

Centers of Excellence and Centers of Development for Teacher Education: Their Contribution to the Elementary Teacher Force

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Abstract. This paper provides an assessment of the Centers of Excellence (COEs) and Centers of Development (CODs) for teacher education by looking into the performance of their graduates in the 2010 Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) elementary level. The sample consisted of 3,206 examinees (2,202 first-timers and 1,004 repeaters) from the 31 COEs and 1,588 (949 first-timers and 639 repeaters) from the 9 CODs. Results revealed that only 1,256 (57%) first-time examinees from the COEs and 510 (54%) from the CODs or a total of 1,766 (56%) passed the LET. Eight COEs and 4 CODs had lower than 50% passing percentage. Only 8% of the repeaters passed the licensure examination, which resulted to the overall passing percentage of 40%. The title “Center of Excellence” for the 8 institutions and “Center of Development” for the 4 institutions needs to be reviewed because of their mediocre performance compared to the other COEs/CODs. There could be many other teacher education institutions that deserve the distinct title of Center of Excellence or Center of Development.

Keywords: Center of development, center of excellence, licensure examination for teachers, teacher education institutions

1. Introduction

The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) identifies teacher education as one of the program areas needed for the development of world-class scholarship, nation building and national development. To strengthen and further improve the quality of teacher preparation in the Philippines, CHED has identified Centers of Excellence (COEs) and Centers of Development (CODs) for teacher education.

Center of Excellence refers to a teacher education program in a higher education institution (HEI), which continuously demonstrates excellent performance in the areas of instruction, research and publication, extension and linkages, institutional qualifications and provides excellent quality pre-service teacher education program to meet the needs of progressive teachers for elementary, secondary and special education programs. On the other hand, Center of Development refers to a teacher education program in an HEI, which demonstrates the potential to become a COE in the future. The identified COEs and CODs are expected to serve as catalyst in attaining and fulfilling the program’s mission of producing professionally competent and morally upright teacher education graduates [1].

Among the specific roles and responsibilities of identified COEs include the following: Act as role models / leaders in teacher education programs (TEP); Sustain and enhance research capabilities and upgrade professional or research graduate programs in teacher education; Provide assistance to agencies / institutions within their geographical area of coverage; Undertake activities / projects necessary in developing quality TEP; Accelerate the development of the TEP through strategic developmental agenda and projects; Develop quality instructional programs through faculty development and upgrading of facilities and library holdings; Undertake basic and applied research activities on emerging trends and developments in the field of teacher education; and Undertake extension and linkages through consortia and collaborations with academe [2].

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Similarly, the identified CODs shall: Accelerate the development of the TEP through strategic developmental agenda and projects; Develop quality instructional programs through faculty development and upgrading of facilities and library holdings; Undertake basic and applied research on emerging trends and developments in the field of teacher education; Undertake extension and linkages through consortia and collaborations with academe; and Establish linkages with COEs in teacher education to enhance instructional and research capabilities to undertake research in the said programs.

To qualify for the selection of COE/COD, the teacher education program should have passed the initial screening. One of the requirements in the initial screening for COE includes being top 10 per category of high performing TEIs – average performance in the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) for the last three years. On the other hand, an institution applying to become COD must belong to the top 11-20 per category of high performing TEIs.

In 2008, CHED identified 14 COEs and 5 CODs for a period of three years from June 2008 to June 2011 [3]; 12 COEs and 5 CODs from 2010 to 2013 [4]; and 5 new COEs and 2 CODs from 2010 to 2013 [2]. These COEs and CODs are expected to stimulate and expedite the development of world-class and responsive teacher education programs, and to initiate projects that will strengthen other non-COE/COD teacher education institutions, especially in their respective regions. To realize these tasks, identified COEs/CODs are given funds for developmental projects and other non-monetary subsidies such as faculty scholarships and research grants.

This study aimed to determine the extent to which the COEs and CODs have produced competent teachers. Specifically, it intended to assess these institutions by examining the performance of their graduates in the licensure examination for elementary teachers.

