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Addressing the barriers and difficulties in achieving educational institutions accreditation

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ABSTRACT

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES: The accreditation process is pivotal to ensuring high educational standards, but it often faces various challenges. The innovative study seeks not only to identify these hindrances in the accreditation process within Philippine educational institutions but also to map out the countermeasures employed. The study uniquely delves into the perceptions of diverse stakeholders - administrators, faculty, staff, and students - providing a comprehensive, multi-perspective view of the barriers to accreditation. The objective is to explore these perceptions, assess their alignment, and thereby create a more effective, stakeholder-informed strategy for accreditation processes. This novel approach is designed to optimize institutional performance and bolster educational quality, marking our study's distinctive contribution to the field.

METHODS: A descriptive survey method was employed in this study. The sample comprised administrators, faculty, staff, and students from various schools. A self-constructed questionnaire that was validated and were to gather data on hindrances faced by the schools during the accreditation process, and the measures taken to address them. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data, and ANOVA was performed to identify any significant differences in the perceptions of the respondents.

FINDINGS: The results revealed several categories of hindrances, with administration, faculty, instruction, laboratory, library, and physical facilities emerging as the key areas of concern. Financial aspects in administration and faculty development programs in the faculty category were the most significant hindrances. Other notable hindrances included measuring student progress in the instruction category, sufficiency of facilities in the laboratory category, organizational structure of libraries, and room lighting in the physical plant category. No significant differences were found in the perceptions of administrators, faculty, staff, and students regarding accreditation hindrances, indicating a shared understanding of these challenges.

CONCLUSION: This study examines the hindrances to accreditation and the steps educational institutions have taken to overcome them. Prioritizing these challenges is vital for continuous improvement and educational quality. Investment in competent administrators and funding is crucial for problem-solving. Creative service formulation aids in overcoming hindrances and achieving accreditation. The study provides insights into stakeholders' perceptions of accreditation challenges, helping schools enhance performance and reputation, benefiting students and the broader community.

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INTRODUCTION

Accreditation, a process of validation in which educational institutions are evaluated against established standards to ensure a high level of educational quality, plays a pivotal role in the educational landscape. It confers a sense of legitimacy, verifying that an institution meets or exceeds an established set of educational standards. Notwithstanding its relevance, a significant proportion of Higher Education Institutions remain unaccredited, raising concerns about their quality of education. This study aims to delve into the challenges these institutions face in obtaining accreditation and proposes feasible solutions to address them. Previous research on accreditation has explored various facets of this complex phenomenon, yet a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and obstacles to accreditation remains elusive. Prior studies (Hanh, 2019; Alajoutsijärvi, 2018 and Sanyal, 2007) have underscored the significance of accreditation as an indirect measure of educational quality. However, despite these insights, a critical gap persists in the literature, pertaining specifically to the barriers to accreditation in the context of the Philippines. Different educational institutions must go through one type of accreditation in order to be “recognized by the government.” An educational institution has the chance to achieve standards above those set as minimal requirements by the government through private, voluntary certification by a recognized accrediting agency. Programs and institutions can be distinguished based on their quality using accreditation as an indirect measure of quality (Min-Allah and Saeed, 2020; Tayag, 2005). It also serves as a means of motivating schools that have been determined to have met the desired standards to continue to improve. Large number of the Higher Education Institutions now is not accredited and the question is what about the assurance whether those schools are capable in catering and meeting the needs of their clients which is quality and competitive education which they pay for (Harvey and Williams, 2010). Accreditation, as an evaluation process based on the criteria of an accrediting body, is aimed at guaranteeing and enhancing educational quality (Corpus, 2003; Blouin *et al.*, 2018). Notably, it is a status reflecting a public declaration that a program or institution aligns with the quality standards set by an accrediting body Ching (2013). According to

research, addressing these barriers requires the university to articulate its philosophy and vision-mission statements more clearly (Margareth *et al.*, 2016; Bueno, 2019). The objectives of this study align with this approach, aiming to cohesively represent the institution’s philosophy and mission while also portraying and contributing to national development objectives (Abelman *et al.*, 2007). As suggested by Harrington (2020), it could be beneficial for universities to regularly introduce new faculty members and students to their institutional philosophy, vision, mission, and program objectives upon appointment and admission. These should be periodically reviewed, considering input from various school departments (Compelio *et al.*, 2015). Inclusive development of these foundational elements involves representation from parents, alumni, business partners, industry stakeholders, and professionals from various fields. The result is a comprehensive program for the student’s intellectual, moral, social, emotional, spiritual, and physical development, reflecting the school’s aims (Heikkinen 2018 and Barton and Coley, 2011). To ensure the consistency of operations towards achieving these objectives, an open line of communication between all stakeholders is necessary. All information published by the school, as per Schönwetter *et al.*, (2002), should be factual and verifiable. The lack of financial support from governmental and non-governmental organizations for administrative programs, such as faculty/staff and student development and facility renovation, received high ratings. This could be attributed to the limited funding these schools receive (Malaluan, 2017; Mgaiwa, 2018; Gedeon, 2020). Various issues associated with administrative support included the absence of an Internal Assessment Board (IAB) or Quality Assurance Office, lack of an operational IAB structure to ensure proper accreditation task management, lack of written policies on document submission and filing for accreditation, poor implementation of updating and submission guidelines, irregular monitoring and evaluation of the accreditation process, and limited academic and administrative projects and programs (Malaluan, 2017; Suleiman, 2019; Balas, Chapman, and Romanowski, 2022). Naidoo (2019) and Ancheta (2012), who identified the lack of personnel cooperation in document provision as a common pressing issue for accreditation. The perceived

