



CONCERNS FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE AND EXCELLENCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Abstract:

Higher education is the backbone of any society. It is the quality of higher education that decides the quality of human resources in a country. Higher Education, as we see today, is a complex system that facilitates teaching, research, extension and international cooperation and understanding.

This paper is a documentary analysis of quality and quality assurance in Higher Education. The first part introduces the international perspective of quality from the context of U.N. adopting a common vision, direction, framework and standards for Higher Education Institutions called the "World Declaration on Higher Education for the 21st Century." CHED's role in promoting quality and excellence in Higher Education in the Philippines was discussed, as well as some quality indicators.

Finally, the Philippine accreditation process as a way to assure quality was examined at the latter part and the current government's thrust on ensuring quality in higher education e.g. accreditation targets, indicators and measures towards the end of 2015.

Key Words: excellence, quality assurance, accreditation, higher education and institutions (HE/HEIs), Commission on Higher Education (CHED)

Introduction:

Higher education is the backbone of any society. It is the quality of higher education that decides the quality of human resources in a country. Higher Education, as we see today, is a complex system that facilitates teaching, research, extension and international cooperation and understanding.¹

Quality as defined by the British Standards Institution (BSI) refers to the totality of features and characteristics of a product or service that bear on its

ability to satisfy stated or implied needs² (BSI, 1991). The International Organization of Standardizations (ISO) defines quality as something that can be determined by comparing a set of inherent characteristics with a set of requirements. If those inherent characteristics meet all requirements, high or excellent quality is achieved. If those characteristics do not meet all requirements, a low or poor level of quality is achieved. Quality is therefore, a question of degree. The quality of something depends on a set of inherent characteristics and a set of requirements and how well the former complies with the latter (ISO,

¹ Mishra, Sanjay (2006) "Quality Assurance in Higher Education: An Introduction" National Assessment and Accreditation Council, Bangalore, India and Commonwealth of Learning, Vancouver, Canada

² BSI (1991) Quality Vocabulary Part 2: Quality Concepts and Related Definitions. London: BSI.



2010)³. Meanwhile, Greene and Harvey (1991) identified five (5) different approaches to defining quality as follows: (1) in terms of exceptional or exceeding high standards and passing a required standard; (2) in terms of consistency or exhibited through “zero defects” and “getting right the first time”, making a quality culture; (3) as fitness for purpose – meaning the product or service meets the stated purpose, customer specifications and satisfaction; (4) as value for money through efficiency and effectiveness; and (5) as transformative in terms of qualitative change⁴. Lastly, quality assurance as defined by ISO is a set of activities intended to establish confidence that quality requirements will be met⁵.

Educators and Administrators must focus on quality as a major concern in running/operating Higher Education Institution (HEIs) not only as a way to conform with CHED’s directives and government directives or a mere compliance with Accreditation Requirements but rather it should be a bottom-up approach - that everyone within the organization should be conscious about. According to Mishra (2006), some of the major reasons why educators/administrators should be concerned about quality and quality assurance in education are the following:

- (1) Competition: We are entering a new regime, where competition among educational institutions for students and funds are highly significant and in order to survive education institutions need to worry about their quality.
- (2) Customer Satisfaction. Students, parents or sponsoring agencies as customers of the education institutions are now highly conscious of their rights or getting value for their money and time spent. They are now demanding good quality teaching and receiving employable skill sets, and thus we

should constantly worry about the relevance of our courses and programs to the needs of the labor market.

- (3) Maintaining Standards: As educational institutions, we are always concerned about setting our own standard and maintaining it continuously every year. In doing this, we should consciously make efforts to improve quality of the educational transactions as well as the education provisions and facilities.
- (4) Accountability. Every institution is accountable to its stakeholders in terms of the funds (public or private) used on it. Concern for quality will ensure accountability of the funds utilized and will better inform the stakeholders about taking appropriate decisions. Thus, quality can be considered as a monitoring mechanism.
- (5) Improve employee morale and motivation. Your concern for quality as an institution will improve the moral and motivation of the staff in performing their duties and responsibilities. If a quality system is in place, the internal processes would be systematic making every department complementing each other’s service domain and helping in developing internal customer satisfaction leading to high morale and motivation.
- (6) Credibility, prestige and status: If you are concerned about quality, continuously and not once in a while, it will bring in credibility to individuals and your institution because of consistency leading to practice, status and brand value.
- (7) Image and visibility: Quality institutions have the capacity to attract better stakeholder support, like getting merited students from far and near, increased donations/grants from funding agencies and higher employer interest for easy placement of graduates.⁶

³ ISO Quality Management Definition, Praxiom Research Group Limited (2010) <http://www.praxiom.com/iso-definition.htm> (dated retrieved: February 16, 2011)

⁴ Harvey, L. and Green D. (1993). Defining “quality”, Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education. 18(1), 9-34

⁵ ISO Quality Management Definition, Praxiom Research Group Limited (2010) <http://www.praxiom.com/iso-definition.htm> (dated retrieved: February 16, 2011)

⁶ Mishra, Sanjay (2006). “Why Worry About Quality”. Quality Assurance in Higher Education: An Introduction National Assessment and Accreditation



Clearly, the foregoing explains that quality has been defined differently in different contexts. But one thing is for sure about quality in higher education, that is, educational process should be such that it ensures students' achievement of their goals, thereby, satisfying the needs of the society and generally contribute/help in national development.

