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Examining the Factors of Licensure Examination for Teachers Performance for Program Strategy Enhancement

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Abstract – *Passing the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) has been the ultimate focus of tertiary education institutions in the Philippines to meet the present demand of local and global parties and communities. Hence, various strategies are conducted to increase the likelihood that the prospect will happen. With this, the current study determines the predictors of LET performance of the 146 Bachelor of Secondary Education graduates that could serve as basis for enhancing program strategies for a better LET rating. A descriptive correlational method through the analysis of registration data on LET, grade weighted average, college admission test (CAT) scores, and course audit scores was conducted. Descriptive statistics and correlational tests were employed in the analysis of these data. Results showed that low LET performance is influenced by low performances in academics and admission test, and limited course audit units taken. Admission test performance, however, does not predict LET performance in Major. On the other hand, course audit performance can only forecast licensure exam scores in Major. Hence, to increase LET performance, the program should consider benchmarking from LET performing institutions, choose the right faculty to teach a course, secure the validity and/or reliability of instructional materials and assessment tools with LET competencies, strictly implement the admission and retention policy, and assess regularly the efficacy of the course audit in all areas.*

Keywords –*Licensure Examination for Agriculturists (LEA), College Admission Test, Course Audit, Academic Performance*

INTRODUCTION

The Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) is one of the measures of quality education among teacher education institutions in the Philippines [1]. LET performance is a determinant of teachers' competent and safe job performance. It is a significant criterion in the awarding of Center of Development (COD) and Center of Excellence (COE) by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) to Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) curricular programs. Hence, HEIs are compelled and reinforced to strive and demonstrate excellence in the licensure examination.

Usually, teachers are regarded job-ready after passing the LET since effectiveness and efficiency are both the focus of the examination. On the one hand, effectiveness or teachers' knowledge and understanding of their specialization and general contents, is measured in the Major exam and General Education exam, respectively. On the other hand, efficiency (the teachers' pedagogical knowledge and skills) is being assessed in the Professional Education area. Acquiring these competencies, however, necessitates that the examinees should obtain an average rating of at least 75% without a rating below 50% in any of these three mentioned examination areas.

The Bachelor of Secondary Education program of the Isabela State University, San Mariano Campus in the Philippines produces LET examinees. As such, it adopts various strategies to facilitate the passing of these examinees in the LET. Firstly, it only admits enrolling students who can score satisfactorily in the college admission test. Secondly, it strictly relies on the result of the battery test for incoming second year students to determine whether or not they are qualified to enter a higher level of learning in their chosen course. Thirdly, the program screens students with low general average. Lastly, it conducts course audit courses which serve as a review for the licensure examination. However, despite these interventions,

there are still many graduates who cannot pass the LET; hence this study.

This study examines the areas that contributed to the graduates' LET performance. Specifically, it determines the performances of the graduates in the academe, admission test, and course audit, to analyze whether or not these factors significantly predicted their LET scores.

According to several research, college academic performance influences licensure exam performance [2]-[8]. Such emphasizes the importance of the delivery of the curriculum to the students, which implies that commitment to effective and efficient instruction to facilitate students' academic achievement should be observed among all faculty members. Likewise, this finding suggests that educational institutions should focus all their programs on student outcomes and discontinue or minimize programs unnecessary for the LET. Moreover, the graduates' performance as they enter the institution may be associated with both their performances in college and LET. According to Pascua and Navalta [8] and Soriano [4], admission test performance can be used to forecast LET achievement. However, schools have to secure and sustain the predictive validity of the admission test to gather immediately an assessment of what the enrollees can do later in the LET. Further, Visco [1] posed that licensure examination review also has a significant influence on LET which means that exposure to in-house review or course audit courses is also an essential preparation for taking the LET. On the other hand, institutions are bound to provide a comprehensive course audit for their students.

