Internationalization Towards Fostering a School Culture of Quality: Practices and Perceived Impact

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ABSTRACT

Across the globe, internationalization has influenced the emphasis of educational institutions on international engagement and standardization aligned with global competencies. As Philippine higher education also aimed for internationalization, many universities were tasked to enhance their quality assurance framework by ensuring sound graduate mobility and strong international linkages. With these changes in education, this current study tried to identify existing internationalization practices and their perceived impact in three selected autonomous universities in the country. This study determined how these practices generated an educational paradigm shift toward a culture of quality through internationalization. Employing a qualitative-descriptive approach, structured online interviews were conducted with selected participants (n=14) closely associated with internationalization policies and initiatives in their respective universities. Based on a thematic analysis, the participants identified strategies involving incentivizing and strengthening of international linkages as effective practices for internationalization. Additionally, participants explained how these practices not only enhanced their skills but also enabled them to have international recognition. The findings provided grounding and insights on how to achieve a culture of quality through internationalization.

Keywords: *internationalization, internationalization practices, culture of quality, higher education, school culture*
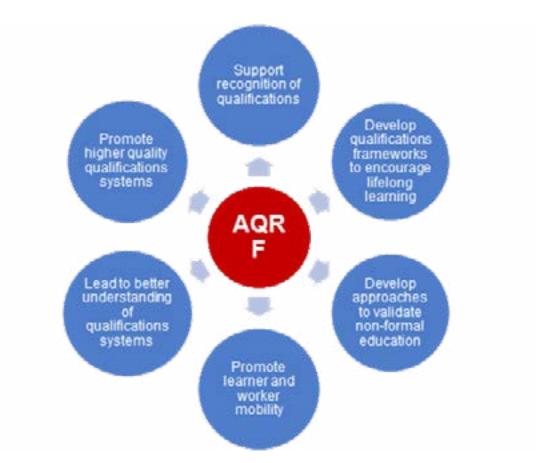
Introduction

In ensuring global competitiveness and quality assurance of many educational institutions, the internationalization of higher education has been widely promoted. Internationalization can be understood in two specific processes: 1) the transnational contract between students and teachers, researchers, universities, and states that can be represented in the mobility initiated to engage in international activities that offer new experiences and diverse insights; and 2) the

ability to obtain educational facts, systems of higher quality, and standardization of capabilities (Curaj et al., 2015; de Wit, 2020; Garson, 2016). Furthermore, this process involves incorporating intercultural, global, and international elements into the institution's purposes and traits, research agenda, and transfer of quality learning (Aerden, 2015). It can be a broad collection of intellectual and experiential undertakings designed to promote understanding of the global setting, to collaborate across borders, and to obtain cultural, social, and political systems from other countries. Internationalization, for its intended purpose, is a systematic effort and means of responding to globalization requirements, educational innovation, and continuous development of policies, practices and programs (Alhalwaki & Hamdan, 2019; Lumby & Foskett, 2016; Szyszlo, 2016). It also entails incorporating international dimensions into teaching and learning experiences, extension services, and research agenda. This process provides a potential innovation that may result in the development of new and relevant practices, and policies that adhere to national and global standards (Gao et al., 2015).

In the Philippines, internationalization is anchored in the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) Memorandum No. 55 s. 2016, titled "Policy Framework and Strategies for the Internationalization of Philippine Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)" which was written in compliance with RA 7722, or the "Higher Education Act of 1994," and other government-initiated policies on internationalizing Philippine higher education. In this mandate, universities are tasked to pursue a holistic approach in implementing and integrating strategies on internationalization such as: (1) implementation of enhanced assurance framework; (2) execution of sound mobility and market access; and (3) strengthening of international linkages and partnerships. These internationalization efforts of Philippine higher education are aligned with the ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) Qualifications Reference Framework or the AQRF (see Figure 1) which enables the comparisons of educational qualifications among ASEAN member-states (AMS) (ASEAN Secretariat, 2020). This framework aims to improve and promote higher quality of educational qualifications among graduates which then facilitates the mobility of various professionals within ASEAN countries by recognizing eligible qualifications, obtaining experiences, and granting certifications as part of the ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangements (MRA) (ASEAN Secretariat, 2020). With this increasing development of internationalization in the Philippines and other ASEAN nations (Madula, 2018), much of the documentation and reports that reflect this development come from figures of foreign tertiary graduates, local and global collaborations, international graduate education institutions, cumulative scholars, ASEAN rankings, and a number of research publications. Having a number of components which represent the movement towards internationalization, it is also important to analyze the influence of this process on the quality of education in the schools.