This paper is a documentary analysis of articles that has been written about quality and quality assurance in Higher Education. The paper introduces at initial part the international perspective of quality from the context of United Nations thereby adopting a common vision, direction, framework and standards for Higher Education Institutions called the "*World Declaration on Higher Education for the 21st Century*." Such Declaration/Covenant was made in appreciation of the fact that Higher Education is confronted with formidable challenges and must undertake radical change and renewal, so that our society, which is currently undergoing a profound crisis of values, can transcend economic considerations and incorporate deeper dimensions of morality and spirituality. Thus, it is with the aim of providing solutions to these challenges and of setting in motion a process of in-depth reform in higher education worldwide that UNESCO has convened a World Conference on Higher Education in the Twenty-First Century: Vision and Action. A focus on what the Declaration says about quality is the one considered in this paper.

This paper further discusses the quality and excellence in Higher Education from the local perspective, particularly, that of the Commission on Higher Education of the Philippines or the CHED. The CHED's role in promoting quality and excellence in education will be looked at; its powers and functions relative to quality and excellence will also be highlighted as well as some quality indicators taken from the materials they published in the past. Finally, the Philippine accreditation process as a way to assure quality will also be discussed e.g. accreditation targets, indicators and measures towards the end of 2016 as explained in the Medium Term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP).

I. INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE OF QUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

The World Declaration on Higher Education for the Twenty First Century provides in its vision to action statement that: "quality in higher education is a multidimensional concept, which should embrace all its functions, and activities: teaching and academic programs, research and scholarship, staffing, students, buildings, facilities, equipment, services to the community and the academic environment. Internal self-evaluation and external review, conducted openly by independent specialists, if possible with international expertise, are vital for enhancing quality. Independent national bodies should be established and comparative standards of quality, recognized at international level, should be defined. Due attention should be paid to specific institutional, national and regional contexts in order to take into account diversity and to avoid uniformity. Stakeholders should be an integral part of the institutional evaluation process.

Quality also requires that higher education should be characterized by its international dimension: exchange of knowledge, interactive networking, mobility of teachers and students, and international research projects, while taking into account the national cultural values and circumstances.

To attain and sustain national, regional or international quality, certain components are particularly relevant, notably careful selection of staff and continuous staff development, in particular through the promotion of appropriate programs for academic staff development, including teaching/learning methodology and mobility between countries, between higher education institutions, and between higher education institutions and the world of work, as well as student mobility within and between countries. The new information technologies are an important tool in this process, owing to their impact on the acquisition of knowledge and know-how."⁷



Quality assurance is an all-embracing term covering all the policies, processes, and actions through which the quality of higher education is maintained and developed. (Campbell & Rozsnyai, 2002, p. 32)

The UNESCO definition enlarges on the context of Quality Assurance when it states that it is: An all-embracing term referring to an ongoing, continuous process of evaluating (assessing, monitoring, guaranteeing, maintaining, and improving) the quality of a higher education system, institutions, or programs. As a regulatory mechanism, quality assurance focuses on both accountability and improvement, providing information and judgments (not ranking) through an agreed upon and consistent process and well-established criteria. Many systems make a distinction between internal quality assurance (i.e., intra-institutional practices in view of monitoring and improving the quality of higher education) and external quality assurance (i.e., inter- or supra-institutional schemes of assuring the quality of higher education institutions and programmes). Quality assurance activities depend on the existence of the necessary institutional mechanisms preferably sustained by a solid quality culture. Quality management, quality enhancement, quality control, and quality assessment are means through which quality assurance is ensured. The scope of quality assurance is determined by the shape and size of the higher education system. Quality assurance varies from accreditation, in the sense that the former is only a prerequisite for the latter. In practice, the relationship between the two varies a great deal from one country to another. Both imply various consequences such as the capacity to operate and to provide educational services, the capacity to award officially recognized degrees, and the right to be funded by the state. Quality assurance is often considered as a part of the quality management of higher education, while sometimes the two terms are used synonymously. (Vlăsceanu et al., 2004, pp. 48–49)

II. PHILIPPINE PERSPECTIVE: CHED'S ROLE ON QUALITY AND EXCELLENCE

A. PHILIPPINE HIGHER EDUCATION: CHED AT THE FOREFRONT

“The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) was established through Republic Act No. 7722, otherwise known as the Higher Education Act of 1994. This was signed into law by the former President Fidel V. Ramos on 18 May 1994. The Creation of CHED was part of a broad agenda for reforms in the country's education system, outlined by the Congressional Commission on Education (EDCOM) in 1992. Part of the reform is the trifocalization of the education sector. The three governing bodies in the education sector are the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) for tertiary and graduate education, the Department of Education (DepEd) for basic and secondary education, and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) for technical-vocational and middle level education. To improve coordination and integration in the higher education systems and to strengthen the policy formation process in the State Universities and Colleges (SUCs), Republic Act 8292 otherwise known as the Higher Education Modernization Act of 1997 was signed into law. R.A. 8292 allows SUCs to initiate mergers and restructuring. It is also meant to improve the internal governance of individual SUCs. This law mandates the CHED Chairman to chair the Board of the SUCs or delegate to the other Commissioners.”⁸

“CHED is responsible in the formulation and implementation of policies, plans and programs for the development and efficient operation of the higher education system in the country. The delivery of higher education in the Philippines is provided by private and public higher education institutions (HEIs).”⁹

Recent data from CHED showed that the country had 1,573 private institutions and 607 state-run colleges and universities, a total of 2,180 HEI's as of this writing. The Public HEIs include: 110 SUCs main campuses, 388 satellite campuses, 93 LUCs, 10 Other Government Schools, 1 CHED Supervised

⁸ CHED Annual Report 2003. Background p. 8

⁹ <http://202.57.63.198/chedwww/index.php/eng/Information>



Institution (CHED-ARMM) and 5 special HEIs¹⁰. This data is illustrated in the following table, to wit:

