

Adequacy of Governance Practices in University of Bohol

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ABSTRACT

Governance refers to institutional systems and processes that reflect the principles guiding the overall use of authority and decision-making of the institution through its governing body. Assessment of the practices of this governing body is the foremost measure of quality in Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) per Philippine Commission for Higher Education (CHED) Institutional Quality Assurance Monitoring and Education (IQUAME) framework. This study assessed the adequacy of governance practices in the University of Bohol (UB) in its continual quest for educational leadership being Bohol's first university. The researcher formulated survey questions adapted from the Governance and Management criteria of the IQUAME Self Evaluation Document (SED). The respondents of the study were the UB administrators that included the Board of Trustees, academic deans/ heads of offices. It involved as well the faculty, staff, and students selected by stratified random sampling. The differences in the means of survey responses for respondent groups were analyzed through weighted means. Results showed the adequacy of the four sub-variables under governance and management: Development planning, Qualifications of administrators, Addressing change, and Documentation of procedures. The overall conclusion is that UB can maintain leadership by building upon its strengths. The assessment addresses the objectives for quality assurance in teaching and learning and is a step towards institutional accreditation.

KEYWORDS

Institutional Management, Governance Practices, IQAME Framework, Weighted Means, Asia, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

It is the intention of this study to assess the governance practice in University of Bohol (UB) with the aim of determining its state of readiness for accreditation. Specifically this study intends to answer the following questions:

- How adequate are the governance practices in UB in the context of: Development planning, Selection and qualification of administrators, Addressing change and critical incidents, and Established processes reflected in manuals?
- Are there significant differences in the assessment of the administrators, faculty, non-teaching personnel, and students on the Adequacy of governance practices?

This research is anchored on the Philippine Commission for Higher Education (CHED) Institutional Quality Assurance Monitoring and Education (IQAME) framework provided for in CHED Memorandum Orders 15 and 16 series of 2005. The monitoring and evaluation framework has five key result areas within which judgments are being made about the performance of institutions. These areas include governance and management, quality of teaching and learning, support for students, relations with the community, and management of resources. Each key area has a number of indicators that are applied appropriately to institutions having regard for the mission and stage of development of the institution as clearly specified by CHED Memorandum Order Number 15 series of 2005, Section 3 (5).

Per IQAME Evaluation guide, Governance and Management is the first key result area with sub-areas under Governance: Strategic vision, Probity, Accountability, Awareness and Management of risk, and Effective monitoring of performance. Sub-areas under Management were: Management and Financial Control, and Quality Assurance Arrangements. For the purpose of this study the indicators under the several sub-areas were re-categorized into five sub-areas namely: Development planning, Selection and qualification of administrators, Addressing change and critical incidents, and Established processes. Governance

refers to the systems that reflect the principles guiding the overall use of authority and decision-making of the institution's governing body while Management refers to the overall systems and processes of the institution as defined in the IQAME Self- Evaluation Document (SED) Guidebook.

Governance as a structure for private sectarian and non-sectarian higher education institutions in the Philippines is covered by Article VII, Section 31 of the 2008 Manual of Regulations for Private Schools, that states:

“Every private higher education institution shall have a governing board that shall exercise general supervision, have exclusive control and direction of all funds, prescribe policies, make rules and regulations and establish practices that are not inconsistent with law and the policies and rules of the Commission.”

Under CHED Memorandum Order 16 Section 3 paragraph 1 series of 2005, the CHED adopted the terminologies commonly used and employed in implementing quality assurance system in higher education sector in UK, Australia, USA, and Hong Kong. Prominent in quality assurance systems is the concept of governance as applied to schools and education systems. This concept was discussed by Halász 2003 in the paper, “Governing schools and education systems in the era of diversity,” presented in 21st Session of Standing Conference of European Ministers of Education.

Halász (2003) identified the difference between governance and management in schools stressing their strong links but very different meanings. Governance is used for things or beings the behavior of which cannot be predicted totally while management is for things or beings, the behavior of which is easier to predict. The processes involved in governing are negotiating, persuading, bargaining, pressuring because of limited control on the things or beings governed. Management instructs and orders because of strong and legitimate power to do so. When schools are taken as organizational units, management is often used. As schools have become more open institutions, existing in varying economic settings, and are characterized by complex array of different needs and interests, governance is more appropriately used.

