Research Article

Examining the Success Rates in Licensure Examination for Teachers: A Quantitative Focus on Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEED) Graduates

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the success rates of Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEEd) graduates from Sultan Kudarat State University (SKSU) – Kalamansig Campus in the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET). This study utilized the descriptive-comparative research design that compares two variables to describe the differences. The study's respondents were the Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEEd) graduates of Sultan Kudarat State University – Kalamansig Campus who took the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) for elementary level from 2018 – 2023. The respondents were selected using the purposive sampling method, with 185 respondents. The data were analyzed using the t-test for paired samples, and the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) was used to analyze the t-test.

The study compares the overall passing percentage with national averages and analyzes the General Education and Professional Education scores. The findings indicate fluctuating performance, with BEED graduates performing better in General Education than in Professional Education. Despite a higher mean passing percentage than the national average, the study highlights the need for continuous improvement in curriculum and teaching strategies to enhance LET outcomes. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on exam preparation and administration is also discussed. Recommendations are provided for educational stakeholders to adopt innovative teaching methods and improve faculty development to increase licensure examination success rates

Keywords: *Licensure exam, Elementary education, Performance, Graduates, National passing Rate, Institutional passing rate*

Introduction

Education is universally recognized as a fundamental driver of sustainable development, economic growth, and social progress (UNESCO, 2023). At the heart of educational quality lies the effectiveness of teachers, who play a pivotal role in shaping students' cognitive, social, and emotional development (OECD, 2023).

The Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEEd) program in the Philippines prepares future educators with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to provide high-quality education to elementary school students (CHED, 2023). However, the effectiveness of these programs is often measured through the performance of their graduates in the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET), a national standardized test that assesses the readiness and competence of aspiring teachers.

Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) around the nation highly value courses, including licensure exams. By producing graduates doing well on their professional teacher licensure exams, these teacher education curriculum providers are building their reputation as high-quality educational providers. Therefore, it is contended that the graduates' academic success is connected to their performance on their licensing exams.

The LET serves as a critical benchmark for evaluating the preparedness of BEEd graduates to enter the teaching profession. High performance in the LET indicates a robust teacher education program, while poor performance may highlight gaps and deficiencies that must be addressed. Given the importance of quality education in achieving broader developmental goals, it is essential to thoroughly understand and improve the factors that influence LET outcomes (Asian Development Bank, 2021).

Furthermore, in the Philippines, passing the professional teacher licensure exam is a prerequisite for teaching practice. Therefore, it is imperative to monitor graduates' performance on their licensure exam, particularly when doing so is expected to raise their passing rate. (Fiscal & Roman, 2022). However, Conchada and Tiongco (2015) stated that the quality of the number of higher education institutions has declined over time, as evidenced by the quality of their graduates.

According to Paqueo et al. (2015), a low percentage of board exam pass rates indicates that most higher education institutions are of low quality. This brings up the urgent need to raise the standard of higher education institutions, particularly the BEED program. Moreover, passing the licensure exam is one of the most reliable indicators of the caliber of education the educational institutions provide.

Pertinent problems with the low passing rate of the graduates in licensure exams are also highlighted in the Second Congressional Commission on Education 2 (EDCOM, 2024) year one report, which discovered that, in comparison to other professions, the average passing rates for elementary (33%) licensure examination between 2009 and 2023 have been dreadfully low. Even worse, 77 higher education institutions that offered the BEEd program carried on with continuous zero passing rates in licensure exams between 2012 and 2022 (EDCOM, 2024)

This program's persistent low passing rates reflect on the quality of education provided and raise serious concerns about the effectiveness of its teaching methodologies, curriculum, faculty qualifications, and overall academic operations. The ramifications of this issue extend beyond individual schools' performance; it threatens the national development agenda. Education is a cornerstone of national progress, and educators' quality directly impacts the quality of education and, subsequently, the nation's human capital development.

