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Responding to Change, Shaping the Future: Developing an Institutional Transformation Framework for Zamboanga Peninsula Polytechnic State University

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Abstract

Higher education institutions are increasingly challenged to respond to evolving societal, technological, and economic demands through continuous organizational transformation. This study aimed to develop an Institutional Transformation Framework for the Zamboanga Peninsula Polytechnic State University (ZPPSU) by examining its internal strengths and weaknesses, external opportunities and threats, and strategic development priorities. Using a qualitative-descriptive strategic planning design, data were gathered through document analysis and stakeholder consultations involving 270 participants. Findings from SWOT analysis revealed key organizational strengths in leadership, faculty competence, accredited programs, and research initiatives, while identifying infrastructure limitations, resource constraints, and faculty development needs as major challenges. The analysis further identified opportunities for collaboration and growth alongside external threats affecting institutional sustainability. These findings informed the development of an Institutional Transformation Framework anchored on seven strategic priority areas to guide long-term university development, innovation, competitiveness, and societal responsiveness.

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Introduction

Higher education institutions (HEIs) play an important role in societal transformation through their functions of instruction, research, extension, and innovation (Higher Education and Social Transformation, 2025). Beyond knowledge transmission, universities are increasingly expected to generate solutions to complex social, economic, technological, and environmental challenges while contributing to sustainable development and community advancement. Contemporary perspectives on higher education emphasize the need for institutions to become active partners in societal development by producing relevant knowledge, developing innovation, and strengthening engagement with stakeholders and communities (Chaudhary et al., 2025; Profiroiu & Popescu, 2024;).

In the Philippines, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) mandates higher education institutions to pursue quality and relevant education, research advancement, innovation, and community engagement. CHED likewise emphasizes the complementary functions of instruction, research, extension, and production as mechanisms through which universities contribute to national development and societal progress. As a result, higher education institutions are increasingly challenged to remain responsive, adaptive, and innovative amid rapidly changing social, economic, technological, and educational conditions. Higher education institutions are increasingly challenged to adapt to evolving societal, technological,

economic, and policy demands while maintaining relevance, competitiveness, and sustainability. This study developed an Institutional Transformation Framework for the Zamboanga Peninsula Polytechnic State University (ZPPSU) by examining its organizational environment, strategic priorities, and developmental directions. Employing a qualitative-descriptive strategic planning design, the study utilized documentary analysis and structured stakeholder consultations involving 270 purposively selected participants representing key university stakeholders. Data were analyzed through SWOT analysis and thematic synthesis. Findings revealed institutional strengths in leadership, faculty competence, accredited academic programs, research initiatives, and stakeholder engagement. However, challenges were identified in infrastructure, resource availability, technological capacity, and faculty development. Opportunities for growth were associated with strategic partnerships, government support, and community engagement, while external threats included increasing competition, funding constraints, and changing educational demands. Based on these findings, an Institutional Transformation Framework was developed, anchored on seven strategic priority areas designed to guide sustainable university development, institutional resilience, innovation, competitiveness, and societal responsiveness. The framework provides a strategic roadmap for supporting long-term institutional transformation in higher education.

Globally, universities are experiencing increasing pressure to enhance academic quality, strengthen research productivity, develop innovation ecosystems, expand community partnerships, and produce graduates capable of responding to emerging workforce demands. These expectations require institutions to continuously assess their relevance, redefine their roles, and develop strategic directions that enable them to respond effectively to both present and future societal needs. Institutional transformation has therefore become a strategic imperative for universities seeking to remain competitive, responsive, and impactful in a rapidly evolving environment.

Institutional Context

The Zamboanga City State Polytechnic College (ZCSPC), now the Zamboanga Peninsula Polytechnic State University (ZPPSU), provides a



compelling example of institutional evolution in response to changing societal and educational demands. Established in 1905 as a trade school, the institution underwent successive transformations that reflected the educational, economic, and workforce requirements of the region. Over time, it evolved into the Zamboanga Trade School, the Zamboanga City Regional School of Arts and Trades, the Zamboanga School of Arts and Trades, the Zamboanga City Polytechnic College, and eventually the Zamboanga City State Polytechnic College through Republic Act No. 9142. Later, Republic Act No. 11187 converted the institution into the Zamboanga Peninsula Polytechnic State University, expanding its mandate in technology education, research, innovation, and advanced professional and graduate education.

This historical progression demonstrates that the institution's development has been characterized by continuous adaptation to emerging educational, technological, and societal needs. The transition from a college to a university represents more than a change in institutional status, it signifies an expanded responsibility to strengthen academic programs, enhance research and innovation, deepen community engagement, develop industry partnerships, and contribute more substantially to regional and national development. Thus, the university must continuously reassess its capacities, opportunities, challenges, and strategic priorities to ensure that its growth remains aligned with its evolving mandate and the needs of its stakeholders.

