

# The Financial Management Practices in Improving the Quality Management Systems of the Finance Personnel of the Central Bicol State University of Agriculture (CBSUA) Campuses, Province of Camarines Sur

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## ABSTRACT

Financial management plays a critical role in strengthening institutional governance and sustaining quality management systems in higher education institutions. This study examined the financial management practices of finance personnel across the campuses of the Central Bicol State University of Agriculture (CBSUA) in the Province of Camarines Sur for Fiscal Year 2024. Specifically, the research analyzed the extent to which key financial management functions—accounting, budgeting, allotting, recording, disbursing, and auditing—were employed and how these practices contributed to enhancing quality management systems in terms of planning, assessment and analysis, evaluating process design, delivery of service, and control. The investigation was anchored on the premise that sound financial governance ensures transparency, accountability, and alignment with institutional goals. The study utilized a descriptive–evaluative–correlational research design involving thirty-nine (39) finance personnel from various CBSUA campuses. A researcher-developed questionnaire served as the primary data-gathering instrument. Statistical tools such as weighted mean, frequency count, percentage, rank, and Kendall’s Coefficient of Concordance with chi-square test were applied at a 0.05 level of significance. These methodological approaches enabled the examination of both the degree of implementation of financial practices and the level of agreement among respondents regarding their effectiveness in supporting institutional quality systems. Findings revealed that financial management practices were generally rated as “very much evident,” with allotting, recording, and disbursing emerging as the most consistently implemented functions. Likewise, financial management activities supporting quality management systems were highly practiced, particularly in delivery of service, control, and planning dimensions. Significant agreement was observed among respondents in most financial management areas, except in allotting and evaluating process design, where variations in implementation were noted. These results indicate strong adherence to fiscal accountability mechanisms while highlighting specific procedural aspects that require harmonization across campuses. Based on the findings, the study proposed policy recommendations aimed at institutionalizing a unified financial management framework, strengthening inter-office collaboration, enhancing capacity-building initiatives, and developing centralized digital systems for financial reporting and monitoring. The research contributes to the discourse on public financial management in state universities and colleges by providing empirical evidence on how financial practices can be leveraged to sustain quality assurance systems and improve institutional performance.

## 1. Introduction

Financial management is widely recognized as a fundamental pillar of institutional governance, accountability, and organizational sustainability, particularly in public higher education institutions where the effective utilization of resources directly influences service delivery, research productivity, and instructional quality. In the Philippine context, financial governance is anchored on constitutional mandates promoting transparency and integrity in public service, as well as on national and global development frameworks emphasizing strong institutions and responsible fiscal administration. These policy directions underscore the necessity of strengthening financial management systems to ensure that public funds are managed efficiently, ethically, and strategically to support institutional development and national progress.

In higher education institutions, financial management practices encompass interconnected processes such as accounting, budgeting, allotting, recording, disbursing, and auditing. These functions collectively contribute to the establishment of quality management systems that guide planning, monitoring, evaluation, and continuous improvement of institutional operations. Universities are increasingly expected to align financial processes with quality assurance standards and performance-based governance models, particularly in environments characterized by resource constraints, regulatory pressures, and growing

stakeholder expectations. Consequently, the integration of sound financial management practices into institutional quality frameworks has become essential for enhancing operational efficiency, ensuring compliance with regulatory requirements, and fostering transparency in decision-making.

The Central Bicol State University of Agriculture (CBSUA), a state university in the Bicol Region, exemplifies the growing demand for strengthened financial governance in higher education. As a SUC Level IV institution and an ISO 9001:2015 certified university, CBSUA is committed to maintaining high standards in instruction, research, and extension services while ensuring accountability in financial operations across its campuses. The institution’s expanding academic programs, research initiatives, and community engagement efforts necessitate robust financial systems capable of supporting strategic planning, risk management, and performance evaluation. However, variations in financial procedures and implementation practices across campuses may pose challenges in maintaining consistency and alignment with institutional quality management objectives.

