

Conformance of Divine Word College of San Jose MBA Theses with CHED CMO No. 52 series of 2016

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Abstract

To ensure alignment with academic and development priorities, the proponent endeavors to analyze the MBA Thesis in accordance with CHED CMO No. 52, s 2016, focusing on the Pathway to Relevance by evaluating its capacity to generate impactful and applicable knowledge that addresses real-world business challenges and contributes to national development goals. This content analysis, using the IPO, explicitly determines the profile of the MBA thesis in terms of category, research design, instrument, respondents, study findings, and the CHED RDE Platform, and analyzes and evaluates the findings to determine whether they conform to the CHED CMO. The in-depth analysis of the thirteen MBA theses shows that only five are considered in conformity with CHED CMO. Three out of the five are aligned with CHED RDE 4, particularly SDG 8 on sustainable economic growth and employment 2, and SDG 9 on fostering innovation. The other two adhere to CHED RDE 1 on food production and security under SGD 2 and to the promotion of sustainable agriculture. Moreover, the two highest classifications of the MBA theses are Innovation and Entrepreneurship, which underscore the crucial factors for adapting to a rapidly changing business environment and the essential tools for sustainability and growth. Thus, the MBA curriculum may be reviewed to incorporate the provisions of CHED CMO No. 52, particularly its RDE Platforms, into core research and/or capstone courses. This will ensure that MBA students are not only aware of the framework but are also trained to design a research study that directly incorporates the CHED CMO guidelines.

Keywords: content analysis, food production, sustainable economic growth, graduate theses, Master in Business Administration

Conformance of Divine Word College of San Jose MBA Theses with CHED CMO No. 52 series of 2016

1. Introduction

The Divine Word College of San Jose (DWC-SJ) is a premier Catholic institution of learning in the province of Occidental Mindoro. For almost eighty (80) years, the institution has not wavered in its genuine commitment to molding young minds in the world of academia. With a firm focus on moral, spiritual, and intellectual growth, DWC-SJ pursues a holistic approach in the development of a person, as clearly stated in its Vision-Mission-Goal (Divine Word College of San Jose, 2025). After successfully overcoming the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the school, with renewed vigor and a clear mandate, has revitalized its operations under the leadership of its new and visionary President, Rev. Fr. Felino B. Javines, Jr., SVD, DM. As part of his strategic initiatives, Fr. President proposed the integration of three (3) significant regional resources: salt, Tamaraw, and Indigenous People (Mangyans) into future MBA research endeavors. In line with this vision, Fr. President launched a program aimed at studying and analyzing MBA Theses, using CHED CMO No. 52, series of 2016 (CHED CMO), as a guiding framework. This effort focuses on evaluating the alignment of MBA research with the "Pathways to Relevance" as outlined in the CHED CMO. The primary goal of this directive is to ensure that the research output of MBA students not only meets academic standards but also contributes meaningfully to addressing real-world issues and advancing both regional and national development goals (Sarsale et al., 2024).

This "Pathways to Relevance" provides the following: Research, Innovation, and Extension in Philippine higher education institutions (HEIs), which must Work contextually and purposively. Under the CHED CMO, knowledge generation in HEIs should enable us to a) Deepen our understanding of ourselves as a people and as a nation and b) Discover practical, evidence- and science-based answers that can address real-world social, economic, and environmental challenges of families and communities. The above-quoted "Pathways to Relevance" is intentionally inclusive, serving as a broad guide in identifying potential areas of focus for research studies within HEIs. These areas are closely aligned with the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are integral to the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Mohammed (2015) explains that the 2030 Agenda is set to deliver a rights-based agenda for People, to end poverty and hunger in all their forms and dimensions; an agenda for protecting the Planet, our typical home, from degradation, sustainably managing its natural resources, and taking urgent action on climate change; an agenda for Prosperity, to ensure that all human beings are included and can enjoy prosperous and fulfilling lives in harmony with nature; and an agenda for Peace, to foster peaceful, just, and inclusive societies that are free from fear and violence.

