

ANALYSIS ON THE READINESS OF TAN TAO UNIVERSITY (TTU) TO OFFER AN MBA PROGRAM

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Abstract

This study provides a strategic analysis on Tan Tao University MBA Program. The main objective of this study is to analyse the readiness of the Tan Tao University to offer an MBA Program and the effectiveness of the curriculum of the proposed MBA Program focusing on four areas such as human resource, facilities and equipment, research aspect and opportunities for development and formulate recommendations based on the findings that would boost the SBE MBA Program.

Data is collected through questionnaire using convenience sampling in order to give a comprehensive view of students and faculty members' perceptions. Data collected have been presented in tabular forms using weighted mean and percentage to facilitate understanding of the study.

Managers of today's organization must comprehend the essentials of individual and group behaviour if they are to motivate and communicate with others in the organizations. They must understand administrative processes if they are to plan and organize its operations. They must familiarize themselves with mathematical and statistical procedures if they are to efficiently control what goes on in an organization.

Every company has its leaders and managers. They are the people who get things done, make things happen, and make the decisions that will make the difference between success and

failure. It is this special breed of accomplished professionals for whom the Graduate School of Business of Tan Tao University is designed.

Key Words: Academic credits, Effectiveness, MBA Program, Strategic Analysis.

I - THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

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Introduction

The proposed Graduate School Program is a project of TTU School Economics and Business Administration. Its mission/vision is to become globally distinguished institution with standards and practices based on American liberal arts model of higher education. It aspires to become the first Vietnamese university with a U.S. style of education. In fact, as stressed by World Education News Reviews (WENR) and Higher Education in Vietnam (2014), the structure of the Vietnamese education system is similar to the United States in that it has 12 years of schooling followed by a four-year bachelor degree, a two-year master's degree and a three to four year Ph.D. The MBA Programs require between one and a half and two years of full-time or 40 credits, with a mix of course work, research and a final dissertation.

The TTU Graduate School of Business & Economics will specifically design its own curriculum based on the minimum requirement defined in the policies and standards specific to the field of business as mandated by Ministry of Education and Training vis. Higher Education in Vietnam. The curriculum will consist of multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary learning experiences and flexibility in major fields. In the words of Sobel (2010), the functional disciplines must be integrated. Marketing, finance, information and technology management, and human resources management should not operate in a vacuum, independent of one another. Thus, the aim of the MBA curriculum is to develop the skills necessary to plan and manage the various business disciplines vis-à-vis multidisciplinary and interdepartmental approach of the successful business enterprise.

However, in keeping with its vision/mission, the curriculum has to be benchmarked with the curriculum of graduate school program for business of Rice University (<https://business.rice.edu/academic-programs/full-time-mba>) and with other universities in the United States. Benchmarking is a popular concept in the TQM practice. Aligning the graduate program with Rice University has many reasons. One of these reasons is to help students of TTU admitted for registration if he or she would want to transfer, continue and further their studies with the Rice University or any other universities in the United States. Besides, Master in Business Administration degree not only helps improve your career advancement opportunities but can also be used to establish your own business. It stands to reason, therefore, that the Master in Business Administration degree is a good choice in terms of future growth, wages and career opportunities. The TTU as education provider and to accomplish its mission to produce

special breed of accomplished professionals wants to offer MBA program, hence, the urgency of this research study.

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Research Objectives

This research study aims to assess the readiness of Tan Tao University to offer an MBA Program taking into consideration the human resource, facilities and equipment, research aspects, and opportunities of development and formulate recommendations based on the findings. Specifically, this study attempts to answer the following questions:

1. What is the current status of academic programs of Tan Tao University?
2. What is the perception of the respondents on the readiness of TTU to offer an MBA program in terms of human resource, facilities and equipment, research aspects, and opportunities for development?
3. What is the level of readiness of Tan Tao University to offer an MBA Program as perceived by the students and faculty members along (a) human resource, (b) facilities and equipment, (c) research aspects, and (d) opportunities for development?
4. What recommendations can be offered to boost the MBA Program?

II - LITERATURE REVIEW

This section discusses the literature and studies considered relevant to the study at hand. The reference materials for the discussion are drawn from existing international periodicals, articles written by internationally known authors on the subject matter of MBA program.

Academic Courses

Currently, TTU offers 10 undergraduate majors across five division of study, including Business & Economics, Engineering, Humanities and Languages, Medicine, and Biotechnology. TTU website www.ttu.edu.vn clearly specified that as far as the School of Business Administration and Economics is concerned, the same currently offers 4 academic major programs, namely, (1) Business Administration, (2) International Business, (3) Banking and Finance, and (4) Accounting.

