

Is it too much freedom in Thammasat University?

It is said that freedom is god's giving to mankind. I also totally agree with this quote because everyone has the same rights and equal freedom. It is distinctively different from other universities in Thailand. Thammasat was established by Pridi Banomyong. He believed that "a society exists because of the participation of its members, and a social system which enables most people to legally influence decisions and move society is a democracy". Thammasat University is usually named in the top 5 universities in Thailand, It is Thailand's second oldest university. Thammasat has many campuses throughout Thailand such as at Thaprachan in Bangkok, near the Grand Palace and Wat Phra Kaew and Rangsit. This university has always been the first or second top pick for almost every student in Thailand. Generally known that Thammasat is usually described as land of freedom, it gives students and outsiders full rights and freedom to use their own right and all facilities in the university. In addition, students and personels have freedom to not wear uniforms. Some people hold onto the notion that Thammasat university provides too much freedom as it diminishes the privacy and decorum in university. On the other hand, others argue that freedom that this university gives benefits more than drawbacks. The following paragraph will illustrate more about the advantages and disadvantages of freedom in Thammasat university to this point of view.

First and foremost, Thailand is one of few countries left in the world that inform students to wear uniforms even at university level. While wearing a uniform is essential in all institutions such as study, work, and government officers. Somehow, there is controversy about wearing uniforms. Some people said that allowing students to not wear a uniform can be complained by outsiders. Take the case of female students for example; it can be seen that most female students usually dress too dizzy: they wear too short and too sexy. Moreover, another example is that we sometimes see students wear pajamas to university. It looks impolite and disrespectful to an honorable place like a university. On the other hand, when it comes to Thammasat University, most people will talk about how this university gives students freedom to live in. Thammasat University is the only university in Thailand that does not force students to wear the student' uniform. Students are able to dress whatever they like to study except for the midterm or final exam which students have to wear

their polite uniform. It is an immense advantage of Thammasat University because nowadays many famous colleges around the world don't have rules that students have to wear the uniform which will make many students delightful, lively and have self confidence. Thus, it is evident that Thammasat university believes in liberalism. It favors unfettered markets and opposes government regulations in the name of human freedom. It supports individual rights, and democracy. In other words, forcing students to wear a uniform oppresses their freedom and humanity in democratic system. Consequently, freedom to not wear a uniform can provide advantages and disadvantages. Since our country is governed by democratic system, it is particularly important to establish universities that allow students opportunities to be not opposed by the regulations in order to uphold human rights and freedom.

It is worth to mention that freedom of speech is the cornerstone of a functioning society. It is necessary here to clarify what "freedom of expression" means: the term not only deals with verbal communication, but it also involves in non-verbal language. The rights to freely express ideas play a crucial role in a functioning democratic society as it enables us informed citizens to publicly comment or criticize the work process of the dishonestly leading politicians with ease, which more or less can help improve the society in which we live. Take the case of General Prawit Wongsuwan's luxury watch scandal as an example. With freedom of expression, the public whole-heartedly have rights to inquire about his unusual wealth and pressurize those officials involved in the legal framework to carry out further investigation with this powerful politician in order to bring about political transparency. As can be seen, freedom of expression can be one of the effective factors forming a solid foundation for a democratically functioning society. When it comes to Thammasat university, students usually involve themselves with political framework. As we know that Thailand has been under military control since 2014. Thai people have been forced to live under the Junta government - the military government and incontestable state power. Our people have no freedom in terms of politics as our freedom of speech is disappearing due to Lese Majeste section 112. Freedom of speech is the most important type of interaction. Liberty of words shows the power especially in politics or government. Because of this, people have part in social action and express their thoughts to others. The speech not only shows in verbal speech, but also displays in the movements, but since

speaking the truth may cost our lives, it can be seen that Thai people have no freedom to express and criticize the government or royal family. For instance, in 2015 a man was sentenced to 30 years in prison for comments he posted on Facebook about the monarchy. Moreover, it can be clearly seen that a lot of brave activists and Thammasat' students who have come forward to protest against the junta were arrested, disappeared, and even murdered. Furthermore, Thai economic growth is dropped since the junta take over the power.

