

**IMPLEMENTATION OF BOARD OF TRUSTEES RESOLUTION
NUMBER 34, SERIES 2015: FOLLOW-UP STUDY FOR POLICY
ENHANCEMENT**

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Abstract

The paper is a follow-up of the previous paper on the graduate school survey that focuses on the implications of Resolution No. 34, series of 2015. It takes up the current profile of the school on enrolment and number of graduates, policy compliance, blended-learning needs, faculty commitment, and feedback on the affordability, competitiveness, and patronage of graduate school programs and services. It adopted a descriptive design with 34 faculty members and 307 graduate school students as respondents. The survey covers three academic periods—from the academic year 2015-2016 to 2018-2019. Data were sourced from interview questionnaires, annual reports, and college documents. Frequency count and percentage were utilized for the treatment of quantitative data, and thematic analysis was followed for the explication of qualitative data. The full implementation of small-class size and adjusted salary scheme for the faculty resulted in a seemingly more accessible and less expensive graduate education for students. However, significant guidelines of the policy were not fully complied such as the submission and utilization of the blended-learning materials designed for small classes. The faculty needs further training in course website development, class material digitization, and instructional video development. On the other hand, students considered graduate education to be affordable and competitive for to them, cost, location, quality, and reputation are imperative for their continued patronage of the college graduate program. These outcomes call for the re-visitation and amendment of Resolution No. 34, series of 2015, and its guidelines to ensure its full implementation.

Keywords: *graduate education, blended learning, enrolment data, graduate study policy compliance, faculty commitment, students' feedback.*

Introduction

The implementation of Board of Trustees (BOT) Resolution number 34 during the 2nd semester of the academic year 2015-2016 evolved from the previous research on the “Graduate Study Survey: Inputs for the Proposed New Instructional Delivery and Salary Scheme.” The study covered the analyses of enrolment trends, number of graduates, students’ feedback on the affordability, competitiveness, and patronage of the graduate school programs, and the faculty commentaries on their commitment and willingness to handle small classes with adjusted wages. The significant findings of the study conjured up to the passage and adoption of updated salary and blended learning schemes that enabled the graduate school to survive its dwindling state and sustain its operation amidst the constricted and competitive environment (Malaga, 2014).

As an immediate sequel, the current paper offers a clearer illustration of the implementation of BOT resolution no. 34, series of 2015 and extensively explores its eventual consequence in the enrolment and graduation of the master and doctorate students. To provide a more comprehensive picture, it bears out the contemporaneous notion of the students on the cost and quality of post-graduate education and their predisposition to continue studying at the college. The experience of the faculty in handling the small-class size and using blended learning materials and their willingness to continue teaching in the graduate programs were also revealed in the study.

In the effort to determine the development and incidence of the outcome, the researcher postulates that the completeness and overall effectiveness of the research effort are harbored in a follow-up study. Salkind (2010) posits that a follow-up study is a normal component of the research design that furthers an end in a particular study, reviews new developments, fulfills a research promise, and ensures that targeted project milestones are met. Outcome assessment depends on reliable follow-up information (Barbour et al., 2013). The completeness of follow-up is an important determinant of validity (Clark et al., 2003).

On the above premise, the study sets out to obtain data across sources and periods of time using quantitative and qualitative data

to construct a broader and more objective picture of the serviceability and efficiency of graduate education. For in-depth analysis, a researcher may collect data using a quantitative data instrument and follow up by interviewing a subset of the participants to learn more detailed information about some of the survey responses, providing a more thorough understanding of the results (Creswell & Clarke, 2017). Accordingly, the paper utilized data drawn from surveys to render a complete account of the implementation of the BOT resolution no. 34 and its concomitant effects using the perspectives of the faculty and student stakeholders. Subsidiary to the yielded results, the paper proposed a new salary scheme and blended-training training program for faculty in the graduate school program of the college for its continued sustainability.