The Proposed Programs of TTU Graduate School of Business

The following will be the proposed course offerings of two academic graduate programs (MBA Regular Program & MBA-Special Business Management Program):

Table 1. Courses for SBE MBA-Regular Program

Courses	Credits
Core Courses	
Competitive Strategy	3
Research Methodology and Research Writing	3
Business, Government & the International Economy	3
Quantitative Analysis for Business Decisions	3
Major Courses	
Leadership & Organizational Behaviour	3
Marketing Management	3
Financial Management	3
Technology & Operations Management	3
Managerial Accounting	3
Business & Management Research	3
Financial Accounting	
Electives (Choose any two Courses)	3
Legal Aspects of Business	3
Global Business Environment	3
Business Analytics	3
Strategic Management	
	6
Thesis/Dissertation Writing	

Table 1 shows the courses for MBA Regular Program of the Graduate School of TTU. There will be 12 credits for core courses, 18 credits for major courses, 6 credits for electives where a student has the prerogative to choose, any of the two courses offered, and 6 credits for the Thesis/Dissertation Writing. Upon completion of the program, a graduate of the MBA-Regular Program of Graduate School will be equipped with 42 credits of principles and basic concepts of the managerial discipline that maybe used to develop techniques in problem solving. An article entitled “A Close Look at the MBA Curriculum” on December 7, 2017, clearly stated that the MBA curriculum contains courses designed to pave the way to a successful business career so to speak, the soul of the MBA. MBA core courses are designed to equip students with fundamental business knowledge and skills essential for success in today’s business landscape (<https://www.accessmba.com/articles/view/a-close-look-at-the-mba-curriculum>). As pointed out by Sobel (2010) in his book MBA in a Nutshell, you will have a solid grounding in key concepts, techniques, and the terminology or jargon used by MBAs.

An MBA-Regular Program student will have to pass also the comprehensive examination upon completion of the academic credits. The said examination will consist of major courses and electives of the program. In the case where there is a non-business bachelor’s degree holder who wants to register in MBA-Regular Program, the same will have to take up first the basic concepts and principles of Accounting, Marketing, Management and Economics depending upon the evaluation of the courses he took in his undergraduate degree. In relation to this requirement, admission to master’s level programs is based on the first university degree, which must be completed in full-time or in-service mode (World Education News Reviews (WENR), Higher Education in Vietnam (2014). As amplified further under Article 38 (3) of Education Law – Vietnam, Master Education is conducted from one to two years of study for persons with university degrees.

Table 2. Courses for SBE MBA-SBMP Program

Courses	Credits
Foundation Courses	
Economics for Business	3
Business & Management Research	3
Organization & Management	3
Accounting	3
Major Courses	
Global Strategy	3
Corporate Finance	3
Marketing Management	3
Technology & Operations Management	3
Management Accounting	3
Electives (Choose any two courses)	
Global Business Environment	3
Business Analytics	3
Legal Aspects of Business	3
Position Paper	6

Table 2 presents the courses for MBA-Special Business Management Program of TTU Graduate School Program. The program will be specially designed for managers and entrepreneurs in providing them opportunity to acquire formal management orientation and be able to link all

nuances acquired in their work experience and have better understanding of different concepts, principles, and tools relevant to business management.

It will have a total 39 graduate credits that can be completed in one and half years. 12 more credits of foundation courses, 15 credits of major courses, six credits of electives and another 6 credits for position paper in lieu of a thesis or dissertation. A student will have to prepare a position paper on current issues in any field of business management approved by the university to be orally defended before a panel. There will be a comprehensive examination in four areas of management, i.e. marketing, financial, operations and strategic management after the completion of academic credits.

To qualify for the said program, an applicant should be holding the position of manager, director, entrepreneur, officer of a corporation. He/she must also be a holder of bachelor's degree with at least one (1) year of working experience.

An MBA is an internationally recognized business degree. It is academic in nature yet it provides practical preparation for individuals in business and management. An MBA cannot only complement professional experience, but an MBA graduate is able to command a higher salary than his or colleague who does not have the degree (Ramlall et al, 2016). According to the National Centre for Education Statistics, 191,571 people graduated from U.S. schools in 2012 with advanced degrees in business, representing about one in four of all master's degrees conferred nationwide (Hann, 2014) making the MBA the most popular graduate degree in the U.S. As Hellmich (2014) stated briefly that more companies hiring new MBAs.

MBA Opens a Variety of Careers

While there are students who may be dubious when it comes to the effect of MBA programs on their career development, there were surveys and studies that clearly pointed out "MBA can help you make a career change." As reported in Graduate Management Admission Council (2016), through their MBA programs and the professional guidance provided by their business school career services office, MBA students are able to identify the job opportunities that appeal to their interests and match their individual talent and aspiration. Across all industries and job functions, 96 percent of full-time two-year MBA alumni say their degree has been professionally rewarding, and 92 percent report being satisfied with their current job. In addition thereto, data collected from more than 4,750 alumni of full-time two-year MBA programs who responded to the GMAC 2016 Alumni Perspective Survey show the versatility of their degrees – they are employed across all sectors of the economy with no more than 1 in 5 currently working in any one particular industry. The largest share of full-time two-year MBA alumni work for organizations in the products and services, technology, finance and accounting industries. In short, the job functions and employability of full-time two-year MBA alumni also vary widely.

In the recent research study conducted by Marino, et al., (2019) entitled “MBA and Career Development: A Literature Review from the Human Capital Perspective,” it discloses diametrically similar findings with that from Graduate Management Admission Council (2016). It stressed that the MBA program plays a key role in the development of managerial competencies as well as in the creation of successful professional careers in the business arena. Although it’s long time reputation, the MBA has been the object of numerous criticisms that question the value it represents to its graduate. In response to these inquiries, several researchers have focused their works in analysing the impact of the MBA on human capital, finding evidence of an important added value for the professional careers of its graduates. Gupta, A., & Bennett, S. E. (2014) stated in their research article that an MBA adds value to both MBA alumni as well as the organizations who hire them. The main source of this value is the knowledge and skills acquired while taking academic courses in the program.

