

Licensure Examination and Academic Performance of Bachelor of Secondary Education Graduates

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Abstract: *The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between the academic achievement and LET performance of Bachelor of Secondary Education graduates of the Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology, San Isidro Campus, from 2016 to 2018. A descriptive-correlational research design was used for the study, correlating the academic achievement and the licensure examination performance of the graduates. The study revealed that there is no significant relationship between the graduates' academic performance and their performance in the licensure examination. It was also found that despite getting high grade in college, the graduates performed poorly in both professional education and major components of LET. It was, therefore, recommended that both the delivery of instruction and evaluation procedures in the university be re-visited to match the licensure examination and better prepare the graduates for LET.*

Keywords: LET, academic performance, general education, professional education, major

1. Introduction

Producing quality graduates has prompted Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) to continuously conduct curricular reviews and update their curricular programs. According to Visco (2015), one focal measure of the success and quality of the TEI's academic program offerings is the performance of their graduates in the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET).

The Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) is the first challenge that graduates must face should they choose to pursue a career in teaching. As stipulated in Article IV of Republic Act 7836 (1994), unless otherwise allowed in the act, no person shall practice or offer to practice the teaching profession in the Philippines without having previously obtained a valid certificate of registration and a valid professional license from the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC). Moreover, the Department of Education (DepEd) strictly adheres to this requirement as part of the standards in hiring public school teachers (DepEd Order No.7, s.2015).

However, despite the importance placed by education institutions and of the government in the performance of teacher education graduates in the licensure examinations, there is a dismal performance of the takers of the licensure examination for teachers (Faltado III, 2014). Increasing the passing percentage has led to the conduct of studies aimed at determining the factors and predictors of LET performance.

One extensively explored predictor of LET performance is the graduates' academic performance. However, while some studies found a direct correlation between the graduates' academic performance and their LET performance (Rabanal, 2013; and Pachejo and Allaga, 2013), there are studies that found academic performance to not be correlated to the graduates' LET performance (Visco, 2015; Espino, Roman, and Magno, 2013). These inconsistencies of research findings prompted the researchers to conduct a study to determine the relationship between the Nueva Ecija University of

Science and Technology BSE graduates' academic achievement and their LET performance. Results of the studies will serve as a tool in monitoring and assessing the effectiveness of the curriculum implementation and teacher preparation methods and approaches, as well as in devising a special program for the improvement of the graduates' performance in LET.

1.1 Research Problems

This study aimed to determine the relationship between the academic and LET performance of BSE 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 performance of the BSE graduates be described in terms of general education, professional education, and major field of specialization?
2. How may the LET performance of the BSE graduates be described along the three components?
3. Is there significant relationship between the BSE graduates' academic performance and their LET performance?

Hypothesis

1. There is a significant relationship between the graduates' academic performance and their LET performance.

2. Review of Related Literature and Studies

2.1 Licensure Examination for Teachers

Obtaining a license is one of the hurdles that a prospective teacher must face upon graduating from the university. LET is a government-held assessment to test the prospective teachers' overall knowledge and proficiency along the areas of professional education, general education, and major field of specialization. Its importance was emphasized by the DepEd Order No.7, s.2015, which

mandates the requirement of passing the LET to all teacher graduates who wish to be a public teacher in the country.

According to Bellen, et. al. (2018), there are two major components of holding LET: 1) to screen candidates and define the knowledge base for professional practice; and 2) to presume that a single instrument exists not only to contain the essential knowledge required for professional practice, but also accurately identifies those most qualified to teach. To pass the licensure examination, examinees must obtain a general average of at least 75%. This is computed on the basis of: 40% from professional education; 40% from the major field of specialization; and 20% from general education.

2.2 On the Relationship between Academic Performance and LET Performance

Several studies aimed at determining the factors and predictors of LET performance have been conducted over the years. One such predictor that has gained attention is the graduates' academic performance.

According to Lozarita, et. Al. (2009), academic achievement has a significant relationship to LET performance. In a study conducted by Pascua and Navalta (2011), they found out that a high grade-point average results in high LET performance, hence they concluded that academic performance has a correlation with the LET performance. This result was similar to the findings of Pachejo and Allaga (2013) and Rabanal (2012) who both found out that academic achievement of graduates significantly correlates with their LET performance.

Additionally, Quiambao, et. al. (2015) have found that the academic average of teacher education graduates had positive correlation to their LET performance, while using prediction model, Tarun (2017) confirmed the academic achievement as a predictor of performance in the licensure examination.

On the other hand, Visco's (2015) study entitled, "Determinants of performance in the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) of Abra State Institute of Sciences and Technology, " revealed that academic performance did not correlate to their LET performance. Similarly, a weak correlation between the academic performance and LET result of BSE graduates from Polytechnic University of the Philippines, San Pedro Campus was found by Antonio, et. al. (2016). This concurred with the findings of Espino's, et. al. (2013) study, where they discovered a low correlation between academic and LET performance of teacher education graduates.

