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# LICENSURE EXAMINATION PERFORMANCE OF NORMAL SCHOOLS IN THE PHILIPPINES: IMPLICATIONS FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICIES.

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## ABSTRACT

As the world becomes more globalized and education is increasingly internationalized, genuine quality assurance (QA) mechanism seems to be the new password to educational excellence. This paper primarily attempts to examine the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) performance and accreditation status of ten (10) Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) that constitute the National Network of Normal Schools (3NS) in the Philippines. The study employed a documentary analysis and descriptive-quantitative research design of the data collected from the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) and Commission on Higher Education (CHED). Results of the data analyses provide an empirical evidence of the impact of institutional and program-based accreditation on the licensure performance. TEIs with Level IV accreditation status generally performed better in the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) as compared to TEIs with the lower level status of institutional accreditation. Moreover, curricular programs of TEIs identified as Center of Excellence (COE) and Center of Development (COD) demonstrated varying levels and inconsistent performance trends. Results offer valuable insights to the governmental regulating body, TEIs, educational reformers, and policymakers of the crucial importance of QA to educational quality. Thus, challenge them to continually search for new paths to educational quality in an interconnected society.

**Keywords:** Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs), National Network of Normal Schools (3NS), Board Licensure Examination for Professional Teachers (LET), Normal school, Quality assurance (QA), Licensure performance

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The aphorism that “[t]here is nothing more constant than change,” is true of education. All over the globe universities have been driven to internationalize higher education (HE) in an attempt to reach beyond the national border. Meanwhile, the Philippine higher education system still struggles with quality and quality assurance mechanism seems to have only a marginal impact as reflected in the licensure examination performance of Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) and world university ranking. Efforts to improve quality education in HE has been one of the priority areas of the government. Major structural reforms and substantive change have been introduced over the past few decades to address the continuous decline of higher education in the country. Since the creation of the Philippine Association for Teacher Educators (PAFTE) in 1966, it has been committed to promoting quality teacher education programs. One mechanism that PAFTE adopted was through the partnership with different governmental agencies and even forging international linkages and collaborative endeavors with neighboring countries that would bring positive impact to educational quality.

Moreover, it has been playing a vital role in the development of a quality assurance framework, refinement of quality assurance (QA) instruments, monitoring, and evaluation of TEIs.

Leveraging the role of TEIs in bringing quality education across all levels of the educational system of the country, it has also been empowered to introduce numerous educational reforms. More recently, the country's premier TEIs together with the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) launched the National Network of Normal Schools (3NS) that aims to produce competent teachers. The member institutions include Philippine Normal University (PNU) as the primary implementer of the various programs of the 3NS with 9 other original normal schools which are Cebu Normal University (CNU), Leyte Normal University (LNU), Palawan State University (PSU) Pangasinan State University (PSU), West Visayas State University (WVSU) Bukidnon State University (BSU), Bicol University (BU) Mariano Marcos State University (MMSU) and Western Mindanao State University (WMSU). One of the programs birthed by the 3NS is the so-called Normalite, a Local Erasmus Mundus Program that aims to provide an avenue for member schools to exchange the best academic practices, research expertise and forge strong collaborative academic endeavors. This inter-institutional partnership is in response to Southeast Asia's plan for regionalization of higher education particularly teacher education.

QA is a construct and practice that primarily aims to improve quality and through utilization of standards and benchmarks against which evidence of performance is going to be gauged (Ishimine, et al, 2009). Church (1998) opined that quality assurance does not just merely determine standard and quality control in order to evaluate but it also seeks to develop mechanisms, procedure, and processes to make sure that desired outcome is assessed and met. In the Philippine context, accreditation is voluntary in nature rather than a prescribed one. It is perceived as a process by which HEIs independently evaluate its programs offering, in whole or in part, and seeks an independent judgment to confirm that it substantially attains its goals and objectives, and is generally parallel in quality to comparable HEIs in the country.

Recognizing accreditation as a key to quality in HE in the country, QA has been one of the priority areas of CHED. It has been constantly monitoring HEIs and more and more TEIs have responded to the call of improving the quality of teacher education programs particularly the original normal schools. To date, a substantial number of TEIs have voluntarily submitted for programs and institutional accreditation to governmental accrediting agencies such as the Philippine Accrediting Association of Colleges and Universities (PAASCU) and accrediting Agency of Chartered College and University in the Philippines (AACCUP). These two accrediting agencies are under the umbrella of Federation of the Accrediting Agency of the Philippine (FAAP) and member of Philippine Association of State Universities and Colleges (PASUC). The QA systems in the country are consistent with the constitutional mandate that is "...to establish and maintain a complete, adequate and integrated system of education relevant to the goals of national development." (Education Act of 1982).

In the Philippines, aside from quality assurance compliance of HEIs, the performance in the licensure examination of their graduates given by the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) is considered as a parameter for determining educational quality. It is important to note that this governmental agency is promulgated to strengthen the regulation and supervision of the teaching profession as stipulated in the Republic Act 7836, an Act to Strengthen the Regulation and Supervision of the Practice of the Teaching Profession in the Philippines and Prescribing for Licensure Examination for Teacher and for Other Purposes (<http://www.chanrobles.com/republicactno7836.htm#wLktrm-GPtQ>). It is also otherwise known as Philippine Teachers Professionalisation Act of 1994. One of the strategies that are being implemented by the PRC particularly on the monitoring of HEIs licensure performance that is congruent with this mandate is to make licensure results available through print media and website posting. Despite numerous reforms and educational initiatives introduced by TEIs to improve quality in HE, quality seems to be an insurmountable issue. The studies have shown that Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) performance of TEIs have been continuously declining over the past years. In a survey conducted by the Philippine Business Education (PBED), a non-profit organisation that envisions to introduce sustained advocacies on educational reforms in the various aspects of the Philippine educational systems, it lamented that the average passing percentage for first-timers and repeaters in the Licensure Examination for Teachers from 2009-2013 was only 29% in the elementary and 34% in the secondary respectively. It further added that out 1,025 TEIs, 537 elementary schools were poor performing from 2009-2014. The same is true for the secondary, a total of 774 poor performing schools out of 1,259 TEIs. ([http://www.pbbed.ph/sites/default/files/LET%202014%20Update\\_0.pdf](http://www.pbbed.ph/sites/default/files/LET%202014%20Update_0.pdf)). Verola et. al (2010) study on the best and worst performing schools in terms of licensure passing confirmed the survey outcomes of PBED. They found out that the passing rate for secondary was 58% while only 28% for the elementary teachers from different HEIs in the country. In a recent LET given by the PRC last 2014, according to PBED, there is an improved passing performance in the LET. However, it noted that the 1,200 TEIs data survey showed that 50% of their graduates do not make it to the LET (<https://www.thesummitexpress.com/2015/02/2014-teacher-education-let-top-and-worst-performing-schools.html>). These study surveys paint a bleak picture of the perennial issues on quality instruction in HE particularly TEIs system and a definitive analysis study of the current deterioration of the TEIs needs to be conducted. Moreover, the above survey outcomes imply a herculean job by those who are directly involved in the monitoring and evaluation of TEIs specifically, Commission on Higher Education, the Philippine Regulations Commission, the Technical Panel for Teacher Education and the

This study stems from the hypothesis that an examination of accreditation status and licensure performance of TEIs would be of crucial importance as the country anticipates for the ASEAN 2015 integration and its plan for regionalization of HE in the region. The present investigation primarily examines the institutional and program-based accreditation of premier TEIs that constitutes the National Network of Normal Schools in the Philippines. It also delved into TEIs licensure performance trends in the past 5 years from 2010-2014 in order to provide empirical evidence of QA impact on LET performance. The study findings would aid policy makers, curriculum planners, education reformers, curricularist in their continuous quest for achieving quality teacher education programs by redefining QA. Moreover, future researchers and educators research works on QA study can be anchored on the current study results.

