

Adaptation of the College of Education Students and Faculty Regarding Academic Calendar Shift

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ABSTRACT

This study used the descriptive method of research to determine the perceived adaptation of the students and faculty members of the College of Education, Polytechnic University of the Philippines regarding Academic Calendar Shift, School Year 2013-2014. The researcher used a semi sub-system paradigm that involved the input, process and output approach, with a five-point Likert Scale questionnaire to gather data on the perception of quota samples of both students and faculty. The survey was conducted on a room-to-room basis reaching a quota of 218 respondents subcategorized by the year level of the student respondents, and 11 of the faculty. The statistical tools used were frequency, percentage, and Pearson Correlation Test.

Results show that the students' overall assessment on the eight items for the concept of Academic Calendar Shift yielded a mean rating of 3.63 showing that they "Agree" in favor of the academic shift's advantages; the faculty's overall assessment for Academic Calendar Shift is 4.49 (mean rating) showing that they "Strongly Agree" with the benefits of academic shift; the students' perception on academic shift in PUP context is 3.08 (mean rating) showing their "Neutrality" on the issue; the faculty response has an overall mean rating of 4.06 with regard to Academic Calendar Shift in PUP showing that they "Agree" to it; and there is a significant difference in the perception of the students and faculty with regard to the Academic Calendar Shift and to the Academic Calendar in PUP.

PUP administrators should welcome the idea of academic calendar shift and propose a study of its possible recommendations.

Keywords: Education students, academic calendar shift, adaptation, perception

INTRODUCTION

The current academic calendar and proposed shift is a timely issue at the moment. This issue has been addressed briefly during the 1960's by Education Secretary then Alejandro Roces, and has been postponed by the efforts of Senator Maria Kalaw-Katigbak (Flores 2014). The stakeholders would have to agree with the plan proposed by Roces, with the benefits of the shift include having a healthy student population, as children would no longer have to go to school during the start of the rainy season, and the children would be able to help their parents during the planting

season from June to August. Support for the law made by Katigbak came from the parents who claimed that they were not consulted in the shift beforehand, but in today's setting and technology, the information dissemination about the academic calendar shift is not an issue anymore.

The Philippines is a member of Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) which on the other hand created the ASEAN Economic Cooperation of 2015 (AEC, 2015). This AEC 2015 objectively proposed to have both an economic integration and educational synchronization. The AEC is part of the regional association whose thrust for its member nations is to connect with it in different aspects, including those in the educational sector. UP Vice President for Public Affairs, Prospero de Vera (2014) said that aside from aligning with the AEC vision, the new system can also provide opportunities for students and faculty members to take part in exchange programs in other universities in the ASEAN and around the world.

The Polytechnic University of the Philippines on the other hand has not been giving its position whether it will also adapt and adjust its academic calendar in 2015. On the other hand, Umbao (2013) stated that the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) has not yet mandated all higher educational institutions to adapt the academic calendar shift, but it reminded them to have 18 weeks per semester with a corresponding number of hours.

This study sought to answer the question about the perceived adaptation by the students and faculty of the College of Education in the Polytechnic University of the Philippines (Mabini Campus, as the flagship of PUP) regarding this proposed change in academic calendar.

This choice of the problem in this research is anchored to the idea that it could be helpful to the PUP community who would sooner or later face this change in academic calendar as done by other state and private universities in the Philippines.

The researchers had chosen this study to research the perceived adaptation of the students, faculty and staff of the College of Education at the Polytechnic University of the Philippines (Mabini Campus) and to be aware their perceptions and positions on the proposed shift in academic calendar. Through this, it is hoped that it could help the PUP administrators in the future in case they would initiate adapting this academic calendar shift.

This study is primarily anchored in the Globalization Framework (Fig. 1) which shows how globalization caused the idea of synchronization and internationalization that would lead to the shifting of academic calendar. It also shows the interconnections (perceived adaptation) of higher educational institutions (HEIs),

Department of Education, Technical Educational and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) and Commission on Higher Education (CHED).