Previous studies in financial governance highlight that effective financial management practices contribute significantly to institutional performance, organizational sustainability, and stakeholder trust. Conversely, weaknesses in financial controls, limited capacity-building initiatives, and fragmented policy implementation can hinder operational effectiveness and compromise quality assurance mechanisms. In response to these concerns, this study examined the financial management practices of CBSUA finance personnel and their role in improving quality management systems. By analyzing the extent of practice implementation and the level of agreement among personnel across campuses, the research aimed to generate evidence-based policy recommendations that could strengthen financial governance structures and promote continuous institutional improvement. Ultimately, the study contributes to the broader discourse on public financial management in Philippine higher education by providing context-sensitive insights that may inform reforms in state un

**2. Methodology**

This study employed a descriptive–evaluative–correlational research design to examine the financial management practices of finance personnel and their contribution to improving the quality management systems of the Central Bicol State University of Agriculture (CBSUA) campuses in the Province of Camarines Sur for Fiscal Year 2024. The descriptive component enabled the assessment of the extent to which financial management functions were implemented, while the evaluative dimension examined the effectiveness of these practices in supporting institutional quality systems. The correlational aspect determined the level of agreement among respondents regarding the ranking of financial management practices and their perceived influence on quality management processes. This mixed analytical approach provided a comprehensive framework for generating empirical evidence relevant to institutional governance and policy development.

The respondents of the study consisted of thirty-nine (39) finance personnel from the different CBSUA campuses. A purposive sampling technique was utilized to ensure that participants possessed direct involvement in financial operations such as accounting, budgeting, allotment processing, financial recording, disbursement, and auditing. This sampling strategy allowed the researcher to obtain informed and experience-based responses regarding institutional financial practices. The study was delimited to finance personnel only, recognizing that their professional roles positioned them as primary actors in financial governance and quality assurance implementation within the university system.

Data were gathered using a researcher-developed questionnaire designed to measure financial management practices across six functional domains: accounting, budgeting, allotting, recording, disbursing, and auditing. The instrument also assessed the extent to which financial management practices contributed to quality management systems in terms of planning, assessment and analysis, evaluating process design, delivery of service, and control. The questionnaire underwent validation procedures to ensure clarity, relevance, and alignment with the research objectives. Administration of the instrument followed ethical research protocols, including securing necessary permissions and ensuring the confidentiality and voluntary participation of respondents.

For data analysis, descriptive and inferential statistical tools were employed. Weighted mean, frequency count, percentage, and rank were used to determine the extent of implementation of financial management practices and their role in improving quality management systems. To test the level of agreement among respondents in ranking these practices, the Kendall Coefficient of Concordance (W) with the corresponding chi-square test was utilized at a 0.05 level of significance. These statistical techniques enabled the identification of areas of convergence and divergence in perceptions across campuses, thereby providing a robust empirical basis for policy recommendations aimed at strengthening financial governance and institutional quality management frameworks.

**3. Results and Discussions**

This section presents the empirical findings on the financial management practices of finance personnel and their role in improving the quality management systems of the Central Bicol State University of Agriculture (CBSUA). Results are discussed according to the major analytical domains of the study: (1) financial management practices employed, (2) agreement on rank orders of practices, (3) contribution of financial management practices to quality management systems, and (4) agreement on rank orders of quality dimensions across campuses. Overall, results reveal that financial governance practices were consistently rated “Very Much Evident,” indicating strong operational compliance, institutional accountability, and alignment with quality assurance processes.

*3.2 Financial Management Practices Employed by Finance Personnel*

Table 1: Summary of Financial Management Practices

| Financial Management Domain | Mean | Interpretation    | Rank |
|-----------------------------|------|-------------------|------|
| Allotting                   | 4.96 | Very Much Evident | 1    |

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|------------|------|-------------------|---|
| Recording  | 4.94 | Very Much Evident | 2 |
| Disbursing | 4.94 | Very Much Evident | 3 |
| Auditing   | 4.92 | Very Much Evident | 4 |
| Accounting | 4.89 | Very Much Evident | 5 |
| Budgeting  | 4.87 | Very Much Evident | 6 |

The results show that all financial management domains were rated very highly, suggesting that CBSUA finance personnel consistently demonstrate strong competence in core fiscal processes. The highest mean for allotting indicates that fund distribution mechanisms are well-structured, transparent, and responsive to institutional priorities. This is critical in multi-campus systems where resource allocation directly affects operational continuity and program implementation.

Similarly, the high ratings for recording and disbursing highlight the strength of documentary controls and compliance with government financial regulations. Accurate financial recording ensures audit readiness and supports real-time monitoring of transactions, while effective disbursement practices facilitate timely service delivery to academic and administrative units.

Conversely, budgeting, although still rated “Very Much Evident,” obtained the lowest mean. This suggests that planning-oriented financial functions may involve more complexity due to stakeholder coordination requirements, strategic alignment considerations, and variability in campus-specific needs. These findings imply that while execution mechanisms are highly standardized, upstream planning processes may benefit from stronger participatory approaches and integration with institutional strategic planning.