## 2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND AIMS

Given that QA and policy redirection are the keys to educational excellence, this paper primarily aims to examine the:

1. Institutional accreditation level of the normal schools;
2. Status of accredited programs of Normal schools as Center of Development (COD) and Center of Excellence (COE);
3. Licensure performance trends of normal schools vis-a-vis program-based and institutional mechanism accreditation;

## 3. BRIEF LITERATURE REVIEW

### History of the Normal Schools

A few numbers of normals school in the Philippines were established in the first decade of the American Colonization Period by the Thomasites. This normal school was created to primarily produce teachers who would become teachers in the public school systems. The first normal school was the Philippine Normal School established in 1900, now Philippine Normal University (PNU) in Manila. In 1901 a year after PNU was created Cebu Normal Schools now Cebu Normal University was installed as a branch of the normal school in the Visayas Region. This was followed by the establishment of Ilo-Ilo Normal School in 1902 now a comprehensive university known as West Visayas State University (WVSU). In subsequent years, these normal schools spread to other provinces together with other HEIs offering teacher education programs. To date, there is a total of 1,025 elementary and 1,259 secondary TEIs in the Philippine. As to the ownership, 50% are Private Non-Sectarian (PNS), 30% are state-funded, these are State Colleges and Universities (SUCs), 15% are Private Sectarian (PS) while 5% are considered as local colleges and universities (LCU). These institutions of higher learning offering teacher education programs are also popularly known as Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) in the country.

### Quality Assurance Mechanism of HEIs in the Philippines

While the country assumes the pivotal role of QA system in promoting and ensuring quality HE, the government thus exercises regulatory power over HEIs through CHED that is empowered to oversee from the setting of national standards to monitoring and evaluation, as well as compliance set by this governmental regulating body. This inherent function over all other HEIs is clearly elucidated in R.A 722 or otherwise known as "Higher Education Act of 1994" ([https://www.lawphil.net/statutes/repacts/ra1994/ra\\_7722\\_1994.html](https://www.lawphil.net/statutes/repacts/ra1994/ra_7722_1994.html)). Its function includes granting recognition and incentives and imposing sanctions such as the diminution or withdrawal of subsidy, downgrading or withdrawal of accreditation, program termination or school closure. This function is expedient for the continued development of HE in the country. AACUP is another governmental accrediting regulating body and is a member of Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges, and Universities (PAASCU) whose function is to accredit curricular programs of state-funded HEIs. Clearly, it is the government-controlled supervision and public monitoring of the quality assurance procedures and standards that prevail in the Philippines (AACUP 2014).

There are only two kinds of quality assurance system prevailing in the Philippines. The first is the program-based mechanism that includes CHED authority to grant permit licensing and recognition, CHED standard setting, accreditation, international certification, international benchmarking, international certification such as APEC Registry and Washington Accord. Another program-based mechanism is the CHED designation to TEIs curricular programs as of COE and COD. COE is granted to tertiary State Colleges and Universities (SUCs) that demonstrate excellence on the four-fold functions of the university in the areas of instructions, research, extension, and linkages while for HEIs that particularly show potentials to become COE are granted with COD. The designation as COE or COD entitles the institution to some grants and benefits like prioritization in the CHED selection of institutional partners with regards to developmental factors and entitled to other non-monetary subsidies and awards such as faculty scholarship and research grants (CHED Memorandum Order Number 24, Series 2010). There is also the so-called leveling of SUCs characterized by voluntary in nature to be conducted by Federation of Accrediting Agencies of the Philippines (FAAP) and the National Network for Quality Assurance Agency (NNQAA) according to their accomplishment and compliance with the recommendations issued by the accrediting body. The second is an institutional mechanism which includes CHED Institutional Monitoring and Evaluation for Quality Assurance (IQuAME), autonomous and deregulated status for HEIs and Institutional accreditation by PAASCU.

Accreditation procedures involve a dual step, self-study by the institution and an on-site visit is followed by quality assurance experts. The results of the various process of assessment are forwarded to FAAP for further evaluation and whether compliance of the requirement meets standards and quality. Periodic external review by the accrediting body is conducted to ensure that the institutions maintain quality. SUCs are leveled according to their accomplishment and compliance with the recommendations issued by the accrediting body. SUCs with higher accreditation level enjoys institutional autonomy and receive higher annual government funding.

In the context of teacher education institution, programs, curricular framework, assessment, learning resources, sustainable faculty development programs, and even school milieu are the areas that are revisited more often to find out whether such program is aligned with the expectations of stakeholders and consistent with national standards. At the institutional level, there are as well commitment efforts towards ensuring educational quality through internal quality assurance mechanism and practices that are recently being implemented such as international linkages with universities in the Asia Pacific Region, research partnership with universities, membership in professional organizations, and international associations, faculty exchange programs are among the most common approaches. These internal quality control initiatives aim to uplift the quality of the country's SUCs outcomes and in order to catch up with Asian neighbors.

### **Challenges, Direction and Current Developments of QA in the Philippines**

Original normal schools are mature TEIs in the Philippines that remains to be the best training institutions for future teachers. Thus, they have been spurred to carry out the vision of producing quality teacher education graduates. With the ASEAN 2015, Integration TEIs face an "avalanche of challenges" as the ASEAN Region is beginning to develop a regional QA model for HE. Indeed, the borderless global arena for HE among ASEAN members demands HEIs align learning outcomes with ASEAN vision and establish both internal quality control and external quality assurance to meet the demand of the changing time.

