ACCREDITATION OF TEACHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS OF STATE UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES IN REGION III: BASIS FOR INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

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ABSTRACT

This descriptive research was conducted to analyze the accreditation of Teacher Education Institutions of State Universities and Colleges in Region 3, Philippines. This study was accomplished using the documentary analysis submitted by the external accreditors of AACUP (Accrediting Association of Chartered Colleges and Universities in the Philippines) and sets of questionnaire answered by the respondents. Interview with the use of an interview guide was also utilized. The respondents of this study were directors/chairmen of accreditation; deans of Teacher Education Institutions; internal accreditors; coordinators; area leaders for faculty, students, extension and community involvement, and administration from ten state universities and colleges in region III. The study was done during Academic Year 2010-2011.

Results of the study and recommendations are simultaneously presented. One of its important findings is that the TEIs’ strengths in accreditation had motivated the SUCs to continue in being evaluated by national accreditors to level up their status. On the other hand, the weaknesses of the TEIs gave them reasons to delay their progress and improvement of the institutions which could affect the community they belong to and the country as a whole.

The problems encountered by the respondents in accreditation do not require much of the intelligence. It is the dedication to one’s profession that counts most. The attitude dictates the altitude of the institutions’ development. No matter how rigorous the work is, this can be accomplished easily if the attitude towards work is healthy.

An institutional development program was prepared based on the noted findings of the research.

Field of Research: Accreditation, attitude, dedication, progress and improvement

1. Introduction

Accreditation is a voluntary method of quality assurance developed more than 100 years ago by American universities and secondary schools. Accreditation engages the entire school community in a continuous process of self-evaluation, reflection, and improvement. It invites external scrutiny and welcomes the constructive feedback of peers. It demands rigor, is based in data, and approaches documentation of results with discipline. Accreditation is about making the quest for excellence a habit; it is about being the best a school can be on behalf of the students it serves. The purpose of accreditation is to identify how a school can continue to improve its effectiveness. The
most objective and reliable indication of school effectiveness is how well students are learning.

The accreditation movement began in 1951, through the initiative of a group of educators from private higher education institutions who were convinced of the importance to enhance the quality of higher education through a system of standards.

The system of higher education in the Philippines adopted accreditation as means of high-level quality on a voluntary basis. It was also envisioned that through accreditation, appropriate guidance would be provided to parents and college-bound students. The accrediting association likewise heightened cooperation among higher education institutions. It was then that three accrediting bodies were formed namely the Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges, and Universities (PAASCU); the Philippine Association of Colleges and University-Commission on Accreditation (PACU-COA); and the Association of Christian Schools and Colleges and Universities-Accrediting Agency (ACSCU-AA). Each of the association has its own accrediting instruments and standards.

In striving towards common instruments and standards, the Federation of Accrediting Agencies in the Philippines (FAAP) an umbrella organization of accrediting agencies was established in 1976. FAAP serves as a coordinating body of the three accrediting associations.

2. Level of Accreditation

CAAS Webmaster( 2006) cites impact of accreditation on agency's personnel that accredited agencies report a strong feeling of pride among their employees support staff as well as patient care providers - and they share ownership in their company's success. If this is true to private groups then this could probably be true to educational institutions where there is a employee- employer relationship. Employee morale is lifted knowing that their institution has a concern for their stakeholders. State universities and colleges policies will then be clearly spelled out in terms of benefits, employee evaluations, expected conduct, and grievance procedures. Employees know exactly what to expect from their employers and what they are expected to contribute for the progress and development of a learning institution in which team effort is required. In an accredited agency, the emphasis is always on quality improvement; providing a positive daily focus. Some of the functions of accreditation are 1. Assisting prospective students in identifying acceptable institutions. 2. Helping to identify institutions and programs for the investment of public and private funds and 3. Involving the acuity and staff comprehensively in institutional evaluation and planning;

Campbell and Rozsnyai (2002) suggest that while accreditation has different definitions, forms and functions, it generally has the following characteristics: it provides proof that a certain standard is being met in a higher education course, programme or institution. The standard met can either be a minimum standard or a standard of excellence; it involves a benchmarking assessment; judgements are based solely on quality criteria, never on political characteristics and always yes/no; the emphasis is on accountability .

United Nations Population Division and Statistics Division (2007), states that an unaccredited degree can be accepted as legitimate but the Acceptance is very low in the academic world and the government world, but is somewhat higher in the business world. Some companies have clear policy with regard to accreditation, and indeed may not even indulge in it. Educational program planning is based on regular and continuous assessment of programs, the identification of core subjects in light of the
needs of the disciplines, the fields or occupations for which programs prepare students, and other constituencies of the institution. With all of these things being done for the institutions stakeholders, administrators have high expectations on the quality of graduates the school has to produce. It behooves upon all educators that the institution ensures quality education.