Table 1. Distribution of Higher Education Institutions by Region and Sector as of August 2010

Region	Public	Private	Total
I	30	78	108
II	22	47	69
III	59	168	227
IVA	74	202	276
IVB	45	41	86
V	45	100	145
VI	72	80	152
VII	35	126	161
VIII	42	58	100
IX	49	52	101
X	19	64	83
XI	17	78	95
XII	16	75	91
NCR	34	278	312
CAR	19	33	52
ARMM	15	50	65
Caraga	14	43	57
Total	607	1573	2180

Source: CHED Website

B. CLASSIFICATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES

1. Private Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)

“Private HEIs are established under the Corporation Code and are governed by special laws and general provisions of such Code. Those under non-sectarian are duly incorporated, owned and operated by private entities that are not affiliated to any religious organization while those under sectarian are usually non-stock, non-profit, duly incorporated, owned and operated by a religious organization. Generally, private HEIs are covered by the policies, standards

¹⁰ <http://www.ched.gov.ph>

and guidelines (PSGs) set by CHED in terms of program offerings, curriculum, administration and faculty academic qualifications, among others. Officials or owners of private HEIs usually manage their internal organizations and implement the PSGs formulated by CHED.”¹¹

2. State Universities and Colleges (SUCs)

“State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) are chartered public higher education institutions established by law, administered and financially subsidized by the government. SUCs have their own charters. The Board of Regents (BOR) for state universities and a Board of Trustees (BOT) for state colleges maintain the formulation and approval of policies, rules and standards in SUCs. The Chairman of CHED heads these boards. However, CHED Order No. 31 series of 2001 of the Commission *en banc*, also authorizes CHED Commissioners to head the BOR/ BOT of SUCs. Implementation of policies and management are vested on the President, staff, and support units of the public higher education institutions.”¹²

3. Local Universities and Colleges (LUCs)

“The local universities and colleges (LUCs) are those established by the local government through resolutions or ordinances. LUCs are financially supported by the local government concerned.”¹³

4. CHED Supervised Institution (CSI)

“A CHED Supervised Institution (CSI) is non-chartered public post-secondary education institution established by law, administered, supervised and financially supported by government.”¹⁴

5. Other Government Schools (OGS)

“Other government schools (OGS) are public secondary and post-secondary education institutions, usually technical-vocational education institutions that offer higher education programs. Special HEIs are directly under the government agency stipulated in the law that created them. They provide

¹¹ <http://202.57.63.198/chedwww/index.php/eng/Information> (date retrieved: December 2010)

¹² *Ibid*

¹³ *Ibid*

¹⁴ *Ibid*



specialized training in areas such as military science and national defense.”¹⁵

C. QUALITY AND EXCELLENCE: AT THE APEX OF CHED’S ROLE

“The CHED was created out of a broad agenda that aimed to institute reforms in the Philippine educational system, as outlined by the Congressional Commission on Education (EDCOM) in 1992. The EDCOM particularly highlighted the poor quality of Philippine education among other shortcomings of the sector. The poor quality of graduates was mainly attributed to the poor quality of teachers, inadequate teaching and learning facilities of the institutions, and ill-structured curricular offerings among others. However, with the trifocalization of the educational system back in 1994, CHED was tasked to provide the needed attention and proper focus in improving the deteriorating state of higher education in the country. With quality and excellence being a primordial concern, the CHED was mandated (by virtue of Republic Act 7722 otherwise known as the (Higher Education Act of 1994) to promote quality education in line with its mission to accelerate the development of high-level professionals ready to meet international competition. Thus, CHED was founded with quality and excellence at the apex of its goals. Among the powers and functions of CHED relative to quality and excellence are the following:

- Formulate and recommend development plans, policies, priorities, and programs on higher education and research;
- Formulate and recommend development plans, policies, priorities, and programs on research;
- Set minimum standards for programs and institution of higher learning recommended by panels of expert in the field and subject to public hearing, and enforce the same;
- Monitor and evaluate the performance of programs and institution of higher learning for appropriate incentives as well as the impositions of sanctions such as, but not limited to diminution or withdrawal of subsidy, recommendation on the downgrading or

withdrawal of accreditation, program termination or school course;

- Identify, support and develop potential centers of excellence in program areas needed for the development of the world-class scholarship, nation-building and national development; and
- Rationalize programs and institution of higher learning and set standards, policies, and guidelines for the creation of new ones as well as the conversation or elevation of schools to institution of higher learning subject to budgetary limitations and the number of institution of higher learning in the province or region where creation, conversion or elevation is sought to be made.”¹⁶

D. INDICATORS OF QUALITY AND EXCELLENCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

“Highlighted in the Medium-Term Higher Education Development and Investment Plan 2001-2004 (MTHEDIP) and the Long-Term Higher Education Development Plan 2001-2010 (LTHEDP), the levels of quality and excellence in higher education are determined by measuring the following:

- (1) faculty qualification,
- (2) the performance of graduates in licensure examination, and
- (3) the accreditation status of educational program and employability of graduates.

With these indicators, CHED has been implementing its programs and projects following the five key result areas toward upgrading quality and achieving excellence in higher education, namely:

- (1) Improved quality and international comparability of higher education programs/institutions;
- (2) improved quality of teachers;
- (3) improved research and extension capability;
- (4) improved student selection/admission system; and
- (5) improved performance of graduates.