Although previous studies have examined institutional transformation, strategic planning, and organizational development in higher education, important gaps remain in understanding how newly converted state universities can develop context-specific transformation frameworks grounded on organizational realities and stakeholder perspectives.

Opportunities for Institutional Transformation and Development

Contemporary universities increasingly rely on collaborations with government agencies, industries, communities, and international partners to enhance academic quality, research productivity, innovation, and societal impact. External partnerships provide access to resources, expertise, funding opportunities, and knowledge networks that strengthen institutional

development and competitiveness. Studies have shown that effective stakeholder engagement and strategic collaborations enable universities to improve research impact, strengthen community relevance, and respond more effectively to emerging societal and workforce needs (Abualrub & Pinheiro, 2022; Domínguez-Gómez et al., 2021; Heiser et al., 2025;). These opportunities support institutional adaptability and sustainability while expanding the university's capacity to fulfill its academic and developmental mandates.

Threats in Institutional Transformation and Development

Higher education institutions operate within dynamic environments characterized by policy changes, technological disruptions, financial uncertainties, and increasing competition. These conditions require universities to develop resilient governance systems, adaptive organizational cultures, and proactive risk-management mechanisms (Aryanti, 2025). Institutional resilience depends on the ability to anticipate external challenges, manage resources strategically, and maintain organizational responsiveness (Palkova et al., 2024). Therefore, effective governance and preparedness are critical for sustaining institutional effectiveness and long-term development (Kazanskaia, 2025b).

Strengths in Institutional Transformation and Development

Organizational strengths provide the foundation for institutional transformation by supporting innovation, knowledge creation, and continuous improvement. Effective leadership, competent faculty, quality assurance systems, and strong knowledge-management practices contribute significantly to institutional performance and adaptability. Studies consistently demonstrate that institutions with strong internal capacities are better positioned to pursue innovation, strengthen research productivity, and sustain organizational development amid changing educational environments (Amick & Mayega, 2022; Fang and Yang, 2024; Ramdass, 2023; Santos et al., 2024). Weaknesses in Institutional Transformation and Development. Internal limitations such as inadequate infrastructure, insufficient technological resources, faculty development constraints, and financial dependence may hinder institutional transformation efforts. These



weaknesses can affect academic quality, research productivity, and organizational competitiveness (Kazanskaia, 2025a ; Szabo, 2025; Walistian, 2025). Addressing such limitations requires targeted investments, capacity-building initiatives, diversified funding strategies, and strategic resource management to support long-term institutional sustainability.

Objectives

This study aimed to develop an Institutional Transformation Framework for the Zamboanga Peninsula Polytechnic State University (ZPPSU) by examining its internal strengths and weaknesses, external opportunities and threats, and strategic development priorities.

Specifically, it sought to:

1. Assess the internal strengths and weaknesses of the institution.
2. Examine the external opportunities and threats influencing institutional development.
3. Identify strategic priority areas necessary for institutional transformation and sustainability.
4. Develop an Institutional Transformation Framework that can guide long-term university development, innovation, and societal responsiveness.

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

This study focused on the development of an Institutional Transformation Framework for the Zamboanga Peninsula Polytechnic State University (ZPPSU). Specifically, it examined the institution's internal strengths and weaknesses, external opportunities and threats, and the strategic priority areas necessary to support institutional transformation and long-term sustainability. The study was guided by Institutional Change Theory and utilized SWOT analysis as the primary analytical framework for assessing the university's organizational environment and identifying strategic directions for future development.

The investigation was limited to qualitative data obtained from documentary sources and stakeholder consultations. Documentary sources included Republic Act No. 11187 otherwise known as the Charter of the Zamboanga Peninsula Polytechnic State University, which converted the former Zamboanga City State Polytechnic College into a state university and expanded its mandate to include advanced instruction, research, innovation, extension services, and technology-driven development. Other documentary sources included were related legislative issuances, university strategic and development plans, institutional accomplishment and annual reports, accreditation and quality assurance documents, and relevant organizational records. Stakeholder consultations involved selected university administrators, faculty members, staff, students, alumni, community representatives, industry partners, and government agencies whose perspectives were considered relevant to institutional planning and development. Data were analyzed through document analysis, thematic analysis, and SWOT analysis to identify strategic issues and priority areas that informed the development of the proposed framework.

