

**GOVERNANCE AND BLUE OCEAN STRATEGIES OF HIGHER
EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS: A KEY TO QUALITY AND SUSTAINABLE
EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING**

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ABSTRACT

Governance in higher education focuses on compliance congruent with performance and good decision-making while Higher Education Institutions are called to create their blue oceans in response to the challenges of globalization.

This descriptive-correlation-inferential method of research investigated and analyzed governance principles/practices among Higher Education Institutions (HEI) in the Province of Capiz. Respondents were the HEI managers/administrators taken by proportionate random sampling from five HEIs. A researcher-made, validated and reliability-tested questionnaire composed of three parts: profile of HEIs; profile of the HEI managers/administrators; and governance arrangements and general assessment levels.

Results showed that HEIs demonstrated governance arrangements with all characteristics in place; fully implemented consistent with VMGOs with very good outcomes and good governance practice.

Differences in the levels of governance arrangements and governance assessment among HEI profiles were non-significant. HEI managers/administrators' profile as to educational attainment, academic rank, HEI manager designation and gross monthly income showed significant differences in the governance arrangements and assessment of the 5 HEIs; age and sex were non-significant. Civil status, while it showed significant difference in governance arrangement, it was not significant in governance assessment; there was a very strong relationship between the level of governance arrangement and governance assessment. Only the HEI type was a predictor of the level of governance assessment.

This study had given a baseline necessary in creating distinct positioning and strategies for HEIs amidst challenges and continuous change. Blue Ocean strategies would be helpful in crafting glocal praxis toward sustainable HEIs.

Keywords: institutional governance, Blue Ocean Strategies (BOS), glocal and praxies

Introduction

Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are like boats sailing on a sea of changes and challenges of rapid globalization, impacts of technology information, strong demands for societal developments and international competitions with the imperative to redefine strategies; to move away from a paradox and traditional paradigms; and adapt praxis within institutional governance and Blue Ocean Strategy frameworks (Collis, 2004).

HEIs today are adjusting to their ever changing environments. Transforming into world class has challenged managers and administrators to create strategies in positioning HEIs with their distinct competitiveness (De Guzman, 2013. Retrieved January 2015 from [data:text/html;charset=utf8 cable](#)), thus, higher education governance has become a key policy issue; state-driven policies and growing intervention of financial crisis had brought challenges to higher education governance despite the autonomy that opened to improvements towards global readiness and competitiveness (Kennedy, 2010). Universities and colleges need to examine every possible solution to combat the encroachment on their “territories” by the corporate providers that have entered the educational marketplace in recent years. In addition, universities and colleges need to reach beyond their own horizons when contemplating the best ways to educate the technology savvy generation students (Thor, 2006).

Governance plays a critical function for HEIs to anticipate, design, implement, monitor and evaluate effectiveness and efficiency of policies and directions with the increasingly diverse interests they served. Thus, governance is now a crucial concern of HEIs, as they are confronted with the expansion of tertiary education systems. HEIs are no longer the sole key player in delivering higher education. Knowledge production and dissemination, research and teaching are no longer exclusive to HEIs as they are carried out in relative institutional isolation. According to Gibbon, universities, today, are only one amongst many actors involved in the production of knowledge (Gibbons, 2008).

Accreditation and international rankings have further added to the pressures on university governance (Salmi, 2009). Salmi stressed that the importance of governance are needed to include but not limited to resolute leaders and educators, strong value and philosophy of success and excellence, a culture of constant reflection, research oriented and organizational learning and a well-founded strategic vision of institutional direction to increase productivity and the relevance of higher education to socio-economic needs and aspirations of their stakeholders.

Objectives of the Study

This study assessed to understand the governance of HEIs in the Province of Capiz as challenged by the pressures of globalization and internationalization, competitiveness and mandates of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED). The implications of the study to become the basis of the blue ocean strategies towards quality higher education, sustainable education development and lifelong learning to capacitate and empower HEIs through governance.

Theoretical Framework

The study anchored on Theory of Governance, Quality Assurance and Stakeholders' Theories and the Principles of Conformance and Performance. Philippine Commission for Higher Education (CHED) Institutional Quality Assurance Monitoring and Education (IQuAME) and the Blue Ocean Strategy frameworks was also considered in investigating governance of HEIs.