Moreover, the outcomes of this study are expected to provide actionable recommendations to stakeholders in the field of education, including educational institutions, policymakers, and teacher education programs. These recommendations may focus on curriculum development, instructional strategies, student support services, and professional development opportunities for faculty, all aimed at enhancing the overall success rates of BEEd graduates in licensure examinations.

Given the significance of performance in the licensure examination for teachers, the SKSU-Kalamansig Campus must take a proactive

measure by regularly reviewing the performance of the BEEd graduates in the licensure examination for teachers to maintain or improve the curriculum and instruction in the said university; thus, this study is relevant and worth researching.

Objectives of the Study

This study aimed to examine the success rates of Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEED) graduates in the licensure examination for teachers of Sultan Kudarat State University (SKSU) – Kalamansig Campus from 2018 until 2023. Specifically, the study aimed to attain the following objectives:

a) To compare the mean scores in General Education and Professional Education and
b) To compare the BEED overall passing percentage and the national passing percentage.

Related Literature

To practice their profession, graduates of Teacher Education programs must pass the Licensure Examination for Professional Teachers (LEPT). A person who succeeds in the test will have a competitive edge over those who fail the LET, as well as prestige and honor (Pacheco & Allaga, 2014). Furthermore, as the Philippines prepares to modify its Basic Education Curriculum in the K–12 curriculum, instructors must possess a teaching license (obtained by passing the Licensure Examination for teachers) and demonstrate academic achievement. Further, this is also evident in the work of Darling-Hammond (2022), who maintained that to guarantee that educators who wish to work in a classroom are equipped to handle this responsibility, they must hold a teaching license.

Furthermore, Dagdag et al. (2017), who said that passing the licensure exam has been the priority of the Philippine tertiary education institutions, support this. They also mentioned that these establishments might benchmark studies with other top-scoring educational institutions for the licensure exam.

Passing the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) is a requirement for teacher education graduates in public and private elementary and high schools in the Philippines, as stipulated by Republic Act 7836, popularly known as the Teachers Professionalization Act of 1994. Those who pass the licensure exam are regarded as qualified educators with minimum pedagogical expertise.

Moreover, the effectiveness of the training and preparation that the teacher training school offers its graduates reflects their success on the licensure exam. Consequently, it is necessary to routinely assess the LET performance of BEEd graduates to determine whether the College can create competent elementary school teachers.

The level of professional achievement required for a teacher to be accepted into the network of teaching practitioners is reflected in the LET Performance level. It demonstrates that the teacher's requirements were met (Acosta & Acosta, 2016). Tests for licenses are often one of the several requirements needed to be eligible for admission to the teaching profession. This government exam aims to find experts who meet basic education teaching competency requirements.

The very small number of institutions in the top 10 global universities, the relatively low performance of graduates on board licensure exams, and the fact that more than half (57%) of the nation's Centers of Excellence are concentrated in just two state universities and colleges (SUCs) and five private HEIs out of all higher education institutions demonstrate how uneven the quality of higher education is. 1,962 HEIs in total, which helps to explain why the nation's environment for innovation and research is still underdeveloped (Bautista et al., 2023).

Challenges arise from the observation that the passing rates for the Board Licensure Examination for Professional Teachers (BLEPT) between 2009 and 2023 were merely 33% on average for the elementary level and 40% for the secondary level. These figures fall below the passing rates observed in other professional board exams, as Generalao et al. (2018) and the Philippine Business for Education highlighted. (PBEd, 2023, as cited in Bautista & Aranas, 2023).

A major human resource difficulty is made worse by inadequate learning results resulting from the disparate standards of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). More than ten years ago, in the field of Information Technology and

Business Process Management (IT-BPM), Barrios et al. (2012) raised awareness of this problem. Twenty-one thousand graduating students (representing supply) and 3,000 new hires (representing demand) in IT-BPM companies took the Global Competency Assessment Test. The results showed that, on average, there was a significant 21 percent difference in fundamental skills between supply and demand.

