

# Framework for Strategic Integration of Internationalization in Teacher Education Institutions

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**Abstract.** This study addresses the internal and external drivers and barriers to creating a tangible strategic integration of the internationalization framework for Teacher Education Institutions. The strategic alignment in the curricula, planning processes, and assessment of implementation were notably established as emerged from the data analysis. Though internationalization embraces numerous advantages or positives to higher education, crucial risks are connected with this complex and growing phenomenon, including some identified internal and external drivers and barriers in the conduct of internationalization of the Teacher Education Institution.

## 1 Introduction

Historically, internationalization was noted to be present even during the time of Erasmus (ca. 1467-1536), after which the European program for exchanges or transnational education system was named. Technically, internationalization was dated during the 18th and 19th centuries as a historical reference to a national orientation and function [1]. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and World Bank highlighted the integration of internationalization into more integrative international, intercultural, and global dimensions [2]. Hence, internationalization is an aim that every higher education institution across the globe should adhere to form an educative alliance that will benefit the stakeholders and the people through generations.

Internationalization in higher education institutions in the country is the ideal goal to meet global recognition and be on par with other ASEAN communities. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations' integration of concepts and thrust of teacher education signifies that it is no longer within the context of the exclusion ambit of national development goal but instead of borderless education known to be internationalization. The educational challenges in the Southeast Asian and East Asian Road map for the ASEAN community indicatively put efforts of countries to respond to globalization characterized by a high degree of students and faculty mobility on services, resources, skilled labor, and professional in multicultural dimensions emphasis on the development of inclusivity in standard quality of education.

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Another driver for internationalization is the road map for the ASEAN community [3], which focuses on the development of frameworks to facilitate responsive milestones in collaboration not just within the community but also outside the country. One nation reaches out to other countries not only for political and economic reasons but also for educational purposes. This kind of interaction among nations, particularly for educational purposes, is referred to as internationalization.

The Teacher Education Program, in the latest circular memorandum order (CMO) numbers 74 and 75, was implemented to navigate the shifting of learning competencies based on the standard/outcomes-based education as a response to the 21st-century Philippine Teacher Education Framework. Anchoring this ideal, all of the SUC's and LUC's in the country adhere to this, but what makes this initiative important is that this study focused not just on the curriculum but also on the human side approach of internationalization.

The reasons mentioned above justified the need to conduct this study on internationalization efforts of Teacher Education Institutions in Camarines Sur to empirically benchmark their institutional development initiatives and compare the same to the global standards of delivering quality higher education. This study provides comprehensive data that is useful, timely, and relevant in the process of formulating innovations and plans for the institution to internationalize. It is even more significant for future leaders of these institutions to consider ensuring world-class academic programs and environment services to students and stakeholders for effective and efficient management of institutions worthy of international recognition. Generally, this study aims to analyze the sustained internationalization initiatives of a state university in Camarines Sur, Philippines.

Specifically, the study seeks to describe the internal and external drivers and barriers to the internationalization efforts promoting the sustainability of the institution and design an internationalization framework for TEI.

## **2 Methodology**

This study used a qualitative research approach using a multiple-case design to ensure the accuracy and comprehensiveness of gathered data to attain the objectives set for this investigation. The descriptive method was used to examine and analyze the internal and external factors as prime movers of teacher education programs' internationalization, enabling them to sustain collaboration. These factors are the drivers and barriers along different areas met by these institutions on internationalization. There were forty-six (46) number of research participants from the state university in Camarines Sur. Total enumeration was used in order to collect all the data needed for the investigation. The reckoning period for this study on internationalization is from the academic year 2019 to the academic year 2022. The College of Education is the main program under investigation for this study.

## **3 Results and Discussion**

### **3.1 Internal and External Drivers**

#### *3.1.1 Achieving global standards and competence.*

The institution has the internal goal of achieving global standards. Since internationalization is defined in this study as the basis of attaining quality education of the HEI by its relations to foreign institutions, the drive must start within the home institution, more specifically in

the College of Education. To foster these global standard goals. An administrator from the Main Campus believes that:

*“Internationalization in the state university seeks to upscale the competence of faculty and students, increase collaborative engagements in instruction, research, and extension, develop global citizens and professionals, and contribute to generating solutions to global issues. These are all addressed in the different internationalization programs of the university, such as the ICTP, Student Credit Mobility, AIMS, International Internship, faculty exposure program, international multi-disciplinary research collaboration, foreign experts’ program, flat classroom program, internationalization of the curriculum, and the like.”*

In aiming to upscale the competence of the students and the teachers, the institution deliberately proposed programs that uphold global criteria in education. This serves as the holistic motivation to prepare the students for the competitive economy, governmental concerns, social and environmental issues that are prevalent in our society today [4]. The state university in Camarines Sur aspires to produce graduates capable of working in a global market and excelling through the skills they develop from internationalization activities. This can be considered the prime driver, as without this mindset, the institution will have no concrete plans for the whole IZN initiative.

