Academic Achievement as Predictor of Licensure Examination Performance of Elementary Education Graduates

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Abstract: *The Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) is regarded as one important measure of the quality of training provided by colleges and universities to prospective teachers. This has led to the conduct of researches aimed at identifying the factors that may predict the LET performance of the graduates. This study is particularly focused on analyzing the academic performance of the 232 BEED graduates from the Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology, San Isidro Campus from 2016 to 2018. It used the descriptive-correlational research design, with the graduates' LET results and permanent record as data. The results revealed a no significant correlation between the graduates' academic achievement and their LET performance.*

Keywords: Academic achievement, predictor, LET

1.Introduction

The Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) is regarded as one important measure of the quality of training provided by colleges and universities to prospective teachers. Republic Act 7836, otherwise known as the "Philippine Teachers Professionalization Act of 1994, " emphasized the importance of the passing of the licensure examination as a pivotal standard for prospective teachers to qualify as professional teachers.

Moreover, the Department of Education (DepEd) has highlighted the significance of passing the licensure examination by making it a requirement for entry in the public schools in the country through the Department Order 7, s.2015. With this, the pressure for education graduates to pass the licensure examination has increased significantly, which also puts pressure to universities and colleges offering teacher education programs to constantly improve their curriculum and pedagogical approaches to equip the prospective teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge needed not only for the job, but for passing the licensure examination. The Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology (NEUST) is not an exemption to this.

The NEUST is one of the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the country that offer teacher education program. Its pioneer campus, the San Isidro Campus (SIC), is one of the university campuses that offer the program. The College of Education of the university adheres to produce competent teachers who are effective and efficient facilitators of learning in their chosen field of specialization and at par to world class standards. However, though the San Isidro Campus and its faculty are proud of their graduates, they are aware of the fact that their graduates are yet to score the esteemed top notch in the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET).

This study was conducted to analyze the academic achievement of the BEED graduates as a predictor of their LET performance from 2016 to 2018. Results of the studies will serve as a tool in monitoring and assessing the effectiveness of the BEED curriculum implementation and teacher preparation methods and approaches, as well as in devising a special program for the improvement of the BEED graduates' performance in LET.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to determine the relationship between the academic achievement and LET performance of BEED graduates of the Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology, San Isidro Campus, from 2016 to 2018. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. How may the academic achievement of the BEED graduates be described in terms of:

1.1 General education;
1.2 Professional education; and
1.3 Major field of specialization?

2. How may the LET performance of the BEED graduates be described in terms of:

2.1 General education;
2.2 Professional education; and
2.3 Major field of specialization?

3. Is there significant relationship between the BEED graduates' academic achievement and their LET performance?

Hypothesis

There is a significant relationship between the BEED graduates' academic achievement and their LET performance

2. Review of Related Literature and Studies

The Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) is considered to be an effective tool to measure the effectiveness of the teacher education curriculum delivery (Gerundio and Balagtas, 2014). As such, higher education institutions in the country have been giving special attention in analyzing and improving the performance of their teacher education graduates in the licensure examination (Tarun, Gerardo, & Tanguilig, 2014).

LET is given twice annually and thousands of teacher education graduates take the test each time. To pass the licensure examination, examinees in BEED must obtain at least 75% general average, with 40% of which from general education, and 60% of the same coming from the professional education domain. Though thousands take the examination each year, it has been noted that only a small proportion of them pass.

This has led to the conduct of researches aimed at identifying the factors that may predict the LET performance of the graduates (Bothenagan, Bansiong, & Kudan, 2018). One such factor that has gained attention over the years is the academic performance of the graduates. Researchers have found that the graduates' academic performance positively correlates with their LET performance (Bellen, Abela, and Truya, 2018; Chan-Rabanal, 2016; and Esmeralda and Perez-Espinoza, 2015). Their respective studies revealed that a significant relationship existed between the LET performance and the academic achievement of the graduates.

Moreover, Puertos (2015) have found that the academic performance of the teacher education graduates in Liceo de Cagayan University from 2011 to 2014 have moderate positive correlation to their LET performance. The BEED graduates' academic achievement is a good predictor or determinant of LET performance (Labastilla, 2018).

However, in a study conducted by Dato-on, et. al. (2017), entitled "Academic and Licensure Examination For teachers (LET) Performances of the Teacher Education Students of the CTU North Campuses," they failed to establish the academic achievement of the graduates as a predictor of their LET performance. Similarly, Antonio, et. al. (2016) also found out a weak correlation between the academic achievement and LET result of BSE graduates from Polytechnic University of the Philippines, San Pedro Campus.

These inconsistencies of research findings have prompted the researchers to conduct a study among the BEED graduates of the Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology to analyze their academic achievement as predictor of their LET performance.

3. Research Methodology

This research employed descriptive-correlational method in determining the relationship between the academic achievement and LET performance of 232 BEED graduates of the Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology, San Isidro Campus, from 2016 to 2018. Only the graduates who took the LET and were first takers in their respective examinations were included in the study. Total or complete enumeration was utilized.

Secondary data were utilized in this study. These data included the BEED graduates' Transcript of Records obtained from the Office of the Registrar after the graduates' permission and necessary approvals were secured. The BEED graduates' LET ratings were obtained from the Professional Regulatory Commission (PRC). The data were then treated statistically, and analyzed to determine the correlation of the academic achievement and LET performance of the BEED graduates.