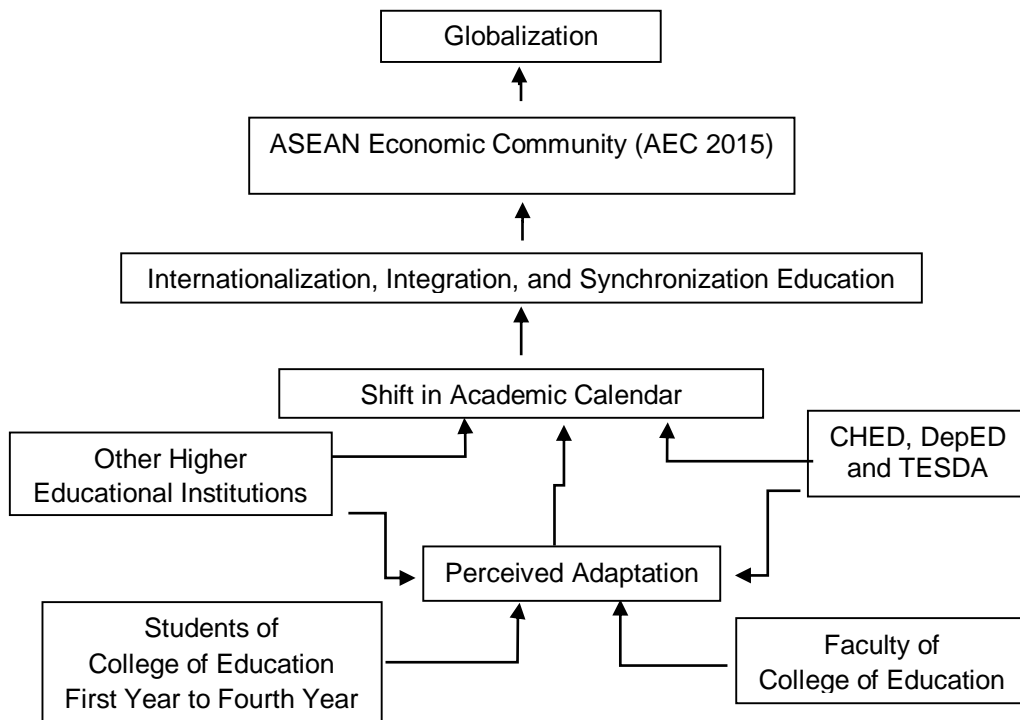


Figure 1: Globalization Framework

According to Kamal (2013), globalization is a process of increasingly widening and deepening the integration of goods, ideas, culture, communication and problems on a worldwide scale. This integration necessarily affects the society especially the economic and cultural dimension. These effects would be primarily on its human resources because of services of man-power and the goods that they could create. However, on the core of human resources the educational aspect of it is of fundamental importance. Globalization affects the educational system somehow because the educational programs and courses whether it is technical, vocational or business are globalized to meet international standard and global competition. This is proven by the Association of the Southeast Asian countries and the ASEAN Economic Cooperation of 2015. One of these integrations is the synchronization of academic calendar by international universities. The Philippines is a member of this ASEAN Economic Community and some of its universities are proposing to adapt the shift in academic calendar. The ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) aspires to have a regional integration. The AEC articulates the vision of an economically-integrated region by the end of 2015 between all ten member states: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia,

Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. The vision is for a single market and production base in a highly competitive economic region with equitable economic development and fully integrated into the global economy (Goyer, 2013). The Philippine dimensions of business, economy and education are interrelated and had been affected by globalization. In the Philippines trifocal educational system, the tertiary and the higher educational institutions are welcoming this globalization for international recognition and participation both in the fields of Educational Research and Science and Technology. Such for example is the Department of Education's K to 12 Program or the "Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013" which added two more years in high school education (Geronimo, 2013).

Through globalization, as has been illustrated by Fig. 1, the ASEAN established the interconnections of the countries that are members of the ASEAN Economic Community. They have been interconnected by globalization in education, economy and business. The Philippines as part of the AEC 2015 wanted to be globalized in education, business and economy. It is for the reason that some of the higher educational institutions in the Philippines are trying to synchronize and integrate their academic calendar, hence, this study is conducted.

