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IMPLEMENTING THE BACHELOR OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION PROGRAM IN THE LENSE OF ACCREDITATION

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Abstract

Through the conduct of an evaluation, this article examined the implementation of a Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEEd) program at a public institution. It defined the program's performance metrics and identified the obstacles that program implementers encountered. The study took a qualitative approach, relying heavily on document analysis to assess and evaluate documentation pertaining to the program's enrollment, graduation, Licensure Examination pass rate, and accreditation results. Semi-structured interview guides were devised, evaluated by specialists, and administered to university administrators, focusing on the college of education. Thematic analysis was used to elicit themes from the informants' comments during the interview.

Between 2012 and 2017, the program enrolled an increasing number of students. However, the BEEd program's graduation rate has declined due to the following factors: drop-out, moving, and K-12 transition program. The program's institutional LET performance is consistently higher than the national passing rate. In terms of accreditation, the area of VMGO is rated as excellent (4.62). On the other hand, the library was the accredited area of the program with a satisfactory degree of implementation (3.05). In general, the program is implemented at a very satisfactory level (3.74).

The program's implementers have identified issues with the program's execution, including an increased number of enrollees, a decreased number of graduates, and inadequacy of papers throughout the accreditation process. The report advises that SUCs focus the growth and sustainability of educational facilities, as well as the supply and improvement of student support and services. Sustain the program's level of execution through community awareness and involvement. The expansion of learning resources and materials in the library to ensure compliance with standards.

The accreditors' challenges should motivate members of the school community to take action to improve the program and obtain Level 3 accreditation by implementing the suggested ways to accomplish the program's objectives. A development strategy for the program was created to handle the hurdles and accomplish the target within a year. The recommended development

plan is customized and adaptable to the program's demands, which may assist program implementers in carrying out their obligations to students and the community.

Introduction

Elementary school is the first phase in a child's education. Early childhood education is widely accepted to have a significant impact on how kids perform in following years of education. Elementary education is the earliest phase of a child's education, recognizing the crucial nature of these years. Early education is critical for a child's success since it enables youngsters to develop essential skills such as reading, writing, mathematics, and imagination, as well as character development, analytical reasoning, logical judgment, communication and socialization ability, and holistic growth. Because elementary education is so critical in people's lives, pre-service teachers in Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) must be trained and equipped in curriculum and instruction at this level. That is why elementary education programs at Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) must be examined on a constant basis to guarantee they remain responsive, relevant, and competitive.

The Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEEd) is a bachelor's degree in teacher education that prepares individuals to teach in elementary schools. The BEEd program's objective is to develop highly motivated and capable teachers with a focus on elementary education curriculum and practice. (Section 2017 of CMO No. 74). It draws on a range of related subjects, including social sciences, physics, mathematics, technology, languages, and the humanities, to ensure that graduates possess a breadth of knowledge and pedagogical preparation.

The academic community aspires to realize this aspiration by continuously improving instruction, increasing access to quality education, intensifying knowledge generation, improving organizational efficiency, enriching organizational governance, providing modern facilities and cutting-edge equipment, and promoting social responsibility through extension, manpower, and skills development training and community outreach services, and the establishment of consortia and other forms of

linkages with local and foreign institutions.

In response to this academic endeavor, the Don Honorio Ventura Technological State University (DHVTSU) in the Municipality of Bacolor, with six satellite campuses across the Province of Pampanga that was renamed as the Don Honorio Ventura State University (DHVSU), hereinafter referred to as the University as one of the state-funded Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) has committed itself in producing competent graduates in various fields, particularly, professional

teachers. Hence, the university has offered BEEd program which is under the College of Education (COE).

The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) designated the DHVSU-COE as a Center of Development (COD) on May 16, 2016, and CHED issued a memorandum approving the designation on March 31, 2016. This designation is given to a teacher education program within a college or department of a university that has the potential to develop into a Center of Excellence in the future. To be considered for COD, a program must have passed the initial screening process, which includes Level II accreditation/international standing and a minimum accumulated score of 65 points in the following categories instructional quality – 45 percent, research and publication – 30%, institutional qualification – 5%, and extension and linkages – 20%.