### 3.2 Agreement on Rank Orders of Financial Management Practices

Table 2: Test of Significant Agreement Using Kendall’s Coefficient of Concordance

| Domain     | Kendall’s W | Chi-Square | p-value | Decision        |
|------------|-------------|------------|---------|-----------------|
| Accounting | 0.91        | 21.84      | <0.005  | Significant     |
| Budgeting  | 0.65        | 18.20      | <0.025  | Significant     |
| Allotting  | 0.25        | 8.00       | >0.05   | Not Significant |
| Recording  | 0.75        | 18.00      | <0.01   | Significant     |
| Disbursing | 0.88        | 24.64      | <0.001  | Significant     |
| Auditing   | 0.61        | 19.52      | <0.025  | Significant     |

The findings demonstrate significant agreement among respondents in ranking most financial management practices, indicating institutional consistency in how finance personnel perceive the importance of accounting, budgeting, recording, disbursing, and auditing functions. The strongest agreement was observed in accounting and disbursing, suggesting highly standardized procedures and shared professional norms across campuses.

However, the absence of significant agreement in allotting is particularly noteworthy. While this domain obtained the highest overall mean, respondents differed in prioritizing its specific indicators. This indicates contextual variations in fund allocation experiences, likely influenced by differences in campus size, operational demands, or administrative decision-making structures. Such variation underscores the need for harmonized allotment protocols to ensure uniformity in resource distribution processes.

### 3.3 Extent of Financial Management Practices in Improving Quality Management Systems

Table 3: Contribution of Financial Management Practices to Quality Management Dimensions

| Quality Management Dimension | Mean | Interpretation    | Rank |
|------------------------------|------|-------------------|------|
| Delivery of Service          | 4.93 | Very Much Evident | 1    |
| Control                      | 4.93 | Very Much Evident | 2    |
| Planning                     | 4.92 | Very Much Evident | 3    |
| Evaluating Process Design    | 4.92 | Very Much Evident | 4    |
| Assessment and Analysis      | 4.91 | Very Much Evident | 5    |

Results indicate that financial management practices significantly support institutional quality management systems. The highest means for delivery of service and control highlight the critical role of finance personnel in ensuring timely reporting, responsive service provision, and compliance with institutional standards. These dimensions are directly linked to stakeholder satisfaction and operational efficiency.

The high rating for planning confirms that financial activities are strategically aligned with institutional goals, enabling evidence-based decision-making and effective resource utilization. Meanwhile, evaluating process design reflects the finance personnel’s capacity to review workflows, integrate risk management mechanisms, and coordinate with other units to maintain process efficiency.

The relatively lower mean for assessment and analysis, although still within the highest descriptive category, suggests that analytical functions such as variance analysis, performance monitoring, and benchmarking require further strengthening. This domain demands advanced technical skills and systematic use of financial data for institutional improvement, indicating an opportunity for targeted capacity-building initiatives.

### 3.4 Agreement on Rank Orders of Quality Management Dimensions Across Campuses

Table 4: Test of Significant Agreement on Quality Management Dimensions

| Dimension                 | Kendall's W | Chi-Square | p-value | Decision        |
|---------------------------|-------------|------------|---------|-----------------|
| Planning                  | 0.82        | 19.68      | <0.005  | Significant     |
| Assessment and Analysis   | 0.56        | 15.68      | <0.05   | Significant     |
| Evaluating Process Design | 0.47        | 15.04      | >0.05   | Not Significant |
| Delivery of Service       | 0.93        | 22.32      | <0.005  | Significant     |
| Control                   | 0.93        | 22.32      | <0.005  | Significant     |

Significant agreement in delivery of service and control demonstrates strong institutional coherence in stakeholder-facing financial processes. These functions are perceived uniformly across campuses as central to quality assurance and institutional performance.

Similarly, significant agreement in planning suggests that campuses share a common understanding of the strategic role of financial management. However, the lack of significant agreement in evaluating process design indicates variability in how campuses prioritize workflow improvement and procedural innovation. This may reflect decentralized administrative structures or differing levels of exposure to quality assurance initiatives.

Overall, the results suggest that CBSUA has achieved high levels of financial governance competence, but continued efforts toward standardization of evaluation mechanisms and process design frameworks are necessary to ensure uniform quality management implementation across campuses.

Collectively, the findings affirm that financial management practices at CBSUA are deeply embedded in institutional quality assurance mechanisms. Strong performance in operational domains such as allotting, recording, disbursing, and service delivery indicates a mature financial control environment characterized by transparency, accountability, and responsiveness.