According to Shewart's Theory of Prediction, factors can also be predictors of a criterion and may be utilized to partly explain the latter (as cited in [9]). In this regard, the performances of graduates in academics, admission test, and course audit can also be used to forecast their LET scores.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study is intended to analyze the graduates' academic achievement, admission test scores, and course audit performance whether these significantly influenced their LET performance.

METHODS

Correlational research design was utilized through analysis of the extent to which the graduates' performances in their academics, admission test, and course audit courses influenced their licensure examination performance. The research subjects were fresh graduates-first takers of the campus in the LET to measure more validly the impact of the campus services on their LET performance. In this regard, only 135 LET takers were identified. Data on LET ratings were taken from PRC Manila, Philippines upon the approval of the PRC chairperson. College Admission Test (CAT), Transcript of Records (TOR), and course audit scores were obtained from the Office of Student Affairs and Services (OSAS), registrar's office, and Office of Academic and Related Affairs, respectively, after the approval of the campus administrator. The graduates' average LET performance (during their first attempt) was interpreted as Passed if 75 and above and Failed if 74 and below. Similarly, their GWA in General Education, Professional Education and Major were computed and converted into percentage, and then interpreted based on the following standards:

Grade/GWA	Percentage	Remarks
1.25	96.00	Very Satisfactory
1.50	93.00	Satisfactory
1.75	90.00	Fairly Satisfactory
2.00	87.00	Good
2.25	84.00	Fairly Good
2.50	81.00	Fair
2.75	77.50	Below Fair
3.00	75.00	Passed

Frequency and Percent were used to analyze their CAT scores after these were categorized based on the following remarks: 1 – 20: Unsatisfactory; 21 – 30: Unsatisfactory; 31 – 40: Slightly Satisfactory; 41 – 50: Moderately Satisfactory; 51 – 60: Moderately Satisfactory; 61 – 70: Satisfactory; 71 – 80: Satisfactory; 81 – 90: Very Satisfactory.

Mean was also utilized in gauging course audit scores whose results were interpreted similarly to the standard used for the Licensure Examination. Correlation analysis through Pearson-r was conducted to test the association of the LET scores with the scores in academics, college admission, and course audit whose results were interpreted based on Cohen's [12] interpretation as shown in the following: 0.10 - 0.29: Small/ Weak; 0.30 - 0.49: Medium/ Moderate; 0.50 – 1.0: Large/ Strong.

Further, Coefficient of Determination (R^2) was used to reveal how much variances in their licensure examination scores are explained by each of the three

factors: academic achievement, CAT scores, and course audit performance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1.The Campus Ratings for Fresh Graduate-First Takers

Year		Passed		Failed	
	N	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*
2010	9	0	0.00	9	100.00
2011	13	2	15.38	11	84.62
2012	16	6	37.50	10	62.50
2013	32	23	71.88	9	28.12
2014	34	18	52.94	16	47.06
2015	31	19	61.29	12	38.71
Overall	135	68	50.37	67	49.63

The campus has improved tremendously its LET ratings starting year 2013. About 62% fresh graduate-first takers passed the LET from this year to 2015. Based on the current analysis of finduniversity [10], 52% of first takers in the past four years passed the LET. Hence, it is implied that almost all of the examinees who passed the examination are fresh graduate-first takers which simply means that the institution can have higher LET rating when it requires every education graduate to immediately take his LET upon graduation.

Table 2. The Graduates' Average LET Performance

Areas	*M*	*SD*	Remarks
General Education	73.31	7.94	Failed
Prof. Education	73.10	8.60	Failed
Major	70.24	8.63	Failed
GWA	71.88	7.35	Failed

Table 2 shows that the examinees performed below satisfactory in LET. Specifically, they obtained the lowest rating in their major ($M = 70.24$; $SD = 8.63$) while they had almost similar higher scores in General Education ($M = 73.31$; $SD = 7.94$) and Professional Education ($M = 73.10$; $SD = 8.60$). This result suggests the need to do more interventions to increase their LET scores most especially in their major.