The study was delimited to the institutional context of ZPPSU and focused exclusively on the organizational and strategic dimensions of institutional transformation. It did not evaluate academic outcomes, student learning outcomes, financial performance indicators, operational efficiency measures, or the implementation effectiveness of the proposed Institutional Transformation Framework. Furthermore, comparative analyses with other state universities and colleges were beyond the scope of the investigation. Thus, the findings and recommendations are specific to the organizational conditions, stakeholder perspectives, and documentary evidence available during the conduct of the study. While the framework may offer insights for similar institutions, its application should be adapted to the unique contexts, governance structures, resources, and strategic priorities of other universities.

Conceptual Framework

This study is anchored on the premise that institutional transformation is a dynamic process influenced by the interaction of internal organizational capacities and external environmental conditions. Guided by Institutional Change Theory (Aoki, 2006), the framework suggests that universities



continuously adapt their structures, policies, and strategic priorities in response to changing opportunities, challenges, and stakeholder expectations. The transformation process begins with a comprehensive assessment of the institution's internal environment, consisting of strengths and weaknesses, and its external environment, comprising opportunities and threats. These factors collectively form the university's capacity to respond to emerging demands and sustain organizational growth.

The identified internal and external factors are systematically examined through SWOT Analysis to determine strategic issues and development needs. The analysis generates strategic priority areas that serve as the foundation for institutional transformation. These priorities include Academic Excellence, Research and Innovation, Extension and Community Engagement, Student Development, Infrastructure Development, Resource Generation, and Expansion and Partnerships. The integration of these strategic dimensions results in the development of an Institutional Transformation Framework that guides long-term university development. Ultimately, the framework is expected to contribute to sustainable university development, enhanced research productivity, improved community impact, institutional competitiveness, organizational sustainability, and greater innovation and societal responsiveness.

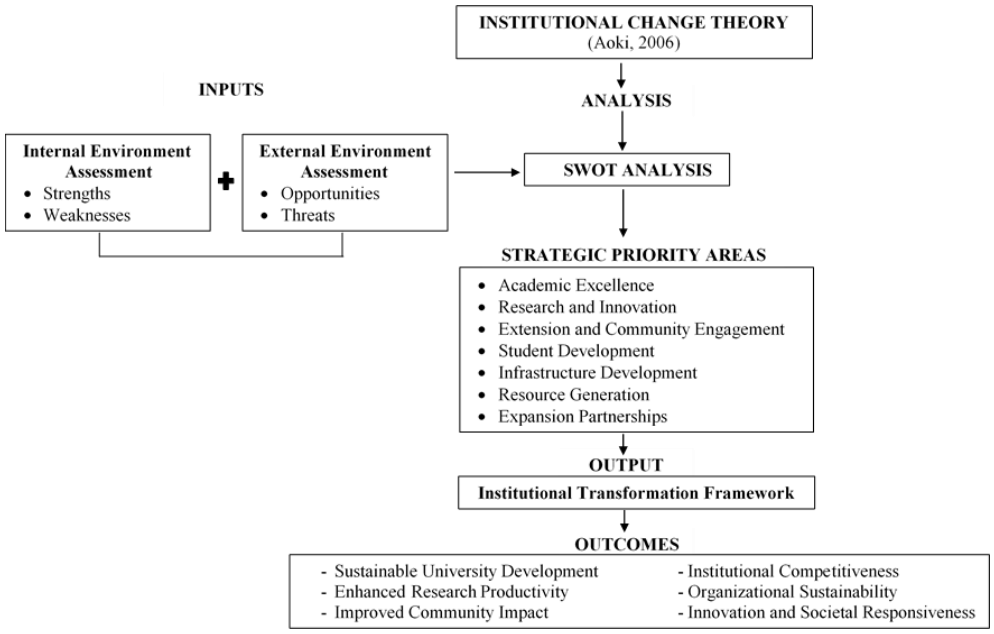


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Institutional Change Theory, proposed by Aoki (2006), which explains how organizations evolve in response to changes in their internal structures and external environments. The theory posits that institutions are not static entities but dynamic systems composed of formal rules, governance mechanisms, organizational routines, stakeholder interactions, and resource arrangements that continuously adapt to emerging conditions. Institutional change occurs when organizations modify their structures, policies, practices, and strategic priorities to maintain relevance, legitimacy, effectiveness, and competitiveness amid changing social, political, economic, and technological environments. The theory further emphasizes that sustainable transformation results from the alignment of institutional capabilities with environmental opportunities and challenges.

Within higher education, Institutional Change Theory provides a useful lens for understanding how universities respond to shifts in policy environments, technological developments, stakeholder expectations, and societal demands. The theory proposes that successful transformation depends on an institution's ability to leverage internal strengths, address organizational weaknesses, capitalize on external opportunities, and mitigate environmental threats.