Harmonization and globalization of HE system around the world have resulted in a paradigm shift in the way universities operate. For instance, in the Southeast Asia universities are now driven to regionalize teacher education programs. In the Philippines, current developments in QA mechanism has been influenced by major structural reforms in HE typology and regionalization of teacher education. To mention, inter-university collaboration and partnership of TEIs among ASEAN neighbors (e.g Cambodia, Indonesia, Thailand, Laos, Vietnam, Singapore, Myanmar, Malaysia, and the Philippines) was ventured and the The Association of Southeast Asian Teacher Education Network (AsTEN) membered by premier teacher education institutions is a network of premier TEIs in the Asian Region established through the initiative of the country's premier normal school, Philippine Normal University. This network is pursuing collaborative partnerships that will result in greater cooperation and understanding among regional members through education. AsTEN addresses issues such as challenges, developments, and issues in teacher preparation practices, and other relevant teacher preparation policies in the ASEAN Region in order to address them while it aims to increase internationalization of TEIS (<http://www.pnu.edu.ph/association-of-southeast-asian-teacher-education-network-holds-second-meeting-on-24-april-2015-at-bayleaf-hotel-manila-philippines/>). There are also local partnerships that are being undertaken by TEIs. For example, the Local Erasmus Mundus program adopted by the National Network of Normal Schools from the European model has offered avenues for the exchange of best practices on pre-service teacher preparation among 3NS members. Currently, TEIs have been engaging in collaborative efforts to achieve an educational quality of teacher education graduates in the country through student exchange in student teaching internship phase. Best practices in coaching and mentoring are provided while students are immersed in a diverse culture of a particular region. Plans for inter-university faculty exchange are being finalized, as well as having the program expanded by accepting and sending pre-service teachers outside the country. These developments are in response to the ASEAN integration where all ASEAN members anticipate for higher mobility of students and teachers. While it is true that quality assurance mechanism of the country is voluntary in nature and involves the governmental approach to accreditation system, there is a more compelling demand to develop new mechanisms, frameworks, and practices on QA as the country awaits for the cross-border mobility of higher education in Southeast Asia.

## **4. RESEARCH METHOD**

The study involved ten (10) Teacher Education Institutions that constitute the National Network of Normal Schools originally established as Teacher Training Institution for the public school system with the Philippine Normal University, Manila (PNU) as the lead school of the 3NS various educational reforms and projects. The TEIs included in this study survey was: Cebu Normal University, Cebu City (CNU), Leyte Normal University, Tacloban City (LNU), Pangasinan State University, Bayambang (PSU), Mariano Marcos State University, Loag (MMSU), Palawan State University, Puerto Princessa (PSU), West Visayas State University, Lapaz (WVSU), Bukidnon State University, Malaybalay (BSU), Western Mindanao State University, Zamboanga City (WMSU), Bicol University, Legazpi (BU). The selection of normal schools from other TEIs in the country as the subject of the study is anchored on the premise of their role as the premier TEIs and their contribution to the country's developments in the various level of the Philippine educational system. Moreover, their long existence has resulted in a good number of normal schools having their programs accredited by the governmental regulating body and professional organizations. Utilising the data on LET results of the past five years (2010-2014) from the PRC and accreditation status of SUCs obtained from CHED, a documentary analysis, and quantitative-descriptive design were employed. Licensure performance of normal schools was based on the first time taker. As to the

program accreditation, the data was based on the 2013 issuance by the CHED while the institutional was obtained from the status granted by the commission.

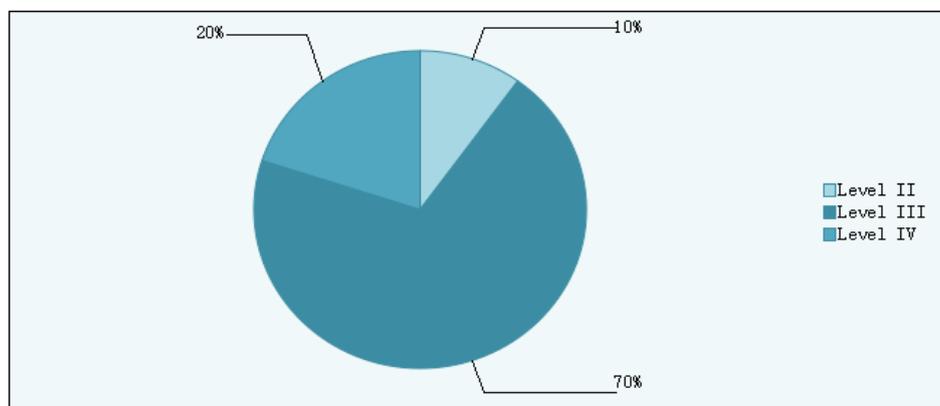
### 5. RESULTS

#### Status of institutional and program accreditation of normal schools in the Philippines

Given that previous studies have mounted positive impact of QA on the various aspect of the university from organizational outcomes, school milieu, students learning to the employability of the graduates. The current study examined both institutional and program-based accreditation vis-a-vis licensure performance of normal schools. The succeeding figures present the major findings of the study.

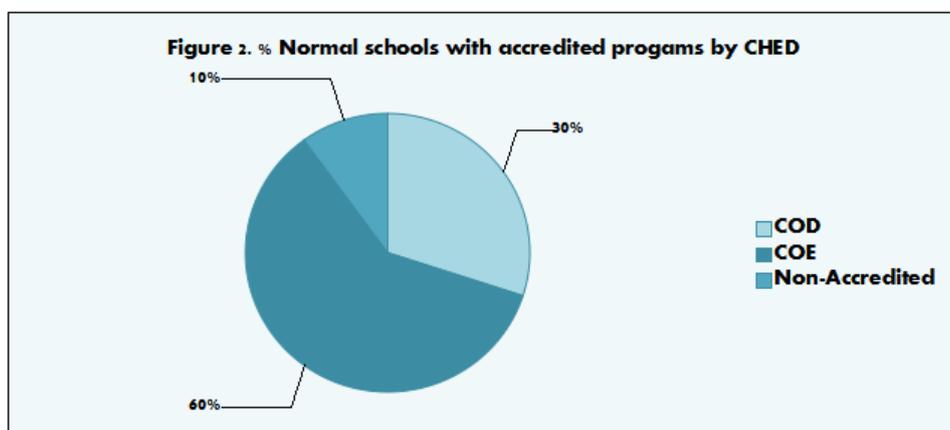
Figure 1 shows the level of the institutional accreditation status of normal schools across all teacher education programs that include Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSEd) and Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEED). Of the ten members of the National Network of Normal schools, n=1 or 10% is level II accredited, n=7 or 70% is level III and n=2 or 20% is level IV accredited status.

**Figure 1.** Percentage of normal schools with institutional



The granting of COE and COD to HEIs is consistent with the pertinent provision of Republic Act 722 otherwise known as the “Higher Education Act of 1994” ([https://www.lawphil.net/statutes/repacts/ra1994/ra\\_7722\\_1994.html](https://www.lawphil.net/statutes/repacts/ra1994/ra_7722_1994.html)). (Designation of COD and COE is an indicator of quality programs of HEIs granted by the Commission on Higher Education. Figure 2 indicates the number of normal schools granted with COE and COD. Among the ten original normal schools (60%; n=6) are currently designated as COE. While (30%; n=3) are identified as COD and there is only (10%; n=1) are not designated either as COE or COD. The substantial number of COE and COD designated schools could be explained by the level of their accreditation status which is beyond the accreditation status that is Level II set by the TPTE and the AACCUP standards in order to be granted with such recognition.