Globalization is one factor that contributed to the evolution of the current concept of governance. Carlsson with Ramphal (1995) defines governance as referring to three elements: “(1) individuals and institutions (public, private and civic) manage their collective affairs, (2) the diverse interests accommodate and resolve their differences; (3) these many actors and organizations are involved

in a continuing process of formal and informal competition, co-operation and learning.” The dynamism and open-nature of modern democracies with the mix of competition, cooperation and learning are now attributes of organizations. Collective decision-making with the participation of all stakeholders is facilitated through established structures in the organization. It was indicated in *The Road to Academic Excellence* (Altbach&Salmi 2011) that the best contemporary universities have shared governance with the academic community in control of essential academic decisions and the administrators and managers responsible for resources, facilities, and other administrative matters.

IQUAME is the quality assurance system adopted by CHED although it is not the only mechanism for quality assurance for Philippine higher education. Accreditation by an independent body as a quality assurance mechanism preceded the government’s drive for quality in education. The move for accreditation started as early as 1951, through the initiative of a group of educators from private higher education institutions who were convinced of the importance to enhance quality education through a system of standards, continuous monitoring, and self-evaluation. This group envisioned that the accreditation would be an appropriate guide to parents and college-bound students as cited by Arcelo (2003).

Quality assurance activities depend on the existence of the necessary institutional mechanisms preferably sustained by a solid quality culture. Quality management, quality enhancement, quality control, and quality assessment are means through which quality assurance is ensured. The scope of quality assurance is determined by the shape and size of the higher education system. Quality assurance varies from accreditation, in the sense that the former is only a prerequisite for the latter as posited by Sabio and Sabio(2014).

The administrators of the University of Bohol fully subscribe to the idea that academic leadership is going beyond the minimum requirements set by the law and is aiming for institutional accreditation and its attendant benefits. UB is long overdue for re-accreditation as it obtained Level 1 accreditation from PAASCU in 1998 for the colleges of Liberal Arts, Commerce, and Education. This accomplishment was not followed through in its aim for higher accreditation levels as a conflagration on February 1999 destroyed more than half its buildings and facilities shifting institutional priorities and resources towards infrastructure rehabilitation and construction. In 2008, UB attempted to process its re-accreditation with PACUCOA although this was not completed. UB now has the required buildings and facilities and is now poised to hurdle its quest for accreditation in major programs and as an institution.

Hence, this study is part of the steps undertaken for the institutional accreditation of UB. Studies on the other result areas under the CHED IQAME particularly Community Relations and Resources Sufficiency are already undertaken by this researcher.

METHODOLOGY

The study is a descriptive research utilizing a researcher-developed questionnaire for data collection. The questionnaire form was pre-tested on 64 test respondents for clarity and for further refinement before its final distribution.

The respondents of the study were the administrators, department heads, faculty, non-teaching personnel, and selected students of the University of Bohol.

Table 1. Distribution of Respondents

Respondents	Population	Sample Size
Administrative officers	44	15
Faculty	300	101
Staff	100	34
Students	343	115
Total	787	265

Table 1 reflects the distribution of respondents. The population of the administrative officers includes all the 10 members of the Board of Trustees and the 34 officers-in-charge of the responsibility centers. The survey population of the faculty is made up of the entire regular tenured faculty from all the 19 academic departments/colleges excluding the probationary teachers. The survey population of the students were all the senior students, fourth and fifth years, from all the colleges. The staff or non-teaching respondents included all the service personnel with employment terms of more than three years. A third of the group population was chosen for the study.

Furthermore, as to the selection of the respondents, an alphabetical list of all group members was prepared for each survey population. Random numbers generated using Microsoft Excel was used to select the respondent from the alphabetical list for each respondent group. The same procedure was used to determine the test group that was taken from the faculty, staff and students survey population but on a smaller scale equal to one-fourth of the final respondents or 64 test-respondents.

