Whither the Professor? Crafting a Viable Business Doctoral Program in a Developing Country

Chip E. Miller, Matthew C. Mitchell, and Jeffrey A. Kappen
Drake University – College of Business and Public Administration, USA

Melanie Balenzuela De Ocampo
University of San Carlos, Philippines

Abstract. Universities in many developing nations seek to enhance their business education programs to support their national economies. One problem often faced by such institutions is a shortage of fully trained doctoral faculty. This paper uses an institutional lens to identify and explore the material and non-material factors that have influenced the efforts of one private university in the Philippines to establish a doctoral program in business. Recommended strategies for addressing these challenges are provided.

Keywords: doctoral education, business pedagogy, developing country institutions.

1. Introduction

The developing nations of East Asia are striving to improve their economies and increase their influence in global trade. An important facet of national competitiveness is improving access to quality business education programs (PRWeb 2012, Speece 2007). The increasing demand for tertiary education, however, creates many challenges for local universities who struggle to meet the demand for college graduates who are prepared to make contributions in the workplace (Jimenez 2010, Ordonez & Ordonez 2008, EAHEP 2010). An important contributing factor to these issues is a shortage of qualified professors who have the requisite business experience and academic training. Importing professors and books from abroad, whose knowledge and examples may not be relevant to those who work in quickly changing emerging markets, is not a viable long-term strategy to address the needs of these institutions in developing nations (Jocano 1999).

The role of the university and higher education should continually adapt to meet the needs of society (Duderstadt 1999, Owen & Demb 2004, Tabata & Johnsrud 2008). The traditional standard of the professor as the source of
knowledge who lectures to students that copy and memorize it – the lowest level on Bloom’s taxonomy of learning – will only serve to leave these nations trailing in education and creation of new knowledge (Bloom & Krathwohl 1956). Instead, universities in developing countries must now confront the dual demands to supply industry with graduates trained for the knowledge economy and to conduct research that expands academic knowledge relevant to the local institutional context (Davis, Schoorman, & Donaldson 1997, Hofstede 1983). Doctoral programs to train qualified faculty are essential to achieve the national economic imperatives of these countries.

Unfortunately, due to shortages of qualified PhDs in many developing countries, universities may resort to less than optimal approaches to train doctoral students or hire new faculty (Ordonez & Ordonez 2008). It is not unusual to have a student receive a BA, MBA and EdD or PhD from the same school, and then remain at the university as a professor. This stifles learning and, in the case of using EdDs to teach business, is insufficient training to perform the tasks expected of a business professor. This in turn leads to what Birnbaum (2000) describes as “the grand idea without the grand thing” i.e., individuals have the right letters behind their names, and may contribute in the classroom, but cannot provide the full depth and breadth of analytical experience of a fully trained PhD faculty member. To ensure the creation of quality original research, doctoral programs must thus fulfill their mission to produce adequately trained scholars (Merton 1973).

To provide insight into how these global dynamics play out at the local level, this paper profiles the efforts of one Filipino university to create a viable business PhD program while facing significant faculty resource constraints. As an illustration, the Commission on Higher Education in the Philippines reported in 2008 that only about 40% of faculty members held a master’s degree or doctorate in their fields. There is a notable shortage of available research about developing sustainable doctoral programs in developing countries. In fact, the Global Business School Network, a leading professional association dedicated to “bringing excellence in management education to the developing world” has highlighted the need for more research specifically addressing the challenges faced by PhD programs in developing countries (Leander 2014). Additionally, the scant research available on Filipino higher education has shown that universities have had difficulties building a strong base of skilled researchers despite interest in being known internationally for research (Calma 2011). Therefore, in this paper we utilize an institutional theory perspective to identify and explore the material and non-material factors that may influence the development of a doctoral program in the developing world. In the hopes of offering guidelines to schools in similar situations that seek to leverage their existing assets, we conclude by offering possible strategies for addressing challenges faced while creating a sustainable doctoral program. In summary, these analyses and subsequent recommendations will provide schools in
developing countries with a framework to help them avoid common pitfalls associated with starting and maintaining a viable PhD program.

