GRAND NARRATIVE OF THE EXISTING DRIVERS AND BARRIERS ON INNOVATING THE INTERNATIONALIZATION OF EDUCATION

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A R T I C L E I N F O.	**Abstract**
Keywords: Lived Experiences, Drivers and Barriers, Internationalization Initiatives, Education Programs.	This article is a testament of the existing initiatives of internationalization of education in the Philippines. It serves as an avenue to look into the details of drivers and barriers how curriculum navigates into internationalization and being recognized in the ASEAN nations. The article utilizes multiple case study analysis to arrive to data that are cross-sectional and diverse to capture the essence of the findings. As the fifth industrial revolution and the seventeen sustainable development goals measures the timeline for innovations, this study looks into these dimensions. Moreover, signaled the meta discourses of Philippine ideologies to borderless education.

Introduction

The globalization initiatives in State Universities and Colleges in the Philippines were promulgated by Commission on Higher Education in response to Global Education and emended through Circular Memorandum Order Number 55 series of 2016, known as the Policy Framework and Strategies on the Internationalization of Philippine Higher Education in accordance with the 1987 Philippine Constitution and Republic Act number 7722, otherwise known as the "Higher Education Action of 1994". Considering the pledge and alliance to bilateral, multilateral, regional, national, and international partnerships with emphasis on agreements in Higher Education Institutions in the country and neighboring communities. This study would greatly benefit the Commission on Higher Education in coming up with a more responsive and relevant policies and programs on internationalization of higher education institutions particularly Teacher Education Program on their efforts to internationalize and gain global merits. It would also serve as point of reference not only in crafting strategies and mechanism but also in making clear cut policies on integrating Teacher Education Program (TEP) in the internationalization efforts of higher education institution in the Bicol Region. Likewise, they would be able to identify the initiatives, programs, plans, and challenges met by the institutions under study which may serve as benchmark in the interventions that may be implemented by the Commission to better ensure the establishment of internationalization of such institution. Ultimately, this would give them clear projection on how quality higher education would be achieve through internationalization of TEP in the Bicol region most especially the Province of Camarines Sur.

The educational challenges on globalization have emerged long before the onset of the developed Millennia. It has brought dramatic and drastic changes in the educational landscape on both basic and

higher education learning just to ensure academic responsiveness and global recognition of the Philippine educational system. The aforementioned defiance in internationalization was highlighted in the scholarly worked of Vitriolo (2013) which emphasizes that internationalization of higher education is one of the recent developments and challenges the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) is working on through collaborative and participative efforts of allied institution both local and abroad. More so, Reapor (2015) cited that State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) should enhance international linkages, faculty – student exchange, collaborative researches and scholarship grants. Plans, programs, and best practices on internationalization must be strongly established and that a tangible policy on internationalization should be crafted by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED).

For the internationalization to prosper, three major reasons must be considered by Higher Education Institution as revealed in the study of Balagtas (2012) wherein she emphasized the interest in international security as the primary consideration, followed by maintenance of economic competitiveness to sustain collaboration with other learning institution and lastly, fostering a human understanding across nations wherein for a country to triumph in internationalization, thriving cooperation and mutual understanding must be observed at all times.

In the National Association of Foreign Student Advisors (NAFSA, 2021) report on "Comprehensive Internationalization: From Concept to Action", the concept of comprehensive internationalization is suggested to be empirically defined as comprehensive internationalization (CIZN) that requires active support and participation from many locations and corners of the campus for example, executives and key figures in each of these areas have the effect of promoting internationalization. This is truly the essence of building a strategy that is global. In order to establish an effective global strategy, there is an absolute need for quality collaboration. This collaboration needs to be at many different levels, but the key is being as inclusive as possible.

It is from the aforesaid reasons that the necessity was felt for this study on internationalization efforts of Teacher Education Institutions in Camarines Sur to empirically benchmark their institutional development initiatives and compare the same to the global standards of delivering quality higher education. In the end, this will provide a comprehensive data useful, timely, and relevant in the process of formulating innovations and plans for the institution to internationalize. The same is even more significant for future leaders of these institutions to consider ensuring world-class academic programs and environment, services to students and stakeholders for effective and efficient management of institutions worthy of international recognition.