**Figure 2.** Percentage of normal schools with institutional accreditation with program-based accreditation



### LET performance of normal school with institutional accreditation

The subsequent section presents the institutional passing percentage of the first timer in the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) in both teacher education programs BEED and BSED in the past 5 years from 2010-2014.

### LET performance of Level IV accredited normal schools

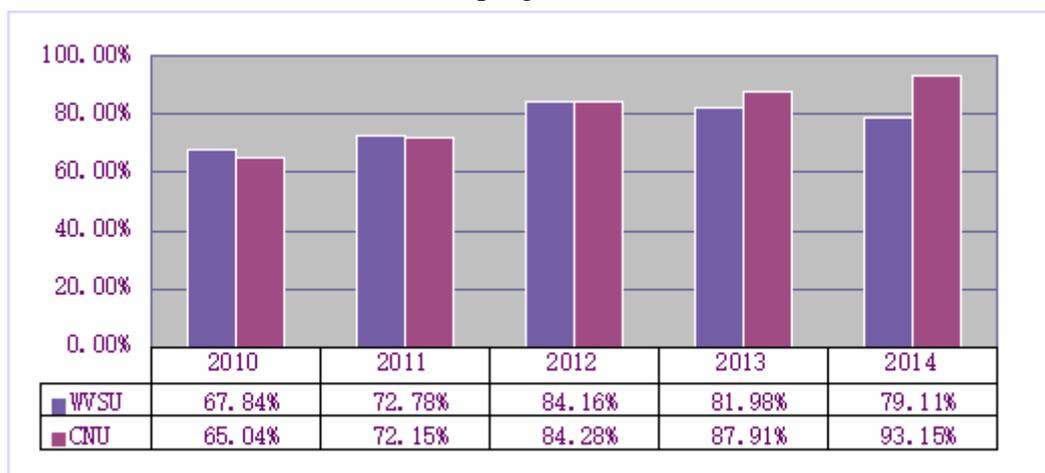
It can be gleaned from Figure 3a that the performance of Level IV accredited normal schools in the for Bachelor of Elementary Education is described as “high” for most of the TEIs have maintained above 60% passing percentage during the past five years. Specifically, West Visayas State University indicated (71.01%, 94.12%, 100%, 96.59%, and 99%) respectively which is a bit higher as compared to the performance of Cebu Normal University (62.99, 79.75%, 95.72%, 84.95% and 91.80) respectively. It can be seen from the figure that the two normal schools had recorded the highest passing percentage in 2012.

**Figure 3a** LET performance of normal school with Level IV ACCUP accreditation in the BEED program



In terms of performance of Level IV accredited normal schools in the Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSEd) still had maintained a 60% passing percentage for the past 5 years. It can be noticed that Cebu Normal University had a remarkable performance (65.04, 72.15%, 84.28%, 87.91%) with rising performance rating and recorded the highest passing in 2014 with (93.15%), while West Visayas State University had (67.84%, 72.78%, 84.16%, and 81.98% respectively during the last 4 years, however, declined in 2014 with a passing rate of ( 79.11% ). It can be observed that WVSU had a declining performance passing during the past 2 years.

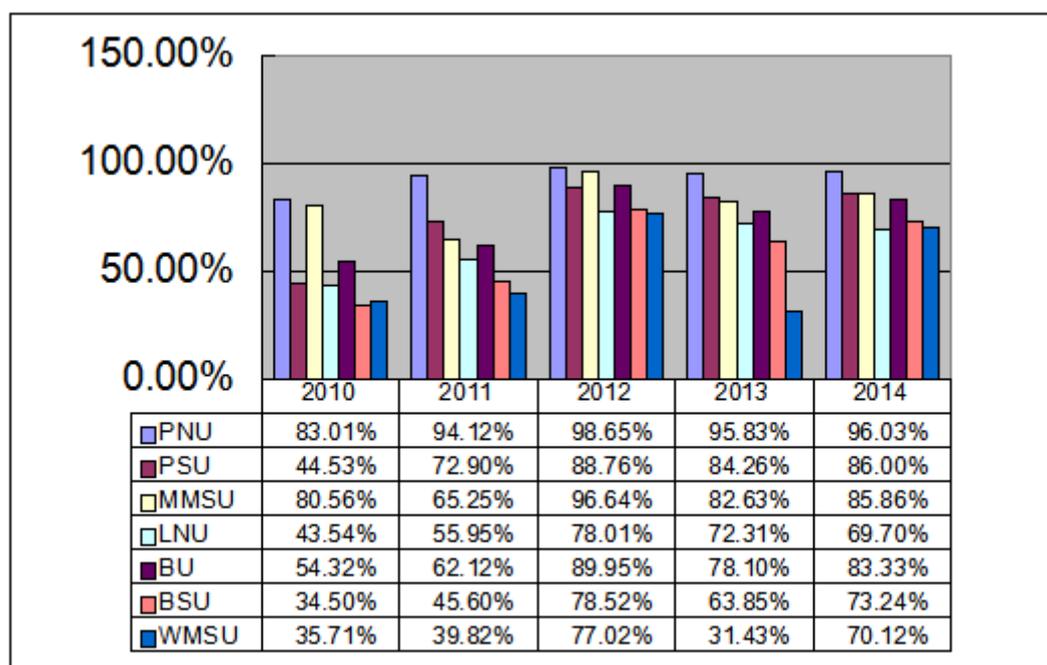
**Figure 3b** LET Performance of normal school with Level IV AACUP accreditation in the BSED program