Blue Ocean Strategy (BOS) is a systematic approach in making the competition irrelevant and outlines principles and tools any organization can use to create and capture their spaces by creating "blue oceans" referring to the untapped new market spaces ripe for growth popularized by W. Chan Kim & Renée Mauborgne (Harvard Business Review, April 2004. Retrieved January 3, 2015 from <https://hbr.org/2000/10/blue-ocean-strategy>).

Institutional Governance is the process by which the university campus community has the opportunity to participate by being informed of, expressing views on and making recommendations about, a wide variety of important issues affecting the institution. Governance defines the context within which HEI strives to achieve stated objectives in a consistent and well-orchestrated way. Governance can be decomposed to internal and external. Internal embraces policy and procedures, which guide management and external addresses the interface at the macro-level between a HEI and social stakeholders. (Gibbons, R. 2008).

Conceptual Framework

This study was based on a conceptual paradigm of relationships among arrangements, presence of governance systems and implementation of governance of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) as influenced by the profiles of HEIs and HEIs' administrators/managers.

The independent variables were the institutional profile of HEIs and profile of HEIs' managers/administrators. The dependent variables were the governance arrangements: probity, strategic vision, accountability, awareness and management of risk, effective monitoring of performance; and the assessment of the presence of governance system, extent of implementation, outcomes and effectiveness of implementation based on outcomes in view of the principles of good institutional governance among HEIs.

The generalization, predictions/inferences regarding the selected variables were perceived to provide a baseline in crafting glocalized Blue Ocean Strategies engaged towards quality and sustainable higher education and lifelong learning.

