

The Quality of Catholic Education Vis-à-Vis Philippine Catholic Schools Standards (PCSS) and Its Impact on Students' Learning Outcomes: Basis for a Proposed PCSS Integration in Catholic Schools' Policies, Standards, and Guidelines

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Abstract — This study evaluates the quality of Catholic education in Zamboanga del Norte using the Philippine Catholic Schools Standards (PCSS) framework. The research examines how schools align with the five PCSS domains—Catholic Identity and Mission, Leadership and Governance, Learner Development, Learning Environment, and Operational Vitality—and assesses the framework's impact on students' academic performance and moral development. A descriptive correlational approach was employed, utilizing surveys, official student records (Form 137), and a checklist for observed values. Statistical analyses included descriptive statistics, Spearman's Rho correlation, and non-parametric tests to explore relationships in perceptions. The findings reveal high perceived alignment with the PCSS across all domains, a moderate positive correlation between quality education and academic performance, but a weaker correlation with observed values, indicating gaps in moral development outcomes. While Catholic schools excel in academic rigor and operational practices, the study identifies challenges in fully integrating faith formation into student behavior and character development. The study concludes that targeted strategies are needed to enhance the integration of faith-based values into curricula and daily practices. Recommendations include embedding PCSS standards into policies, fostering collaborative leadership, and implementing structured programs to strengthen values education. This research contributes to the broader dialogue on improving Catholic education in the Philippines, offering actionable insights for aligning operational practices with the mission of Catholic schools.

Keywords — *Catholic education, PCSS, student outcomes, moral development, academic performance*

I. Introduction

Catholic education has been fundamental in shaping the moral, intellectual, and social development of students for centuries. In the Philippines, Catholic schools have played a significant role in producing leaders grounded in both academic excellence and Christian values (Gravissimum Educationis, 1965). The mission of Catholic education is to nurture students'

academic and spiritual growth, preparing them for lives of service, integrity, and faith. However, Catholic schools now face challenges due to the rise of secularism and materialism, which prioritize economic success over spiritual and moral development (Ozar & Weitzel-O'Neill, 2013; Aldama, 2018). These secular ideologies create a disconnect between Catholic education's religious goals and students' focus on career success (ECCCE, 1992; PCP II, 1991).

In response to these challenges, the Philippine Catholic Schools Standards (PCSS), introduced in 2016 by the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines (CEAP), offers a framework to align Catholic schools' educational practices with the Church's values while promoting academic excellence. Comprising five domains—Catholic Identity and Mission, Leadership and Governance, Learner Development, Learning Environment, and Operational Vitality—the PCSS framework addresses the holistic nature of Catholic education (Bual & Madrigal, 2018). Despite its potential, research on the implementation and impact of the PCSS, particularly in rural schools, remains limited. Studies by Bual and Madrigal (2019) and Laurente (2019) suggest improvements in learner development and the learning environment but highlight ongoing challenges in leadership and values integration. Additionally, research is scarce on how faith-based values in Catholic schools directly affect academic performance and moral development (Madrigal & Oracion, 2019). This study aims to assess how Catholic schools in Zamboanga del Norte align with the PCSS and whether its implementation leads to improved academic and moral outcomes, ultimately contributing to the broader conversation about strengthening Catholic education in the Philippines.

Review of Related Literature

Catholic education has long been recognized for its dual focus on academic excellence and moral development. Rooted in the mission of the Church, it aims to foster intellectual growth alongside spiritual and ethical formation (Gravissimum Educationis, 1965). Catholic schools have historically produced leaders equipped with both knowledge and a strong ethical framework, essential for service and moral integrity (Baltazar, 2003; Palma, 2012). However, secularism and materialism now challenge this educational model, as many students view their education more as a path to financial success than as a moral journey, as noted by Ozar & Weitzel-O'Neill (2013). This shift has diminished the prioritization of faith-based education, impacting how Catholic education is perceived and practiced today.

Secularism and liberalism have significantly affected Catholic education. Secular ideologies, emphasizing individualism and materialism, conflict with Catholic educational values (Aldama, 2018). These shifts have led students to view Catholic education primarily as a means to economic success rather than spiritual development. Aldama (2018) also discusses how liberalism, with its focus on individual freedoms, sometimes challenges traditional Catholic teachings, leading to a decline in moral and ethical values in some schools. This change in focus has caused Catholic schools to reassess how they integrate faith into their curricula and activities.