More specifically, the survey intended to gather the following information:

1. the enrolment profile of the graduate school from the academic year 2015-2016 to 2018-2019;
2. the number of graduates in the graduate school from the academic year 2015-2016 to 2018-2019;
3. the compliance of BOT resolution number 34, series of 2015, in terms of assignment of subject load with small-class size, submission of blended-learning materials, and utilization of eLearning materials in the blended-learning classes;
4. the graduate school faculty blended-learning needs;
5. the faculty commitment to continue teaching in the graduate school program; and,
6. the graduate school students' feedback on the affordability, competitiveness, and patronage of graduate programs and services.

Framework of the Study

The entire study revolved around gauging the implementation of the previously adopted policy, a survey of the enrollment and graduate program, and obtaining the faculty and students' feedback on the graduate program operations.

The OLM specifies a framework for planners to “move backward” and compare gaps or discrepancies, “look inward” to identify strong and weak and subsequently propose a policy to adopt a new set of strategies to enhance existing conditions or practice.

The OLM hypothesizes descriptions of the chain of causes and effects leading to an outcome of interest. The logic model usually takes form in a graphical depiction of the "if-then" (causal) relationships between the various elements leading to the outcome. More than a graphic depiction, it encompasses the theories, scientific evidence, assumptions, and beliefs that support the different processes behind it (Renger & Titcomb, 2002). This study shows a clear direction of the logic model track commencing from the inputs moving towards the program rollout and then to gauging the program's implementation with the outcomes as indicators of success.

The OLM's methodical and pragmatic features make it attractive for employment in numerous fields such as education and business. While there are many versions of the logic model, they generally summarize the logical connections among the needs that are the focus of the project - project inputs (resources), the proposed activities and processes directed toward the target population, the outputs, and the expected short- and long-term outcomes the initiative is designed to achieve (Hoeffler, 2019).

Working from the base, the study used data from previous research (inputs) to propose the adoption of a new salary and instructional scheme in the graduate school program through a resolution (activities). After three years of implementation, the researcher followed it up to determine the implementation of the resolution and measure its effects on the current operations of the graduate school program (output). The data reflecting the participants' notions divulge the related outcomes of the program.

As exemplified, the OLM serves as a graphical and textual illustration of "what inputs are needed," "what the program will do with the inputs?", "how it is intended to work?", "what is it to accomplish?" and "what will indicate its success?." Stated in another way, it represents a framework for describing the relationships between project resources, activities, and results related to a specific program or project goal.

Certainly, it can provide a commonsensical approach to integrating planning, implementation, and evaluation. It can serve as a scaffold for guided planning, implementation, and evaluation towards the envisioned route and hitting the target bull's eye.

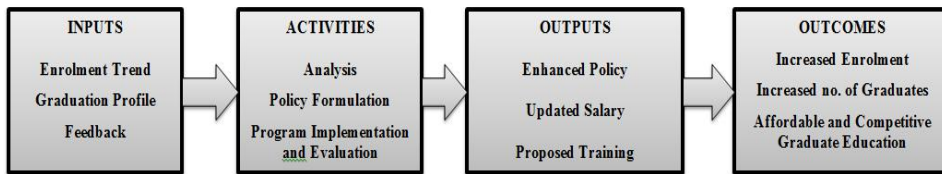


Figure 1. Schematic model of the study

Methods

Research Design

The paper utilized numerical and qualitative descriptions to characterize the feature or attribute in question without manipulating any experimental variables. Given the nature of the research problem, a descriptive research survey method was adopted. This research is classified as a subtype of quantitative research method, though can be used for descriptive purposes. Descriptive research can typically combine components of both quantitative and qualitative research approaches, therefore it does not cleanly fit into either description. The type of research question, design, and data analysis that will be used on a certain issue are all referred to as descriptive research (The Associations for Educational Communications and Technology, 2001).

Respondents of the Study

The survey covered three academic periods – from the academic year 2015-2016 to the academic year 2018-2019 with 34 graduate program professors and 307 graduate program students as respondents (comprising 61% of the 503 students enrolled in the graduate school programs).

Research Instrument

A survey questionnaire was utilized to gather data pertinent to the conduct of the study. The researcher likewise secured annual reports and documents from the offices of the deans, registrars, and planning directors to gather data on enrolment and the number of graduates in the master's and doctorate degrees per year.