In the present study, Institutional Change Theory guided the assessment of ZPPSU's internal and external environment through SWOT analysis. The identified strengths and opportunities represent institutional capacities that facilitate transformation, while weaknesses and threats signify pressures requiring organizational adaptation. The resulting Institutional Transformation Framework serves as the institution's strategic response to these conditions, illustrating the process of institutional change envisioned by Aoki (2006).



Methods

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative-descriptive strategic planning design to develop an Institutional Transformation Framework for ZPPSU. The qualitative-descriptive strategic planning design was deemed appropriate because the study focused on generating an evidence-based institutional transformation framework through the examination of organizational conditions, stakeholder perspectives, strategic priorities, and developmental directions. Rather than establishing cause-and-effect relationships, the study sought to understand institutional realities and translate them into strategic transformation initiatives. The approach enabled a comprehensive assessment of institutional conditions necessary for strategic planning and organizational transformation.

Respondents of the Study

Stakeholder consultations involved purposively selected 270 representatives from key sectors directly associated with the university's operations and development. Participants included university administrators, faculty members, non-teaching personnel, students, alumni, community representatives, industry partners, and government agency representatives. Purposive sampling was employed to ensure that participants possessed adequate knowledge of institutional programs, governance, community engagement initiatives, and strategic development concerns. Selection was based on participants' involvement in university planning activities, institutional operations, partnership engagements, or stakeholder representation.

Table 1

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents

Stakeholder Group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Administrators	20	7
Faculty Members	55	20
Non-Teaching Personnel	20	7
Students	100	37
Alumni	30	11
Community Representatives	15	6
Industry Partners	20	7
Government Representatives	10	4
Total	**270**	**100**

Research Locale

This study was conducted at Zamboanga Peninsula Polytechnic State University (ZPPSU), a state higher education institution in the Zamboanga Peninsula region of the Philippines. The university was selected as the research locale because the study aimed to assess its internal strengths and weaknesses, examine external opportunities and threats, identify strategic development priorities, and develop an Institutional Transformation Framework to support long-term growth, innovation, and sustainability. The investigation focused on key institutional domains, including governance and leadership, instruction, research, extension, human resource development, infrastructure, resource management, and external partnerships, providing a comprehensive basis for understanding the university's current condition and future transformation needs.

Data Collection

Data were obtained from multiple sources to ensure the credibility, comprehensiveness, and triangulation of findings. Documentary sources included Republic Act No. 11187 and related legislative issuances, university strategic and development plans, institutional accomplishment and annual



reports, accreditation reports, quality assurance documents, and relevant organizational and historical records. These documents provided essential information regarding the university's mandate, governance structure, academic programs, research and extension initiatives, institutional performance, and developmental trajectory. To complement the documentary review, stakeholder consultations were conducted through a series of structured focus-group discussions, strategic planning workshops, and consultation meetings. The 270 participants represented administrators, faculty members, non-teaching personnel, students, alumni, community leaders, industry partners, and government agencies. During the consultation sessions, participants were asked to identify institutional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats, and future development priorities using guide questions and facilitated discussions. Consultation outputs were documented through written records, workshop outputs, synthesis reports, and facilitator notes. These data served as the primary qualitative source of stakeholder perspectives and were subsequently analyzed through thematic analysis and integrated with documentary findings to ensure triangulation and validation. The integration of documentary evidence and stakeholder perspectives provided a comprehensive understanding of the university's organizational environment and served as the basis for assessing institutional conditions and developing the proposed Institutional Transformation Framework.

Data Analysis

The study utilized document analysis, thematic analysis, and SWOT analysis. First, institutional and policy documents were systematically reviewed and coded according to recurring organizational themes. Second, stakeholder inputs were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify common concerns, opportunities, aspirations, and developmental priorities. Finally, findings from documentary and stakeholder analyses were classified according to strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

The SWOT findings were subsequently synthesized to identify strategic priority areas that formed the basis for the development of the Institutional Transformation Framework.

Framework Development Procedure

Following the SWOT analysis, a framework-generation process was undertaken to translate the identified organizational factors into strategic development priorities. SWOT themes extracted from documentary analysis and stakeholder consultations were first coded and categorized according to their contribution to institutional performance, sustainability, competitiveness, innovation, and societal responsiveness. Similar themes were subsequently merged through iterative thematic coding and constant comparison techniques. The clustered themes were then organized into broader institutional development domains based on conceptual similarity, strategic relevance, and alignment with the university's mandate as stipulated in Republic Act No. 11187. This process resulted in seven strategic priority domains: Academic Excellence, Research and Innovation, Extension and Community Engagement, Student Development, Infrastructure Development, Resource Generation, and Expansion and Partnerships. The preliminary framework was subsequently reviewed and refined through expert validation involving university administrators, planning officers, and academic leaders to ensure relevance, feasibility, coherence, and alignment with institutional strategic directions. The final framework emerged from the convergence of SWOT findings, stakeholder priorities, and validation results.

