



Enhancing Quality Assurance in a Philippine University through Course Review (Phase 1: Part 1) : An Interlevel Dynamics Approach

Philippe John Sipacio
*National University
De La Salle University
philippe_sipacio@dlsu.edu.ph*

Abstract: The emergent concepts of globalization and internationalization, and the possible impacts of Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) Economic Integration have resulted in an urgent need to enhance quality assurance (QA) in higher educational institutions. In the Philippines, this call has been responded by the Commission of Higher Education (CHED) through CHED Memorandum Order (CMO) – Number 46- series of 2012 spelled out as Policy-standard to enhance QA in Philippine Higher education through an outcomes-based and typology-based QA. However, at the National University Manila (NU), there seemed to have a misalignment of its current QA system to CMO 46, 2012. I conducted an action research to align the QA at NU to CMO 46. Interlevel dynamics in insider action research approach by Coghlan and Brannick (2014) was used in this study. Specifically, this study, as part of the first phase of a large-scale research project, determined the present internal QA system on the curricular programs of the College of Education, Arts, and Sciences (CEAS) particularly the Bachelor Arts major in English (ABE) where I am currently a faculty member. Participant-observation, interview, and document analysis were used for data generation. The results revealed several manifestations of the stated issue in the ABE programs specifically in the curriculum. Likewise, the results showed the need and nature of intervention; that is course review. Impacts of intervention will continually be monitored through observations of the patterns of activities created and implemented by the College. The findings will also be significant especially when this paper extrapolates to other aspects of QA such as governance and management, quality of teaching and learning particularly on faculty profile and appropriate learning resources, quality of professional exposure, research and creative work, support for students, and relations with the community.

Key Words: Quality Assurance; National University; Course Review; Interlevel Dynamics; Insider Action Research

1. PURPOSE AND RATIONALE OF THE RESEARCH

The emergent concepts of globalization and internationalization and the possible impacts of ASEAN Economic Integration have resulted in an urgent need to enhance QA in higher educational institutions. In the Philippines, this call has been responded by the CHED through CMO - No. 46-s2012 spelled out as Policy-standard to enhance QA

in Philippine Higher education through an outcomes-based and typology-based QA.

This action research is primarily geared towards effecting transformational change to the internal QA system at NU with the active participation of the key officials and members, and the researcher as an insider. The change evolves from issues on misalignment of the governance and management, quality of teaching and learning, quality of professional exposure, research and



creative work, support for students, and relations with the community at NU to the descriptions of QA stated in CMO - No. 46- s2012. The said misalignment is critical to what CHED demands higher educational institutions like NU ought to be- “Philippine higher education is mandated to contribute to building a quality nation capable of transcending the social, political, economic, cultural and ethical issues that constrain the country’s human development, productivity and global competitiveness” (CMO - No. 46- s2012, Article 1, Section 1, p. 1).

This present paper is the first part of the phase one of a large-scale project. The focus is on the curricular programs of the CEAS particularly ABE, where I serve as a faculty member. The present internal QA system on the curricular programs of the said college is determined and analyzed. The results of the analysis are the basis for designing and implementing interventions, which target is to enhance the QA.

2. CONTEXT

2.1 Quality Assurance in Higher Educational Institutions

The stark facts on QA have remained to be an interesting field of study especially those who believe in revolutionary form of education (Holm, Sammalisto, & Vuorisalo, 2014; Hou, Chen, & Morse, 2014; Jarvis, 2014 a/b; Lucas, 2014; Prisacariu, 2014; Sava, Borca, & Danciu, 2014; Wang, 2014; Yat & Lo, 2014; Puteh, Habil, & Azli, 2013; Kahveci, Uygun, Yurtsever, & Ilyas, 2012; Huet, et al, 2011; Carroll, 2010; Pond, 2001). With regard to the definition of QA, the stance of these practitioners/researchers is that QA means differently to different stakeholders (e.g. administrators, teachers, parents, and students) because each of them has different priorities. Instead of defining QA, practitioners/researchers suggest that indicators in assessing quality should be clearly defined. This proposition has become the basis of viewing QA in the context of higher education.