According to the institution framework, path dependence is the idea that decisions we are faced with depend on past knowledge trajectory and decisions made, and are thus limited by the current competence base. In other words, history matters for current decision making situations. People, who are afraid of changing can be called neglect. Because of that, the change is not occurred because people think that the adaptive cost to change is too expensive.

However, many Thammasat students voice to improve and make changes in society.

Therefore, the protest (คณะประชาชนปลดแอก) leading by Thammasat University' students are calling out the government led by Prayuth Chan Ocha to quit from position, cancel Lese Majeste section 112 in order to let citizens commenting or complaining monarchy. It is evident that Thammasat university advocates the protest. Students also lecturers are altogether coming out to fight against the military government. On the other hand, protesting can be problems. First and foremost, there may be a risk that protest will be dangerous due to Covid-19. Moreover, it affects economic growth for example it can lead to a shutdown of economic activities and reduce firm's productivity as foreigners may lose confidence in investment and also direct investment in Thailand. Political instability and the start of a fresh storm of anti-government can create a fragile economy. Take the case of 2010 protesting in Thailand for an example: foreign investors have already shown some signs of withdrawing from Thailand. They have sold \$584m in Thai shares, so Thai stocks are among the cheapest in asia. Furthermore, the protest will make problems in our society, if it blocked the traffic. It will make traffic bad to worse as we know that our capital has traffic jam problems. Thus, it is evident that protest can provide benefits and drawbacks at the same time. According to Ball and Cup resilience curve, if the ball passes the threshold point, the change will be made; in other words, if the protester can win the race, our freedom and rights under democratic institutions

will regain. On the other hand, if the ball can not pass the threshold, the change will not happen. In the other words, if protesters can not win the race, problems that we see in Thailand today will continue.

Since liberalism plays a big role in Thammasat University, we can obviously notice that Thammasat University opens for everyone to fully access and utilize all facilities and resources. Without barriers to access educational resources and materials, this availability could encourage the academic development for both internal and external parties. Thammasat University has helped the society to expand access to learning while at the same time has supported other people to enhance the level of knowledge which we cannot deny that this is another potential way to eventually improve long-term development of the country as an overview. Taking consideration of the social benefits, accessible services from Thammasat University have provided great opportunities for people to save their expenses and other relevant costs that might incur from learning since it can substantially reduce the cost to access materials for people who lack the resources to acquire good academic alternatives. However, liberalism can create moral issues. when we take negative perspective into consideration, this openness can cause some danger to students and internal officers as well. For instance, there were many circumstances in Thammasat university that there were lots of thieves, burglars, or even beggars who have caused trouble, ranging from financial and property issues to physical and mental distress for the students and university personnels. Thus, it is evident that although the aim to be a university for the people is something significantly considered to be benefits for society, taking into account the safety level and rights of students is also another crucial consideration. Moreover, there is also an issue about copyright and intellectual property concerns. Consequently, providing educational resources is meant to be used openly, the fair use of exemption may not apply.

In conclusion, it can be concluded that freedom is the fundamental basis of democratic institutions. As mentioned above, freedom of wearing which somehow only exists in Thammasat University. Therefore, students have more confidence and self-enthusiasm. Furthermore, it not only provides freedom of wearing, but also fully allows students to express and criticize in political terms. New generations can drive significant changes in society by standing against dictatorship in order to bring back democracy. Moreover, it

also provides advantages to outsiders to access and utilize almost every facility and resource in the university. However, double-edge-swords always happen on a daily basis; in other words, giving too much freedom can have drawbacks. In my opinion, however every student that graduated at Thammasat University will surely have a bright future for their own paths ,and most importantly students will be a good person and be a great element for the nation.