Methodology, Purpose and Objectives

Integrating the previously cited general research questions with the results from the reviewed drivers of sustained internationalization in Teacher Education Program, this study aims to answer this question: What are the drivers of sustained internationalization of state university in Camarines Sur, Philippines? In a grand narrative style, what are the internal and external drivers and barriers on the internationalization efforts promoting sustainability of the program? These aspects are the reasons why this study is put forth.

This study used qualitative research approach using a multiple-case design to ensure accuracy and comprehensiveness of gathered data so as to attain the objectives set for this investigation. Descriptive method was used to examine and analyze the internal and external factors as prime mover of teacher education program's internationalization which able them to sustain collaboration. These factors are the drivers and barriers, the strategies, and constraints along different areas met by these institutions on internationalization. Cresswell (2013) highlighted that a multiple-case design discovers and explores a real-life multiple bounded system through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information. Through using a multiple-case design a wider exploration of the research question and theoretical evolution will enable the researcher to understand the differences and similarities of

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information management of the process between the multiple-cases studied (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). This will enable the researcher to address the complex issues that need to be explored in-depth, and to understand the developmental conditions of such undertakings, based on contributions and perspectives of the research participants.

A cross-sectional of the data are observed in order to measure the outcomes of the study. Furthermore, interview and secondary data, used for the validation of initial findings. also describe as an unfolding model that happen in a natural setting that enables the researcher to develop a level of details from high involvement in the actual experiences (Creswell, 2014).

Results and Discussions

Drivers and Barriers on the Internationalization (IZN)

The United Nations (UN) in 2015 stated that the world is facing exceptional challenges in safeguarding and ensuring a sustainable future. In their report, the United Nations (UN) Agenda 2030, "Transforming our world for sustainable development," and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have been adopted by 193 countries. The program and agenda of 2030 is a strategic and vital document for all stakeholders. As a worldwide agenda, the UN Agenda 2030 can and should be incorporated by higher education, as it provides a good direction or roadmap for higher education to foster sustainable development, particularly education, and development in general.

The UN has also bounded the key role of higher education in helping reach all the SDGs (Fredman, 2020). Higher education, therefore, plays a key role in the sustainable development of our societies. At the same time, however, there are voices criticizing this role and the importance of the vital principles. These voices grow louder, also among community stakeholders must raise their concerns with a shared voice locally, nationally, and globally, encouraging essential ideologies. This approach can recapture societal confidence and appreciation. In this way, as one community, we can agree with the social development and desires that are moving very quickly, and that cannot be sufficiently addressed without the influence of higher education.

The aim toward internationalization is very rough for a developing country such as the Philippines, wherein we are at the receiving end of the motions from the Western community. Asia and other continents which faced challenges are drawn to conventionally played parts primarily as correspondents of students, beneficiaries of capacity building, and more recently as settings of franchise processes, linking divisions, and other forms of cross-border provision (Deardorff, de Wit, & Heyl, 2012). These concepts emerged from varieties of global engagements as nations navigate through the cycle of borderless education. Such engagements create ripple effects on the global compact as it molds a certainty of actions from different Institutions involved in the said mobilization and discipline. This claim was also supported by Beltran (2023) which emphasizes the importance on mechanisms and provisions on internationalizing the curriculum.

In their study conducted in New Zealand, Langley and Breese (2005) emphasized the significance of the lack of appreciation of periods abroad/credit transfer, inadequate information on theoretical requisites and qualifications of various countries, dissimilarities in the structure of the academic year, gaps in the times at which analyses are taken, lack of foreign language skills, lack of information on the host country living conditions, culture and administrative requirements, lack of suitable accommodation for the study abroad period and additional costs to students, such as additional insurance coverage, bank and currency exchange charges (Langley & Breese 2005; Desoff 2006; Goldstein & Kim 2006; Lozano 2011). On the other hand, Doyle et al. (2010) identified the influences that constrain the commitment to universal exchange programs. He argued that mentoring as part of the collaborative activity for student exchange delivers positive results and has a huge link toward measurable impact creating a myriad of pathways for a successful endeavor. Therefore, support to students indicates an early achievement of goals when observed, guided, and motivated.