On the other hand, according to Esmeralda and Espinosa (2015), the group of students pursuing a Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEED) exhibited higher levels of academic confidence. It also strongly correlated with the BEED graduates' academic success and LET performance. It implies that teacher graduates' academic achievement strongly predicts the LET. The study of Visco (2015) on the determinants of LET Performance in Abra State Institute of Sciences and Technology found that Teaching Aptitude (TAT), LET Review attendance, teacher-attended training and seminars, academic rank, and workload significantly predict their students' performance.

Methods

The research design of this study is the descriptive-comparative research method. The design is appropriate in this study since it describes the differences in General Education and Professional Education subjects of the LET. Also, it is used to describe and compare the BEED graduates' overall passing percentage and the national passing percentage.

This study utilized the descriptive-comparative research design, which compares two variables to describe the differences or similarities. This design is appropriate in this study since it aims to compare the mean scores of the BEEd graduates in General Education and Professional Education subjects of the Licensure Examination for Teachers. It also compares conditions, such as BEEd graduates' overall passing and national passing percentages. According to Siedlecki (2020), the descriptive-comparative research design " compares two or more groups on one or more variables to assess similarities or differences without the researcher manipulating any variables." This approach helps understand the natural variations

and relationships between groups or phenomena.

The respondents of this study were the Bachelor of Elementary Education graduates of Sultan Kudarat State Universiy – Kalamansig Campus who took the Licensure Examination for Teachers for elementary level from 2018 – 2023. The respondents were selected using the purposive sampling method. A total of 185 BEED takers were the respondents of this study.

The purposive sampling method was appropriate because the study aimed to compare these graduates' mean scores and passing percentages, making it necessary to select respondents who met these criteria. Purposive sampling allowed the researchers to focus on a well-defined group relevant to their research objectives.

For the accuracy and validity of the data, the researchers requested the LET performance of the BEED takers from 2018 – 2023 at the main office of the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) under the Research and Statistics Division. Data was gathered using a document analysis guide to extract relevant information from institutional records, including examination schedules, passing, and failing counts, and institutional and national passing percentages.

In data analysis, a t-test for a paired sample was employed to compare the mean scores in General Education and Professional Education, the BEED overall passing percentage, and the national passing percentage. Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) was used to analyze the t-test.

Ethical Considerations

The paper was submitted to the University Research Ethics Committee to evaluate the ethical considerations needed in this study. By doing so, the study will be able to adhere to the principles and standards that avoid ethical conflicts. The following actions addressed the ethical aspects. The researcher sent a letter of request to the Campus Director for approval to conduct the study. Upon approval, another request letter was submitted to the campus Registrar to request the Master List of the BEED graduates. Attached to the letter was a letter

approved by the Campus Director. The researcher asked the data on the performance of the BEED takers in the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) by filling out the Freedom of Information Form (FOI) and the Request for Performance of School in Various Licensure Examinations Form from the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC).

Study Limitations

This study provides certain limitations that other researchers should consider for future research. Since the study's sampling technique is purposive and only focuses on the BEED graduates who took the LET in 2018-2023, this method limits the generalizability of the findings to other populations or periods. Also, the study highlights the performance in LET, which is fluctuating due to external factors (changes in curriculum, teaching methods, COVID-19 impact); however, it does not extensively explore these factors like the conduct of its qualitative features or control for them in the analysis which may affect the interpretation of data.

Moreover, this study compared BEEd graduates' GenEd and ProfEd performance, including the overall passing percentage. Future researchers may include other variables such as faculty qualifications, individual student preferences, or learning styles, including support services and learning resources may be considered since they would contribute to the result of the licensure examination for teachers.

Other research may also consider the time frame from 2018 to 2023 as one of the study's limitations. This limitation would mean that the performance trends in LET covering this period may not reflect longer-term changes in the performance of BEEd graduates.