Under the CHED CMO, the UN SDGs are categorized into six (6) Research, Development, and Extension (RDE) platforms, namely: Food Production and Security; Environment, Disaster Risk Reduction, Climate Change, and Energy; Terrestrial and Marine Economy: Biodiversity and Conservation; Smart Analytics and Engineering Innovations; Health Systems; and Education for Science, Technology, Engineering, Agriculture-Fisheries, and Mathematics (STEAM). Based on the CHED CMO, this structured framework not only supports HEIs in contributing to global sustainability goals but also ensures that their research outputs remain relevant and impactful in addressing pressing social, economic, and environmental challenges. Nelson and Torres-Rahman (2015) argue that to drive sustainable development, companies and individuals must have market insight that explains why challenges exist and suggests ways to overcome them. This includes insight into the environmental, institutional, and cultural contexts in which companies operate and insight into the options and incentives of the people whose decisions companies need to influence—whether these be consumers, suppliers, distributors, retailers, employees, or stakeholders in the broader business, government, civil society, or donor community. Moreover, HEIs must also understand the different business models that can be employed. By aligning its research initiatives with the SDGs and the overarching vision of the UN 2030 Agenda, DWC-SJ solidifies its position as a hub of academic excellence

and societal impact, not only in the province of Occidental Mindoro but also in the MIMAROPA Region.

Research Objectives - This content analysis aimed to (1) determine the profile of the MBA thesis in terms of category, research design, instrument, respondents, findings of the study, and the CHED RDE Platform; and (2) analyze and evaluate the findings to determine if they conform to the CHED CMO No. 52 series of 2016.

Significance of the Study - This content analysis of the MBA graduate theses is significant, as it aims to ensure that the academic research outputs of DWC-SJ MBA students remain relevant and impactful in addressing pressing social, economic, and environmental challenges outlined in CHED CMO No. 52, series of 2016, and the UN Sustainable Development Goals. This study is limited to theses written by MBA students of the DWC-SJ during the specified Academic Year 2020-2024.

2. Methodology

This part of the study presents the proper procedure undertaken to determine conformance of DWC-SJ MBA Theses with the CHED CMO. All MBA Theses submitted and approved for the period 2020-2024 were included in this study. Each research problem was carefully evaluated and approved, with the relevant sections of the thesis identified for analysis. Copies of the MBA Theses were obtained from the college library and thoroughly reviewed and analyzed to gain a comprehensive understanding of their contents. Information and data relevant to the study were systematically collected and encoded for ease of reference. It was determined that qualitative research was best for this study. Teodorescu (2024) clearly explained that qualitative data helps in-depth analysis. Data were arranged categorically based on their attributes and properties. Moreover, he explained that data records are an exploratory collection method that primarily focuses on gaining insights by using existing, reliable documents as the data source. These data helped complete the study. A review of related literature was conducted to support the discussion of the findings.

In order to provide a more straightforward presentation of the results, descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentage were used. Given the qualitative nature of this research and its focus on analyzing conformance to an existing CHED-CMO, the Input-Process-Output (IPO) framework was identified as the most appropriate research design. As qualitative research with an in-depth analysis of conformance to an existing CHED-CMO, the IPO is the most appropriate research design. IPO, as a systems model, is not linear; all parts affect each other (Dunaetz, 2024). The model offers a simple, practical, and efficient way to analyze and document (Feldman, 2025).

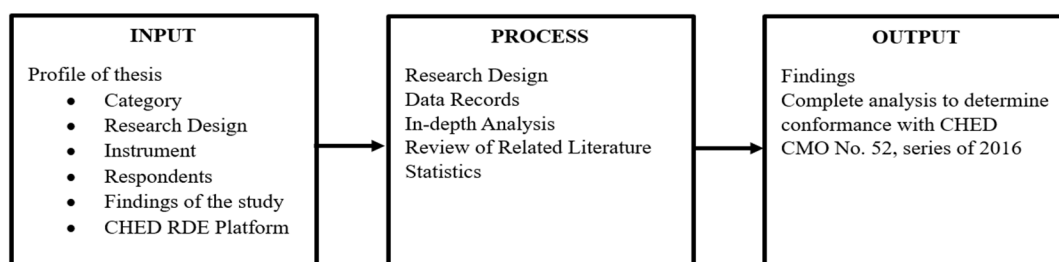


Figure 1. Input-Process-Output Model

Figure 1 shows the IPO model of the study. Under the input, the available profile of the thesis, including the category, research design, instrument, respondents, findings of the study, and the CHED RDE Platform. For the PROCESS, the research design, data records, in-depth analysis, review of related literature, and statistics using frequency and percentage. For the OUTPUT, the researcher analyzed the findings and evaluated whether they conform to the CHED CMO.