Framework Validation

The preliminary Institutional Transformation Framework underwent expert validation to assess its relevance, completeness, feasibility, and alignment with institutional mandates. Validators consisted of university administrators, planning officers, quality assurance personnel, and academic leaders with substantial experience in higher education governance and strategic planning.

A structured validation instrument employing a four-point relevance scale was utilized. Validators evaluated each framework component according to, Relevance to institutional transformation, Completeness of strategic domains, Feasibility of implementation, and Alignment with institutional mission and development goals.



Comments and recommendations from validators were analyzed and incorporated into the final version of the framework. The validation process confirmed the framework's contextual appropriateness and practical utility as a strategic planning guide for institutional transformation.

Trustworthiness and Rigor

To ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings, multiple sources of evidence were utilized through methodological triangulation involving documentary analysis and stakeholder consultations. Data obtained from institutional documents were cross-validated with stakeholder perspectives to verify emerging themes and strategic issues. Member validation was conducted during stakeholder review sessions to confirm the accuracy of interpretations. An audit trail consisting of consultation records, coding summaries, documentary analyses, and validation reports was maintained throughout the study. These procedures enhanced the credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability of the findings.

Results and Discussion

SWOT Analysis

The SWOT analysis provided a comprehensive assessment of the university's internal and external environment and revealed key factors influencing its long-term development and transformation. Consistent with Institutional Change Theory (Aoki, 2006), the findings demonstrate that institutional transformation is formed by the interaction between organizational capacities and environmental conditions. The identified strengths and opportunities represent enabling factors that support growth and innovation, while the weaknesses and threats highlight areas requiring strategic intervention and organizational adaptation.

Table 2

Summary of SWOT Findings

SWOT Category	Key Findings	Evidence Source
Strengths	Qualified faculty, accredited programs, research culture, leadership	Documents and stakeholder consultations
Weaknesses	Infrastructure gaps, laboratory shortages, limited faculty development, resource constraints	Documents and stakeholder consultations
Opportunities	Government support, industry partnerships, international linkages	Documents and stakeholder consultations
Threats	Budget limitations, policy changes, competition, peace and order concerns	Documents and stakeholder consultations

Opportunities

The analysis identified several external opportunities that can significantly support institutional growth and transformation. Political and government support provide favorable conditions for academic expansion, infrastructure development, and research funding, while civic and community support enhances institutional legitimacy and strengthens extension and development initiatives. The identified opportunities demonstrate that government support, community engagement, and strategic partnerships provide the university with access to resources, legitimacy, and collaborative networks necessary for institutional growth. This finding supports the work of Abualrub and Pinheiro (2022), who argued that strong stakeholder relationships strengthen institutional capacity by facilitating policy support, resource mobilization, and long-term organizational sustainability.

International assistance, academic collaborations, and industry partnerships further create opportunities for faculty development, research collaboration, technology transfer, curriculum enhancement, and graduate employability. These findings suggest that the university is well-positioned to leverage external networks and resources to strengthen its academic relevance, research capacity, and societal impact. Domínguez-Gómez et al. (2021) noted that universities increasingly engage with government, industry, and civil society to enhance knowledge production, innovation, and societal responsiveness. Similarly, Heiser et al. (2025) argued that strategic partnerships and stakeholder engagement are essential for maximizing



research impact and public relevance. These opportunities also enable universities to balance local development needs with global aspirations, thereby enhancing institutional adaptability, competitiveness, and long-term sustainability (Abualrub & Pinheiro, 2022).

Furthermore, from an Institutional Change Theory perspective, external collaborations, government support, and industry linkages serve as environmental motivation that encourage organizational adaptation, innovation, and strategic expansion.

Threats

Despite favorable opportunities, the institution faces several external threats that may hinder its transformation efforts. Peace and order concerns may affect student recruitment, faculty retention, stakeholder engagement, and program implementation, while budget limitations and funding uncertainties pose challenges to university expansion, infrastructure development, and research advancement. Additionally, policy changes and increasing competition among higher education institutions require continuous institutional adaptation to maintain compliance, quality, and competitiveness.

These findings highlight the need for proactive governance, strategic resource management, and organizational adaptability to strengthen institutional resilience. Aryanti (2025) emphasized that effective governance, adaptive organizational cultures, and proactive policy implementation enhance institutional capacity to respond to uncertainties. Similarly, Palkova et al. (2024) emphasized the importance of governance structures, risk management, and organizational preparedness, while Kazanskaia (2025a) noted that proactive leadership and strategic resource allocation are critical for sustaining institutional effectiveness.