In response to these challenges, the Philippine Catholic Schools Standards (PCSS) were developed to help schools assess and improve their educational quality. Launched in 2016 by the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines (CEAP), the PCSS provides a framework across five domains: Catholic Identity and Mission, Leadership and Governance, Learner Development, Learning Environment, and Operational Vitality. Bual and Madrigal (2018) emphasize that PCSS allows schools to evaluate their adherence to Catholic values and academic performance, though its implementation remains inconsistent, especially in leadership and governance (Bual & Madrigal, 2019). These gaps suggest that more structured guidance and training are needed for effective PCSS application.

While the integration of Catholic values in education is crucial, its impact on measurable student outcomes remains under-researched. Laurente (2019) found that while Catholic schools excel in promoting Catholic identity, these efforts do not always correlate with improved academic results or ethical development. Madrigal and Oracion (2019) also observed that while Catholic schools foster strong learning environments, these qualities do not consistently translate into better student performance or stronger moral values. These findings suggest that Catholic schools need to bridge the gap between faith formation and practical academic and ethical outcomes.

Despite frameworks like PCSS, many Catholic schools struggle to integrate these standards effectively into their daily operations. The lack of cohesive strategies for implementing PCSS has created gaps between schools' mission statements and actual practices. CEAP (2016) highlights the need for greater alignment between internal policies, curriculum, and the PCSS framework to ensure that Catholic education remains relevant and effective. Goetsch & Davis (2014) argue that educational institutions must align their practices with their mission, a process that involves collaboration among all school stakeholders to achieve common goals.

While Catholic education remains central to academic and moral development, Catholic schools face significant challenges in maintaining their identity amid growing secular influences. The introduction of PCSS has helped address these challenges, yet gaps remain, particularly in leadership, governance, and the integration of Catholic values into daily school life. The relationship between Catholic education quality, as defined by PCSS, and student learning outcomes is underexplored. This study aims to fill this gap by examining the impact of PCSS alignment on academic performance and values development among students in Catholic schools in Zamboanga del Norte. Additionally, this research will contribute to the ongoing discourse on integrating PCSS into Catholic schools' policies and operational practices, proposing a framework for its full integration to enhance both academic and moral development.

II. Methodology

This chapter discusses the research design, research environment, research respondents, sampling methods, research instruments, and procedures used in gathering and analyzing data.

Research Method

This study is quantitative in nature as it seeks to quantify the relationships between variables and obtain numerical data. Specifically, the study uses a correlational research design, which is appropriate for examining the direction and magnitude of relationships between variables. In this case, the study aims to determine if there is a significant relationship between the quality of Catholic education, as perceived through the Philippine Catholic Schools Standards (PCSS), and students' learning outcomes in terms of academic performance and observed values. The correlation will assess whether the degree of association between these variables is statistically significant. Cristobal & Cristobal (2016) define correlation research as a design used to investigate relationships between variables within a defined population.

Research Environment

The study was conducted in the two divisions of Zamboanga del Norte and Dapitan City, specifically focusing on Catholic schools within these areas under the supervision of the Diocese of Dipolog. Zamboanga del Norte is a province located in the northwestern part of the Zamboanga Peninsula, with a population of approximately 957,997 as of the 2010 census. It is home to several Catholic schools, with a total of five participating institutions: Saint Vincent's College (Dipolog City), Saint Joseph College of Sindangan (Sindangan), Rizal Memorial Institute (Dapitan City), Colegio de San Francisco Javier (Rizal), and Saint Estanislao Kostka College (Manukan).

Research Respondents and Sampling

The respondents of this study included school administrators, teaching and non-teaching personnel, and Junior High School students from Grades 7 to 10 across five Catholic schools in Zamboanga del Norte. Administrators, including Vice Presidents and Principals, as well as teaching and non-teaching staff such as registrars and accountants, were selected through purposive sampling due to their direct involvement in implementing the Philippine Catholic Schools Standards (PCSS) and their knowledge of Catholic education quality. For student respondents, stratified random sampling ensured proportional representation from each grade level, with students randomly selected using the fishbowl technique to maintain diversity and fairness in the sample.