Figure 1

ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework

It should be assumed that internationalization is not merely an aim, but a vital means to realize quality. A quality culture connotes a school's culture that promotes meaningful and successful teaching and learning (Yeboah, 2015). The term "school culture of quality" is both an outlook and a belief influencing the whole community and every aspect of the institution on how the school realizes its purpose. A quality culture is one in which all members of a community, not only the top managers and academic leaders, are accountable for ensuring that excellence is maintained. It is composed of philosophy, beliefs, feelings, characters, and shared values that determine how the school works (Yusof et al., 2016). Moreover, a culture of quality in relation to change can potentially impact student achievement (Schoen & Teddlie, 2008). The assessment of realizing a culture of quality in education has to be embedded and linked to various school assurance initiatives and internationalization efforts (de Wit, 2015; Moodley, 2019). Higher educational institutions, which are directed to promote and implement quality strategies for sustainable development (Dziminska et al., 2018), should focus not only on producing economic rationales but also on shaping quality teaching and learning, promoting effective leadership and management, and culture of quality (Yusof et al., 2016).

With the increasing interest in studying internationalization in the country (e.g., Cinches et al., 2017; Rosaroso et al., 2015), this investigation believed that assessing the impact of internationalization practices on a school culture of quality among autonomous universities would help many higher education institutions (HEIs) to innovate and achieve excellence by aligning with international standards. Institutions granted autonomous status by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) demonstrate exceptional excellence through quality audit systems and program outcomes. Self-governing HEIs also manifest outstanding performance consistent with their institution's objectives and agenda (Margaret & Kavitha, 2018). Promoting and fostering quality culture will require a strengthened contextual investigation of how one perceived and understood a school's culture of quality. With the assumption that the internationalization of HEIs directly affects and upholds quality systems of instructional and learning processes, and of leadership and management, this study identified internationalization practices that allowed institutions to realize this culture of quality. The study also established contributory results and insights that further expanded the understanding of the implications of internationalization of HEIs. Moreover, the study's in-depth analysis aimed at providing a basis for a paradigm shift toward the adoption and implementation of internationalization for the fostering of a culture of quality and achievement of international standards.

Around the globe, many countries have integrated internationalization practices and policies in their HEIs. The Netherlands, for example, invested in its internationalization process of teaching and research through its Dutch Universities of Applied Sciences (UAS). UAS considered internationalization of education to increase the value of quality in education and research which enhances students' socialization and personality development (Vereniging Hogescholen & VSNU, 2018). As a result, this direction toward internationalization of education has turned out to be a key aspect of policy discussions related to realizing the requirements of the labor market and to increasing innovation capacity (Matei et al., 2015). For other European countries, the process of internationalization and development in HEIs (e.g., student mobility and other cross-border initiatives) resulted from the Bologna Process. The Bologna Process is an attempt for HEIs in Europe to structure and systematize their educational component to be more organized, compatible, and competitive for many European citizens and scholars around the globe (Morosini et al., 2017). Additionally, through the European Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students (ERASMUS), there have been approximately millions of international students that have studied in many European universities and received firsthand learning experiences about European cultures and values (Kaleja & Egetenmeyer, 2017; Morosini et al., 2017). Internationalization of European HEIs has allowed international and intercultural teaching, learning, and research (Aerden, 2017).

In Australia, internationalization of education became a commercial enterprise that focused on increasing international scholars as a source of revenue (Sá & Sabzalieva, 2018). The country recognized the financial motivations of global students which helped

Australian academic institutions develop practices and policies. Internationalization efforts were successful in terms of recruiting students around the world, giving support for these students, providing international opportunities for domestic students, and continuously improving internationalization at home. Internationalizing curriculum provided possibilities for the development of discipline-specific programs which led to greater academic legitimacy. According to Adams et al. (2012, as cited in Sá & Sabzalieva, 2018), Australia recognized student recruitment and mobility as key features of their economy and expenditure towards a more coordinated internationalization principle. Canada's long-term goal and principle on internationalization, meanwhile, were closely related to their educational quality assurance (Anderson, 2015; Guo & Guo, 2017). In Canada, policies for securing international scholars as possible permanent residents have been initiated to increase Canadian universities' profile which can produce possible linkages to other countries and generate possible income revenue. In Kenya, internationalization principles focused on faculty development, international quality programs, faculty and student exchange, and joint research projects (Mukhwana et al., 2017). Information Communication Technology has been associated with Kenya's success in internationalization.

In Asia, the ASEAN University Network (AUN) was developed to strengthen the existing linkages of support among leading universities and colleges in Southeast Asia. Primary principles of internationalization among ASEAN countries are related to student exchange, readiness and innovation, institutional mobility program, and research collaborations. ASEAN countries, such as Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand, emphasized their educational institutions that produce high-performing graduates with international capabilities (Madula, 2018; Songkaeo & Yeong, 2016). Singapore, as a standard in achieving international objectives as it is ahead of other ASEAN countries, focused on honing and strengthening abilities in ways to generate linkages and collaborations with recognized universities and colleges abroad (Songkeo & Yeong, 2016). With Singapore's support, Vietnam and Malaysia have also built a substantial international education which increased their market labor and strategies by recruiting brilliant scholars and highly-recognized faculty across their regions into their universities and colleges (Killingley & Llieva, 2015; Nguyen et al., 2016). In other Asian regions, Japan's and Taiwan's objectives include refining the overall quality of all their HEIs which involved improving their ranking in the global market and enhancing students' international knowledge and skills, with focus on recruiting foreign students and scholars (Ho et al., 2015). Furthermore, internationalization in countries under the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), such as Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, and UAE, provided remunerations for educational knowledge and values through global exposure, transmission of expertise, and creation of universally proficient professionals which led to an emerging manpower for economic rationale (Alsharari, 2018; Vardhan, 2015).