This is also supported by the statement given by an IZN coordinator from satellite campus D that through IZN, “the global competencies of the faculty, staff, and students are enhanced. Reviews and reflections on the current curricular programs were done by benchmarking universities and colleges that have the same programs and are successful in integrating internationalization. All of these encompass the goals of the university.” This statement gives us an overview of the essential actions in IZN processes. In a very simple statement, it is a competitive analysis of performance among institutions with shared global perspectives that drives the IZN to higher heights. Without the inputs from partner universities, the state university and the College of Education deemed it difficult to place the institution in the field of IZN.

### 3.1.2 Professional development of faculty and staff.

The continuation of quality education relies heavily on the capacity-building of teachers. In order to provide outstanding teaching instruction and guidance, institutions must invest highly in the professional development of the faculty in terms of subject matter mastery and pedagogy. One way to do it is through sending envoys for internationalization purposes. To further analyze the problem along the internal and external drivers and barriers, the most highlighted questions with responses from the campuses are shown below for the in-depth analysis of the responses.

Table 1 shows the key responses of the deans regarding the internal and external drivers and barriers to internationalization.

**Table 1.** Key responses of the deans regarding the internal and external drivers and barriers

Question	Main Campus	Satellite Campus A	Satellite Campus B	Satellite Campus C
<i>Articulation of international education as part of the institution’s vision, mission, or goals</i>	“As one system, it is articulated in the vision and goals. For the vision, the state university aims to lead as an Agricultural University of Global Standards, while in the goals, it is stipulated that the university must pursue, maintain, and strengthen internationalization initiatives.”			

Question	Main Campus	Satellite Campus A	Satellite Campus B	Satellite Campus C
<i>The extent by which the institution developed faculty/ students' learning goals associated with the international dimensions of Teacher Education</i>	“It is highly observed that our college is able to participate in benchmarking on the best practices of other institutions; by doing so, our goals and dimensions are highly achieved.”	“In our campus, our ways of measuring this is to collaborate and heed the individual development plan of our faculty.”	“For me, knowing our sense of intentions and being marked as one system could be an indicator that our extent in IZN was achieved.”	“Programs and other activities attuned with internationalization served as statements on how we seriously answer the mechanisms of IZN, particularly in our college.”
<i>The most important obstacles (internally and externally) in conducting internationalization.</i>	“Majority of the problems in our college include the lack of clear-cut policies and physical infrastructure.”	“As we move toward IZN, our main obstacle is more on financial restrictions.”	“Of course, financial restrictions. As a matter of fact, we have plans that are no longer catered to because of insufficient financial allotment. It has affected both our function internally and externally.	“During a series of events regarding our activities on IZN, our college looked for budget from other sources within the university. However, these budgets are already allotted for other purposes.”

### 3.1.3 Improving learners' experience through upgrading the existing IZN efforts.

It is acknowledged that students are the main recipients of IZN programs. The experiences from the academic years 2019-2022 serve as the basis for improving the existing policies. These activities included internships abroad through SEA-TEACHER, AIMS, and ICTP. Moreover, they were also able to attend webinars, virtual training, and research colloquiums. Apart from these, there is yet a call to enhance the student's learning environment and make their activities more diversified. The Dean of the main campus College of Education (COE) expounded her thoughts on the matter:

[“Yes, because if we do benchmark it, we can also say that we are able to do what other countries have done. When I was once a student at the state university, our dean told us to conduct research since our subject was comparative education. But we fought for it, "Ma'am, we would like to experience what is outside/" That was when we realized how lagging behind the Philippines is in terms of facilities. In order for a school to function well, it needs facilities. No matter how active and

competitive the faculty are, it would be useless if facilities were lacking. It is already given that a teacher must have the teaching skills; therefore, facilities is where priority must be given.”]

This sentiment from the dean of the main campus emphasizes the truth about the current situation of the Philippine school system, where we lack facilities for students' use, especially here in the provinces.

### *3.1.4 Research collaboration to address a gap.*

Research is an important undertaking of any academic institution. In line with its vision to become a leading Agricultural Research University of Global Standards, the state university works closely with partners to conduct research activities. This aims to tackle critical global challenges such as climate change, food security, poverty, and educational crisis. This is addressing a gap-sewing the common problems together through academic studies and discussion [5].

