Innovations

A Study on the Realization of the Mission and Objectives of a University Student Support Services

*Leny Estacio (Guidance Counselor)

0000-0002-9375-4252

Nona Gabriel, (Research Staff)

0000-0003-1463-4349

Jozenieh Bangibang, (Guidance Counselor)

0009-0008-6611-6504

University of Baguio, Baguio City, Philippines

Abstract : *The Higher Education Institutions are foundational in the developing and strengthening of local, national and global goals. It is then rudimentary that the mission statement and objectives of the school offices are anchored in the university vision, mission, and objectives; as reflected in the services they offer. The study was conducted to examine the realization of the mission and objectives of the University of Baguio student support offices in the different services or programs extended to the whole school community. The study used the descriptive survey method of research, where the responses of 353 stakeholders (262 students and 91 employees) were analyzed through descriptive statistical analysis. Findings showed that both the office mission statement and office objectives are realized in the student support services offered. More so, from this research findings, an action plan was crafted to provide additional insight as to how the realization of the office mission statement and objectives could continuously be fostered by the concerned student support offices. Office mission and objectives in an academic institution set the pathway for the identified services relative to the identified thrust of the institution itself. Thus, it is fundamental that the offered services capture the cited office mission and objectives, consequently strengthening the pursuit of internationalization and attainment of the sustainable development goals.*

Keywords: *student support offices, student support services, realization, mission, objectives, stakeholders*

Introduction

Higher education institutions have gradually been more visible in their potential to reinforce global, national, and local goals and have also been identified as fundamental in development [1,2]. Also, higher educational institutions are seen as a source of support for government programs and priorities [3]. Relative to this, the human capital theory perspective suggests that teaching and research in

higher education institutions enhance skills and knowledge, consequently leading to economic development [1]. The study of Oketch et al. [4] provides insight into the undeniable impact of higher education institutions on economic growth. More so, research suggests that there is an undeniable impact of higher education institutions on economic growth [4].

In the context of higher education institutions' vision and mission statements, Laguador [5] suggests that vision and mission statements that capture educational strategies that deliver quality and excellent instruction, research, and extension services are instrumental in realizing sustainable development goals. Moreover, mission statements communicate what the institution wants to accomplish within the society and provides a reason why these institutions exist[6]. A well communicated mission statement builds unity and makes the commitment to do what has to be done a shared endeavor [7,8]. Thus, the vision and mission of universities have to clearly set the course of action that the institutions intend to take in a long-term standpoint to play their fundamental role in society [9,10].

Further, the relationship between the vision statement, the mission statement, and the objectives must be properly documented and displayed so that the different stakeholders, particularly the employees, can embody them [11,12]. Hofstrand adds that when the vision, mission, and objectives are done properly, the focus will be on the important aspects and the organization's success. Additionally, well-stated objectives anchored in the vision and mission statements could add to the motivation of human resources to realize those statements and achieve milestones [12,5]. On the other hand, employees who understand these statements differently might make decisions that will tear down the institution's culture,hence, school offices are to look into nurturing a comprehensive understanding and articulation of the shared commitment to achieve mission statements and objectives [7,13].

In addition, universities employ strategic planning to help achieve institutional goals [14]. In support of this thrust, the offices also carry out practices of planning, assessment, and accountability. By assessing the strategies for reaching goals; priorities and accountability are taken into account [8]. Further, coming from the Total Quality Management (TQM) perspective in tertiary education, customers such as the students, teachers, guardians/parents assess that there is a high standard of quality in the services rendered when these services capture the satisfaction of its customers. However, continuous improvement remains necessary even when the quality of educational service delivery is attributed to workers' empowerment and the communal understanding of the office mission and objectives [15].

The University of Baguio, as one of the esteemed higher education institutions in the Cordilleras, commits itself to providing quality education. As the institution celebrates its 75th anniversary, there is a need to re-appraise the institution's vision and mission statement to ascertain how articulated, well-understood,

disseminated, and collectively shared this mission and objectives statement by both staff and students. This will help to appreciate how well the University's mission and objectives statements have contributed to the institution's performance in the past quarter of a century. In relation, each student support office has crafted its own objectives, which encapsulate how they intend to support the university's vision to provide quality education.

