

## **The Ideal Characteristics of Higher Education Music Institutes in 21st century Thailand**

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### **Abstract**

In the 21st century, there are many factors affecting the survival of music institutes. In Thailand, music in higher education has been a part of the Thai educational system for more than 80 years. Sixty-eight higher education institutes are reported to provide music degree programmes. The objective of this study was to investigate the ideal characteristics of higher education music institutes in Thailand in the 21st century. Participants selected through purposive sampling included eleven administrators from higher education music institutes in Thailand. This is a design study that used a qualitative approach by collecting data through the in-depth interview method. The results showed that the characteristics of the ideal music institute in Thailand in the 21st century could be explained as having three main parts: 1) administration and management—this deals with four major issues including the philosophy of the institute, styles of the institute, administration strategies and finances; 2) curriculum and instruction—this is concerned with levels of the study, purpose of the programme, content, teaching styles, evaluation and assessment, music activities and services; and 3) resources that include buildings and environment, library and databases, and human resources.

*Keywords:* administrative strategies, ideal characteristics, music institute, music in higher education, music studies in Thailand

### **Significance and Background**

Music has been valued for a variety of reasons by every culture and society throughout history since the time of the ancient Greeks. Music served as a tool to elevate moral senses and values of the society, which brought along the concept of music education (Page, 2001; Suttachitt, 2012). A number of political writings by famous Greek and Roman philosophers such as Plato, Aristotle and Quintilian defined music as a tool for shaping civilisation. Its purpose was not only for personal entertainment, but also served as a tool to identify class in the society (Jackson, 2014). Until the present time, music has always been a necessary component of education. Philosophers who had roles in changing perspectives of the world on religion, politics and education paid regard to

music for its priceless value as the vital tool to pass on their ideas to following generations.

At present, music learning and practice in higher education ranges from club activities, such as bands and choruses to formal degree programmes across the globe (Weber, 2001). In Thailand, music in higher education has been a part of the Thai educational system for more than 80 years since Luang Vichitvathakarn, the first director of the Fine Arts Department, Ministry of Public Instruction (Chandrasu, 2010; Suttachitt, 2012). In 2016, there was a total of 157 universities under the supervision of the Office of the Higher Education Commission and 113 music degree programmes provided by 57 public and private universities. Moreover, Bunditpatanasilpa Institute under the supervision of the Ministry of Culture offers four music Bachelor degree programmes in performance and education. Also, a Masters degree in Thai music performance through the collaboration of 11 network colleges under the institute's supervision is offered to the public. Even though music institutes in Thailand are high in numbers, many institutes cannot manage their own organisations to achieve excellence. Some institutions are not capable of recruiting students to study or find their own identities. Chandrasu (2010) discovered issues in developing music in higher education in Thailand including qualifications of music graduates in Thailand that are not consistent.

In the 21st century there are many challenges affecting the survival of higher education institutions. Duderstadt (2000) mentioned that universities are now facing various challenges such as the costs (initial and operating), price and value of a college education, the rising costs of academic excellence and the limitation of resources, the changing relationship with diverse constituencies, the changing social contract, the challenge of intellectual change and the relevance of the university. Furthermore, diversity in ethnicities, cultures, wealth status and human rights, including inequitable education access, are contributing to the university's rough path to success in providing the best education. UNESCO's Incheon Declaration for Education 2030 that states, "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all", is an example showing a vision for equity in education that leads to human fulfilment and sustainable development (UNESCO, 2015). Nevertheless, the familiar and famous conceptual quotes "Music for all" or "No one left behind" highlighting equality of education is difficult to achieve.

Research in administrative strategies of the music university is limited. Related researches showed two types of studies. The first is the historical study of well-known institutions or music programmes in different countries (Orlando, 1946; Connor, 1955; Chay, 1981; Alberici, 2004; Chow, 2005; Archer, 2014; Powell, 2014). In the Thai social context, a historical study by Boonjae (2014) studied the changing process and music teaching trends using Bansomdejchaopraya Rajabhat University as a case study. The history of the university can be classified in three eras based on the status of the institution: the teacher college period, the Rajabhat institute period and the Rajabhat university period. Five factors were identified as administrative supporters: human resources, equipment, budgets and funding, management and curriculum. Finally, the researcher suggested that the music department should be organised as a college in order to operate more efficiently administratively. Additionally, Chandrasu (2010) also studied the development of music education in Thailand's higher education. Chandrasu found that music education development can be classified into five time periods: the

initial artist training (1934-1970), music teacher education by the teacher training department (1970-1976), production of university graduates (1976-1989), production of music scholars (1989-1998) and production of professional musicians (1998 - present).

