Innovative pathways to global engagement: A systematic review of strategies and trends in internationalization in higher education

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Abstract

This systematic review examines the significance of internationalization in higher education, and the creative ways Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) have responded to it. The study highlights how crucial internationalization and globalization are in meeting rigorous academic standards that are both competitive and inventive. Fifty-six of the approximately 500,000 relevant papers found through a thorough literature search were included in the review. The evaluation centers on the innovations that higher education institutions have embraced, including worldwide joint publications, active student mobility, research collaborations, expanded linkages, and innovative teaching approaches. It also includes the internationalization policies or innovations that can be adapted to higher education in the Philippines. The report emphasizes how important it is for higher education institutions to act as internationalization catalysts by giving them access to industry and practical market expertise. The development of higher education institutions in the global context depends on the interdependence of partnerships, internationalization, and pedagogical innovation.

Keywords: globalization, higher education institutions, innovation, internationalization, systematic review

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1. Introduction

In today's world, it is hard to deny that the perspective of globalization and internationalization in higher education should be considered and embraced to be considered competitive and innovative in the academic world. This standpoint is one of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals for 2030: to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. Also, other researchers emphasized that the internationalization of higher education is a fundamental aspect that contributes to improving the quality of teaching and preparing and developing students for a globalized intercultural world (Gao, 2015).

Globalization is a powerful force that upholds the "survival of the fittest" rule of the market and emphasizes competition in economic domains. It considers social, political, and economic factors and causes a rapid cross-border flow of capital, goods, services, and technology, intensifying national economies' interdependence. This process affects complex social and economic development. Globalization increases competition between countries across national borders, enabling them to engage in production, innovation, and investment without hindrance. Beyond just economic activity, its influence shapes many facets of life, such as family and friend relationships, which adjust to a more compressed sense of time and space (Jibeen & Khan, 2015).

If knowledge is a cornerstone of globalization, it follows that globalization should significantly influence the transmission of knowledge. Research suggests that it indeed does, and its effects permeate the educational system. It significantly reshaped higher education systems, policies, and institutions. The relationship between globalization and higher education is inherently interdependent and interconnected. Higher education institutions (HEIs) play a pivotal role in producing skilled professionals and contributing significantly to research and development projects, which are crucial factors influencing the international competitiveness of both institutions and nations. This trend reflects the broader impact of globalization on higher education, transforming institutions into more dynamic, interconnected, and globally oriented entities (Jibeen & Khan, 2015).

Internationalization is closely interdependent with globalization; both are dynamic change processes. However, internationalization refers to the strategies and measures governments, institutions, groups, and individuals adopt to face globalization. In short, internationalization is considered the inside-out process, while globalization is the out-inside process. In addition, internationalization values equal cooperation, interpersonal communication, and mutual benefits. It lies in the exchange of different cultures from different countries based on the ordinary existence of independent countries, the everyday existence of sovereign nations, and cultural diversity. Internationalization of higher education is an essential transitional process that can help push the arrival of educational globalization. The progression of education globalization will expedite the development of its internationalization (Gao, 2015).

In addition, its deliberate process of integrating and infusing an international, intercultural, and global aspect into the purpose, functions, delivery, and outcome of post-secondary education to strengthen the quality of education and research for all the learners and other academic community staff and to make a relevant contribution in the field of education (Zhou, 2016). Internationalization is the conversation of people's ideas, goods, and services between two or more nations and cultural identities, which undertakes a relationship that is closely tied to a country's history, cultural resources, and priorities (Wu & Zha, 2018). Furthermore, it is the deliberate process of unification of a worldwide culture or scope for the intention, objective, and transmission of post-secondary education to advance the condition of teaching and research for all students and personnel and to create a significant improvement in society (Woicolesco et al., 2022).

One of the primary objectives of higher education is to meet its stakeholders' expectations consistently; a vital aspect of this is active participation in internationalization. To uphold and enhance the quality of service these educational institutions provide, they must embrace and implement innovations. In this study, the researchers focus on internationalization in higher education and its innovations. This systematic review aimed to answer the following research questions:

> ➢ What is the nature of internationalization in higher education?

> ➢ What are the innovations of internationalization in higher education through: active students' mobility, worldwide research collaboration, expanding access/ partnership/linkages, and innovative teaching approach

> ➢ What internationalization policies/innovations can be adapted to higher education in the Philippines?