Furthermore, research article by Boyatzis (2019) published in the Journal of Management Development averred that despite the growing concerns about the impact of graduate management education, few studies have documented their effect on a student’s managerial abilities. Consequently, an outcome assessment study was conducted on entering and graduating students in an MBA program. Graduate of the MBA program were found to have significantly greater level of six skills, as compared to entering students. After a thorough analysis of this research article, the results indicate that attending an MBA adds value on a number of abilities related to effective managerial performance and remarkable opportunities for development.

Having an MBA qualification is seen by many as a passport for a managerial role. As a result, the demand for Master of Business Administration (MBA) education has increased tremendously over recent years notwithstanding the significant challenges, critiques and causes of concern for MBA program. Many studies have undertaken endeavours to assess the effectiveness of various elements of higher education. The MBA degree has been shown to enable students to (a) obtain jobs, (b) earn higher salaries, and (c) succeed in subsequent job performance (Iacobucci, 2013). Attaching the MBA to your name can affect your hiring chances, your networking abilities, and your innovation skills (Mondalek & Roger, 2013).

While there are significant challenges and critiques of the MBA and causes for concern as previously mentioned, there is no doubt that MBAs have to be directly associated with results of managers’ and company significant performance. As stated in the findings and/or recommendation by Ramlall, S.J & Ramlall, D. P. (2016), business schools worldwide are continuously changing their curriculum to ensure relevance and to maintain positive results. This includes increasingly internationalizing their curriculum to address globalization, accreditation expectations, and other trends. Hurst et al, (2013) suggested that study abroad courses as one way to internationalize MBA students with invaluable experiential learning overseas.

Methods of Instruction

Concerning methods of instruction, Webber International University – Graduate Programs (<https://webber.edu/academic/graduates-programs>) focuses on the interdisciplinary nature of business practices. The programs capitalize on the faculty's ability to focus on proven traditional methods of teaching, which integrate the various facets of effective business administration. The traditional methods of instruction include course structures that develop analytical skills, which stress interdisciplinary emphasis, participation-based learning through case studies, and exposure to conceptual foundations leader to sound strategies.

The Graduate School Program of TTU will use group discussion, lecture, reporting, case study analysis, examination, field trips/exposure, field global immersion and research as methods of instruction. It should be noted though that traditional lecture and reporting are still the primary methods of teaching utilized by most of the professors in the Graduate School Program.

These professors still find the effectiveness of these methodologies because when the students report their particular topics or present a case analysis, group discussion follows among students that encourage interaction among them. Also, the preparation of reports involves research on the subject matter. That is why this method of instruction encompasses some of these teaching methodologies.

Case study analysis will also be employed by the Graduate School Program that will provide practical application for the advancement of students. Lecture will be the most common used method of instruction, where professor presents information to the student systematically in this method. This is considered the best method to use because the professor interfaces with the students by presenting segments of instruction, question the students frequently, and provides periodic summaries or logical point of development.

Some professors may not be employing all the methods of instruction particularly examination and field trips, because they are not applicable to all courses. Examinations will not be a practice among graduate school professors but rather they focus on reporting, group discussion and case analysis as basis of evaluation the comprehension of the students on the subject matter.

Moreover, Stanford Graduate School of Business (<http://www.gsb.stanford.edu/experience/learning/faculty/teaching-approach>) categorically emphasized on teaching approach that because no two students – and no two courses – are alike our educational philosophy is uniquely adaptable. Whether its group projects, hands-on labs, problem-solving sessions or lectures, graduate school faculty members select teaching

methods that best for each subject. That flexibility means you'll learn in a variety of ways, and you'll learn more effectively. In short, there is no hard and fast rule when it comes to teaching approach or method. It is contingent upon the very nature and character of courses that will be offered in Graduate School Program.

Teaching methods in MBA should be topically relevant in terms of content as well as the teaching methods used. Furthermore, in terms of content, the integral part of MBA programs should also be the development of participants' leadership competencies and their understanding of current leadership concepts. The teaching methods in MBA program should correspond to the strategy of learner-centred teaching that focuses on the participants' learning process and their active involvement in class. Research study of Jarosova, et al., (2019) showed that the respondents most valued the methods that enabled them to get feedback, activated them throughout the program and got them involved in discussions with others in class. It appears, therefore, that there are views citing the preference of MBA students for innovative teaching methods and in a variety of ways. According to Saraswat, M. (n.d.) in relation to innovative teaching; (1) the teachers adopt common methods and also aware of many innovative methods, (2) about 35-70% consider interactive methods to be effective, (3) besides a management degree, skills, knowledge of the industry are important hence involvement of students has to be maximized. Experiential learning can offer students the opportunity to develop these skills and practice discipline knowledge.

Financial Aspects

We don't have yet the percentage of revenue generated neither balance sheet nor cash flow statement as this program is still under study and for implementation. But it is worth noting that SBE may have two different programs (undergraduate and graduate level programs) which are separate and distinctive of each other. Hence, there should be a separate financial statement for each program to determine the financial performance. We could only show the accounts for expected revenue to be generated.

The actual and majority of revenue to be generated by these Graduate School Programs would come from the tuition fees followed by the miscellaneous fees then other fees collected from students.