With the increasing internationalization efforts among HEIs, it is important that there is an assessment embedded and linked to realizing the culture of quality in education (de Wit, 2015; Moodley, 2019). HEIs, which primarily implement quality

strategies for sustainable development (Dzimińska et al, 2018), should not only focus on economic development but also promote educational development that aims to achieve a culture of quality in teaching, learning, leadership, and management (Yusof et al., 2016). Even with this apparent significance, there has been limited work that supports the influence of quality international initiatives on the school's culture of quality. In the study of Lewis et al. (2016), it was revealed how a culture of quality highly influenced organizational productivity and individual efficiency. The study uncovered how the school culture impacted academic and instructional leaders that promoted creative thinking and academic achievement. Moreover, Brockerhoff and colleagues (2016) posited how establishing a culture of quality could lead to a higher quality of teaching and meaningful learning engagement. It was found that academic staff were highly engaged in integrating teaching achievements and that leaders did have a higher tendency in implementing innovative changes in institutions that implemented a culture of quality work. Through internationalization efforts and the implementation of a culture of quality, it is not only academic leaders and staff who benefit from this but also students. The abilities of students are developed academically, socially, and emotionally because of these school initiatives. As the experiences of students broadened, their values, relationships, studying practices, and personal objectives have also improved and deepened (Darling-Hammond & Cook-Harvey, 2018; Kane et al., 2016).

To understand school culture of quality indicators there have been investigations that tried to assess various factors that might be of critical importance in the development of quality culture. For Yeboah (2015), there is a solid association between the school's characteristics and background, and its performance in creating a culture of quality. It is to be presumed that effective schools feature good interpersonal relationships, teamwork, and great participation among stakeholders in decision-making. Thus, the quality culture of schools must consider the teaching-learning process, students' behavior and performance, teachers' development and participation, management decisions and leadership, and attainment of the school's objectives and purposes. For Hall and Hord (2015), a culture of quality can be assessed through the following practices: personal mastery (i.e., individual vision applied through participation), team learning (i.e., collaborative decision-making), and sharing and working on the common vision. On the other hand, for Brockerhoff and colleagues (2016), quality culture is said to be affected by perceptions, values, and beliefs of individuals, and their motivational factors. In summary, a culture of quality gives meaning to the educational core objectives, the teaching-learning process, the school's achievements, innovativeness, effectiveness, and continuous improvement.

Based on the aforementioned discussion, it is vital for HEIs to deliver this type of learning environment to provide and maximize their stakeholders' (i.e., students and teachers) skills and abilities. This study believes that understanding the impact of internationalization practices on the school culture of quality among autonomous universities will help new and promising HEIs to innovate and achieve excellence and be at par with international standards.

The study anchored its analysis on the impact of internationalization on quality culture to Hofstede's Multi Focus model (1998, as cited in Warter, 2019). The model consists of dimensions aimed at helping organizations to become more successful in effectively improving and continuously ensuring a detailed culture of quality in the organization. In context, organizational culture is defined as the way individuals interact with and share information with one another as well as their work experiences both inside and outside the organization (Warter, 2019). The model provides an overview of the six dimensions of organizational culture: 1) Means-oriented vs. Goal-oriented (i.e., reflects on organizational effectiveness); 2) Internally- vs. Externally-driven (i.e., customer satisfaction, students in the case of the study); 3) Easygoing work discipline vs. Strict work discipline (i.e., amount of internal structuring, control, and discipline); 4) Local vs. Professional (i.e., identity of the employees); 5) Open system vs. Closed system (i.e., accessibility of the organization); and 6) Employee-oriented vs. Work-oriented (i.e., management philosophy) (Bhatt, 2020). In the study, the model enabled the analysis of the degree to which universities' and colleges' internationalization policies were implemented and employed to influence the delivery of the overall school culture of quality. By adapting the dimensions of the model in understanding the organizational culture of universities in integrating internationalization, the study identified meaningful instructional delivery and effective school governance that established the culture of quality. It is important to understand that, when quality culture is emphasized in education, it becomes imperative and necessary to develop a receptive internationalization strategic design that acknowledges the present organizational culture and stakeholders of the school community. Further, quality culture will be a significant result when internationalization approaches are greatly accomplished and realized (Dzimińska et al., 2018).