All these considered, a study focusing on the realization of the mission and objectives of the student support offices was pursued. The research provided insight into how much the academic support offices in the University of Baguio bring into the realization the office mission and objectives, a focal strategy in the continuing pursuit of the university to provide quality education and to be a top choice institution in the North.

Literature Review

In addition, mission statements in a university provide a public declaration of what the organization is all about and whom it serves and displays a compelling purpose for the existence of the institution., whereas the objectives are the specific, quantifiable, and time-sensitive statements that show what the organization has to achieve [7,8,16]. The statement is an integral and critical part of the institution, considering the mission displays how the institution intends to exist, thrive, grow, and continuously "matter" in the wider society [5,6]. In like manner, the mission statement in the offices of educational institutions displays the purpose and what it wants to accomplish in a larger environment [17]; while the objectives display what an office has to achieve and help determine the results [8]. Moreover, universities employ strategic planning to help achieve institutional goals [14].

From the standpoint of strategic planning, institutions are given the groundwork for implementing the identified strategies to achieve the identified goals and priorities. In as much as action plans formulated in strategic plans seek to address the improvement of quality education, the overall target is a wider educational development. In support of this thrust, the offices are also to carry out practices of planning, assessment, and accountability. By assessing the office strategies for reaching goals, priorities and accountability are taken into account [8,10].

More so, the delivery of quality education is influenced by various factors, including the services provided by the different support offices to meet student needs [18]. Hoyt [19] examines the impact of academic support services if they can make a difference in student retention, a university-wide effort and discovered that the availability of student support services does nurture a satisfactory college stay among students.

Methodology

Research Design and Population of the Study

The study used the descriptive-survey method of research. The purpose of such design is to describe a phenomenon and determine its cause, value and significance. In this study, the situation described was the perceived extent of realization of the student support offices' mission and objectives in relation to the provided office services. In total, 353 stakeholders voluntarily participated in the study: 262 students and 91 employees who were either teaching or non-teaching personnel.

Data Gathering Tool

The researchers used a researcher-made questionnaire that was composed of three parts. The first part asked for general information, while the second and third parts reflected the services of the student support services in relation to the identified mission and objectives: Admission and Records Center (ARC), Center for Counseling and Student Development (CCSD), Extension and Community Outreach Services (ECOS), Library, Linkages, Management Information System (MIS), Office of Student Affairs (OSA), Research and Development Center (RDC) and the University Clinic. Tool validity was established through the assistance of the Research Innovation Extension and Community Outreach office by subjecting the tool to the tool validation process of the university. Once validated, the questionnaire was converted into an electronic questionnaire via Google Forms and shared to the different schools and offices of the university. It has to be noted that throughout the data gathering, the researchers complied with the university guidelines for conducting researches.

Treatment of Data

Once the collection of the responses was closed, the analysis of data commenced. Descriptive statistical analysis was carried out to address objective one and two, weighted means were computed and interpreted using the table:

Table 1. Interpretation table

Mean Range	Descriptor	Verbal Meaning	Interpretation
1.00-1.75	negligible extent	insignificant realization	the mission/objective was not realized
1.76-2.50	slight extent	minor realization	the mission/objective was somehow realized
2.51-3.25	moderate	average	the mission/objective was

	extent	realization	realized
3.26-4.00	great extent	great realization	the mission/objective was greatly realized

The data privacy policy of the university, as well as the ethical consideration of confidentiality, was strictly followed by the researchers throughout the conduct of the study. More so, the right of the respondents to voluntarily participate or withdraw their participation was clearly disseminated. The researchers also ensured that the collected data was treated with objectivity and that the research findings were reported from a neutral perspective. Further, the respondents were informed that the research findings can be obtained from the researchers upon request and that these will also be disseminated through paper presentation, publication and sending of copies to the concerned student support offices.

Results and Discussion

Perceived extent of the realization of the mission of the student support offices through the services offered

The school mission displays "where the school is going" and fosters the desired growth within the community [20]. As such, it is essential that the mission does not exist in documents or walls only; but is expressed as a lived philosophy and commitment in the school community. From this, it can be observed that looking into how the mission is displayed or captured in the services provided by the different student support offices will be insightful.