Internationalization, economic integration and synchronization of academic calendar are the effects and concrete manifestation of globalization. Academic calendar shift is the first step towards globalized education. Synchronizing the academic calendar with the rest of the Asian countries would provide greater mobility for students and faculty in terms of exchange and research programs. In the current Philippine setting, the adaptation of the academic calendar shift has been perceived by some higher educational institutions, CHED, DepEd, and TESDA.

The Academic calendar shift is a consequence of the effect of globalization. Globalization increases the integration between countries and nation-states around the world. The Philippines is not an island on its own and through the existence of the ASEAN and AEC 2015, the Philippines will be part of a global integration not only with the economic and business dimension but also with education. One of the initial steps of this integration is synchronizing academic calendar with other universities in Asia and around the world. This would increase global competitiveness and recognition of educational system because it opens the possibility to increase exchange programs between students and faculty local and abroad as well as the exposure and production of local universities in terms of research and enrollees. In this invitation of shared vision by the Asian Economic Cooperation of 2015, the member-countries will be able to strengthen the educational sector in Asia by means of coordination, integration and cooperation. Some universities in the Philippines (UP, UST, ADMU) initiated and instigated the synchronization of their academic calendar, and proposed to change it by virtue of their autonomy and approval by CHED. The educational system and

program of the Philippines are geared towards development and these would entail internationalization and integration with other countries in Asia and around the world. The adaptation of academic calendar shift is a step towards progress in the Philippine educational sector.

Adaptation of academic calendar shift had an increasing audience in a global context, in Asia such as Suvredini (2013), reported that Japan has undergone a similar move to change academic shift last 2012 but failed because of social environment factors and traditions.

In the United States, Yap (2012) pointed out that countries with international education cooperation develop partnership by enhancing education of a less developed country by a more developed partner. Therefore, the academic calendar shift is viewed as a developmental process in education.

Local authors and journalists such as Umbao (2013), Malipot (2014), and Geronimo (2013) had similarities in reporting that University of the Philippines, Ateneo De Manila University and University of Santo Thomas initiated and concretized the implementation of the proposed academic calendar year. Their dissimilarities lie in the context of articulating what a university would first adapt and implement in the academic calendar shift.

UP President Alfredo E. Pascual and ADMU President Jose Ramon Villarin openly confirmed their support with the academic calendar shift. Their differences lie on how to adapt the academic calendar in respect to their university's current situation and status especially the changes that will incur once the adaptation is processed.

Geronimo (2013), had the same position too on the importance of the ASEAN University Network by utilizing the pool of human resources in the region to strengthen the existing network of top institutions of higher education.

Commission on Higher Education through CHED executive director Julito Vitriolo and CHED regional director Catherine Castañeda had the same position in assenting with proposed change but they still have to study the academic calendar shift more thoroughly. The Coordinating Council of Private Educational Associations (COCOPEA) which is composed of five major school associations namely Association of Christian Schools, Colleges and Universities, Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines, Philippine Association of Private Schools, Colleges and Universities, Technical Vocational Schools Association of the Philippines are open to the idea of academic calendar shift. The differences however, will be based on how they are going

to institute the shift in academic calendar in their own respective universities as they are waiting of the CHED's formal position on this matter.

This study was conducted to find out the perceived adaptation of the students and faculty of the College of Education regarding the shift of academic calendar at the Polytechnic University of the Philippines, Sta. Mesa, Manila.

Specifically this study determined the following: the profile of the student and teacher- respondents in terms of age, gender, civil status; the respondents' perception regarding shift of academic calendar and adaptation of the shift of academic calendar and the significant difference on the perceived adaptation on proposed shift in academic calendar year between the students and faculty members of the College of Education.

The focus of this study was limited to the perceived adaptation of the students and faculty members in the College of Education at PUP Sta. Mesa, Manila. This study was narrowed to a ten percent sample size of the 2,175 students from the College of Education, with a quota sample of 68 from the first year students, 60 from the second year students, 40 from the third year students, 50 from the fourth year students, and 20 percent out of the 55 faculty members of the College of Education during the second semester of the School Year 2013-2014.