CHED’s strategies for promoting quality and excellence involve the upgrading of HEIs programs

¹⁵ Ibid

¹⁶ CHED Annual Report 2003, Background, page 12



and standards towards global competitiveness and providing a program assistance to prepare students entering the higher education system. These strategies, as highlighted in the Medium Term Public Investment, have been started earlier by CHED with the assistance of other governmental agencies, the administrative and funding from the local and foreign agencies. A major project that embarks on the upgrading of the quality of higher education is the Higher Education Development Program which aims to strengthen HEDF Development activities; strengthen the quality assurance system through curriculum benchmarking.¹⁷

In its 2009 Annual Report, CHED highlighted its undertakings when it comes to quality and excellence. During the leadership of Chairman Angeles, regional consultative meetings were held in all 17 regions in the country to disseminate the **Roadmap to Quality Higher Education: A New Philippine Education Highway**. A unified higher education sector was introduced whereby all HEIs were organized in one body which subsequently prompted the organization of Regional Associations of HEIs or the RAHEIs composed of both public and private HEIs. The creation of such body proposes the conduct of academic, cultural and sports activities culminating in a national competition supported by CHED. It also serve as conduits of CHED and CHED Regional Offices in granting incentives to HEIs such as scholarships and financial assistance. In ensuring the quality education is delivered, CHED implemented the following in 2009:

- (1) Development of policies, standards and guidelines (PSGs);
- (2) Issuance of permits and recognitions;
- (3) Provide support to identified centers of excellence and centers of development and crafting/issuing of timely appropriate policies, standards and guidelines (PSGs);
- (4) Grant autonomous and deregulated status to HEIs which demonstrated an indisputable track record of integrity, academic excellence, effective institutional management sustainability and public accountability;
- (5) Conduct IQuAME Accreditation or the Institutional Quality Assurance through Monitoring and Evaluation which is a

mechanism for monitoring and evaluating the outcomes of the programs, processes and services of HEIs in the key areas of quality teaching and learning as supported by the governance and management, support for students, relations with the community and management of resources;

- (6) Grant and retention of University Status and University System for deserving HEIs which have proven excellence in the areas of instruction, research and extension in furtherance of promoting quality education in the country;
- (7) Creation of Coordinating Council for Accreditation (CCA) in adherence to Executive Order 705 and 705-A rationalizing the accreditation process in higher education;
- (8) Process application for Distance Education and Transnational Education among HEI who intends to provide education via these means;
- (9) Assistance in the upgrading of faculty qualifications and improving management at the institutional level; and
- (10) Monitoring of performance in the licensure examination.¹⁸

III. ACCREDITATION AND ACCREDITING BODIES

Accreditation is a process for assessing and upgrading the educational quality of higher education institutions and programs through self-evaluation and peer judgment. It is a system of evaluation based on the standards of an accrediting agency, and a means of assuring and improving the quality of education. The process leads to a grant of accredited status by an accrediting agency and provides public recognition and information on educational quality. To illustrate the accreditation process among private HEIs in the country, Figure 1 is herewith presented to summarize the process. As seen in the figure, accreditation among private HEIs is voluntary (therefore, it's not mandatory or obligatory on the part of any private HEI). The process begins when they voluntarily submit themselves for accreditation to any FAAP certified accrediting agencies¹⁹ as illustrated in the

¹⁸ CHED Annual Report 2009

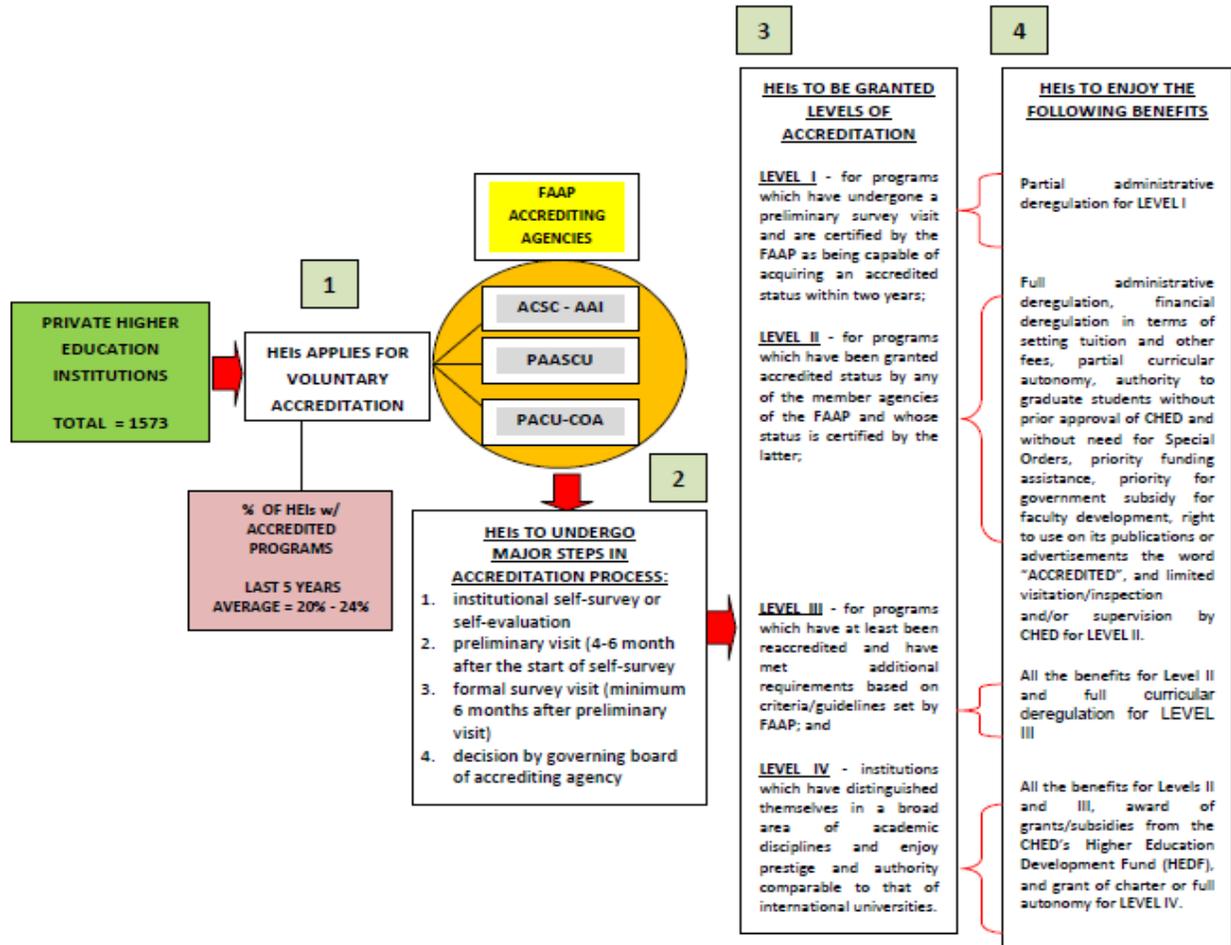
¹⁹ The Federation of Accrediting Agencies of the Philippines (FAAP) is the umbrella organization which is authorized to certify the accredited status of programs granted by the different accrediting agencies, namely: the Association of Christian Schools and Colleges Accrediting Agency, Inc. (ACSC-AAI), the Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges and