Overall, the respondents ascertained that the mission statement of the different student support offices was evident in the provided services, which means that the office mission statement is greatly realized in the office services (M=3.52, SD=.88). From the research finding, it can be inferred that the different offices were able to communicate to the stakeholders what the office is for; which accounts for the general perception that the office mission statement of the participating offices was realized. Also, a realized mission statement displays that an office is able to convey what it wants to accomplish as an office [5]. The derived research finding is justified through the research finding that the collective appreciation of the institution's vision and mission is associated with how well articulated and disseminated these are to the school community [19]. On the other hand, the realization of the office mission is attributed to the motivation of the employees to accomplish what the office is set to do or the sufficient understanding of the employees as regards how to carry out their commitment to support the realization of mission statements [7,12]. At the University of Baguio, office mission statements are displayed strategically, such as on the office websites or the office receiving area. Employees are made aware through office orientations, meetings, planning sessions, office manuals, and office memoranda;

whereas the students are made aware through orientations, the release of manuals or handbooks, and social media postings. For the first-year college students, the office mission and objectives are shared by the different offices during the first day of the social orientation class, where each office is given time to provide an overview of their office services.

Table 2.*Perceived Extent of the Realization of the Mission of the Student Support Offices through the Services Offered (N=353)*

SUPPORT OFFICE	WTD MEAN	SD	Descriptive Interpretation
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE			
1. Admission and Records Center (ARC	3.44	.94	Great extent/realized
2. Center for Counseling and Student Development (CCSD)	3.54	.88	Great extent/realized
4. Extension and Community Outreach Services (ECOS)	3.50	.86	Great extent/realized
5. Library	3.54	.85	Great extent/realized
6. Linkages	3.59	.86	Great extent/realized
7. Management Information System (MIS)	3.49	.91	Great extent/realized
8. Office of Student Affairs (OSA)	3.53	.86	Great extent/realized
9. Research & Development Center.	3.54	.88	Great extent/realized
10. University Clinic	3.54	.88	Great extent/realized
11. Security	3.52	.86	Great extent/realized
12. Student Accounts	3.52	.86	Great extent/realized
Overall Mean	**3.52**	.88	Great extent/realized

The services provided by the student support offices and the realization of the office mission statement remained visible. This means that in as much as there are different factors that may influence how information is processed, how the respondents associated their experiences on student services to the cited office

mission is the same. In addition, the experienced process of becoming aware of the relationship between services rendered and the office mission statement is a communal experience shared by the stakeholders in the school community. That being said, looking into the different factors that influence student overall experience such as the provision of student support services or the teacher-student relationship will be an advantage to the University of Baguio [21,22].

Nonetheless, there are services under specific offices that obtained means that have less weight than their counterpart. This could be observed in the Admissions and Records Center (ARC) when it comes to the timely access of accurate documents and the timely and efficient release of documents; Extension and Outreach Services (ECOS) when it comes to the delivery of immediate ECOS outreach and extension programs; and the Management of Information System office (MIS), when it comes to the provision of sustainable and innovative ICT services. From the standpoint of the Total Management Quality (TQM) framework, the different perception illustrates the judgment placed by "customers" to services experienced. Regardless of the effort exerted by the company to satisfy customers, the decision of whether a service is of high quality or not is the final say of the customer [23]. The influence of various factors in the delivery of office services, such as differences in perspectives between employees and students, may also account for obtained means [18].

Perceived extent of the realization of the objectives of the student support offices through the services offered

An objective is defined as "a goal to be attained" and synonymously used with the word goal [24]. In the context of an office work environment, office goals or objectives give an outline of what the office has to accomplish and justifies the presence of the office, whereas, for the employees, office goals or objectives guide their efforts and provide clarity of what they can contribute for the company [25].From this alone, it can be observed that assessing the degree to which these objectives are realized would guarantee that the provided students' services and programs are aligned with the thrust of the university [26].

When it comes to the extent to which the office objectives have been realized through the different services offered, findings show that, in general, office objectives were perceived to be captured to a great extent in the services offered (M=3.52, SD=.88). This would imply that office objectives are exemplified in the services provided by the different student support offices. Using the Total Quality Management (TQM) framework, the derived research finding would suggest that offices are able to meet their goals and are efficiently able to maximize the use of resources to provide efficient services or programs, thus, resulting in customer satisfaction [15,27]. Further, goals that reflect what is considered significant to the target population would be seen as unit effectiveness and, even more so, essential to program development [28]. Additionally, students who are aware of office

objectives are able to provide feedback which can be used for the improvement plans of the school administrators and personnel [29]. On the other hand, it is suggested that realized goals define what the workforce or the offices are doing, how they are carrying out their work and what results were achieved [17].