The College of Education Dean from Satellite Campus C recollected their visit to Mariano Marcos State University (MMSU) and expressed her belief that the state university could potentially explore similar strategies. She said:

[“In Mariano Marcos State University, their faculty are engineering graduates, yet there was still an insufficiency of faculty members. To rectify that, they came up with a plan to engage in research about bioethanol. In fact, they did not have nipa palm trees at first, but they learned how to turn them into alcohol. As a result, their research has been recognized by the US, and they now have their own laboratory. That is internationalization in action.”]

The COE Dean from Satellite Campus C believed that research collaboration to address a pertinent gap or a necessity in the community is an essential external driver for internationalization. Particularly in its social relevance at the pandemic's peak, bioethanol production was deemed necessary. This necessity served as the catalyst for collaboration and funding, ultimately leading to the establishment of a world-class laboratory at MMSU [6]. Leveraging their engineering and chemistry expertise, they made the most of their resources to secure support. More importantly, she concluded that state universities could consider parallel prospects and more. She believed that the University President was highly motivated in encouraging the institution in research engagement.

The state university to the community. Another external driver that emerged from the responses is the perceived role that the state university in Camarines Sur plays in the community, which is supported by the evidence of its achievements or, on the other side, the decline in the number of IZN deployments. Another Dean from Satellite Campus B disclosed feedback from the school administrators:

[“My experience here in the first district is that when we do our deployment and meet with the school heads, they would say that we must deploy more because schools are in big competition nowadays. They hold COE in high regard, especially since we have internationalization now. People in the community would also say that we are doing better because they can see the achievements in the social media accounts of the state university, especially from the COE. Since, after all, we are the transferor of knowledge. So, whatever it is that we produce, they know that we are the bearer. That is why they see COE with high esteem.”]

The positive reviews from the parents and guardians of the students in IZN initiatives serve as a great source of encouragement and a morale boost for the institution. As a result,

state universities actively utilize these constructive criticisms and positive feedback to further spread the institution's programs and services to the larger community, allowing future enrollees to make informed decisions to pursue their education at the state university.

The role that the state university has already played in the community is an external driver in itself. The state university, particularly COE, has a significant impact on the community by producing highly qualified graduates in the teaching field. The immediate locality recognizes the contributions that the institution brings to the province while the state university endeavors to sustain and improve its identity. It is important that the neighboring population acknowledge and reaffirm the institution's positive influence on society.

### **3.2 Internal and External Barriers to Internationalization**

This section discusses the internal and external barriers to internationalization. Barriers are defined in this study as the contemporary issues and dilemmas that the university encountered in its IZN efforts. These barriers are divided into internal and external barriers.

For added clarity, internal barriers are also referred to in this study as constraints. This means that constraints are hindrances within a specific system that need to be worked with internally. The following were the identified internal barriers: online as a medium of instruction, research collaboration within the system of the state university, and student-faculty immersion program. The external barriers include government policies on internationalization, time differences, visa restrictions, and the global content of the curriculum.

#### ***3.2.1 Lack of implementing sound policies.***

One of the evident barriers that the institution encountered, according to an IZN coordinator, is the lack of clear-cut policies about the program. He determined the specific areas IZN policy lacked, including the absence of organizational structure, assessment tools, and particular IZN plans. There are a lot of governing laws regarding IZN. However, the management finds it so difficult to implement since their knowledge is limited and the resources of the main campus or the satellite campus are inadequate.

The absence of knowledge, organizational structure, and an exclusive office for dealing with IZN affairs slowed down the processing of IZN documents and processes. The respondent from satellite campus C expressed regret that "there is no specific area where internationalization can be studied. It has only become a part of target setting by the colleges vying for a higher level in accreditation." Given the absence of a dedicated office for internationalization, the directives and actions are more dispersed in nature. As a result, challenges are posed in communicating the concerns of the people involved in IZN. The actions were not coherent but individualized since the members were motivated differently. Furthermore, he continued that it resulted in "plans being only carried out usually if there is an initiative to conduct one."

When asked about the assessment tools that are used to measure the level of success from student E and teachers' experiences, student E from the main campus shared that "there are no existing tools tailored after an international standard. The instrument is usually made by the teachers and is patterned to lesson objectives." The respondent was referring to the specific tools needed to assess the achievement of IZN goals and not the grading system from the regular classes. Student E emphasized that these activities must be embedded in the curriculum seamlessly to realize international mobilization and to have common international objectives and assessment tools among the partner universities. He concluded that the lack of approved policies, staff, and funding are the hindrances to the internationalization efforts of this institution. This kind of idea was supported in the study conducted by [7].

### 3.2.2 Financial restrictions.

Internationalization programs always require a significant financial investment, which can be a barrier for any institution. Financial restrictions are in congruence with a lack of knowledge in the implementation of policies for IZN. With limited resources, financial constraints are major hindrances to fully engaging in internationalization efforts.