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In the Philippines, international relations are tied to historical colonialism and predominant to epistemic challenges confronting the hegemonic ideology leading toward contributive to predicting new prospects for transnational relationships in higher education in the Global South (Leal et al., 2022). This is one of many reasons why higher education in the local scene finds it challenging to participate in global consortia for students, teachers, and administrators. In the reviews and works on student mobility, most readings on student movement have been based on minor samples and have not been associated with mobile and non-mobile students (Klahr & Ratti, 2000). State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) halted their transnational agenda since the pandemic disrupted the mobility of internal and external linkages leading to the stagnation of programs which limited the key result areas, thus, affecting the number of conducted activities.

On the other hand, Local Universities and Colleges (LUCs) also adjusted their timeframe tuning to the sound of new set-ups in educational mobility. The birth of hybrid (blended learning) arose during this event, and the use of technological assistance paved the way to still continue the transition of learning from the old normal to the now-normal structure. SUCs and LUCs were applauded by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) because of the initiative they have made in order to still cater to the needs of learning despite the unprecedented event. Such recognition was given to exemplary institutions like the University of the Philippines for answering the call of changing time and delivering quality education.

Barriers to the Internationalization (IZN)

The internationalization of higher education is progressing into a novel phase. After and during the pandemic period, internationalization of nation is gearing toward online learning. Affected by the spread of the infection from the virus, mode of delivery and instructions had changed, becoming the instructions more crucial and problematic implementing.

The Administration, Board of Regents (BOR), and other stakeholders were considered the internal drivers of an institution toward attaining and sustaining the shared mission of internationalization. They are the main contributors to how this mechanism and operations work for the entire system of the Institution. This is also coined in the challenges and opportunities in

Higher Education by Pavan (n.d.) who was cited in Grove (2019) in Curaj et al. (2020).

"*With institutions having to overcome numerous legal and administration hurdles in each country, as well as quality assurance and credit recognition issues, three years would not be enough time to integrate processes. Instead, institutions should be given at least seven years to forge meaningful links with each other.*"

During the event of the World University Ranking in Helsinki Finland, the President of the Erasmus Mundus Association, Yalda Hakim and Jimmy Nelson who spoke at the 2019 European Association for International Education conference said that an institution should agree with the role of administration in ensuring the international processes are crucial to delivering standard mechanisms for all. With them are the BOR and offices within the system that provides pluralistic feedback, which may or may not be essential to the delivery of the activities achieving global appreciation. They have also to consider the economic, political, and social impact their policies toward internationalization will create so that internal balance perhaps observes.

Nacario (2019) in his dissertation stated that a five-year development plan and the vision set forth by the administration changed the direction of the institution in embracing the "new normal" in navigating the common well journeying and being guided with the values aligning to the global landscape of transnationalism. But for it to materialize, several goals should be considered by the institution, like its timeline, assessments, specific target, and career goals which encapsulate the transition of internal policy of planning and strategically move toward the synchronous and same directions.

Furthermore, Nacario (2019) highlighted that one major measure of internal barriers in light of internationalization is the appropriation of funds. For instance, the institution offers this global opportunity to students, yet limited to no allocation of funding can be a loophole toward achieving the target. This is just for the administration – but looking from the perspective of a student who is willing to participate in the journey, this might be a mountain to climb. What the administration can offer is to aid students with financial support, granting a scholarship or pay later scheme may be also considered. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) may also be the way for the institution to collaborate with giving scholarships to students deserving and qualified to apply.

On the other hand, Reapor (2015) supported the claim on another driver which was the lack of acceptable, consistent, and reliably collected documents is often used as an apology for the lack of action towards more unbiased schemes, but it also hampers the selection of empirical-based policy-making or of gauging the impact of the ingenuities already put into practice. When an institution has no specific directions, its plans and navigation will be disturbed. However, if they have a framework for achieving the plans, they will have a smooth sailing development and directions leading to transnationalization.

Table 1. Drivers and strategies on internationalization

DRIVERS AND STRATEGIES ON INTERNATIONALIZATION	EMPHASIS
Linked with other overseas institutions	Standardization, Consistency, and Commitment
Recruitment and Marketing Processes	Exposure, Transparency, and Assurance
Curricula	Special tract geared toward internationalizing the programs

Diversification of Higher Education with regard to internationalization has flourished, and their strategies continue to discuss this international phenomenon. Kishun (2006) presented Africa's lived experiences in internationalizing its networks to the world. Over the years, he has shown the emergence of risks, threats, and gains as major drivers they hurdled to see blooming days in the global arena. They were given ample time to hone the research and knowledge productions of the African Universities' curricula, the same manner they were given justification in the works of (Oyewole, 2009; Teferra & Knight, 2008). Through this, more collaborations among African Universities were developed, paving the way to external linkages.