Wang (2014) emphasizes the importance of involving teachers and students in QA to help define quality in higher education in China. Another study by Holm, Sammalisto, and Vuorisalo (2014) reveals that QA can contribute to the goal of education for sustainable development through

relevant policies and enhance cooperation among stakeholders. However, QA must adhere to the demands of 21st century that require a learner-focused framework instead of institution-focused, and must open the entire process to larger stakeholder compositions (Pond, 2001).

Jarvis (2014a) contends that there is an increasing global popularity of using QA as regulatory tool specifically in the management of higher educational institutions. Likewise, Jarvis (2014b) argues that this popularity is explained “as a process of policy diffusion, the advent of marketization, the spread of neoliberalism, massification and, concomitantly, the emergence of a ‘global market’ for higher education, prompting governments to respond by validating standards, quality, and introducing certification and compliance regimes” (p. 237). Clearly, the proposition of Jarvis (2014b) suggests efforts for all stakeholders including in political and economic sectors to produce, implement, and enforce relevant policies to revolutionize higher education.

Meanwhile, Carroll (2010) offers a pluralistic framework for QA that defines global standards that are localised. This framework embeds the concept of glocalization, which can balance the global and local strengths of universities and colleges in realizing their roles in nation building and social development. Related to this one is the argument of Yat and Lo (2014) in the context of Singapore. It states that in 2009 Singapore experienced reform of higher education because the establishment of QA mechanisms integrating of various political and economic agendas at the global and local levels (ibid). Similarly, Hou, Chen, and Morse (2014) provide another view on QA integrating glocalization. The core argument is that Taiwan’s higher education transforms its QA systems based on the concepts of global, national, and local (glonacal) for institutional autonomy through self-accreditation.

Another interesting view is postulated by Huet, et al (2011) highlighting the importance of research-based studies to enhance QA especially used for teaching and learning.

Nevertheless, Lucas (2014) state that there is academic resistance to QA processes. This resistance, however, provides an opportunity for the stakeholders to overhaul and improve QA mechanisms. Additionally, Lucas (2014) mentions that critiques of QA are attributed to its superficiality in a sense that it does not actually



contribute in improving teaching and learning practices in colleges and universities.

2.2 Quality Assurance in Philippine Higher Educational Institutions

In the Philippines, several policies have been implemented with regard to QA. The basis of these policies is the Section 1 of Article 14 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution, which states “the State shall protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels.” This provision led to the creation of CHED through Republic Act 7722 (Higher Education Act of 1994), which part of its objective is to monitor and assess performance of programs and higher educational institutions. Ruiz and Sabio (2012) identified classifications of QA mechanisms: (1) program-based and (2) institution-based

1. Program-based mechanisms include:

- a. CHED authority to grant permit, recognition
- b. CHED Standards Setting
 - Policies and Standards (PS) for minimum standards
 - Technical Panels, Task Forces, Technical Committees and Technical Working Group
 - Regional Quality Assessment Teams (RQATS)
- c. Accreditation - conducted by accrediting bodies federated under Federation of Accrediting Agencies in the Philippines (FAAP) and National Network of Quality Accrediting Agencies (NNQAA)
- d. International Certifications – APEC Registry; Washington Accord, etc.
- e. Center of Development (COD); Center of Excellence (COE)
- f. International Benchmarking

2. The institution-based mechanisms are:

- a. Institutional Quality Assurance through Monitoring and Evaluation (IQUAME)
- b. Assessment for SUC Leveling
- c. Philippine Quality Award (PQA)
- d. Autonomous and Deregulated Status of Private HEIs

- e. PSG for University Status
- f. Local Colleges and Universities
- g. Government Quality Management System (p. 65)

In 2009 CHED Annual Report, CMO- Nos. 15 & 16- s2005 (IQUAME) was highlighted. It underscores “a mechanism for monitoring and evaluating the outcomes of the programs, processes and services of higher education institution in the key are of quality of teaching and learning as supported by the governance and management, support students, relations with community and management of resources” (Ruiz & Sabio, 2012, p. 65). Therefore, this is a policy that clarifies the valuable role and the support of CHED for stakeholders to design and implement QA system in the Philippine higher educational institutions.

Another is the Executive Order No. 605, 2007 (Institutionalizing the Structure Mechanisms and Standards to Implement the Government and Standards to Implement the Government Quality Management Program). This identifies and awards institutions that promote standards with International Organization (ISO) 9000 series.

