

RATIONALIZING PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION: A CASE OF THE POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES

Author:

Lenina F. De Guzman

Instructor I

Polytechnic University of the Philippines

Manila, Philippines

ABSTRACT:

Rationalizing government organizations and institutions to adapt to the new demands and complexities of a relentlessly modernizing and globalizing world is a crucial task by governments in developing countries. Rationalization is typically done through the enactment and implementation of laws that are attuned to the logic of a global-capitalist system. In the Philippines, Higher Education is one such field that a couple of decades ago was set for rationalization through the creation of a government agency—the Commission on Higher Education or CHED—by a legislation. Mandated to rationalize higher education institutions (HEIs) in both the private and public spheres for avowed systemic ends, CHED was created through the enactment of the Higher Education Act of 1994 (Republic Act 7722). The rationalization process of Philippine Higher Education, however, was set into motion three years later through the enactment of Republic Act 8292 also known as the Higher Education Modernization Act of 1997.

This research study critically examines the rationalization of the largest state university in the country, the Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP), through the regulation and monitoring of the CHED following the principles, tenets and rules of RA 8292. Using the frames of Max Weber's Rationalization Theory and Jurgen Habermas' Lifeworld Colonization by the System, the study specifically analyzes the expected clashes of traditional practices and internal culture in PUP with the rationalizing actors and instruments of the Commission and the outcomes of such clashes. The researcher employed descriptive-analytical qualitative research methods and techniques in accomplishing a descriptive-analytical-critical evaluation of the structures and the processes that have been created in PUP in the course of the implementation of the Higher Education Modernization Act of 1997.

KEYWORDS: Public Higher Education, Rationalization, Modernization, Critical Theory