### LET performance of Level III accredited normal schools

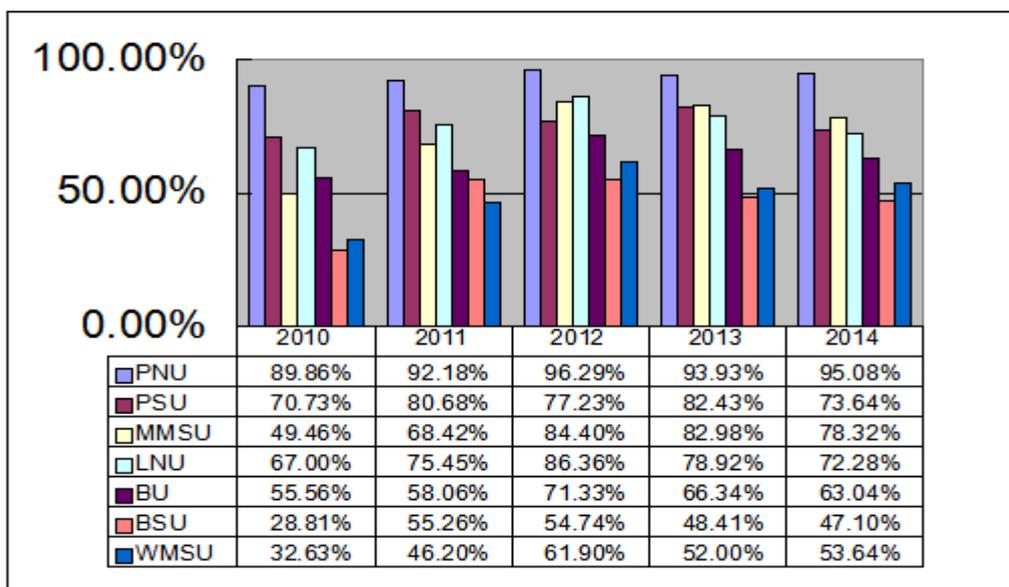
As gleaned from Figure 4a normal schools with “very high” passing percentage are Philippine Normal University (83.01%, 94.12%, 98.65% 95.83% and 96.03%) respectively which is characterized by increasing in terms of passing performance for the past 5 years. This followed by Mariano Marcos State University, with a fluctuating performance passing percentage (80.56%, 65.25%, 96.64%, 82.63%, 85.86%) but still within the passing standard of the country. It recorded the highest passing in 2012 ( 96.64%). Palawan State University obtained below the national passing standard passing in 2010 (44.53%) and had the highest performance passing in 2012 (88.76%). Bicol University had demonstrated increased passing performance (54.32%, 62.12%, and 89.95%) respectively. It declined its performance in 2013 with (78.10% and was able to regain with 83.33%) passing percentage in 2014. Normal schools with inconsistent performance were Leyte Normal University, (43.54%, 55.95%, 78.01%, 72.31%, 69.70%) respectively. This is followed by Bukidnon State University, with rising performance for the past 3 years, (34.50%, 45.60%, 78.52%, 63.85%, 73.24% respectively. Also Western Mindanao State University, (35.71%, 39.82%, 77.02%, 31.43% 70.12% respectively. It can be observed from the figure that level III accredited normal schools had “high” performance in 2012 wherein they obtained beyond the national passing percentage standard which is 60% and in 2014. As reflected in the graph normal schools had a “distressing” performance in 2010 where the majority of them recorded below the national passing percentage standard.

**Figure 4a** LET Performance of normal school with Level III AACUP accreditation in the BEED program



As to the Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSEd) program, the performance of Level III accredited normal schools, obtained a consistent rating that is above the national passing percentage. The Philippine Normal University, the country’s National Center for Teacher Training yielded “very high” passing percentage (89.86%, 92.18%, 96.29%, 93.93% and 95.08%) respectively. Palawan State University also demonstrated consistent passing above the national passing percentage, (70.73%, 80.68%, 77.23%, 82.43%, and 73.64%) respectively. Mariano Marcos State University had declining performance during the last two years, (49.64%, 68.42%, 84.40%, 82.98%, 78.32% ) respectively. The same with Leyte Normal University (67.00%, 75.45%, 86.36%, 78.92% and 72.28%) respectively. While Bicol University had obtained the national passing percentage during the last 3 years, (55.56%, 58.06%, 71.33%, 66.34%, and 63.04%) respectively. Western Mindanao State University with only 2012 to achieve the national passing percentage 61.90% while the rest of the school year (32.63%, 46.20%, 52.00% and 53.64%) were below the national passing rate. While Bukidnon State University recorded below the national passing percentage for the past 5 years, (28.81%, 55.26%, 54.74%, 48.41% and 47.10%) respectively indicating 2010 with the lowest passing rate.

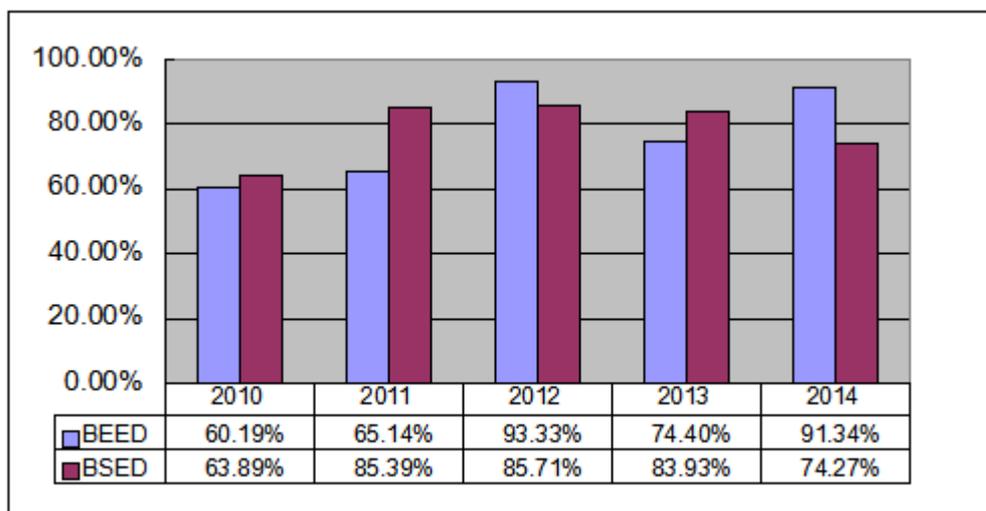
**Figure 4b** LET Performance of normal school with Level III AACCUP accreditation in the BSED program



Of the 10 sampled normal schools, only 1 had Level II accreditation by the ACCUP. It can be shown from the figure that both of its teacher education programs had a passing percentage that meets the national standard which is 60%. The passing percentage in the Bachelor of Elementary Education from 2010-2014 were (60.19%, 65.14%, 93.33%, 74.40%, and 91.34%) respectively. While in the Bachelor of Secondary Education, (63.89%, 85.39%, 85.71%, 83.93%, and 74.27%) respectively. It can be noted that the university had the highest passing percentage 2012 (93.33) for BEED and 85.71 for BSED in that same year.

**LET performance of Level II accredited normal schools**

**Figure 5** LET performance of normal school with Level II AACCUP accreditation in the BEED and BSED program



**LET performance of normal school with program accreditation**

The preceding figure presents the normal schools' performance that is program accredited by the Commission on Higher Education as Center of Excellence (COE) and Center of Development (COD) in teacher education programs of their respective region. It can be reflected from Figure 5a that COE designated normal schools in terms of BEED passing performance, an overwhelming number of normal schools had obtained beyond the national passing percentage. The two COE normal schools with very high passing percentage were Philippine Normal University, (83.01%, 94.12%, 98.65%, 95.83% and 96.03%) respectively. This was followed by WestVisayas State University, (71.01%, 94.12%, 100%, 96.59% and 99%) respectively. Mariano Marcos State University had 80%

passing above 80.56%, 96.94% 82.63%, 85.86% except in 2011 only (66.25%). Palawan State University had below the national passing percentage in 2010 ( 44.53%) however garnered above the national passing in the succeeding years, (72.9%, 88.76%, 84.26%, 86%.) Bicol University, had a fluctuating performance trend (54.32%, 62.12%, 89.95%, 78.1% and 83.33%) respectively. While Leyte Normal University had a declining performance trend during the last 2 years (43.54%, 55.95%, 78.01%, 72.31%, and 69.7%) respectively. It can be reflected from the figure that COE normal schools garnered high passing in 2012 and mostly declined in 2013.