The other type of study concerns training for music careers in higher educational systems (Khongkhakul, 1976; Charoensook, 1985; Plourde, 2000; Mangan, 2005; Choi, 2013; Ivy, 2013). In the case of Thailand, Khongkhakul (1976) investigated the curriculum for music teacher training. Khongkhakul's research on music education in Thailand at the time dealt with the lack of attention from Thai society that demonstrated inadequate training programmes, instructional materials and qualified teachers. The researcher suggested two types of music programmes: the liberal arts programme and the music educational programme. Khongkhakul also suggested that administrative issues were an essential concern for policy implementation in the future. In another study, Charoensook (1985) compared undergraduate music curricula in Thai and American universities and suggested a music curriculum for Thai universities. The National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) standards were used as the criteria in the study. Charoensook found that the degree programmes varied in programme offerings and course requirements and that Thai degree programmes failed to meet the NASM standards. Therefore, the researcher recommended that the NASM standards should be used as a basis for developing the Thai curriculum.

This study's primary concern is to investigate the ideal characteristics of music institutes for higher education in Thailand in the 21st century. This article will be beneficial for music administrators to use as a guideline to develop their music institutions and aims to provide effective reference tools for institutions in adjusting music programmes in the future.

## **Literature Review**

### **Higher Education for the 21st Century**

Higher education has always been greatly affected by the changes in societies and in the world. Education is meant to provide for a better future and a path leading to good careers and meaningful lives. Duderstadt (2000) explained that several challenges affect higher education in the following ways:

- the cost, price and value of a college education;
- the rising costs of academic excellence and the limits on resources;
- the changing relationships with diverse constituencies;
- the changing social contract;
- the challenge of intellectual change;
- the increasing relevance of the university.

Due to rapid changes in society and throughout the world, Duderstadt (2000) explained that the university should look beyond its specific goals and instead build the capacity to move toward the future. The real objectives of the university are: to remove limitations that hinder the institute's responsiveness to the changing world; to remove unnecessary processes and administrative structures; to question existing assumptions

and arrangements; and to challenge, excite and encourage institute members to view institutional transformation as a terrific adventure. Duderstadt also suggested that the transformation process must include every aspect of the institution such as:

- the mission of the university;
- financial restructuring;
- organisation and governance;
- general characteristics of the university;
- intellectual information;
- relations with external communities;
- cultural change.

Rostan and Vaira (2011) discussed the issues of excellence in higher education for the 21st century, observing that international higher educational policy was increasingly shifting from quality to excellence that becomes an identity mark for higher educational institutions across the world. Three indicators of concern are shown in the study. The first indicator is the existence of many literatures related to the topic of excellence in higher education with either a critical view or an apologetic stance. A second indicator is ranking movement that is both a manifestation of the new global competitive environment and a driver of change in the field of higher education. A third indicator is detectable in national policy-making. Developed and developing countries have mostly been more engaged in promoting policies aiming to encourage respective systems and institutions to attain or maintain top level or world-class quality. This policy issue reflects the institutional and competitive pressures exerted by the global ranking movement on national systems and institutions.

UNESCO (2014) published the UNESCO Education Strategy 2014-2021 that articulates the vision and strategic priorities. With regard to higher education issues, UNESCO focuses on three areas: distance and open higher education; internationalisation of higher education; and governance of higher education systems and institutions including quality assurance and recognition of qualifications. Moreover, during the World Education Forum 2015 at Incheon, Republic of Korea organised by UNESCO, UNICEF, the World Bank and many other international organisations, the announcement for the Incheon Declaration for Education 2030 was made. The declaration set out a new vision for education over the course of 15 years. The new vision emphasised to, “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”—inspired by a humanistic vision of education and development based on human rights and dignity as well as social justice, inclusion, protection, cultural, linguistic and ethnic diversity and shared responsibility and accountability. This vision is essential for peace, tolerance, human fulfilment and sustainable development (UNESCO, 2015).

In Thailand there are several trends affecting educational policies. “Thailand 4.0” is a strategic approach announced by the government and is the main strategy toward developing the quality of education. General Dapong Ratanasuwan of the Ministry of Education mentioned tertiary education saying that the university should strengthen academic and research quality related to producing skilful labourers and craftsmanship to be applied to developing economics and different industries of the country such as the medical care and food industries, etc. (Janthem, 2016).

Prasarn Trairatvorakul, former Governor of the Bank of Thailand gave a speech on the topic of the “University in the different world” on 19 August 2016. His speech explained that the changing world influences universities to adapt their roles in three aspects:

**Creating people as lifelong learners.** This is a challenge of the university to develop people of different characteristics to reach their highest potentials. The university must modify the learning process to encourage students to become lifelong learners by letting them discover themselves and promoting study skills.

**Creating knowledge and innovations.** Encouraging collaboration and knowledge integration is a method of solving problems and creating innovations to serve society. Collaborative research with foreign universities will be essential to the world’s development. The university should offer multi-disciplinary programmes to prepare students for the changes. Moreover, we should not neglect the arts in understanding humanity. Any subject can become a beneficial innovation for the country. Innovation is not limited only to inventions of new technologies, but also ideas and modern practical ways that lead to social advantages.

