Managing Philippine Higher Education Institutions: Implications to Policies

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This policy brief describes crucial aspects in managing Higher Education Institutions as revealed by six research projects completed by PNU faculty members from 2017 to 2019. Based on the findings of these research projects, policy recommendations are provided.

The study by Mabunga and Mabunga (2019) has explored the conflict management style of officials of state universities and colleges (SUCs) in the Philippines, and found that the most dominant style is that of a *collaborator*. Furthermore, Sabate (2019) assessed middle-level managers of SUCs and found Filipino value-bound management functions, including *educational leadership for school development, curriculum management for student learning, school environment, staff management, resource management, and*

community building. This information provides insight as to what educational managers value and their priorities for the development of the higher education sector.

The role of the university encompasses that of research and education but should also involve active participation in making positive change in the community. Osborne et al. (2019) explored the relationship between *rhetoric engagement* and *resilience*, specifically in the case of migrants and refugees, in universities in the Philippines and Italy to provide insights regarding the community engagement role of universities.

Scholarships and financial assistance are means in which universities can provide help in educating deserving but financially challenged students. It is important that scholarship and financial assistance programs be properly administered. In a study by Zulieta (2018), the level of effectiveness of the management of scholarships and financial assistance programs in higher education institutions that are national centers of excellence in teacher education in the Philippines were assessed, and it was found that overall, these programs are well-managed.

The library is an important part of knowledge management in schools and learning among students. Thus, its relevance should be emphasized and students and educators alike must be encouraged to fully utilize library services. Antonio et al. (2019) conducted an assessment of a university library and identified students' needs. They came to a conclusion that there is a need for the university library to embark on new programs, activities, and services that would enhance user satisfaction and increase the frequency of their visits to the library. In line with this, the Library and Information Science Programs should also improve, as suggested by the findings of Antonio and Porteza (2017) that there is a need to improve the marketing of such program, encourage its graduates to take licensure exams for teachers, and enhance the ICT and writing skills of its students. Likewise, the facilities should also be enhanced.

The following are some of the policy implications that can be drawn based on the aforementioned findings.

1. Educational managers and administrators should be given attention and properly trained considering the crucial role they play in the development of higher education institutions. In these trainings, preferences, culture, and values must be considered, such as in the findings of Mabunga and Mabunga (2019), where they found that the conflict management mostly preferred by SUC officials is that of a collaborator, and in the study of Sabate (2019), which outline the factors that middle-level managers of SUCs value the most.

2. Policies on expanding the role of universities in creating real impact in the community must be put in place (Osborne et al., 2019). The role of higher education institutions must not be confined to teaching and research, but they must also be actively involved in facilitating progress and positive change in the society.

3. Insights on policy development can be gleaned from the study of Zulieta (2019) in implementing well-managed scholarship and financial assistance programs. Proper administration of scholarships and financial assistance is crucial to ensure that deserving students receive proper and quality education. Adoption of the systems framework could be of help to improve management of scholarships and financial assistance programs.

4. The importance of library and knowledge management should be recognized and policies that support and improve library services and education on information science must be developed to ensure the relevance of libraries and its services and for students and other stakeholders to benefit from it. Digitization of the library collection must be pursued continuously to make the library use "borderless" so students can access the resources even via their cellphones and other gadgets (Antonio & Porteza, 2017; Antonio et al., 2019).

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