METHODOLOGY

The nature of the study is descriptive in order to determine the perceived adaptation of the students and faculty members of the College of Education, Polytechnic University of the Philippines regarding Academic Calendar Shift, School Year 2013-2014. It utilized a survey questionnaire for gathering information. Descriptive research method is a fact-finding study with adequate interpretation of the findings. According to Calmorin (1994), descriptive survey signifies the gathering of data regarding present conditions.

The focus of the population for this study was the College of Education faculty members and students enrolled for this School Year 2013-2014 at PUP Sta. Mesa, Manila. The respondents were approximately 10% out of the 2,175 college students and 20% out of the 55 faculty members. The researcher used the purposive quota sampling technique.

The researcher used a semi sub-system paradigm that involved the input, process and output approach, with a five-point Likert Scale questionnaire to gather data on the perception of quota samples of both students and faculty. The survey was conducted on a room-to-room basis reaching a quota of 218 respondents

subcategorized by the year level of the student respondents, and 11 of the faculty. The gathered data were subjected to appropriate statistical treatment such as frequency distribution, percentage, and Pearson Correlation Test to answer the problems raised in the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of the Respondents

The greatest number (200 or 91.74%) of the **student- respondents** belong to the lowest age bracket of 16-20 ; 16 or 7.34% are between 21-25 years old; and 2 or 0.92% are 26-30 years old. Meanwhile, a little more than one-half (126 or 57.8%) of them are female, and almost all of them (215 or 98.6%) are still single.

As to the frequency distribution of the **faculty respondents** by age, a majority of six (54.55%) faculty are in between the range of 30-39 years old. Three are between the ages of 20-29 years old making up 27.27% of the total faculty respondents; there is one respondent each from the ranges of 40-49 years old and 50-59 years old which is 9.09% of the total respondents. On the other hand, out of the 11 teacher-respondents, more than one-half (6 or 54.5%) are female. There are more teachers who are still single (6 or 54.5%) than those who are married.

Student's Perception About Academic Calendar Shift

This section presents the opinions of the students and the faculty regarding calendar shift. The students and teachers' responses are exhibited in the succeeding tables.

Table 1
Students' Responses Regarding Perceived Academic Calendar Shift

Items	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
A1. Adapting academic calendar shift will help synchronization with other ASEAN countries.	3.44	Agree
A2. The academic calendar shift will somehow cut the number of suspensions due to typhoons.	3.56	Agree
A3. Synchronizing the academic calendar will provide concrete exchange programs with other universities in Asia	3.59	Agree
A4. Adapting the academic calendar shift will allow greater efficiency in implementing student and faculty exchange programs.	3.44	Agree
A5. Parents, students and other concerned stakeholders must be informed first before the adaptation of the said academic calendar shift.	4.54	Strongly Agree
A6. The shift in academic calendar is necessarily needed in order for globalized education and internationalization.	3.44	Agree
A7. Integration and internationalization will get support in the Philippine government.	3.49	Agree
A8. Changing the academic calendar could avoid the effect of typhoons and heavy rains which are prevalent in the months of July and August.	3.57	Agree
Overall Mean	3.63	Agree

Table 1 presents the responses of the students regarding their opinions about academic calendar shift in general. Notable highest mean among all the questions is at item A5 ($M=4.54$) which shows that the students “Strongly Agree” regarding parents, students, concerned stake holders being informed first before the adaptation of academic calendar shift. The lowest means are tied at 3.44 regarding 3 questions about: (A1) adapting academic calendar shift will help synchronize with other ASEAN countries; (A4) adapting the academic calendar shift will allow greater efficiency in implementing student and faculty exchange programs; and (A6) the shift in academic calendar is necessarily needed in order for globalized education and internationalization. The overall mean rating of 3.63 for the students' response for Set A indicates that the students “Agree” on the concept of Academic Calendar Shift. It is for this reason that these universities (UP, ADMU, and UST) are proposing to change their academic calendar from previous June to March to September to June or August to May. These proposals are geared on the harmonization and standardization of the ASEAN Universities Network ahead of the ASEAN economic integration in 2015 (Calica et al, 2014).