**Using knowledge to benefit society.** The university does not only aim to educate people, but its key mission is to lead people and apply existing knowledge to serve society. The university should be a pioneer in new ideologies and a shelter for innovators, leading them to make contributions for the betterment of society.

Global and national changes affect Thai education as well. Luankaew (2016) commented on Thai educational transformation saying that the success of the transformation depends on keeping up labour competencies to match the changing needs of industries in the new economic trends. The areas in which the Thai work force lacks competencies most are language skills and technological literacy. In addition, there are gaps in working competencies. Furthermore, Luankaew suggested that the suitable educational system to drive the country toward the goals of “Thailand Economic 4.0” must focus on reducing learning through memorisation only. Teachers must also equip students with learning skills and encourage them to become lifelong learners. What this means is that new learning assessments must be different from the present style that focuses only on examinations.

### **Historical Background of Music Studies in Thailand**

Music education existed in Thailand’s history long before being added to the standard curriculum for formal education. Teaching music in artists’ residences, the courts, and the temples were the principle music instruction systems since the Sukhothai period. Each system had different educational aims and pedagogical methods depending on the locations where music was taught (Suttachitt, 2012; Laovanich, 2013).

Regarding the history of music studies in Thailand, Chandransu (2010) looked at the development of music education in Thailand focusing on higher education. The results found that the development of music in higher education in Thailand can be classified into five periods from 1934 to the present:

**The initial artist training (1934-1970)**

This period is the preliminary period of music education in formal educational settings for a music profession. The national reformation policy for modernisation focused on being as civilised as Western countries. Hence, modern performing arts became one of the ideals in the government's national agenda. The College of Dramatic Arts was established. Local music teachers who were qualified as experts in their music professions provided the teaching. However, these teachers did not hold music or educational degrees. In 1952, the college awarded high school and music certificates as a combination music and teacher training programme under the administration of the Fine Arts Department.

**Music teacher education by the teacher-training department (1970-1976)**

During this period, the government's educational policy was based on increasing the numbers of students and teachers. Teacher training schools produced music teachers through higher vocational degree programmes. Later, the demands of degrees increased in educational management and curricula for music education degrees were created.

**Production of university graduates (1976-1989)**

Following the previous period, bachelor's degree programmes in music education expanded into regional areas in Thailand in terms of increasing numbers of institutes and programmes.

**Production of music scholars (1989-1998)**

In this period the first master's degree programme in the field of ethnomusicology was introduced to enhance the research qualifications of music related professionals. Following the programme, various music studies such as music education and musicology were taught in master's degree programmes in many institutes.

**Production of professional musicians (1998- the present)**

Music programmes during this period were divided into several specific fields. Also, multidisciplinary courses in music were established in response to the needs of labour markets. Music major programmes expanded from pre-higher education to doctoral degree programmes.

Chandransu (2010) also stated that even though music education was growing, there are problems in the quality of educational management. Her suggestions about management approaches include creating a diverse environment in education that includes different ages, genders and genres. Furthermore, education strategies should be changed and the government should be a part of the development.

### **Current status of music studies in Thailand's higher education**

Music institutes in higher education in Thailand can be separated into three groups:

#### **Music departments and faculties in universities**

Based on the history of music education in Thailand, music studies in the earlier times can be divided into two sections: music education and music performance. Later, music programmes offered specific majors such as music production, music business, music entertainment and other options to produce more specialised graduates to serve the demands of the labour market. Most of the music programmes in Thailand are considered liberal arts degree programmes conducted under the faculty of fine and applied arts or the faculty of humanities. On the other hand many music programmes lead to a bachelor's of music degree under the faculty of music that aims to train professional musicians. Music teacher training programmes are popular. They are taught in many leading universities including Rajabhat universities in major cities such as Bangkok, Khon Kean and Chiang Mai.

#### **Music colleges in universities**

At the present many faculties and departments of music have attained 'college' status under University management. Seven colleges were founded. This paragraph is very short

#### **Bunditpatanasilpa Institute and the College of Dramatic Arts**

The College of Dramatic Arts was founded in 1934 as the first national education institute providing general and specialised subjects in music under the supervision of the Fine Arts Department, Ministry of Education. The aim of the college is to train teachers and professionals in traditional dance and music.

In 1998, the Bunditpatanasilpa Institute was founded in order to offer bachelor's programmes in Thai and Western dance, vocal and instrumental music and fine arts that expanded from its existing programmes. In 2008, the Institute merged with the College of Dramatic Arts, the College of Fine Arts and their branches to become part of the Bunditpatanasilpa Institute. In 2010, two master's degree programmes in Thai traditional dance and Thai traditional music were opened for further studies to the public.

