

THE JOURNEY OF LYCEUM OF THE PHILIPPINES UNIVERSITY-BATANGAS TOWARDS QUALITY ASSURANCE AND INTERNATIONALIZATION OF EDUCATION

Jake M. Laguador
Lyceum of the Philippines
University-Batangas
PHILIPPINES

Cristina D. Villas
Lyceum of the Philippines
University-Batangas
PHILIPPINES

Renelee M. Delgado
Lyceum of the Philippines
University-Batangas
PHILIPPINES

ABSTRACT

Program accreditation in higher academic institutions serves as a quality assurance mechanism and an approach for external body to monitor the implementation of educational practices to ensure high quality outputs. Private academic institution like Lyceum of the Philippines University (LPU) – Batangas would like to ensure the quality of its products and services to be transparent in the general public through undergoing various voluntary accreditation and certification. This article deals with basic information on the initiatives and achievements of the university as manifestations of its commitment to provide quality education to the future leaders of the country and professional workforce of the world. Making the standard of education in international level provides a wider perspective of social and cultural diversity into one learning environment. Strong implementation of marketing strategies inside and outside the Philippines could give greater opportunity to encourage more foreign students to study in LPU-Batangas.

Keywords: Quality Assurance, Internationalization, Investors in People, Higher Education.

INTRODUCTION

Veiling the era of culture isolation, comes the techno-cultural generation that has finally enlightened the Pearl of the Orient to take part in transcending modern day trends, thus opening the thresholds for illuminative progress in the age of globalization which on that note giving us a spot in the global arena. Institutions of higher learning are now considered the primary sources of quality manpower, technology and knowledge of any nation in its attempt to achieve the desired level of development (Balingbing, 2014). Higher education has taken a new dimension with new modes of delivery in higher education. It is widely documented that the international mobility of students and academicians permits developing countries to acquire current knowledge and research methodologies (Sinha, 2014). The universities are essential and sacred elements of modern society for the acquisition and renewal of knowledge needed to solve social, economic and technological problems. Thus universities are seen as instrument of change and national development (Oshemughen & Oshemughen, 2014).

Consequently, the Lyceum of the Philippines University (LPU) – Batangas as an institution of higher learning is now making its highest peak to be one of the nation's prime leaders in providing equally productive and globally competitive graduates to the international community by pushing its image judiciously in the frontier of world-class universities. LPU family sprouted from the grassroots of great leadership and philosophies of Dr. Jose P. Laurel with Sen. Sotero H. Laurel his son and successor built a strong university in the Province of Batangas and now being managed by Dr. Peter P. Laurel who is very passionate and eager to climb higher in the altitude of internationalization. Three well-thought-of generations of Laurels within the hierarchy of trustworthy family, LPU for forty-eight glorious years of

transforming lives of Filipino people is now prepared to share its human resources and services to foreign nationalities to experience the LPU education and its culture of hospitality, integrity and excellence.

Program accreditation in higher academic institutions serves as a quality assurance mechanism and an approach for external body to monitor the implementation of educational practices to ensure high quality outputs. It is a voluntary procedure of submitting one's curricular offering to evaluation from accrediting agency to prove the institution's capacity in providing above the minimum requirements set by the Commission in Higher Education (CHED). This is one way of demonstrating optimum transparency and integrity in showing one's worth of possessing the character of an excellent university for the future leaders of the country.

As an educational institution it has to deliver the products and services necessary to achieve the outcomes it intends to produce (Javier, 2012). Recognizing the reality in today's academic world, the role of higher education institutions can not only be limited to impart knowledge, but also to contribute to maintain a competitive economy and most important of all, to secure the dream of graduates to get jobs and become socially recognized and successful in their respective field of endeavours (Meñez, 2014).

The Lyceum Alumni as products of LPU's commitment to education are persistently contributing to the advancement of knowledge through research undertaking, productivity of country's economy and they serve as components to the improvement of transnational society through applying the learning and wisdom they have gained from their alma mater. Laguador and Ramos (2014) found out that employers have very high standards in choosing their prospective employees that the Higher Education Institutions must provide to their students like competencies in technical skills with relevant knowledge in research, communication skills, computer skills and leadership skills while entrepreneurial skills obtained the least.

It is the main objective of this article to present some of the major achievements of Lyceum of the Philippines University-Batangas through the years as an academic institution which provides honor and glory not only for its management but also for all the graduates who became part of the LPU education.

Quality Assurance Mechanisms

The models of accreditation that have emerged within the educational arena over recent years have followed essentially a similar pattern, in that they have involved some form of internal review or evaluation linked to a degree of external consideration of the nature of the educational processes taking place within the organization (Fertig, 2007). Accreditation visitation became necessary procedure for ascertaining the quality of a university programme. During such visits which, comes up every year as programmes are continuously maturing for accreditation because they have fulfilled the required validity period for their accreditation status or they have to make a request for re-visitation because they earned denied or interim accreditation status in a previous visit or that they are just maturing for accreditation (Ozurumba & Ebuara, 2014).

A fruit bearing university like LPU is now presently utilizing the scales for measuring the magnitude and intensity of quality and characteristics of an international university like being certified ISO 9001:2008 and Asia's first Investors in People - Silver recognized University. These tools are concrete evidence and indication that LPU is sincere in achieving its sovereign mission and vision to keep its journey wherein taking the road less travelled by other institutions of higher learning. The Quality Management System (QMS) periodically review each process involved in the system to check its applicability in the present

situation and daily practice of the different work units. Laguador, De Castro and Portugal (2014) emphasized that educational institutions especially those belong to private sectors are very much particular with the customer satisfaction as part of the continuous improvement to retain the students and encourage more parents to enrol their children on the same college or university and through making the students feel satisfied to all the services being given to them especially in the delivery of instruction is something enormous achievement for the university because it is a mark of commitment to quality education (Laguador, 2013)

Through continual revision in the procedures, the quality service is being achieved and accomplished that result to better customer satisfaction. The QMS and the people behind the success of all accreditation visits of the university are the main components of an effective organization leading its way for global recognition.