¹⁷ Ibid, pp. 12-18

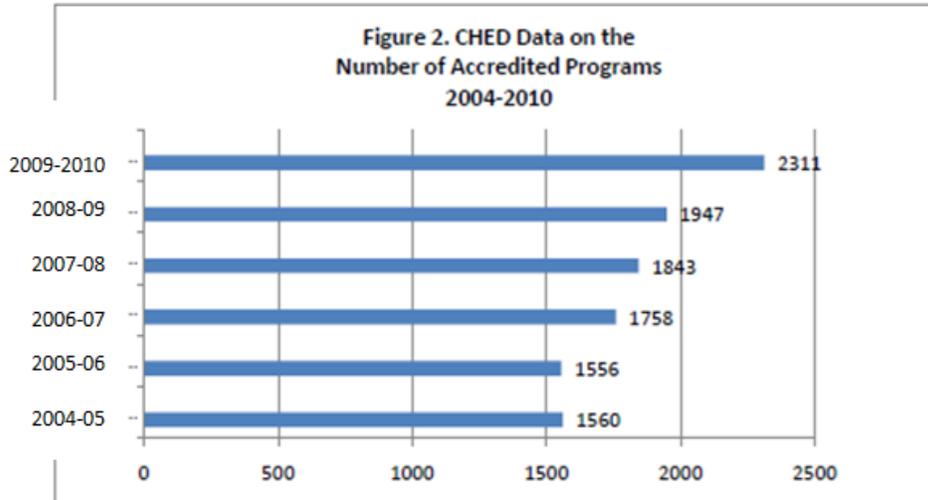


figure in process No. 1. The choice of which accrediting agency to choose depends on the institution's own preference or which goal/interest the applicant HEIs supports. Then the steps as indicated in Process No. 2 will have to be strictly adhered to. After this process, the granting of accreditation level will follow depending on what particular level an HEI is applying for. Once the level of accreditation is granted, an HEI will enjoy the benefits as indicated in Process No. 4.

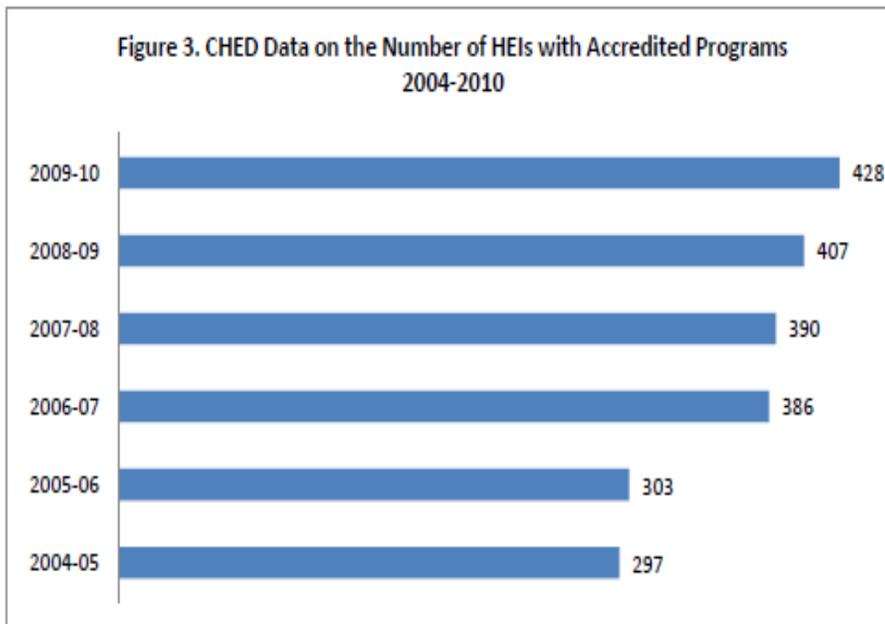
Figure 1.
Accreditation Process Among Private HEIs



It is worth stressing that of the 1573 private HEIs only an average of 20-24% percent submits themselves (as reflected 2004-2010 CHED data, see Figure 2 and 3 below) to voluntary accreditation and the remaining 75% chooses not to be accredited.