2. An Institutional Perspective

How might universities in developing countries go about creating a doctoral program to meet increasing demands? An institutional approach calls our attention to doctoral programs as a part of an organizational field, the recognized group of actors in any given society that together produce similar products and services (Powell & DiMaggio 1991, Wooten & Hoffman 2008). As university administrators face demands from the local environment, they have in mind the norms and expectations that membership in the field entails thus shaping what university programs should look like (Hanson 2001). These norms and expectations may constrain the legitimate options available to the participants, and through isomorphic forces, bring about similarity in structure and content within a given discipline (Rowan & Miskel 1999).

Prior institutional scholarship has examined these norms and expectations through three pillars – regulative, normative, and cognitive – that shape organizational actions and choices (Scott 2013). The regulative pillar refers to entities such as the aforementioned Commission on Higher Education (CHED) which has authority to establish, monitor and sanction activities of academic institutions within its jurisdiction. As another example, in the case of business doctoral programs, the emergence of the transnational accreditation bodies such as the “triple crown” i.e., AACSB, EQUIS, and AMBA, provide guidance to those who seek to set up programs through the supply of standards that have been accepted by peer institutions. The normative pillar would reflect stakeholders’ concerns about the proper role of the university in society. Finally, the cognitive basis for institutions relates to the creation of meanings through which individuals view the world around them. For example, the value of entrepreneurship provided by the CHED, which declares, “entrepreneurial spirit is the backbone of the economy” in its standards promotes entrepreneurial education among Filipino undergraduates.

Prior scholarship examining research universities in the Philippines has shown that they are confronted by both a lack of financial support from the government as well as problems with structuring and supporting the entire process of training researchers (Calma 2010, 2011). When facing demands for change, organizations may rely on established practices and routines or engage in a search for new solutions to their problems if feedback indicates that established processes are no longer adequate (Levitt & March 1996). For example, technological change has made it possible for local students to access foreign educational opportunities and obtain degrees outside of Asia deemed superior (Hamlin 1997). As such, universities must react to this new competition to recruit
top students, but may not have resources or strategies to do so effectively due to lack of experience. Problems encountered by universities entertaining a PhD program reflect this tension between what has worked in the past and the ambiguity of new practice in the face of change.

Despite these challenges and constraints, universities still take on the creation and design of doctoral programs. Beyond addressing the national development imperatives discussed earlier, the presence of such a program can also enhance the prestige of a school (Speece 2007). As awareness and reputation among deans of other universities play a role in most international rankings (AACSB 2013, Morse 2010, 2012), increased publishing stemming from the activities of a doctoral program could enhance a school’s reputation if the research is disseminated in peer reviewed journals that enjoy worldwide readership. While international reputation is certainly defined more broadly than just annual rankings, research productivity certainly contributes to it. Arguably, professors who advise their students about possibilities for foreign cooperation or study abroad rarely know much about the teaching in a given program first-hand, but they may have heard of a university whose faculty are actively publishing research. This is a powerful example of how the perceptions of influential actors within the wider organizational field can influence the reputation of the institution.

3. Study Design and Analysis

To explore the factors that influence the evolution of doctoral programs in a developing country like the Philippines, an ethnographic approach using multiple qualitative sources, including participant observation, interviews, and fieldwork at national education events, was carried out by the authors embedded at a major private university. This approach was chosen to gather detailed, processual data that complement extant survey research on higher education in the Philippines (e.g., Calma 2011). Henceforth, to maintain confidentiality, the school will be referred to by the pseudonym, Central Philippines University (CPU). CPU has significant standing with the Filipino Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and has business programs at the bachelors, masters and doctoral levels. The authors spent more than six months interviewing all CPU administrators, faculty, and business PhD students about the following topics: (1) Program development, (2) faculty training, (3) incentives for research and (4) other initiatives involved in launching and sustaining graduate business programs. To aid in contextualizing the CPU data, additional discussions were held with national education officials in Manila. Finally, for purposes of comparison, interviews were held with faculty and administrators of other private schools in the Philippines, Thailand, and Uganda regarding how their doctoral programs were founded and continue to operate.
In total, the data corpus contains 55 interviews conducted with key informants both inside and outside the CPU institutional structure as well as archival data collected while in the field. An inductive approach was used to generate insights into the key challenges faced by CPU. The data was coded for themes paying particular attention to the ways in which participants framed resource constraints, institutional factors affecting the establishment and maintenance of the doctoral program, and their solutions to the tasks they face. Next, we turn to the main challenges that emerged from our analysis of the data gathered from informants at CPU.