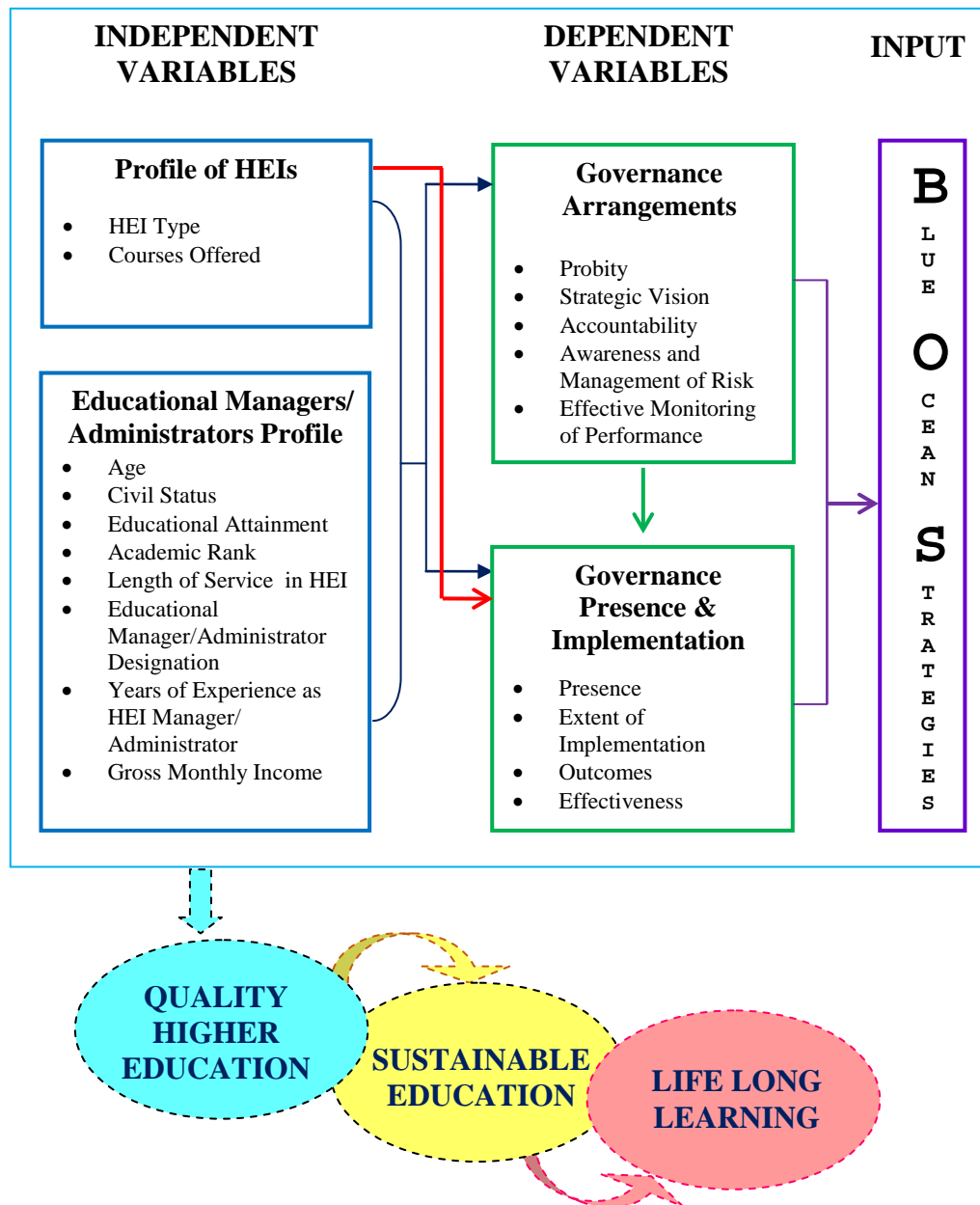


Figure 1. The Conceptual Framework. A schematic diagram showing the generalizations, predictions and inferences between and among selected variables towards quality and sustainable higher education and lifelong learning.

Methodology

This study employed descriptive and correlation-inferential methods of research to investigate and analyze data relevant to the various principles and practices of good governance among HEIs in the Province of Capiz for future direction-setting; determined the differences, relationship and predictor of governance arrangements and implementation as input crafting Blue Ocean Strategies of HEIs towards quality and sustainable higher education and lifelong learning.

Respondents were the HEI managers/administrators taken by proportionate random sampling from five HEIs. Researcher-made, validated and reliability-tested questionnaire had all variables adapted from the Governance and Management criteria using the QuAME-SED Guide of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED 2011). *Cronbach alpha* results showed an excellent reliability coefficient of 0.946, thereby, was used in the conduct of the actual survey of the study.

The questionnaire was composed of three parts: profile of HEIs; profile of the HEI managers/administrators; and governance arrangements and general assessment levels which provided data on the HEIs' general assessment of governance level evaluated in the areas of presence of governance system, extent of implementation, outcomes and effectiveness of implementation based on outcomes. Sub-areas of outcomes were assessed in terms of: policy formulation; decision-making; sustainability of operations; monitoring; and communications systems.

Data were processed and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) using 0.05 alpha as the level of significance in all inferential statistics.

Results and Discussions

Good governance has always been important to Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Governance is not static, but changes and adapts with context and time focused on compliance in congruence with performance and good decision-making. This study serves a baseline of information of how the higher education institutions in the Province of Capiz operate. Key results showed that HEIs had governance arrangements in order; a governance level that demonstrated an index of presence, order and a very good implementation.

Governance arrangements for strategic vision and accountability had means higher than the over-all mean, 4.15 and 4.08, respectively, demonstrating that governance criteria for said arrangements were in place and were met in all respects, at a level of excellence that provided to be a model. The results per IQuAME standards were all above the rating of 3.0, the minimum score required for HEIs to qualify for autonomous and deregulated status (CHED, 2014). However, while minimum ratings required by Commission on Higher Education (CHED) were met, gaps in the ratings of about 1.04 between the overall mean and the standard rating of 5.00, need to be considered in the area of effective monitoring performance mechanisms.

The shortfalls in the means in comparison to the rating of 5.0, implied for strategies to bridge the gap in attaining expected outcomes congruent with the HEIs vision, mission and goals. Results implied that HEIs may need to revisit their Vision, Mission and Goals in a process referred to a strategic planning whereby key officials of HEIs with inputs from stakeholders would determine how HEI could best achieve their VMGs in the context of the current environments with expected outcomes as explained in the Commission on Higher Education on Typology, Outcome Based-Education and Institutional Sustainability Assessment (CHED, 2014).

Results showed that there were no significant differences in the level of governance implementation and governance arrangement among and between the five HEIs. On the other hand, a positive relationship between governance arrangements and its presence and implementation was revealed by the study. It was also showed that the higher education type was a predictor of the governance presence, practice and extent of implementation.

Finally, the results also showed that HEIs were compliant of the quality assurance criteria set by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED, 2014).

Conclusion

This study had given insights and baseline that are deemed important in creating distinct positioning and strategies for HEIs amidst the challenge of global competitiveness and continuous change. Blue Ocean strategies would be helpful in crafting global approaches toward quality and sustainable higher education and lifelong learning.