hindrances in this area might be influenced by previous issues encountered concerning administrative support. According to [Lajus et al. \(2018\)](#) and [Malaluan, \(2017\)](#), the problems with administrative support in accreditation were significant but manageable. [Dumancas and Prado \(2015\)](#) and [Al-Kassem et al. \(2022\)](#) show a positive attitude from faculty members towards accreditation, underlining its importance for enhancing institutional resources ([Soliven et al., 2012](#)). In the study conducted by [Dumancas and Prado \(2015\)](#), their respondents have positive attitude towards accreditation because they believe that accreditation will improve the quality of education in their institution. Prominently, measuring student progress through tests and examinations emerged as the most crucial challenge. This suggests that accreditation can be hindered by difficulties in aligning assessments with the requirements of accrediting bodies. It further implies that schools may struggle to accurately track and enhance student learning, which is a critical element in fostering an effective learning environment. By addressing these hindrances, schools can better measure and enhance student learning, which is crucial for improving educational outcomes and supporting community development. [Dela Cruz and Mendoza \(2018\)](#); [Chowdhury \(2019\)](#), stated that the large number of instructors and students that use these facilities made maintenance and management of laboratory equipment difficult. [Santos \(2023\)](#) pointed out, specific HRM practices can enhance organizational success by improving performance. This applies directly to libraries, where staff roles, particularly those of head and assistant librarians, are essential. Their duties extend beyond maintaining the existing collection to continually updating and expanding resources to match recent advancements and publications. Accomplishing these tasks requires competence, dedication, and up-to-date knowledge, all traits nurtured by effective HRM practices. [Pila et al. \(2016\)](#) supported this perception, identifying improvements needed in their library, such as catering to a growing number of students, increasing seating capacity, and addressing insufficient library budgets. Additionally, [Adetunla and Familusi \(2017\)](#) found that positive perceptions of accreditation led to better library resources and improvements. However, without accreditation, they noted that libraries received insufficient support and funding,

resulting in subpar services and a lack of acquisitions. [Trigueiro \(2021\)](#); [Patel and Brown \(2021\)](#); [Agboola and Bassey \(2021\)](#); [Lunenbergl \(2010\)](#). These researchers pointed out that schools often have outdated physical facilities, such as plumbing, sewer, electrical, roofing, masonry, and carpentry systems. This ageing infrastructure naturally contributes to perceptions of physical obstacles to accreditation. A significant budget must be allocated for the student programs and extracurricular activities for the office organization with qualified staff to provide student services as required by accrediting agencies ([Nguyen et al., 2018](#)). There are a number of things that contribute to the perceived barriers to student services in the school, including a lack of skilled staff, a lack of facilities and equipment, and a lack of cooperation amongst partner agencies ([Alamri and Almazan, 2018](#); [Singhavi et al., 2019](#)). By putting students and various staff members who deal with student matters through various seminars and training on personality development programs and proper handling of student services, the issues with student services in accreditation concerns can be resolved. Hire licensed, academically prepared librarians and guidance counselors, expand the staff in the registrar's office, guidance office, and medical-dental clinic, provide a separate area for group counseling sessions, and upgrade the facilities and equipment ([Calamayo et al., 2022](#)). [Tapscott's \(2010\)](#) findings, attributing the failure of certain activities to poor coordination and logistical issues. Furthermore, Tapscott observed that these organizational flaws often lead to problems with community service or outreach activities in schools. There is also an underlying issue of recipients' lack of appreciation, which may cause protest or discourtesy towards those helping them. The recommendation extends to attending community development seminars and workshops, as suggested by [Fagan et al., \(2022\)](#) and [Locke et al., \(2019\)](#). Based on the model of the Community Extension Office, community programs should focus on sustainability, self-sufficiency, and self-reliance ([Sunarti et al., 2023](#)). Previous studies have highlighted the role of faculty members' opinions in enhancing the quality assurance process ([Aamodt et al., 2018](#); [Nguyen and Ta, 2018](#); [Absor, 2022](#)). They hold valuable insights into the on-ground realities and challenges of the education system that can inform strategic plans for accreditation.