2. Methodology

This study involved 31 identified COEs and 9 CODs from 2008-2011 and 2010-2013. The sample consisted of 3,206 examinees from the COEs and 1,588 from the CODs. Examinees were classified as first-timers or repeaters. First-timers are those who take the LET for the first time and might have graduated during the current year or previous years while repeaters are those who take the LET more than once.

The data on the LET performance of the 40 institutions were obtained from the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC). LET performance is operationally defined as the percentage of examinees in a COE/COD who passed in the September 2010 LET elementary level. The examination is comprised of three tests with their corresponding weight namely: General Education (Gen Ed) test – 20%, Professional Education (Prof Ed) Part I test – 40% and Professional Education Part II (Preschool Education/SPED/Content Courses) test – 40%. Each of the three tests consists of 150 items, taken in two sittings – one half-day for Gen Ed and Prof Ed Part I and another half-day for the Prof Ed Part II. To pass the examination, an examinee must obtain a general average rating of not less than 75% and must have no rating lower than 50% in any of the tests [5].

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. LET Performance of the First-timers

Based on the percentage of passers from each of the COEs, University of Santo Tomas has the highest percentage (93.3%), followed by De La Salle University-Manila (93.1%). Capitol University, Philippine Normal University-Manila and Saint Mary's University ranked third (83.3%), fourth (83.0%), and fifth (81.8%), respectively. On the other hand, the 5 lowest performing are: Mindanao State University (31.8%), Father Saturnino Urios University (35.7%), University of Southeastern Philippines (36.1%), Don Mariano Marcos Memorial State University (41.3%), and University of Mindanao (42.9%).

As regards CODs, the 3 highest performing are: Ateneo de Davao University (85.7%), Xavier University (84.1%), and Colegio De Dagupan (80%). The 3 lowest performing CODs are: Western Mindanao State University (35.7%), Manuel S. Enverga University Foundation (41.5%), and University of San Agustin (44.7%).

Table 1. LET Performance of First-timers and Repeaters by COE/COD

Centers of Excellence/Dev't COEs	First-Timers			Repeaters			Overall			Rank
	Takers	Passed	% Passing	Takers	Passed	% Passing	Takers	Passed	% Passing	
1. Don Mariano Marcos Memorial State Univ.	121	50	41	37	1	3	158	51	32.3	28
2. Mariano Marcos State Univ.	108	87	81	18	2	11	126	89	70.6	8
3. St. Louis College	9	7	78	7	0	0	16	7	43.8	19
4. Univ. of Luzon	17	9	53	22	0	0	39	9	23.1	34
5. Saint Mary's Univ.	11	9	82	3	0	0	14	9	64.3	11
6. Angeles Univ. Foundation	28	16	57	11	2	18	39	18	46.2	17
7. Central Luzon State Univ.	36	26	72	38	1	3	74	27	36.5	25
8. De La Salle Univ. – Dasmariñas	21	11	52	6	0	0	27	11	40.7	21
9. Univ. of Batangas	19	9	47	26	0	0	45	9	20.0	36
10. Palawan State Univ.	137	61	45	41	3	7	178	64	36.0	26
11. Ateneo De Naga Univ.	15	11	73	6	0	0	21	11	52.4	15
12. Bicol Univ. (BU)	162	88	54	90	6	7	252	94	37.3	23
13. Univ. De Santa Isabel	7	5	71	5	0	0	12	5	41.7	20
14. West Visayas State Univ.	276	196	71	13	2	15	289	198	68.5	10
15. Univ. of San Carlos	56	37	66	9	1	11	65	38	58.5	13
16. Univ. of San Jose Recoletos	32	16	50	33	1	3	65	17	26.2	31
17. Leyte Normal Univ.	395	172	44	415	10	2	810	182	22.5	35
18. Silliman Univ.	9	7	78	1	0	0	10	7	70.0	9
19. Capitol Univ.	6	5	83	21	0	0	27	5	18.5	38
20. Mindanao State Univ.– Iligan Institute of Tech.	157	50	32	5	1	20	162	51	31.5	29
21. Univ. of the Immaculate Conception	8	4	50	7	0	0	15	4	26.7	30
22. Univ. of Mindanao	28	12	43	53	0	0	81	12	14.8	39
23. Univ. of Southeastern Phil.	133	48	36	60	1	2	193	49	25.4	33
24. Notre Dame of Marbel Univ.	52	34	65	25	2	8	77	36	46.8	16
25. Centro Scholar Univ.	14	9	64	2	1	50	16	10	62.5	12
26. De La Salle Univ.–Manila	29	27	93	1	1	100	30	28	93.3	1
27. Phil. Normal Univ. – Mla.	153	127	83	1	1	100	154	128	83.1	4
28. Univ. of Santo Tomas	60	56	93	5	3	60	65	59	90.8	2
29. St. Louis Univ.	67	49	73	3	1	33	70	50	71.4	7
30. Univ. of the Cordilleras	22	13	59	13	0	0	35	13	37.1	24
31. Father Saturnino Urios Univ.	14	5	36	27	1	4	41	6	14.6	40
Subtotal	2,202	1,256	57.0	1,004	41	4.1	3,206	1,297	40.5	
CODs										
32. Colegio De Dagupan	5	4	80	0	0		5	4	80.0	5
33. Pangasinan State Univ.	108	65	60	99	13	13	207	78	37.7	22
34. Manuel S. Enverga Univ. Foundation	53	22	42	65	1	2	118	23	19.5	37
35. Univ. of San Agustin	47	21	45	13	0	0	60	21	35.0	27
36. Holy Angel Univ.	19	10	53	17	6	35	36	16	44.4	18
37. Cebu Normal Univ.	281	177	63	38	3	8	319	180	56.4	14
38. Xavier Univ.	107	90	84	7	1	14	114	91	79.8	6
39. Ateneo de Davao Univ.	7	6	86	0	0		7	6	85.7	3
40. Western Mindanao State Univ.	322	115	36	400	69	17	722	184	25.5	32
Subtotal	949	510	53.7	639	93	14.6	1,588	603	38.0	
TOTAL	3,151	1,766	56.0	1,643	134	8.2	4,794	1,900	39.6	