2. Methodology

Eligibility Criteria - The systematic review included published studies pertinent to innovations in internationalization in higher education. It also provides consensus studies and systematic reviews. This review gathered studies from 2015 to the present.

Information Sources - A comprehensive search of academic databases from but not limited to Google Scholar, Academia, Mendeley, ERIC, ResearchGate, and SAGE Journals was conducted. Other papers were from websites, including IOPScience and Bournemouth University Research Online.

Search Strategy - The inclusion of literature was conducted by searching for the keywords "internationalization in higher education," "innovations on internationalization," and "innovations in higher education." To filter the search, the keywords used were "innovation+internationalization+higher education+2015".

Selection Process - The initial literature search in Google Scholar utilizing the keywords "internationalization in higher education," displayed 525,000 related articles. The exact keyword was used in searching in Mendeley, posting 73 pages of results. In searching from Academia, it turned out to be 84,282 various articles. An application called Covidence was utilized to facilitate the selection process faster. The researchers identified 169 articles relevant to the title, screened 84 articles, and after assessing for eligibility, a total of 53 articles were included in the review. The screening of potentially related literature is based on the inclusion criteria of kinds of innovations adopted by higher education in pursuing its internationalization. It included the nature of the internationalization of Higher Education Institutions.

Study Risk of Bias Assessment - This study used the Covidence Software which was based on the Cochrane Risk of Bias version 1 tool. Proper methods were used in the identification, screening, and inclusion of related articles. The study results' validity is further supported by reporting transparency.

3. Results and Discussions

This review discusses the nature of internationalization in higher education and the innovations employed/utilized by HEIs in adapting to internationalization. There were 50 related articles included in this review. Twenty-four were excluded due to different study designs.

3.1 The Nature of Internationalization in Higher Education

In the contemporary landscape of higher education, HEIs are experiencing a paradigm shift towards greater mobility and global competitiveness (Khalid et al., 2017). This evolution necessitates HEIs to recalibrate their strategies and response tactics to operate effectively within a globalized environment (Peters et al., 2020).

Recognizing the imperative of internationalization, HEIs are compelled to embrace a more international outlook to remain competitive globally (Mente, 2022). As globalization continues to exert its transformative influence, higher education emerges as a pivotal driver, facilitating cross-border interactions and opportunities (Suspitsyna, 2021). Initially spurred by national responses to globalization, internationalizing higher education has gained prominence (Leask & de Gayardon, 2021).
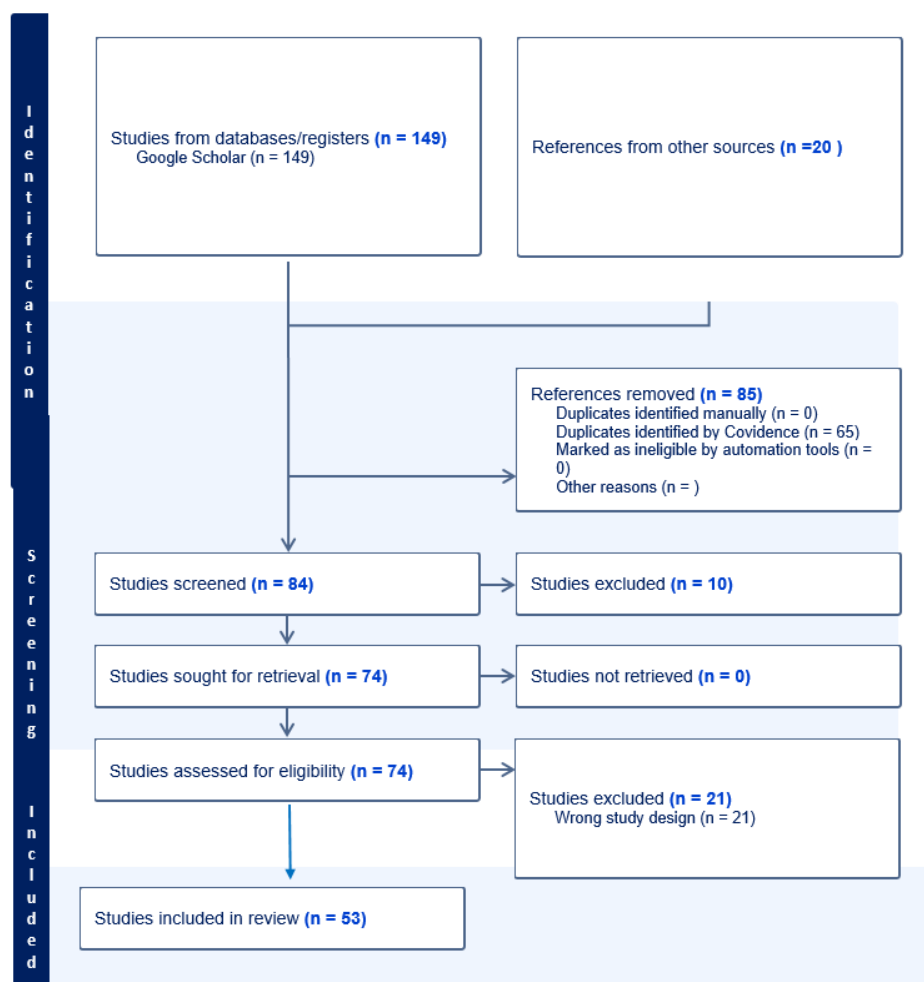