The administrators were predominantly male (80%), aged 36-40 years (60%), and had 6-10 years of service (60%), reflecting mid-career professionals with significant experience in educational leadership. Similarly, teaching and non-teaching personnel were mostly male (60%), aged 36-40 years (50%), and also had 6-10 years of service (50%). This demographic composition highlights a workforce that is stable, experienced, and capable of ensuring continuity in school operations and governance. Their collective professional experience and alignment with institutional goals provide a strong foundation for implementing the PCSS and maintaining the quality of Catholic education in the region.

Research Instruments

The study employed a structured research instrument designed to gather both demographic and perceptual data from respondents. The instrument consisted of two main parts. Part I focused on collecting demographic information, including sex, age, length of service, educational qualifications, and participation in PCSS-related seminars or training. This section provided a comprehensive profile of school administrators, teachers, and non-teaching personnel, offering context to their backgrounds and experiences in Catholic education.

Part II used the Self-Assessment Instrument of the Philippine Catholic Schools Standards (PCSS), as introduced by the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines (CEAP) and Phoenix Publishing. This part assessed the quality of Catholic education based on the five domains of the PCSS: Catholic Identity and Mission, Leadership and Governance, Learner Development, Learning Environment, and Operational Vitality. Respondents rated their perceptions of the alignment of their schools with these standards using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 5 (Strongly Agree) to 1 (Strongly Disagree). The ratings helped capture their agreement levels on the schools' adherence to PCSS guidelines. Additionally, student academic performance was measured using grades from Form 137, and observed values were assessed through a checklist to evaluate students' moral behaviors. The data from these sources were analyzed to determine the perceived quality of education and identify any gaps in the implementation of the PCSS framework, providing a comprehensive view of both academic and moral education in Catholic schools.

Data Collection Procedures

The data collection process began by securing permissions from the authors of the instruments and from school administrators. Questionnaires were distributed to selected respondents during school hours, with prior approval from the concerned school officials. This ensured a high response rate and facilitated efficient data collection. The student learning outcomes, including academic performance and observed values, were derived from the students' Form 138 (Report Cards), which were randomly selected using the fish bowl technique.

Data Treatment and Statistical Methods

The data were analyzed using a combination of statistical methods to assess the relationships between Catholic education quality and student outcomes. Simple Percentage was used to calculate the proportion of responses in different categories, providing a clear understanding of the distribution of data. The Weighted Mean formula was applied to compute the average responses, factoring in the varying importance of each response category. Spearman's Rho Correlation was used to determine the strength and significance of the relationship between the perceived quality of Catholic education and students' learning outcomes. The combination of these statistical techniques allowed for a comprehensive analysis of the data, providing valuable insights into the impact of the PCSS framework on educational quality and student performance.

III. Results and Discussion

The findings are organized by the research questions to provide a detailed examination of the quality of Catholic education in Zamboanga del Norte Catholic schools based on the Philippine Catholic Schools Standards (PCSS) framework.

Level of Quality Education and PCSS alignment

Table 1 Perceived Quality of Catholic Education by Administrators and its PCSS alignment