Table 3. *Perceived extent of the realization of the objectives of the student support offices through the services offered (N=353).*

SUPPORT OFFICE	WTD MEAN	SD	Descriptive Interpretation
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE			
1. Admission and Records Center (ARC	3.49	.87	Great extent/realized
2. Center for Counseling and Student Development (CCSD)	3.56	.86	Great extent/realized
4. Extension and Community Outreach Services (ECOS)	3.54	.89	Great extent/realized
5. Library	3.56	.86	Great extent/realized
6. Linkages	3.43	.94	Great extent/realized
7. Management Information System (MIS)	3.45	.89	Great extent/realized
8. Office of Student Affairs (OSA)	3.51	.88	Great extent/realized
9. Research & Development Center.	3.56	.86	Great extent/realized
10. University Clinic	3.58	.87	Great extent/realized
11. Security	3.58	.87	Great extent/realized
12. Student Accounts	3.46	.94	Great extent/realized
Overall Mean	**3.52**	.88	Great extent/realized

It can also be observed from Table 3 that the mean average for each office reflects values that are interpreted as "realized." This would imply that as an individual office, the services availed or received greatly demonstrate the defined objectives. The perceived resemblance of the extent to which office objectives are captured in the provided services could be attributed to the university family

culture, which spurs employees or the workforce to make sure that delivered services are aligned with office objectives [5,12]. From the standpoint of the need for cognition theory, the research finding would be due to the tendency of the respondents to be thoughtful of the different factors which surrounded their experience of receiving the office service. Hence, regardless of being students or employees, the participants thought of their participation in the research carefully [30]. In contrast, student satisfaction may be seen as a short-term attitude, but higher educational institutions ought to look into it since it is associated with progress and quality education [29].

A closer look at the data presented would, however, reflect that similar to the derived findings for the realization of mission statements; there are offices whose cited objectives obtained mean averages which may have been interpreted as realized, but the values had lesser weight than their counterparts. The variance could be observed in the office objectives under the Admissions and Records Center (ARC), Linkages Office (LNK), Management Information Systems (MIS), and Student Accounts Office. To explain the disparity, it is suggested that there are different ways that statements are understood; or that there are occasions when customers see the perceived dependability of the institution as regards providing what they promise to deliver, yet there are those who see otherwise [13,31]. Also, it may be that for the participants, the experienced services did not really capture what was significant to them at that particular point in time or that the services did not clearly communicate the cited office objectives [6,28]. In light of this, assessing how much the services are able to capture the cited objectives would not only be helpful for service improvement but further displays the compliance of the university to the prescribed monitoring and evaluation of student services and programs [26].

To summarize, the respondents generally recognize that the University of Baguio's mission and objectives are embodied in the services provided by the different student support services. In effect, how the services are delivered and the workforce behind these services have efficiently displayed the direction of the university to be a premier university and to be an educational setting that reflects quality education amidst a fast-changing environment. While the research findings give a general impression that office mission and objectives are in place, regularly looking into how these are captured in the office services will ensure that the objectives remain captured or reflected amidst the changing needs and mindset of the population the offices serve. At the same time, the endeavor highlights the continuing compliance of the university to relevant memoranda from the Commission on Higher Education such as internationalization and the realization of the different sustainable development goals.

Proposed action plan based on the research findings to ensure the continuous realization of office mission and objectives

An action plan is "a list of key tasks that need to be undertaken to achieve a particular goal' [32]. In the context of the University of Baguio, student support offices are to reflect office mission and objectives that are primarily anchored from the university vision, mission, and objectives. The said mission and objectives are also to be revisited every three years. This way, all office endeavors are directed toward what the university is set to achieve as a higher education institution. Hence, it is essential for the different student support offices to carry out particular strategies that foster office mission and objectives that are firmly anchored in the university vision, mission, and objectives.