Similar to Chapter 2, Section 2 of the OVPBEA manual, financial assistance is available to students. This includes a cash advance for round-trip fare, tuition fees, dormitory accommodation, food allowances, health insurance, book allowances, and clothing allowances. All of these are subject to the availability of funds.

As stipulated within the guidelines from the Office of the Vice President for External Affairs (OVPBEA), in case the host university offers financial support, then the student is no longer eligible for the home university's assistance. However, if the financial assistance provided by the host university is insufficient, the student may receive the items not covered by the host university. The student is also responsible for the additional expenses incurred outside the items mentioned. Additionally, the students under the AIMS program may receive cash advances but must be liquidated from the CHED fund.

### 3.2.3 Distance learning barriers.

Especially during the pandemic and travel restrictions, the whole IZN program went online. A few concerns emerged as the students and organizers tried to navigate the virtual world of online education. One of which is the difference in time zones. With the partner institutions in Belgium and Canada, with a seven and twelve-hour time, respectively, the IZN respondents found it difficult to adjust to meeting them at late hours. A Dean from satellite campus B also recalled their experience when they were confused about their scheduled meeting. According to her account, they woke before 2 AM for a meeting only to realize that it should have been at 4 AM. Another prevalent issue, especially here in the Philippines, is weak internet connectivity. Some of the students had to drop out of their classes because they could not secure stable internet access.

Other barriers mentioned by the participants were (1) visa restrictions imposed on the students, both from the Philippines and foreign; (2) differences in curriculum, equivalences of qualifications, and study program; and (3) difficulty in internationally promoting and marketing the institution. The students and faculty had trouble in obtaining their visas, which deterred them from applying for more study-abroad programs. Additionally, the students pointed out that since there is no established and unified curriculum yet, comparing academic equivalences is still a pressing constraint. Finally, the difficulty in promoting the institution to foreign universities hampered IZN's efforts to prosper. The state university needs to develop effective strategies that highlight its uniqueness as an agricultural state university and a producer of high-quality professional teachers who compete effectively in the global education market and in achieving the UN's Sustainable Development Goals [8].

**Table 2.** Key responses of the students regarding the internal and external drivers and barriers

Question	Statement of Main Campus	Statement of Satellite Campus A	Statement of Satellite Campus B	Statement of Satellite Campus C
<i>How was the subject taught in education in terms of practicability and contextualization?</i>	"Since the program needs immersion during the pandemic, online classes are being held. It is practical in the sense that it is a pandemic. However, in terms of financial concerns, daily struggles are being encountered. Nonetheless, our learned principles, strategies, and teaching methodologies are unrepayable as we focus our learning acquisition on them."			



Question	Statement of Main Campus	Statement of Satellite Campus A	Statement of Satellite Campus B	Statement of Satellite Campus C
<i>How rich are the opportunities for students to take courses with an international or global focus?</i>	“It is obvious that the opportunities are for extended learning and cultural exposure.”	“With this once-in-a-lifetime-opportunity, I learned not just academically but also personally.”	“Cultural exposure and scenic visits, among others, are among the many opportunities I experienced during the entire program.”	“We could probably agree that this IZN gave us more exposure to the international curriculum and its program.”
<i>How were the international majors, minors, concentrations, certificates, and courses offered?</i>	“The focus and target may be different from country to country, but the essence and the desired outcomes are the same, and that is to inculcate and imbibe the cultural understanding of each nation.”			
<i>To what extent does pedagogy take advantage of the differing perspectives that domestic and international students bring to the campus?</i>	“I was able to share the knowledge I gained from that program through culminating activities with my co-learners.”	“Students like us made our state university able to adjust our syllabi targets through sharing, collaborating, and practicing our best experiences when it comes to international events.”	“Like other students from other campuses, we were able to hone our skills in teaching and able to share them through micro-demonstration teaching.”	

### 3.3 Proposed Framework for Strategic Integration of Internationalization in Teacher Education Institutions

As the state university's education department strives to become more globally recognized in the field of education in the years to come, more attention should be given to internationalization efforts. Internationalization of higher education is the process that integrates an international and intercultural dimension into teaching, research, and other service functions [9]. A comprehensive guide that oversees the different aspects of internationalization must, therefore, be developed to help achieve the institution's goal of becoming globally competitive and realize the reverie of international merits.

### 3.4 The TEI’s Curriculum Development

In order to give a clear picture of TEI's curriculum development, it is imperative to point to the relevant information and connection to this study. It is known to all that Teacher Education Programs in an Institution in the country are the most common Baccalaureate degree or undergraduate programs easily opened by SUCs and LUCs as long as the institution



partakes basic requirements based on the CHED latest approved CMO 74 for the Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEED) and CMO 75 for the Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSED) with different fields of specialization.