Source: Defensor (2010) "Quality Assurance in Southeast Asia: The Philippine Experience," paper delivered at SEAMEO RIHED



Source: Defensor (2010) "Quality Assurance in Southeast Asia: The Philippine Experience," paper delivered at SEAMEO RIHED

In a paper presented by Dr. Nenalyn Defensor in 2010, she mentioned that current data from CHED shows a total of 2,311 programs accredited. This number, according to her represents 7.5% of the combined baccalaureate and graduate programs in the country as seen in Figure 1.

She further stated that out of the 1,791 HEIs (excluding satellite campuses), only 428 HEIs have accredited programs or (23.8 or 24%) as reflected in Figure 3.



“As a whole, there are two types of accreditation in the Philippines, namely, government accreditation and private accreditation. Government accreditation is done by CHED which involves the process of issuance of government authorization to offer programs to the private HEIs in the form of permit or recognition.

The SUCs do not secure government authority from CHED in offering programs while the CSIs and LCUs in some instances secure authority when they do not have legal basis for the programs to be offered. In the case of the private HEIs, permit or recognition is granted to them upon compliance to the minimum requirements prescribed by CHED for the various programs. For this purpose, the CHED has Regional Offices in the different regions of the country assisted by the Regional Quality Assessment Teams (RQATs) in the different disciplines which are tasked to evaluate the extent of compliance of the HEIs to the minimum standards.”²⁰

On the part of public HEIs, the National Network of Quality Assurance Agencies (NNQAA) works as the umbrella network which is also recognized by the CHED to certify the accredited status of the public institutions. The NNQAA is composed of:

1. Accredited Chartered Colleges; and
2. The Association of Local College and Universities Commission on Accreditation (ALCUCOA)

As seen in figure 4, the process of accreditation for public HEIs is the same as that of private HEIs. The difference lies in the number of public HEIs which is only 607 as compared to the 1573 and that public HEIs applies accreditation either to AACUP (in the case of SUCs) or ALCUCOA (in the case of Local Colleges and Universities) which is both under the umbrella of the National Network of Quality Assurance Agencies (NNQAA) while those of private HEIs is under the umbrella of FAAP. As reflected, processes No. 2, 3 and 4 are common to both HEIs, regardless, whether its public or private institution.

Worth stressing is that not only that the commonalities appear in the process of accreditation of both public and private HEIs as seen in figures 2 and 4 (specifically in processes Nos. 2-4), but also on the scope of quality assurance of the accrediting agencies mentioned above e.g. ACSC – AAI, PAASCU, PACU-COA and AACUP. Table 2 below which were taken from Martin and Stella (2007) highlights how similar these accrediting bodies are in terms of scope of their quality assurance. The areas that are considered by the quality assurance agencies that do institutional accreditation are also similar.²¹

IV. 2010-2016 MEDIUM TERM PHILIPPINE DEVELOPMENT PLAN (MTPDP)

A. Targets for the next six (6) Years

The Medium Term Philippine Development Plan 2010-16 has specified the following targets in terms of Accreditation:

To realize this target in HEI accreditation, enrolment and graduation trends, the MTPDP 2010-16 has enunciated the furtherance of the following policies and strategies which shall be pursued for the next six (6) years:

²⁰http://stinusononlineinstitute.com/yahoo_site_admin/assets/docs/CHED_ACCREDITATION_IN_THE_PHILIPPINES.67223608.pdf
Date Retrieved: August 22, 2011

²¹ Martin, Michaela & Stella, Antony “External Quality Assurance in Higher Education: Making Choices”, UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning, Paris 2007