Defensor (2010) outlines the issues in Philippine QA. This includes the functional role of the Coordinating Council Accreditation, the voluntary concept of accreditation through CMO- No. 01 s2005 (Revised Policies and Guidelines on Voluntary Accreditation in Aid of Quality and Excellence in Higher Education), which results in few schools undergoing accreditation process, the below the national percentage passing rate licensure examinations of most of the colleges and universities, and the overlapping function of CHED and other government agencies considering regulatory functions.

2.3 Quality Assurance Framework (CMO- No. 46- s2012)

CMO- No. 46- s2012 is issued with an aim “to enhance the QA system of Philippine higher education through learning competency based standards and an outcomes-based system of QA that is differentiated by type of higher educational institutions” (p. 1). Clearly, this policy demands higher educational institutions to serve its purpose of building a quality nation “capable of transcending the social, political, economic, cultural and ethical issues that constrain the country’s



human development, productivity and global competitiveness” (ibid).

Article 11, Sections 6-10 of CMO- No. 46- s2012 describe the QA framework used in the Philippines. Succinctly, it defines quality based on three perspectives:

1. Quality as “fitness for purpose” is generally used by international bodies for assessment and accreditation. This perspective requires the translation of the institution’s vision, mission, and goals into learning outcomes, programs, and systems;
2. Quality as “exceptional” means either being distinctive; exceeding very high standards; or conformance to standards based on a system of comparability using criteria and ratings; the third characteristic underlies CHED’s definition of “exceptional”;
3. Quality as “developing cultures of quality” is the transformational dimension of the CHED notion of quality (p. 3).

Other sections describe the mechanisms, procedures, and processes that define and underlie in QA. Please refer to Appendix for full details of the framework.

2.4 Course Review Concepts

The defining concepts of course review as an intervention to QA issues used in this context of the paper are the proposition of Gibson (1993), which is globally accepted definitions. According to Gibson (1993), course review is a process that evaluates and monitors course offered in a particular institution operationally conducted by its Academic Policy Committee or its equivalent. The activity includes preparing current course syllabi, conducting evaluation meetings, synthesizing results, and restructuring, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing courses.

Effectiveness of course review as an intervention to address issues in QA at NU can be determined once its impact of change is assessed through a critical interlevel dynamics of change (Coghlan & Brannick, 2014), which states

The change process has to begin somewhere, and typically it begins with an individual, although not exclusively at the

top. For the change agenda to progress, that individual has to take it to a team, and that team needs to adopt the need for change. When a management team adopts the need for change and begins to act, it has then to win over other teams in the system. Each of these movements- from individual to team to other teams- is an iterative process (pp. 99-100).

2.5 Brief Background of NU

After it was acquired by the SM Group of Companies in 2008, NU has engaged in several developments such as improvement of infrastructures, offering relevant curricular programs, modernization of facilities, and enhancement of student and faculty productivity and profile. The following provides relevant guiding statements of NU gleaned from its official web page (NU, 2014):

Vision

National University, characterized by its cultural heritage of dynamic Filipinism, envisions itself as a leading educational institution committed to nation building.

Mission

National University provides relevant, innovative, and accessible quality education and other development programs to:

1. Its students, by developing them into moral, spiritual, and responsible citizens;
2. Its employees, by enhancing their competencies and providing them a rewarding work environment
3. Its alumni, by cultivating in them a sense of pride and commitment to their alma mater;
4. Its community, by contributing to the uplift of various aspects of life of its members;
5. Its industry partners and employers; by providing them with graduates who will contribute to their growth and development.

Goals

The National University provides a nurturing learning environment. It strives to continually innovate and improve its programs and services. Its programs are student-centered, experiential in methodology, competency-based and relevant in content. It shapes students into leaders and team players, provide them with essential skills to empower them to become global professionals with the right attitude toward success.

Quality Policy

Guided by the philosophy of dynamic Filipinism, all the members of National University commit to develop the students into total persons and inculcate in them, moral and spiritual values and all that is good in the Filipino by complying with the appropriate customer, regulatory and statutory, and other requirements and continually improve the effectiveness of our organization. Such improvement and effectiveness shall be measured based on the quality and timeliness of services we deliver to our students and competencies of our teaching and non-teaching employees.