Data Analyses

Frequency count and percentage distribution were applied for the treatment analysis of quantitative data. The interpretation and analysis by utilizing the descriptive information from the participants' responses to open-ended questions.

Ethical Considerations

The researcher followed a strict ethical criteria throughout the research procedure and upheld a high standard of professionalism. A proper communication channel was established whereby the participants were informed of their rights to privacy and anonymity and by informing them that the nature of their involvement in the study was optional reflected in the informed consent that they were asked to sign. The researcher strictly followed the specified time, schedule, and protocols and observed the health and safety recommendations during the interview. All information was kept private and treated, presented, and assessed objectively. They were exclusively employed to solve the problems identified by the study. The article offers accurate citations and correctly acknowledged and credited sources. All completed questionnaires recorded interviews, and transcripts were either deleted from the file or discarded a year after the paper's final copy was turned in for in-house evaluation.

Results and Discussion

Enrolment profile the graduate school from academic year 2015-2016 to 2018-2019

The academic year 2015-2016 precipitated an increase in the enrolment rate of the graduate school (61.24%), which was sustained in the following AY 2017-2018.

The AY 2018-2019 indicates a trivial decrease (0.44%) ascribed to the bigger number of graduates in the preceding academic year. In the previous survey covering academic years (from 2010-2011 to 2014-2015) before the resolution, the enrolment rate followed a decreasing trend and ranged only from 747 to 825 total enrolments (Malaga, 2014). The result hints that Resolution No. 34, series of 2015, spurred graduate school enrollment. The resolution resulted in the non-cancellation of small-class size and cheaper fees, which evidently attracted more student attendees to the graduate school program of the college. Consequently, the imposition of clear policies through a board resolution guiding the operation and affordability of fees invited the current flow of increased enrolment.

The fees charged to the graduate school students are one of the primary revenue streams to operate in such a way that the quality of programs and research output, the prestige of professors, the sophistication of campus infrastructure and technology, and the

overall supports and services for students are so impressive (ICEF Monitor, 2014). This can influence the current flow or attract substantial volumes and quality of students. Nevertheless, when tuition and other fees climb high without mitigating measures and grants, it can decrease enrollment and massive drop-out and transfer of students.

Table 1 shows the results:

Table 1

Enrolment profile of the graduate school from AY 2015-2016 to AY 2018-2019

Academic year	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
Enrollment	614	990	1129	1124
Rate of Change		61.24%	14.04%	-0.44%

Number of Graduates in the Graduate School from Academic Year 2015-2016 to 2018-2019

The graduate profile of the graduate school program indicates a parallel upward trend. The number of graduates in AY 2015-2016 (36) almost tripled in AY 2018-2019 (112). The previous survey (from 2010-2011 to 2014-2015) only registered 28 as the highest number of graduates (Malaga, 2014). It could be gleaned from the comparative results that the passage of Resolution No. 34, series of 2015 bolstered the capacity of the program to accommodate students with few lacking subjects to finish the degree without waiting for more enrollees to fill up a regular class. Before its implementation, a substantial number of students were denied the class offerings, if not burdened by the add-on cost to pay for the professor and tuition fees. As a consequence, students opted to drop out or transfer to a nearby college or university to finish the degree in due time. Data in Table 2 present the comparative results.

Table 2

Graduation profile of the graduate school from AY 2015-2016 to AY 2018-2019

Academic Year	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
No of Graduates	36	68	91	112
Rate of Change		88.89%	33.82%	23.08%

Compliance with BOT Resolution Number 34, series of 2015

On the assignment of teaching to small-class size. Thirty-four faculty members comprising 100% of the total handled small classes within the periods covered in the survey. Apparently, there was a pressing need to offer a small-class size considering the time and cost entailed for the students to finish the degree. The

implementation of Resolution No. 14, series of 2015, thwarted the possible exodus of the students and fueled their continued patronage of educational services offered by the institution. Table 3 reveals the results.

On the submission of blended-learning materials. In sequential order, the graduate school faculty showed full compliance in the submission of the grade sheets (100%) and a very high percentage of submission of the course syllabus (88%) and blended-learning class schedule (82%). Tending to contrast the above results are their submission of materials that necessitate technology use for preparation, such as the sample online materials (35%), email or FB screenshots (35%), and website URL (12%).