The study aimed to answer the following questions:

1. What are the internationalization practices implemented in the selected universities that helped in realizing and achieving the institution's culture of quality?
2. How do these internationalization practices impact the realization of a culture of quality?
3. How do these internationalization practices inform educational paradigm shifts towards a culture of quality?

Research Methods

Design

Following an interpretivist paradigm, the study employed a qualitative-descriptive approach. This provided an in-depth analysis and understanding of the impact of internationalization on the attainment of a culture of quality. The purpose of the descriptive study was to holistically examine any occurrence of internationalization and its features as experienced by the school community. This qualitative design allowed

a holistic approach with flexible guidelines for personal views and perceptions of the participants.

Participants

The research study was conducted in three autonomous universities in the National Capital Region (NCR). From these universities, the participants (n=14) who were selected in the interview process were four (4) administrators, four (4) faculty members, and six (6) students who were directly involved and had participated in internationalization initiatives and quality assurance programs of the institution. The basic criteria for determining the administrator-participants were 1) they should have been in the institution for 5 years or above, and 2) must have handled a significant position related to internationalization efforts and accreditation of the institution. While for faculty and students, the criteria were 1) participation in an internationalization effort and quality assurance initiative, and 2) three-year residency or working experience. The administrators interviewed in the study were a Quality Assurance Director (Admin1), an Associate Dean for Student Formation (Admin2), a Director for Communications (Admin3), and an Executive Director of International Student Affairs (ISA) Office (Admin4). The faculty members in the study participated in internationalization projects of their respective institutions such as academic participation in research conferences (Faculty1, Faculty2) and industry training (Faculty3, Faculty4). On the other hand, all the students in the study joined student internships and on-the-job training abroad (Student1, Student2, Student3, Student4, Student5, Student6). They were purposively identified using the sampling criteria. Participants were enlisted because they met the pre-selected criteria related to the research objectives and were available at the time of the study. To protect the participants' identities, each of them was given a pseudonym. All participants gave their informed consent to take part in the research.

Procedures and Instruments

The qualitative-descriptive method involved naturally-occurring data, including perspectives and opinions, that were difficult to be manipulated and would require deeper understanding (Nassaji, 2015). Following this method, a structured interview using open-ended guided questionnaires was conducted (see Figure 2). Computer-assisted structured interviews (e.g., use of Google forms) were used as a technique to collect information. According to Creswell (2013), this data collection procedure achieves a better rate of response to sensitive and important queries than other techniques would have. Structured online interview is more cost and time efficient and affords participants personal time and space flexibility that allows clearly thought-out responses. The questions were derived from Hofstede's Multi-Focus Model on Organizational Culture which guided the analysis to see clearer details of the impact of internationalization strategies on a culture of quality.

Figure 2

Interview Guide

a. How do students and employees relate and participate in internationalization practices in terms of home-based and cross border engagements?

b. How do students and employees relate and participate in the university's culture of teaching and learning, and leadership and management?

c. How ready is the university for change (internationalization of education vis-à-vis culture of quality)?

d. What is the actual way of working (the implementation of internationalization practices) and the desired way of working (institution's objectives) aligned with the optimal culture (culture of quality in terms of teaching and learning, and leadership and management)?

e. How well does management use its practices to set an example (strengths in implementing internationalization of education in terms of home-based engagements and cross-border initiatives)?

f. How do indirect change initiatives assist in ensuring a better fit between the actual way of working and optimal way of working (impact of internationalization practices to realizing culture of quality)?

Prior to the data collection, several approvals were acquired from CHED, the Private Education Assistance Committee (PEAC), and the management of the chosen schools to ensure the ethicality of the study. Participants were emailed the interview tool in the form of a Google Form where informed consent was presented in the first section of the tool, followed by the open-ended questions derived from the research objectives. The collected answers in the extracted Excel file were transferred to paper, separating the participants' feedback. Responses were analyzed, reduced thematically, and the essence was uncovered using themes. Data were securely kept by the researchers by ensuring that only they can have access to these unless the participants requested their own data.

Analysis

Grounded in the qualitative-descriptive approach, thematic analysis was employed in the study. This was used to have an in-depth analysis and to elucidate themes on the impact of internationalization practices on a school's culture of quality. Thematic analysis, as suggested by Nowell and colleagues (2017), included key phases: a) familiarization with data gathered by storing gathered online interviews in well-organized archives, reading them repeatedly, and highlighting thoughts about potential themes; b) generation of initial codes through coding, reflexive journaling, and audit

trailing of highlighted key thoughts and answers possible for themes; c) search and review of themes by reviewing initial codes, diagramming to make sense of words and code connections, and keeping detailed notes about highlighted concepts; and d) definition and naming of themes, writing of the implications through analysis and coding of audit trail, and thorough review of related literature for possible comparison or negation (Nowell et al., 2017).

