Implementation of internationalization practices vis-à-vis school culture of quality

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Structured abstract

Background: The clear-eyed consciousness and collaboration of the entire school and community members are absolutely significant for the successful integration and implementation of internationalization practices essential for realizing a culture of quality.

Purpose: The study aims to investigate in depth and analyze how the execution of internationalization practices impacts the attainment of a school's culture of quality.

Setting: Three performing autonomous universities or colleges in the National Capital Region were purposively selected.

Participants: A sample of 147 third-year college students, faculty, and administrators were chosen from the three selected higher education institutions (HEIs) using convenience sampling.

Research design: Quantitative-inferential research method

Data collection and analysis: Data were drawn from a Likert scale survey that was statistically validated (α = .945), and prepared and gathered online through Google Forms. Data analysis was carried out using means, analyses of variance, Pearson correlation coefficients, and multiple linear regressions.

Findings: The HEIs implemented their internationalization practices successfully, and significant differences exist in how they execute home-based initiatives ($F(2,146)$ = 3.109, p = .048) and cross-border efforts ($F(2,146)$ = 3.658, p = .028). Culture of quality in terms of teaching and learning, and leadership and management are remarkably high. Internationalization practices and culture of quality were significantly correlated (r = .532, r = .559, r = .405, r = .471; $p < $ .001) resulting in significant impact. Internationalization practices predict the attainment of culture of quality in terms of teaching and learning (home-based: 2.305 + .382x, cross-border: 2.775 + .246x), and leadership and management (home-based: 2.180 + .421x, cross-border: 2.607 + .299x).

Recommendations: Based on the findings' implications, to successfully implement the internationalization of education and attain a school culture of quality, universities and colleges should (a) strengthen their ties and activities with cultural and ethnic groups and establishing organizations related to international and local perspectives; (b) invest in an offshore presence of the institution in other countries, strengthen research collaboration, and improve clear program articulation of internationalization perspectives and practices through twinning programs, academic franchising, and other means; (c) conduct benchmarking; and (d) redesign the research study to consider universities outside the Philippines.

Keywords
home-based, cross-border, internationalization practices, culture of quality, autonomous universities and colleges, NCR, Philippines

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Introduction

Engagement in globalization of higher education is often regarded as one of the greatest achievements of the global educational system (Robiños & Alcazaren, 2023). Internationalization, rather than just adding the international dimension into an existing institutional framework, was clearly highlighted as a critical means of showcasing growing global knowledge and learning networks (de Wit, 2020; Lumby & Foskett, 2015; Songkaeo & Yeong, 2016; Szyszlo, 2016). It is a dynamic process that involves all members of the community, including students, staff, administrators, and other stakeholders. Internationalization of higher education provides institutions with a fantastic opportunity to boost educational effectiveness, continual improvement, and quality (Jibeen & Khan, 2015).

The Philippine government supports the initiatives of internationalizing education (Commission on Higher Education, 2016). The country's internationalization initiative points in the right direction and provides opportunities for higher education institutions (HEIs) to fulfill their goals and objectives. As previously noted, the Philippines' and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) HEIs' internationalization is increasing and improving year after year (Madula, 2018). Figures of international tertiary graduates, local and global collaborations, international graduate education institutions, Centers of Excellence and Progress Eminence, cumulative scholars, ASEAN ranking, and research publications all contributed to this development (Milla, 2019). However, with this pronounced impetus, there is certainly a need to establish profoundly the influence of internationalization to school culture of quality.

Internationalization of education must be taken seriously as a result of emerging global economic trends and global interdependence (Szyszlo, 2016; Vaught, 2015). In order for such dedication to be well understood and appreciated, the influence of internationalization practices must be considered in order to meet an institution's mission (Xinqi et al., 2018). To avoid a potential institutional dilemma, this effort must include the implementation of initiatives and efforts based on the proper paradigm's impact on organizational culture. This provides yet another incentive to investigate the impact of internationalization procedures in greater depth.