At present, the program is continuously accredited by the Accrediting Agency of Chartered Colleges and Universities in the Philippines (AACUP). The BEEd program is highly in demand in the community, which is why it is being offered across all campuses. However, the program is challenged to produce topnotchers and upgrade the passing rate on the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET). There are only few faculty members with specialization in the elementary education who teach the program.

As a result, the study intended to characterize the BEEd program's success measures, including enrollment, graduation rates, and LET rates. Additionally, it analyzed the consequences of the degree of execution of the program as established by external accreditation. Additionally, the research uncovered issues that program implementers encountered during the program's execution. A development plan was designed to address the issues and improve the program's execution. The findings of this paper will contribute to increasing the availability of the BEEd program at Teacher Education Institutions in this regard (TEIs).

Research Methodology

The qualitative technique was chosen because it comprises the collecting and analysis of non-numerical data (e.g., text, video, or audio) in order to gain a deeper understanding of individuals' thoughts, perspectives, or experiences. It can be used to get in-depth knowledge about a subject or to generate new research ideas. 2020 - (Bhadari).

This study incorporated document analysis. It is a type of qualitative study in which the researcher interprets data to create context and meaning for an evaluative issue. 2009 (Bowen).

For enrollment, graduation, LET rate, and accreditation data, document analysis was utilized to assess or evaluate documents—both printed and electronic (computer-based and Internet-

transmitted) content. As with other qualitative research methodologies, document analysis necessitates the examination and interpretation of data in order to extract meaning, acquire insight, and build empirical knowledge (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; see also Rapley, 2007). This study was conducted entirely online at Don Honorio Ventura State University's College of Education. Cabambangan, Villa de Bacolor, Pampanga is where it is located. This was chosen since the study is entirely focused on the university's Bachelor of Elementary Education program.

The informants complied with the study's requirements for providing information. There were seven informants, all of whom were faculty members, including the college's dean. Only individuals with at least five years of teaching experience in the program and who participated in the program's accreditation were interviewed. The researcher emailed the registrar's office to request permission to collect data on program indicators such as enrollment and graduation rates for the Bachelor of Elementary Education program. Additionally, the rate of passing the Licensure Examination for Teachers was acquired. The researcher then wrote to the vice president's office at Don Honorio Ventura State University, requesting the results of the program's accreditation survey. These findings included an assessment of the vision, mission, and objectives, faculty, curriculum and instruction, student assistance, research, extension, and community involvement, physical plant and facilities, library, laboratories, and administration. A letter of permission was also issued through email to the study's informants, requesting permission to conduct an interview via Google Meet.

Thematic analysis was used in this investigation. Interviews were conducted as part of this investigation. Thematic analysis is a subset of qualitative data analysis that requires poring over a data collection (for example, transcripts from in-depth interviews or focus groups) in search of meaningful patterns. (2006) (Clarke & Braun).

The research is conducted in accordance with five essential ethical principles: avoidance of harm, avoidance of deception, respect for privacy, practice of confidentiality, and the notion of informed consent. This research will take into account the informant's anonymity and confidentiality. Prior to the one-on-one interview, consent will be requested from informants. Additionally, we examined the informant's desired time and location. Additionally, ethical considerations will be consistent with the policy and guidelines outlined in RA 10173 or the 2012 Data Privacy Law, which protects individuals from unauthorized processing of personal information that is private, not publicly available, and identifiable, which means that the individual's identity is apparent either directly