Below is the actual response of a participant to the question, "What is the main impact of internationalization of higher education implemented and practiced in your institution's culture of quality, in general?" and the participant's answer:

> "Impact is on the way the school is able to gain a wider perspective resulting from international linkages, and how the school is able to provide a world-class education which allows graduates to enter the world of work, and in their own fields create an impact for the betterment of society and the world, and to help those most in need."

Open Code: The impact of internationalization is how schools gain a wider understanding of international linkages that leads to providing quality education that helps students create their own impact in their chosen fields and the world.

As a general rule in coding, there should be only as few inferences as possible about the meaning of the data to remain as close to the participant's perspective. From the generated codes, a review was done to identify core categories that systematically connected to other codes and validated their similarities and relationships. After label refinements, themes were developed after the coding process where words and phrases that summarized the general message of the categories were used.

Results

Internationalization Practices of Institutions

Based on the interviews and subsequent thematic analysis, four themes emerged as existing internationalization practices of the selected institutions, and these were named the "4Is in Implementing Internationalization Initiatives in Institutions." The 4Is were: (1) Incentivization and subsidization of internationalization initiatives; (2) Involvement and collaboration of students and faculty; (3) Innovation and quality assurance of the university; and (4) Intensified international linkages and networks. The findings represented the perspectives and opinions of school administrators, faculty members, and students regarding the university practices of internationalization. To summarize, Table 1 presents the themes from the gathered qualitative data of the study.

Table 1

Themes that Represent the Best Internationalization Practices

Category	Themes
"4Is in Implementing Internationalization Initiatives in the Institutions"	1. Incentivization and subsidization of internationalization initiatives 2. Involvement and collaboration of students and faculty 3. Innovation and quality assurance of the university 4. Intensified international linkages and networks

Incentivization and Subsidization of Internationalization Initiatives

In line with the literature, one effective practice among the selected institutions was the institutional support in providing financial resources in implementing internationalization initiatives. This claim is emphasized by the literature on internationalization of higher education (e.g., Tanhuenco-Nepomuceno, 2019). Based on the insights of the participants, the process of incentivization and subsidization of these initiatives could be observed through the funding of both faculty and student participation in international academic or non-academic events such as research conferences and work internships. For these universities, these initiatives were aligned with their Philosophy, Vision, and Mission (PVM) in improving their international reach and linkages. Admin1 discussed how these initiatives were partly anchored in their university's internationalization framework. She also mentioned how internationalization practices could be observed through students' international on-the-job programs. She explained:

> "The university subsidizes participation of employees and students to international events, seminars, conferences, and research. The university provides an internationalization framework as stated in the university's PVM. Students were engaged in OJT programs abroad."

Another administrator agreed to this type of effort in strengthening internationalization. Admin4 discussed internationalization efforts that could also be seen in the participation in international research conferences and study trips of both faculty members and students. Through university subsidies, he explained how faculty development and student workshops could also be performed by international partner institutions in the United Kingdom (UK). He stated:

> "Internationalization efforts include hosting the recent International Research Conference on the UN SDGs and the 4th Industrial Revolution, student experiences like international study trips and collaboration with peer student organizations in partner institutions. Cross border initiatives include faculty training by international partner institutions, seminars, lectures, and workshops led by UK faculty for PH students, and cross-border research collaboration."

The accounts from the administrators from different universities reflect how important allocation of resources and funding is in strengthening internationalization practices. These resources help not only the research engagements of faculty members but also the overall student learning experiences that can only occur through international work exposure.

To supplement the perspectives of school administrators, insights and experiences of faculty members were also elicited as evidence for this practice. Faculty1 shared how she and her students experienced university-funded international travel as part of their student training. She said:

> "The University provides hotel and accommodation with travel allowance. The University also helps in acquiring visas by giving endorsements."

Based on this account, faculty members were able to participate in various international events, most likely to be research conferences, through various internationalization initiatives of the university. Students were also able to acquire learning experiences abroad through subsidies that were anchored in the internationalization framework of these universities. Student2, a university alumna who currently was engaged in community development projects at the time of the research, shared how she got to experience her internship abroad because of these initiatives. She also mentioned how her teachers conceptualized practices of internationalization. She expounded:

> "We were able to do student internships abroad and also receive interns from other countries. The university coordinated the whole experience and curriculum. The teachers are also trained to be able to implement internationalization practices."

Involvement and Collaboration of Students and Faculty

Another practice of the universities in their internationalization efforts was their constant student and faculty involvement. It is noteworthy to remark that successful internationalization of higher education is linked to the creation of practices that engage and empower productive faculty and staff (Kirk et al., 2018). Internationalization practices should manifest collaboration and teamwork among its stakeholders to foster an environment of communal excellence and accountability. Admin1 best described this when she said:

> "Everyone is becoming compassionate and collaborative in the university's engagement towards excellence. Learning becomes effective and everyone becomes aware of their responsibility. It encourages teamwork and effective communication. If there is quality in terms of teaching and learning, and leadership and management that secures (most likely, everyone becomes confident) that the university is gearing towards quality culture (excellence in the system, happy customers, and globally engaged stakeholders)."