Additionally, these threats emphasize the importance of organizational resilience and adaptive governance, central concepts within Institutional Change Theory, which emphasize the need for institutions to continuously respond to external pressures and uncertainties.

Strengths

The findings revealed several organizational strengths that provide a strong foundation for institutional transformation. Stakeholders consistently recognized the university's commitment to quality education, responsive student services, relevant academic programs, and strong leadership characterized by transparency, consultation, and support for innovation and continuous improvement. Faculty competence, accredited academic programs, expanding facilities, and responsive student services further demonstrate the institution's readiness to pursue academic excellence and sustainable development.

The emergence of a research culture likewise strengthens the university's transformation potential. Increased participation in research activities, improved access to research support mechanisms, and growing faculty collaboration indicate an expanding capacity for knowledge generation and innovation. These findings align with Santos et al. (2024), who found that strategically supported knowledge management initiatives enhance institutional innovation and knowledge creation. Similarly, Ramdass (2023) emphasized that capacity development and continuous learning promote organizational adaptability, while evidence from Makerere University highlights the role of institutional support in strengthening innovation and knowledge production (Amick & Mayega, 2022). Fang and Yang (2024) likewise reported that knowledge creation capabilities positively influence institutional innovation and performance.

Moreover, these findings support Institutional Change Theory, which suggests that organizational transformation is facilitated by the presence of internal capabilities that enable adaptation to changing environmental conditions. Strong leadership, qualified faculty, and quality-assured academic programs represent institutional resources that enhance the university's capacity to implement strategic change initiatives and sustain long-term development.



Weaknesses

Despite these strengths, the SWOT analysis identified several internal weaknesses that may constrain institutional development if not adequately addressed. Infrastructure gaps, limited technological resources, shortages of specialized laboratory equipment, and restricted faculty development opportunities may affect the quality of instruction, research, innovation, and student services as the university continues to expand. In addition, the limited availability of income-generating and resource-generation mechanisms contributes to continued dependence on government appropriations, potentially restricting institutional flexibility and strategic growth.

The identified infrastructure deficiencies, technological limitations, and faculty development constraints suggest the need for strategic investments and institutional capacity-building initiatives. This finding reinforces Szabo's (2025) assertion that strengthening infrastructure, technological capability, and human resource development enhances institutional resilience and supports sustainable organizational transformation. Similarly, Kazanskaia (2025a) highlighted the importance of diversified funding strategies, capacity development, and stakeholder engagement in achieving organizational sustainability. Walistian (2025) likewise highlighted the value of institutional capacity building and diversified investment mechanisms in enhancing long-term financial resilience.

Moreover, the identified weaknesses represent organizational constraints requiring adaptive responses and institutional restructuring to sustain competitiveness and effectiveness in a rapidly changing higher education environment.

SWOT Strategic Matrix

While the SWOT analysis identified the institution's internal and external conditions, strategic implications emerged through the interaction of these factors. The SWOT matrix facilitated the formulation of strategic responses

that maximize strengths and opportunities while addressing weaknesses and mitigating threats.

Table 3

SWOT Strategic Matrix

Strategy Type	Strategic Direction
SO Strategies	Utilize qualified faculty, accredited programs, and research capabilities to maximize international collaborations, industry partnerships, and government-supported development initiatives.
WO Strategies	Leverage external funding opportunities, government assistance, and international partnerships to address infrastructure deficiencies, laboratory equipment shortages, and faculty development needs.
ST Strategies	Utilize strong leadership, accreditation status, and quality assurance systems to maintain competitiveness and respond effectively to changing policy environments and external uncertainties.
WT Strategies	Diversify revenue streams, strengthen risk-management mechanisms, and develop sustainable resource-generation initiatives to reduce vulnerability to funding constraints and external disruptions.

Legend: SO = Strengths–Opportunities strategies; WO = Weaknesses–Opportunities strategies; ST = Strengths–Threats strategies; WT = Weaknesses–Threats strategies.

These strategic interactions demonstrate that institutional transformation is not merely a description of organizational conditions but a strategic response to the dynamic interaction between internal capabilities and environmental pressures. Consistent with Institutional Change Theory, institutional adaptation occurs when organizations leverage existing strengths to exploit opportunities while simultaneously addressing weaknesses and mitigating threats

Strategic Priority Areas for Institutional Transformation and Sustainability

The seven strategic priorities were derived through the clustering of related SWOT themes according to their contribution to institutional effectiveness, organizational sustainability, competitiveness, and strategic growth. Themes associated with instructional quality, faculty competence, and accredited programs were consolidated under Academic Excellence, while research-related strengths and opportunities were grouped under Research and Innovation. Community engagement activities and stakeholder support informed Extension and Community Engagement. Student-centered services formed the basis for Student Development. Infrastructure deficiencies were consolidated under Infrastructure Development, whereas



funding-related concerns were classified under Resource Generation. Finally, opportunities involving external linkages, international collaborations, and industry partnerships were integrated into Expansion and Partnerships. This thematic consolidation ensured that the resulting priorities reflected both organizational realities and future institutional aspirations.