**Figure 6a** COE normal schools’ performance in the BEED program

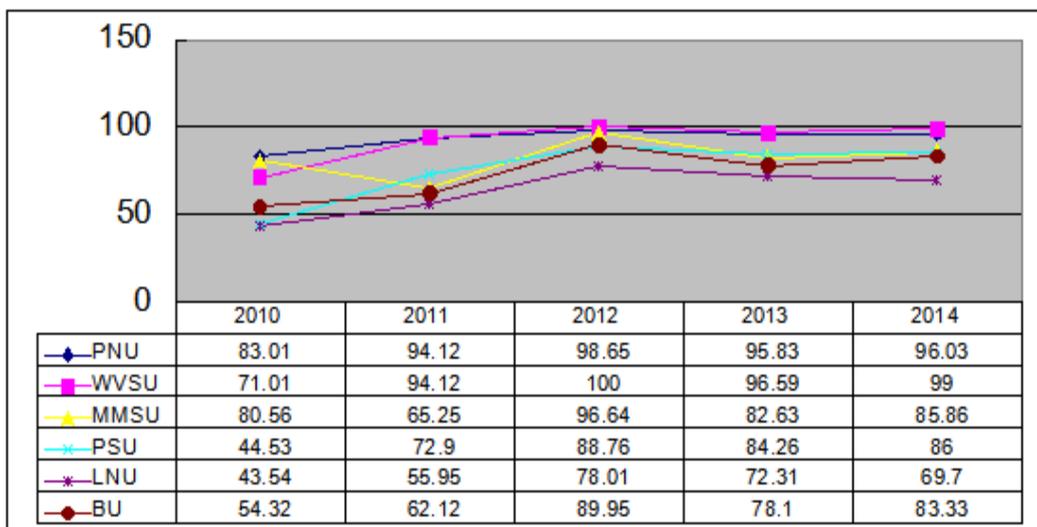
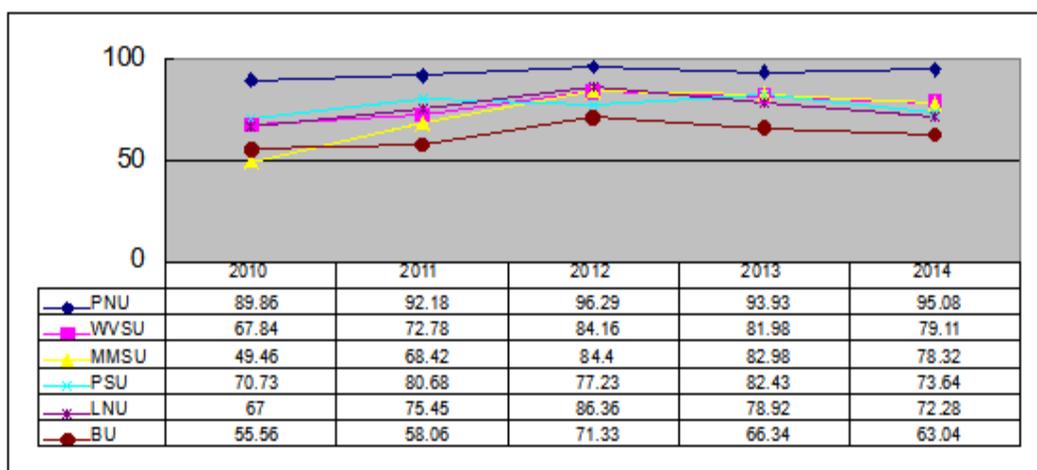


Figure 6b presents the COE normal schools’ performance in the BSED program. The Philippine Normal University still outperformed other normal schools with a passing percentage that is exemplary that is beyond the national passing standard (89.86%, 92.18%, 96.29%, 93.93%, and 95.08%) respectively. This is followed by West Visayas State University (67.84%, 72.78%, 84.16%, 81.98%, 79.11%), Mariano Marcos State University failed to reached the national passing standard in 2010 (49.46%, 68.42%, 84.4%, 82.98%, and 78.32%) respectively. Palawan State University, with maintained national passing standard (70.73%, 80.68%, 77.23%, 82.43%, 73.64% respectively), Leyte Normal University consistently demonstrated above the national passing rate which is 60%, consistent with the national passing standard (67%, 75.45%, 86.36% 78.92%, and 72.28%) respectively. Finally, Bicol University with the least passing percentage among the normal school identified as COE (55.56%, 58.06, 71.33%, 66.34%, 63.04%) respectively. It can be noted that all normal schools had improved performance in 2012 and majority as well had dwindled down their performance in terms of passing in 2013 and 2014.

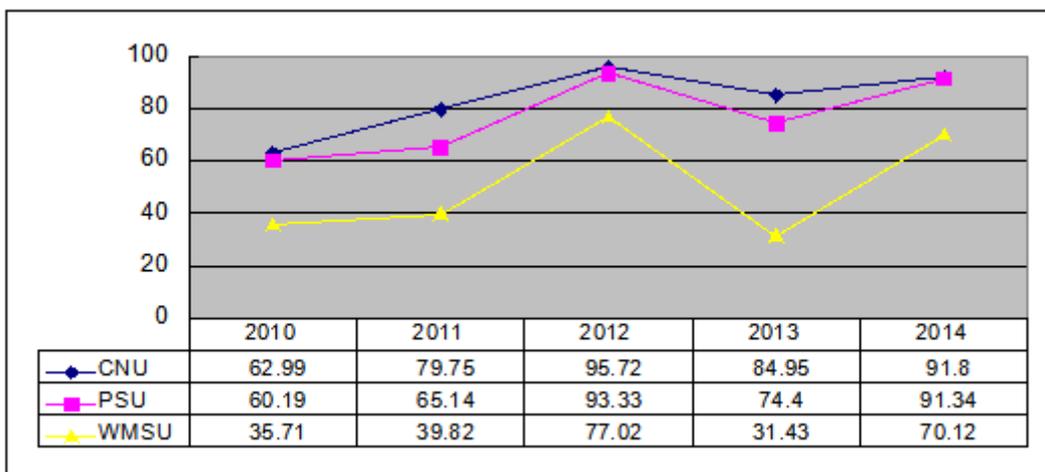
**Figure 6b** COE normal schools’ performance in the BSED program



It can be shown from the Figure 7a that of the 3 normal schools designated as COD for BEED 2 had demonstrated above the national passing percentage standard while 1 had for the firsttwo years below the national passing standard. It can be shown