One of the readings on the New Trends in Higher Education, Daugenti (2008) wrote an experience in accreditation. He stated that the preparation of a self-study report requires compliance with a format prescribed by the accrediting association and consistent with the accreditation instrument. Each academic program has its own accreditation instrument. However, there are some similarities between items. Based on the evaluation of the institutional self-study committee, a ranking on a five-point scale is made for each of the major items, five being the highest. Because of the tedious process of preparing the self-study report on the actual academic operation, strengths and weaknesses of the institution, as well as the identification of opportunities and threats in the light of the changing environment in which the institution is operating, all being time-consuming procedures. This is one of the parts of this study in which people who acted as area leaders, coordinators, dean of the TEI, internal accreditors and chairman of accreditation were given the chance to identify the problems encountered in accreditation.

3. Related Literature

Gascon and Deazeta (2007) mentioned in their journal that submitting the different programs to accreditation is not an easy task. There should be harmony in terms of financial and physical resources, commitment of leaders and diligence, capacity and willingness of people.

4. Conceptual Framework
The concept of this study could be illustrated through the paradigm below. The paradigm shows the relationship of the variables in this study.

![Figure 1: Paradigm of the Study](image-url)
As shown in the paradigm of the study, the variables such as the level of accreditation and the number of accredited programs of the TEIs of SUC’s in region 3 served as the bases in determining the strengths and weaknesses in accreditation of the respondent institutions. Through documentary analyses, data for the aforementioned variables were derived from the accrediting agency (AACCUP). From the results presented by the AACCUP, the strengths and weaknesses in the ten areas of accreditation in each program were revealed. Alongside are the problems the TEIs encountered in the accreditation of their programs. The problems encountered could vary depending on the level of accreditation and on the accredited programs of an institution. These problems occurred in the preparation, on the actual and at the post accreditation and some are not reflected in the bench mark statements of the AACCUP instrument. And yet, these problems in one way or the other affected the performance of the SUC. From these, the institutional Development Program was created to augment the effectiveness and efficiency of the TEIs in terms of performance in all areas of accreditation which would be of great contribution in the progress of the institution.

5. Methodology

Research Design

This study used a qualitative and quantitative research design employing the descriptive research method to evaluate the accreditation compliance of the Teacher Education Institutions of SUCs of Region III as the basis for the institutional development program. This method is most appropriate technique to employ in describing the information that has been gathered; particularly it utilized documentary analysis, interview and questionnaire.

Research Instrument

This study employed documentary analysis such as the reports, specifically the Technical Review and Board Action report submitted by the team of national accreditors. Such instrument was used in determining the level of accreditation, the number of accredited programs and the strengths and weaknesses of the TEIs in region 3. Moreover, a questionnaire was constructed to identify the problems experienced by the respondents pertinent to accreditation. The questionnaire was then validated through a face and content validity by the national and internal accreditors. After which, it was dry-ran to a different set of respondents who were not the researcher’s target of respondents. The questionnaire was revised in accordance with the suggestions posted on the dry-run, the suggestions of national accreditors who were interviewed at a previsit before the distribution of the questionnaires in the field, and the suggestions of internal accreditors and area leaders whom the researcher has known in other SUCs. The final draft was then administered to the ten SUCs in Region III and retrieved after a week or two. This was used as instrument in data gathering. Moreover, an interview was also done for salient points in the questionnaire which were not answered or clearly answered. National accreditors patiently shared information on their line of expertise which the researcher is so grateful for.
Respondents of the Study

The respondents of this study are SUC university directors/ chairman of accreditation, Teacher Education deans, coordinators; internal accreditors, and area leaders for faculty, students, extension and community involvement, and administration from state universities and colleges in Region III which underwent accreditation in the academic year 2010-2011. Each SUC was supposed to have eight respondents coming from different designations in the university/college accreditation team. There were SUCs with more than a total of eight respondents for there were more than one teachers assigned in the area for faculty and extension of accreditation. The total number of respondents is eighty (80) among SUCs in Region III who experienced at least three years of being assigned in the university/college accreditation team so that the data gathered were valid and reliable.

Data Gathering Procedure

The data for this study were gathered through the use of questionnaire and interview. The questionnaire was revised with the suggestions posted on the dry-run, the suggestions of national accreditors who were interviewed at a pre-visit before the distribution of the questionnaires in the field, and the suggestions of internal accreditors whom the researcher have known in other SUCs. The final draft was then administered to the ten SUCs in Region III and retrieved after a week or two. This was used as instrument in data gathering. Documents submitted by the AACCUP through the external accreditors like the Technical Review and Board Action, Technical Review and Recommended Board Action and summary of findings and recommendations were analyzed. In the event that questions were not answered properly, the researcher employed an interview to get salient answers. The data were tallied, tabulated, scored, interpreted, and analyzed.