The state university has a unique course to take when you enroll in the TEI. One, in particular, is the course of agriculture incorporated into the general education courses. This course is being offered only to this state university in the Bicol region, while others offer the usual courses found as prescribed by the CMO's 74 and 75 in their general education courses. Another is the practicability of the curriculum; it embedded the contextualized formation of education's dialect within the locality or the mother tongue method/ approach in teaching. It observes and follows the indigenous curriculum shared in one of the general education courses only available at the TEI. The state university is the only one in the Bicol region that promotes an indigenous cultural-centered curriculum and integrative contextualized education with an emphasis on the dialect from the districts of Naga, Partido, and Rinconada. These local languages or dialects are being taught in the curriculum, most especially in the undergraduate course of the Bachelor of Elementary Education, catering to the needs of the community.

Moreover, the extension services in education had given emphasis by integrating the curricular offerings of the program embedded in the syllabus. The focus of this one is to practice more agricultural education, giving the new face of transformational, genuine, and cross-methods in teaching and giving back to the stakeholders through training and livelihood programs.

### *3.4.1 Quality of education*

Relatively, the quality of education in an institution is considered one of the topmost priorities in order to attract investments and students. The Philippine education sector invested time, money, and energy to make the curriculum at par with other nations. This is because it is their mandate to provide the recipient with an all-round development of skills and potential to achieve success in their future endeavors in society.

In a recent study by Villegas, the author shared policy recommendations to contribute to the quality delivery of education in the country [10]. He argued that all children must be able to access quality pre-kindergarten to Grade 3 education and development programs. Also, there is a need to improve the quality of instruction and teachers with the target that all learners meet basic skills based on international standards. Hence, it is imperative to use the lens of lifelong learning in workforce development and fully leverage private education to complement the delivery of services and strengthen autonomy. Necessary also is the accountability of school leaders and local governments.

### *3.4.2 Access to education.*

Like in any other country in the world, access to quality education is also the top priority of the government. As mentioned, Republic Act 10931 establishes the tertiary education subsidy and student loan programs aside from giving them free education. It strengthens unified financial assistance to the students in need. In state universities, even after internationalization, students are given access to participate.

The state university gave and opened the opportunity to deserving and academically qualified students. Once qualified for the internationalization initiatives or programs, students are given a pre-departure orientation program, which is facilitated by the TEI. Moreover, students are assisted and given time to process their documents for visa approval. The assigned IZN coordinator will coordinate and arrange the travel to immigration or foreign affairs, while the state university provides all requirements to be found in the

institution free of charge. Once approved, the state university arranges for the ticket, transportation, and accommodation of the outbound students. The counterpart of the students in this process is the allowance for day-to-day activities. From time to time, the assigned IZN coordinator monitors the safety and security of the students or any other concerns they have. They make sure that the student follows the prescribed protocols. The same protocols are also observed and followed by the inbound students. This ensures that they are in good hands and that the university is true to its core principles, mandates, and promises to its partner institutions around the world.

### **3.5 The Internationalization (IZN) Infrastructure**

Zhuo et al define IZN infrastructure as the physical, technological, and administrative elements that enable the implementation of internationalization [11]. This component is important to the whole IZN process because these elements enable the facilitation of the programs to be easy and flow. This serves as the support system to provide diverse needs for international and local students and faculty and effectively implement internationalization strategies [12].

#### **3.5.1 Offices and staffing arrangement.**

Teacher D, a respondent from the Main Campus, shared knowledge of how staffing and office designation work with internationalization. She said: "The responsibility of IZN lies in the Office of the Vice President for Business and External Affairs' University International Relations Office, the other Vice Presidents, Research and Extension, HR, and OSAS Directors, and College Deans. The Campus Administrators also shared the responsibility of implementing the internationalization initiatives." These are the main organizers of the internationalization program of the university's main campus.

Furthermore, Teacher D expressed her satisfaction that "these arrangements are very effective since more activities are conducted. Thanks to their strong support and commitment- as they say, 'two heads are better than one.'" Having a central office and focal people who are experienced in the field can help facilitate the establishment of successful partnerships [13]. They continued that for the campuses; there are coordinators who propose activities that are endorsed by the University International Relations Office Director for the approval of the top management.

#### **3.5.2 Funds and resources.**

According to one of the administrators, the budget comes from the "general institutional budget, funds from other institutional international activities, and other external private funds." The participant continued that "since the internationalization is part of the mandate (previously mentioned as Chapter 2, Section 2 of the OVPBEA Manual), there is a fund for faculty development, student travel, international scholarship, and co-curricular programs." Furthermore, the same administrator claimed that "there was an increase in the budget in 2022 because, in the previous years, the International Relations Office did not receive much of a budget due to the pandemic." This is also in reference to the Dean's statement about less worry in terms of the budget during the pandemic aside from the internet connection and time difference.