One of the colleges at NU is the College of Education, Arts and Science (CEAS), which offers Bachelor in Teacher Education and Bachelor of Arts program for undergraduate and graduate level. For this present study, the context is CEAS particularly its Bachelor of Arts in English (ABE). As a member of a faculty, I have assigned to teach Research and Creative Writing courses as a major of ABE undergraduate students, and Communication Techniques course as a cognate/elective of graduate students.

3. METHODOLOGY AND METHODS OF INQUIRY

This paper used the multiple action research cycles of Coghlan and Brannick (2014) (Figure 2), which are “operating concurrently and these cycles have different time spans” (p. 12). However, I only covered cycle one for this paper.

More specifically, this paper used the organizational dynamics of insider action research model of Coghlan and Brannick (2014) (Figure 3),

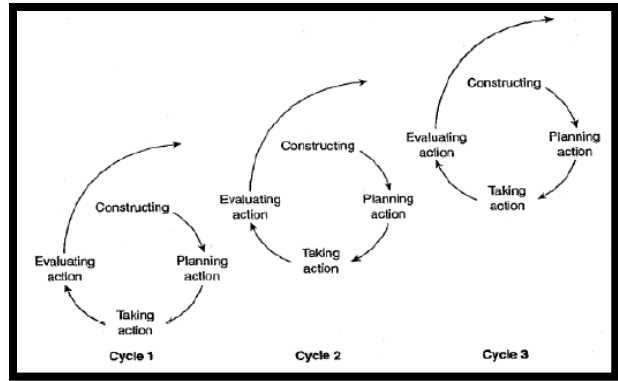


Fig 1. Spiral of Action Research Cycles (Coghlan & Brannick, 2014)

which interlevel dynamics operates. This model provides “frames to understand how participation in human systems is developed through increasing complexity as individuals, individuals in groups and teams, individuals in groups and teams which are part of an interdepartmental group with other groups and teams, the interdepartmental group within an organization which itself is a participant in a sector, market and global economy” (p. 107).

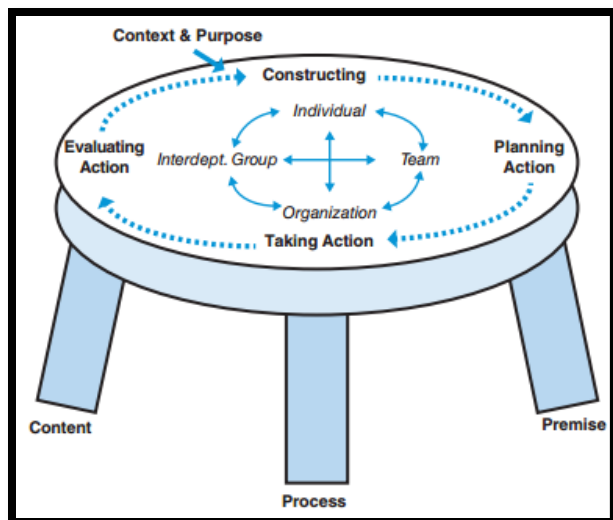


Fig 2. The Organizational Dynamics of Action Research (Coghlan & Brannick, 2014)

3.1 Data Generation and Intervention

Case study was used to determine the issues in the QA system at NU and the nature and



need of intervention. To triangulate the findings, data were generated through participant observations, one-on-one interviews, and document analysis. Observations were based on what the researcher as the insider exactly observes and describes the context of the study. The framework for journal-keeping by Schein (1999, 2013 cited in Coghlan and Brannick, 2014) known as ORJI (Observation, Reaction, Judgement, Intervention) was used. Interviews were conducted with open-ended questions to the Vice President of the Academic Affairs, Director of the Quality Assurance Office, Consultant of the Quality Management, Dean of the CEAS, Head of the English Sector, Head of the Social Science Sector, Head of the Psychology Sector, and three full-time and three part-time English faculty members. The questions were based on the five strategic foci that entail interlevel dynamics of change (Coghlan and Brannick, 2014): (1) Who are we?; (2) What do we want to be good at?; (3) How do we assess the external world that affects us? (4) How do we make choices and implement them?; (5) How do we assess what we are doing? Current syllabi for all courses offered for an ABE major were subject to document analysis.