3. Results and Discussions

The results present the study's findings, noting any significant outcomes and highlighting patterns in the data. It is the culmination of extensive efforts to study and analyze the topics presented in the DWC-SJ MBA Theses for the period 2020-2024. Presented below are the results of the analysis, starting with the Category of MBA Theses under Table 1.

Table 1
Category of MBA Theses

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Good Governance	2	15%
Innovation	5	39%
Entrepreneurship	4	31%
Human Relations	2	15%
Total (13)	13	100%

Table 1 shows that the most common category of the MBA Theses was innovation at 5 (39%), followed by entrepreneurship at 4 (31%). Both good governance and human relations are at two (2) or 15%. In designing and evaluating research, Frankel et al. (2017) explained that categorical data are obtained by determining the frequency of occurrence in each of several categories. Although it is hard to quantify intangible concepts such as creativity and innovation, success and failure, and the quality of information, the methodology of categorical data analysis is helpful (Vuong et al., 2023). Based on this premise, the researcher classified the MBA Theses into four (4) main categories, namely, Good Governance, Innovation, Entrepreneurship, and Human Relations. Five (5) among the thirteen (13) MBA Theses harped on Innovation, which is crucial and necessary in today's technological developments. Innovation is critical across all industries. Innovation can be mastered by adopting novelty, creativity, sustainability, and successful entrepreneurship (Balaji, 2022). Innovation is indeed the tool of entrepreneurship, especially in light of the significant changes that characterize the 21st-century entrepreneurial landscape (Eliakis et al., 2020).

Table 2
Research Design Used by the MBA Students

Category	Descriptive Correlational		Qualitative-Quantitative		Input-Process-Output		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Good Governance	1		1					
Innovation			4		1			
Entrepreneurship	2		2					
Human Relations			2					
Total (13)	3	23%	9	69%	1	8%	13	100%

For the research design, the majority of the MBA students opted for a qualitative-quantitative design (9/13, 69%), which is an exploratory sequential mixed-methods design that involves collecting and analyzing qualitative data first. Quantitative data and, finally, integrating the two. (Fetters et al., 2013; Berman, 2017). Only one (1) used the Input-Process-Output (IPO) design, while the rest used descriptive correlational designs at 3 (23%). It is noteworthy that the mixed-methods design was commonly used by the MBA students, with 9 (69%) using it. Mixed-methods design involves collecting and analyzing qualitative data first, then quantitative data, and finally integrating the two. Mixed-methods approaches require not only the skills of the individual quantitative and qualitative methods but also a skill set to bring two methods/datasets/findings together in the most appropriate way (Wasti et al., 2022).

Table 3 presents the types of instruments used in MBA theses. As to the types of instruments used, the most common method was a combination of an interview schedule and a questionnaire at 9 (69%). Three (3) MBA students, or 23%, used a questionnaire, and only one (1), at 8%, used triangulation or a combination of an interview schedule, questionnaire, and ocular inspection. Usually, an interview schedule is prepared for follow-up, especially for unanswered survey questionnaires. The methods of data collection in qualitative research follow a convention

that is almost the opposite of those in quantitative research. The wording, order, and format of these questions are neither predetermined nor standardized. Qualitative methods are characterized by flexibility and freedom in terms of the structure and order given to the researcher. Most qualitative study designs are method-based: that is, the method of data collection seems to determine the design (Tenny et al., 2017). As to the type of instruments used in this study, the most common method used by MBA students was a combination of an interview schedule and a questionnaire, with 9 (69%) respondents. Three (3) MBA students, or 23%, used the questionnaire. A questionnaire is one of the most widely used tools to collect data, especially in social science research. The main objective of a questionnaire in research is to obtain relevant information as reliably and validly as possible. Thus, the accuracy and consistency of survey/questionnaire forms are significant aspects of research methodology and are known as validity and reliability (Taherdoost, 2016). Only one (1) at 8% used triangulation or a combination of interview schedule, questionnaire, and ocular inspection. This indicates that all students used a questionnaire as the instrument, with some preferring to include a form of interview or inspection alongside the questionnaire. Kuphanga (2024) finds the questionnaire method to be a versatile and potent tool for data collection across diverse research domains. Its structured format facilitates standardized data collection, organization, and analysis, particularly advantageous for quantitative research endeavors. This method offers researchers cost-effectiveness, accessibility, and the ability to reach a broad, diverse population, enabling the efficient collection of comprehensive insights.