Recommendations and Implications

The results of the study forward the following recommendations that Higher Education Institutions may evaluate and consider in building strategies:

First, considering that the results showed a gap between the overall means in terms of the governance arrangements, strategies must consider filling-up the gaps in achieving a full implementation of governance by the HEIs;

Governance presence, practice and implementation, require for HEIs' efforts to get to the full implementation rating of 5.0 based on the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) Self-Evaluation Document Guideline. Efforts are needed to address the necessary gaps between the present status and the desired governance levels based on CHED criterion.

Given that none of selected variables probed to have significant difference in the level of governance arrangements and implementation, the results need to be evaluated in the light of other factors that may not been included but may have impacts on HEI governance.

Considering that there was a positive relationship between the governance arrangements and extent of governance presence, practice and extent of implementation, it would be best that in deciding for strategic direction planning, the gaps identified in the different variables of governance be given emphasis. Aligned to this, results showed that the profile of institutions was a predictor of the extent of implementation of governance arrangements, presence and practice.

Results of the study input to the development of Blue Ocean Strategies (BOS) which, as popularized by its author, centred on creating markets rather than competing to the existing markets. Purcell in his Study forwards the idea of positioning universities through the developing of distinct strategies for HEIs (Purcell, 2011) in the light of BOS.

The Study implied a Framework for Institutional Partnerships in delivering relevant education adapting a spiral route towards Quality Education, Lifelong Learning and Sustainable Education using Blue Ocean Strategies anchored on the CHED mandates. Distinct strategies will be considered in customizing curriculum of HEIs that are industry need-based; BOS for competitive advantage; a triplization approach in the delivery of quality higher education using a the spiral route anchored on the regional and global agenda aligned with the Commission on Higher Education Mandate; and HEIs may innovate relevant and glocalized strategies; and institutionalizing HEIs' affairs within their system.

A recommended paradigm for HEIs is shown in Figure 2 in the context of governance, quality and sustainable higher education and lifelong learning.

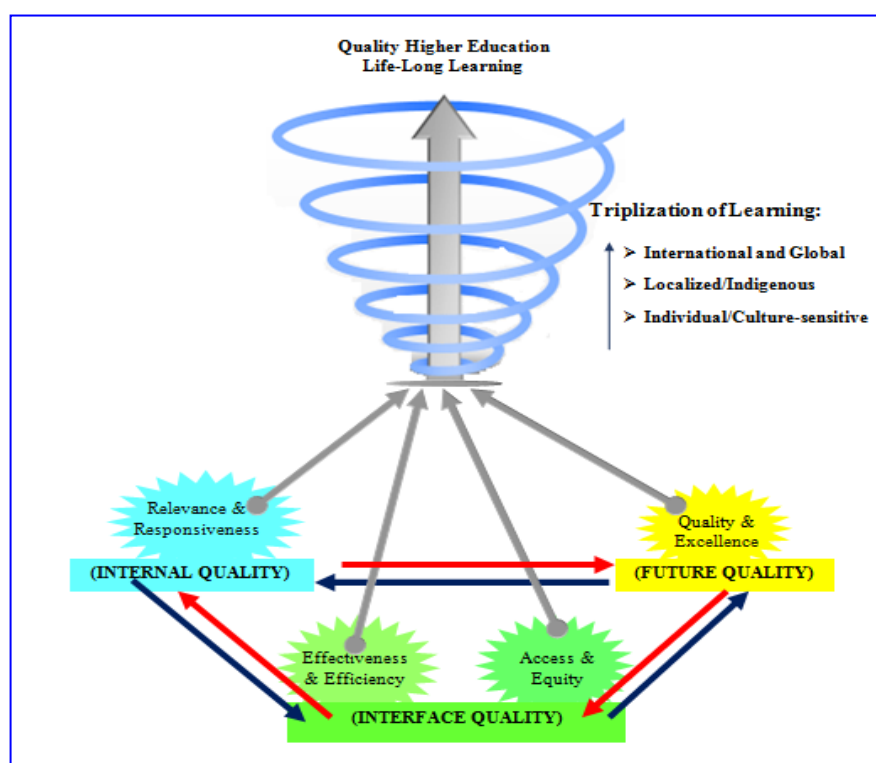


Figure 2. The Proposed Governance Towards Quality and Sustainable Higher Education and Life-long Learning

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