Operating Expenses

Conversely, most of the revenues generated will answer for the personnel related expenses and other expenses that may be incurred during a certain period. Among the operating expense accounts, the salaries and wages of personnel (teaching and non-teaching staff) is expected to register the highest amount since this will include professional fees for Graduate School Professors and Lecturers.

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Comparing the expected revenue with expected operating expenses for the period will show whether the Graduate School Program is self-sustainable as far as the financial performance is concerned.

However, due to the limitations of this study such that the same has yet to be implemented, we could not provide any figure to determine the proceeds of the net income. Follow-up study may be conducted after one or two years of implementation that would include now the financial aspects.

Human Resources

A graduate program shall, if feasible, be vertically structured. The Dean of the program shall be holder of a doctorate degree. The designated graduate program coordinator shall also be a holder of a doctorate degree in any of the graduate fields offered by the University. For master's program, there shall be at least one full-time faculty who is a doctorate degree holder and at least three full-time faculty who are master's degree holders in the discipline. The number of advanced degree holders shall vary with enrolment in the graduate programs in such a manner as to allow for a load of maximum five active students per graduate faculty. However, the Graduate School Program will have part-time faculty members teaching in the graduate programs and visiting foreign professors with extensive global experience across the corporate, government and academic sectors depending upon the availability of their schedule. This may depend upon the human resource requirements prescribed by the Higher Education – Vietnam Ministry of Education and Training vis-à-vis graduate program.

Vietnam Law & Legal Forum Magazine (2020) stated that as for educational quality, all university lecturers will possess masters or higher degree, of which 35 percent will have doctor's degree. In the coming time, greater autonomy will be given to the universities; educational administration will be reformed in combination with application of effective management and supervision mechanism: the higher education will be internalized and analysis and forecasting of supply and demand of highly qualified human resources will be built.

Facilities and Equipment

Available Classrooms

The Graduate School of TTU will be situated in the ground floor of the Gillis Hall of the University. It will share classrooms with the School of Business and Economics.

The SBE MBA-Regular Program may hold classes during Tuesdays to Saturdays. Weekdays classes may be for three hours while Saturday classes may be for 10 hours from eight in the morning until six in the evening. SBE MBA-SBMP Program may hold classes only during Saturdays.

There are 8 classrooms that will be used by the Graduate School Program.

Library

School of Business and Economics has 858 titles and 1,040 volumes of books as of inventory last July 12, 2019. There are magazines/journals and newspapers subscriptions. Hence, based on the ratio of student to books the library has sufficient quality collection for all courses in the graduate school level.

Besides, the Graduate School Library will be handled by professional librarians classified as non-teaching academic staff. The library is open every Monday to Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. It may be opened during Saturdays for the graduate school program.

The quality of collection will be maintained through regular checking. The library holdings of Graduate School Program shall be maintained and improved by considering the recommendations of faculty members and library staff, national professional organizations and learned societies, and international recognized lists of books and periodicals.

Instructional Equipment Available

The instructional equipment of the University is handled by the IT Department. There are enough functional OHP and variety of instructional equipment available in IT Department for classroom instruction.

However, considering that the IT Department is closed during Saturday which most of the classes of the Graduate School Program is held, functional and video projector must be reserved in the Graduate School Office. In addition, there is a computer research laboratory equipped with internet facility available for graduate students doing research which shall be opened during Saturdays.

Research

As Policies and Standards on Graduate Education, a master's thesis is generally required for research master's programs. Evaluation of the research outputs of the student shall be done through an oral examination by a panel of examiners to be attended to may be by at least one external expert. Faculty research supervisors shall be chosen on the basis of the field of specialization.

The SBE MBA Regular Program has Thesis/Dissertation writing (6 credits) included in the curriculum which is to be orally defended before a panel of examiner.

The SBE MBA-SBMP Program has Position Paper on current issues in any field of management approved by the school to be orally defended before a panel of examiners with a representative from Vietnam Ministry of Education and Training, if it is possible and necessary. The University may provide slots for research and teaching assistantships. Research assistants may be hired for graduate faculty doing funded research.

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The University will make research programs available for students, faculty, administrators, and non-teaching staff. These research programs will offer research grants and loans depending upon the research budget to be approved. This is in keeping with the goals set forth in Prime Minister Decision 69/QD-TTg dated January 22, 2020, approving the Scheme on improvement of higher education quality during 2019-25. Modern practice centres and laboratories will be built for common use by universities. An international university complex will likewise be built to attract foreign prestigious universities for joint training and research (Vietnam Law and Legal Forum Magazine, 2020). In addition to this, Vietnam's Law on Higher Education (University Research Responsibility) which took effect in January 2013 provides legal framework for university research and the promotion of linkages between universities and industry. The master's program provides students with fundamental scientific knowledge and advanced research skills of a science or a certain profession, with the ability to work independently, creatively and the capability of detecting and solving the problems related to the trained profession.

Published and Unpublished Researches

The Graduate School Program will have researches conducted by faculty and students published in TTU Graduate School Journal, the official research journal of the Graduate School Department.

Furthermore, the Graduate School Program will also have unpublished researches. These are limited to thesis/dissertation of MBA students, Position Papers of MBA-SBMP students which are part of the academic requirements. These researches will be stored in the graduate school office and/or in the library so that other researchers may have access and use them for their future researches.

