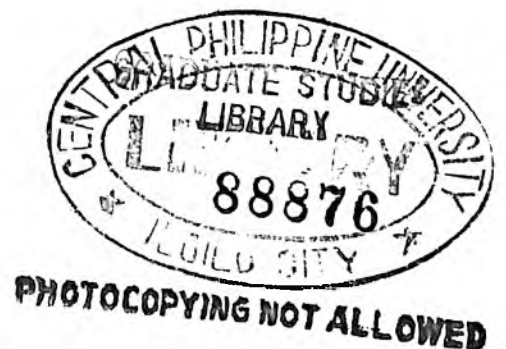


A STUDY OF PUBLIC RELATIONS ACTIVITIES OF
SUCs AND DECS-SUPERVISED GOVERNMENT
COLLEGES IN WESTERN VISAYAS

A Dissertation
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Doctor of Education

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

It is clear that the ability of the next generation of Filipinos to manage their affairs depends to a great extent on the ability of the educational system to train students in the proper attitudes, values and skills that will make them successful and happy individuals, good citizens and productive members of society.

According to former UP President Vicente G. Sinco,¹ we should count it a good cause for rejoicing that the subject of education is becoming popular among associations and groups in our country today, especially associations and groups not directly connected with school teaching or college administration. The growing interest in the educational theme, if sufficiently sustained to the point of permanence, is bound to produce a genuine desire on the part of more and more people for an improvement of the performance of our schools, colleges and universities. To create this condition, there should not only be more frequent discussions of educational subjects in meetings of professional associations and special groups but also wider and continuous publicity through important channels of communication such as newspaper, radio, and television. We

¹Vicente G. Sinco, "The Problem of Improving Education Standards" in Education in Philippine Society (Quezon City: UP Press, 1959), pp. 55-56.

should disabuse our minds of the idea that a school or college, its administrators and teachers, if left by themselves could accomplish completely the improvement of educational standards and performance. It is absolutely essential that they be extended the cooperation, enthusiastic cooperation and not mere lip cooperation, of parents, government officials, businessmen, industrialists, and all the other intelligent elements of the population.

It could be correctly asserted that every nation gets the education and the educational institutions that it deserves. A nation will deserve excellent education if it appreciates excellence and demands that educational institutions give superior training to the youth. On the other hand, it deserves an inferior kind of education, which is not much better, if not worse, than no education at all, when it is satisfied with the awarding of more degrees, certificates and diplomas to the youth without questioning whether such degrees or diplomas represent possession of learning and adequate cultivation of mental competence and technical skills.

Bernays² recognized the problem to develop public understanding of education. In his speech to the Second Annual Conference of School Administrators and Supervisors when he said "One of the obstacles that our educational system faces is in the field of public relations. We cannot have better understanding of our schools"..

²Edward L. Bernays, Public Relations (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1952), p. 265.

Any public relations campaign must be based on a clear conception of the goals to be attained. The goal is the development of public recognition of and support for the idea that public education is the job of the Filipino people as a whole.

The Philippines has a strong tradition of public education. But public understanding of its vital importance has not been a dominant force as it should be. One reason for this lack of understanding is that the public knows little about the serious situation of Philippine education.

As a social institution owned and operated by the people, the school depends for its continuance and support upon the status of public opinion. The way citizens think and act in regard to school personnel, plant, curriculum offerings, supplies, equipment and the like, not only establishes the limits of institutional functioning, but also influences the policies and practices by which the work of the institution is done.

It is essential to the effective operation of the school that those who are charged with responsibility for its affairs understand the role of public opinion in a democracy, and the way in which it affects the education of children.

Public opinion is the source spring of public relations. It was Ortega y. Gasset³ who wisely wrote that no one has ever

³Scott M. Cutlip and Allen H. Center, Effective Public Relations (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc. 1971), p. 104.

ruled on this earth without basing his rule on anything other than the rule of public opinion.

However, public opinion which is not well-informed cannot constitute a dynamic force. To inform public opinion of an issue, it is necessary to endow that issue with high visibility. Public education has practically low visibility, and so requires even greater effort in making the public aware of what is involved and what must be done in the current educational crisis.