3. Research Methodology

This research employed descriptive-correlational method in determining the relationship between the academic performance and LET performance of BSE graduates of the Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology, San Isidro Campus, from 2016 to 2018. Only the 340 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 BSE graduates' Transcript of Records obtained from the Office of the Registrar after the graduates' permission and necessary approvals were secured. The 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 and LET performances of the BSE graduates.

To describe the academic achievement and LET performance of the BSE 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 Discussion

4.1 Academic Performance of the BSE Graduates

The academic performance of the BSE graduates from 2016 to 2018 presented in Table 1 revealed that the graduates had a "very satisfactory" performance in both professional education with an overall mean of 85.23 (SD=4.78) and major subjects with an overall mean of 85.23 (SD=4.59); and a "satisfactory" performance in general education subjects, with an overall mean of 84.72 (SD=4.8) in college. These data imply that the BSE graduates received the knowledge along the three areas.

Table 1: Academic Performance of BSE Graduates

Year	N	Academic Achievement	M	SD	Descriptive Value
2016	69	General Education	84.79	4.84	satisfactory
		Professional Education	86.09	4.61	very satisfactory
		Major	84.39	4.27	satisfactory
2017	121	General Education	85.17	4.57	very satisfactory
		Professional Education	85.12	4.72	very satisfactory
		Major	85.74	4.54	very satisfactory
2018	150	General Education	84.32	4.95	satisfactory
		Professional Education	84.94	4.9	satisfactory
		Major	85.21	4.74	very satisfactory
Overall	340	General Education	84.72	4.8	satisfactory
		Professional Education	85.23	4.78	very satisfactory
		Major	85.23	4.59	very satisfactory

4.2 LET Performance of the BSE Graduates

Table 2 presents the performance of the BSE graduates of NEUST, San Isidro Campus from 2016 to 2018. The data revealed that except for the general education component of LET where the graduates got a mean of 79.93, interpreted as “fair,” there is a dismal performance in the major component with a mean of 71.03, and in the professional education component with a mean of 73.08, both interpreted as “poor.”

The data revealed that while the BEED graduates performed fairly in the general education, it still failed to register a satisfactory performance, implying that there is still a need to improve the effectiveness of the delivery of instruction in preparing the graduates for LET.

However, the graduates’ performance in both professional education and major components did not meet the minimum passing rate of 75%, which indicates a decline in student preparation for LET. These findings are congruent to those of Antiojo (2017), who found out that teacher education graduates of Cavite State University-Naic registered the highest average ratings in general education component, followed by the professional education component, while the lowest average rating was registered in the major component. Additionally, Guanson and Marpa (2013) also found that BSE graduates of PNU found difficulty in the areas of professional education and major subjects when they took the LET.

Table 2: LET Performance of BSE Graduates

Year	N	Academic Achievement	M	SD	Descriptive Value
2016	69	General Education	79.9	6.98	fair
		Professional Education	71.39	8.04	poor
		Major	69.68	9.04	poor
2017	121	General Education	81.02	7.54	satisfactory
		Professional Education	73.4	8.12	poor
		Major	72.02	9.38	poor
2018	150	General Education	77.49	10.13	fair
		Professional Education	73.61	9.54	poor
		Major	70.85	9.78	poor
Overall	340	General Education	79.23	8.81	fair
		Professional Education	73.08	8.78	poor
		Major	71.03	9.5	poor

4.3 Correlation between Academic Performance and LET Performance of BSE Graduates

Table 3 shows the correlation analysis between the BSE graduates’ academic performance and their performance in the licensure examination. It revealed that a significant correlation does not exist along the three components of general education ($r=0.039$, $p<.05$), professional education ($r=0.073$, $p<.05$), and major subjects ($r=0.025$, $p<.05$).

The findings imply that grade in college did not correlate to the ratings that graduates got in LET, further indicating that academic performance is not a predictor or determinant of LET performance. Therefore, the hypothesis is rejected.

These results are congruent to the findings of Espino, et. al. (2013), Visco (2015), and Antonio, et. al. (2016) who also did not establish academic performance as a determinant or predictor of teacher education graduates’ performance in the licensure examination.

Table 3: Correlation Between Academic Performance and LET Performance of BSE Graduates

Area	r	p	Interpretation
General Education	0.039	0.001	Not Significant
Professional Education	0.073	0.001	Not Significant
Major	0.025	0.001	Not Significant

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

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

The academic performance of BSE graduates from 2016 to 2018 did not correlate to their performance in the licensure examination. Since the grade in college did not coincide with their ratings in LET, this is evidence of the need to improve both the delivery of instruction and evaluation procedures in the university to match the licensure examination and better prepare the graduates for LET, which can ultimately lead to an improved performance in LET.

Since the study revealed a poor performance of the BSE graduates in both the professional education and major components of LET, an intervention program, such as an in-house pre-board review and assessment, may be implemented to increase the graduates’ level of performance in the licensure examination.

Moreover, since the academic performance was found to not predict the LET performance of graduates, future researchers may consider other variables like college admission test and personal factors to be examined to determine their influence on the graduates’ LET performance.

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