The variables were adapted from the Governance and Management criteria of the IQAME Self Evaluation Document and assessed in the sub-variables: development planning, qualifications of administrators, addressing change, and documentation of established procedures.

The respondents were asked to rate the variables per category according to

the following code:

Symbol	Description	Meaning	Mean Weight Equivalent	Values Range
VA	Very Adequate	Absolutely flawless or perfect in the formulation, development and implementation	4	3.25-4.00
A	Adequate	Has few minor flaws in the formulation, development and implementation	3	2.50 -3.24
FA	Fairly Adequate	Many minor flaws but few major flaws	2	1.75-2.49
In	Inadequate	Needs revision, many major flaws exist	1	1.00-1.74

Data were gathered in 3 phases: 1) Permission for the testing and the administration of the instrument was obtained from the University President; 2) upon approval, the forms were distributed and answered by the administrators-respondents in a regular academic meeting. The faculty-respondents answered the questionnaire during the monthly academic meeting. The staff- and student-respondents were called to a special meeting to answer the questionnaires, and 3) the filled-out forms were collected the same day they were administered. The respondents were given the assurance of full confidentiality on their responses to avoid bias.

Weighted means were computed to measure the central tendencies. To test further whether there is a significant difference in the means among the groups of respondents; the analysis of variance was used.

The F Hypotheses were tested using analysis of variance to determine whether the set means do not differ significantly or whether the sets were drawn from a population having the same means. First, the F ratio was calculated using the ANOVA.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The key results area of Governance and Management was further categorized into the sub-areas of Development planning, Qualifications of administrators, Addressing change and Documentation of procedures.

Table 2. Adequacy of Governance Practices in Development Planning

Items	Admin		Faculty		Staff		Students		Total	
	X	I	X	I	X	I	X	I	X	I
1. Functions of the governing body in considering, approving, and supporting the strategic plan	2.83	A	2.94	A	3.05	A	2.84	A	2.91	A
2. Participation of stakeholders in strategic planning	2.72	A	2.87	A	2.69	A	2.85	A	2.78	A
3. Matching of strategies and vision / mission	2.89	A	3.02	A	3.21	A	2.91	A	3.01	A
4. Adherence to established process in strategic planning	2.72	A	2.97	A	3.05	A	2.71	A	2.86	A
5. Utilization of indicators in monitoring strategies	2.39	FA	2.91	A	2.95	A	2.71	A	2.74	A
6. Identification of human, financial, and physical resources	2.72	A	3.05	A	3.02	A	2.77	A	2.89	A
Group Mean	2.71	A	2.96	A	3.00	A	2.80	A	2.87	A

Legend: VA	Very adequate	3.25	- 4.00
A	Adequate	2.50	- 3.24
FA	Fairly adequate	1.75	- 2.49
NA	Not adequate	1.00	- 1.74

Table 2 illustrates the adequacy of governance practices in development planning in the context of higher education in the Philippines which is the process of formulating long-term development plans. The table reflects six items being assessed for this sub-area which were the following: 1) Functions of the governing body in considering, approving, and supporting the strategic plan; 2) Participation of stakeholders in strategic planning; 3) Matching of strategies and vision / mission; 4) Adherence to established process in strategic planning; 5) Utilization of indicators in monitoring strategies; and 6) Identification of human, financial, and physical resources.

The survey found that Item 5 had the lowest mean rank (2.74), which was ranked lowest by administrators (2.39) and students (2.71). Item 2 got the second lowest mean rank (2.78) as ranked lowest by the faculty (2.87) and the staff (2.69). Highest mean rank of 3.01 was on item 3 as ranked highest by administrators (2.89), staff (3.21), and students (2.91). Item 1 had second highest mean (2.91). The overall mean rating by the respondents on the governance practice of development planning is 2.87 indicating the sub-area was adequate. The findings run parallel with what was stated by Burrell and Grizzell 2008 that it

is an imperative for universities to utilize the business paradigms in their strategic planning and management to thrive and attain the desired levels of performance.