It is only when public opinion is thoroughly informed, aroused, and ready to act that we shall get the government support to lift our school system.⁴

For several years, the growing complexity of our society has steadily pulled our schools and community away from each other.

Unfortunately, the distance at this very time when our rapid changing world makes new demands on education has widened. However an opportunity exists to be tapped in the seemingly new field in the administration of schools for its great potential,⁵ the program of public relations.

Higher Education in the Philippines

While the three levels of education have their own roles in relation to national development goals, higher education is

⁴Bernays, op. cit., p. 278.

⁵Leslie W. Kindred, School Public Relations (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc. 1959), p 3.

generally regarded as the most crucial, as it is in higher education that high-level manpower is trained to supply our economy.⁶

Harbison and Myers⁷ Education, Manpower and Economic Growth have established the relationship between economic growth and human resource development among the eighty-six countries they have studied.

The Philippine situation seems to defy the conclusions of Harbison and Myers, however. Because according to the Ranis Report:⁸

By international standards, the Philippines is a well-educated, an over-educated country, as some would say. Whether the measure is the ratio of the total expenditures to GNP; the proportion of the relevant age-groups enrolled in secondary and higher education; the national literacy rate (83%) or the proportion of active population aged (10-65) with at least five years of primary education (54.4%), with some college education (8%) and complete college education (4%), the Philippines in 1965 ranked just below the United States, above

⁶Vitaliano Bernardino, "Higher Education" in Manila Bulletin, April 12, 1986, p. 7.

⁷Frederick Harbison and Charles A. Myers, Education, Manpower, and Economic Growth (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1964)

⁸The Ranis Report, p. 2, Mimeographed, cited by Cerdy J. Arañador, "The Human Resource Allocation Decisions of Selected Families in Three Selected Towns and in the City of Iloilo" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation; University of San Carlos, 1983), pp. 7-8.

most of the countries in Western Europe and above all the countries of Asia and southeast Asia.

But in economic development, the Philippines is an underdeveloped country. Thus in 1970, the Philippine Commission to Survey Philippine Education (PCSPE) concluded that the Philippines suffered from "an oversupply of a sizable number of college trained manpower" ⁹

The aforementioned predicament of higher education vis-a-vis its vital role in the national development is underscored by the present state of higher education and the problems affecting it. These problems are the following:¹⁰

1. The Philippines has many colleges and universities which are nothing more than over-grown high schools.
2. There is no equitable geographical distribution of State colleges and universities in the country.
3. There are unnecessary duplication and proliferation of course offerings, many of which are substandards and need to be phased out.
4. The government can ill-afford to meet the present needs of the state colleges and universities, yet their expansion program requires more staff, equipment and facilities.
5. Numerous government colleges under the defunct Bureau of Vocational Education known as "DECS-supervised government

⁹Philippine (Republic), Education for National Development: New Patterns, New Patterns, New Directions PCSPE, (1970), p. 97.

¹⁰"The Proposed Macro-Plan for Agricultural Education for the Philippines", Medium 4(1), March 1982, p. 6.

colleges" are also offering degree programs in spite of their weak staff, limited facilities and fund.

6. Even at present, many national high schools and vocational schools are aspiring to be converted into new SUCs and if nothing is done to stop them, they shall swell further the rank of half-baked state institutions of higher learning.

Dr. Amado Campos, former President of Central Luzon State University at Muñoz, Nueva Ecija, attributed the proliferation of SUCs to the conspicuous absence of the highest policy-making body in education in the country and the "too much" intervention of politicians in Philippine education.¹¹

Former MECS Deputy Minister Abraham I. Felipe¹² identified the unequitable allocation of funds among state colleges and universities in different regions, favoring developed or large institutions leaving the less-developed SUCs which are really in need of logistic support to improve their quality usually end up getting "a drop in the bucket", as serious problems of state colleges and universities.