3.2 Implementation

With my participation as the insider researcher, selected faculty members, sector head, dean, director and consultant of QA, and vice president of academic affairs, intervention on how to address issue on quality assurance alignment were identified and could be implemented given the constraint in schedules of the key informants and time. The changes were, are, and will be continually monitored by the researcher with interlevel dynamics of change concepts in mind.

3.3 Evaluation

Evaluation of changes that can occur in the QA at NU particularly in the ABE program was, is, and will be continually done using Interlevel Dynamic of Change (Coghlan and Brannick, 2014). The assessment was undertaken supposedly through reflection journals (self, team, interdepartment, and organizational) of key informants and one-on-one interview with them, observations, and plenary sessions. For the sake of this paper and given the schedule and time constraints, however, reflection journals were only

used as a tool. The contents of the journals are also based on the five strategic foci that entail interlevel dynamics of change (Coghlan and Brannick, 2014): (1) Who are we?; (2) What do we want to be good at?; (3) How do we assess the external world that affects us? (4) How do we make choices and implement them?; (5) How do we assess what we are doing?

4. STORY AND OUTCOMES

4.1 Presentation of Findings

Individual Level. Based on my observations and the documents (syllabi and development plan) there seems to have a misalignment between the current QA system at NU and the CMO 46. The manifestations include the mismatch between NU's vision, mission, and goals into learning outcomes, programs, and systems as reflected in NU's curriculum, teaching, resources, research productivity, incompetent graduates, and community engagement. I thought that NU's non-participation in the accreditation process can justify my observations. In this sense, there is a need to address this misalignment through enhancing QA system at NU. The rationale is to respond to the mandate of CHED that is for "Philippine higher education to contribute to building a quality nation capable of transcending the social, political, economic, cultural and ethical issues that constrain the country's human development, productivity and global competitiveness" (CHED, 2012, p.1). First step to enhancing QA is through course review in the college level.

Group or Team Level. I conducted an individual face-to-face interview with English Sector Head, three full-time faculty members and three part-time faculty members at a different period of time. Generally, my observations and theirs are similar to a very great extent. Below show some of their responses.

Speaker A: "The curriculum seems to be outdated. Maybe because the Sy family does not really see NU as an academic community, but as sports academy..."

Speaker B: "... I don't see the QA system at NU is relevant anymore. I base my statement on the



results of Board Exams. If you check the results, performance of NU test takers is below expectations...”

Speaker C: “I am affiliated with three universities because of my part-time status. If I compare NU with my other affiliations, I would say NU is far behind in terms of quality graduates...”

Speaker D: “CEAS has never underwent [sic] the PAASCU because of obvious reasons. There is no problem in quality of teaching here because there are many good teachers around. The problem maybe is due to the lack of resources and programs for student development.”

Speaker E: “The syllabi are not even properly checked in terms of specific competencies that every student needs to develop after they take the subjects...”

When I asked about how issue on quality can be addressed, majority of them recommended a continual curriculum mapping or review, which should occur every after the semester.

Intergroup Level. The responses of the English Sector Head, Psychology Sector Head, and Social Science Sector Head during the individual interview were considered. However, it can be noticed that their observations on the QA at NU are slightly different compared to mine and other faculty member-informants’.

Speaker A: “I think NU promotes quality in all aspects. In fact, there have been several instances that NU gives values to uplifting its standard of education to meet the global demands. One example is the yearly professional development for teachers who have no Master’s degree yet. Another is offering

curricular programs that will help NU students become employability... If I see a problem in the QA system at NU, maybe it’s not too serious...”

Speaker B: “As far as I know, QA system at NU is still relevant. Otherwise, enrolment every semester is decreasing...”

Speaker C: “If there’s an issue in QA system, I think NU immediately addresses it. Being the Sector Head, I ensure quality is embedded in all aspects of our programs...”

Curriculum review is also recommended by the informants in case issue on QA is identified.

Organizational Level. At this level, NU is represented by Rachel Editha Roxas, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Estrellita Valeros-Gruenberg, Consultant-Quality Management, Arlene Trillanes, Director-Quality Management Office, and Rowena de Guzman, Dean- CEAS.