What is critical to internationalization is the kind of culture it generates. International institutions are expected to achieve excellence (Cinches et al., 2016). However, in contradiction, some forms of internationalization are unlikely to lead to improvements in HEI's quality (Jibeen & Khan, 2015). Nevertheless, internationalization is significant to schools' shared vision and culture among and across individuals and academic leaders in an institution (Kane et al., 2016). As indirectly revealed by Kottmann et al. (2016), sharing the school's values and commitment towards quality is one of the impacts of the internationalization effort.

The definition of HEIs that have established a culture of quality differs depending on how important the university considers it to be and the system in which it operates (Moodley, 2019). In general, culture of quality is defined in all educational settings by a progressive and holistic approach to continuous improvement, quality assurance, and the institution's national and international ranking (Moodley, 2019; Robson & Wihlborg, 2019; Warter, 2019). Though institutional quality assurance and internationalization activities are not solely responsible for the university's culture of quality and prestige, they do play a significant role (Stafford & Taylor, 2016). Still, most perceptions of culture of quality have been drawn to different features of quality assurance in different colleges and universities. Given the importance of a complex and collaborative focus, culture of quality must be well-defined and thoroughly studied to provide a clearer viewpoint and processes. The research focuses on framing school culture of quality exactly to teaching and learning, as well as leadership and administration, despite a paucity of literature. The study is anchored to three assimilated frameworks: the Commission on Higher Education's (CHED) (2012) policy-standard to enhance quality assurance in Philippine higher education, The Inspectorate's (2016) framework on quality for primary schools, and Schoen and Teddlie's (2008) dimension of school culture. Extent of engagement of HEIs in meaningful learning activities including transnational initiatives is normally associated to the worth of instruction and learning experiences, and leadership and management (Aerden, 2017; Egekvist et al., 2017; Mukhwana et al., 2017; The Inspectorate, 2016).

The use of a variety of teaching methods promotes high-quality learning, and hence good teaching promotes a meaningful learning culture. Meanwhile, good management and leadership are evaluated because they make a difference (Baporikar, 2015; Javed, 2015; Lasrado, 2015) in refining the heart, soul, quality, and primary goal of education, the instruction and the learning process. Within any institution, leadership and management have become vital and required for quality and innovation (Lasrado, 2015; Mukhwana et al., 2017). The growth and progress of an efficient and effective strategy that allows the institution to accomplish its aims and improve the quality of services and education it provides is sustained by school culture of quality (Markowitsch, 2018).

Only a few studies have found a direct link between a school's culture of quality and the implementation of international initiatives. According to de Wit (2015) and Moodley (2019), evaluating the impact of internationalization techniques on school culture of quality among autonomous universities will assist new and promising HEIs in innovating and achieving excellence while meeting international standards. Autonomous institutions display extraordinary excellence through their quality audit system and program outcomes, demonstrating excellent performance in line with their mission (Margaret & Kavitha, 2018). Promoting and fostering a culture of quality will necessitate a more in-depth contextual examination of how one perceives and understands the school's culture of quality.

The study objectives are: (a) identify the level of implementation of internationalization home-based and cross-border strategies; (b) identify the extent of culture of quality in terms of teaching and learning, leadership and management; (c) determine if significant differences and associations occur between the implementation of internationalization and the school culture of quality; and (d) explore the impact of implementing internationaliza-

tion practices on universities and colleges' perceived culture of quality.

Methodology

A quantitative-inferential research design was used in the study to assess the amount to which international practices have been implemented, as well as the institution's culture of quality, associations, and influence. The population consisted of third-year college students, faculty, and administrators from three performing HEIs in the National Capital Region (NCR). At the time of the study, third-year college students had taken the additional two years of senior high school and were thus expected to have substantial experiences in terms of internationalization and quality assurance in an institution. Some inclusion criteria were: (a) is enrolled or employed in one of the three selected autonomous HEIs for 3 or more years; (b) is 18 years old or older; (c) understands English and Filipino; and (d) is willing to participate.