Figure 1. The Screening Process Using Covidence Software

Internationalization of HEIs is an investment for the future and involves a long-term commitment to students, staff, and other stakeholders globally (Khalid et al., 2017). Subsequent definitions emphasized that internationalization ought to be a deliberate instrument to support global development objectives and promote international collaboration and partnership instead of rivalry (Peters et al., 2020). It is increasingly recognized as a vital strategic goal for organizations and governments as they become more aware of universities' pivotal role in fostering national competitiveness within their respective regions (Khalid et al., 2017). This recognition positions higher education as a politically strategic and economically advantageous policy area. However, the asymmetry in the effects of internationalization and the fact that the economic power and influence still reside with former colonizing nations compel critics to view internationalization as a form of re- or neo-colonization (Suspitsyna, 2021). On the other hand, a failure to examine the less celebratory elements of internationalization may contribute to reproducing harmful patterns of economic and epistemological dominance on a global scale (Stein et al., 2016).

Over the past four decades, the evolution of European higher education has significantly contributed to the internationalization of higher education. The involvement of European Union (E.U.) institutions and their

constituent states has imparted a more pronounced international dimension to this development. A key innovation in internationalization has been the heightened mobility and interaction within European higher education and broad research collaboration, which are acknowledged as cornerstones of European programs. This initiative has enabled young Europeans to gain insights into other European cultures, fostering the development of a shared European identity (De Wit & Deca, 2020). The expansion and acceleration of global interconnectedness have made HEIs more globalized and internationalized. Education is increasingly being traded globally (Khalid et al., 2017).

The higher education sector is pressured by a dynamic environment characterized by rapid technological changes and increased demands. HEIs are forced to seek new quality assurance instruments to ensure greater market competitiveness and survival. The emphasis on internationalization in higher education has increasingly leaned toward an economic perspective; there is an aspiration to transform into a global university committed to expansion and worldwide influence (Ledger & Kawalilak, 2020). Early 1990s definitions of HEI emphasized internationalization as a collection of integrated measures incorporating the international dimension in an institution's primary functions, such as teaching, research, and social services, challenging earlier interpretations for their instrumentalism (Peters et al., 2020).

In higher education, internationalization has emerged as a defining principle of the twenty-first century. It encompasses various facets, such as transnational education, spanning cross-border and borderless educational initiatives (Khalid et al., 2017). It fosters connections between cultures and navigates the interplay between global and local realities (Knight & De Wit, 2018). This dynamic and multifaceted landscape requires continuous scrutiny, reimagining, and restructuring (Ledger & Kawalilak, 2020). It involves integrating an international, intercultural, or global perspective into post-secondary education's objectives, operations, and delivery methods (Rose & McKinley, 2018; Suspitsyna, 2021). A conscientious approach to internationalization signifies a desire to shift the focus from quantity to quality in higher education relationships and programs, emphasizing ethical conduct and pedagogical efficacy (Ledger & Kawalilak, 2020).

Compared to the Global North, Brazil's Higher Education Internationalization is conceptually lagging, with a predominant focus on mobility. It mentions explicitly that, within the framework of Brazil's internationalization initiatives, South-South academic mobility stands out as a priority (Morosini et al., 2017); mobility is still the most dominant factor in internationalization policies worldwide (De Wit, 2019). Every HEI has its justification for internationalization. The justifications for internationalizing higher education are academic, social, political, and economic (Khalid et al., 2017). The internationalization efforts focus more on academic than financial incentives (Peters et al., 2020). American colleges and universities actively enroll international students. It is essential to acknowledge the global cultural perspectives international students bring and revise curricula and teaching methods to leverage their valuable contributions.