Results of the interview to key informants highlighted significant points about QA system. First, NU does not have a clear policy statement or framework for quality in teaching and learning. Because of this, NU is currently undergoing an academic restructure with focus on faculty and student development (Roxas, personal communication, November 22, 2014). Second, as stressed by Trillanes and Valeros-Gruenberg, NU has not yet identified external inputs essential in validating the internal QA system (Trillanes & Valeros-Gruenberg, personal communication, November 21, 2014). Nevertheless, this is now addressed by preparing a few of NU curricular programs namely Computer Engineering and Computer Science to undergo initial phase accreditation by Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities (PAASCU) sometime in 2015 (Valeros-Gruenberg, personal communication, November 21, 2014). Third, NU does not offer a sustainable training to all academic and non-academic personnel, which primarily aims to encourage and promote positive attitude towards a comprehensible QA. “That, however, has been addressed with a plenary session facilitated by Dr.



Brian Gozun, former Dean of the Ramon V. Del Rosario College of Business, De La Salle University... I think that's a good jumpstart..." (Roxas, personal communication, November 22, 2014).

With regard to CEAS, Roxas stated that several work needs to be done particularly in aligning the curriculum to CMO 46 But, the work should begin in reviewing the current courses offered by the college (Roxas, personal communication, November 22, 2014).

4.2 Implementing the Action Program

After two weeks (November 10- 22) of data generation, I finalized with my informants during the interview the interventions I planned to implement. Together, we decided on course review at the college level. The activity as mentioned includes preparing current course syllabi, conducting evaluation meetings, synthesizing results, and restructuring, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing courses. For the sake of this paper, I began with CEAS because it is where I am currently involved as a faculty member; the focus of the course review is the ABE program. However, only two major courses underwent the review due to time constraints. These are Research Output and Creative Writing, which I have been assigned to teach.

Supposedly the course review should be attended by my key informants. However, it was difficult to gather them because of our schedules which were conflicting. Hence, only those who were available such as myself two, full-time faculty members and English Sector Head attended the first three-phase meeting that include preparing current course syllabi, conducting evaluation meetings, and synthesizing results. The outputs of this meeting, which are the revised syllabi and revised curriculum were submitted physically to my other key informants not present in the meeting for feedback.

In the process of course review, CMO 46 framework was used. As mentioned, three concepts were considered: (1) Quality as "fitness for purpose"; (2) Quality as "exceptional"; (3) Quality as "developing a culture of quality".

The final phase of course review (i.e. implementing, monitoring, and reviewing courses) has not been implemented yet because classes in the current semester have had begun by the time this intervention was implemented.

4.3 Evaluating the Program Impact

Because the output of the final phase of course review has not been implemented yet due to the stated reason, the change in the QA of the ABE programs is obviously not yet observable. With this, I considered instead the possible change that may occur once the revised syllabus and revised curriculum will be implemented, monitored, and reviewed. The table below shows some of the reflections of the key informants (KIs) extracted from their journals.

Table 1. Possible Changes to the QA of the ABE Programs

KIs	Extracted Reflections
1	"With the new leadership named at NU, the picture will be reframed clearly. Along with it, new set of priorities will be defined including the alignment of the learning outcomes of NU to the educational policy framework of CHED. The conduct of course review is a good start."
2	"I am looking forward to a transformational change that may happen once the results of course review are disseminated."
3	"I think it's about time to translate NU words into action. With the outcomes of this course review, I am hoping that everything will be in place..."
4	"I believe the revised syllabus and curriculum will have a positive impact on the image of NU as it moves to the next level."
5	"I am positive that academic leadership aimed by NU will be achieved through the outcomes of course review..."

Looking into the responses/reflections of the KIs gleaned from their respective journals, I can surmise the lifelong and experiential learning that took place in the process of the implementation of the intervention. That kind of learning is a clear evidence of transformative education. More significantly, my key informants have a manifested a conscious exploration of their experiences through course review being considered as one intellectual and affective activity. Consequently, this has led to new understandings, to making sense, to making meaning, to working



with meaning, and ultimately to transformative learning (deep reflection) (Mezirow, 1996).

As regards QA at NU, there appears to be an interest in enhancing it making it more effective and relevant. This observation supports the proposition of Jarvis (2014a/b) in relation to revolutionizing higher education. This kind of dramatic turn in education, however, should involve all stakeholders especially teachers and students (Wang, 2014) and other sectors (e.g. economic, political, or social) (Jarvis, 2014b) to achieve sustainability (Vuorisalo, 2014) in the context of 21st century (Pond, 2001).