The Office of the Civil Service Commission (2016) accredited over 300 music degrees in Thailand including vocational diplomas and bachelor's to doctoral degrees in private and public institutions from the initiation launch of the first music programme. From information gathered in 2016 what is found is that there are over one hundred music degree programmes in 57 of 156 institutions under the supervision of the Office of Higher Education Commission (OHEC) with 15 institutes under public universities, 10 autonomous institutes, 34 institutes under the Rajabhat University group, one institute under Rajamangala University of Technology group and seven institutes under private institutions. Moreover, Bunditpatanasilpa Institute and 11 network institutes that

are under the supervision of Ministry of Culture, provide music programmes for vocational diplomas to master’s degrees.

Information about music institutes in higher education are shown in the chart below:

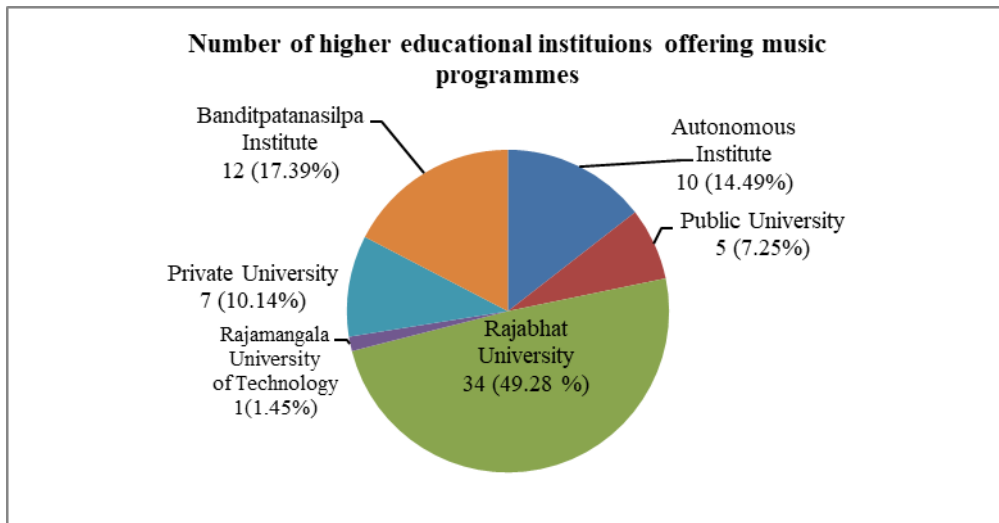


Figure 1. Number of higher educational institutions offering music programme.

There are 118 music degree programmes in Thailand’s higher education system. Most of the programmes confer bachelor’s degrees ( $n = 94$ ). Nearly 1/3 of the bachelor’s degree programmes are found in the Bachelor of Arts ( $n = 35$ ), Bachelor of Education ( $n = 29$ ), and Bachelor of Fine Arts or Fine Arts and Applied Arts ( $n = 20$ ). There are nine Bachelor of Music degree programmes while 1 of 94 programmes is a Bachelor in Engineering major in Music Engineering and Production at the King Mongkut Institute of Technology Ladkrabang.

At the graduate level there are 17 master’s degree programmes and 7 doctoral degree programmes in music studies. Most of the master’s degree programmes in music are in music education that is offered as a Master of Education ( $n = 6$ ). There are five Master of Music degree programmes, four Master of Fine and Applied Arts degree programmes and two Master of Arts degree programmes. Most of the doctoral degrees are offered under the Doctor of Philosophy degree programmes ( $n = 4$ ). Two of the doctoral degree programmes are offered in the field of Fine and Applied Arts and only one programme is offered under Doctor of Music. Information about music programmes at the higher education level is shown in the chart below:



