school-effective/.* Retrieved from https://www.theedadvocate.org.

Macsuga-Gage, A.S., Simonsen, B. and Briere, D. E. (2012), Effective Teaching Practices that Promote a Positive Classroom Environment. In *Beyond Behaviour*. Retreived from journals. sagepub.com. on 9 April 2020.

Mazzarol, T. (1998). Critical Sucess Factors for International Education Marketing. *International Journal of Educational Management, Vol.(12)*, 163-175.

Mazzarol, T. S. (2003). The Third Wave: Future Trends in International Education. *International Journal of Educational Management, Vol. 17(3)*, 90-99.

Rust, V. D. and Kim, S. (2012). The Global Competition in Higher Education. In *World Studies in Education*, Vol 13 (1), pp. 5-20.

Sokoli, D. and Koren, A. (2017). Qualifications of Lecturers as Indicator of Quality Teaching in Higher Education. Conference Paper of *Management, Knowledge and Learning International Conference 2017* organized at Lubin, Poland on 17-19 May 2017, pp. 445-452.

The Bangkok Post, *International Education in Thailand—30 Years* on. Retrieved on28 January 2020 from http://www.bangkokpost.com.

Xu, A. and Chan, G. (2016). A Study on the Effects of Teachers' Information Literary and Information Technology Integrated Instruction. In *Eurasia Journal of Mathematics, Science and Technology Education*, 12 (2), 335-346.

Yilmaz, D.V. (2017). Studying Abroad: Experiences of International Students in a Turkish University. *Journal of Higher Education*. www.Yuksekogretim.org