Result and Discussion

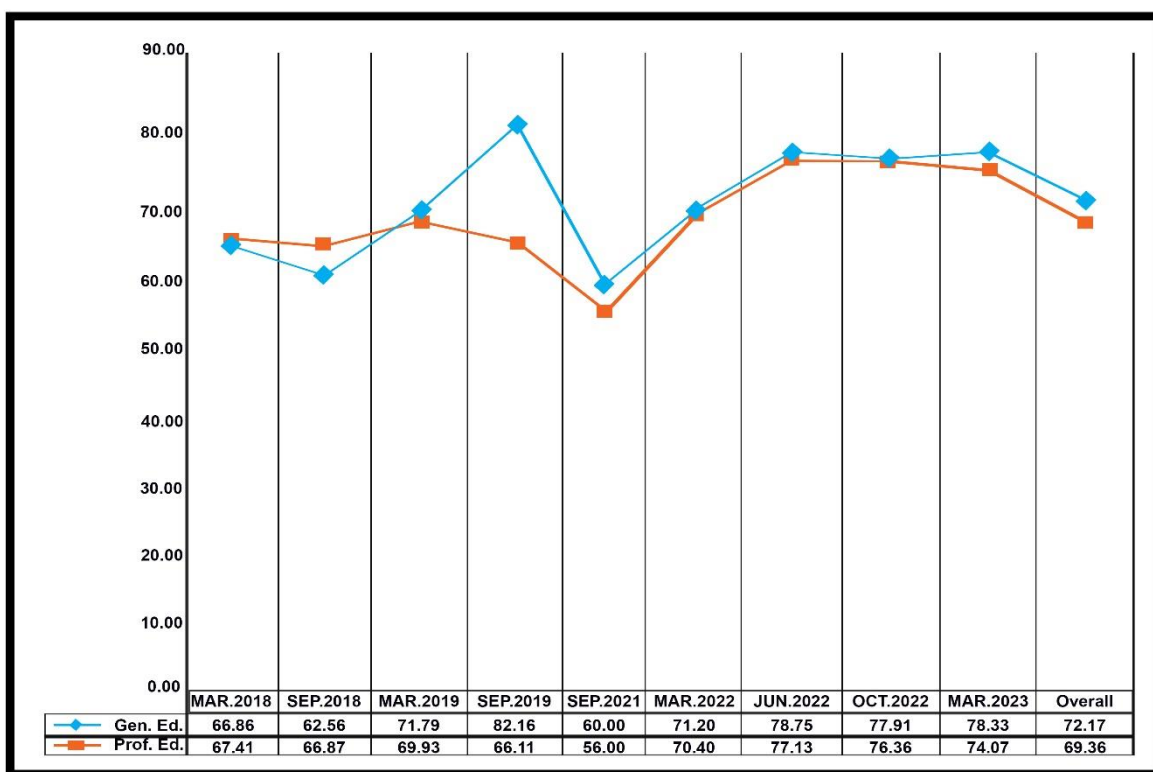|	MAR.2018	SEP.2018	MAR.2019	SEP.2019	SEP.2021	MAR.2022	JUN.2022	OCT.2022	MAR.2023	Overall
Gen. Ed.	66.86	62.56	71.79	82.16	60.00	71.20	78.75	77.91	78.33	72.17
Prof. Ed.	67.41	66.87	69.93	66.11	56.00	70.40	77.13	76.36	74.07	69.36

Figure 1. Mean Scores Comparison in General Education and Professional Education

Figure 1 compares mean scores in General Education (Gen.Ed.) and Professional Education (Prof.Ed.) from March 2018 to March 2023 teacher licensure examinations. It shows that for the General Education course licensure exams from March 2018 to March 2019, the

scores increased from 66.86 to a peak of 82.16 in September 2019. For the September 2019 to September 2021 exams, the scores saw a decline, reaching a low of 60.00, while for the March 2022 and March 2023 licensure exams, the scores recovered, peaking again at 78.75 in June 2022 and then slightly declining to 78.33 in March 2023. The overall

mean score in General Education subjects of BEED graduates over the period is 72.17.