Internationalization plays a critical role in fostering academic and student advancement, enhancing the institution's standing in the international arena, and elevating the overall quality of higher education. This emphasis on internationalization is instrumental in advancing education within the region and highlights the need for additional funding to support the implementation of innovative teaching technologies (Shayery et al., 2022). Students are provided with opportunities to pursue studies abroad, enroll in virtually any college across various foreign countries, and immerse themselves in diverse cultures, attitudes, and experiences (Krechetnikov & Mihina, 2019). Jones and de Wit (2018) suggest that adopting "internationalization of the curriculum at home" seems to face challenges in progressing beyond mere aspirations and sporadic instances of practical implementation. They argue that achieving a truly inclusive and accessible form of internationalization remains a distant goal, as opposed to one currently perceived as elitist and exclusive (De Wit, 2019).

Operational challenges and barriers exist at both institutional and individual levels, including financial constraints, bureaucratic hurdles, and challenges stemming from researchers' unfamiliarity with the procedures for publishing in foreign journals. Additionally, limitations in advancing the international scope of research may

occur at the expense of integrating international dimensions into teaching and outreach efforts (Romani-Dias et al., 2019).

3.2 Innovations in Internationalization in Higher Education

Innovation is considered a strategic driver for HEIs to take advantage of new opportunities. The internationalization of HEIs is the process of integrating the institution and its stakeholders in a rapidly transforming and globalized world (Antunes, et al., 2018).

Active Students' Mobility - One well-known example of innovation in the internationalization of higher education (IHE) is International Student Mobility (ISM). A recent advancement that potentially lowers expenses and broadens access to international education is hybrid mobility. The COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns have underscored the need for alternative modes of international student mobility (ISM). Through hybrid mobility, students can utilize digital platforms to overcome mobility challenges and pursue education abroad. The future of ISM will integrate both virtual and physical elements, necessitating technological advancements to achieve hybrid mobility (Tibelius & Allame, 2023). Student exchange initiatives foster experiential learning by immersing students in the local environment, aiding in language acquisition, cultivating intercultural management competencies, and contributing to global knowledge dissemination (Khan, et al., 2016). Comprehensive internationalization efforts within HEIs entail expanding student mobility programs, promoting language learning initiatives, facilitating international internships, and fostering global research partnerships (Otto, 2021).

This diversity management learning includes sending German tertiary students and academics abroad, exposing them to different cultures and diverse research activities worldwide. The German Academic Exchange Center (DAAD) plays a pivotal role in expanding the international expertise of German students and academics (Altin, 2019). The same is true in the Arab higher education system; student mobility is identified as a continuous trend for students pursuing complete degrees abroad. The movement of students and faculty is seen as a valuable catalyst for fostering international collaboration and networking, serving as a driving force for societal integration and change (Al-Agtash & Khadra, 2019); it is one of the cornerstones of internationalization (Internationalization of higher education and student mobility in Japan and Asia background paper prepared for the 2019 Global Education Monitoring report, 2018).

This program has not only made international mobility an accessible option for many but has also institutionalized such mobility within universities. Staff exchange and curriculum development have become integral components of this initiative. Beyond being viewed as a tool for European integration and mobility, European cooperation has emerged as a pivotal factor in enhancing the quality of European higher education, contributing to Europe's economic competitiveness in the increasingly globalized world. Furthermore, European universities are now seen not just as educational institutions but as sources of economic growth, reflecting a country's competitiveness through enhanced flexibility and innovation in higher education. Another noteworthy innovation is the substantial growth in international joint publications, which is becoming increasingly prevalent in Europe (Rosyidah et al., 2020).

Likewise, sending more teachers and students on exchange with the most significant international universities is a common strategy. Many schools globally participate in offshore programs and enhance foreign student recruiting (Rosaroso et al., 2015). In addition, international student mobility is a significant factor in assessing the quality of higher education internationalization. It serves as an indicator of campus diversity and boosts the revenue of higher education institutions (Bista et al., 2018); mobility is still the most dominant factor in internationalization policies worldwide. Hungary and China, recognizing its importance, have initiated student mobility programs to attract students globally (Wang & Wang, 2022). In relation, Hungary exhibits a high percentage of international students, particularly in medical and agricultural education. It maintains balanced inward and outward student mobility, with a significant increase in students with foreign citizenship over the past

decade (Kovacs & Tweneboah, 2020). Moreover, internationalization in higher education is imperative, as well as supporting mobility programs for enriching academic experiences abroad and promoting collaboration in joint studies worldwide. It is a crucial strategy for universities to acquire a global identity and contribute to pursuing universal knowledge. In addition, the influence of international faculty movement on host institutions, institutional features, and definitional challenges are highlighted (Rumbley & de Wit, 2019).