She continued that school administrators also elicited recommendations and consensus from the university student body as many of the initiatives generally concerned students, from implementation of curriculum like outcome-based education (OBE) to evaluation of learning activities. This sentiment is seconded by Admin2 when she emphasized the significance of having the participation of employees and students in crafting internationalization policies and activities. She added:

> "Participation of employees in international events helps augment the attainment of quality instruction and the learning process. For students, it enhances their learning by giving them a global perspective."

From the faculty's perspective, Faculty4 shared how her university created programs and activities that involved the whole school community, not only teachers and students but also parents and alumni. These programs involved other stakeholders by allowing them to participate in activities that enriched the internationalized experiences in schools like outreach programs, fundraising, and outside training and workshops. She expounded:

> "We have institutionalized programs, clubs, and activities to address the requests of the stakeholders particularly the students. We have several activities and initiatives that do not only involve teachers and students but the entire school community like outreach, non-teaching staff appreciation, batch events, etc. They involve students, teachers, academic heads, alumni, parents, and many more."

Based on the interviews, it is clear that allowing the participation of other university stakeholders, such as students and faculty members, provides a wider perspective on how to better implement internationalization practices. Through this participation, universities can develop more relevant activities on internationalization that address first-hand issues and needs of their community.

Innovation and Quality Assurance of the University

To further improve internationalization practices, universities also highlight the significance of the constant need for innovation and quality assurance of their programs

and policies. One particular process that universities exercise is participating in various accreditation processes. Recognized as an internationalization strategy, accreditation is an important aspect of creating and maintaining quality assurance among initiatives and policies. Admin1 explained how her university put importance on ensuring their programs were all accredited by a legitimate accrediting body. She mentioned:

> "Accreditation is highly prioritized – as everyone clearly supports the promotion of customer delight. Professional development enables academic leaders and managers to ensure [the] impact on the delivery of meaningful learning. Leaders are all accountable and proactive towards the realization of the university's mission."

The universities were able to participate in various accreditation processes through its quality assurance office. This office became a major part in strengthening internationalization initiatives. Faculty3 explained how her university quality assurance office ensured that their internationalization initiatives were implemented effectively and appropriately implemented by their stakeholders. She expounded:

> "We have a quality assurance office, which provides checklists and timetables to help us navigate any engagement. The university also has its own internationalization office to help it with various internationalization initiatives."

In reviewing internationalization practices, it is imperative to consider the initiatives of universities in pursuing accreditation of their programs and activities. Based on the participant interviews, the process of accreditation ensures the effectiveness of initiatives and evaluates whether these programs consistently promote faculty and student development.

Aside from accreditation, innovation, and quality assurance are reflected in the consistent review and evaluation of the internationalized curriculum of programs of the university. The literature presented how one of the best strategies in internationalizing education is through developing internationalized curriculum, and teaching and learning processes, like the creation of experiential events (Ho et al., 2015; Vaught, 2015). This was explained by Admin1 when she said:

> "As for quality teaching and learning – plans and changes are research-based. Curriculum enrichment is done through curriculum evaluation. Teachers are given training and opportunities toward professional development. As for leadership, academic leaders, supervisors, and managers are fully aware of their duties and functions. Graduate programs are 100% free for them, international activities such as presentations and publication of research are supported, and other professional development opportunities are given to them. Everyone is involved in accreditation and community extension services.

Deans and academic heads ensure the realization of the program education objectives."

Clearly, consistent curriculum evaluation and enrichment are a commendable practice of innovation and quality assurance that not only improves the internationalization process of the university but also helps in adjusting to educational changes in the next decades to come.

Intensified International Linkages and Networks

Finally, one of the most recommended practices for internationalization is the collaborative internationalization partnership and arrangement with universities across the globe. The literature is clear in presenting how important it is to have international linkages and networks. It posits that having international linkages among universities outside the country enables the facilitation of networks and the promotion of a school's competitiveness (Ziyatdinova et al., 2016). This idea is followed by the universities in the study as explained by Admin3. He said that:

> "The school is most ready for implementing internationalization practices. Networks and international linkages are most extensive, for student and faculty exchange…. There are over a hundred institutions around the globe that we partner with. There are also government agencies, private agencies, and schools within the country which enter into agreements with our university for research collaboration, teacher-training, and offshore offerings of programs."

From the perspective of students, there have been several advantages in having an internationalized community in the university. Student5 expounded how having this type of learning environment helped him develop his skills in communicating and connecting with people from other countries and cultures. He discussed:

> "Well, the main support is that the school itself is an international school. Diplomas and certificates are completely autonomous from the Philippine system, and our school is one of the first and only to offer such courses. In this case, as a student I grew up in an internationalized community, this has allowed me to build and create relationships that have developed into advantageous opportunities for both me and my school. I grew up abroad so I can create connections and communications that build and grow the local and international social sphere."