5. SELF-REFLECTION AND LEARNING OF THE ACTION RESEARCH

Personally, I like to use the Expected Lasallian Graduate Attributes (ELGAs) as a starting point of my reflection on the content, process, and premise (Mezirow 1991 cited in Coghlan and Brannick, 2014) of/in conducting this action research on enhancing the QA at NU by making it attuned to CMO 46. These ELGAs include (1) critical and creative thinker; (2) ethical, humanistic, logical, innovative, strategic and creative decision makers; (3) technically proficient and competent professionals and leaders; (4) effective communicators; and, (5) reflective life-long learners.

I have learned to develop a deep sense of critical and creative thinking in the process. One illustration is my ability to develop, implement, and communicate a research topic relevant and significant to the development of my organization such as NU in the contexts of 21st century pedagogy, internationalization in higher educational institution, and ASEAN Economic Integration. Likewise, I have learned to value quality, rigor, validity, and ethical considerations in business research particularly insider action research.

I have found my topic for this paper to be challenging because I am a new member to my current organization and to introduce innovation such as conducting a course review can be daunting to my colleagues. But because I have turned the challenge into an opportunity and I have learned to appreciate proficiency and competency expected of me as a professional and leader, I am able to at least effect change to some extent. Unfortunately,

I was not able to identify the change that course review can impact the QA of the ABE program at NU. Nevertheless, I am very positive that with the statements reflected in the journals of my informants, my purpose of enhancing the QA system of the ABE program at NU through alignment to CMO 46 will be achieved.

The context of insider action research is quite new to me as a social science student. In this sense, I have felt diffident to go through the process of constructing, planning action, taking action, and evaluating action and extend the same process to another cycle. But, I have used my knowledge in participatory development, which is attuned to the goals of an insider action research, and my expertise in effective communication, which is essential as I go through the rigour required in the procedures.

On the other hand, the use of transformative education framework fits in Coghlan and Brannick's concept of interlevel insider action research. The interface is in terms of the dynamics of change. That change should start somewhere that the individual is expected to extend it to a team. The team adopts and enacts the change, which the team win over other teams within the organization. For the change to effect, there is a need for transformation through meta-learning and/or deep reflection of learning.

As mentioned, this paper is a baby step towards realizing the primary purpose of my big project at NU. That is to enhance its QA. So, my journey to realizing that purpose is obviously still long and winding. But, I am glad that I have started to create an impact and effect change.

6. EXTRAPOLATION TO A BROADER CONTEXT AND ARTICULATION OF USABLE KNOWLEDGE

This action research has been conducted with my purpose to align QA at NU particularly ABE program of CEAS to CMO 26 using interlevel dynamics approach. My observations and results of the analysis of pertinent documents as regard the manifestations of the issue were justified to a moderately extent by my key informants namely Vice President of the Academic Affairs, Director of the Quality Assurance Office, Consultant of the Quality Management, Dean of the CEAS, Head of



the English Sector, Head of the Social Science Sector, Head of the Psychology Sector, and three full-time and three part-time English faculty members. Generally, the results described the need and nature of intervention; that is, course review. However, the change that course review can possibly impact on the QA of the ABE program at NU was not yet observed because the final phase of the intervention cannot be possibly implemented due to internal policy issues.

As mentioned, this study is part one of phase one of a bigger research project. Hence, the stated findings can be extrapolated to other aspects of QA such as governance and management, quality of teaching and learning particularly on faculty profile and appropriate learning resources, quality of professional exposure, research and creative work, support for students, and relations with the community.

In addition, extrapolation of this study will be leading towards elaborating a framework of first, second and third person research. First person research can be in relation to my experience of personal and professional growth through insider action research. This addresses how I engage in inquiry and learning about my experience and how I act in the process. Second person research can address how this action research can involve a team process between me and my colleagues. This can address how I create a community of inquiry through working with a team. Finally, third person research can address how I transport first and second person audience to a wider community and contribute to the existing body of knowledge.

Finally, the interface between transformative education and interlevel dynamics action research was explored in this present study. Part of the engagement could be theory building through observation, decision-making, problem-solving, empowerment, and critical thinking among others.

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