Furthermore, the studies of [Alsete \(2004\)](#), [Hendrick et al., \(2010\)](#), and [Jackson et al., \(2010\)](#) underscore the significant impact accreditation has on institutional and program reputation, as well as its connection to program review. [Santos \(2023\)](#) highlights the pivotal role of coordination between government and stakeholders in fostering smart cities and how robust economies propel the adoption of safer city programs. In parallel, a similar relationship can be seen in the education sector where accreditation bolsters the quality of education in a school, stimulating trust and confidence among its stakeholders including students, parents, faculty, and the larger community. Much like how coordination serves as a conduit for the success of smart city programs, accreditation operates as a key performance indicator in the education field. Both drive continuous improvement and commitment to excellence, emphasizing the interconnected nature of trust-building measures in different sectors, from urban development to education. Despite its recognized importance, it remains an uphill battle for many institutions, particularly in urban areas, to achieve this status. Addressing this identified gap in research, the present study seeks to explore and elucidate the obstacles that prevent educational institutions in the Philippines from attaining accreditation. Through a meticulous examination of pertinent literature and a rigorous analysis of existing accreditation protocols, this study endeavors to uncover the inherent barriers that inhibit these institutions from fulfilling accreditation prerequisites. To gain a deeper understanding of these impediments, the current study adopts a mixed-method approach, integrating qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. It focuses on the exploration of respondents' perceptions concerning the obstacles that prevent private schools from obtaining accreditation across a spectrum of operational aspects including administration, faculty, instruction, labs, libraries, physical facilities, school-community relations, and student services. The structure of this study is as follows: The following section offers an overview of the study's theoretical framework, following which the methodology adopted is detailed. This is succeeded by a discussion of the study's findings, their implications, and proposed recommendations. The study culminates with a conclusion summarizing the key findings and potential

avenues for future research. By dissecting the hindrances to accreditation and suggesting actionable solutions, this study aspires to contribute significantly to the educational discourse, particularly in the context of accreditation. The current study has been carried out in Nueva Ecija in 2022.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research design and Instrument

Employing a descriptive research approach, this study utilized a specially developed survey instrument designed to gauge the impediments that hinder schools from undergoing accreditation. The instrument was informed by insights from both local and international literature on accreditation, Accreditation Primers, and the researcher's own expertise in this field. The questionnaire was segmented into three sections:

1. Identification of areas that obstruct schools from seeking accreditation, including philosophy and objectives, administration, faculty, instruction, laboratories, library, physical plant, school-community relations, and student services.
2. Measures that schools have adopted to mitigate identified obstacles.
3. Perceived benefits of achieving accredited status.

To assure the instrument's validity and reliability, a test-retest method was employed, with the questionnaire administered to 5 administrators, 20 teachers, 10 staff, 30 students, and 10 parents who were not part of the primary study sample. The instrument demonstrated high reliability, with a value of 0.89.

Sample

Participants were the administrators; faculty; staff; the Parents who are involve in the school and community affairs; and student leaders of the Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology [Table 1](#). Purposive sampling was used to ensure the sample adequately represented the key demographic groups involved in the accreditation process.

Data Gathering

The researcher addresses a letter of request to the President of the University. After the necessary permit is already secured, the researcher sought the help of the administrators of the schools and

coordinated with them for the administration of the questionnaire. The researcher administered a set of questionnaires to the respondents. The same sets of questionnaires were retrieved after two to three days. This was done in order to give the different respondents enough time to answer the items to the best of their knowledge and ability. The researcher presumed that if the researchers were asked to accomplish the set of questionnaires in a limited span of time/ at once, the validity of the data might suffer. The researcher also conducted an interview to the participants to verify the results from the questionnaire.

Data Analysis

The collected data was meticulously organized, tallied, tabulated, and analyzed to answer the research questions. Descriptive statistics, specifically weighted averages, were used to describe respondents' perceptions regarding the factors that hinder schools from seeking accreditation and the severity of these hindrances. Furthermore, the researcher employed Friedman's Two-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) by Rank to detect significant differences in perceptions across the five respondent categories. In this model, the dependent variable was 'perception of the hindrances to accreditation,' while the two classifying factors were 'type of respondent' and 'type of hindrance.' Both main effects and potential interaction effects were considered in this analysis. Concerning the collective measures or actions taken by schools to counteract the hindrances, a qualitative approach was adopted. Instead of numbers, words were employed to vividly illustrate the responses shared by the respondents. Lastly, percentage distribution was employed to quantify the proportion of respondents aware of the incentives and benefits of accreditation. This method helps understand

the broader awareness and perception about accreditation among the various respondent groups.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 2 indicates respondents agree that every aspect under the area of Philosophy and Objectives can be considered potential roadblocks for schools seeking accreditation. The most significant challenge identified is the involvement of faculty in crafting the philosophy and objectives. The least intricate appears to be aligning the philosophy and objectives with regional and national goals. It seems many respondents feel unfamiliar with their institution's mission and objectives, which could hinder the accreditation process.