In addition, the Graduate School Program will encourage also students and faculty to conduct scholarly researches that would promote and explore new facts and knowledge on their respective field of disciplines that would contribute to the advancement of the University and its environment.

Currently, the University has TTU Review (Memorandum of TTU Review (2018) operated continuously and published periodically whose purpose is to ask TTU instructors as well as students and Deans to share their ideas and research studies, or describe their inventions in their individual areas of expertise. By doing so, TTU will earn its academic reputation, and its name will become more widely known specially in the field of research.

In World Education News Reviews (WENR), Higher Education in Vietnam (2014), the Harvard researchers highlighted "the comparative lack of articles published by Vietnamese researchers in peer-reviewed international journals" and point to the fact that "the government was awarding research funding un-competitively." This "lack of articles" may somehow contribute specially to "lack of information" showing a tremendous difference between what graduates

had learned and what prospective employers wanted them to know thereby preventing the so called mismatch. The gap between higher education and the industry has become wider and wider since the implementation of the economic liberalization policy (June (Thi Tuyet) Tran, n.d.). By analogy therefore the lack of connections between university, research institutions and the internal industry all hinder the effort of the whole system in preparing students with the necessary skills and knowledge required by the labour market.

Nguyen Van Nha, et al. (2015) explained in their research study entitled “Higher Education Reform in Vietnam: Current Situation, Challenges and Solutions” that Vietnam’s universities are largely isolated from international currents of knowledge. There is a severe lack of close links between Higher Education institutions and scientific research, businesses, industries and employers. This is further confirmed by Hoang Tuy who states: “Vietnamese university system is heavily influenced by the Soviet academic system, in which universities were primarily teaching institutions, while research was carried out by research institutes.” Recognizing this weakness of the HES and the mismatch between the HES and the industry, Vietnamese government has made a great effort to renovate the system. In 2005, an ambitious comprehensive reform of higher education aimed to have a highly competitive, international standard higher education system by 2020. This reform, named “Fundamental and Comprehensive Reform of Higher Education in Vietnam 2006 – 2020” (also known as Higher Education Reform Agenda, or HERA), was proclaimed by the Vietnamese government (June (Thi Tuyet) Tran, n.d.). Some of the major objectives stated in the HERA were to develop a curriculum that has a strong applied/professional orientation with the shift from the instructional to the learning paradigm, with special pedagogical consideration in order to meet the demand for more relevant graduate skills for the economy.

III - RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the research design and the methodology of the study. It defines and specifies the research method/s used, the population and the sampling procedures applied and the statistical instruments used. It likewise explains the quantification of variables for statistical treatment and analysis. It further explains in details how the data were gathered and how they were processed and statistically analysed, to include the description of the statistical tools used in the data analysis.

Research Method/s Used

It uses the research process of (a) description, (b) recording, (c) collection, and (d) analysis of data concerning the current status or state of the subject under study. In this case, it is the state of affair of the proposed MBA Program to be implemented by Tan Tao University.

The survey-questionnaire method was used. A survey-questionnaire was administered as the structured system of data gathering.

Population and Sampling Procedures

The main source of data for this study was derived from two (2) groups of respondents, namely, (1) the selected students of Tan Tao University, and (2) faculty members.

Population

In the case of the students, with a total of 23 students of Tan Tao University, the total population was taken as one type of group of respondents and 8 faculty members as another type of respondents. No sampling procedures were employed since the total number of 23 was small and manageable for the survey as shown in Table 3.

Research Instruments

As structured manner of data gathering, a survey questionnaire was utilized and administered to the two types and group of respondents. The questionnaire was formulated into two sets, corresponding to the two groups of respondents.

In the construction of the instrument, specific research questions were considered in relations to the research objective and/or statement of the problem. Questions were formulated and integrated in the questionnaire to elicit some background information (See Appendices A & B for the two sets of questionnaire).

Guided by the research instrument procedure that validity of the instrument warrants validity of the results, instrument was pretested, the results of which were collated. Neither major revision nor substantive correction was needed for the questionnaire. In consultation with the supervisor, the questionnaire was finalized for distribution to the respondents of the study.

Quantification of Dependents and Independent Variables

The study used a scale to measure “how much” of the variables is present. A scale is a composite measure.

On the level of readiness/effectiveness Tan Tao University to offer MBA Program vis-à-vis academic curriculum, human resources, facilities and equipment, research aspects, and opportunities for development from the perceptions of the students and faculty members, the scale used is as follows:

Mean Rating	Qualitative Equivalent
5	Strongly Agree (SA)
4	Agree (A)
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree (NAD)
2	Disagree (D)
1	Strongly Disagree (SD)

Quantitative data were obtained by determining the placement on the scale that indicates the amount of rating or the degree of presence. Quantitative data were then reported in terms of scores. High scores mean “more” of the variables is present. Low scores mean the opposite, viz., less presence of the variable.

Data Gathering Procedures

To minimize, if not eliminate, delays through the mails, questionnaires were personally delivered to the students and the faculty members. The duly accomplished questionnaires were returned to the researcher within a period of one month.

Statistical Treatment of the Data

Statistical treatment concerns itself with the identification of trends and pattern observed in the data. It allows for a description of the population under study by considering specific characteristics of interest in the research conducted.