The proposed action plan reflects the different actions to be taken, the personnel involved (in the context of the University of Baguio), the time frame, and the outcome expected. The specified actions-to-be-taken were recommended in such a way that any of the offices can incorporate it in their office workplans. The personnel involved and time frame were included to better assist the offices in carrying out the proposed action. In the context of strategic planning in schools, looking into actions that can be carried out for school improvement would help the school to remain competitive, relevant and on-mission amidst the constant challenges brought by rapid changes [33].

Table 4

Proposed action plan based on the research findings to ensure the continuous realization of office mission and objectives

Objectives	Action Description	Responsible personnel	Time Frame	Outcome
Planning Phase				
To disseminate the research findings for data utilization	Dissemination/articulation of the research findings to office personnel (offices concerned/reflected in the research)	VPAA through RDC, CCSD, Head of office	at the onset of the school year 2023-2024	Informed school community; informed concerned offices; data utilization
To review the office mission	Office assessment of the office	Head of office,	at the onset of	Evaluated office

and objectives as regards the alignment to university VMO, university thrust and changing needs of the stakeholders	mission and objectives as regards the appropriateness in capturing the changing needs of the stakeholders; while keeping in mind the university VMO and thrusts	office personnel	the school year-every other year	MO
Monitoring Phase				
To oversee the delivery of office services in light of the declared office mission and objectives	Monitoring of the delivery of services: instructional work and office work (To ensure that the delivery of services is continuously aligned to the office MO)	Head of office	Throughout the school year	Consistent alignment of office services to office MO and university VMOs
Evaluation Phase				
To obtain insight from the different stakeholders; to analyze the obtained feedback for the improvement of services	Feedback gathering & analysis using the client satisfaction survey results & conduct of office SWOT analysis	Head of office, office personnel	Towards the end of the school year	Regular assessment of office services relative to office MO, gathered feedback for service improvement
To integrate the analyzed feedback to the office workplan, to ensure that	Utilization of analyzed feedback	Head of office, office personnel	Prior to the start of the new school year	Data utilization, relevant office MO

the declared mission and objectives are clearly captured by the rendered services and programs				

More so, the proposal shows the different phases when an office is prodded to implement the action plan: at the onset of the school year, within the school year, and towards the school year [34]. The different phases would see to it that the observed aligned office services to office mission-objectives will remain consistent; which eventually contributes to the growth of the institution and the well-being of the stakeholders, particularly the students [33].

Further, data utilization is highlighted in the action plan considering that client feedback and office assessment results show the alignment of the intended and actual outcomes of the services; hence an intricate basis for improving office services [35].More so, continuous assessment and use of feedback further establish the appreciated performance of the institution.

Taking into account that both the office mission statement and objectives were perceived as encapsulated in the different services provided, strategies that will foster this projected impression are to be considered. This way, the student support offices will continue to live out their role as support to the general thrust of the University of Baguio to be one of the premier universities in the North.

Conclusion And Recommendations

An office mission statement and identified objectives set the direction for all the office endeavors, thus emphasizing the weight of having an assessment, at least every other year, as to how captured these are in the office services. The research study at the University of Baguio showed that the office's mission and objectives are encapsulated in the different services offered. From this, the delivery of services and resources embodies what the office is set to accomplish.

In as much as both the office mission and objectives are captured in the services they offer, the following are recommended:

- For the University of Baguio to provide opportunities for the office personnel to be informed of the relevance of reviewing office MOs, at least every other year, on basis of the received feedback from stakeholders, changing thrust of the university and changing needs and perception of the population served;

- For offices with MOs which were crafted 3 years ago and onwards, to consider MO review as part of the office strategic planning; and
- For future researchers to venture into the same research topic using the involvement of more stakeholders