In accordance with the literature, the participants highlighted the importance of international networks for collaboration and benchmarking to help improve not only the marketing reach of the university but also students' learning experiences, especially those which develop skills for adapting to different people and cultures.

Perceived Impact of Internationalization on the Culture of Quality

On the attainment of a culture of quality, there were three themes that emerged and were highlighted as the 3Es of the perceived impact of internationalization on school culture of quality. These are: (1) Empowerment of university stakeholders; (2) Enhancement of skills and competencies; and (3) Endowment of more international recognition. The highlighted perceived impacts of internationalization are concurrently supported by the literature on internalization (Lewis et al., 2016; Yeboah, 2015). Data revealed that internationalization increased engagement and collaboration among the school and community members. This initiated curriculum transformation and educational innovation and facilitated skills and competency development among students and teachers, thereby improving the institution's reputation and its ranking in the global academic arena (Dzimińska et. al., 2018). These impacts provided organizational effectiveness and competitiveness as one way to measure culture of quality.

To summarize, Table 2 presents the themes from the gathered qualitative data of the study.

Table 2

Themes that Represent the Perceived Impact of Internationalization

Category	Themes
"3Es of the Perceived Impact of Internationalization towards School Culture of Quality"	1. Empowerment of university stakeholders 2. Enhancement of skills and competencies 3. Endowment of more international recognition

Empowerment of University and College Stakeholders

As highlighted by one internationalization practice among universities, the majority of the initiatives allowed the involvement of various institutional stakeholders (e.g., students, teachers, and non-academic staff) in the process of planning, implementing, and evaluating. Through this process, participants determined that this practice hav empowered the members of the school community to decide, process, and support initiatives that concerned the internationalization of the university. Admin1 clearly explained how this practice impacted learners and teachers. She maintained that:

> "Learners and teachers enjoy the teaching and learning experiences. Everyone is reinforced to collaborate, become more productive and become responsible for their own learning. Teachers and students understand their

functions and relevance in the learning process. Faculty and learners are empowered to construct their own learning with a wide scope from the international arena. Everyone contributes to the delivery of the university's purposes and objectives."

This impact was also observed by the student-participants. Student1, an alumna who was working as a flight attendant during the study, enumerated positive outcomes of having an internationalized university. She said that:

"[t]he positive characteristics of internationalization include better-quality academic, internationally interested and oriented learners, faculty and non-teaching, and national and international citizenship for learners and staff from underdeveloped nations. For progressed states, income production and brain gain are impending advantages."

The findings indicated how internationalization efforts enabled stakeholders like faculty members and students to participate in the process of planning, preparing, and implementing such activities. This initiative reflects how these types of activities can develop good interpersonal relationships and collaborative decision-making among university stakeholders. These developments are directly linked as an indicator toward fostering a culture of quality (e.g., Hall & Hord, 2015; Yeboah, 2015).

Enhancement of Skills and Competencies

With many stakeholders becoming empowered and exposed to an internationalized curriculum, there is an inevitable growth of skills and competencies among them. For school administrators and leaders, they broadened their perspectives on international practices, hence maximizing their decision-making and communicating skills. Admin1 expounded:

"Administrators and supervisors become more aware and skillful in applying varied perspectives learned from the international initiatives that they have engaged and participated in. Competencies are well-maximized. Quality management systems are communicated and executed. Academic leaders and managers promote a conducive environment where everyone maintains harmonious relationships with one another. Everyone takes part in the decision-making and the delivery of improved services."

Aside from the school administrators, students were also able to benefit from these initiatives. For example, Student2 mentioned how these initiatives helped in making students more knowledgeable of international standards and perspectives. She said:

"The students are able to broaden their perspectives. They can adapt to changes quickly and are able to troubleshoot and problem solve well."

Based on the findings, it was revealed how internationalized activities and curricula of the universities helped in developing not only the personal and professional competencies of students but also the knowledge of academic staff and leaders. This demonstrates how these efforts greatly influence the stakeholders' productivity and efficiency (Asberry et al., 2016). It is clear that internationalized school initiatives led to a better quality of teaching and learning as experienced by the participants in their respective institutions, a finding supported by the literature (e.g., Brockerhoff et al., 2016).

Endowment of More International Recognition

An observable impact of internationalization among universities is their international recognition as a result of their international linkages and reach. Admin3 explained this when he said that:

> "Impact is on the way the school is able to gain a wider perspective resulting from international linkages, and how the school is able to provide a world-class education which allows graduates to enter the world of work, and in their own fields create an impact for the betterment of society and the world, and to help those most in need."

As a result, these recognitions have become advantages to the students and the graduates as they become known as globally competitive skill workers and professionals locally and internationally. Student6 explained:

> "It solidifies and cements ourselves as one of the institutions at par with international standards that produce graduates who are globally competitive in their chosen field."