A sample of 147 respondents was selected using convenience sampling with the sample size obtained using the Raosoft sample size calculator with 5% margin of error and 95% confidence level. (The COVID-19 pandemic made it necessary to use convenience sampling.) The study was conducted in Ateneo de Manila University, Southville International School and Colleges, and the University of Perpetual Help System DALTA Las Piñas Campus. These institutions are established for about 30 years, are ISO 9001 certified, have reputable niche programs for internationalization, and were granted by CHED an autonomous status for the last decade. Participating schools provided approval of the disclosure of their institution's name and the conduct of the study through their Research and Development Center, Office of Academic Affairs, or School Director's Office.

Upon approval and endorsement from CHED and the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines, a researcher-made survey questionnaire was developed and administered using Google Forms. Its items on internationalization practices (home-based and cross-border) and culture of quality (in teaching and learning, and in leadership and management) were scored using a 4-point level of agreement Likert scale. The tool was evaluated using face and content validity, and had an SPSS version 24 reliability analysis result of Cronbach's α = 0.945. Revisions were made in accordance with Cronbach's α results and corrections, suggestions, and recommendations given.

Through the survey instrument, participants gave their consent and were informed of their right to participate, the rationale of the study, the anonymity approach, their right to refuse to answer the survey questionnaire, and their right to withdraw their responses. A research ethics board's approval of the conduct of the study was

Table 1. Implementation of internationalization practices

	Mean	Description
Home-based	3.26	Successfully implemented
Cross-border	3.16	Generally implemented

Table 2. Level of culture of quality

	Mean	Description
Teaching and learning	3.55	Very high culture of quality
Leadership and management	3.55	Very high culture of quality

secured.

The study utilized means, analyses of variance (ANOVAs), Pearson correlation coefficients, and multiple linear regressions to provide sufficient and substantial interpretation and analysis. Multiple linear regression was used to see the strengths of the relationships between the internationalization practices (home-based and cross-border) and the culture of quality (teaching and learning, and leadership and management).

Results and discussions

Extent of implementation of internationalization practices and level of culture of quality
Table 1 shows the HEIs' extent of implementation of internationalization practices.

The participants considered the following home-based strategies as well-implemented: accreditation and evaluation for quality assurance and internationalization, provision of international substance and scopes in the curriculum, learning outcomes, resources, and teaching pedagogies, integration of intercultural materials and online platforms, the establishment of strong linkages and international research partnerships, and the conduct of international conferences and workshops with expatriates.

The majority of cross-border efforts focused on establishing international perspectives through conferences, professional development trainings, and partnerships involving travel or delegation of learners, faculty, and researchers to foreign countries, implementation of clear policies on studying or interning abroad, and provision for student, faculty, and researcher mobility.

These findings suggest that CHED (2016) Memorandum Order no. 55, series of 2016 is highly practiced and integrated by the selected performing autonomous institutions. Academic institutions with exemplary internationalization strategies work to improve quality assurance and accreditation, provide international content, integrate hybrid learning arrangements, build strong networks, and host intercultural campus events, conferences, research collaborations, mobility programs, and

Table 3. One-way ANOVA tests of significant differences

	F-value	*p*-value (2-tailed)
HEIs' extent of implementation		
Home-based initiatives	3.109	.048*
Cross-border efforts	3.658	.028*
HEIs' level of culture of quality		
Teaching and learning	0.183	.833
Leadership and management	0.842	.433

* *p* < .05

Table 4. Pearson *r* results on significant associations

	Pearson *r*	*p*-value (2-tailed)
Home-based initiatives and teaching and learning	.532	< .001*
Home-based initiatives and leadership and management	.559	< .001*
Cross-border efforts and teaching and learning	.405	< .001*
Cross-border efforts and leadership and management	.471	< .001*

n = 147, * *p* < .05

other activities that include inviting and hosting international facilitators and resource speakers. These practices and strategies were recognized as important for an academic institution's success in internationalization (Egekvist et al., 2017; Madula, 2018; Stafford & Taylor, 2016).

Table 2 shows the HEIs' level of culture of quality.