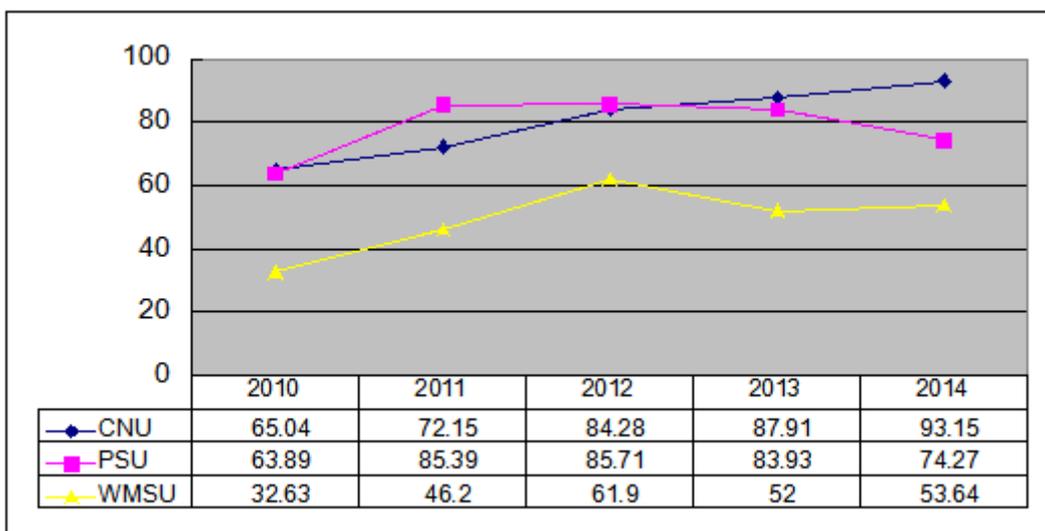
from the graph that of the 3 COD normal schools, Cebu Normal University performs better ( 62.99%, 79.75%, 75.72%, 84.95%, and 91.8% ) respectively. This was followed by Palawan State University, ( 60.19%, 65.14%, 93.33%, 74.4%, and 91.34%) respectively. Western Mindanao State University was the least performing of the 3 COD normal schools ( 36.71%, 39.82%, 77.02%, 31.43%, and 70.12%) respectively. They seemed to had their high performance passing in 2012. Cebu Normal University had 95.72%, Pangasinan State University had 93.33% and Western Mindanao State University with 77.02%.

**Figure 7a** COD normal schools’ performance in the BEED program



It can be noticed that of the 3b COD normal schools, their performance trends vary in the BSED program. Cebu Normal University had an upward trend ( 65.04%, 72.15%, 84.28%, 87.91%, 93.15%) respectively. It obtained the highest passing percentage in 2014 with 93.15%. While the two other premier normal schools, Pangasinan State University (63.89%, 85.39%, 85.71%, 83.93%, and 74.27%) and Western Mindanao State University (32.63%, 46.2%, 61.9%, 52%, and 53.64% ) respectively had a declining performance trend in the past 2 years.

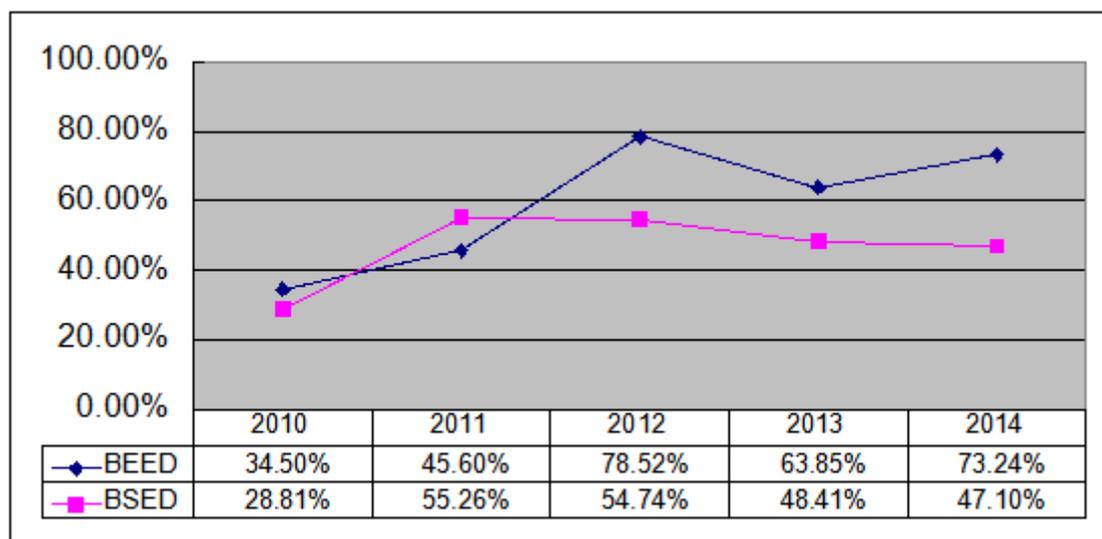
**Figure 7b** COD normal schools’ performance in the BSED program



**Performance trends of non-program accredited normal schools in the LET**

It can be seen from the figure that performance passing of the two programs of the non-accredited norma school, BEED (34.50%, 45.60%, 78.52%, 63.85%, and 73.24%) respectively performs better as compared with the BSED programs (28.81%, 55.26%, 54.74%, 48.41%, and 47.10%) respectively. It is observed that the BSED performance passing rate was consistently below the national passing for the past five years while in the BEED only in 2010 (35.50%) and 2011 (45.60%) respectively.

**Figure 8.** Performance of non-accredited normal school in the BEED and BSED programs



## 6. DISCUSSION

This study tried to examine the performance of normal schools that constitute the National Network of Normal Schools (3NS) in the LET vis-a-vis their level of institutional and program-based accreditation in the past five years from 2010- 2014. This study hopes to aid education reformers, policymakers and QA experts in crafting policies that would address the country’s perennial issue on the continuous declining quality in higher education.

### Institutional and program-based accreditation status of normal schools

The study found out that of the ten normal schools in the Philippines involved in this study, **an** overwhelming number of normal schools are Level III re-accredited (70%; N=7), Level IV accredited (20%; N=2) and Level I (10% N=1). As to the program-based accreditation, there are (60%; N=5) Center of Excellence and (30%; N=3) is Center of Development while only (10% N=1) do not have program-based accreditation. The greater number of TEIs with above the minimum level of the national standards on accreditation status reflects government strong command and stance over TEIs compliance on the quality assurance system in the country. On the contrary, the 10% normal school without institutional accreditation through QA in the country is something viewed as voluntary in nature, should not just be ignored by the government. It is therefore suggested that governmental regulating body together with CHED look into the cause of such reluctance of the university to QA system in order to develop an early intervention scheme and priority programs to prepare non-accredited TEI for preliminary accreditation and thus, contribute to the country’s quest for quality teacher education programs. The result indicating Level IV accredited status of the majority of TEIs may be interpreted to mean that these normal schools can shape the landscape of teacher education programs by internationalizing their curricular offering to serve as a model for the rest for Higher Education Institutions that offer teacher education programs. As hinted in the study of Balagtas et. al, (2012) nine dimensions of internationalization of higher education in the Philippines are identified which are curriculum and instruction, facilities and support systems, and academic standards and quality were dimensions that could be internationalized in the teacher education programs. While it’s true that universities from developing countries are trying to internationalise their higher education at the same time preserving their national cultures, internationalisation of higher education may not be an entirely new reality in the Philippine HE as there has been a noticeable presence of foreign students in both public and private HEIs across different regions in the country. However, this gradual development has also confronted them with enormous challenges as student and faculty mobility, institutional partnership and network are becoming embedded into the university culture that demands QA framework and mechanism that is not only consistent with the national standards but also conforms with that of international setting and standards. From this, normal schools with Level IV accredited status should, therefore, pursue quality assurance that goes beyond the country’s boundary because from the angle of globalization and internationalization in higher education, quality is expedient for global competitiveness.