The data were treated for the frequencies of a given attribute or a particular category in the questionnaire. As tools of descriptive analysis of weighted means, the used of percentages and ratings was applied. The mean was used to determine the typicality of the responses on the rating scales on the perception of the students and faculty members as to the level of readiness and effectiveness of Tan Tao University to offer MBA program in terms of human resource, facilities and equipment, research aspects, and opportunities for development.

IV - RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section discusses the presentation, analysis, and interpretation or implication of the data gathered from the respondents of the study, namely, (a) students of Tan Tao University, and (b) faculty members. It consists of five (5) parts or areas of discussion: 1) academic curriculum; 2) human resource; 3) facilities and equipment; 4) research aspects; and 5) opportunities for development, relative to SBE Graduate School Program as perceived by the respondents.

Perceptions on SBE Graduate School Program effectiveness

Academic Curriculum

Table 3. Academic Curriculum of TTU SBE Graduate School Program As Perceived by the Respondents

Academic Curriculum	Students		Faculty Members	
	Mean N = 23	QE	Mean N = 8	QE
1. Courses to be offered enhance the learning skills of the students.	4	A	4	A
2. Develops critical, analytical, and logical thinking among students.	5	SA	4	A
3. Endorses practical application for students' advancement.	4	A	4	A
4. Manifests awareness on the demand of the industry.	4	A	4	A
5. Provides students' exposure to the industry for better comprehension of the subject matter.	4	A	4	A
Weighted Mean	4	A	4	A

Legend: Mean Rating = Qualitative Equivalent
 5 = Strongly Agree (SA)
 4 = Agree (A)
 3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree (NAD)
 2 = Disagree (D)
 1 = Strongly Disagree (SD)

Table 3 shows the perceptions of students and faculty members on the academic curriculum of the SBE Graduate School. In general, both students and faculty members had the weighted mean of 4 on the perceptions of academic curriculum with the qualitative equivalent of *Agree*. Besides, these two groups of respondents both *'agreed'* on items pertaining to enhancement of the learning skills of students, development of critical, analytical, and logical thinking, and manifestation of awareness on the demand of the industry. This clearly signifies that the courses to be offered by the SBE Graduate School Programs boost the learning abilities and the

Analytical thought of students. The curriculum that will be offered by the Graduate School Program also shows responsiveness to the needs of the industry and keeping it with the current business practices and bestows exposure of students to the industry for better comprehension of the courses taught as perceived by the students and faculty members.

This item concerns the field trip or off-campus industry ocular visit by the students wherein they can have real experience on the industry setting. This method however may apply only to some courses offered that may need industry visit.

Table 4. Human Resources of the SBE Graduate Program as Perceived by the Respondents

Academic Curriculum	Students		Faculty Members	
	Mean N = 23	QE	Mean N = 8	QE
1. The number of Graduate School Faculty is adequate to meet the academic needs of students.	4	A	3	NAD
2. The Graduate School faculty are academically competent.	4	A	4	A
3. The faculty members possess necessary skills in teaching.	4	A	4	A
4. There are adequate administrative personnel to attend the needs of students/faculty members.	4	A	4	A
5. There are adequate library personnel to attend the needs of students/faculty members.	4	A	4	A
Weighted Mean	4	A	4	A

Legend: Mean Rating = Qualitative Equivalent
 5 = Strongly Agree (SA)
 4 = Agree (A)
 3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree (NAD)
 2 = Disagree (D)
 1 = Strongly Disagree (SD)

The perception of the respondents on the human resources of the Graduate School Program is shown in Table 4. The students and faculty respondents *agree* commonly in most of the items considered in this area. Both of the respondents acquired weighted mean of 4 equivalents to *agree*. It is worthwhile to note that students and faculty members *agreed* on the items

concerning academic competency and the teaching skills of faculty members. However, both respondents had different perceptions on the items pertaining to the adequacy of faculty to meet the academic needs of students. Faculty members are not so sure that the Graduate School Programs have the adequate number of professors that would meet the academic needs of students.

Table 5. Facilities and Equipment as Perceived by the Respondents

Facilities and Equipment	Students		Faculty Members	
	Mean N = 23	QE	Mean N = 8	QE
1. There are enough classrooms available.	5	SA	5	SA
2. The classrooms are conducive for learning.	5	SA	5	SA
3. The library is equipped with internet services used for research of students/faculty members.	4	A	4	A
4. There is adequate & updated number of reference books in the library.	4	A	4	A
5. There are sufficient subscription and updated newspapers, magazines, journals and other periodicals needed by the students/faculty members.	3	NAD	4	A
6. The library possess comfortable environment for research and study.	4	A	4	A
7. There are enough instructional equipment and audio-visual materials available.	4	A	4	A
8. There is an easy access of borrowing instructional equipment and materials.	4	A	4	A
Weighted Mean	4	A	4	A

Legend: Mean Rating = Qualitative Equivalent
 5 = Strongly Agree (SA)
 4 = Agree (A)

- 3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree (NAD)
- 2 = Disagree (D)
- 1 = Strongly Disagree (SD)

Table 5 displays the perceptions of the respondents on the facilities and equipment of the Graduate School Program. The general perceptions of respondents on this area attained a weighted mean of 4 with a qualitative value of *agree*. Both the students and faculty members *strongly agreed* on the sufficiency and conduciveness of classrooms for learning. This is because of the fact that the Graduate School Program is sharing classrooms with the School of Business and Economics and these classrooms are equipped with air conditioning units that enable conducive learning environment among faculty members and students. Besides, both respondents strongly believed that the Graduate School Program Library possesses comfortable environment for research and study. Whereas, the students were not satisfied to the number of subscriptions such as journals, newspapers, magazines, and other periodicals needed by faculty for research and reading materials.