**Table 3. Adequacy of Governance Practices
in Qualifications of Administrators**

Items	Admin		Faculty		Staff		Students		Total	
	X	I	X	I	X	I	X	I	X	I
1. Integrity is demonstrated by the governing body in the transaction of its business.	3.22	A	3.09	A	3.36	VA	2.85	A	3.13	A
2. There are clear guidelines and procedures in the selection of suitable members of the governing body.	3.22	A	3.00	A	3.12	A	2.83	A	3.04	A
3. Proven competence and managerial experience of administrators.	3.33	VA	3.25	A	3.36	VA	3.02	A	3.24	A
4. Ability of governing body to clearly share the institutional vision with stakeholders.	2.94	A	3.10	A	3.21	A	2.90	A	3.04	A
Group Mean	3.18	A	3.11	A	3.26	VA	2.90	A	3.11	A

Legend: VA Very adequate 3.25 - 4.00
 A Adequate 2.50 - 3.24
 FA Fairly adequate 1.75 - 2.49
 NA Not adequate 1.00 - 1.74

Table 3 depicts the adequacy of governance practices in qualifications of administrators. The mean of rating by the respondents on qualifications of administrators is 3.11 which indicated that they found the measure adequate. Item 3 got the highest total mean of 3.24 and was consistently ranked highest by all respondents who perceived that the current members of the UB Board of Trustees are best qualified and competent. Two items ranked with the lowest mean of 3.04 were items 4 and 2. The faculty, staff, and student respondents ranked item 2 the lowest. This observation by the respondent groups, other than the administrator, was indicative of their belief that the selection process for membership in the governing body is not fully understood by them or that this process is outside their sphere of concern. This findings reiterates the full import of Principles 2 and 3 of Quality Management Principles 2012 that leadership and involvement of people are key factors for the functioning of a quality management system in an organization.

**Table 4. Adequacy of Governance Practices in Addressing
Change and Critical Incidents**

Items	Admin		Faculty		Staff		Students		Total	
	X	I	X	I	X	I	X	I	x	I
1. Formal and intentional search procedures in the external environment for information and intelligence likely to induce changes in strategy.	2.50	A	2.83	A	2.74	A	2.83	A	2.72	A
2. Formal evaluation procedures within the institution for information and intelligence likely to induce changes in strategy.	2.61	A	2.90	A	2.93	A	2.85	A	2.82	A
3. Established plans and procedures to meet contingencies such as fires and disasters.	2.67	A	2.76	A	2.74	A	2.85	A	2.75	A
4. Support from stakeholders when strategies and plans need to be changed.	2.78	A	2.90	A	3.00	A	2.80	A	2.87	A
5. Ability to adopt and incorporate required changes in the institution.	3.11	A	2.93	A	3.00	A	2.87	A	2.98	A
Group Mean	2.73	A	2.86	A	2.88	A	2.84	A	2.83	A

Legend: VA Very adequate 3.25 - 4.00
 A Adequate 2.50 - 3.24
 FA Fairly adequate 1.75 - 2.49
 NA Not adequate 1.00 - 1.74

Table 4 provides a clear picture of adequacy of governance practices in addressing change and critical incidents.

Five items were assessed for this sub-area: 1) Formal and intentional search procedures in the external environment for information and intelligence likely to induce changes in strategy; 2) Formal evaluation procedures within the institution for information and intelligence likely to induce changes in strategy; 3) Established plans and procedures to meet contingencies such as fires and disasters; 4) Support from stakeholders when strategies and plans need to be changed, and 5) Ability to adopt and incorporate required changes in the institution.

The grand mean of the ratings by the respondents on the governance practice of addressing change and critical incidents is 2.83 indicative that practices under this sub-area are adequate. Item 5 got the highest mean 2.98 and is consistently rated the highest by all the respondent groups. The respondents have a high regard for the ability of the current leadership in UB to address changes in the future. This fact is connected to their consistent highest rating on the proven competence and managerial experience of the administrators previously assessed in the qualifications attribute of governance practice.