World-Wide Research Collaborations - Research literature emphasizes two bodies of work regarding institutional adaptation in higher education institutions (HEIs). The first body of literature views institutional adaptation as a process of innovation in response to environmental challenges, exploring how internal characteristics of HEIs mediate innovation success, including the influence of university culture (de Wit, 2019). The second body of work delves into the impact of external or systemic qualities, such as culture, structure, or identity, on HEI innovation by mediating adjustments to exogenous stimuli. This literature emphasizes the influence of both the external environment and internal norms and values within HEIs (de Wit, 2019). International research collaborations are crucial in advancing innovation and globalization, as exemplified in the Greater Bay Area (GBA) of China's Pearl River Delta. In this context, world-class universities contribute significantly by fostering innovative thinking through open international exchange and collaboration, exemplified by the world-class colleges in the GBA (Oleksiyenko & Liu, 2022). However, the recognition of foreign research still needs to improve, especially in the context of Philippine higher education institutions, highlighting the need for further development of research culture at the international level (Rosaroso et al., 2015).

Higher education and research have become significant players in the global information economy, necessitating the crucial global reach of universities (Hans de Wit, 2019). Recognizing the need for global relevance, initiatives are underway to develop a research culture and internationalize education, as seen in the Philippines (Rosaroso et al., 2015). Forging research partnerships among diverse nations is widely considered advantageous. To effectively progress and distinguish themselves, organizations must actively participate in the multi-stage process of innovation, which involves translating ideas into novel or enhanced products, services, or processes (Hasanefendic et al., 2017). Building a community of intellectuals through active engagement with international scholars contributes to global scientific research, strengthening existing alliances and exchanges. Universities pursuing internationalization through joint ventures offer diverse collaborative initiatives, providing opportunities for students to benefit from educational partnerships (Khan, et.al., 2016.) Moving on, achieving comprehensive internationalization within a Higher Education Institution, Joint research initiatives enable scholars to engage in internationally recognized studies and seek international funding, advancing the research mission. HEI partnerships focused on educational and economic development within host societies contribute to the service mission (Otto, 2021).

A related study from Germany, supported by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, aims to bolster the competitiveness of German higher education institutions globally. Established by the German Research Foundation, this initiative focuses on advancing cutting-edge research, creating exceptional conditions for young scholars, fostering collaboration, and elevating the international standing of outstanding German universities (Altin, 2019). Another article investigates the determinants of International Research Collaboration (IRC) within Turkish Higher Education (HE) institutions. It applies complexity theory to elucidate IRC and identifies various individual, professional, institutional, national, and transnational factors that motivate academics to engage in IRC. Logistic regression results highlight significant factors associated with IRC. Notably, the findings indicate that academics in universities established after 2005 tend not to engage in international collaborations (Çalıkoğlu et al., 2022).

The article talks about how international research collaboration led to the creation of an open research university. It investigates how citation rates are affected by funded research, open-access publishing, and global cooperation. Large datasets from various fields, themes, and sciences are examined in the study using bibliometrics analysis. The findings show that while open universities are not explicitly impacted by

international research collaboration, it is a significant variable for all universities. According to the findings, open universities have developed to participate in globalization and exhibit academic excellence through joint publication and research. The paper suggests more investigation into the journal and subject-level characteristics that influence the number of citations received by researchers in open universities.

Moreover, another study that emphasized the United States and Western European countries' research innovations was that the said countries consistently maintained domestic research output, with papers authored exclusively by individuals from their respective home countries. The observed increase in the overall annual output in each country can be attributed to international collaboration. Research indicates that jointly authored papers tend to receive higher significance scores than papers produced solely within a domestic context. This collaborative ethos has become institutionalized over the past few decades, manifesting itself as a dense network of academic associations. In the realm of Academia, the primary objectives are exchanging information, sharing ideas, and collaborative efforts to generate new knowledge. Academic associations play a pivotal role in facilitating these goals. Conferences and journals within these organizations serve as channels for communication and exchanging information, contributing to the collaborative and global nature of academic research and innovation (Research Institute for Higher Education Hiroshima University, 2014).

