The History of Negros Oriental State University, Bais Campus II: An Analysis on its Establishment and Development

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ABSTRACT

This historical research account seeks to reconstruct and analyze the events starting from the establishment of the school as Bais Developmental College (BADECO) to Genaro Goñi Memorial College (GGMC), now Negros Oriental State University (NORSU) Bais Campus II. Data were gathered through documentary analysis and interviews with key informants. The establishment of Bais Developmental College is viewed as the interaction of various elements which serve as drivers to the school's early beginnings and later development. Through the years, its development was an interconnection of the causal elements, (1.) political, as evidenced by political patronage brought by the various resolutions and ordinances enacted starting from its creation in 1980, up to its change of nomenclature to Genaro Goñi Memorial College in 1992 and integration to Negros Oriental State University in 2004; (2.) economic, as an answer to the need for manpower for its growing industries and (3.) social, as in the case of cooperation among the city officials and residents with the social changes in the environment. These socio-political and economic drivers are not divergent from each other; rather, they complement and work together as determining elements in the school's establishment and development.

Keywords: BADECO, GGMC, NORSU Bais Campus II, establishment of college, history of college.

INTRODUCTION

Past events shape and influence the present and the future just as people make history and history shapes people. It is in documenting and studying history that we can understand our past and the essence of our identity. But in the case of an educational institution, its real essence and purpose does not begin and end with its establishment, but is understood through the totality of the important processes that contribute to its origin and development. Negros Oriental State University, Bais Campus II began as Bais Developmental College by virtue of Sangguniang Panlunsod Resolution No. 168, s. 1978 on October 19, 1978. It was renamed into Genaro Goñi Memorial College through Ordinance No. 22, s. 1992 on November 27, 1992 and was integrated to Negros Oriental State University, by virtue of Republic Act 9299 on June 25, 2004. The institution has come a long way and continues to pave the path for a brighter future of aspiring Baisanons. As the first public college in Bais City, there is a need to reconstruct or trace back the events from its establishment up to its development not only for posterity purposes but in order to set the groundwork for the love and appreciation of local history. This study seeks to
answer the following questions: What were the reasons for the establishment of this academic institution? What were the intervening political, economic and social drivers that contribute to its development? These are the salient questions which this study pursues to investigate and document so that a historical identity for this educational institution will be appreciated and valued by future generations.

Various researchers identified reasons why governments establish schools. Such reasons are to impose government power on peoples’ beliefs (Pritchett, 2002), to determine educational content and growth (Castoni and Yutchman, 2011, Acemoglu and Robinson, 1998); to propagate state ideologies and centralization (Chuguryan, 2013, Gok, 2007) and promote cultural beliefs (Kremer and Sarycher, 2000, Dragan, 2007). Furthermore, other schools were built as a product of lobbying and people empowerment (Lampropoulou and Hadjikakou, 2010). While affirming that these explanations are plausible, this paper humbly presents an analysis into the reasons for the establishment and development of the Bais Developmental College (BADECO) to Genaro Goñi Memorial College (GGMC) then to Negros Oriental State University (NORSU) using the General Systems Theory. This study also contends to add evidence to the prevailing literature by asserting that schools are not only created as a mechanism for government control and propagation of beliefs and ideologies but an offshoot of the combined interaction among economic, political and social processes. Such processes do not oppose each other but sometimes overlap and intertwine in the instances where they serve as drivers of change. The General Systems Theory by Robert Gregory is perceived as a guiding framework for this occurrence. According to Gregory (2012), components of change happen to operate collectively and function as a system within an environment. In this study, the establishment of the college cannot be solely explained and viewed on a particular purpose and event only. This is also caused by the various changes in the society which can either be political, social and economic that all worked together to bring about the establishment and development of a local college.