Upon entering the field, key participants from CPU informed us of their intention to become a premiere university in Asia by 2020. A key feature of this institutional plan was the high profile launch of a PhD program. At the time of our arrival, the PhD program was in the beginning stages and had not yet graduated any students. Even at this early stage, the university was faced with many challenges that threatened the continuing existence of the program. The first issue the CPU administrators had faced was to ascertain the purpose of having a doctoral program at a university. While many reasons exist as discussed earlier, this sample mission statement from a comparable university referenced by CPU administration illustrates the objectives of a “standard” doctoral program within the Philippines:

The specific objectives of the (PhD) program are 1) To provide the students with advanced theoretical, analytical and research training in their given fields of study, 2) To expose the students to the classical as well as the most current methodologies in their fields, 3) To develop academic scholars who will use their knowledge and skills to investigate issues and problems facing their communities and to develop appropriate solutions to those problems; and 4) To prepare students for careers in university teaching and research (JSU 2013).

These goals are consistent with the wider organizational field’s goals. Speece (2007) comments on these goals and translates them into an Asian context. Specifically, he proposes several challenges faced by developing country institutions.

To grow and to provide higher quality PhD training, a PhD program requires more structure. This is evident from discussion with past and current PhD students about the program, from faculty concerned about the content of the program, from analysis of the PhD programs in many top research schools in the West, and from observation of the trend in many top business schools in Asia. The PhD program needs:

- More focus on publication quality.
- Strong methodological training through PhD seminars.
- Extensive coverage of current literature in PhD seminars.
• Integration of teaching components into the program.

In this paper, we sought to investigate these challenges using a methodology that allows one to observe processes that unfold in their natural setting. Each of these goals has a significant impact on the community and the nation. The positioning statement of the mission statement provided above reflects the conditions of a developing country with its emphasis on finding solutions to community problems. Using an institutional lens, we identify and explore the material and non-material factors that influence the development the doctoral program at CPU in the Philippines. With these objectives in mind, we share the four major challenges to the goal of launching and sustaining a PhD program that emerged from our analysis of the data.

**Challenge #1: Lack of sufficient faculty with business PhDs.**

At the time of the review, CPU had only nine professors in the business school with some sort of doctorate degree who were responsible for teaching and mentoring thirteen PhD students. One PhD in business was the dean of the college, who did not teach because of administrative responsibilities. Another doctorate holder was an associate dean who was in the hospitality department who also did not teach business courses. Six of the nine were part-time faculty, which provided an additional challenge for staffing PhD seminars.

A comparison with another university in the province demonstrates the inadequacy of CPU’s staffing for the doctoral program. The competitor’s school had a total of eight full-time credentialed faculty dedicated to the PhD program. Of these, six were doctorates in business. However, these six received their terminal degree from the same school at which they were teaching. This illustrates the significant challenges faced by developing country universities to develop a PhD program that isn’t staffed by graduates of the same institution. Therefore, one of the major challenges faced by CPU administrators was the ability to staff the PhD program with the limited faculty resources available. Given the ambitions of CPU to become a globally recognized institution, let us consider the conditions at similarly sized PhD programs accredited by AACSB. Each of the following schools offers a PhD in management – not a general business PhD – and had far better faculty to student ratios than the subject school.

University of North Texas, 20 PhD faculty in management, 11 PhD students

Louisiana State University, 10 PhD faculty in management, 10 PhD students

Southern Illinois-Carbondale, 13 PhD faculty in management, 27 PhD students
In an attempt to support the program, faculty that had an MBA and an EdD were used as professors in business PhD classes. Also, philosophy professors taught in the program since nine credit hours of the thirty-six hour program consisted of philosophy courses. The result, as Birnbaum (2000) forewarned, was a PhD program that had the same structure as a legitimated program, but did not realistically deliver adequate academic preparation.