### **3.5.3 IZN Policies**

Internationalization policies in education refer to the intentional efforts by the institution to increase global engagement, cross-cultural understanding, and diversity among students, faculty, and staff [14]. Under policies, this discusses the activities/ experiences, global content curriculum, language requirements, student distribution/ selection, and partnership processes. Universities must build a strong institutional policy of internationalization because it opens solutions to the complexity of foreign relations [15]. The rationale behind the internationalization policies of the state university is to create a blueprint that sets the program's action- to prepare the graduates for a globalized workforce, promote cross-cultural understanding and global citizenship, and advance research and scholarship, among others.

### **3.5.4 Communication channels.**

The context of this section is the internationalization efforts at the time of the pandemic and how the partner institutions navigated the virtual world of education. Online communication, including messaging and video conferencing, served as the main way to communicate with partner institutions. A respondent recalled that "as an ICTP student, communication plays a significant role in our lives as a student, we tend to use different kinds of social media platforms in order to communicate with one another such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Google Meet, and Zoom. International activities and programs conducted online." With these many platforms, the students and teachers could "express their ideas and conduct classes so distance would not matter." They also used other communication channels like SIA and UNRAM websites for modules and other general announcements.

Despite the pandemic, a participant noted that "the synergy exists among international activities and programs by allowing the students to participate, communicate effectively with other people, and share each other people's perspectives and insights." Another student emphasized the importance of the "ability to make good communication to the students and other people, by using different motivations. And this motivation fueled commitment on both sides."

## **3.6 The Future of Internationalization**

Where is the internationalization of TEI heading? Where is it now? Internationalization of higher education has gained momentum in recent years, and institutions worldwide are increasingly focusing on developing their internationalization strategies. Internationalization has become a key goal for many institutions, and in order to achieve this, there is a need to establish clear targets. In this part of the research paper, we will discuss the target goals for future IZN (Internationalization) initiatives. Target goals are important because these give the institution the direction for future plans. These targets include hiring more foreign faculty, wider student mobility, establishing more partnerships, research and development involvement, and establishing a global identity.

### **3.6.1 Foreign faculty hiring.**

Hiring foreign faculty was identified as an important target for future collaboration. Administrator from Satellite Campus A said: "The most important targets for future collaboration and connection among international programs/activities on campus are foreign faculty hiring and the state university's faculty studying outside the country." This kind of mentality is already exercised in other higher education institutions. This can be materialized if the institution has a strong policy about the concern on foreign faculty hiring. Adhering to

the mandates of the National Bureau of Immigration about foreign exchange faculty, permit to work, and other mandated requirements must be submitted by the institution applying for the program.

### *3.6.2 Wider student mobility.*

For the future IZN initiatives, student C from main campus A stated that: "think the target for this internationalization is the connections for greater opportunities that allow a lots of students to participate in internationalization." Any opportunity for students to work or study abroad while undertaking their degree program can also be both incoming and outgoing.

The Office of the International Linkages of the University of the Philippines, for instance, encourages students to participate and explore more possibilities in studying abroad. This practice may be adopted by the state university by allotting ample budget and sustaining it through annual development planning. This can be done through short-term courses or programs and long-term courses or programs.

### *3.6.3 Establishment of more partnerships.*

Most of the research participants agreed that connection with other individuals or groups is the most important target for IZN. A few accounts are the following: (1) "I think the most important target even for the future collaboration and connection among international programs on the campus is no other than a "good relationship;"

(2) "Good relationship in all aspects, on the implementor and communication or both institutions," and (3) "Building a harmonious relationship and generating ideas that would further improve the program."

Times Higher Education coined it as "partnerships are like marriages as with affairs of the heart, you do not marry just because you can or because someone likes you. You marry because you have the same vision for the future. Try to find that with potential academic partners – and within your own organization, too. You will need buy-in from internal and external stakeholders." Once it has been decided this could be "the one," there will be full legal, financial, and quality due diligence. Before you get that far, however, initial scoping and light-touch investigations will confirm whether you're on the right path.

### *3.6.4 Research and development.*

Research and development (R&D) involvement is another target for future IZN initiatives. Research and development activities can enhance the quality of education, promote innovation, and provide solutions to global challenges. According to [16], international research collaboration can create new knowledge and research opportunities. By exercising intellectual exchanges among institutions through research collaboration, the foundation will be stronger, and the partnership will have a long-lasting positive effect.