PCSS Domain	Standard	Mean	Standard Deviation	PCSS Alignment	Level of Quality
Catholic Identity and Mission	1.1. The philosophy, vision, mission statements, and core values are centered on Jesus Christ, rooted in Gospel values, and aligned with Church teachings and practices.	4.76	0.43	Very Much Aligned: Fully meets or exceeds expectations in Catholic identity.	5 (Exceptional Quality)
	1.2. Members of the school community share and adhere to a clear and well-articulated philosophy, vision, mission, and core values.	4.55	0.48	Aligned: Strong shared understanding of values, generally aligned.	4 (Good Quality)
	1.3. School policies and relationships conform to the values of the Gospel.	4.61	0.45	Very Much Aligned: Strong alignment with Gospel values.	5 (Exceptional Quality)
	1.4. Pastoral directions of the Church are integrated in the school's plans, programs, and activities.	4.65	0.47	Very Much Aligned: Clear integration of pastoral directives.	5 (Exceptional Quality)
	1.5. Faith formation is central to the school's curriculum, governance, environment, and partnership with stakeholders.	4.69	0.42	Very Much Aligned: Strong focus on faith integration.	5 (Exceptional Quality)
Leadership and Governance	2.1. The school leadership fosters a culture of mission-driven governance.	4.53	0.52	Aligned: Leadership supports mission-driven governance.	4 (Good Quality)
	2.2. School leaders communicate effectively with all stakeholders, ensuring mission alignment.	4.46	0.54	Aligned: Effective communication with stakeholders.	4 (Good Quality)
	2.3. Decision-making processes are participatory, collaborative, and mission-aligned.	4.48	0.51	Aligned: Collaborative decision-making processes.	4 (Good Quality)
Learner Development	3.1. The curriculum is designed to develop learners holistically—intellectually, emotionally, spiritually, and socially.	4.59	0.50	Very Much Aligned: Holistic development approach is well-implemented.	5 (Exceptional Quality)

	3.2. Teachers actively support students in their personal and academic growth.	4.55	0.53	Aligned: Teachers offer strong support for personal growth.	4	(Good Quality)
	3.3. Learning assessment strategies promote student growth and achievement.	4.57	0.49	Aligned: Effective learning assessment strategies.	4	(Good Quality)
Learning Environment	4.1. The school provides a safe, conducive learning environment for academic and moral development.	4.54	0.51	Aligned: Positive learning environment conducive to academic and moral development.	4	(Good Quality)
	4.2. The physical and emotional environment promotes personal dignity and academic excellence.	4.58	0.47	Very Much Aligned: Environment fosters dignity and excellence.	5	(Exceptional Quality)
	4.3. Discipline practices are Gospel-centered, respectful, and focused on growth.	4.56	0.50	Very Much Aligned: Gospel-centered and respectful discipline.	5	(Exceptional Quality)
Operational Vitality	5.1. The school maintains adequate resources and effective management for its long-term sustainability.	4.60	0.50	Very Much Aligned: Excellent operational management and resource allocation.	5	(Exceptional Quality)
	5.2. The school evaluates and improves its performance in a regular, systematic manner.	4.52	0.55	Aligned: Strong focus on continuous improvement.	4	(Good Quality)
	5.3. Partnerships and community engagements support mission sustainability.	4.55	0.52	Aligned: Effective partnerships for sustainability.	4	(Good Quality)

The results from the assessment of the Philippine Catholic Schools Standards (PCSS) demonstrate that Catholic schools in Zamboanga del Norte perform exceptionally well in several domains. Specifically, the Catholic Identity and Mission domain is marked by exceptional quality across all standards, with mean scores ranging from 4.53 to 4.76, indicating a strong alignment with Catholic values and faith integration. The Leadership and Governance domain also shows good quality, with a focus on mission-driven governance and effective communication, although some areas, particularly in decision-making, could benefit from slight improvements. In the Learner Development domain, schools are very much aligned with providing a holistic approach to student development, offering intellectual, emotional, spiritual, and social growth through well-designed curricula and strong teacher support. The Learning Environment demonstrates good quality, with a conducive and safe environment for academic and moral development, though more consistent support for academic excellence and values could further enhance this domain. Similarly, Operational Vitality shows exceptional quality, reflecting excellent resource management and a strong focus on continuous improvement.

These results indicate that Catholic schools in the region have a robust foundation in Catholic teachings, governance, and overall educational quality, with very much aligned practices in most areas. However, some aspects, such as leadership communication and decision-making, as well as fostering a more consistent learning environment, still offer room for growth. While these

schools perform excellently in aligning with the PCSS, enhancing the integration of values across all aspects of school life, and improving areas like stakeholder communication and decision-making, will ensure their continued success in providing a holistic, values-driven education for all students. This analysis points to the schools' capacity for maintaining a high level of academic and moral development, with potential to elevate certain areas to even higher standards.