The CPU administrators also quickly recognized that the lack of properly trained professors made it nearly impossible to create an adequate dissertation committee. If a minimum of four professors were needed to make up a committee – (1) chair, (2) research methods, (3) second member from the subject area and (4) an outside member – the school lacked enough doctoral faculty to assemble a dissertation committee. The research methods person was almost always selected from outside the business college, as there was no methodological expertise within CPU. One PhD faculty member pointed out that EdD faculty members were employed too often for expedience. It was also noted that in several occasions this individual was made the chair of the committee out of necessity.

A study of other programs and solicitation of advice from CPU administrators all pointed to the same conclusion: Central Philippines University needed to have at least five PhDs in business administration to have a viable PhD program in business. Ideally, four of these should have been faculty that obtained their PhDs from another university. Several informants indicated this diversity would improve the prestige of the program and immediately distinguish it from almost every other doctoral program in business in the country, including the top program in the nation, all of which have rampant hiring and promotion from within the institution. The final argument for the need for at least five full-time business doctorates came from the dean of liberal arts at CPU regarding their new PhD in chemistry who hired eight PhDs before launching their program, which was of a similar size.

In response to the shortage of PhD faculty, CPU routinely employed less than optimal solutions to confront the shortage of qualified faculty. Specifically, CPU has institutionalized the process of hiring in-house graduates. The ease of hiring CPU graduates reflects the tendency of organizations to rely on well-established practices even when faced with challenges in a dynamic organizational environment. It is generally accepted in the wider organizational field that students should not return to teach at the same institution where they received their doctorate. In Asia, this is not the case (“Academic Inbreeding Attacked”1998, “Beijing University: An Ivory Tower in Change” 2003). The majority of schools interviewed in the Philippines had professors that took most or all of their degrees from the same school in which they taught. This practice generally stifles creativity and does not enhance the ability of the faculty to pursue new ideas or new methods of teaching (Fong 2003).
**Challenge #2: DBA preparation with PhD expectations.**

The PhD at Central Philippines University is offered in the general field of business administration with a focus on practice. The corresponding degree within the global organizational field of business schools is a Doctor of Business Administration (DBA). The DBA has a more applied focus and was intended for upper management, but also includes a significant research focus that was more practical and less theory based. A DBA, Doctor of Management, or other applied doctorate is commonly found in Thailand and the Philippines and is employed as an equivalent to the Doctor of Philosophy in response to the scarcity of adequately trained PhDs. Table 1 shows a compilation of private schools’ business doctoral programs in the Philippines.

*Table 1: Doctoral Programs in Business or Management from Private Colleges & Universities in The Philippines – De-Identified*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Province</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.</td>
<td>PhD management</td>
<td>Metro Manila</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.</td>
<td>DBA</td>
<td>Bicol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.</td>
<td>PhD Business (Rockwell)</td>
<td>Metro Manila</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.</td>
<td>Doctor of Management</td>
<td>Cagayan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.</td>
<td>DBA</td>
<td>Metro Manila</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F.</td>
<td>Doctor of Management</td>
<td>Cagayan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G.</td>
<td>PhD in Public Policies &amp; Business Management</td>
<td>Metro Manila</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.</td>
<td>PhD in Management</td>
<td>Agusan de Norte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I.</td>
<td>Doctor of Business Management</td>
<td>Cagayan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.</td>
<td>PhD in management</td>
<td>Bicol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K.</td>
<td>PhD in Business Management</td>
<td>Batangas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L.</td>
<td>Doctor of Business Management</td>
<td>Isabela</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.</td>
<td>PhD in Behavioral Management</td>
<td>Bicol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.</td>
<td>DBA</td>
<td>Metro Manila</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O.</td>
<td>Doctor of Management</td>
<td>Cebu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.</td>
<td>PhD in hotel &amp; restaurant management</td>
<td>Metro Manila</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from Olmeda’s (2002): *Directory of Private Higher Education Institutions in the Philippines*

Following the Asian model, CPU administrators considered reducing the hours necessary for a doctorate and focusing on different research topics. Instead of the typical 60 hours of work beyond the master’s degree seen around the world, 36-42 hours for a doctorate is more commonly seen in the region. A program in management from another Filipino university that has been in place for more than
20 years offers a model that has proven successful (see Table 2). This program emphasizes a narrow focus of training – as suggested by Hamlin (1997) – and is more applied in nature. The needs of the nation for applied research were also a consideration in forming a DBA program instead of a PhD. Moreover, the DBA appellation was carefully chosen to conform to international standards for program content. Programs from AIT in Thailand also show a more focused approach. The recommendation for PhD students in these programs was to publish two or three articles in lieu of a dissertation. This option also exists at other top PhD programs in the wider organizational field (Harvard 2013) and was under serious consideration by CPU administration.