Table 4

Strategic Priorities Derived from SWOT Analysis

SWOT Findings	Strategic Priority
Qualified faculty and accredited programs	Academic Excellence
Emerging research culture	Research and Innovation
Community support and extension impact	Extension and Community Engagement
Student support services	Student Development
Infrastructure gaps	Infrastructure Development
Dependence on government funding	Resource Generation
International assistance and industry linkages	Expansion and Partnerships

The SWOT findings revealed that institutional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats converge into seven strategic priority areas that are essential for long-term university development. These priorities represent strategic responses to both internal organizational conditions and external environmental demands. Consistent with Institutional Change Theory, the identified priorities illustrate how institutions adapt their structures and strategic directions to maintain relevance and effectiveness in changing environments.

Development of the Institutional Transformation Framework

The framework emerged through a multi-stage analytical process. First, SWOT themes generated from documentary analysis and stakeholder consultations were coded and categorized according to their relevance to institutional effectiveness, sustainability, innovation, competitiveness, and societal responsiveness. Second, recurring themes were subjected to iterative comparison and clustering to identify conceptual similarities. Third, the clustered themes were organized into broader strategic domains aligned with the university's mandate, strategic objectives, and Institutional Change Theory.

The process resulted in seven interconnected strategic domains: Academic Excellence, Research and Innovation, Extension and Community Engagement, Student Development, Infrastructure Development, Resource Generation, and Expansion and Partnerships. These domains collectively represent the institutional capacities and strategic responses necessary for organizational transformation and sustainable development. Figure 2 illustrates the framework.

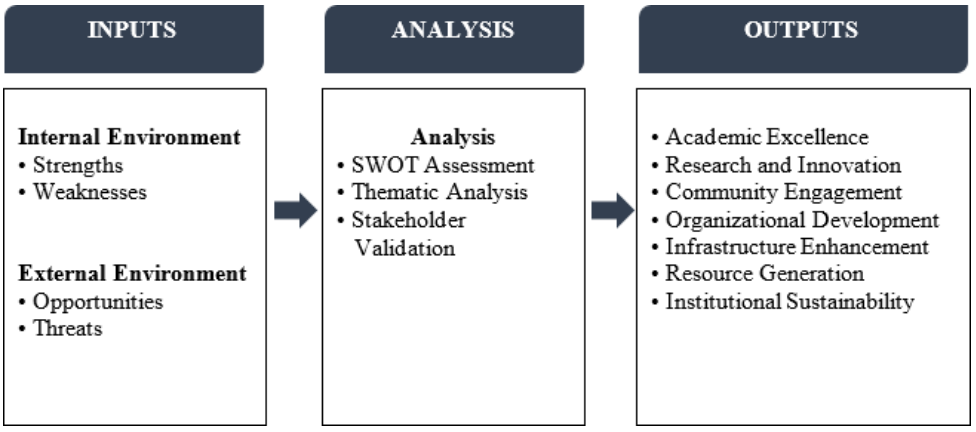


Figure 2. Institutional Transformation Framework

The Institutional Transformation Framework illustrates the dynamic process through which ZPPSU can achieve sustainable development and organizational transformation. Anchored on Institutional Change Theory, the framework begins with the assessment of internal organizational capacities and external environmental conditions through SWOT analysis. The identified factors are translated into seven interconnected strategic domains that collectively drive institutional transformation.

Academic Excellence strengthens instructional quality, curriculum relevance, accreditation performance, and graduate employability. Research and Innovation enhance knowledge production, innovation ecosystems, and evidence-based decision-making. Extension and Community Engagement promote social responsiveness and strengthen the university's contribution to regional development. Student Development focuses on holistic learner growth, leadership formation, well-being, and student success. Infrastructure Development addresses physical and digital resource requirements necessary for academic and operational excellence. Resource



Generation promotes financial sustainability through diversified funding mechanisms, income-generating projects, and strategic investments. Expansion and Partnerships broaden institutional reach through collaborations with government agencies, industries, international institutions, and community organizations.

The interaction among these strategic domains creates a reinforcing cycle of institutional growth, organizational learning, innovation, and stakeholder engagement. Thus, the framework serves not merely as a planning model but as a transformation mechanism that enables the university to adapt to changing environmental conditions while maintaining relevance, competitiveness, sustainability, and societal impact.