References

1. *Chankseliani, M., Qoraboyev, I., & Gimranova, D. Higher education contributing to local, national, and global development: new empirical and conceptual insights. High Educ 81, 109–127 (2021).*
2. *Boni, A., & Walker, M. (2016). Universities and global human development: theoretical and empirical insights for social change. London: Routledge.*
3. *Chang, G.W. (2008). Strategic planning in Education: some concepts and method [UNESCO].*
4. *Oketch, M., McCowan,T.& Schendel, R. (2014). The impact of tertiary education on development.*
5. *Laguador, J. (2020). Dynamism of vision and mission statements of Philippine Higher Education Institutions. Asia Pacific Journal of Education, Arts & Sciences 7 (4), 51-68.*
6. *Oruonye, E.D. & Ojeh, V. N. (2018). An Appraisal of the Attainment of Goals and Objectives of Vision and Mission Statements of Taraba State University at 10 Year Anniversary.*
7. *Gurley, K., Peters G., Collins, L. & Fifolt, M. (2014). Mission, vision, values and goals: An exploration of key organizational statements and daily practice in schools. Journal of Educational Change 16 (2).*
8. *Ozdem,G. (2011). An analysis of the mission and vision statements on the strategic plans of Higher Education Institutions. Educational Sciences: theory and practice, 11(4), 1887-1894.*
9. *Tan, D. & Borres, T. (2020). Awareness, acceptability, consistency and clarity of the vision, mission, goals and objectives of Central Mindanao University and its congruence to outcomes-based instruction: A preliminary result. 32. 93-98.*
10. *Castillo, R. (2014). Awareness, Acceptance and Perception of Batangas State University Stakeholders towards its Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives. International Journal of Sciences: Basic and Applied Research (IJSBAR).*
11. *Hofstrand, H. (2016). Vision and Mission Statements -- a Roadmap of Where You Want to Go and How to Get There. Iowa State University.*
12. *Arado, L. M., Mendoza, A. D., & Esmero, D. P (2019). Awareness, understanding, acceptance, and congruency of the pit vision and mission, college goal and program objectives. International Journal of Science and Management Studies (IJSMS), 2(2), 168-175.*
13. *Roblek, V. & Meško, M. (2018). The importance of vision and mission for organizational development and growth.*

14. Holwick, J. (2009). Assessment of institutional strategic goal realization: a case study ED 532384). ERIC.

15. Almazan, C. G. O., Galangue, C. S., & Bueno, D. C. (2017). Total quality management (TQM) in Practice at a private higher education institution in the Philippines. In International Conference on Law, Business, Education and Corporate Social Responsibility (LBECSR-17) Sept (pp. 21-22).

16. Allen, K.A., & Kern, H. (2018, January 14). School vision and mission statements should not be dismissed as empty words. The Conversation.

17. Nderu-Boddington, E. (2009). Organizational Goals and Mission Statements in Educational Institutions (ED 504297). ERIC.

18. Abu hasan, H.F., Ilias, A., Rahman, R., & Razak, M. (2009). Service quality and student satisfaction: a case study at private higher education institutions. International Business Research 1(3), 163-175

19. Hoyt, J. E. (2021). Student Connections: The Critical Role of Student Affairs and Academic Support Services in Retention Efforts. Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice, 0(0).

20. Prodigy. (2019). School mission statements. The 2021 guide [+ 6 writing tips].

21. Niwlikar, B. (2021). What is perception and its core approaches as per different psychologist? Careershodh.

22. Siming, L., Niamatullah., Xu,D., & Khurrum, S. (2015). Factors leading to students' satisfaction in the Higher Learning Institutions. Journal of Education and Practice 6(31),114-118.

23. ASQ. (2023). What is Total Quality Management (TQM)?

24. Vocabulary.com. (2023). Objective.

25. Lutkevich, B., Roy, M. & Sales, F. (2023). Organizational goals. TechTarget.

26. Commission on Higher Education (2017). Enhanced Policies and Guidelines on Student Affairs and Services.

27. Villar, I.V., (2017). Empowering lives through comprehensive guidance programs (2nd ed.). Aligned Transformations Education

28. Kanwar, A. & Sanjeeva, M. (2022). Student satisfaction survey: A key for quality improvement in the higher education institution. Journal of Innovation and Entrepreneurship 11(22).

29. Jhangiani, R. & Tarry, H. (n.d.). 5.4 Individual differences in person perception. BCcampus.

30. Estacio, L. & Latogan, M.S. (2021). A look into the school experiences of UB graduating students. University of Baguio Research Journal 45(1), pp.75-93.

31. King, M. (2023). 3 exceptional examples of strategic planning in Education [Envisio].

32. Gat-eb, J. (2023). Instructional leadership in the context of program assessment and evaluation [PowerPoint slides]. University of Baguio.

33. Schuh, J., West, A. & Dunn-Coetzee,M. (2020). Research, evaluation, assessment and strategy in student affairs. University World News.