Table 3. The Graduates' Academic Performances

Areas	*M*	*SD*	**Remarks**
General Education	85.93	3.59	Fairly Good
Prof. Education	85.40	3.54	Fairly Good
Major	85.09	3.14	Fairly Good
GWA	**85.47**	**2.81**	**Fairly Good**

Table 3 shows that the respondents have a fairly good academic performance across the three areas: General Education, Professional Education, and Major.

Table 4. Correlation between GWA and LET scores

Area	*r*	*p*	*Interpretation*
General Education	.50	.00	Large
Prof. Education	.41	.00	Medium
Major	.40	.00	Medium
GWA	.46	.00	Medium

Table 4 reveals that the respondents' academic performance and LET performance in General Education have a positive and large correlation ($r = .50$; $p < .001$) while positive and moderate correlation only for the other two areas, Professional Education ($r = .41$; $p < .001$) and Major ($r = .40$; $p < .001$).

Their academic performance, in general, has a positive and moderate significant impact on their LET performance ($r = .46$; $p < .001$) which confirms that the examinees who have higher GWA scored higher in LET. This result is parallel to the claims of several researchers [3],[5],[7],[14] that academic performance is a good predictor of licensure exam performance.

Table 5. The Graduates' CAT Performance

Score	Remarks	*F*	*%*
21 – 30	Unsatisfactory	5	3.70
31 – 40	Slightly Satisfactory	39	28.89
41 – 50	Moderately Satisfactory	56	41.48
51 – 60	Moderately Satisfactory	21	15.56
61 – 70	Satisfactory	11	8.15
71 – 80	Satisfactory	3	2.22
Mean Score (45.95) Moderately Satisfactory		N = 135	100.00

Table 5 shows that performance of the majority (67.41%) of respondents in a 100-item admission test is at least moderately satisfactory. Hence, as a whole, they had moderately satisfactory CAT performance.

Moreover, the respondents' CAT performance has a positive and moderate significant correlation with their LET performance in General Education, $r = .48$, $p < .001$, and Professional Education, $r = .46$, $p < .001$ (see Table 6). This means that the higher their CAT performance, the higher also their LET scores are in these areas. On the other hand, there is a weak although significant correlation between their CAT scores and LET Major scores ($r = .44$; $p < .001$) which confirms that the CAT instrument has a weak predictive validity in this area of LET.

Table 6. Correlation of CAT Scores and LET Scores

Area	r	p	Remarks
General Education	.48	.00	Medium
Prof. Education	.46	.00	Medium
Major	.28	.00	Small
GWA	**.44**	**.00**	**Medium**

In general, the respondents' performances in CAT and LET have a positive and moderate significant correlation ($r = .44$; $p< .001$) which means that the examinees who scored higher in the CAT also scored higher in the LET. This shows that the admission test can serve as basis for determining LET performance in General Education and Professional Education. Such coincides with the finding of Pascua and Navalta [8] and Soriano [4] that admission performance is significantly related to LET performance.

Table 7. The Graduates' Course Audit Performances

Areas	M	SD	Remarks
Gen. Education	57.07	10.66	Failed
Prof. Education	81.06	7.12	Passed
Major	81.12	3.88	Passed
GWA	76.28	4.46	Passed

Table 7 revealed that they failed their course audit in General Education ($M = 57.07$; $SD = 10.66$) which declined their general course audit rating down to 76.28, a low passing score.

Table 8 Correlation between Scores in Course Audit and LET

Area	r	p	Remarks
General Education	.153	.428	Small
Professional Education	.010	.960	Small
Major	.43*	.02	Moderate
GWA	.244	.202	Small