The very high level of culture of quality in teaching and learning indicates that learners achieve with satisfaction the intended learning outcomes, make meaningful experiences and authentic opportunities, demonstrate essential competencies and values, and reflect on their own progress which help them develop their sense of responsibility. Furthermore, faculty highly manifest mastery and expertise, and are consistently engaged in continuing professional progress to improve the teaching and learning experience. Teachers select relevant learning targets that are contextualized to diverse learners' needs and styles, and give quality assessments to present the complete representation of learning realizations and necessities for improvement (da Costa & Araújo, 2018; Kane et al., 2016; Mikhaylov & Mikhaylova, 2018).

The expression of a very high culture of quality in leadership and management posited that academic leaders and managers actively uphold a positive culture of excellence, collaboration, and innovation to enable learners to become successful and to help the institution in realizing its quality purposes and objectives. Academic leaders establish clear principles and authentic commitment to inclusive education, gender equality, non-academic activities, and opportunities for holistic development. They clearly enunciated in policies the institution's core values and equity and justice for all, and they highly practice and encourage a sense of accountability (Baporikar, 2015; Lasrado, 2015).

Significant differences

Table 3 compares the HEIs' extent of implementation of internationalization practices and the HEIs' level of culture of quality.

When respondents were grouped according to their institutional affiliation, there were significant differences in their extent of implementation of internationalization practices for both home-based initiatives and cross-border efforts. Internationalization practices on the HEIs differ in their motives and understanding, and approaches in observing the delivery of processes (Cinches et al., 2016). Higher institutions used varied rationales to internationalize the school community and differ in set priorities and institutional resources. There are broader, varied, and complex approaches in terms of internationalization. Differences noted are linked to the creation of international linkages, faculty development support, exchange program policies, and research engagements (Egekvist et al., 2017; Ziyatdinova et al., 2016).

On the other hand, there were no significant differences in the level of culture of quality for both teaching and learning, and leadership and management when respondents were clustered according to their institutional affiliation.

Significant associations

Table 4 shows that there were positive and significant associations between the extent of implementation of internationalization home-based initiatives and the level of culture of quality the selected autonomous HEIs have in terms of teaching and learning (*r* = .532, *p* < .001) and leadership and management (*r* = .559, *p* < .001). This finding is identical to that of Kirk et al. (2018) and Yeboah (2015), stating that internationalization of education such as designing a suitable curriculum, aligning the instruction and assessment, and empowering faculty and students enables the delivery of quality teaching and learning engagements. For Vaught (2015), leadership and management, if handled effectively, can help in the promotion of internationalization efforts. Transformation and some change of processes such as internationalizing education is definitely associated with the organization's culture. Knowing the current situation on how academic leaders handle change and quality assurance is helpful in crafting and improving school

practices.

Table 4 also shows that the execution of cross-border internationalization efforts and the level of culture of quality of the selected institutions in terms of teaching and learning (r = .405, $p < .001$) and leadership and management (r = .471, $p < .001$) were significantly associated. A high level of culture of quality is reflected by effective and highly engaged academic staff, instructional leaders, and institutional leaders. Relevant managerial vision and productivity highly affects culture of quality (Kottmann et al., 2016).

Successful execution of internationalization practices of higher education, may it be home-based efforts or cross-border initiatives, is linked to the establishment of substantial and pronounced culture of quality principles, perspectives, and approaches on teaching and learning, and leadership and management (Kirk et al., 2018). A university's journey from domestic to transnational reveals significant association indicating success in realizing internationalization rationale. Related to this attainment are efforts and practices linked to instruction, provision of meaningful learning experience, and leadership and management set to internationalizing higher education Alanazi, 2016; Kirk et al., 2018; Nguyen et al., 2016).

Perceived impact: Multiple linear regression test of impact

A linear regression was calculated to predict culture of quality in terms of teaching and learning based on the extent of implementation of home-based initiatives (b = .532, $t(146)$ = 13.776, $p < .001$). A significant regression comparison was found ($F(1,145)$ = 57.340, $p < .001$), with r^2 = .283. Respondents projected that the culture of quality in teaching and learning is equal to 2.305 + .382x when home-based initiatives are assessed in terms of the extent of implementation. That is, for every one-unit increase in the extent of implementation of home-based initiatives, the culture of quality in teaching and learning improves by 0.382 units.