**METHODOLOGY**

The study utilized the historical method of research which focuses on documentary analysis and interview of key informants. The researchers gathered and analyzed primary and secondary documents pertinent to the study in order to reconstruct historical accounts and events. The data were subjected to internal and external criticisms. Aside from documentary gathering and analysis, the researchers also used documentation through oral history. Furthermore, a critical appraisal and analysis of the data gathered was made and not just mere recording and narration of events and people.

**RESULTS**

**Establishment of Bais Developmental College**

The establishment of Bais Developmental College (BADECO) was an avenue for fulfilling the dreams of poor Baisanons who sought for higher education. Before the establishment of the said institution, many high school graduates could not proceed to college due to financial constraints. Most of these graduates were children of hacienda workers, fisher folks and farmers (Valencia, 2001). The idea of establishing a locally funded public college came from the petition of the Parents Teachers Association (PTA) of the Bais City High School. The PTA president, Luciano Benlota, Sr., and the principal of Bais City High School,
Pacencio Rosalem, Sr. submitted the petition of the parents for the establishment of a local college in the city. Mayor Genaro Goñi, without hesitation, supported the idea of establishing a locally funded public College in the Bais City and immediately endorsed favorably the proposal of establishing a local college to the City Council.

In Sangguniang Panlungsod Resolution No. 168, approved on October 19, 1978, the City Council resolved to establish Bais Developmental College to the Ministry of Education and Culture and on June 9, 1980 BADECO started to operate with the courses on Electrical Technology, Automotive Technology and Agricultural Technology. The first thirty-two students used the same campus and building of Bais City High School where they held classes. While secondary students have their classes in the day time, college students on the other hand, attended night classes. The day to day administrative matters of the college was managed by the first school administrator, Paciencio Rosalem Sr. who was the same time the principal of Bais City High School. He was assisted by Benjamin Cañete, Concordia G. Corsiga and Alejandro Tölentino, who were permanent faculty and were then junior college instructors. The first part-time faculty members were Demetrio Lecciones, Nora Serrano, Maxianiano Garcia, Cesar Kadusale and Enrico Garcia, Jr. The second school administrator of Bais Developmental College was Benjamin S. Cañete.

With the increase in student and faculty population, the city council decided to enact a resolution which would provide for the offering of new courses and a new organizational set-up of BADECO. The City Council approved Resolution No. 173, s. 1986, on November 4, 1986, which provided for the charter of BADECO. The charter described the college as “a multi-purpose educational institution designed to give the youth and adults of Bais City and the neighboring municipalities, continuing, practical and advanced education in the arts, sciences, and humanities, in professional, technical and occupational training, there being no barrier for admission by reason of age, sex, nationality, religious beliefs or political affiliation”.

Factors that led to the development of BADECO to Genaro Goñi Memorial College

On January 24, 1990, through Resolution No. 270, dated November 24, 1989, the City Council authorized the City Government of Bais and to be represented by Mayor Genaro Goñi, in donating the school site which was owned by the city, to BADECO. This deed of absolute donation of real property was executed by the city to express its intention to provide necessary support to the educational growth of its constituents. This benevolent feat, therefore, led to the development of BADECO as a distinct institution that can now stand on its own feet. It should be noted that before the donation, BADECO and Bais City High School were sharing the same site and resources.

On May 17, 2000, the City Council resolved to enact Ordinance No. 7, series of 2000 confirming the creation of the then Bais Developmental College, and giving a permanent status and affirming all its legal acts to the now Genaro Goñi Memorial College. Furthermore, with this new ordinance, the institution continued to be governed by the Board of Trustees and was managed by an administrator. On July 4, 2002, the City Council resolved to enact Ordinance No. 11, series of 2002, amending and revising the Charter of Genaro Goñi Memorial College. This was premised on the ground that the college had already expanded in size and role and that its current charter is no longer deemed relevant to the needs of the changing city. It was then considered appropriate that the college should
have its new philosophy, vision, mission, goals and objectives of the college. Nonetheless, the school was still funded by the local government and remains true to its original purpose which is to provide quality education to the poor but deserving students of Bais City.