When the individual performance of the COEs and CODs is compared, the 5 highest performing are: University of Santo Tomas, De La Salle University-Manila, Ateneo de Davao University, Xavier University, and Capitol University. The top two performing COEs are from the National Capital Region (NCR) and all 5 are private institutions. Notice that they have only few examinees ranging from 6 to 107. If we consider their first-time examinees as their total graduates for the year 2010, it suggests these institutions implement strict retention procedures. Their very high passing percentage which ranges from 83% to 93% implies that quality instruction is provided to their students. Other private TEIs determine the graduates who will take the LET based on their performance in the Pre-board Examination administered by the TEIs.

On the contrary, the 5 lowest performing institutions are: Mindanao State University, Father Saturnino Urios University, Western Mindanao State University, University of Southeastern Philippines, and Don Mariano Marcos Memorial State University. It is surprising to note that 4 of these 5 lowest performing institutions are COEs. All of them, except FSUU, are state universities and have at least 121 examinees. Many state universities usually adopt lenient admission and retention measures since they cater to the less privileged students. However, these procedures prevent the COEs from their mandate of training professionally competent teacher education graduates. The combined passing percentage of these 5 COEs is 36%, which means that only 1 in every 3 graduates pass the LET. As far as their LET performance is concerned, the 5 COEs fail to perform its major role of producing quality teachers.

The national passing percentage in the Sept 2010 LET elementary level is 19.6%. All COEs/CODs have higher passing percentage than the national, so they still perform better compared to the other teacher education institutions in the country.

Of the 2202 examinees from the COEs, 1256 or 57.0% passed while 510 (53.7%) of the 949 examinees from the CODs passed the LET. This shows that the performance of COEs is slightly higher than that of CODs by 3%. A total of 3151 (56.0%) of the 1766 first-timers passed the LET. An overall passing percentage of more than 50% indicates a considerably good performance. However, 8 (26%) of the COEs and 4 (44%) of the CODs obtained lower than 50% passing percentage.

3.2. LET Performance of the Repeaters

Contrary to the performance of the first-timers, the repeaters had extremely poor performance. Of the 31 COEs, 12 or 39% registered 0 passing percentage among the repeaters. These 12 COEs are all private institutions. Only 41 (4%) of the 1004 repeaters passed the LET. This performance has dramatic effect to the institutions' passing percentage considering the ratio of the number of first-timers to repeaters, which is 2202:1004, or approximately 2:1. The very low performance of the latter pulled down the COEs' overall passing percentage (40.5%) by 16.5%.