Data Analysis

Responses derived from the questionnaire were tallied and computed through frequencies and percentages to establish the patterns and rank of data. The researcher used descriptive analysis because it provides simpler summaries about the samples and measures of the respondents.

To measure the strengths and weaknesses of the areas in accreditation, the minimum area mean was recorded and a five-point scale was used as reflected.

Range:

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<th>Level I</th>
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<td>3.00-5.00 - strength</td>
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<td>2.50 - 2.99 - weakness</td>
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The responses of the respondents in the administered questionnaires specifically the part on related problems in the preparation, on the actual, and at the post accreditation were lumped together to see the significant commonalities and differences in the problems encountered in accreditation by the faculty members and the administration.
6. Findings and Discussion

1. Majority of the TEI programs of the 10 SUCs in region 3 had level II accreditation with 5 or 50% of them, 4 or 40% had level III status and only 1 or 10% had level I accreditation status. Among the 10 SUCs, majority of them with 5 or 50% had only 2 accredited TEI programs such as elementary and secondary, 3 or 30% of them had only 1 accredited program which is secondary education and least of them with 2 or 20% had 3 accredited programs such elementary, secondary, and industrial education programs.

2. One (1) out of 10 SUCs had Level I accreditation status and among its strengths under this level were on areas of faculty, curriculum and instruction, physical plants and facilities, laboratories and administration. While its weaknesses were on areas of student support, research, extension and community involvement, and library. While there were 5 SUCs in Region 3 with Level II accreditation status of their TEI programs with 5 or 50% of them found to have strengths on areas of faculty, curriculum and instruction, extension and community involvement. Four (4) or 80% of them were strong on areas of student support, research, library, physical plants and facilities, laboratories and administration. While there was only one (1) or 20% who were found weak on areas of support to student, research, library, physical plants and facilities, laboratories and administration. Moreover, there were only four (4) SUCs who had attained level III status of accreditation. Among these SUCs, all of them (4) or 100% found to have strengths on mandatory areas of accreditation such as instruction and extension. They were also strong on the option areas such as licensure examination for teachers, library and learning resources and faculty.

3. The most pressing problems encountered by the faculty respondents on accreditation were lack of cooperation of some faculty members in providing needed documents 39 or 92.8%, accreditation is so tiring and sometimes very demanding of one’s time and effort 35 or 83.33%, insufficient time to prepare needed documents 34 or 80.95%, co-faculty members do not submit credentials needed to area leaders 34 or 80.95%, do not have common free-time to meet with fellow faculty members for follow ups of needed credentials 33 or 78.57%, do not agree in most of the findings and recommendations submitted by the external accreditors 29 or 69%, problems on the continuity and sustainability of extension programs 27 or 64.28%, insufficient documents showing support to students 27 or 64.28%, insufficient supporting documents provided by faculty members who undertook extension program 26 or 61.90%, no research studies on students’ needs, problems, and profile 26 or 61.90%, insufficient man power to prepare documents 25 or 59.52%, and lack of financial support from the university 25 or 59.52%.

Majority of the respondents on the administration encountered problems such as accreditation is so tiring and sometimes very demanding of one’s time and effort 34 or 89.47%, lack of cooperation of some faculty members and personnel in providing needed documents 33 or 86.47%, do not have common free-time to meet with faculty members for follow ups of needed credentials 31 or 81.57%, insufficient time to prepare needed documents 30 or 78.94%, faculty members do not submit credentials needed to area leaders 30 or 78.94%, insufficient supporting documents provided by faculty members who undertook extension program 27 or 71.05%, no research studies on students’ needs, problems, and profile conducted by faculty
members 27 or 71.05%, insufficient documents showing support to students of Parent Teachers Association 23 or 60.52%, insufficient an power to prepare documents 22 or 57.89%, do not agree in most of the findings and recommendations submitted by the external accreditors 19 or 50%, and lack of financial support from the university 10 or 26.31%.

4. An institutional development plan covering all areas of accreditation composed of the following parts such as objectives, target clienteles, strategies or techniques, persons involved and accountable, budget allocation and budget sources, was developed based on the findings of the study which could serve as a reference or model of the SUCs with TEI programs who would undergo accreditation.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study the following conclusions were drawn:

1. That majority of the TEI programs of the 10 SUCs in region 3 had level II, great number of them had level III, and least number of them had level I accreditation status respectively. That majority of them had only 2 accredited TEI programs such as elementary and secondary, great number of them had only 1 accredited program which is secondary education and least of them had 3 accredited programs such elementary, secondary, and industrial education programs.

2. That the SUC which had Level I accreditation status had strengths on areas of faculty, curriculum and instruction, physical plants and facilities, laboratories and administration. While its weaknesses were on areas of student support, research, extension and community involvement, and library.