Table 6. Research Aspect of the Graduate of the SBE Graduate School Program as Perceived by the Respondents

Research	Students		Faculty Members	
	Mean N = 23	QE	Mean N = 8	QE
1. There is a concrete program for research.	3	NAD	4	A
2. There are sufficient materials available for research.	3	NAD	4	A
3. There are adequate published researches and scholarly journals.	3	NAD	3	NAD
4. There is a research journal available for the publication of the research works of students/faculty members.	3	NAD	3	NAD
5. There are available grants that would financially assists the students/faculty members in conducting researches.	3	NAD	3	NAD
Weighted Mean	3	NAD	3	NAD

Legend: Mean Rating	=	Qualitative Equivalent
5	=	Strongly Agree (SA)
4	=	Agree (A)
3	=	Neither Agree nor Disagree (NAD)
2	=	Disagree (D)
1	=	Strongly Disagree (SD)

Based on Table 6, both students and faculty respondents generally *neither agrees nor disagrees* on the items considered in this area. This area achieved a weighted means of 3 equivalent to *neither agree nor disagree* on the rating scale. The faculty members had a common perception with the students and *neither agrees nor disagrees* on the items concerning adequacy of published researches, research journal for publication of researches, and research grants available for funding of researches. However, faculty members and students have different perceptions when it comes to the existence of concrete research program and sufficiency of materials available for research with qualitative value of *agree* and *neither agree nor disagree*, respectively. This is because the Graduate School Program has yet to launch Graduate School Journal that would publish scholarly researches of students. So, the students may be not be aware whether there is a concrete program for research.

Table 7. Opportunities for Development as perceived by the Respondents

Prospects	Students			Faculty Members		
	Frequency N = 23	%	Rank	Frequency N = 8	%	Rank
1. MOET – Vietnam Accreditation.	16	69%	1	7	87%	1
2. Uplift the academic standards of the SBE – TTU.	15	65%	2	5	62%	3
3. Increase the number of enrolees.	12	52%	4	5	62%	3
4. Sustainability of the Graduate School Program.	13	56%	3	3	37%	4
5. Partnership with the international academic business program.	15	65%	2	6	75%	2
6. Linkages with the other agencies and institution.	15	65%	2	6	75%	2
7. ISO accreditation.	11	49%	5	2	25%	5

Table 7 presents the opportunities for development of the Graduate School Programs as perceived by the respondents. Both the students and faculty members regarded MOET Accreditation as the main opportunity for development for the Graduate School Program as deemed by 69 percent and 87 percent of students and faculty respondents, respectively. The respondents perceived that the Graduate School Program being accredited possesses academic excellence. Then, everything will follow into it such as to enhance academic integrity and standard, increase the number of enrolees, and the sustainability of the Graduate School Program.

Other opportunities for development considered by the respondents are the partnership with other international academic programs, linkages with other agencies and institutions, and a possible ISO Accreditation. Partnership with other international academic programs such as the graduate school of business in the United Kingdom and the United States that will have sharing of expertise and enable the Graduate School Program to update its programs with the

international academic community. Moreover, the administrative personnel also considered the linkages with other agencies and institution in offering off-campus classes.

The TTU Graduate School Program can also look into a “modular, blended or hybrid online program” which is now the trend in the international academic community. This is specially designed for working professionals who do not wish to interrupt their careers while pursuing MBA degree. Research study conducted by Rydzewski, Eastman & Bocchi (2010) about the “Important Characteristics in an MBA Program: The Perceptions of Online MBA Students” focused on availability, program quality, program length, cost and courses in the curriculum. The results suggest that the importance of characteristics in a MBA programs falls into three tiers. The most important characteristics is availability. The next tier of importance is quality, program length and cost. Another study entitled “Lessons From Launching an Online MBA program” conducted by Michael Hergert of San Diego State University clearly emphasized that online MBA program was intended to complement the wide variety of on-campus program in the College. A successful online program should create synergy (or at least peacefully coexist) with traditional offerings. This can only occur if the online program has credibility with faculty, serves students needs, and has financial viability.

Applying for other accrediting agencies could also be an opportunity for development of the Graduate School Program such as European Council for Business Education (ECBE) Accreditation and the International Organization for Standardization (ISO Certification). Hence, as cited by the Open University in its qualification leaflet (MBA), it claimed that with AACSB, EQUIS and AMBA recognition, the Open University Business School is the largest triple accredited MBA provider in the world. This guarantees our reputation as a global top-tier provider of management education and places the OUBS in the top 1% global business school (<http://www.openuniversity.edu/sites/www.openuniversity.edu/files/brochures/F61MBAO.pdf>. - September 2013).

VI - CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This section deals with the presentation of the findings, and the conclusions, as well as recommendations, of the study.