Table 3
Types of Instruments Used

Category	Interview Questionnaire	Schedule &	Questionnaire	Interview Questionnaire, Inspection	Schedule, Ocular	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Good Governance	1		1			
Innovation	4				1	
Entrepreneurship	2		2			
Human Relations	2					
Total (13)	9	69%	3	23%	1	8%

Table 4
Frequency and Percentage of Select Respondents Utilized in the Study

Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
Businessman	5	38%
Students (HS/College)	2	15%
Employees	3	23%
Rabbit Raisers	1	8%
Producers	1	8%
Consumers	1	8%
Total (13)	13	100%

Moreover, most of the respondents in this study are businessmen at five (5), or 38%, while the next two (2) are employees at three (3), or 23%, and students are divided into High School and College at two (2), or 15%. The rest, including rabbit raisers, producers, and consumers, is at one (1) or 8% each. A well-conducted survey not only needs to ensure that it is in the correct format but also that respondents are selected according to the proper criteria (Raišys, 2022). Moreover, Taherdoost (2016) noted that the selection of respondents is a critical aspect of research design, as it affects the reliability and validity of the study's findings. Most of the respondents in this study are businessmen at five (5), or 38%, followed by employees at three (3), or 23%, and students are divided into High School and College at two (2), or 15%. The rest, including rabbit raisers, producers, and consumers, is at one (1) or 8% each. Businessmen comprise the most significant number of respondents, since the course is an MBA, and students would necessarily gravitate towards business owners to put the theoretical frameworks discussed in class into practice. This result implies that ten (10) out of the thirteen (13) respondents, or 77%, are either business people/owners/producers or employees who have direct access to or knowledge of the business operations. Schuhmacher and Thieu (2022) posit the stakeholder theory, which holds that every organization must focus on managing key stakeholders to achieve its mission successfully. According to them, a key stakeholder (such as a

businessman, owner, producer, or employee) is a person or entity with a legitimate interest in the organization's implementation and outcomes and with the right to intervene.

Table 5
Cluster of SDGs under the Six CHED RDE Platforms

Category	CHED RDE 1	UN SDG 2	CHED RDE 4	UN SDG 8	UN SDG 9	Total	%
Good Governance							
Innovation	2	□	3	□	□	5	38%
Entrepreneurship							
Human Relations							
Total (13)	2	15%	3		23%	5	38%

Table 5 presents the SDG clusters under the Six CHED RDE Platforms. An in-depth analysis of the thirteen (13) MBA Theses shows that only five (5), or 38%, conform to CHED CMO No. 52, series of 2016. Three (3) out of the five MBA Theses are aligned with CHED RDE 4, particularly SDG 8 on sustainable economic growth and employment, and SDG 9 on fostering innovation. As mentioned in the Findings, these MBA Theses address the adoption of financial technology, the extent of e-commerce application among MSMEs, and the enabling of research using online marketing strategies to foster innovation and sales. The other two (2) MBA Theses adhere to CHED RDE 1 on Food Production and Security under SDG 2, which promotes sustainable agriculture.

While the other eight (8) MBA Theses do not fall under specific CHED RDE Platforms, they contribute to vital aspects of business operations, such as Good Governance, Entrepreneurship, and Human Relations. Two (2) of these discuss the Anti-Red Tape Act (ARTA) and multi-purpose cooperative development. Four (4) are centered on entrepreneurship, including the desirability of enrolling in business courses, the economic impact of the new normal on micro-enterprises, and barriers to business start-ups. The final two (2) focus on Human Relations, particularly career pathing for employee loyalty and contractual employment. This study underscores the importance of aligning MBA Theses with CHED CMO No. 52, series of 2016, and its RDE Platforms, designed to address global challenges through the 17 UN SDGs. Future MBA students at DWC-SJ must embrace this alignment to contribute practical, tangible solutions to society's pressing concerns. By fostering innovative and SDG-focused research, students can make meaningful contributions to the vision of the UN's 2030 Agenda.