In fact, LPU is recognized as one of the universities in the Philippines with the highest number of accredited programs from the Philippine Association of Colleges and Universities' Commission on Accreditation (PACUCOA). LPU-Batangas is also considered with the First Accountancy Program to have been granted Level IV Accredited Status in Region IV and in the Philippines.

Along with the numerous board top notchers and far above national passing rate board examination results from Philippines Regulation Commission (PRC); LPU – Batangas reaps another laurel as it was hailed as a Top 1 Performing School in the recently released results of the Medical Technology Licensure Examinations by the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) held last September, 2014.

In line with these achievements, the LPU already reached the Autonomous Status, recipient in 2012 of the Philippine Quality Award Recognition for Commitment to Quality Management, First HRM program in the Philippines to be Center of Excellence and Center of Development in Tourism Education; and most awarded HRM School in the Philippines with 39 national championships and 8 international awards.

LPU-Batangas was awarded with Full Accreditation for Hotel & Restaurant Management and Tourism programs by The International Centre of Excellence in Tourism and Hospitality Education (THE-ICE) and incessantly aspires to acquire the International accreditation for Engineering and Technology.

In the last quarter of 2014, LPU-Batangas already granted an Institutional Accreditation Status granted by PACUCOA under the Federation of Accrediting Agencies of the Philippines (FAAP). LPU is truly a magnificent epitome of aspiration, leadership, integrity and authority with sense of direction and spirit for making its people and organization more dynamic and universal.

Research could never be taken away as one of the major trifocal function of the University and being evaluated during accreditation visits. Most world university rankings are considering the research outputs of the faculty members in the criteria. Several international research presentations have already attended by the faculty members and students. They have already published numerous research articles in various international refereed journals. Some of the faculty researchers are also members of different national and international research organizations and editorial board of research journals. Citation count of published papers is being monitored by the Research and Statistics Center of LPU-Batangas as one important measure of its impact to the research community.

Internationalization of Education

Continuous growth and expansion of local and international industry linkages will provide more possibilities to acquire the universal knowledge, live the core values and apply the valuable skills of first world countries in the delivery of instruction inside the university through adapting the outcomes-based curriculum towards ASEAN integration. Several international accreditation initiatives and future plans for collaboration with foreign universities and industries are being strengthened and worked with to expand the linkages of the university. Likewise, the Philippine government is doing its best to implement the K to 12 Curriculum as a response to the demand of other ASEAN countries to have the same number of years in basic education.

Moralista and Delariarte (2014) emphasized that awareness of human choices depends on understanding, problems of choice that confront individuals and nations, and a review of strategies for action on issues in local, national, and international settings. Bringing the world and its best practices in the academic community of LPU with foreign students is something that would break the borderline of inequality and cultural differences. LPU-Batangas also sends faculty members to teach in South Korea. The University is very aggressive to have more foreign students who will enroll in the undergraduate and graduate programs. Opening new doors of opportunities for other nationalities would bring diverse culture in the atmosphere of the university. Exchange student program is also being implemented in the University. Living the future with great advantage and paying high respect to boundless opportunities for progress and development would lead LPU-Batangas to a higher degree of diverse responsibility, commitment and perseverance to sustain whatever had been accomplished by the present administration.

The quality of human resources in any given society is largely dependent on the curriculum content of its educational system. The concern, however, is that due to the ever changing needs and aspirations of societies occasioned by globalization, the curriculum content must constantly be reviewed and evaluated to meet with these challenges (Egwuasi et al., 2014). Internationalization and linkages increases the quantity of graduate's efficiency in the way institutions are managed and producing graduates and professional's global outlook ready to be hired by internationalized economies. The Lyceum Hospitality curriculum was developed to integrate an in depth academics, laboratories and field internship programs that will ensure the efficiency and quality to meet worlds class standards. The Lyceum Hospitality curriculum was developed to integrate an in depth academics, laboratories and field internship programs that will ensure the efficiency and quality to meet worlds class standards. The said curriculum is in line with collaboration of the LPU and Dusit International (Mejia et al., 2014).

Evaluation of the curriculum materials is a necessary process if one has to ensure that quality and coherence are demonstrated by the developed curriculum materials. It is also necessary to detect whether developed materials will adhere to instructional congruence framework which formed the bases of the development as well as the envisioned process to enhance scientific literacy and preserve indigenous knowledge for sustainability. The intended evaluation instrument is highly influenced by the development of international evaluation and survey instruments (Morales, 2014).

CONCLUSION

Lyceum family shares a mutual mission and vision of serving people to the best of their ability that they could extend not only to the LPU students and employees but also to the adapted community of the university by sharing not only the gift of things but also the gift of heart. Being in the frontier of

internationalization is a shared responsibility of the people within the academic community. The top management could not really achieve all the recognitions of LPU alone without the support of its human resources. Embracing more foreign students to become part of the LPU family through extending and unveiling its highways and avenues for greater learning and advance student services to a large group of foreign nationalities could be a remarkable challenge to everyone. Good marketing strategies outside the country may be implemented through enhancing the university website with features and concepts that would gain the interest of foreign nationalities to pay attention in the news and advertisements of the school activities. Research collaboration would also create strong linkages with international universities which might also serve as starting point of long-term partnership. With the grace of Almighty Father and the continuous commitment of the entire family, nothing is impossible to accomplish the vision of making LPU-Batangas a recognized university in the Asia Pacific region by 2022.

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