Nevertheless, areas of variability—particularly in budgeting participation, allotment prioritization, and process evaluation—highlight the need for strengthened institutional coordination and policy harmonization. Addressing these gaps will enable CBSUA to transition from high operational competence toward fully integrated financial governance, thereby enhancing institutional sustainability and performance excellence.

## 4. Conclusions and Implications

### 4.1 Conclusions

This study examined the financial management practices of finance personnel across the campuses of the Central Bicol State University of Agriculture (CBSUA) and their contribution to strengthening institutional quality management systems. The findings lead to several important conclusions that advance both institutional practice and scholarly understanding of financial governance in public higher education.

First, financial management practices in CBSUA are highly institutionalized and consistently implemented across key functional domains. The uniformly high ratings in accounting, budgeting, allotting, recording, disbursing, and auditing indicate that finance personnel possess strong operational competence and adherence to regulatory standards. These results suggest the presence of an established culture of fiscal accountability and transparency, which is critical for sustaining public trust and ensuring efficient utilization of institutional resources. Such operational strength reflects the university's commitment to quality assurance and compliance with national public financial management frameworks.

Second, financial management practices significantly support the university's quality management systems. The high extent of practice in planning, service delivery, control mechanisms, process evaluation, and financial assessment demonstrates that financial governance functions not merely as an administrative support system but as a strategic enabler of institutional effectiveness. Finance personnel contribute to decision-making processes, performance monitoring, and continuous improvement initiatives, thereby reinforcing the integration of fiscal management and quality assurance systems within the university structure. This confirms that effective financial governance enhances institutional responsiveness, operational efficiency, and service reliability.

Third, while overall performance levels were high, the study revealed areas of procedural variability across campuses, particularly in allotting practices and evaluating process design. The absence of significant agreement in these domains indicates that differences in local administrative arrangements, resource demands, and workflow configurations influence how financial procedures are prioritized and implemented. These variations highlight the need for stronger institutional harmonization to ensure consistency in financial operations and equitable resource allocation across campuses. Addressing such disparities is essential for strengthening system-wide governance and maintaining uniform quality standards.

Finally, the formulation of policy recommendations based on empirical findings underscores the value of evidence-based financial governance. The proposed institutionalization of standardized financial management frameworks, capacity-building initiatives, centralized digital systems, and participatory planning mechanisms reflects the university's readiness to transition from strong operational performance toward more integrated and strategic financial management practices. These conclusions affirm that sustained institutional improvement depends not only on compliance with financial regulations but also on continuous innovation in governance processes.

### 4.2 Implications

The findings of this study carry significant implications for institutional leadership, financial administrators, policy-makers, and scholars in the field of public administration and higher education governance.

From an institutional management perspective, the results highlight the importance of strengthening coordination mechanisms among campuses to achieve procedural standardization in financial operations. The development of harmonized allotment protocols, unified evaluation tools, and centralized financial monitoring systems can reduce operational inconsistencies and enhance decision-making efficiency. Moreover, embedding financial analytics and performance-based budgeting into institutional planning processes can further align financial governance with strategic institutional objectives.

From a human resource and capacity-building standpoint, the findings emphasize the need for continuous professional development programs for finance personnel. Training initiatives focusing on financial data analysis, risk management, quality assurance integration, and digital financial systems can enhance analytical competencies and support evidence-based policy implementation. Strengthening technical expertise in assessment and evaluation functions will enable finance personnel to contribute more effectively to institutional innovation and performance management.

In terms of policy and governance implications, the study underscores the role of financial management practices in promoting transparency, accountability, and service quality in public higher education institutions. Regulatory bodies and higher education administrators may utilize the findings to inform the development of standardized financial governance models applicable across state universities and colleges. Such models can support performance-based funding mechanisms, strengthen audit systems, and foster institutional resilience in resource-constrained environments.

Finally, the study contributes to the academic discourse on public financial management and quality assurance systems by providing empirical evidence from a multi-campus higher education context. It highlights the interdependence between financial governance structures and institutional quality outcomes, offering a framework for future comparative research and policy innovation. Further investigations may explore the integration of digital financial platforms, the impact of financial reforms on institutional performance, and the role of participatory governance in enhancing fiscal accountability.

Overall, the study affirms that strengthening financial management practices is integral to sustaining institutional excellence, promoting stakeholder confidence, and advancing the broader goals of good governance and sustainable development in Philippine higher education.

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