Moreover, as a strategic roadmap, the Institutional Transformation Framework translates organizational assessment into actionable development directions. Each strategic domain functions as a pathway for institutional improvement while collectively contributing to long-term sustainability, innovation, competitiveness, and societal responsiveness. Through the integration of academic excellence, research productivity, community engagement, resource sustainability, infrastructure enhancement, and strategic partnerships, the framework operationalizes institutional transformation and provides a practical guide for future university planning and decision-making.

Implications

The findings demonstrate that institutional transformation requires the alignment of organizational capacities with external opportunities and challenges. The proposed framework offers a practical mechanism for integrating strategic planning, governance, resource allocation, research development, community engagement, and partnership-building within a unified institutional development agenda. The framework may serve as a reference model for state universities undergoing organizational transition, expansion, or strategic realignment while contributing to the growing discourse on higher education transformation in developing-country contexts.

Conclusion

This study developed an Institutional Transformation Framework for the Zamboanga Peninsula Polytechnic State University (ZPPSU) by examining its internal strengths and weaknesses, external opportunities and threats, and strategic development priorities. The SWOT analysis revealed that the university possesses substantial organizational strengths, including strong leadership, qualified faculty, accredited academic programs, expanding facilities, and an emerging research culture, which collectively provide a solid foundation for institutional transformation. At the same time, the analysis identified critical weaknesses related to infrastructure, specialized equipment, faculty development, and resource generation that require strategic attention to sustain institutional growth and competitiveness.

The findings further demonstrated that external opportunities, such as government support, community engagement, international collaborations, and industry partnerships, create favorable conditions for institutional advancement. However, threats associated with funding uncertainties, policy changes, regional peace and order concerns, and increasing competition among higher education institutions highlight the need for proactive governance and organizational adaptability. These internal and external factors collectively informed the identification of seven strategic priority areas: Academic Excellence, Research and Innovation, Extension and Community Engagement, Student Development, Infrastructure Development, Resource Generation, and Expansion and Partnerships.

Drawing from these priorities, the proposed Institutional Transformation Framework provides a strategic roadmap for guiding long-term university development, innovation, and societal responsiveness. Consistent with Institutional Change Theory, the framework demonstrates that sustainable institutional transformation is achieved through the alignment of organizational capacities with environmental opportunities and challenges. By strengthening academic quality, research productivity, community engagement, infrastructure, financial sustainability, and strategic partnerships, the framework positions the university to become a more resilient, innovative, and competitive institution.

Ultimately, the principal contribution of this study lies in the development of a context-specific Institutional Transformation Framework designed for a



newly converted state university undergoing organizational expansion and strategic realignment. By systematically integrating SWOT analysis, stakeholder perspectives, Institutional Change Theory, and strategic planning principles, the framework provides an evidence-based roadmap for sustainable university development, innovation, competitiveness, and societal responsiveness. Beyond its relevance to ZPPSU, the framework contributes to the growing discourse on higher education transformation by offering a replicable yet adaptable model that may inform strategic planning initiatives among state universities and colleges facing similar developmental transitions.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that the university institutionalize the proposed Institutional Transformation Framework as a guiding mechanism for strategic planning, decision-making, and resource allocation. University administrators may strengthen existing organizational strengths by sustaining leadership development initiatives, enhancing quality assurance systems, maintaining accreditation status, and continuously improving academic programs to ensure relevance and competitiveness in a rapidly changing higher education environment.

To address identified weaknesses, the university may prioritize investments in infrastructure modernization, laboratory facilities, digital technologies, and specialized equipment to support instruction, research, and innovation. Faculty development programs may likewise be expanded through advanced training, graduate studies, international exposure, and research mentoring to strengthen expertise in specialized and emerging fields. Furthermore, the institution may develop sustainable resource-generation mechanisms through income-generating projects, research commercialization, industry partnerships, grants acquisition, and alumni engagement to reduce dependence on government funding and enhance financial resilience.

The university may also maximize external opportunities by strengthening collaborations with government agencies, international institutions, industry partners, and community organizations. Such partnerships can

facilitate research productivity, technology transfer, faculty and student mobility, workforce development, and community impact. At the same time, proactive risk management strategies may be established to address potential threats related to policy changes, funding uncertainties, regional challenges, and increasing competition among higher education institutions. Finally, future studies may validate and assess the effectiveness of the proposed Institutional Transformation Framework through longitudinal implementation and evaluation. Similar studies may also be conducted in other state universities and colleges to determine the applicability, adaptability, and contribution of the framework to institutional transformation, organizational sustainability, and higher education development in diverse contexts

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