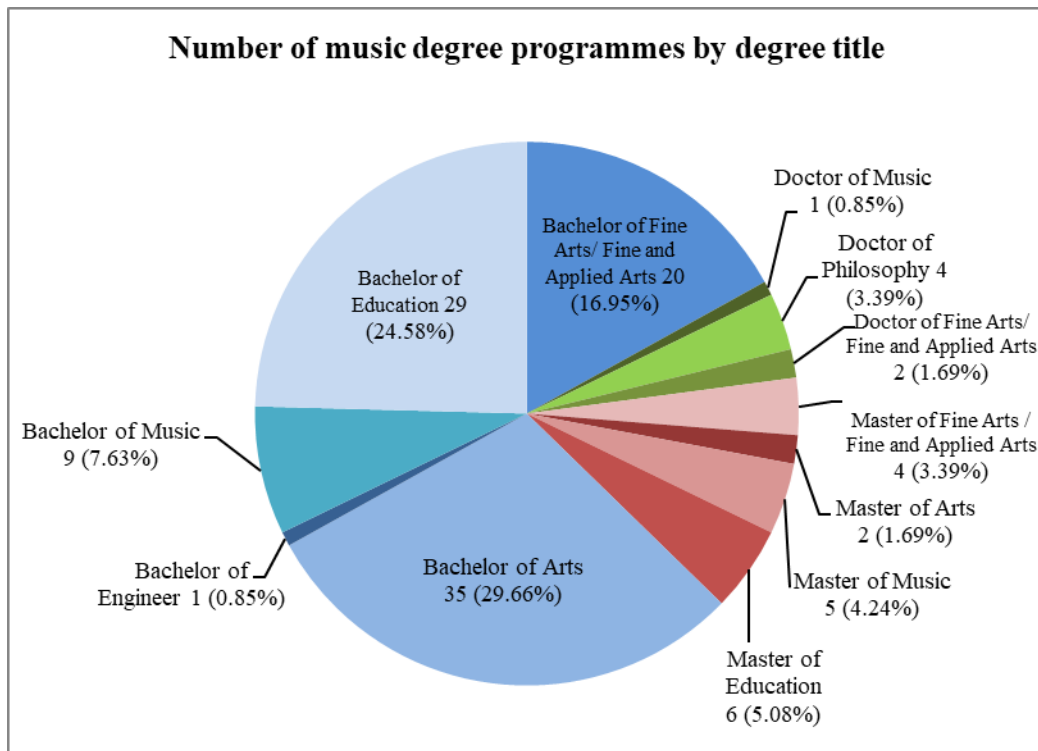


Figure 2. Number of music degree programmes in Thailand by degree title.

## Methodology

The central question addressed in this study is: What are the ideal characteristics for higher education music institutes in Thailand in the 21st century? The findings presented in this paper are derived from in-depth interviews. The participants were 11 Thai administrators who work in the following music institutes:

- Bunditpatanasilpa Institute;
- College of Music, Bansomdejchaopraya Rajabhat University;
- College of Music, Mahasarakham University;
- College of Music, Mahidol University;
- Conservatory of Music, Rangsit University;
- Duriyasilp College of Music, Payap University;
- Faculty of Music and Performing Arts Activities, Burapha University;
- Faculty of Music, Bangkokthonburi University;
- Faculty of Music, Silapakorn University;
- Princess Galyani Vadhana Institute of Music;
- School of Music, Assumption University.

These institutes were either music faculties or colleges that operate independently as Faculty of the universities and not as music departments under a Faculty.

To gather information the research instrument was designed to investigate the ideal characteristics of Thai higher education music institutes. The pilot study was employed to determine suitability and effectiveness of interview questions. The study consisted of 39 questions in 11 themes: general and context-related comments of Thai society in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, educational philosophy, the established identity of the institute, the institute's administration, educational products and characteristics of the desired graduates, educational purposes and objectives, teaching methods, curricular content, faculties and staff, the institute's environment and interviewing summary.

The interviews took place at the interviewees' institutes from March until October 2016. During the interviews, Thai language was used to reduce language barriers and to encourage smooth communication. Some of the questions had to be changed to adjust to different availabilities of each interviewee's time schedule and to reduce redundant answers. The interviews were recorded and important issues were noted during the interviews.

Through the documentary analysis approach the information was categorised by coding data in the interview transcriptions. Then the data was summarised to answer the research questions.

## **Findings**

The fundamental elements of the ideal music institute should contain three main parts:

### **Administration and Management**

**Philosophy of the institute.** The philosophy of the institute is the most important aspect guiding the institute with a mission to reach its vision. The institute's administrators define the philosophy.

Two main philosophical beliefs are; "Education as a tool for social development in the nation" and "The Arts fulfil each human being to live to his fullest". Both aims are envisioned to lead the country forward and offering peace within the nation. Although these philosophical ideas are the traditional beliefs, they are referred to as the fundamental beliefs for a human development approach.

**Styles of the institute.** The ideal music institute should definitely be diverse. There are three institute types that should exist in the country: the conservative university, the creative university, and the lifelong learning university.

The conservative university should be used as a cultural preservation tool. This type of institute can teach various kinds of musical styles but should continue Thai traditional traits. Parallel to the conservative university, the creative university should be an institute to create new works for the world.

The lifelong learning university ought to be part of all institutes. Every institute should take a role to accommodate everyone by offering music teaching and knowledge. In addition to providing courses in physical classrooms, virtual classrooms should also be offered so that everyone can access music courses anytime and anywhere.

Finally, all three types of music institutes should ideally be academic hubs to exchange knowledge and for participants to present their work to the public.

**Administration strategies.** Administrators are the key people in leading the institutes toward reaching goals. The interview participants mentioned that music instructors who may lack administrative and management skills lead most of the music institutes in Thailand. In reality, these instructors learn through on-the-job experiences and at the same time are still overloaded with heavy teaching workloads that result in having less time to focus on management.