This suggests that change of home-based initiatives such as adherence to quality assurance mechanism, provision of international dimensions and curriculum to the teaching and learning process, establishment of linkages and networks, and other important campus-based practices can create change of quality in teaching and learning delivery.

A computed linear regression shows that culture of quality in terms of leadership and management is predicted by the extent of implementation of home-based initiatives (b = .559, $t(146)$ = 12.690, $p < .001$). A significant regression equation was found ($F(1,145)$ = 65.930, $p < .001$), with r^2 = .313. Respondents projected that the culture of quality in leadership and management is equal to 2.180 + .421x when home-based initiatives are

measured in terms of the extent of implementation. That is, for every one-unit increase in the extent of implementation of home-based initiatives, the culture of quality in leadership and management improves by 0.421 units.

This suggests that the successful observance to accreditation and quality assurance organizations, the effective integration of an international curriculum to a school system, clear provision of policies relative to study abroad and platforms in conducting international classes, the formation of strong partnerships, linkages and networks, and all other vital campus-based practices can hone and foresee academic leaders and managers that are effective, productive, and dynamic.

A computed linear regression shows that culture of quality in terms of teaching and learning is predicted by the extent of implementation of cross-border efforts (b = .405, $t(146)$ = 18.641, $p < .001$. A significant regression equation was found ($F(1,145)$ = 28.515, $p < .001$), with r^2 = .164. Respondents projected that the culture of quality in teaching and learning is equal to 2.775 + .246x when cross-border efforts are measured in terms of the extent of implementation. That is, for every one-unit increase in the extent of implementation of cross-border efforts, the culture of quality in teaching and learning improves by 0.246 units.

This suggests that an increase of the establishment of a clear policy program on student mobility and the conduct of international seminars, conferences, professional development programs, international practicums, and all types of mobility can also increase the successful delivery of school culture of quality in terms of teaching and learning where students and teachers show high engagement, have a sense of accountability, value the attainment of life-long learning, and promote high impact on learning.

A computed linear regression shows that culture of quality in terms of leadership and management is predicted by the extent of implementation of cross-border efforts (b = .471, $t(146)$ = 17.309, $p < .001$). A significant regression equation was found ($F(1,145)$ = 41.291, $p < .001$), with r^2 = .222. Respondents projected that the culture of quality in leadership and management is equal to 2.607 + .299x when cross-border efforts are measured in terms of the extent of implementation. That is, for every one-unit increase in the extent of implementation of cross-border efforts, the culture of quality in leadership and management improves by 0.299 units.

This suggests that change of implementation on cross-border activities can influence change in how academic leaders and managers help in the realization of school culture of excellence. If there is a successful delivery of cross-border internationalization practices, then academic leaders and managers are expected to embody right attitudes and competencies that can help them in the successful delivery of their functions and

responsibilities.

Some globally active academic institutions have autonomous status and have been doing well in institutional rankings, substantially extending their influences towards excellence and a culture of superiority. Internationalization efforts and initiatives enhance and deepen curriculum implementations, influencing a school's progress towards excellent teaching and assessments, and the establishment of meaningful, collaborative, and authentic learning, research and innovation, and institutional alliances (Higgins-D'Alessandro & Sadh, 1998; Szyszlo, 2016).

Sustainable internationalization processes establish solid leadership and management and global ranking from linkages and international organizations. Successful change in an organization establishing quality is a vital indicator that academic leaders and managers are effective and actively working as team players with all the stakeholders and partners. Culture of quality and leadership work hand-in-hand towards sustainability and reform (Gul et al., 2019; Ziyatdinova et al., 2016). Nevertheless, seeing the dynamic effect and assistance the internationalization practices can deliver to attain school culture of quality, leaders and managers must remain vigilant for undesirable consequences on the school community and national development (Knight, 2008). One of the best effects of internationalization in education is the attainment of prestigious status as well as the opportunity to promote excellent education.