As found by the literature (e.g., Ho et al., 2015; Killingley & Llieva, 2015; Nguyen et al., 2016), the participants highlighted the importance of having international networks for collaboration and benchmarking to help improve not only the marketing reach of the university but also the learning experiences of students, especially in developing their skills in adapting to different cultures and people.

Discussion

Based on the results, participants were able to identify the various internationalization practices that they experienced in their respective institutions. They considered these practices- incentivization of school initiatives, involvement of stakeholders, educational innovation, and intensification of international linkages- to be an effective and good manifestation of their university's direction towards a quality culture of instruction, research, and extension services. Among these recognized practices, it is clear that the internationalization of higher education is enhanced if stakeholders, both students and faculty, were engaged and involved in its planning and implementation. The findings were

similar to the position of Kirk and colleagues (2018) who explained how empowered and enthusiastic faculty and staff with appropriate knowledge of internationalized instructional delivery and effective resource allocation contributed to the success of internationalization thrusts of universities. Moreover, student mobility, as argued by Helms and Rumbley (2016), encouraged and facilitated the educational and economic agenda of many academic institutions toward global exposure and international linkages. Similar to Japan's and Taiwan's internationalization practices of higher education (Ho et al., 2015), the results showed how many Philippine universities' capabilities for integrating internationalized curriculum provided directions toward a multicultural academic campus.

These internationalization practices were possible partly because of the academic leaders who spearheaded policies and mandates focused on internationalizing the various university-related activities of all the stakeholders. As posited by Vaught (2015), effective leadership enables and supports the successful execution of different schools' initiatives that drive efforts on internationalization. He mentioned how academic leaders who recognized the significance of the internationalization of education created more opportunities for innovative service learning, proposed more collaborative research and development projects, and allocated generous funding towards the internationalized agenda of education. With effective academic leaders at the helm of internationalizing higher education, this entails focusing a university's vision and mission on transnational efforts, well-planned and designed strategic and operational plans, supportive administrative and financial provision, and clear communication process and workflows (Nguyen et al., 2016; Tanhuenco-Nepomuceno, 2019; Ziyatdinova et al., 2016).

Aside from the internationalization practices of Philippine universities, the study also revealed some of the perceived impact of these practices on the participants, from the administrators down to the students. The study identified how these practices empowered university stakeholders, enhanced their skills and competencies, and resulted in the universities' international recognition. These fruits of internationalization promoted healthy and constructive teaching and learning processes that led to a culture of quality in the school. As Yeboah (2015) argued, a school's quality culture manifests from its strong and productive community where every stakeholder, from the leaders to the students, shares a sense of purpose and commitment toward effective teaching-learning experiences. Moreover, quality school culture not only improves teacher performance but also positively impacts student learning and achievement (Schoen & Teddlie, 2008). Aside from reflecting high-quality teaching and learning engagement, the school's culture of quality represents the quality work of school staff usually supported by professional development and the operation of an effective management system that is grounded from relevant managerial vision and communication structures (Brockerhoff et al., 2016). With internationalization practices contributing to the school's culture of quality, there can also be improvement in organizational productivity that creates better academic achievement and quality services and individual efficiency that encourages employees to be more creative and innovative (Lewis et al., 2016). Lastly, as one's school culture improves, school climate is also highly influenced, prompting a more positive

physical atmosphere, meaningful experiences during the teaching-learning process, and an accommodating sense of how people in the community interact and relate with one another (Darling-Hammond & Cook-Harvey, 2018).

Conclusions

The execution of strategies for internationalizing education has been positively perceived as a contributing factor toward quality culture in terms of both teaching and learning, and leadership and management. As revealed in the results, some effective practices were the provision of resources and incentives on the linkages of students, faculty, and administrators in other countries, and the clear shared responsibility of increasing healthier collaborations and community involvement. As internationalization practices indicate a school culture of quality, it can be assumed that these strategies empower the participation of various institutional stakeholders particularly students, faculty members, non-academic staff, and administrators. Equally, internationalization practices enhance and augment the growth of skills and competencies of stakeholders.

Critical reflection in planning and carrying out processes aligned with CHED's mandates can be of great help to institutions in framing their internationalization strategies, with structures aimed at enriching quality assurance and innovation, mobility and market access, and international linkages and networks. For academic leaders and managers, they should broaden their viewpoints on internationalizing processes, maximizing their full potential in communication and decision-making. Shifting directions toward constructive changes in internationalizing higher education is important as it delivers a culture of quality, orchestrated in every dimension of the school and among stakeholders. Shifting the educational paradigm on effective internationalization of higher education should be a significant task for the entire school community requiring their full commitment and effort towards achieving a culture of quality.

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Data Availability Statement

The data used in this paper are available upon written request addressed to the corresponding author of the paper. This request will be evaluated by the authors before responding.

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