To describe the academic achievement and LET performance of the BEED graduates, mean and standard deviation were used as statistical tools. The data were then categorized using the following descriptive values: excellent (90.00 or above); very satisfactory (85.00-89.99); satisfactory (80.00-84.99); fair (75.00-79.99); and poor (74.99 or below).

Correlation analysis through Pearson-r was conducted to test the relationship between the graduates' academic achievement and their LET performance.

4. Results and Discussions

4.1 Academic Achievement of BEED Graduates

Table 1 presents the academic achievement of the BEED graduates from 2016 to 2018. As can be gleaned in the table, graduates of the program showed "very satisfactory" achievement in general education subjects (M= 85.15, SD=4.77) and a "satisfactory" achievement in professional education (M=84.96, SD=4.78) subjects while in college.

These data indicate that the BEED graduates performed rather well in college along the areas of general education and professional education, further indicating that the BEED graduates possess adequate knowledge of the teaching profession. This is similar to the findings of Chan-Rabanal (2016) where she found out that the BEED graduates of the University of Northern Philippines (UNP) exhibited good academic achievement.

Table 1: Academic Achievement of BEED Graduates

Year	N	Academic Achievement	M	SD	Descriptive Value
2016	75	General Education	82.69	4.02	satisfactory
		Professional Education	83.21	4.58	satisfactory
2017	70	General Education	85.44	5.37	very satisfactory
		Professional Education	85.65	5.38	very satisfactory
2018	87	General Education	87.04	3.9	very satisfactory
		Professional Education	85.91	4.02	very satisfactory
Overall	232	General Education	85.15	4.77	very satisfactory
		Professional Education	84.96	4.78	satisfactory

4.2 LET Performance of BEED Graduates

Table 2 reveals that the graduates had an alarming result of "poor" performance in LET. Specifically, they obtained a mean of 69.44 (SD=8.74) in general education and a mean of 72.04 (SD=8.95) in professional education. The results showed that they are not within the minimum passing rate of 75%. This is similar to the findings of Visco (2015), where he found out that the LET performance of BEED graduates from Abra State Institute of Sciences and Technology in both general education and professional education were below the passing rate.

This "poor" performance in LET of the BEED graduates may imply the need to improve the quality of instruction provided to the teacher education students. This may also suggest that additional mechanisms to increase the performance of the graduates in LET may be designed and implemented.

Table 2: LET Performance of BEED Graduates

Year	N	Academic Achievement	M	SD	Descriptive Value
2016	75	General Education	71.48	8.61	poor
		Professional Education	72.6	8.76	poor
2017	70	General Education	68.49	8.17	poor
		Professional Education	69.44	10.01	poor
2018	87	General Education	68.46	9.09	poor
		Professional Education	73.64	7.77	poor
Overall	232	General Education	69.44	8.74	poor
		Professional Education	72.04	8.95	poor

4.3 Correlation between LET Performance and Academic Achievement of BEED Graduates

Table 3 presents the correlation analysis between the BEED graduates' academic achievement and LET performance. It shows that there is no significant correlation between the graduates' LET and academic performance along General Education (r=-0.068, p=<.05), and Professional Education (r=-0.008, p<.05). Therefore, the hypothesis is rejected.

The data imply that the performance of the BEED students in college does not predict their performance in the licensure examination. It revealed that their performance in general education and professional education in college did not affect their LET performance. This means that obtaining a high grade in college does not guarantee getting a passing score in LET.

The findings of the current study refute the findings of Bellen, Abela, and Truya (2018), Chan-Rabanal (2016), and Esmeralda and Perez-Espinoza (2015) who found out that the graduates' academic achievement has a strong correlation with their success in the licensure examination. This may suggest that since the graduates still performed poorly in LET despite having performed well in college, the teacher preparations made by the College of Education of the University needs to be re-aligned and geared towards the LET performance improvement.

Moreover, assessment tools used in academic subjects may be reviewed for alignment to LET preparation to increase the strength of correlation between the academic achievement and LET performance.

Table 3: Correlation between LET Performance and Academic Achievement of BEED Graduates

Area	r	p	Interpretation
General Education	-0.068	0.001	Not significant
Professional Education	-0.008	0.001	Not significant

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

The academic achievement of the BEED graduates had no correlation with their performance in LET. Despite having an overall very satisfactory achievement in general education area and a satisfactory achievement in professional education area, the graduates still had an overall poor performance in both areas. This calls for a need to revisit the curriculum, approaches, methods, and assessment tools for the re-alignment of the offerings and testing with the goal of improving their performance in the licensure examination.

Moreover, since the findings revealed no significant correlation between academic achievement and LET performance, the researchers recommend exploring other factors or predictors that may have affected the graduates'

performance in LET, as these other factors, according to Quiambao, et. al. (2015), may be crucial in developing policies to improve the graduates' LET performance.

Additionally, the findings of this study may be used by the university in tracking the performance of its graduates in LET, as well as a basis for the development of mechanisms for assessment tools and pre-board review to align the academics with LET and improve the performance of the graduates in the licensure examination for teachers. The university may introduce an in-house pre-board review and assessment for teacher education students in each of its campuses so that for a more focused framing of the review mechanisms to help improve the graduates' LET performance.

Finally, future researchers have a closer look into the modes of preparation for the licensure examination like the review process may also be conducted. They may also examine the differences in the LET performance of different teacher education programs offered in the university.

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