Table 2
Students' Responses to Perceived Academic Calendar Shift in PUP context

Items	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
B1. The academic calendar shift will affect the motivation of the students in going to PUP during its implementation year.	3.61	Agree
B2. The shift in academic calendar would make students in PUP more competitive.	3.13	Neutral
B3. The PUP students and faculty are willing to experience the heat during summer season.	2.57	Disagree
B4. The students in PUP are ready for the academic calendar shift.	2.60	Neutral
B5.. The shift in academic calendar will be of help in giving the PUP students quality education.	3.00	Neutral
B6. The academic calendar shift is a step for PUP in terms of globalized education.	3.34	Neutral
B7. Adapting the academic calendar shift in PUP will provide synchronization with other universities in Asia.	3.50	Agree
B8. PUP should pursue Academic Calendar Shift.	2.89	Neutral
Overall Mean	3.08	Neutral

Table 2 presents the mean ratings given by the 218 students for the second part of the questionnaire regarding academic shift in PUP context. Notable highest mean is on item B1 (M=3.61) with an interpretation of "Agree" regarding the academic calendar shift affecting motivation of the students in going to PUP during its implementation year. Notable lowest mean among all questions is item B3 (M=2.57) with an interpretation of Disagree regarding the willingness of the PUP students and faculty to experience the heat during summer season. The overall mean for the students' response for Set B questions is at 3.08 indicating that they are Neutral with regards to Academic Calendar shift in PUP context. There are various reasons why universities in the Philippines are pushing academic calendar shift. One of the reasons is that they want to synchronize with other global academic partners for greater collaboration through university networks and joint offerings of curricular programs and research. Another reason is that the months of June and July which start the opening of classes are the country's most rainy times and affect the students' number of days in school because of class suspensions and floods (Calica et al, 2014).

Table 3
Faculty Responses Regarding Perceived Academic Calendar Shift

Items	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
A1. Adapting academic calendar shift will help synchronization with other ASEAN countries.	4.64	Strongly Agree
A2. The academic calendar shift will somehow cut the number of suspensions due to typhoons.	4.18	Agree
A3. Synchronizing the academic calendar will provide concrete exchange programs with other universities in Asia	4.91	Strongly Agree
A4. Adapting the academic calendar shift will allow greater efficiency in implementing student and faculty exchange programs.	4.64	Strongly Agree
A5. Parents, students and other concerned stakeholders must be informed first before the adaptation of the said academic calendar shift.	4.91	Strongly Agree
A6. The shift in academic calendar is necessarily needed in order for globalized education and internationalization.	4.55	Strongly Agree
A7. Integration and internationalization will get support in the Philippine	4.18	Agree
A8. Changing the academic calendar could avoid the effect of typhoons and heavy rains which are prevalent in the months of July and August.	3.91	Agree
Overall Mean	4.49	Strongly Agree

Table 3 presents the responses of the faculty regarding the concept of academic calendar shift. Notable highest mean with a “Strongly Agree” are items A3 (M=4.91) with regards to synchronization of the academic calendar providing concrete exchange programs with other universities in Asia, and A5 (M=4.91) with informing first the parents, students and other concerned stakeholders before the adaptation of the academic calendar shift. Notable lowest mean is item A8 (M=3.91) with an Agree regarding changing the academic calendar could avoid the effect of typhoons and heavy rains which are prevalent in the months of July and August. Overall mean for the faculty response for Set A questions is at 4.49 which is “Strongly Agree” with the concept of an Academic Calendar Shift.

For this to be realized, some of the universities in the country, namely the University of the Philippines (UP), Ateneo de Manila University (ADMU), and University of Santo Tomas (UST) propose to adapt the so called academic calendar shift and adjust their academic terms from previously known June to March calendar into the new system, the September to June academic calendar. The academic calendar will be moved so it will synchronize with the international universities to allow greater efficiency in implementing student and faculty exchange programs (Umbao, 2013). The University of the Philippines already started a proposal at the time of the creation

of this thesis, and it is geared towards the idea of being a regional and global university and maximizes its student and staff mobility and at the same time fosters cooperation in relation to implementing the action plans of the ASEAN Economic Cooperation of 2015 (UP Memorandum no. CAS-13-047, 2013).