Ordinance No. 11, series of 2002, in Article V, provided for the financing of the college and sources of funds. The sources of funds for the college were tuition fees, matriculation and other college fees imposed by the Board of Trustees that were also remitted to the City Treasurer as trust funds. The school received an annual budget form the local government of P 60,000 from 1980 – 1992. There was an increase in the aid from the city amounting to 1 million in 1993 to 3 million until the year 2000. In 2001, the financial help from the city was raised to 4 million due to the increase in the number of faculty members who took care of the educational needs of the increasing student population. To cope with the need for a bigger budget, the Board of Trustees increased the student tuition fees that in turn paved the way for the growth in the college budget.

**Significant Events and Personalities involved in the Integration of GGMC to NORSU**

On June 10, 2004, the bicameral congress approved Republic Act No. 9299, entitled, “An Act Converting Central Visayas Polytechnic College (CVPC) into a State University to be known as Negros Oriental State University (NORSU) integrating therewith the Genaro Goñi Memorial College in the City of Bais, the Siaton Community College in the Municipality of Siaton, and the Mabinay Institute of Technology in the Municipality of Mabinay, all located in the Province of Negros Oriental and Appropriating Funds Therefor.” Dr. Henry A. Sojor, the last president of Central Visayas Polytechnic College (CVPC), gave his insights on the drafting of the bill and defended it before the joint session of the Senate Committees on Finance, Education and Ways and Means to justify the conversion of CVPC to NORSU (Sibala, 2012). Sojor later became the first president of Negros Oriental State University (NORSU).

At the Lower House, Congressman Herminio Teves, Representative of the Third District of Negros Oriental, sponsored House Bill No. 5633 while at the Senate; Senator Sergio Osmeña sponsored Senate Bill No. 257. On June 25, 2004, her Excellency President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo signed the bill into law. The other key personalities responsible in the conversion of CVPC to NORSU were Congressman Emilio Macias II, Senator Francis Pangilinan, Senate President Franklin Drilon and Speaker of the House Jose de Venecia (Sojor, 2004).

**DISCUSSION**

Negros Oriental State University, Bais Campus II, started as the first local college in Bais City in 1980. It was established through the concerted efforts of its city government officials headed by City Mayor Genaro Goñi. At that time, there was only a little political or social opposition on this endeavor; hence, the immediate establishment of the school was feasible. What could have caused the underlying reason for such government action to establish the first local college in the city?

The establishment of Bais Developmental College (BADECO) in 1980 can be attributed to political patronage. According to Piliavsky (2014), political patronage is usually viewed as how politicians bestow favors and benefits to their voters. In the case of BADECO, patronage politics can be seen as a generous act of the local officials to establish a school for its residents. With the same vision and perspective, the mayor and the city council were able to set the legislative basis for
carrying out the plan to establish the school and support its finances that were also taken from the local coffers.

Aside from parents’ petition and the local government’s legislation, what were the other reasons for the school’s establishment? Before the establishment of the institution in the early 70’s, many high school graduates could not proceed to college due to financial constraints. There was then a common need for higher education that was affordable to all the residents. Moreover, the people wanted to improve their socio-economic condition by earning a college degree and uplift their means of living which only relied on sugar cane production. In a much broader perspective, social consciousness slowly emerged from the time Bais was converted into a city in 1968. The people felt an indirect need to improve their status as professionals and that doing so can make them worthy residents of the city. These educational and social needs triggered their determined action to erect a college in the locality. This manifestation is consonance with Lampropoulou and Hadjikakou’s (2010) study on the establishment of schools as a product of lobbying and people empowerment.