With regard to CODs, 93 (14.6%) of the 639 repeaters passed the LET. This is 10% higher than that of COEs' repeaters. Only one (11%) COD had 0 passing percentage. The ratio of the first-timers to repeaters is 949:639, about 3:2. Since 40% of the total examinees are repeaters, this resulted to the CODs' overall passing percentage (38%) decrease of 16%.

In general, only 134 (8%) of the 1643 repeaters passed the examination. This indicates a lower performance than the national passing (20%). The total number of repeaters is one-third of the total number of examinees. The overall passing percentage of the COEs and CODs is 40%.

3.3. Overall LET Performance of the COEs/CODs

In terms of the individual overall passing percentage of the COEs/CODs, the 6 highest performing are: De La Sale University-Manila (93.3%), University of Santo Tomas (90.8%), Ateneo de Davao University (85.7%), Philippine Normal University-Manila (83.1%), Colegio De Dagupan (80.0%), and Xavier University (79.8%). Among these 3 COEs and 3 CODs, only PNU is a state university and has produced the greatest number of elementary teachers, which proves that PNU is the country's national center for teacher education. In addition the 3 highest performing COEs are located in NCR.

The 5 lowest performing COEs/CODs are: Father Saturnino Urios University (14.6%), University of Mindanao (14.8%), Capitol University (18.5%), Manuel S. Enverga University Foundation (19.5%), and

University of Batangas (20.0%). Four of these institutions have passing percentage which is lower than the national passing of 19.6%. While 5 of the top performing COEs/CODs are private institutions, the bottom 5 also belong to private institutions. Surprisingly, 4 of 5 the lowest performing institutions are COEs. Furthermore, 20 (65%) of the COEs and 4 CODs had overall passing percentage of less than 50%.

4. Implications and Conclusion

The results of this study have significant implications in identifying Centers of Excellence and Centers of Development. In 8 of the 31 identified COEs and 4 of the 9 CODs, less than half of their first-time examinees passed the LET elementary level. If all these first-timers are 2010 graduates, this means that these COEs/CODs failed to fulfill their mandate to produce competent teachers. Thus, the CHED Technical Panel for Teacher Education needs to review the title “Center of Excellence” for the 8 institutions and “Center of Development” for the 4 institutions because of their mediocre performance compared to the other COEs/CODs. There could be many other HEIs that deserve the distinct title of Center of Excellence or Center of Development.

Considering the performance of the first-timers, the top performing COEs and CODs are private teacher education institutions, namely: De La Sale University-Manila and University of Santo Tomas. Besides ample funding, these private institutions have adopted “best” practices that place and keep them at the top. Further investigation should be conducted to explore, document and share these “best” practices so that other teacher education institutions (TEIs) will be inspired and guided to become COEs/CODs. On the other hand, the lowest performing COEs/CODs are state universities. The practice of lenient admission and retention must be reviewed so that only potential teachers will be selected and retained. However, this may result to low enrolment in teacher education programs since most of the bright students choose engineering, business, health sciences, science and technology courses. Hence, TEIs and concerned government and non-government agencies should collaboratively design, implement and evaluate programs that will attract the bright students into the teaching profession.

Philippine Normal University, the National Center for Teacher Education in the Philippines, is the only state university that belongs to the highest performing COEs. Being the premier teacher education institution, PNU may develop a guidebook that highlights the effective procedures on providing and maintaining quality teacher preparation.

The poor performance of the repeaters (8%) dramatically pulled down the performance of the first-timers (56%). The Professional Regulation Commission allows teacher-examinees to take the LET for unlimited times. There may also be repeaters who graduated in an old teacher education curriculum. Thus PRC may formulate policy limiting the number of times an examinee may take the LET and requiring old graduates and repeaters to take refresher courses before allowing them to take the examination again.

In general, most of the COEs and CODs are producing competent elementary teachers. Their overall performance is significantly higher than the other TEIs in the country.

5. References

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