Table 2: Curriculum of a Long-Standing Filipino DBA Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Methods Courses (6 units)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Multivariate Statistics</td>
<td>3 units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Research Methods</td>
<td>3 units</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Literature and Application Courses (18 units)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Management and Organization Theory</td>
<td>3 units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Ethics and Social Responsibility</td>
<td>3 units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Management and Corporate Governance</td>
<td>3 units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurship and Intrapreneurship</td>
<td>3 units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable Business</td>
<td>3 units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change and Consulting Strategies</td>
<td>3 units</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Dissertations Writing (12 units) |  |

In another departure from accepted practice, the CPU PhD program was part-time for many of the students. As interview participants have noted and Teehankee (2007) reaffirmed, most PhD students in developing countries want to enhance their careers, but they may also have full time jobs in industry or academe. This closely resembles the structure of a DBA as opposed to a research based PhD program. This part-time dynamic promotes relevance and responsiveness to local industry, but may not serve to incentivize the deeper thinking required for PhD students and future faculty.

**Challenge #3: Insufficient training in research methods and instructional pedagogy.**

CPU had as part of its strategic plan to “ensure national stature as a knowledge producing institution” (italics added). This implies foremost that the faculty must do research that is published in recognized, refereed journals or at least in widely
attended international conferences. In order to achieve this goal by 2020, the college strategic plan recommended these steps be taken:

- Develop short term programs.
- Develop new courses with a positive impact on community and country.
- Build research capacity.
- Find competent researchers to be mentors.
- Provide incentives for research.
- Disseminate the results of research.
- Ensure that research enhances the curriculum.

Throughout our investigation we found there were several of these initiatives being undertaken. For example, a series of one-day research methods seminars were offered to assist faculty. The presenters were all published researchers with notable records. Unfortunately, the audience was not able to utilize the lessons learned due to perceived lack of interest, lack of skill, or failure to follow through. One informant noted that a visiting presenter asked a gathering of more than 30 attendees to submit a sample of research for potential collaboration. After six months no papers were submitted for review.

Upon reviewing CPUs publication records and extensive interviews with faculty, we identified several challenges faced by faculty who aspired to improve their research productivity. Common themes that arose from interview participants and an analysis of publication records were:

- Research failed to cite the current literature and utilized older books as opposed to current journal articles.
- Simple descriptive statistics were used in place of inferential statistics.
- Publications generally failed to demonstrate sufficient rigor and relevance.
- Rewards were given for any publication, including non-business research.
Several informants also expressed frustration with the administration’s plan to increase the number of publications by trying to get the majority of faculty to publish. Instead, they argued high potential faculty members who have a doctorate and research skills must be given relief from a typical eight-course teaching loads to conduct research.

Several PhD students who were interviewed had mentors who had not published in peer-reviewed outlets or had not published in business journals. Having someone from another field, like education, attempt to assist a business PhD student with research usually indicated the subject was not germane to business and therefore not useful for promotion and tenure decisions. Faculty with an EdD or PhD in philosophy or a liberal arts discipline should not be relied upon to support the research efforts of the business school. Instead, the college has a great opportunity build its research around the needs of the Department of Trade and Industry, local chambers of commerce, entrepreneurship centers and the regional development groups, all of which have requested studies that fulfill the dual aims of getting faculty published and aiding the local and regional economies (Coghlan & Brannick 2000).

Finally, one major shortcoming that was noted in every interview of western faculty dealing with CPU counterparts was the reliance on lecture as a means of teaching at the graduate level. While the lowest level of Bloom’s taxonomy is acceptable for undergraduate students in some classes, it not generally acceptable for training PhD candidates who will eventually be called upon to teach MBA and PhD students. In order to convey knowledge at the highest levels – analyzing and creating – training in modern pedagogy is essential (Bloom & Krathwohl 1956).