Item 1 obtained the lowest mean (2.72) and is ranked lowest by the administrators (2.50) and the staff (2.74). They have the notion that the intelligence-gathering structure geared towards the external environment can be improved upon, and potentials are not fully utilized to this end.

It is noteworthy that Item 3 had the second lowest mean (2.75) as ranked lowest by the faculty (2.76) and the staff (2.74). The nature of their work makes them responsible for the students and properties and they have observed the shortage of drills and trainings making them ill-equipped to respond to emergencies and contingencies properly. They consider this item adequate as they are aware of established emergency drills and procedures and also of safety equipment and precautions, but practice and re-familiarization on these precautions and procedures are very limited.

This finding coincides with the study of Kettunen 2005 on the integration of strategic management and quality assurance that affirmed the importance of taking into account the external influences on higher education to reconcile these with their internal resources. Management has a role to communicate and implement a strategic plan throughout the organization in order to be proactive and effectively respond thereto.

Table 5. Adequacy of Governance Practices
in Documentation of procedures

Items	Admin		Faculty		Staff		Students		Total	
	X	I	X	I	X	I	X	I	X	I
1. There are clear guidelines and protocols in dealings of the school with different parties.	2.67	A	3.00	A	3.02	A	2.89	A	2.89	A
2. There are written specifications of terms and conditions for use of specific funds and resources.	3.00	A	3.03	A	3.00	A	2.65	A	2.92	A

3. Established processes and structures that put financial strategy, annual operating plans, and budgets in place.	2.94	A	3.06	A	3.10	A	2.73	A	2.96	A
4. Processes and structures are identified, formally documented, and observed by stakeholders.	2.89	A	3.02	A	3.07	A	2.82	A	2.95	A
Group Mean	2.88	A	3.03	A	3.05	A	2.77	A	2.93	A

Legend: VA	Very adequate	3.25	- 4.00
A	Adequate	2.50	- 3.24
FA	Fairly adequate	1.75	- 2.49
NA	Not adequate	1.00	- 1.74

Table 5 shows the adequacy of governance practices in documentation of procedures. The sub-area for documentation of established procedures and processes was adopted from the IQAME SED indicators from the sub-areas of Probity, Accountability, and Management of Risks. Accountability and transparency are key elements of governance. These attributes are implemented through documentation of procedures and processes. Documentation of processes results to quality assurance, improvement and management. The practice of documentation would ease communication and transfer of information between the stakeholders involved.

Four items assessed were: 1) There are clear guidelines and protocols in dealings of the school with different parties; 2) There are written specifications of terms and conditions for use of specific funds and resources; 3) Established processes and structures that put financial strategy, annual operating plans, and budgets in place; and 4) Processes and structures are identified, formally documented, and observed by stakeholders.

The grand mean of the ratings by the respondents on the governance practice of documentation of procedures is 2.93, which indicate that the practices for this sub-area are adequate.

Highest mean of 2.96 was for Item 3 and ranked highest by the personnel respondents – the faculty and staff. They were equally aware that the biggest portion of the institutional budget is for the salaries and wages of the personnel.

Item 1 got the lowest mean (2.89) with the administrator and faculty respondents giving the lowest rating. From their experience, the current administrative and faculty manual is due for updating and review but adequate. However, this item was given the highest mean by the students who find the current student manual very useful to them.

Second lowest mean (2.92) is on Item 2, which is given the lowest mean rank by the staff and the students. They feel that equitability and transparency in certain funds and obligations must be written for completeness though presently such circumstances are adequately addressed.

The findings in this sub-area affirm good management practices in the records and documentations management of UB similar to the findings in the study presented by Sy-Aves (2007) that quality assurance standards were complied by Capitol University through documented procedures and work instructions, and documents needed to operate, monitor, and control processes.

CONCLUSION

Results showed the adequacy of the four sub-variables under governance and management: development planning, qualifications of administrators, addressing change, and documentation of procedures. The overall conclusion is that UB can maintain leadership by building upon its strengths. The assessment addressed the objectives for quality assurance in the adequacy of governance to deliver quality teaching and learning, and is a step towards institutional accreditation.

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