Table 4
Faculty Response to Perceived Academic Calendar Shift in PUP context

Items	Mean	Verbal
B1. The academic calendar shift will affect the motivation of the students in going to PUP during its implementation year.	4.09	Agree
B2. The shift in academic calendar would make students in PUP more competitive.	4.00	Agree
B3. The PUP students and faculty are willing to experience the heat during summer season.	3.45	Agree
B4. The students in PUP are ready for the academic calendar shift.	3.55	Agree
B5.. The shift in academic calendar will be of help in giving the PUP students quality education.	4.00	Agree
B6. The academic calendar shift is a step for PUP in terms of globalized education.	4.36	Strongly Agree
B7. Adapting the academic calendar shift in PUP will provide synchronization with other universities in Asia.	4.73	Strongly Agree
B8. PUP should pursue Academic Calendar Shift.	4.27	Strongly Agree
Overall Mean	4.06	Agree

Regarding the possible implementation of academic calendar shift in PUP, the responses of the teachers on the statements are shown in Table 4. The highest mean of “Strongly Agree” is at B7 (M=4.73) with the adaptation of academic calendar shift in PUP providing synchronization with other universities in Asia. Notable lowest mean is at B3 (M=3.45) with an “Agree” regarding the willingness of the PUP faculty to experience the heat during summer season. An overall mean of 4.06 indicates the faculty “Agree” on the Academic Calendar Shift in PUP context.

Faculty vs. Students' Perceptions on the Academic Calendar Shift

Table 5 presents the results of t-test using the SPSS software with mean values taken from the results of Table 4 (Students' Responses) and Table 3 (Faculty Responses).

Table 5
t-Test Results of Faculty vs. Students' Perceptions

Question Set	Respondents	Group Statistics		t-test for Equality of Means			Decision
		Mean	Std. Deviation	t	degree of freedom (df)	significance (p value)	
Academic Calendar Shift	Faculty	4.49	0.363	4.65	14	0.000	Reject
	Students	3.63	0.371				
Academic Calendar Shift in PUP Context	Faculty	4.06	0.418	4.84	14	0.000	Reject
	Students	3.08	0.388				

The table shows first the result of the t-test between the means of the perception regarding Academic Calendar Shift (Question Set A) of the faculty (Mean=4.489; SD=0.363) and the perception of the students' (Mean=3.63; SD=0.371), with a t-value (df:14) of 4.65 and resulting $p = 0.000$, against $\alpha = 0.05$. Since the level of significance or p value is less than the set critical of 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence, there is a significant difference between the opinions of faculty and the students regarding the concept of Academic Calendar Shift (Set A). The faculty favored the academic calendar shift more than the students.

The next set of values regarding Academic Calendar Shift in the PUP context (Question Set B) for faculty (Mean=4.06; SD=0.418) and the perception of the students' (Mean=3.08; SD=0.388), with a t-score (df:14) of 4.84 and resulting $p = 0.000$, against the critical α of 0.05. The level of significance or p value is less than the set critical of 0.05, so again the null hypothesis is rejected and conclude that there is a significant difference between the faculty and students' perception regarding Academic Calendar Shift in the PUP context (Set B). Again, academic calendar shift in PUP context was favored more by the faculty than the students.

CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of the findings emerging from this study it could be concluded that the PUP College of Education students are generally in favor of the academic calendar shift, faculty members strongly agree in favor of the academic calendar shift while the students and faculty members of College of Education have different

perceptions on the context of adaptation. The students are neutral and undecided if PUP should adapt the context of Academic shift while faculty members favor the academic calendar shift in PUP.

RECOMMENDATIONS

PUP administrators should welcome the idea of academic calendar shift and propose a study of its possible recommendations. Students and faculty from different Colleges in PUP should be well informed regarding the nature of academic calendar shift. Various stakeholders concerned in PUP should also take the initiative in studying the implementation of academic calendar shift if PUP is geared towards international recognition as an educational institution. The PUP administrators should study how classroom environment could be improved to address the summer heat problem if the academic calendar shift would be implemented.

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