Expanding Access/ Partnership/ Linkages - In higher education, a notable emphasis is placed on forging partnerships, implementing efficient support mechanisms, and enhancing research investments, as observed in the evolving landscape. The contemporary approach to partnerships is shifting, with a particular focus on Higher Education (Al-Agtash & Khadra, 2019). Effective management of collaborations and partnerships abroad becomes a pivotal element in institutions' internationalization efforts, offering students valuable international experiences and enhancing institutional visibility globally (Khan, et al., 2016). In addition, Academic partnerships, alliances, and consortia emerge as strategies for collaborative associations between academic institutions. These partnerships commit to international connections and collaborative initiatives such as student and faculty exchanges, joint academic programs, and collaborative research projects (Khan, et al., 2016).

HEI partnerships encompass faculty development, diversity enhancement, curriculum improvements, institutional competitiveness, and advancements in research (Otto, 2021). The capacity of universities to serve as potent catalysts and platforms for internationalization, emphasizing their potential to offer valuable market knowledge and facilitate industry access. Additionally, it delves into the role of academic professionals in supporting Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in their internationalization efforts through boundary-spanning activities across organizations and cultures (Corsi et al., 2023). International partnerships in higher education are expanding and evolving to achieve new objectives and enhance institutional strategy. Institutions strategically employ these collaborations to address the diverse needs of students, faculty, and the institution. Institutions are prioritizing partnerships with government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and other international entities in pursuit of internationalization. This strategic approach aims to foster a global perspective within the educational environment.

Innovation offers countries the prospect of achieving global excellence. The linkages among innovation, technological advancements, and economic advancement are widely acknowledged. Innovations, whether they pertain to novel organizational methods, the application of knowledge, or a combination of both, can boost productivity, strengthen competitiveness, and confer economic benefits upon nations, companies, and individuals. Notably, these innovations need not always be revolutionary; they merely need to introduce novelty within a particular context. Additionally, innovation creates a pathway for specific developing nations to leapfrog traditional developmental stages and advance more rapidly (ADB, January 2014).

Innovative Teaching Approach - The modification and innovation of teaching approaches in universities have been longstanding endeavors. Universities worldwide have been at the forefront of implementing teaching innovations, reflecting the dynamic evolution of educational methodologies. In China, this evolution is particularly evident in two interconnected phenomena: its rapidly developing economy and the exponential

growth of academic research. These trends underscore the imperative for universities to adapt their teaching methods to keep pace with the changing landscape (Lin, 2019). A notable example of such innovation can be found at the University of Houston-Victoria, where the Theory and Practice of Leadership Management Program has embraced a blended learning approach. This approach integrates online and classroom instruction with real-world experiences, providing students with a comprehensive and dynamic educational experience (Lybolt et al., 2016). This innovative teaching method acknowledges the evolving needs of students in a digital age, leveraging technology while incorporating practical, real-world applications to enhance the learning process. As universities continue to explore and implement such innovative teaching approaches, they contribute to the ongoing transformation of higher education to meet the demands of the contemporary learning environment.

3.3 The Internationalization Policies or Innovations that can be Adapted to Higher Education in the Philippines

Aiming for internationalization, Philippine higher education also required many universities to strengthen their quality assurance framework through strong international connections and sound graduate mobility. (Robiños & Alcazaren, 2023). Given the quantity of HEIs in the nation, the Commission on Higher Education has taken the initiative to promote important studies on this novel shift. In terms of a.)Mission, Goals, and Plans of the University; b) Structures and Staff; c) Budget and Implementation; d) International Dimension on Research Activity; e) Support System; f) Promotion of International Affiliation; g) Internationalization of the University Curriculum; and h) Joint Programs with External Organizations, higher education institutions in the Philippines are prepared for the g) The university curriculum's internationalization; h) Collaborative programs with other organizations.(Dimasindel & Salam, 2018).

Current internationalization strategies, includes (1) Incentivization, by providing funding and incentives for internationalization projects (Robiños& Alcazaren, 2023); competitive Programs will mainly gain from being hubs for staff and student mobility (Vibar&Rosales, 2021); (Robiños& Alcazaren, 2023); (2) Involvement of teacher and student participation and cooperation; (3) innovation and quality guarantee of the university; and (4) intensified global connections and networks. (Robiños& Alcazaren, 2023); global research collaborations (Vibar&Rosales, 2021); (Dacut, 2022) which makes them desirable collaborators for partnerships. Additionally, there's the internationalization of education at home, overseas internships, and curricular alignment or improvement depending on standards for ASEAN's course offerings. (Dacut, 2022).