On the other hand, the scores in the March 2018 to March 2019 licensure exams in Professional Education courses remained relatively stable, fluctuating slightly around 67.

From September 2019 to September 2021, scores of the BEED graduates in Prof.Ed subject saw a gradual decline, reaching 56.00 in September 2021, while for March 2022 to March 2023 licensure exams, the scores improved again, peaking at 76.36 in June 2022 and then slightly declining to 74.07 in March 2023. The overall mean score in the Professional Education course over the period is 69.36 percent.

The figure further shows that from March 2018 – to September 2019, General Education

scores were generally higher than Professional Education scores, particularly peaking in the September 2019 licensure exams. The September 2019 – September 2021 exams experienced declines, but Professional Education scores dropped more significantly. In contrast, The March 2022 – March 2023 exams are considered the recovery period of the BEEd graduates. Since these periods showed recovery, general education maintained a higher average score than Professional Education.

Overall, the General Education scores of the BEED graduates were consistently higher on average compared to Professional Education scores, with an overall mean of 72.17 percent.

Fluctuations in these scores can be attributed to various factors, including changes in curriculum, teaching methods, and external factors such as the COVID-19 pandemic. For instance, the decline observed between 2019 and 2021 may be associated with the challenges posed by the pandemic on educational systems worldwide, such as the shift to online learning and the disruption of traditional classroom environments (Dhawan, 2020).
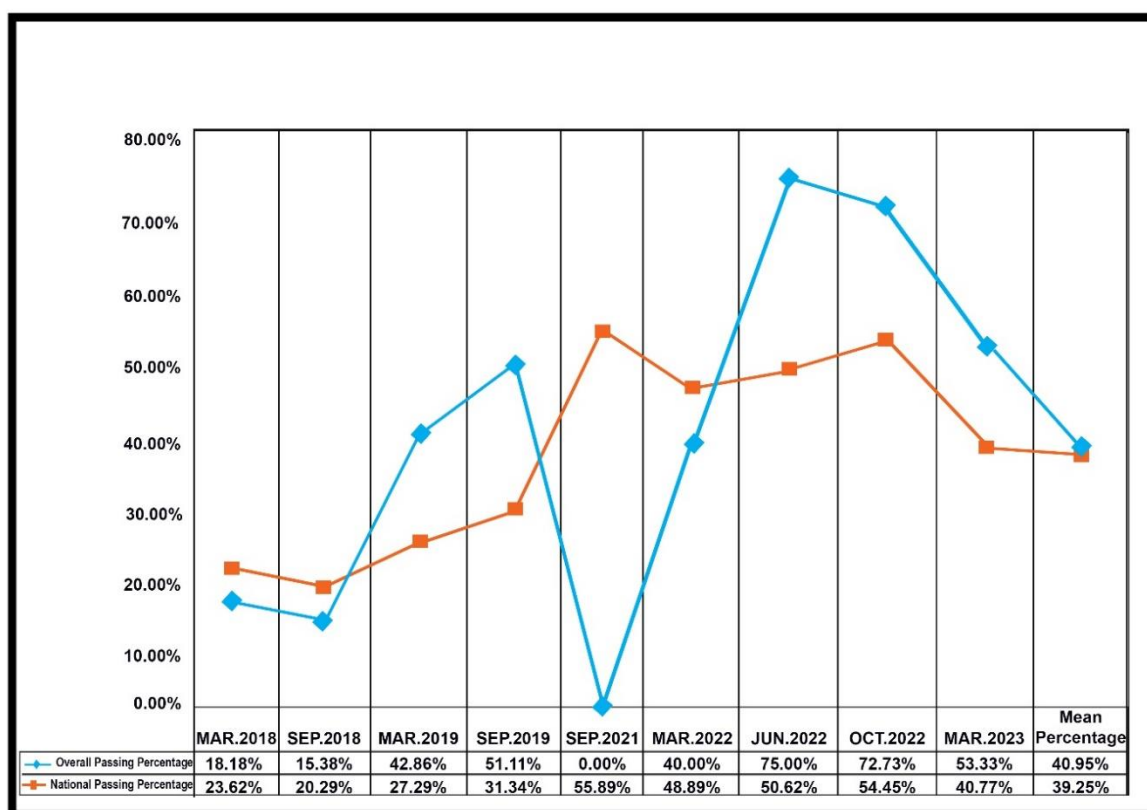