Conclusions

The selected performing HEIs successfully observed and implemented home-based internationalization procedures. The findings emphasized important measures such as robust assessment of a school's mechanism through quality assurance, internationalization of school culture, integration of transnational viewpoints and approaches to learning processes, and the creation of strong linkages and networks. Cross-border strategies, on the other hand, were perceived to be basically implemented despite successful execution of programs and activities with international perspectives, provision given to administrators, faculty, and learners to join international research conventions, other countries on-the-job training platform, and student leadership and professional enhancement programs and courses. Performing independent universities and colleges in NCR implement internationalization efforts and programs in diverse ways. There are differences in terms of delivery, the level of engagement between school and community members, the resources available, and the methodologies and policies that are implemented.

In teaching and learning, as well as leadership and management, performing autonomous universities and colleges clearly demonstrate a strong culture of quality. The responders strongly emphasized and acknowledged all features of students, professors, academic leaders, and managers. In terms of teaching and learning, a culture of quality indicates that students practice and meet the school's cognitive, psychomotor, and values requirements. Likewise, the manifestation of deep understanding on the relevance of what they are learning to adapt and modify their behavior, be accountable, and recognize their self-worth and their colleagues. Faculty, on the other hand, clearly exhibit knowledge, dedication to professional development, and loyalty through participation in the creation of meaningful learning experiences. Furthermore, academic leaders in universities with a strong culture of excellence actively promote the school's goals and objectives, establish and maintain a healthy learning environment, promote holistic development among students, ensure the greatest possible positive impact of learning approaches, and ensure that all stakeholders imbibe the institution's core values through collective accountability, commitment, creativity and innovation, and competence. The perceived level of culture of quality in teaching and learning, and in leadership and management among the self-governing universities do not differ significantly.

The execution of practices on internationalizing education are positively associated with culture of quality in terms of teaching and learning, and leadership and management as conveyed by the learners, faculty, and administrators of the performing autonomous HEIs in NCR. Internationalization can forecast and empower school culture of quality. CHED (2016) Memorandum Order no. 55, series of 2016 can be of great help to institutions in framing their internationalization strategies, as the structure clearly suggests enrichment on quality assurance and innovation, mobility and market access, and international linkages and networks.

Recommendations

Shifting of directions towards constructive changes and practicing continuous improvement are important. The maneuvers to get to the promising destination of culture of quality depends on how well orchestrated every dimension the school has, and how everyone functions accordingly. The following recommendations are made.

Universities and colleges should strengthen their ties and activities with cultural and ethnic groups in order to effectively and successfully adopt home-based internationalization techniques. This necessitates the involvement of fellows from local cultural and ethnic groups in teaching and learning activities, research, non-academic activities, internships, immersion programs, and placement. Academic institutions are recommended to establish organizations related with those in other nations

and having internationalization initiatives.

Focusing on the three least evaluated cross-border practices for internationalizing education, academic institutions should consider investing in a campus or offshore presence of the university in other countries, strengthening research collaboration by sending scholars to partner industries in other states, and improving clear program articulation of internationalization perspectives and practices through twinning programs, academic franchising, and other means. This involves ensuring that HEIs in other countries meet the same criteria and norms in order to facilitate joint degrees or certificate programs.

Benchmarking among HEIs should be strengthened and enforced. This will undoubtedly boost the school's productivity and effectiveness in promoting internationalization viewpoints and practices, as well as in creating a culture of quality at the school, and, more importantly, in lowering costs through critical findings. Benchmarking provides for better operations and the delivery of high-quality teaching and learning experiences. This can also help with internationalization activities, such as strengthening links and networks, collaboration, and innovation.

In redesigning the research study, it is highly recommended that future research include the two top-ranked HEIs in the Philippines according to international rankings to be able to capture their best perspectives, strategies, and practices on internationalization of higher education vis-à-vis culture of quality and established trademark. It can also consider the involvement of topmost international schools in neighboring countries like the University of Tokyo (Japan), National University of Singapore, Keio University (Japan), Tsinghua University (People's Republic of China), and the University of Hong Kong. With their absolute university reputation and high criteria in the international academic arena, learning from them will allow a further in-depth investigation of best strategies and assurance in reaching a culture of excellence.

Acknowledgments

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