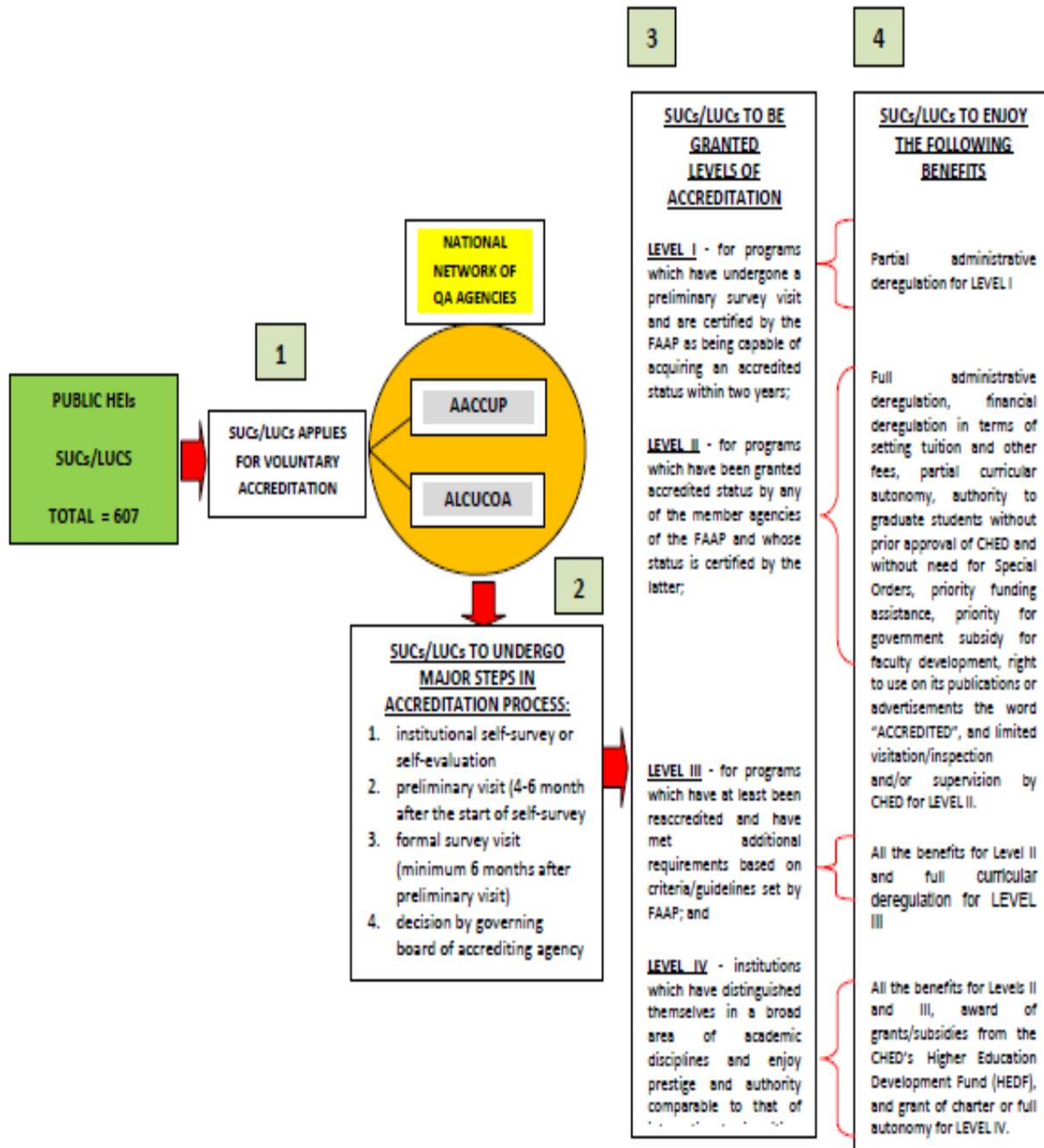


Figure 4.
Accreditation Process Among Public HEIs



Table 2. Standards for quality assurance in the Philippines Program accreditation by the four accrediting associations of the Philippines²³

The (accreditation or quality assurance) agencies engage qualified faculty members and professionals to develop detailed criteria specific to each program or course of study. The criteria may differ from one agency to another, as might their application, but the scope of the review based on the areas covered by the standards of each agency is almost identical.

S. No.	ACSCAA	PAASCU	PACUCOA	AACCUP
1	Purposes and objectives	Purposes and objectives	Purposes and objectives	Mission, goals and objectives
2	Faculty	Faculty	Faculty	Faculty
3	Instruction	Instruction	Instruction	Curriculum and program studies
4	Library	Library	Library	Library
5	Laboratories	Laboratories	Laboratories	Physical facilities and Laboratories
6	Physical plant and facilities	Physical plant and facilities	Physical plant and facilities	
7	Student personnel services	Student services	Student personnel services	Students
8	Social orientation and community involvement	Social orientation and community involvement	Social orientation and community involvement	Extension and community
9	Organization and research administration	Administration	Organization and research administration	Administration

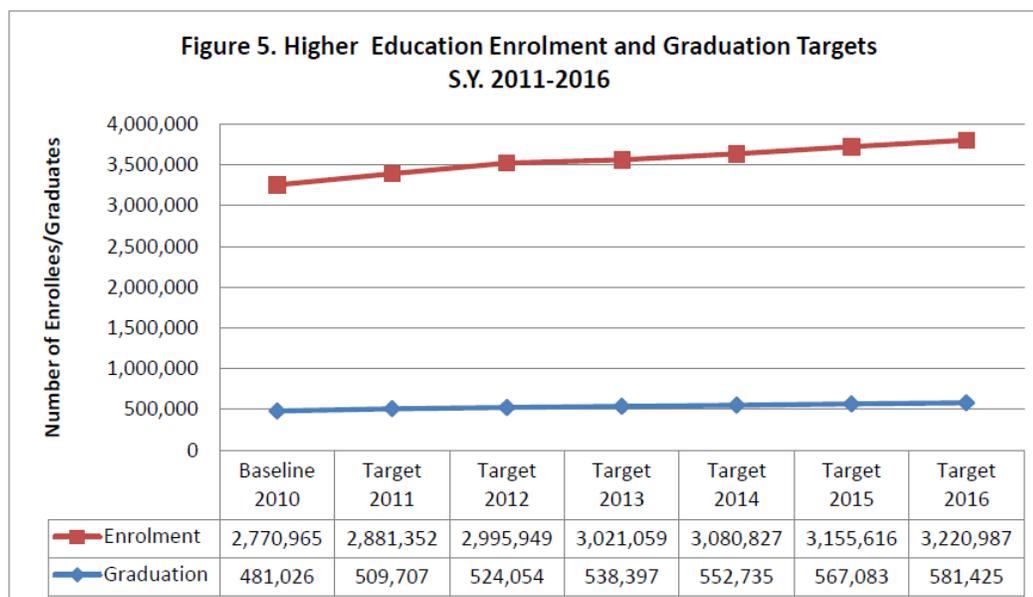
Legend: ACSCAA = Association of Christian Schools and Colleges Accreditation Agency
 PAASCU = Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities
 PACUCOA = Philippine Association of Colleges and Universities Commission on Accreditation
 AACCUP = Accrediting Association of Chartered Colleges and Universities in the Philippines

Table 3. Accreditation Targets 2011-2016

Accreditation	Baseline	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Percent of Higher Education institutions with accredited programs	20	20	23	26	29	32	35