	MAR.2018	SEP.2018	MAR.2019	SEP.2019	SEP.2021	MAR.2022	JUN.2022	OCT.2022	MAR.2023	Mean Percentage
Overall Passing Percentage	18.18%	15.38%	42.86%	51.11%	0.00%	40.00%	75.00%	72.73%	53.33%	40.95%
National Passing Percentage	23.62%	20.29%	27.29%	31.34%	55.89%	48.89%	50.62%	54.45%	40.77%	39.25%

Figure 2. Comparison of the BEEd Overall Passing Percentage and the National Passing Percentage

The figure compares the "Overall Passing Percentage" with the "National Passing Percentage" from March 2018 to March 2023, revealing significant fluctuations in the overall passing percentage, which started at 18.18% in March 2018 and reached a peak of 75.00% in June 2022. This percentage showed a notable drop to 0.00% in September 2021, followed by a recovery to 40.00% in March 2022. In contrast, the national passing percentage remained relatively stable, beginning at 23.62% in March 2018 and gradually increasing to a peak of 55.89% in September 2021. Despite occasional dips, the national percentage fluctuated less dramatically than the overall percentage. Interestingly, while the overall passing percentage was generally lower than the national average, it surpassed the national percentage in March and June of 2022. The mean percentages over this period were close, with the overall passing percentage slightly higher at 40.95% compared to the national average of 39.25%, indicating that despite its volatility, the overall passing percentage occasionally outperformed the national average.

Several studies indicate that the performance of BEEd graduates in the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) often varies, reflecting the trend seen in the figure. For example, Guzman's 2020 study found that BEEd graduates from Isabela State University consistently performed above the national average from 2010 to 2017.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were made:

1. General Education scores of BEEd graduates were consistently higher than their Professional Education scores. The mean score for General Education was 72.17%, while Professional Education had a mean score of 69.36%. This figure suggests that BEEd graduates are generally better prepared in Gen.Ed subjects than in Prof.Ed.

2. The mean overall passing percentage for BEED graduates was 40.95%, slightly higher than the national mean of 39.25%. This implies that the BEEd program of SKSU – Kalamansig campus is performing relatively well compared to the national average, though there is still room for improvement.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions, the following recommendations were drawn.

1. The campus must strengthen the Professional Education subjects to ensure the content is relevant and effectively taught among the BEED graduates for future LETs. Practical experiences are also beneficial for a thorough understanding of the concepts. Another factor that may be considered is the remediation programs that would enhance the scores in the ProfEd subject. This may include mock board exams, tutorials, and intensive review sessions.

2. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the performance of the BEED graduates for those periods fluctuated. Due to this, it is highly recommended that the campus/university strengthen the online learning platforms among its students and provide learning resources to scaffold learning and perform better in online education. Also, COVID-19 does not only impact the performance of the BEED graduates but it also impacts the mental health and well-being of the students. With this, the university must offer mental health programs and stress management among its students since these things could also contribute to the overall performance of LET.

3. The campus must strengthen its monitoring strategy to assess the effectiveness of the implemented programs, such as the Competency Enhancement Program (CEP), and make adjustments as needed. This could involve collecting student feedback, analyzing exam performance data, and conducting focus group discussions.

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