Table 6
CHED Research, Development, and Evaluation (RDE) Platforms

CHED RDE Platforms	17 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)
Food Production and Security	SDG 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 10, 12, 13, 16, 17
Environment, Disaster Risk Reduction, Climate Change, and Energy	SDG 3, 5, 6, 7, 11, 13, 16, 17
Terrestrial and Marine Economy: Biodiversity and Conservation	SDG 3, 5, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17
Smart Analytics and Engineering Innovations	SDG 3, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 16, 17
Health Systems	SDG 3, 5, 10, 11, 16, 17
Education for STEAM	SDG 4, 5, 8, 16, 17

Table 6 shows the CHED Research, Development, and Evaluation (RDE) Platforms. Among the thirteen (13) DWC-SJ MBA Theses, five (5) were under the Innovation category. Two (2) of the five (5) are aligned with CHED RDE 1 on Food Production and Security under SDG 2, which promotes sustainable agriculture. These MBA Theses address salt production and rabbitry marketing. The remaining three (3) MBA Theses are aligned with CHED RDE 4, particularly SDG 8 on sustainable economic growth and employment, and SDG 9 on fostering innovation. These MBA Theses address the adoption of financial technology, the extent of e-commerce application among micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), and the enabling of research using online marketing strategies to foster innovation and sales. The finding indicates that, despite not being explicitly directed to conform to the provisions of CHED CMO No. 52, series of 2016, all MBA Theses from 2020-2024 were able to align with the requirements of the CHED CMO. This shows that the MBA student's research goes beyond academic requirements and aligns with the UN SDGs and CHED RDE platforms. It also highlights the growing trend among Philippine HEIs to move beyond traditional academic functions. Baniaga (2024) stated that in the Philippine Higher Education context, universities are being urged to expand their roles beyond traditional academic tasks and directly contribute to

sustainable development.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

The research analyzed thirteen (13) MBA theses from the DWC-SJ written between the Academic Year 2020 and 2024, which were found to have a significant level of conformance with CHED CMO No. 52, series of 2016, and the United Nations SDGs. The research revealed that while five (5) MBA theses are directly aligned with the specific CHED RDE Platforms, all thirteen (13) MBA theses contributed to the broader goals of good governance, innovation, entrepreneurship, and human relations, which are integral to the "Pathways to Relevance" outlined in the CHED CMO. Moreover, the two highest classifications of the MBA theses are Innovation and Entrepreneurship, which underscore the important factors needed to adapt to a rapidly changing business environment and the essential tools for sustainability and growth.

The following recommendations are hereby forwarded: Integrate the CHED CMO Framework into the DWC-SJ MBA Curriculum: The DWC-SJ MBA curriculum may be reviewed to incorporate the provisions of CHED CMO No. 52, particularly its RDE Platforms, into core research and/or capstone courses. This will ensure that MBA students are not only aware of the framework but are also trained to design a research study that directly incorporates the CHED CMO guidelines. Encourage Applied and Interdisciplinary Research: The DWC-SJ may encourage MBA students to conduct research that is both applied and interdisciplinary. This research study could involve strategic partnerships with LGUs, government agencies and instrumentalities, cooperatives, non-profit organizations, and businesses to address current and emerging threats and concerns in Occidental Mindoro. Develop a Research Fund in Partnership with the Government. The DWC-SJ can initiate the establishment of a research fund, with funding from the local government unit or an international agency, to incentivize projects focused on the three (3) regional resources: salt, Tamaraw, and Indigenous Peoples (Mangyans). This development project would not only align with the school's vision but also directly contribute to the province's growth and development of key resources. Create a Repository of Relevant Studies. DWC-SJ can also take the lead in establishing a publicly accessible repository of all MBA theses that conform to the CHED CMO No. 52, series of 2016, in the province of Occidental Mindoro. This initiative would serve as a valuable resource for policymakers, government agencies, local entrepreneurs, and other researchers, showcasing DWC-SJ's continuous commitment to creating knowledge that is both academically rigorous and socially relevant.

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