Challenge #4: In-house journals as an unproductive research outlet.

As discussed above, faculty must be provided the time and motivation to produce quality research. This means that they must attempt to publish in reputable conferences and strive to publish in peer-reviewed journals with international reputations as opposed to in-house publications with limited circulation. The latter are generally viewed by academics as insubstantial and not scholarly (Speece 2007).

A review of the in-house CPU journal used revealed the problems with such publications. Virtually all the authors published in the journal are from the college, with no outside submissions. The papers generally lacked research questions, theory, hypotheses or inferential statistics. While descriptive statistics should not be rejected, they must add something to the body of knowledge and cannot stand alone. Finally, some of the papers submitted were not on topics relevant to the college or the journal’s mission. Two examples would be a paper on, How To Start a Montessori School and another debating if a local town was ready to compete in a Best Places to Do Business competition.
One student informant described another impediment to improving scholarship was the requirement that students publish their work in the college journal before they were allowed to graduate. This robbed the student of the opportunity to send their dissertation to a recognized, peer-reviewed journal. The dissertation is one of the major pieces of scholarship a future professor is likely to undertake and is often the basis for multiple articles. It is therefore unproductive to require students to use up their efforts on a journal that is not considered acceptable by global accreditation agencies and the wider organizational field. In-house journals contribute little to the real objective of pre-publication experience. There is a proliferation of journals, many of them not very high quality, which can serve the purpose of giving easy initial experience. Therefore, there is no need to invest in an in-house journal to give faculty easy initial experience, as there are already many such publication outlets.

4. Discussion and Conclusions

Limited insights into Asian business practice and educational trends can be garnered from Hamlin (1997) and Birnbaum (2000). Hamlin deals with companies, but many of the same principles may apply to universities as well. Schools are in competition for student dollars, and without a strategy, will eventually be overtaken and left behind. Birnbaum complements Hamlin’s work by focusing on the trends and strategic missteps within the academic world. Combined with the four challenges identified above, these sources inform the following recommendations for creating a viable PhD program in a developing country.

Recommendation #1: Diversify the incoming talent pool for faculty and administrators.

While there were limited numbers of faculty available that have doctorates in business, alternatives exist that will enable the school to develop a critical mass of faculty over time. One option is to utilize the talents of research faculty from abroad who would agree to a contract of up to three years’ duration. The Dean of CPU indicated that this model has been successfully utilized in Singapore. Such faculty serve both to supervise doctoral students as well as provide enrichment training for native faculty whose research skills are in need of improvement. Professors on sabbatical, Fulbright scholars and those nearing retirement who would like to be mentors to younger faculty seeking to improve their research records are all likely candidates. Such opportunities should be used to further the research agenda of the school, not have the visiting faculty teach courses except at the doctoral level.
Thinking globally, the school should consider seeking potential new professors from the region – including Thailand, Taiwan, Korea and Singapore – to staff the doctoral program (Lee 2012). The schools producing these professors typically have a global perspective, which will be essential to developing a new doctoral program that will graduate successful students.

Another alternative is to provide promising faculty with paid leave to pursue their PhD at another university in the region with the proviso that they return to their current employer upon completion of the degree. This is a significant incentive to faculty, as it enhances their career and education. It also provides needed diversity of thought by sending faculty to another university to complete their education and bring back new ideas and methods. The only stumbling block encountered when interviewing faculty for this option was that many were married and had children, so going to another province or another country for PhD classes was considered a potential hardship.

To extend this argument further, Hamlin (1997) admonishes individuals to critically analyze institutional, or national culture if it prevents organizational goals. A prime example of this short-sighted behavior is the mandate from the Filipino Commission on Higher Education (CHED) that the dean of national schools must be a Filipino, except in extreme circumstances. Given the paucity of business PhDs among Filipinos, the result is to stifle creativity and incentivize uniformity among the leadership. Singapore has been lauded for possessing an “East meets West” character in its educational offerings (PRWeb 2012). Given the close relationship the Philippines has had with the United States, CPU could leverage these historical ties to attract and develop talent which would provide differentiated offering to local and global stakeholders.