On the part of the government, the establishment of the college was not only a mere act of satisfying the clamor of the people but was also be a contributing factor to the economic development of the city in the long run. Education contributes to the building of human capital and increase in income levels (Gradstein and Justman, 1999, Gok, 2007, Barro and Lee, 2010). Indirectly, another aim of the government officials pushed for the creation of the local college to boost the manpower skills of the people to support the emerging needs of industries. It can be noted that sometime in 1917, the Central Azucarera de Bais (CAB) was established by the Compania General de Tabacos de Filipinas or Tabacalera (Raymund, 1988). This event marked the beginning of a new era of economic growth in the province of Negros Oriental and the then Municipality of Bais where the sugar mill was located. The sugar mill led to the influx of migrants and settlers who wanted to work in the sugar mill. Another sugar mill, the United Planter Sugar Milling Company (UPSUMCO) was established between the borders of Bais City and the town of Manjuyod. UPSUMCO started its massive operations on November 4, 1976 (Rodriguez, 1989). The city government was looking forward to the generation of a competent manpower to supply the industrial needs of the sugar mills. Here, the creation of BADECO is reflective of the change in the economic conditions of the people and the economic agenda of the government.

In the following years, the development of BADECO was also due to the interaction of combined political, social and economic processes. This affirms the General Systems Theory which posits that changes in social institutions may come from a variety of ways. The City Council approved Resolution No. 173, s. 1986, on November 4, 1986, providing for the charter of BADECO. This legal move was a political action to strengthen the structure of the college as well as respond to the more pressing economic need for skilled professionals in the city. Later, people regarded the institution being on par with the other colleges in the province with new courses offered which included Baccalaureate degrees in addition to the two-year diploma courses; thus, from being a technical-vocational school, it transformed into a multi-disciplinary college.

On January 24, 1990, the Government of Bais donated the city-owned school site to BADECO. Again, this political act generates a social recognition to the college as a distinct institution in the city. This also accounts for the developmental function of political patronage wherein the local officials continued to contribute to the growth of the school. Local officials are
the mechanisms for the translation of perceived needs of the community to the next level (Titeca, 2006).

Faced with the increasing budgetary allocations taken solely from the coffers of the city, will GGMC remain as a locally-funded college and as a legacy of its founders? With the increase in the college aid, some officials felt that this would be a drain to the city budget. Hence, it was deemed to be beneficial that GGMC will be merged with CVPC upon the latter’s conversion to a university. The inclusion of GGMC will relieve the city of its annual aid which could be allocated for other city projects. On June 10, 2004, the bicameral congress approved Republic Act No. 9299, integrating GGMC to NORSU. This law was premised on the grounds that the university will provide poor and deserving students access to quality education. The integration of GGMC to NORSU was believed to be advantageous to the city because the national government will now take care of the financial aspects of its operations. Such integration will also provide sustainability to faculty salaries and benefits through the General Appropriation’s budget. Likewise, it will also offer a certain degree of prestige to students’ credentials as graduates of a university rather than from a local college. The perceived benefits of the expansion and growth of a local college were the possible reasons why the people readily accepted the integration of Genaro Goñi Memorial College (GGMC) to Negros Oriental State University (NORSU).

Conclusion

In the attempt to view comprehensively the causes and reasons for the establishment of a local college, this paper affirms the General Systems Theory as a guiding model. It also presents a view that political patronage contributed much to the establishment and development of a school. Furthermore, political, social and economic factors interrelate and intertwine with one another as to cause directly and indirectly, the development of Negros Oriental State University, Bais Campus II. As a locally-funded college, the school started as Bais Developmental College in 1980 and was renamed to Genaro Goñi Memorial College in 1992. Government patronage translated to policies concerning the school’s development and financing were evident through the series of resolutions and ordinances passed by the city council. These policies were also economically and socially driven and influenced. The establishment and development of the school were perceived to generate economic gains and supply of manpower as well as to gain social recognition and status as a school for the poor and deserving students. The interconnection of political, social and economic processes in the making and growth of a system, in this case, the school, is a positive alternative and possible model to explain why governments establish educational institutions. Further studies to explore this model are possible and encouraged.

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