Conclusion

The study came up with the findings based on the responses of the respondents’ students and faculty members. In the light of the foregoing findings, the following conclusion is hereby drawn:

The SBE Proposed Graduate School Program of Tan Tao University conforms to the minimum requirement of Vietnam Ministry of Education and Training defined in the standards specific to the field of business. Accordingly, the Graduate School Program abide to the minimum requirement on research set by MOET – Higher Education and the TTU has research program

also available for students and faculty members. In addition thereto, lecture and reporting are still the primary methods of teaching utilized by most of the professors in Graduate School Program. The Graduate School of TTU will be sharing classrooms with the School of Economics and Business Administration. Furthermore, the Graduate School Program library has sufficient quality collection for all courses in the graduate school level. However, the Graduate School Program has no pool or line up of faculty members for the two different programs. Beside that the students perceived that while the faculty members are academically competent the same need to update necessary skills in teaching. The students likewise perceived that the programs provide practical/industry exposure to students.

Recommendations

With due consideration of the foregoing findings and the conclusion drawn from the findings, this study recommends the following:

Academic Curriculum

1. Periodically evaluate the academic curriculum.
Once these programs are implemented, the Graduate School of TTU should periodically update every other year the academic curriculum of the two programs (MBA-Regular & MBA-SBMP Programs).
2. Participation of students and faculty members in the review of academic curriculum.
There should be a participation of faculty members and students in the committee of evaluation and revision of academic curriculum of Graduate School Program.

Human Resources

1. Training and seminars on the use of innovative teaching techniques for the Graduate School faculty.
The HRD or SBE should design and develop trainings on the use of innovative teaching techniques for Graduate School Faculty. In this way, they could improve their instructional skills and update their methods of instruction.
2. Update 201 files yearly in the HRD Department.
The academic personnel of Graduate School Program should update their 201 files at least once a year in the HRD Department for evaluation of their rank and level.
3. Separate full-time faculty members in each of the graduate program.
Each program of the Graduate School Program (MBA-Regular & MBA-SBMP) should have a separate line up of faculty members because each program is distinct from each other.

Facilities and Equipment

1. Active participation of faculty members in recommending the acquisition of quality library holdings.

The active participation of faculty members in recommending the acquisition of library holdings should be continued and encouraged in order to have valuable and quality library materials for research.

2. Provisions for regular updating, general care and upkeep of library materials and bibliography tools.

There should be provisions for regular updating, general care and upkeep of library materials and bibliographical tools in order to have proper guidelines.

3. Standard on the maximization of Library usage.

The Graduate School Library should have a standard or scale on the maximization of library usage in order to determine whether to increase or decrease the library operations hours. This standard can determine if the number of students using the library is maximized on certain period.

4. Additional video projectors reserved in the Graduate School Office.

There should be additional and functional video projector reserved in the Graduate School Office for students and faculty usage in their classes. These instructional media equipment should be maximized by the students because they are paying for these.

5. Encouraged students to use advanced technology instructional media equipment.

The faculty members should encourage the use of advanced technology instructional media equipment in classroom discussion. These equipment can facilitate better learning and understanding among students and faculty members.

6. Computer notebook for classroom use.

There should be computer notebook available for usage of students and faculty members in classroom discussions.

Research

1. Encourage students and faculty members to undertake research in their field of specialization.

The Graduate School Program should have program that will encourage students and faculty members to undertake research in their field of specialization. These researches would promote and explore new facts and knowledge on their respective disciplines and also academic disciplines contributory for the advancement of the University aside from the Thesis, Position Paper, and Dissertation.

2. Linkage between SBE Graduate School Program and other research centers.

The Graduate School Program should promote linkages with other research centers for sharing of resources in promoting a culture of research.

3. Orient the Graduate School Program faculty members and students about the research programs of the University.

The SBE and/or the Office of Scientific Research should orient the faculty members and students of Graduate School Program about the research programs of the TTU. In this

way, they will be aware on the existence of research grants and loans available in the University.

4. Published the Graduate School Journal quarterly or bi-annually.
The Graduate School Journal should be published quarterly or semi-annually in order to have a venue for the publication of researches conducted by the students and faculty members.
5. Inventory of unpublished researches.
There should be an inventory of unpublished researches in order to determine the exact figures for recording purposes.

Opportunities for Development

1. Promote off-campus classes.
The Graduate School Program should promote off-campus classes through tie up with other agencies and institution. The program may be introduced in several government agencies and/or big private companies. To intensify information campaign, lecture series, seminars, and other worthwhile projects for the graduate school will be necessary and suggested. These would also boost the enrolment of Graduate School Program.
2. Prioritize the application for MOET Accreditation.
The Graduate School Program should prioritize and speed up the application for MOET Accreditation and get accredited so that academic standards for Graduate School Program will be uplifted.
3. Consider the application for other academic accrediting agency.
The Graduate School Program should also consider application for other academic accrediting agencies such as European Council for Business Education (ECBE) and the International Organization for Standardization (ISO Certification).
4. Partnership with other international academic programs.
The Graduate School Program should consider partnership program with other international academic programs such as the graduate school of business in the United States and the United Kingdom. This partnership will have sharing of expertise and resources in order for the Graduate School Program to update its programs with the international community.
5. Offer distant/online and blended education.
The Graduate School Program can also look into a “modular, distant/online and blended education program” which is now the trend in the international community.

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