To lead a music institute successfully administrators should explore existing human resources in their institute and wisely manage resources as in this practical saying; “put the right man on the right job at the right time”.

**Finances.** Financial issues were rarely mentioned in the interview. However, finances play an important role in driving the institutes and their projects toward success. The ideal institute should have funding from various sources and not only from the government.

## **Curriculum and Instruction**

**Levels of the study.** A variety of programmes should be made available ranging from the bachelor’s level to the doctoral degree level as well as short-term programmes. In response to lifelong learning concepts, music programmes should offer not only degree programmes but should also provide courses for the public to learn interesting subjects. Furthermore, collaboration programmes with formal schools can be offered to the public as well.

**Purposes of the programmes.** The purposes of the programmes should align with the institute’s philosophy and its concepts. Moreover, the institutes should take the lead in solving social problems by producing educated citizens, new research and innovations.

Students should be trained with necessary skills by focusing on good practices encouraging students to develop critical thinking and to continue researching their questions.

**Content.** The ideal music institutes should teach classical music as a foundational subject to enable students to attain sufficient music knowledge in comparison with other music learners. The students, particularly undergraduate students, should be taught subjects that are practical and ought to be guided on how to manage and balance their work and personal lives. Most importantly all content should be integrated so that music learners can use what they learn in a practical and holistic manner.

**Teaching styles.** One teaching style cannot be used to teach all students efficiently. Instructional approaches in the music institute should be well balanced and use mixed methods. The instructors, students and the nature of the subject affect the composition of forms for the best possible teaching and learning methods.

Students should be trained through sufficient practical sessions with the master during live performances on stage. Students will experience and learn to solve problems in real performance situations. Moreover, there should be apprenticeship periods with master teachers.

**Evaluations and assessments.** Evaluations and assessments should be varied. Students should be evaluated for their reliability and validity by using the approach of participating in projects based on real life situations.

**Music activities and services.** The ideal institute should have activities and services to serve all walks of life in Thai society. Music camps, master classes and workshops, concerts, music competitions including music festivals should be established by the individual institute or via cooperation between institutes.

## **Resources**

**Buildings and environment.** The ideal music institute should contain well-maintained equipment and musical instruments, an auditorium and other performance stages, practice rooms and recording studios. Moreover, musical sounds should surround the institute encouraging students to learn.

**Library and databases.** The music library should be the first place to find information and to continue searching data endlessly. The essential value of music institutes is to assist students toward maximising their potentials. The characteristics of a music library should be specific to music with special assistance for music students. The library should have numerous kinds of items available to students such as recordings, manuscripts and music scores. The music librarians should have good background knowledge of music and be able to answer any questions about music resources. Online databases should be offered to users to compensate for limited hard copy music resources.

**Human resources.** Human Resources is comprised of four components: faculties, staff workers, students, and alumni.

**Faculties.** The institute needs talented masters as instructors and masters should also have the characteristics of being a good teacher. They should be competent in teaching, great in communicating with others and highly dedicated to students. Instructors must encourage students to explore knowledge outside the classroom and foster students to be good individuals. Additionally, instructors should always strive for self-improvement.

**Staff workers.** Ideal staff workers in the music institute do not necessarily have to be musicians. However, music knowledge could be beneficial. It is requisite for staff workers to have an understanding nature of musicians, music learning and management. The institute requires people who understand the arts and arts organisation. The music institute's staff workers should have a high level of skill in management and responsibilities with competency in technology and language. In addition, they should

be able to work well with different kinds of people and be good team players. They should have creative minds with the vision to help build inspiration in students. Furthermore, ideal staff workers are required to work flexible hours just like other professionals in order to accomplish their jobs.

**Students.** The desired characteristics of ideal tertiary music graduates for Thailand in the 21st century are:

*Knowledge and academics skills.* Possessing multiple skills is required for ideal music graduates in order to be competent in music related knowledge, technology and cultures. Music graduates should have other talents in addition to their music major skills. Musical competencies are necessary for the graduates such that graduates are required to practice many hours to master their musical talents and skills to meet standard requirements. Additionally, music graduates must learn other knowledge and general information about the changing world and different cultures as part of acquiring material for creating and integrating new pieces of work. Research skills are additionally required for music graduates at the master's and doctorate levels.

*Professional skills.* Ideal music graduates should know themselves well and have sufficient life skills with self-respect and respect for other people. They should work well with others, must be accountable, proud and dedicated to their professions. At the graduate level, ideal students must demonstrate leadership in academic work and in professional life. Moreover, the desired music graduates should have expertise in using technology and social media as an instrument to explore new perspectives and promote them selves to the world.

*Linguistic skills.* English language competency is required for ideal music graduates. They should have linguistic skills to communicate with others and to make academic presentations at national and international conferences. Publishing in academic journals at the international level is required for master's degree and doctoral degree students.