Table 2 The level of quality of Catholic education as perceived by the teaching and non-teaching personnel and its PCSS alignment

PCSS Domain	Standard	Mean	Standard Deviation	PCSS Alignment	Level of Quality Education
Catholic Identity and Mission	1.1. The philosophy, vision, mission statements, and core values are centered on Jesus Christ, rooted in Gospel values, and aligned with Church teachings and practices.	4.55	0.48	Very Much Aligned: Fully meets or exceeds expectations in Catholic identity.	Exceptional Quality (5)
	1.2. Members of the school community share and adhere to a clear and well-articulated philosophy, vision, mission, and core values.	4.53	0.50	Aligned: Strong shared understanding of values, generally aligned.	Good Quality (4)
	1.3. School policies and relationships conform to the values of the Gospel.	4.56	0.47	Very Much Aligned: Strong alignment with Gospel values.	Exceptional Quality (5)
	1.4. Pastoral directions of the Church are integrated in the school's plans, programs, and activities.	4.59	0.45	Very Much Aligned: Clear integration of pastoral directives.	Exceptional Quality (5)
	1.5. Faith formation is central to the school's curriculum, governance, environment, and partnership with stakeholders.	4.60	0.44	Very Much Aligned: Strong focus on faith integration.	Exceptional Quality (5)
Leadership and Governance	2.1. The school leadership fosters a culture of mission-driven governance.	4.46	0.54	Aligned: Leadership supports mission-driven governance.	Good Quality (4)
	2.2. School leaders communicate effectively with all stakeholders, ensuring mission alignment.	4.50	0.52	Aligned: Effective communication with stakeholders.	Good Quality (4)
	2.3. Decision-making processes are participatory, collaborative, and mission-aligned.	4.48	0.51	Aligned: Collaborative decision-making processes.	Good Quality (4)
Learner Development	3.1. The curriculum is designed to develop learners holistically—intellectually, emotionally, spiritually, and socially.	4.59	0.50	Very Much Aligned: Holistic development approach is well-implemented.	Exceptional Quality (5)
	3.2. Teachers actively support students in their personal and academic growth.	4.57	0.49	Aligned: Teachers offer strong support for personal growth.	Good Quality (4)

	3.3. Learning assessment strategies promote student growth and achievement.	4.55	0.51	Aligned: learning strategies.	Effective assessment	Good Quality (4)
Learning Environment	4.1. The school provides a safe, conducive learning environment for academic and moral development.	4.54	0.51	Aligned: conducive and moral development.	Positive learning environment	Good Quality (4)
	4.2. The physical and emotional environment promotes personal dignity and academic excellence.	4.58	0.47	Very Much Aligned: Environment fosters dignity and excellence.		Exceptional Quality (5)
	4.3. Discipline practices are Gospel-centered, respectful, and focused on growth.	4.56	0.50	Very Much Aligned: Gospel-centered and respectful discipline.		Exceptional Quality (5)
Operational Vitality	5.1. The school maintains adequate resources and effective management for its long-term sustainability.	4.60	0.50	Very Much Aligned: Excellent management and resource allocation.		Exceptional Quality (5)
	5.2. The school evaluates and improves its performance in a regular, systematic manner.	4.57	0.51	Aligned: Strong focus on continuous improvement.		Good Quality (4)
	5.3. Partnerships and community engagements support mission sustainability.	4.55	0.52	Aligned: partnerships for sustainability.	Effective for	Good Quality (4)

The results of the assessment show that Catholic schools in Zamboanga del Norte are performing exceptionally well in several domains, particularly in Catholic Identity and Mission, where all standards are rated as exceptional quality (5). The schools demonstrate a strong alignment with Catholic values, integrating faith formation into their curriculum, governance, and community life. Additionally, Learner Development stands out with a well-implemented, holistic approach to student growth, including intellectual, emotional, spiritual, and social development. The Learning Environment is rated as exceptionally aligned (5) in fostering personal dignity and academic excellence, and the Operational Vitality domain also excels with exceptional quality (5) in areas such as resource management and sustainability. These domains reflect a clear commitment to the values and practices that form the foundation of Catholic education, contributing to both academic success and the overall well-being of students.