The obtaining scenario of public higher education in the Philippines behoves a sense of competition between and among public institutions of higher education over the

¹¹Amado C. Campos, "Key Considerations for SUCs Macro-Plan, "A Paper Presented in the First National Planning Conference-Workshop (Philippines: Central Luzon State University, November 14-16, 1985), p. 120 (Mimeographed.)

¹²Abraham I. Felipe, "Towards Rationalizing the System of State Colleges and Universities" Philippine Budget Management, 8 (2); December 1984.

thinning government budgetary allocation for education. It would also imply attractive policies for well-prepared students, and competent faculty and staff members. Thus, it becomes imperative for public institutions of higher education to have public relations program not only for survival but also as a response to the clarion call of public interest for a responsive and relevant education.

The late President Edmund Esra Day¹³ of Cornell University aptly summarized this call when he said:

The very existence of a college or university involves public relations. Furthermore, the success or future of the college and whatever it hopes to do is determined, to a very extent by its public relations.

A Profile of State Colleges and Universities in the Philippines

State colleges and universities are institutions of higher learning created by the government through charters passed by the legislature or issued by the President of the Philippines through an Executive Order (and under the last regime, through Decrees). The earliest SUCs were established during the American occupation of the islands.¹⁴

The first state schools were established in the early 1900's through Act 74 of the Philippine Commission. The schools were set up to specialize the areas deemed crucial

¹³Bernays, op. cit., p. 285.

¹⁴Raul P. de Guzman and Proserpina D. Tapales, "A Report on State Universities and Colleges in the Philippines" prepared Task Force to Study State Higher Education Manila: (Department of Education Culture and Sports 1987), p. 2 (Mimeographed)

at that time - the Philippine School of Arts and Trades (PSAT) for vocational education, the Philippine Normal School (PNS) for teacher education, the Philippine School of Commerce (PSC), and in 1908, the University of the Philippines (UP) for higher education. Only UP was initially established as a state university.¹⁵

A system of provincial colleges in some areas became the forerunner of many SUCs. Some provincial schools, like Bicol University are aggrupations of different institutions into an institution of higher learning. Other SUCs were consequently established, mainly by conversion of state-run secondary schools into colleges.

To date, there are 78 effectively operating SUCs in the country and 324 DECS-supervised tertiary institutions. In Western Visayas, there are eight SUCs including the University of the Philippines in the Visayas (UPV), and twelve DECS-supervised government colleges, headed by vocational school superintendents, and 6 DECS-supervised government colleges, headed by vocational school administrators, which are authorized by DECS, Regional Office, Western Visayas to offer post-secondary courses.

¹⁵Francisco Freznoza and Canuto Casim, Essentials of Philippine Educational System (Manila, Philippines: Abiva Publishing House, 1964), p. 19.

A. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the Problem

This study has three main objectives: (1) to identify the perceived and preferred public relations activities of key officials of state universities and colleges (SUCs) and DECS-supervised government colleges in Western Visayas; (2) to analyze their variations when these were grouped in terms of selected institutional and personal variables and (3) to determine whether these perceived and preferred public relations activities of key officials were related to selected institutional and personal variables.

More specifically, this study sought answers to the following questions:

1. What are the public relations activities of state-supported institutions of higher education in Western Visayas, as perceived by their key officials?
2. What are the preferred public relations activities of key officials of state-supported institutions of higher education in Western Visayas?
3. Are there gaps between the perceived and preferred public relations activities of key officials?
4. Are there significant differences between the perceived and preferred activities of key officials on the four purposes of public relations of state-supported institutions of higher education in Western Visayas?
5. Are there significant variations in the perceived/preferred public relations activities of key

officials, when these were grouped according to:

- 5.1 type of school
- 5.2 program thrust
- 5.3 province
- 5.4 educational qualification
- 5.5 number of years of experience
- 5.6 type of position

6. Are the perceptions/preferences for public relations activities of key officials related to each of the selected institutional variables? (e.g. type of school, program thrust and province wherein the colleges are located)

7. Are the perceptions/preferences for public relations activities of key officials related to personal variables, when these are taken althogether?

8. How much of the variations in perceived/preferred public relations activities of key officials can be attributed to the combined influence of personal variables?