### *3.6.5 Establishing global identity.*

Establishing a global identity is another target for future IZN initiatives. A global identity refers to an institution's ability to project a positive image and reputation worldwide. According to [4], institutions that establish a global identity are more attractive to international students and faculty. Institutions can establish a global identity by improving their international rankings, participating in international conferences, and showcasing their international partnerships and achievements.

The internationalization efforts of the state university are an essential aspect of creating a diverse and inclusive academic environment. The institution needs to establish clear goals and action plans to achieve IZN objectives. Achieving such efforts will require collaboration, competence, and commitment from everyone involved to enhance the quality of education and promote innovation globally.

**Table 3.** Summary of the future targets for internationalization

<b>Future Targets on Internationalization</b>	<b>State University's Way Forward 2024 and beyond</b>
Foreign faculty hiring	Establishment of the College of Education international curriculum. State university's way forward on foreign faculty policies.
Wider student mobility	State University's way forward on student mobility through exchanges is not limited to education.
Establish more partnerships	Engagement, sustenance of the existing MOA/U, and more collaboration
Research and development involvement	Partnership and collaboration with existing partners and tapping more partners in the future.
Establishing global identity	Making an indelible mark for quality education through accreditation and creating a hallmark of excellence in agricultural education in the ASEAN region and the rest of the nations.

### 3.7 Supporting the Professional Development of Faculty and Staff

A good institution has a well-accomplished and ethical professional who can deliver relevant, quality, exceptional, and resilient instructions, research, extension, and production. Professional development of the faculty and staff is one of the top priorities for individual development plans, which are submitted annually to the college to look for the needs of the employee. The Human Resource Management Office of each state university in the country will now be mapped to fit the entire interest of the personnel. Through this strategic planning of Human Resource Management, the academic cluster and non-academic of the institution will have a succession in the professional paths they want to venture into. Professional development programs can enable teachers to expand their knowledge based on different subject areas. The more professional development a teacher undergoes, the more knowledge and industry insight he or she gains.

A report by Queen's University of Charlotte showed that it is easy for teachers to become burdened by the grind of teaching [17]. Professional development gives them an opportunity to step out of their routine; they get to be the student instead of the teacher. This keeps educators engaged because they feel like they are receiving the professional help they need to be better teachers. After all, professional development nurtures the talents of teachers who aspire to take on educational leadership positions, and teachers must learn from other experienced leaders to become effective future leaders themselves. Implementing professional education development has benefits for both teachers and students, but most importantly, it helps teachers become better educators and develop into competent future school administrators.

### **3.8 Global Mobility Barriers to Internationalization**

As discussed earlier, the internal and external barriers include the lack of solid policies, financial restrictions, distance learning constraints, visa restrictions, differences in the curriculum, and difficulty in promoting the institution internationally.

One of the internal barriers is the lack of sound policies. According to a respondent, there is a lack of clear-cut policies about the program. The absence of an organizational structure and an exclusive office for dealing with IZN affairs slows down the processing of necessary documents. Furthermore, there are challenges posed in communicating the concerns of the people involved in IZN since the actions are not coherent but individualized. Raising the concern that IZN efforts are shouldered by certain individuals alone when it calls for a collective effort and collaboration. The lack of united policies creates a diverse understanding with actions not targeting the institutions or departments' common goals.

### **3.9 Factors Affecting Internationalization**

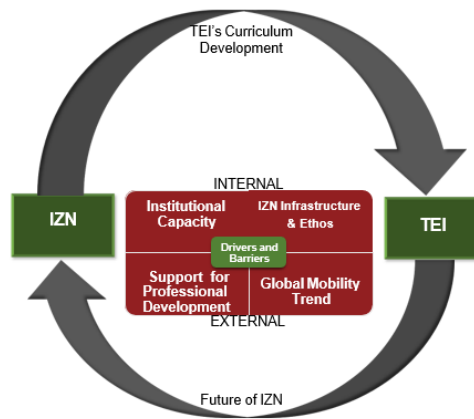
Considering the drivers and barriers, IZN appears to be affected by these three factors: access, quality, and relevance (Table 4). Two factors in the data, the drivers and barriers, are categorized into the three mentioned factors. It is deemed necessary to understand these factors as they influence the drivers and barriers in specific categories. The Philippine Institute for Development Studies reported that affordable quality education is only one of many challenges faced by the sector with respect to future trials due to unforeseen changes in the educational market brought about by the pandemic [18]. However, due to the calendar shifts, the Department of Education and the Commission on Higher Education adjusted the resources, which eventually affected the quality of instructions, its relevance to the needs of the students after the pandemic, and its availability to mass production (materials for teaching and learning). This implies that access, quality, and relevance are indispensable to quality improvement efforts, curriculum, and learning depend on the effective and efficient functioning of other elements of an education system.