Gleaned from the results, the faculty exhibited reluctance, resistance, or disinclination to submit digitized materials. It appeared that compliance with the submission requirements was not imperative or could be opted out by the faculty.

The situation portrayed offers confirmation to the findings of Malaga (2010), stating that the faculty members belonged to the unfortunate side of the digital divide because of their limited utilization of ICT in their teaching-related tasks for instruction. Accordingly, the infusion of technology into teaching and the performance of other related tasks is still at the periphery of its full realization.

On the utilization of e-learning materials in the blended learning classes. The use of eLearning materials for topic presentation and delivery earned lower percentages. Taken individually, none of the faculty used the blog for instruction (0%). Less than a quarter (6 out of 34 or 18%) of the faculty members used the course website and the college portal (2 out of 34 or 6%).

Moreover, the interpersonal exchanges between the teachers and the students were broadly facilitated through technology access and utilization. The faculty popularly used a mobile phone (82%), social media (68%), and email (50%) in communicating with the graduate school students. To provide a meaningful and scintillating presentation of topics, the faculty utilized electronic presentation (91%), multimedia and videos (53%), and PDFS, word, excel, and multimedia (41%). On the other hand, the faculty barely

adopted the use of eBooks (9%) as class materials. The teachers and the students had little means to access these materials due to scarcity and heavy charges required.

E-Learning materials provide the students with greater access to learning, especially now that course materials, simulations, and assessments move increasingly online. This poses a challenge for teachers to interface technology tools with instruction to help students develop the unprecedented flexibility to study any time at any place. The intelligent design of these digital tools and resources can help them become adept self-directed, autonomous learners who can access productivity tools and demonstrate their core learning skills.

Unfortunately, many teachers still struggle to use technology in the classroom. Some teachers do not always prefer the introduced technology because not all believe in using it. They have differing device capabilities and instructions and have unequal access and skills in using technology (Ketchell, 2019). The teachers acknowledged these reasons:

“I still prefer using chalk and board. Technology simply distracts my students.”

“It is your teaching that counts, not technology.”

“What if you don’t have a laptop? I don’t depend on technology.”

“The college must provide the needed tools if we use technology.”

Table 3

Compliance with the BOT Resolution Number 14, series of 2015

Assignment of Subject Load with Small Class Size				
	Yes	%	No	%
Assigned to Small Class	34	100%	0	0%
Submission of Blended-Learning (BL) Materials				
1. BL Class Schedule	28	82%	6	18%
2. Grade Sheets	34	100%	0	0%
3. Syllabus	30	88%	4	12%
4. Website URL	4	12%	30	88%
5. Online Materials	12	35%	22	65%
6. Email/FB Screenshots	12	35%	22	65%
Utilization of E-Learning Materials in the BL Classes				
1. Topic Presentation and Delivery				
a. College Portal	2	6%	32	94%
b. Course Website	0	0%	34	100%
c. Blog	0	0%	34	100%
2. Communication				
a. Mobile Phone	28	82%	6	18%
b. Social Media	23	68%	11	32%
c. Email	17	50%	17	50%
3. Class Materials				
a. PDFs, Word, Excel, Multimedia	14	41%	20	59%
b. eBooks	3	9%	31	91%
c. Electronic Presentation	31	91%	3	9%
d. Multimedia and Videos	8	53%	16	14%

The Graduate School Faculty Blended-Learning Needs

The majority of the faculty responded positively when asked about their blended-learning needs. Twenty-nine, corresponding to 85% of the total faculty members, believed they need instructional video development. Still, more than half of the total openly expressed needing a course website development (68%) and class materials digitization (59%).

Since blended learning is a mixture of learning methods that incorporate multiple teaching modals, the faculty believed that they could cater to the unique or individual needs of the students in the graduate school program more than the traditional classroom experience. Moreover, they conveyed that the blended learning approach can speed up the learning process and expose the students to more advanced resources.