Brazil's education process and international academic cooperation (Laus, 2009), as the largest higher education system in Latin America, reported that the government's strategy toward internationalization had reached 278% since 1996 in public universities are the major contributor to this phenomenon. The Brazilian government's efforts of sending its people abroad indicated a 90% production of scientific papers published in international journals indexed by Thomson Reuter's Science Citation index in 2008 (UNESCO, 2010). By this, the Brazilian education system promoted a desirable context of quality outputs that were recognized around the world scientifically.

These strategies from around the world manifested the walks of policies and strategies that leads to the achievement of the different goals. It is not a walk in the park when we speak of this broad internationalization nor a blink of an eye. But if the government and institutions were coupled with commitment, assurance, output-based agenda, and sufficient financial and moral support then all this effort will not put into waste. Surely before the end of agenda 2030, the Philippines will have a robust connection of linkages within the ASEAN and Western communities.

In local SUCs, the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) is the gateway to collaborative and participative engagements among universities. Such ties bonded the

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seal of good partnerships that the institutions mutually agreed. The Balik Scientist program of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) supported by CHED is one of the major initiatives wherein scholars were automatically given a permanent item to work in identified SUCs by the Commission to contribute in giving information and creation of body of knowledge after all, they were sent abroad through the efforts and approval of the government. Lastly, underpinning the internationalization as a goal to achieve so that its aims and directions will be clear and measurable.

Table 2. Barriers on Internationalization

BARRIERS AND CONSTRAINTS	EMPHASIS
Lack of over-all vision, framework, and concrete plan for internationalizing the program	Planning, monitoring, evaluation/ assessment of the program.
Deteriorating quality education	Current trends and innovations in education.
Limited access to quality education	Personal and economic reasons
Administration's lack of interest to internationalize	Institutions Vision, Mission, and Academic Goals

Administrators should be the one who drives the organization towards its mission and vision. Without proper direction and plans, all the efforts will put into waste and the financial resources of the institution will be misused. In the essence of its role to frame rules for the budgeting, spending, and controlling of the funds and resources available to the school. To make sure that education is being provided by making use of the financial and human resources available within the country. The problem of income and expenditure, their accounting and auditing must be addressed and aligned properly by the administration leading toward the desirable targets of the institution.

The implication to the education services of this kind of hindrances falls under the mechanism of fair and just education. According to UNICEF report in 2015, the lack of qualified teachers, inadequate teaching materials, and poor sanitation are some of the reasons why many children do not receive a quality education. Even when they do go to school, children in such conditions fail to acquire applicable and quality knowledge, sometimes even basic knowledge. UNICEF states that 617 million children and adolescents around the world fail to acquire even the minimum literacy and math knowledge, although two thirds of them attend school.

Conclusion

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that the internal and external drivers and barriers on the internationalization initiatives of the state university contribute to the sustainability of its Teacher Education Program. Furthermore, the broader sense of attainability in the efforts in collaborating, participating, and sharing the internal and external resources was observed and reflected on the policies and regulations of the institution. The internal and external drivers benefited the institutional aims to acquire full implementation on internationalization. On the other hand, the internal and external barriers hinder the systems that determine the overall success rate of the programs in internationalization.

It can be gleaned from the results of the study that a well-rounded strategy in the Teacher Education Program of the state university influences the path of the students and teachers in sustaining the initiatives such as activities like the International Credit Transfer Program (ICTP) on internationalization. The findings of this study also highlight the relevance of networking. For instance, the conversation on best internationalization practices must continue. Such strategies allow each college to extend programs and religiously observe existing internal and external policies on any international engagements of its students, faculty, and staff.

The toughest and main constraints on internationalization undertakings focused on the lack of well-crafted policies and financial restrictions. This perennial problem in the academe discloses the various

aspects which need improvement within and outside the system. On the other hand, lack of organizational structure was identified as one of internal and externally important barriers to address, since these challenges or constraints will be the one responsible for creating the organization's process flow and guiding the college's efforts in decision making.

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