The International Bureau of Education (UNESCO) pointed out that it is important to underscore the value of curriculum to holistic and sustainable development [19]. It is also prudent to recognize the various sources of systematic barriers within education systems that could derail the design, development, and implementation of quality curricula. Even the best curriculum can be undermined by systematic constraints such as poor governance (school-based), insufficient consultation with stakeholders in the decision-making process, the lack of appropriately qualified teachers, inadequate physical facilities, and inadequate financing of teaching and learning materials, to name a few. Table 4 shows the factors affecting the internationalization of Teacher Education Institutions.

**Table 4.** Factors Affecting Internationalization of Teacher Education Institutions

Access	Quality	Relevance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to education</li> <li>• Funds and resources, communication channels</li> <li>• Wider student mobility</li> <li>• Facing global mobility</li> <li>• Financial restrictions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Teacher Education Institution’s curriculum development</li> <li>• Quality of education, Offices and staffing arrangement</li> <li>• Foreign faculty hiring, research, and development</li> <li>• Establishing global identity</li> <li>• The strengthening institutional capacity through internal and external drivers and barriers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internationalization policies</li> <li>• Establishment of partnership</li> <li>• Support to the professional development of faculty and staff</li> <li>• Improvement of learners’ experiences through upgrading the existing IZN efforts</li> <li>• Sustainable strategies in the field of IZN</li> <li>• The goals for future IZN</li> </ul>

Considering the findings of this study, a framework for strategic integration of IZN in Teacher Education Institutions is thus proposed (Figure 1).



**Fig. 1.** Framework for strategic integration of IZN in TEI

## 4 Conclusion and Implication

### 4.1 Conclusion

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that the internal and external drivers and barriers to the internationalization initiatives of the state university contribute to the sustainability of its Teacher Education Program. Furthermore, the broader sense of attainability in the efforts to collaborate, participate, and share internal and external resources was observed and reflected in the policies and regulations of the institution. The internal and



external drivers benefited the institutional aims to acquire full implementation of internationalization. On the other hand, the internal and external barriers hinder the systems that determine the overall success rate of the programs in internationalization.

It can be gleaned from the results of the study that a well-rounded strategy in the Teacher Education Program of the state university influences the path of the students and teachers in sustaining the initiatives such as activities like the International Credit Transfer Program (ICTP) on internationalization. The findings of this study also highlight the relevance of networking. For instance, the conversation on best internationalization practices must continue. Such strategies allow each college to extend programs and religiously observe existing internal and external policies on any international engagements of its students, faculty, and staff.

Lastly, considering the drivers and barriers, IZN appears to be affected by three factors: access, quality, and relevance. IZN is propelled by a dynamic and constantly evolving combination of factors affecting the building and construction of new political, economic, socio-cultural, and academic landscapes. The proposed framework for strategic integration of IZN in the Teacher Education Program may thus address the challenges of internationalization to the different academic dimensions and standards for greater synergy and opportunity.

## **4.2 Implications**

The internationalization of the state university in Camarines Sur has been influenced by the globalization of our economies and societies and the increase in the importance of human knowledge. It is driven by a dynamic and constantly evolving combination of political, socio-economic, and cultural. As the ASEAN and Sustainable Development Goals integration takes place, the state university in Camarines Sur is challenged to increase the visibility and competitiveness of its product, both human and non-human. The focus on employability and social engagement is seen as a key factor in upscaling their competencies. In the context of integration, stakeholders' experiences diversified and sharpened a meaningful understanding of the connections of this interdisciplinary undertaking: Internationalization.

In terms of education and development, opportunities across the field are observed through mutual engagement and participation in the programs. For the past years, the state university has never stopped making a hallmark in the international arena, and these achievements in globalization pave the way in symbolizing the achievements and earned reputation. Consequently, education quality is improved and made more relevant vis-à-vis the needs of the region. Moreover, this channels the opportunities to the stakeholders and partner institutions, both locally and abroad.

In strategic planning of the institution, it is necessary to craft a roadmap toward greater global engagement, alliances, and education to fit into the development plan. This can be done by making an established outline of the goals for the development targets and integrated management policies of the institution. Also, having a strategic plan in place can enable tracking progress.

toward the goals of the institution. Understanding the institution's strategic progress can directly impact its success, creating performance indicators for the attainment of the institution.

The development of an effective communication system within an educational institution can potentially become the driving force for effective functioning. The study complements the existing communication channels as a factor in the effectiveness of an educational organization. It highlights the dynamics of the teachers and administrators to the greatest possible extent, attempting to link the communication factor to all aspects of the institution's effectiveness.

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