Participating in and organizing conferences are some tactics that the majority of HEIs can use to encourage foreign speakers to speak and join their faculty as adjunct, visiting, or part-time instructors in the collaborative process. Also, cross-border Education, scholarly collaboration, and research; External Relations, and Services (Dacut, 2022). It is possible to start more research to investigate their experiences with internationalization, the role of educators, and the participation of the students and a follow-up on the challenges with governance that HEIs face as one of the signs of globalization. (Vibar&Rosales, 2021).

Another is the internationalization tactics and the establishment of a supportive legislative framework for the mobility of providers, staff, programs, students, and research activities both in and out of the country. In addition to this, the national policies about qualifications frameworks, quality assurance, research and innovation clusters, mobility programs, academic credit systems, and other methods were used to improve research and harmonize education systems and policy ability (Eder & Forster, 2020); a well-defined university policy regarding scholarly cooperation and study. (Dacut, 2022). HEIs set up their infrastructure and facilities to leverage new technologies accompanied by a long-term, well-thought-out globalization strategy. (Dacut, 2022). The infrastructure of the organization, the accreditation level, as well as funding allocation for overseas initiatives ought to be highly respected by higher institutions. (Vibar&Rosales, 2021).

3.4 Recommendation

Recommendations for the successful, sustained internationalization of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)

are essential for both short-term progress and long-term viability. First and foremost, HEIs, including universities, schools, and colleges, should integrate internationalization into their institutional mission. To adequately support this mission, there is a need to reorganize and re-energize institutional culture and policies. Second, securing the commitment and enthusiasm of university staff, whether from the international office or the faculty itself, is crucial. These individuals play a pivotal role in creating opportunities for intellectual stimulation and learning, encompassing the promotion of exchange opportunities, effective selection mechanisms, relevant agreements with host partners, recognition of overseas study, financial support, and a credit transfer system for exchange programs. Third, involving key stakeholders in the development of internationalization planning is essential, reflecting the institution's dedication to the process and garnering support from diverse interest groups during implementation. Fourth, effective internationalization programs within academic institutions should include strategic actions:

The institution's strategic planning grants significant attention, space, and importance to internationalization.

➢ Institutionalizing internationalization activities and programs, establishing a well-equipped international program office with ample resources (people, budget, and technology) for planning, implementation, and follow-up.

➢ Implementing formal and continuous assessment mechanisms and systems to evaluate internationalization's goals, progress, and outcomes.

➢ Ensuring that internationalization models undergo ongoing revision, negotiations, and renegotiations, making them an integral and continuous activity on campus.

There is a need to talk about the role of national authorities and the benefits of national strategy building in supporting the efforts of higher education institutions in terms of internationalization. The impact of high-profile new projects, such as the European Universities Initiative, needs to be assessed, as they might redefine internationalization as it is currently known.

This study on innovative pathways to global engagement in higher education, as highlighted in a systematic review of strategies and trends in internationalization, underscores the evolving landscape of academia amidst globalization. This systematic review, building upon trends observed since 2015, illuminates the importance of higher education institutions embracing internationalization as a strategic imperative. By synthesizing current practices and emerging strategies, such studies offer valuable insights for universities seeking to enrich their educational environments and foster global citizenship among students. For instance, initiatives such as international student exchange programs, collaborative research partnerships, and interdisciplinary curricular offerings have become increasingly prevalent, reflecting a broader shift towards fostering cross-cultural competencies and preparing students for a globalized workforce (Knight, 2018).

Moreover, the implications of this research extend beyond individual institutions, influencing broader discussions on the role of higher education in addressing global challenges and promoting sustainable development. Through internationalization efforts, universities contribute to knowledge creation, innovation, and societal advancement on a global scale. By nurturing diverse perspectives and fostering collaborative networks, higher education institutions can play a pivotal role in advancing solutions to complex issues such as climate change, public health, and social inequality. As such, systematic reviews of internationalization strategies serve as valuable resources for policymakers, educators, and stakeholders seeking to harness the transformative potential of global engagement in higher education for the betterment of society (Deardorff, 2018).

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