*Note. N = 29; two-tailed; * means significant at .05 level*

Table 8 shows the relationship between the scores of the respondents in course audit and LET. There was a weak correlation between these two variables ($r = .244$; $p = .202$) since their course audit scores had shared only 5.95% on their LET scores. Specifically, their course audit scores in General Education ($r = .153$; $p = .428$) and Professional Education ($r = .010$; $p = .96$) had a weak and not significant correlation which means that course audit reviews in these areas did not significantly influence their LET performance. On the other hand, a moderate positive correlation was revealed between their course audit scores and LET scores in Major ($r = .43$; $p =.02$). Course audit scores, in this regard, explained 18.49% of the variances of their LET scores which means that higher course audit scores in this area are associated with higher LET

scores. This finding emphasizes that course audit review and licensure examination are not significantly associated with all aspects of the licensure examination and the licensure exam as a whole. It somehow refutes the findings of Visco [1] that licensure exam review is a good predictor of licensure examination. On the other hand, it coincides to some degree with the assertion of Pachejo and Allaga [13] that good performance during college cannot guarantee a good performance in the licensure exam. However, the current study proves that course audit performance can predict LET performance in Major which reflects the practice that most of the time, the review for licensure examination focuses only on students' specialization.

Moreover, analysis of variance was conducted to investigate the impact of the course audit units on the respondents' LET performance (see Table 9). The result revealed that there were highly significant differences in their LET scores when they were grouped according to the course audit units they had taken ($F = 13.86$; $p< .001$).

Table 9. Effect of Course Audit Units on LET Scores

Course Audit Units	M	SD	F
2 units	63.71	3.60	13.86***
3 units	67.21	8.24	
6 units	75.16	4.60	
12 units	73.48	6.67	

*Note. *** means significant at .001 level*

Post hoc analysis using Tukey HSD revealed that respondents with six-unit and twelve-unit course audit performed significantly higher than those who took only two-unit or three-unit course audit. This finding implies that time for reviewing courses is a significant factor of LET performance. Hence, education graduates can perform better in the licensure exam when they have more expanded time opportunity to review their courses.

Table 10. Post Hoc Analysis (using Tukey HSD) on the Effect of Course Audit Units on LET performance

(I) Course Audit Units	(J) Course Audit Units	Mean Difference (I – J)
2 units	3 units	-3.50
	6 units	-11.45***
	12 units	-9.77***
3 units	6 units	-7.96***
	12 units	-6.28***
6 units	12 units	1.68

Note. *** means significant at .001 level

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study employs correlational research design to analyse whether the graduates' performances in academics, admission test, and course audit significantly predicted their LET performance. These graduates, in general, had below satisfactory LET ratings. Results revealed that such performance is influenced by academic performance, admission test performance, course audit performance, and course audit units taken. Academic performance is a good predictor of LET performance. However, the graduates low college general weighted averages (GWA) associates with their low LET scores. Hence, students with high academic achievement are likely to achieve high in LET. Consequently, it is of importance that teachers ascertain their students are achieving high in their academic courses. Moreover, the graduates' low CAT performance is associated with their low LET performance in General Education and Professional Education but not in Major, since the admission test could not forecast their abilities in Major. Thus, enrolees excelling in the CAT can probably excel in LET under General Education and Professional Education but not necessarily in Major. Also, course audit performance impacts LET performance but only in Major which means that the course audit conducted in General Education and Professional Education did not significantly influenced LET performance. Hence, in-house LET review sometimes may not influence the examinees' LET performance in all areas. Most of the time, the review focused on students' specialization which increases its significance on the same area of the licensure examination. Similarly, graduates exposed to six– and twelve – unit course audit significantly achieve higher LET scores than those who took only two– or three–unit which implies that increase of time for course audit results to higher LET ratings. Hence, to increase LET performance, the program should consider benchmarking from LET performing institutions, choose the right faculty to teach a course, secure the validity and/or reliability of instructional materials and assessment tools with LET competencies, strictly implement the admission and retention policy, and assess regularly the efficacy of the course audit in all areas.

LIMITATIONS

The research design, itself, weakens the internal validity of the findings because prediction studies are subject to various factors where some are not really controlled. The study, however, has no choice but to pursue a correlation design since taking the LET cannot be experimental. Likewise, there were very few empirical observations for course audit which might have affected its relationship with licensure examination.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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