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Migrant Education in Philippine Higher Education Institutions: Drivers, Experience and Challenges to Continuous Quality Improvement

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Abstract

This paper looks into the drivers, experience and challenges surrounding migrant education in the Philippines. It explores ways on how migrant education in Philippine Higher Education Institutions (HEI) can be enhanced to be able to respond to the ASEAN goal of a harmonized higher education environment in the region.

The study makes use of quantitative and qualitative data, particularly CHED data on international students, small group discussions with foreign students in select PHEIs, and literature on international education. It also analyzes the drivers, experiences, and challenges that can shed light on continuous quality improvement in migrant education. The findings of the study are:

1. The biggest population of foreign students come from Asia and Africa. The most popular courses among foreign students are Health Sciences, Business Administration, and Social and Behavioral Sciences.
2. The push factors to migrant education include education agents, personal and familial aspirations, friendship networks, and globalization trends. The pull factors to migrant education in PHEIs are academic programs with English as the medium of instruction; affordable tuition and other school fees; the relatively low cost of living; and the hospitality and friendliness of people.
3. The primary concerns of foreign students are in the aspects of general living adjustment, academic difficulty, personal and psychological adjustment, and socio-cultural difficulties.
4. In the management of migrant education, the challenges are in the recruitment of students, processing of documents, teaching strategies, and maintenance of academic standards that are internationally acceptable.
5. Mutual efforts from local teachers and foreign students to understand each other's culture can contribute to harmonization in higher education. Academic and socio-cultural difficulties can be addressed through culture synergy and pedagogical adaptation.

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