**Recommendation #2: Pursue a focused differentiation strategy.**

Central Philippines University is a premiere private university. Nonetheless, it conceded that it was being overtaken by other programs in the country and responded by trying to offer “more” of everything in its business programs. It is a mistake to try to be all things to all people, because you end up doing nothing well. Specialists can support a premium price – generalists usually cannot. Chasing after every opportunity that comes along wastes resources and contributes to an unfocused and confusing brand. This is especially true when the quality of the program is lacking due to insufficient planning and poor implementation. The evidence of such outcomes can be seen in doctoral programs that seek to prepare students for industry (DBA) and academic (PhD) careers. The resulting curriculum does not successfully serve either constituency. Birnbaum strenuously warns against this, as do all strategic management texts (2000).
Recommendation #3: Invest in higher order scholarship and learning infrastructure.

To address the challenge of insufficient training in research methods and instructional pedagogy, CPU must provide faculty ongoing training in their subject areas, hire PhDs in appropriate fields, and demand that students develop the capacity for higher order learning, not simply memorizing. The goal is to train teachers to be able to deliver educational content that ascends Bloom’s taxonomy, and to call upon students to apply themselves to the task of critical thinking. One recommendation provided by a PhD student is to have someone from abroad with an established record of journal publications serve as a virtual advisor on the dissertation if qualified professors on campus are not available to fill the role. This would enable the student to have an experienced researcher aid in the development of the dissertation while faculty at the home university handled administrative issues related to the process.

Engaging in serious research sharpens the analytical skills of the faculty so that they can more critically evaluate the work of their students, and not merely accept simplistic approaches to problems. In many cases the research proposed by faculty and students was very practical in nature, and designed to solve problems germane to the province and the nation. In many cases, the quality of the research undertaken was elementary, or worse, no useful recommendations could be made. This is counterproductive for the individual, the institution and the community. In relation to this shortcoming, several administrators lamented the lack of access to current literature that is necessary to conduct rigorous and relevant research. The library must have access to current research either in a database or on the shelves. Paper journals at CPU were severely limited in number and faculty members were generally not trained in their use. Electronic databases should be a key item on budget requests so that faculty are exposed to a wide variety of current perspectives and methods in management (Scandura & Williams 2000). Furthermore, encouraging faculty to partner with institutions and authors in developed countries could provide a low-cost path to accessing the most current scholarship.

As Tehankee (2003, 2007) notes, most published academic research is from a Western perspective. If Asian management is to progress, it needs to modify those findings and produce its own studies of how business is performed there with an eye toward improving performance. Scholars in the region – and the economies they serve – end up with less value because they use what others provide even if it doesn’t work well in Asia (Lau 2002). This can be addressed by focusing efforts on producing rigorous and original research that leverages local strengths such as access to understudied phenomena and address the socio-cultural traditions that have led to business practices unexplored to date in the management literature.
5. Conclusions

This paper has sought to bring to life the challenges faced by a university that has struggled with the creation and maintenance of a doctoral program. While we feel that insights generated from accompanying a single case are valuable, this methodology also entails several limitations that must be acknowledged. Despite sharing characteristics and challenges, labels like *developing country* or *emerging market* are overly simplistic and ignore the specificities of national experiences. Nonetheless, we have observed problems similar to the ones detailed in Africa and Latin America and hope that individual readers will be able to integrate their own circumstances with what may be useful from this research project. Future research on the institutionalization of changing educational systems in these regions of world may determine the productive limits of comparison and typologies across contexts.

In conclusion, this paper has utilized an institutional theory perspective to identify and explore the material and non-material factors that may influence the development of a doctoral program in a developing country. Our analysis has revealed that established practices may no longer be sufficient to meet the demands of the changing economy and society. We have also offered strategies and guidelines to schools in similar situations that seek to leverage their existing assets to create a sustainable doctoral program. By addressing the main challenges outlined above, universities in the Philippines – and other emerging markets faced with similar resource constraints – may be able develop sustainable doctoral programs that would benefit both internal and external stakeholders.
References:


Whither the Professor?