That SUCs in Region 3 with Level II accreditation status of their TEI programs had strengths on areas of faculty, curriculum and instruction, extension and community involvement. That there were only four (4) SUCs who had attained level III status of accreditation and had strengths on mandatory areas of accreditation such as instruction and extension. That they were also strong on the option areas such as licensure examination for teachers, library and learning resources and faculty.

3. That the majority of the pressing problems encountered by the faculty respondents on accreditation were lack of cooperation of some faculty members in providing needed documents, accreditation is so tiring and sometimes very demanding of one’s time and effort, insufficient time to prepare needed documents, co- faculty members do not submit credentials needed to area leaders, do not have common free-time to meet with fellow faculty members for follow ups of needed credentials, do not agree in most of the findings and recommendations submitted by the external accreditors.

That majority of the respondents on the administration encountered problems on accreditation as so tiring and sometimes very demanding of one’s time and effort, lack of cooperation of some faculty members and personnel in providing needed documents, do not have common free-time to meet with faculty members for follow ups of needed credentials, insufficient time to prepare needed documents, faculty
members do not submit credentials needed to area leaders, insufficient supporting documents provided by faculty members who undertook extension program, no research studies on students’ needs, problems, and profile conducted by faculty members, insufficient documents showing support to students of Parent Teachers Association, insufficient an power to prepare documents, do not agree in most of the findings and recommendations submitted by the external accreditors, and lack of financial support from the university.

4. An institutional development plan covering all areas of accreditation composed of the following parts such as objectives, target clienteles, strategies or techniques, persons involved and accountable, budget allocation and budget sources, was developed based on the findings of the study which could serve as a reference or model of the SUCs with TEI programs who would undergo accreditation.

Implications of the Study

The area in accreditation that is need-and-client based is the area of Extension and Community Involvement. The Institution plans and implements extension programs. A Faculty member or staff serves as the organizer, coordinator, facilitator, service provider and an agent of change in the community. Application of existing and new knowledge and technology learned from the institution are shared to the people in the community to improve the quality of their lives. In other words it is transforming lives for betterment. It needs to be felt in the community for this is its major function in the institution. Budgetary support and other resource allocation are very important. With these years of experiences, working for evidences/documents needed for each area in accreditation, problems encountered can never be forgotten.

The significant criteria for excellence are efficiency of the administrative set-up and harmonious relations among faculty members and personnel.

There are a few who still cannot grasp the meaning of involvement. Internalizing the value of involving oneself in the preparation, during the actual accreditation and at the post accreditation is a big help to the institution that would affect the whole university. The problems reflect more on the kind of values both faculty members and administration members have nowadays. These problems are attitude related problems, time/ schedule related problems, document related problems, research related problems, human resources problem and finances related problems. 

Faculty members and people from the administration work hand in hand to achieve the success in accreditation. What seemed to be the problem encountered in accreditation to among the faculty members can probably be the problems encountered in accreditation by people in the administration. Problems of the faculty members would appear to be complimented with that of the administration's help or concern and vice-versa.

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An institutional development program was prepared for the answer to the strengths, weaknesses and problems encountered in accreditation.

**Recommendations**

Based on the findings and conclusions of this Study, the following are recommended:

1. Administrators of TEIs, should continue on performing their inherent duties and responsibilities in managing the institution, college or university as a follow through to what have been assessed by the accrediting agency, the AACCUP in particular.
2. Curricular planner, dean of TEIs, and Chairman should evaluate industrial curricular against industrial discipline at present.
3. Curriculum planners should propose an enhancement of the curriculum to suit the needs at present.
4. Curriculum planners, dean of TEIs, and Chairman should implement core curricular for appropriate way of suiting the demand in a community.
5. State universities and colleges should be take, accreditation as a way of school life so it would not be a burden on any leader in charge.
6. School administrators and accreditation agency (AACCUP), should have orientation on accreditation as a part of the university’s / colleges’ activities.
7. School administrators, TEI deans and chairmen should conduct a lecture on values formation among faculty members to bring back the spirit of dedication and commitment in their profession.
8. School administrators and educational leaders should conduct a Theological lecture and invite speaker to resurrect the good nature of faculty members. This lecture is in support to the first lecture on values formation. The author of values is the words of God.
9. Deans and chairmen of Teacher Educational Institutions should conduct a seminar-workshop on the latest teaching strategies. One among the outstanding professors of 2010 will serve as the speaker.
10. Deans and chairman of the TEIs should reflect the consultation hours of the faculty members to have time in entertaining school related problem among students and faculty members.
11. A five-year Institutional Development Program prepared by the researcher to augment the strengths for enhancement; to strengthen weaknesses for them to be converted as strengths; and to resolve problems encountered in accreditation to enliven the dedication and commitment of the Teacher Education Institution for its direction.
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