However, while many domains are rated highly, there are areas where good quality (4) ratings indicate opportunities for further growth. Leadership and Governance are strong, but with slight room for improvement in decision-making and communication, which could enhance mission alignment across all levels of the school. Learning Environment also shows good quality (4) in the overall academic and moral development of students, suggesting that while the environment is conducive to learning, there could be further consistency in supporting both academic and moral growth. Additionally, Learner Development would benefit from more consistent support for personal growth, although it remains well-aligned overall. These findings

indicate that while the schools are excelling in key areas, ongoing refinement in leadership practices and learning environments can ensure even higher standards in Catholic education.

Level of students' learning outcomes in the Catholic schools in terms of academic performance and observed values

Table 3 Students' Learning Outcomes

Learning Outcome	Frequency	Interpretation	Implication
Academic Performance	Very Satisfactory	60%	Strong academic performance: The majority of students are performing at a very satisfactory level.
	Satisfactory	40%	Satisfactory performance: A smaller proportion of students meet the expected academic standards.
Observed Values	Always Observed	70%	Strong moral values: Most students consistently exhibit the expected moral behavior.
	Occasionally Observed	30%	Occasional moral behavior: Some students only occasionally demonstrate the expected values.

The analysis of academic performance shows that 60% of students are rated as Very Satisfactory, reflecting strong academic outcomes and indicating that the majority of students meet or exceed expectations. However, 40% are rated as Satisfactory, suggesting that while they meet the minimum standards, there is room for further academic improvement. This distribution implies that the educational practices in place are generally effective, but additional support may be needed for students performing at a satisfactory level to reach higher academic achievement.

Regarding observed values, 70% of students exhibit Always Observed moral behavior, demonstrating that most students consistently display the expected values. However, 30% of students are rated as Occasionally Observed, indicating that a smaller proportion show inconsistency in their moral behavior. This suggests that while the majority of students align with the expected moral standards, there is a need for targeted interventions to ensure that all students consistently demonstrate the desired values.

Relationship between the quality of Catholic education and students' learning outcomes

Table 4 Relationship between the level of Quality of Catholic Education and Student Outcome variables

Variable 1	Variable 2	Correlation Coefficient	p-Value	Interpretation	Decision
Quality of Education	Academic Performance	0.56	0.03	Moderate positive correlation: A strong relationship exists between the quality of education and academic performance.	Reject null hypothesis: There is a statistically significant relationship.
Quality of Education	Observed Values	0.42	0.07	Weaker positive correlation: A moderate relationship exists between quality of education and observed values, though weaker.	Fail to reject null hypothesis: The relationship is not statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

The analysis of the relationship between the quality of education and academic performance reveals a moderate positive correlation with a correlation coefficient of 0.56, indicating that as the quality of education improves, students' academic performance tends to enhance as well. The p-value of 0.03, which is less than 0.05, confirms that this correlation is statistically significant. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis, concluding that quality education has a statistically significant impact on improving academic performance, and this relationship holds at a significant level.

On the other hand, the relationship between quality of education and observed values (such as moral behavior and discipline) shows a weaker positive correlation, with a correlation coefficient of 0.42. The p-value of 0.07, which exceeds the threshold of 0.05, indicates that the relationship is not statistically significant at the conventional level. As a result, we fail to reject the null hypothesis, suggesting that there is no statistically significant correlation between the quality of education and students' observed values at the 0.05 significance level. This implies that while quality education

DISCUSSION

This study evaluated the quality of Catholic education in Zamboanga del Norte using the Philippine Catholic Schools Standards (PCSS) framework. The findings indicate a high level of alignment with the PCSS across all five domains—Catholic Identity and Mission, Leadership and Governance, Learner Development, Learning Environment, and Operational Vitality—with mean scores ranging from 4.50 to 4.61. These scores reflect strong adherence to Catholic educational standards, emphasizing the schools' commitment to their faith-based mission, holistic learner development, and operational excellence. Furthermore, the low standard deviation values across domains suggest minimal variability in perceptions, signifying a shared understanding of quality among administrators, teachers, and non-teaching staff.

The study also explored the relationship between the quality of education and student outcomes. A moderate positive correlation was found between the quality of education and academic performance ($r = 0.56, p < 0.05$), indicating that better adherence to the PCSS framework is associated with improved academic achievement. However, the weaker correlation between the quality of education and observed values ($r = 0.42, p > 0.05$) highlights a gap in how Catholic education influences students' moral development and values formation. Demographic factors, such as sex, age, and length of service, were found to have no significant impact on perceptions of education quality, as demonstrated by the Mann-Whitney U Test, with all p-values exceeding 0.05.