*Morals and ethics.* Ideal music graduates must bring good morals and ethics to their professions with consideration for social and community concerns. The most honourable mission of ideal graduates is to use music to serve society.

**Alumni.** This aspect was not one of the main discussions during the interviews. However, alumni members can take main roles in supporting new graduates by helping to create work connections and by making donations to support their institutions.

## **Results**

The results show that to survive in any changing society the institutes should be concerned about the following trends and issues:

**Changes.** There are many changes affecting the institute's survival. The institutes should prepare themselves for changes in all operational aspects.

**Lifelong learning.** The institutes should educate their students to explore and to be self-learners. Moreover, the institute should be a learning centre to provide knowledge for everyone. The institutes may offer short courses to educate their alumni and those in the general public who want to develop their professional skills.

**Preservation.** One of the roles of a university is to serve society. Preservation of cultures is one action that the institutes could contribute to society. By maintaining cultural practices as well as promoting Thai culture at the international level, the institute must be a place to share knowledge with future generations by encouraging audiences from the community and creating performances.

**Creativity and innovations.** Preservation of traditional practices and the creation of new works should be considered as the approach to influence people as well as to change the world. The creation of fresh works and preservation of cultures should always be of equal importance. The creation of new works can provide inspiring material for people to live in a society undergoing transformation. Innovations can produce new methods of teaching, learning, practice techniques, and music composition ideas that are different from scientific methods.

**Local wisdom-based knowledge.** Cultural diversity in Thailand is unique from others. This diversity should be used for creating the identity of Thai music institutes and performances as in the following examples:

**Musical content.** Local knowledge can be used as material for new compositions and improvisations. Instruction and transmission processes: memorisation techniques and aural traditions can be adapted to ear training methods and performances, and apprenticeships.

**Related contexts.** Local lifestyles, tales and beliefs may be inspirations for creating new productions.

**Diversity.** The music institute should never limit itself only to Western musical content. In addition to Western music, the institutes should broadly teach students about local music and music from around the world.

The relationships between these factors are shown in Figure 3.

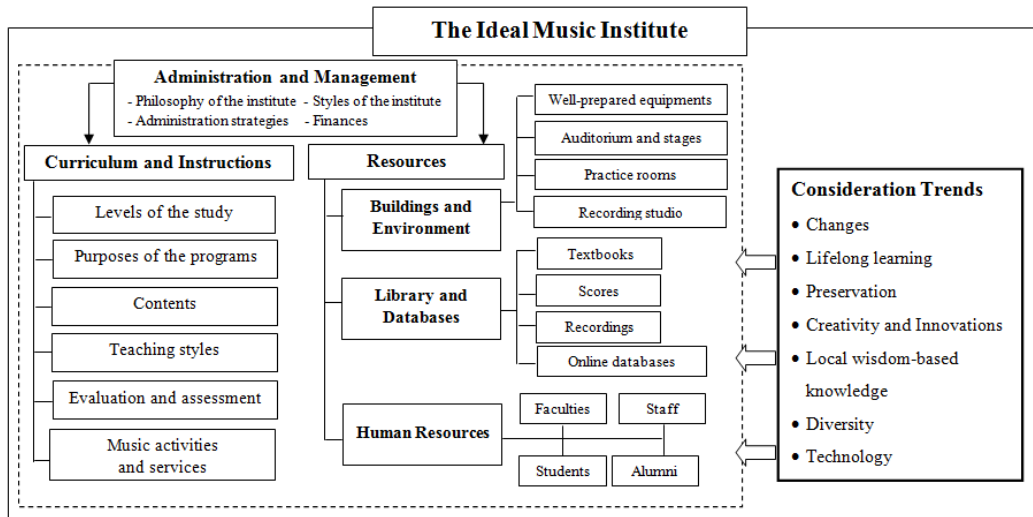


Figure 3. Diagram of the Ideal Music Institute for Thailand in the 21st Century.

## Discussion

Although many issues appear in the findings, there are other issues that should be discussed as factors affecting the survival of Thai music institutes in the 21st century. Three major issues are discussed below as factors and causes of transformation:

### Social needs

**Diversity and Equity.** There are various kinds of diversity in ethnicity, culture, wealth and human rights including inequitable access to education. “Music for all” or “No one left behind” are conceptual ideas to highlight that education must be accessible for all people. UNESCO’s Incheon Declaration for Education 2030 states, “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”, and is an example that demonstrates a vision for equity in education that leads to human fulfilment and sustainable development (UNESCO, 2015).

**Rapid changes.** Changes occur rapidly around us. New knowledge is invented and takes the place of existing knowledge consistently. Communication through online networks and transportation around the world are much faster now than in the past. These phenomena surely affect people’s behaviours. They can be suddenly aroused with astonishing stimulations and also lose attention immediately. Duderstadt (2000) mentioned that there are several challenges faced by the university due to change: costs, price and the value of a college education; the rising costs of academic excellence and

limited resources; the changing relationship between diverse constituencies; the changing social contract; the challenges of intellectual change; and the increasing relevance of the university.