### LET performance of normal schools vis-a-vis institutional and program-based accreditation

The result indicated that Level IV accredited and a majority of Level III re-accredited normal schools demonstrated a high-performance trend in the past five years. This result could be explained by the intensified admission and retention policy being implemented by the institution. This could also be attributed to the long existence of these normal schools in the country with an already strong internal quality assurance system. In contrast, a majority of normal schools with Level I-III re-accredited and with

accredited program recognized as COE and COD is striking with low licensure examination performance. The study also found out that normal schools had relatively better performance in the BEED program as compared to the BSED. Moreover, a substantial number of COE and COD identified normal schools demonstrated a fluctuating trend in their licensure performance. Since the data indicate a not rosy scenario for teacher education licensure performance, a governmental regulating body should re-examine accredited curricular programs offerings of TEIs and push for new forms of internal quality assurance efforts. A step worth taking as this will shun a culture of mediocrity in the tertiary education system. More specifically, premier normal schools like Philippine Normal University, Cebu Normal University and West Visayas State University where excellence has been normal should take active role in shaping the internal quality assurance practices of TEIs with very bad licensure performance in order for those TEIs that are struggling in achieving quality are collectively endeavored and thus impacting effective quality assurance mechanism and national policies that facilitate optimal learning outcomes for all the students. While it is true that quality assurance does not just merely end in creating quality teacher education programs, it also demands a systematic intervention and monitoring activities and support programs that are parallel with the national policies. The findings could have implications on QA policy re-formulation by the CHED and TPTE that would be critical to the establishment of relevant quality assurance framework, system, and mechanism. By doing so, this will not only uplift the quality of higher education more particularly teacher education programs but ensure the country as well with a continuing stream of strong and highly competent prospective 21st century teachers.

The low passing performance of a few premier TEIs could be attributed to the long-standing issue on small public funding and continues cut back from the national government that results to inadequate access to capacity-building for teaching staff, inadequate school facilities, and poor students services. Not unless the government would start to consider investing in higher education as one of the priority areas in the Philippine educational system, the dismal performance will remain a perennial problem. Highly developed and industrialized countries such as Japan, Singapore, Hong Kong, Australia, Canada, and the Republic of Korea have proven that higher investment by their national government in higher education have resulted in a globally competitive and world class graduates. The European universities' experience also echoed the same growing impact of national government prioritization on higher education. On the other hand, the substantial number of TEIs demonstrating dismal performance offer a huge challenge and are prompting CHED and QA regulating body to create new internal QA scheme and policy redirection. For instance, a more strict monitoring of internal quality assurance practices, mechanism and strategies for COE and COD identified TEIs could be developed to make sure that TEIs granted with such recognition meet and maintain the national standards. This is an important move because it will not only bring a substantive and a constructive change in the Philippine higher education system but ensure quality teacher education programs. Normal schools are government funded institutions for higher learning, therefore should make sure that government investment does not just go to waste. It must endeavor that organizational outcomes meet the national standards through explorative effort.

## 7. CONCLUSION AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Quality assurance has been proven to have a profound impact on the many facets of higher education. The current study disclosed that normal schools in the Philippines are highly engrossed with QA effort as evidenced by a substantial number having institutional and program-based accreditation. In addition, study findings have mounted empirical evidence of the pivotal role of QA in licensure performance of TEIs. Normal schools (e.g Philippine Normal University, Cebu Normal University, and West Visayas State University) established by the Thomasites during the American Colonization illustrated exemplary performance in the licensure examination. Interestingly, there are TEIs with institutional accreditation and designated COE and COD that demonstrated a dismal national passing standard in the licensure examination in the past five years. This result is conclusive of Philippine Business Education study survey that the average passing percentage for first-timers and repeaters in the Licensure Examination for Teachers from 2009-2013 in the elementary was only 29% and 34% in the secondary. In particular, out of 1,025 TEIs, 534 schools were poor performing in the elementary while a total of 774 out of 1,259 in the secondary ([http://www.pbed.ph/sites/default/files/LET%202014%20Update\\_0.pdf](http://www.pbed.ph/sites/default/files/LET%202014%20Update_0.pdf)). The result suggest for a well-deserved attention and investigation that would look into the extent of compliance of TEIs to strict admission and retention policy of low performing TEIs and the SUCs capability to offer Staff Development Programs (SDP) for the faculty as these could be the possible culprit of such low licensure performance of the majority of TEIs. More specifically, a study that would delve into the gaps on the QA framework, system, mechanism and implementation, procedure and instruments as the results imply an enduring issue that is embedded in the QA practices that can only be unraveled through a collective effort by governmental regulating body and stakeholders of the university. The study findings also suggest for a policy redirection that will create an inter-institutional quality assurance mechanism for TEIs supported by governmental accreditation body and professional organizations. Such quality assurance effort will result in a culture of shared responsibility, accountability, and excellence in teacher education in the country.

Globalisation and internationalization in HE have shifted universities their traditional way of operation, their vision, and what they intend their future graduates to become. In Southeast Asia, there is a recent move to regionalize HE which is consistent with ASEAN Integration 2015 that intends to form an ASEAN Community. In this emerging context, more and more universities across the region are now driven to produce not only world-class graduates but capable of contributing to the development of the region. Quality is therefore inevitable for HEIs to survive in a more competitive and highly knowledge-driven society. It is believed that the dynamism of the country's commitment to ensuring quality higher education programs could be demonstrated by the extent to which governmental regulatory body and TEIs stakeholder' extent of involvement in the development of a more relevant monitoring

and evaluation scheme. It is therefore recommended that government agencies and QA regulatory body revisit quality assurance framework specifically on the curriculum, learning standards, learning environment, human resources, program management and implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. Moreover, to bring about quality HE, it is imperative that a closer stance is made to TEIs. And because quality assurance is every normal school's social responsibility, it should endeavor to continually put new effort on institutional and internal quality assurance practices. Specifically to develop an embedded internal QA scheme where institutional accountability and student learning are emphasized in the model. This would not only empower HEIs to introduce mechanism strategies that aim to improve institutional outcomes but would also absolutely transform universities to become key drivers in the pursuit of quality where initiatives, intervention scheme, and educational programs are developed and where enduring issues and gaps on quality and QA are addressed. Finally, for the national government to not only ensure access to underprivileged and deserving students but more importantly to shift from classical policy practice on funding for public HEIs into a policy model that is equitable, proactive and transparent. With the current practice of national government on allocating subsidy and funding for State Colleges and Universities anchored on QA system, quality will remain an unresolved issue in the Philippine HE.

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