On this premise, teachers need direction and support from the administrators to improve their pedagogy and incorporate technology into instruction (Inoa & Cascio, 2018). This denotes the importance of cultivating the systemic conditions that support and nurture a growth mindset. Teachers are immersed in a meaningful digital experience that makes them more technologically equipped.

Table 4

The blended-learning needs of the Graduate School faculty

Blended-Learning Needs	Yes	%	No	%
1. Course Website Development	23	68%	11	32%
2. Class Materials Digitization	20	59%	14	41%
3. Instructional video Development	29	85%	5	15%

The Faculty Commitment to Continue Teaching in the Graduate School Program

A remarkable number of the faculty members (25 out of 34) revealed their dedication and commitment to teaching in the graduate school program, as reflected by the 74% who responded “yes” and 9% who replied “no” to the question. When asked about their willingness to handle subjects with small-class size and lower pay, 53% answered “yes,” 38% answered “no,” and 9% were undecided.

Table 5

The commitment of the faculty to continue teaching in the Graduate School Program

Will you continue teaching in the graduate school program?					
Yes	%	No	%	Undecided	%
25	74%	9	26%	0	0%
Will you accept a subject load with a small class and lower pay?					
18	53%	13	38%	3	9%

Although it is overwhelming to think that most faculty considered teaching more of a moral obligation, one cannot dissent from the fact that teaching is likewise a profession and a means of earning a living. The faculty's commitment to teaching is defined in the context of teaching as a profession (Bilbao, 2019). While some faculty members are not so focused on the luxury that teaching can offer, others give their best service quality to promise a reasonable salary. Relative to this, 56% (19 out of 34) of the faculty respondents proposed the P 6,000 average monthly pay for faculty with master's degrees and P 8,000 for faculty with a doctorate degree. In the case of small-class size, 82% corresponding to 28 faculty members, put forward the P 2,000 average monthly salaries for faculty with master's degree and P 3,000 for faculty with a doctorate degree. Statements from the teachers elucidate this:

“I will continue teaching in the graduate school. I am also willing to receive an adjusted salary in case the number of

my students does not meet the required number for a regular class.”

“The college must give a reasonable salary that commensurates my qualification and efforts rendered.”

The Graduate School Students’ Feedbacks Graduate School Program and Services

On the affordability of graduate school program and services. The graduate school students generally considered the graduate school program and services affordable in terms of miscellaneous (84%), tuition (83%), and add-on fees (63%). A minimal percentage of student-respondents indicated check in the “too costly” option for miscellaneous (2%), tuition (1%), and add-on fees (5%).

Table 6

The students’ feedback on the affordability of the Graduate School Program and Services

Fees	Cheap	%	Affordable	%	Costly	%	Too Costly	%
Miscellaneous	18	6%	257	84%	27	9%	5	2%
Tuition	13	4%	256	83%	35	11%	3	1%
Add-on	13	4%	194	63%	84	27%	16	5%

From the interview, the student-respondents underscored that financial consideration is one of the foremost reasons why they enroll, quit, or transfer school. They verbalized:

“Prior to implementation of Resolution No. 34, series of 2015, they were required to pay the high-priced add-on cost to cover the salary of qualified professors to handle subjects with very few enrollees.”

“The college charging fees higher than a private school impelled some of my classmates to transfer to other institutions.”

“The low tuition is one of the main reasons why I enrolled in this college.”

“There’s no need for me to dip into my limited sources just to avail of quality graduate school education.”

On the competitiveness of graduate school program and services. A significant percentage of students-respondents and 40% for “strongly agree” choices. More than that the offering of specialization added value to its competitiveness, with an

aggregate of 92% (51% + 41%) of the student-respondents showing agreement and strong agreement with the item statement.

Table 7

The students' feedback on the competitiveness of the Graduate School Program and Services

	Strongly Disagree	%	Disagree	%	Agree	%	Strongly Agree	%
Quality at a low cost	17	6%	4	1%	162	53%	124	10%
Value-added specialization	20	7%	3	1%	157	51%	127	41%

The students reasoned that they enroll in the graduate program of the college because of the college's commitment to quality and offering of specialized subjects that cater to their needs and field of expertise. The student-respondents expressed:

“At CHMSC, one gets quality education for less.”