The results provide clear answers to the study's research questions. First, the perceived quality of Catholic education in Zamboanga del Norte is high, as evidenced by strong alignment with the PCSS across all domains. This aligns with the research question exploring the schools' adherence to the PCSS framework. Second, the correlation analysis addresses the question of how the quality of education impacts student outcomes. The findings demonstrate that quality education positively influences academic performance but has a less pronounced impact on observed values. This suggests that while the schools effectively deliver academic and operational goals, additional efforts are needed to strengthen their impact on moral and ethical development.

These findings align with the work of Bual and Madrigal (2019), who reported high perceptions of Catholic education quality in schools adhering to the PCSS framework. Similarly, the consistency in perceptions across stakeholders resonates with Laurente (2019), who emphasized the importance of coherence among school communities in fostering effective Catholic education. However, the weaker correlation between quality education and observed values diverges from studies suggesting stronger impacts of Catholic identity on moral development, highlighting a potential area for further exploration.

Limitations

The study acknowledges several limitations. First, the data collection relied on self-reported questionnaires, which may introduce response bias as respondents could provide socially desirable answers rather than objective assessments. Second, the findings are based on perceptions and observations, rather than objective measures or documented evidence, limiting the ability to fully validate the alignment with PCSS. Third, the use of non-parametric statistical methods due to the nature of the data may restrict the robustness of the analysis, particularly for generalizing results to larger populations. Finally, the geographic scope of the study is limited to Zamboanga del Norte and Dapitan City, and findings may not be representative of Catholic schools in other regions with different cultural or institutional contexts.

Impact of Limitations on Conclusions

These limitations may affect the study's conclusions by introducing potential biases and restricting the scope of generalization. The reliance on perceptions may overestimate alignment with the PCSS, while the lack of objective data on student outcomes could understate areas requiring improvement. Additionally, the narrow geographic focus limits the applicability of the findings to Catholic schools nationwide.

IV. Conclusion

This study concludes that Catholic schools in Zamboanga del Norte demonstrate strong alignment with the Philippine Catholic Schools Standards (PCSS) across all five domains, reflecting a high level of commitment to the integration of Catholic values and educational excellence. The findings indicate a moderate positive correlation between quality education and academic performance, showing that adherence to PCSS standards contributes to improved student academic outcomes. However, a weaker correlation between quality education and observed values suggests a gap in moral development, highlighting the need for more effective integration of faith formation and ethical values into student education. While Catholic schools excel academically, further emphasis on values-based education is needed to ensure that students not only perform well academically but also grow in their moral and spiritual lives.

V. Recommendations

Based on the findings, it is recommended that Catholic schools in Zamboanga del Norte focus on strengthening the integration of faith formation into every aspect of their curriculum and school activities. Schools should enhance values education through targeted programs that foster moral and ethical development, ensuring that students are not only academically competent but also ethically grounded. Structured interventions, such as community service projects, ethics training, and character-building activities, should be incorporated to bridge the gap between academic success and moral development.

Moreover, to address the observed discrepancies in the implementation of PCSS standards, Catholic schools can work on fully integrating PCSS into their policies, standards, and guidelines. This includes aligning school curricula, administrative practices, and teaching strategies with the core principles of PCSS, ensuring consistency across all levels of the institution. A collaborative approach involving administrators, teachers, and non-teaching staff should be adopted to ensure that everyone in the school community is working towards a common goal of academic excellence and moral integrity. Future research can explore the role of institutional culture and specific interventions in enhancing the integration of values and improving students' moral development. By embedding PCSS standards into their policies and practices, Catholic schools can more effectively prepare students to lead lives of service, integrity, and ethical responsibility.

Suggestions for Further Research

Further studies should incorporate longitudinal designs to examine the long-term impacts of PCSS implementation on student outcomes. Expanding the geographic scope and including objective measures, such as standardized test scores and documented values-based activities, would provide a more comprehensive understanding of Catholic education quality. Research should also investigate the factors influencing the weaker correlation between quality education and observed values to inform targeted interventions.

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