**Population structure.** The participants in the study did not consider this issue. However, it is an important issue in a changing Thai society. Based on a study by the Institute for Population and Social Research, Mahidol University (2006) on Thailand's future population, the country's population will decelerate in birth rates with the possibility of a near zero percent birth rate. This means that the population structure of Thailand in the future will change as birth rates fall and people live longer. Thai society is becoming an elderly society so that over the next 30 years, the number of elderly people will outnumber children that could possibly lead to decreases in the numbers of students in the institutes.

Therefore, music institutes should adapt to this impending situation by providing optional courses for elderly people to substitute for reduced numbers of students in undergraduate programmes.

**Economics.** The present society is transforming via a fourth industrial revolution or "Economy 4.0", where technology is used instead of human resources in repetition or operational analytical works (Luankaew, 2016). This will lead to changes in business structures valuing innovations and knowledge over mass industrial production. Enterprises and labour markets will focus on creative and contemporary products rather than mass-market products. Moreover, future generations will find an irresistible urge to work via a freelance-working style and be less interested to be a part of companies. The institute should therefore produce graduates who can match new social needs and have their own identities.

**Technology and innovation.** Most of the participants in the study similarly mentioned that technology is rapidly growing. Study participants mentioned that technology, especially mass media and social networking, are the main causes contributing to changes in people's lifestyles. Access to information via new ways of communication can be easily accomplished.

Innovation and related issues are the major considerations for educational institutions. Duderstadt (2000) explained that today's society has shifted from the industrial revolution to a knowledge-driven society. As part of this change music institutes must be able to not only develop human resources, but to also be centres of knowledge management equipping students with knowledge and skills. Furthermore, the institutes are expected to be the resource centres that can accumulate, analyse, integrate, apply and create beneficial knowledge for society.

Under Thailand's "Economy 4.0" and according to statements from government officials, Thailand is transforming into a knowledge-driven society, a period of learning and knowledge integration within which virtual worlds and the non-virtual, real world are treated similarly (Luankaew, 2016). We should use our intellectual property and resources to develop innovations and maximise educational and social benefits.



## **World excellence**

**ASEAN and world competition.** The institutes should think globally, in other words, aim for excellence at the international level. Graduates should be equipped with the knowledge and skills in order to be efficient and competitive in world labour markets where workers can flow freely across the global platform. The institutes' missions should be to develop themselves toward reaching ASEAN (regional) and world standards.

**World rankings.** World rankings are identity marks for higher educational institutions. In addition to producing excellent graduates, the institute should also strive for a high position in world rankings.

**Labour markets.** The ASEAN community will be a new platform for labour competition that educational institutions should prepare themselves to be ready for. Having an open mindset to learn and become fluent in foreign languages, cultural awareness and cultural sensitivity are essential keys for adaptation to a changing world (Pitsuwan, 2016).

## **Policies**

**Government policies.** With political uncertainties in Thailand, changes in leadership and the issuing of new administrative orders are inevitable. Often, it seems that there is no successful and practical application of policies created by the ruling parties toward the actual living conditions of people. Even though government administrators launch policies following world trends, these policies are mostly unrealistic or impractical. Thus, it is vital to actually put government policies into practice. The institutes as educational providers are responsible for nurturing leaders who are qualified to manage the country.

**Educational qualification assurances.** The national educational qualifications framework was designed for several reasons. First, the framework is supposed to support the implementation of the guidelines set out in the National Education Act. Secondly, the purpose of the framework is to ensure consistency of standards and quality of process toward granting any degree title in Thailand and to certify academic awards that are equivalent to those granted by higher educational institutions in other countries. (Office of the Higher Education Commission, 2006).

There must be assurances that there will be evaluations of the programmes so that students can attain high qualifications. In terms of music studies the participants mentioned that there are numerous problems especially with teacher and research qualifications.

**Cooperation policies.** At the present, integrating and expanding new knowledge requires mutual cooperation with others. In order for Thailand and other countries in the ASEAN community to gain strong positions in the world, the music institutes should collaborate together to expand their knowledge and to enhance

themselves to be academic hubs throughout the region. However, there are only a few institutional collaborations that are in their early stages and that display few, tangible accomplishments.

### Conclusion

For over 80 years of music studies in higher education in Thailand, music institutes have developed to respond to social demands and to survive in the changing society until the present. In the 21st century many issues including changes, government policies, technology and innovations, concepts of diversity and world excellence have affected the existence of the institutes. In order to produce socially desired music graduates, the music institutes should adapt themselves to make it possible for students to achieve their highest potentials. Music institute administrators are important as one group of key people who can drive institutes toward success in Thai society and in the world.

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