Source: Medium Term Philippine Development Plan 2010-2016, Chapter 8 – Social Development p. 257

In terms of enrolment and Graduation Targets it specifically provides the following figure as illustrated in Figure 5:



Source: Medium Term Philippine Development Plan 2010-2016, Chapter 8 – Social Development p. 256

1. Harness private sector resources in the delivery and monitoring of, social marketing and advocacy for education, especially higher education;
2. Make education and training truly inclusive, and expand opportunities for lifelong learning;
3. Align the pedagogy of science and mathematics education with the requirements to the global environment, strike a strong balance between technology and livelihood education and expand the use of ICT in technology-based student learning packages to enhance teaching-learning approach e.g. indexing of curriculum concepts and competences for systematic development of e-learning materials.
4. Strengthen, streamline, and improve the learner assessment system based on the expanded definition of Functional Literacy, utilizing it as a mechanism for: (a) a more comprehensive measurement of system performance; (b) curriculum development and instructional delivery; (c) further learning and training enhancement; (d) career and skill aptitude and job readiness; and (e) actual entry into employment.
5. Work for highly accountable higher education subsystem and institution with strong external governance, management, and financing (including locally-funded and maintained institutions), thus demonstrating desired socioeconomic impact, responding to the imperatives of the globalization, and at the same time reaching out to politically-challenged areas and communities. HEIs shall be encourage to incorporate the promotion of peace, sustainable development, gender equality, and women empowerment in appropriate parts of the curriculum and in agendas for research and extensions;
6. Rationalize the number, size and roles of HEIs through systematic inventions, including amalgamation, phase-out closure of nonperforming HEIs and redundant programs, and harmonization and complementation of offerings;
7. Enhance the cross-level mobility of students between higher education and middle-level skills development based on the Philippine National Qualification Framework (PNQF) through ladderization, the expanded tertiary education,



equivalency and accreditation program (ETEEAP) and other modalities;

8. Devise a transnational education (TNE) strategy in programs and services for both inbound and outbound students and workers, including mutual recognition/accreditation of skill and professional development of Filipino workers vis-à-vis neighboring countries. Reasonable and mutually beneficial supervision and regulation of TNE should lead to quality assurance and management of foreign providers, as well as the integrity and competitiveness of Filipino providers;
9. Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the demand-supply match for critical skills and high level professions by: (a) addressing the problem of job-skills mismatch through tighter industry-academe links and better dissemination of labor market information (including career guidance and counseling); (b) emphasizing education and training in generic competencies such as trainability, work ethics, ICT literacy, critical thinking and problem solving and communications skills; and (c) improving levels of competencies among trainers and assessors in human resource development, including heightened gender sensitivity;
10. Balance the demands of globalization through a locally-adapted/indigenized curricula that promote and preserve indigenous knowledge by: (a) expanding and upgrading the capacity to teach foreign languages in response to the requirements of internationally-shared human resource and emerging needs in the ASEAN region; (b) integrating balanced messages and migration and development in the Philippine education, both in the formal and alternative learning system; (c) making the education system responsive to the needs of global community, while minimizing brain drain, encouraging brain gain and protecting the Filipino family from the social cost of migration; (d) encouraging Filipinos overseas to remain rooted in their culture through the appreciation of Filipino languages, culture and heritage.

B. Legislative Agenda to be Pursued

In pursuit of these policies and strategies, following Legislative Agenda will be pursued:

1. **Amendment To CHED Charter (RA 7722) Towards Comprehensive Higher Education Reform Law** – this seeks to pursue the recommended measures of the Philippine Education Sector Study (PESS), to eliminate the conflict of interest between the system of internal and external governance due to CHED’s chairmanship of the governing boards. Other needed provisions include:
 - For LGU – created/funded HEIs to be part and parcel of the overall governance of higher education, for them to conform to national standards and best practices;
 - Clear-cut definition of the functions of regional offices;
 - Strengthen the management of the Higher Education Development Fund;
 - Strengthen, safeguard and institutionalize normative financing; and
 - Update private higher education provisions of the Education Act of 1978
2. **Public Higher Education Institution Restructuring Bill** – this seeks to address the urgent need to innovate and rationalize the system of governance, financing and quality assurance of publicly funded institutions of higher learning, to make state higher education more accountable and responsive to both the needs of the students and the economy.

V. Conclusion

Truly, so many things have been written about quality assurance and excellence in higher education and so many efforts have been made to instill quality and excellence among HEIs and make it a way of life. For one, the Philippine government has been doing its fair share to regulate HEI providers and to assure that provision of education is one that is based on the principle of quality and excellence as evidenced by its enumeration of what it intends to accomplish in Higher Education for the



next six (6) years under the MTPDP 2010-16. While different HEI stakeholders (e.g. government, CHED, HEIs, students, Accrediting bodies) continuously adopts safety nets to ensure quality provision among HEIs, still, it is necessary to consider guidelines written by known international governmental organizations on the matter to provide and guide us with best practices. An example of this is the guidelines for quality provision in cross-border higher education which is a timely document that addresses key higher education issues in a more globalized society.

Finally, allow us to end this paper by stating that while efforts have been made to provide mechanisms on quality assurance and excellence, it is still necessary that national quality assurance capacity should be one that focuses not only on domestic delivery by domestic institutions but rather, one that considers internationalization, globalization, student mobility across borders as the parameters set by different accrediting bodies and CHED are exclusively made for domestic purposes – which does not cover HEI internationalization issues and concerns e.g. credit transfer, international student qualification, curriculum alignment, etc.

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