Result and Discussion

Since academic year 2012 (1158), the DHVSU-BEEd program has seen steady increase in enrollment. By 2020, the program will have the greatest enrollment ever (1690). Students select universities on a range of criteria, including educational excellence, facility availability, campus environment, and personal characteristics. 2012 (Mehboob et al.). Additionally, affluence influences children's educational choices along the public-private school divide. The location of the school is a significant factor in determining HEI selection, and a campus visit is critical. (Jain, 2014). As a result, to attract students, SUCs should place a premium on the sustainability and growth of learning facilities and quality of education. From 2016 to 2018, the number of graduates from the DHVSU BEEd program grew (219). However, a downward tendency was noticed between the academic years 2019 and 2020, when it produced the fewest graduates (103). With this in mind, Astleitner (2000) discovered that employment, family, study obligations, inadequate time, bad health, and study load were all causes for students in the Bachelor of Education degree to withdraw from the program. In this vein, a recent study of dropout rates in web-based distance education discovered that communication or social contact between students and instructors has a significant impact in the decision to withdraw from a web-based course. The institutional passing percentage in LET for the DHVSU BEEd program was lowest in March 2018 (21.80 percent), while the greatest passing percentage was achieved in September 2019. (37.82 percent). In general, the institutional passing rate is higher than the national average. Additionally, as Hermosisima (2003) notes, one of the most frequently mentioned indicators of a university's excellence in the country is graduates' performance on licensure exams. The licensure examination is one of the final hurdles to overcome during the licensing process. A board has overall responsibility for ensuring that the examination conforms to technical, professional, and legal standards and for protecting the public's health, safety, and welfare through the evaluation of applicants' ability to function successfully. Once an applicant has passed the licensing examination, the board must be confident in granting the license, demonstrating to the public that the licensee is at the very least qualified to practice at the time of initial licensure. According to the AACUP's 2017 survey accreditation of DHVSU's BEEd program, the level of execution is exceptional (4.62) in the area of VMGO and satisfactory (3.05) in the area of library. In general, the program has a very excellent implementation level of 3.74. Several difficulties were identified by informants during the execution of the BEEd program, including an increase in enrollment, a drop in graduation rates, a low national passing rate on the LET, and insufficient documentation during the accreditation process.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The expanding enrollment in the program demonstrates the need for BEd graduates, as well as the university's engaging facilities and proximity. The decline in graduation rates has been attributed to students' socioeconomic capabilities and preferences. The program's implementers took steps to ensure that its corresponding institutional LET passing rate remained higher than the national average. The DHVSU BEd program has met the accrediting agency's minimum quality assurance standards for licensed institutions and universities. Like any other educational program, the university's teaching education program for elementary pre-service teachers have confronted challenges that pave the way for its improvement. The proposed development plan, which is tailored to the program's requirements and responsive to those requirements, may assist program implementers in carrying out their responsibilities to students and the community. Generally, the program manifested a very satisfactory level of implementation based on the requirements of an external accrediting agency despite the challenges it has confronted.

The university could establish a program to address the declining number of graduates each year, and in terms of the Licensure Examination, the university may develop free Licensure Examination reviews that may be conducted within the college as part of the college's extracurricular or additional services to graduating students. Despite the fact that the College of Education, particularly the BEd program, performed well in the accreditation process, the researcher recommends that the university maintain high quality standards by continuing to conduct activities that contribute to the college's outstanding performance in the accreditation program, such as the faculty development program, regular curriculum revisions, continuous improvement of facilities and laboratories, and encouraging more faculty to embark on the accreditation process. The recommendation of the accreditors Admission to the BEd program should be based on available space and facilities. A reasonable match should exist between the student population and available resources. Additional lecture halls should be constructed to accommodate students comfortably in a supportive setting. The institution may elect to focus only on the well-being of its pupils. The guidance counseling office or the office of student services may conduct a survey to obtain information about students' personal concerns in order to aid them in avoiding school dropout. The institution should plan ahead and obtain all of the documentation required for accreditation preparation. Faculty members, particularly those in the BEd program, should collaborate to accomplish the program's goals and objectives. This will also be necessary to pass the AACUP accreditor's accreditation visit. The program may consider enforcing its admissions and retention policies to guarantee that only qualified and outstanding applicants are maintained. A particular program should consider pre-screening evaluations such as an aptitude test and an interview. The cost per student, faculty-to-student

ratio, faculty qualifications, and accreditation should all be considered by administrators while designing the Bachelor of Elementary Education. The program may take into account CHED requirements while choosing faculty members for the BEd. Syllabus monitoring and evaluation should be rigorously done to ensure consistency in the delivery of information. The program may provide a syllabus development session for inexperienced instructors. There are some instances that are uncontrollable, such as the ratio of guidance counselors to pupils. There were a restricted number of guidance counselors who applied to the university.

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