“The college charges low fees, yet the professors admirably try their best to offer the students excellent instruction.”

“It is certainly helpful that the college now offers major subjects. Now, I can have choices – to be a generalist, a specialist, or a school manager.”

On the patronage of graduate school program and services.

Two hundred sixty-five participants (89%) manifested an intention to enroll in the coming semester, 36 (12%) said that they were not pursuing their degree at the college, and 6 (2%) were undecided.

Table 8

The students' feedback on their patronage of the Graduate School Program and Services

Are you enrolling next semester?					
Yes	%	No	%	Undecided	%
265	86%	36	12%	6	2%

When further asked about the underlying reasons for their varying intentions, they explained:

“I am about to finish, and I am contented with my graduate school education here at CHMSC.”

“My home is far from school. I also have little children to attend to, so I decided to leave school for a while.”

“I will transfer to a private university in Bacolod because of scholarship.”

*“I like to stay here at ***, but it is far from our place. There are schools offering master’s near my place...still contemplating...”*

Besides issues of distance and opportunity, the continued patronage of the program also depends on the continuance and improvement of the current setup and affordability of the graduate education. Regarding the proposed salary increase, 74% (226 out of 307) of the respondents picked out the 75-peso per unit, the lowest option. They clearly understand the need to raise the salary of the faculty. However, the financial requirement can go too high, which may be deleterious to their chance of finishing their degree on time.

Relating affordability and competitiveness with the continued patronage of the graduate education program, a wide range of studies across the international spectrum of nations has revealed much regarding factors that influence students’ choice of universities. For example, Johnson and Ford (cited in Agrey & Lampadan, 2014) identify the foremost factors that influence the student choice of a university. These include the degree program flexibility and the physical aspects of the campus, such as the quality of the infrastructure and services, the location of the institution, and the time required for the completion of the program. Other important considerations are quality and qualification of teaching staff and personnel, reputation, and institutional image (Tang et al., 2004). Hagel and Shaw (2008) provide a similar set of characteristics like course availability, location, and tuition costs. Concordant to the current findings, the tuition cost, flexibility, the college system that promotes quality and excellence, and location considerably influenced their notion of the graduate education program and their desire to continue studying at the college.

Conclusions

As a corollary of Resolution No. 34, series of 2015, the college graduate education program portrays a sustainable and growing status. The periods covered by the survey depict an increasing trend in the enrollment and graduate profile. Concomitant to the full implementation of small class size and the commitment of the

faculty to receive an adjusted salary, graduate education becomes more accessible and less expensive to the students.

However, essential setbacks impede the gross compliance of the implementing rules resulting from the issued resolution. The faculty members are not completely amenable and compliant with the required submission and utilization of the blended learning materials designed for small classes adopting the blended approach. This result can be linked to the faculty's ICT and blended learning needs, course website development, class material digitization, and instructional video development.

The graduate school education from the perspective of the student-respondents is affordable and competitive. Subsequently, cost, location, quality, and reputation are preeminent to their continued patronage of the college graduate program. These outcomes allude re-visitation of Resolution No. 34, the series of 2015 and its implementing rules and guidelines, and the formulation of significant amendments that will specifically address the problems and inadequacies impeding its full implementation.

Based on the foregoing results, the college may consider an enhancement program that will update the ICT and eLearning skills of faculty members in the graduate school to comply with the blended learning requirements not only for small class sizes but also to be relevant in the emerging classroom situation. The training and eLearning skill enhancement activities will help upgrade the competencies of faculty members in the graduate school. The college may also re-visit and review the compensation for the faculty handling classes in the graduate school to make it competitive and boost their commitment to serve while providing commensurate benefits and rewards for the services rendered. On the other hand, it has to enhance and strictly monitor the utilization of the blended learning approach in the graduate school program. The results of this survey may be submitted to the Graduate School Council to formalize and seek recommendations from the stakeholders for the needed tuition fee increase based on the suggested amount by most participating students. Finally, the proposed amended or updated policy on utilizing the blended learning approach and the corresponding new salary matrix may be submitted to the CHMSC Board of Trustees for deliberation and approval.

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