Table 3 provides an insight into the respondents' perceptions regarding various administrative aspects, which may pose potential barriers to the accreditation of schools in urban areas. Each factor was rated on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 represents "Strongly Disagree" and 5 represents "Strongly Agree". On average, respondents agreed (with an average weighted mean of 3.79) that aspects such as administrative organization, administrators' qualifications, the school curriculum, school policy consistency, school budget organization, goal record organization, administrative performance, and planning and development effectiveness were hindrances to accreditation. The qualification of administrators to hold office garnered the highest agreement (4.97), signaling it as a major hindrance. All aspects of the administration were perceived as obstacles to accreditation, with planning and development effectiveness, administrative performance, policy consistency, administrative qualifications, and organization ranked from least to most obstructive. The school budget organization was rated as the least obstructive administrative aspect.

Table 4 shows the respondents' perceptions of

Table 1: Distribution of the respondents

Respondents	Frequency	Percent
School Administrator	11	3.60
Faculty Member	182	59.10
Staff	37	12.00
Supreme Student Government Officer	78	25.30
Total	308	100.00

Table 2: Respondents' perception about philosophy and objectives as hindrance which prevent the school in urban areas from undergoing accreditation

Item Statements	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
a. Clarity of the principles	3.73	Agree
b. Awareness of the students	3.87	Agree
c. Awareness of the faculty	3.65	Agree
d. Awareness of the staff Agree	3.59	Agree
e. Participation of the faculty members in the formulation of the philosophy and objectives	3.98	Agree
f. Alignment and conformity of the philosophy and objectives with the with the regional and national goals.	3.45	Agree
g. School's mission and vision posted within the conspicuous places within the campus	4.02	Agree
Average Weighted Mean	3.76	Agree

Legend: 1.00 - 1.79 = Strongly Disagree; 1.80 - 2.59 = Disagree; 2.60 - 3.39 = Neither Agree nor Disagree; 3.40 - 4.19 = Agree; 4.20 - 5.00 = Strongly Agree

Table 3: Respondents' perception about Administration as hindrance which prevent the school from undergoing accreditation

Item Statements	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
a. Organization of the administration	3.67	Agree
b. Qualifications of the administrators to hold office	4.97	Agree
c. The school curriculum	3.86	Agree
d. Consistency of the school policies	3.72	Agree
e. Organization of the school budget	3.57	Agree
f. Organization of the records goals	3.61	Agree
g. Administrative performance	3.58	Agree
h. Effectiveness of planning and development	3.56	Agree
Average Weighted Mean	3.79	Agree

Legend: 1.00 - 1.79 = Strongly Disagree; 1.80 - 2.59 = Disagree; 2.60 - 3.39 = Neither Agree nor Disagree; 3.40 - 4.19 = Agree; 4.20 - 5.00 = Strongly Agree

Table 4: Respondents' perception about faculty as hindrance which prevent the school in from undergoing accreditation

Item Statements	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
a. Academic qualification of the faculty members	3.91	Agree
b. Competency of the faculty members	3.94	Agree
c. Load assignment of the faculty members	3.96	Agree
d. Field of expertise on the subjects taught	3.74	Agree
e. Ranking of faculty members	3.86	Agree
f. Benefits and salary of the faculty members	3.85	Agree
g. Faculty development program	4.02	Agree
Average Weighted Mean	3.90	Agree

Legend: 1.00 - 1.79 = Strongly Disagree; 1.80 - 2.59 = Disagree; 2.60 - 3.39 = Neither Agree nor Disagree; 3.40 - 4.19 = Agree; 4.20 - 5.00 = Strongly Agree

faculty-related factors, such as academic qualification, competency, load assignment, field of expertise, ranking, benefits, salary, and faculty development programs, and their role as potential hindrances to the accreditation process. On average, respondents generally agreed (with an average weighted mean of 3.90) that these factors significantly impede accreditation. Among the items, the faculty development program emerged as the most significant barrier, scoring the highest agreement rate (4.02). According to the respondents, the order of obstacles from greatest to least is as follows: faculty development program, load distribution, faculty competency, academic qualifications, faculty member rankings, faculty benefits and salary, and field of expertise in taught subjects.

Table 5 displays the viewpoints of the respondents regarding how instructional issues act as barriers to the accreditation process for schools. Respondents collectively ranked these instructional factors based on their perceived impact in preventing urban schools from pursuing certification. According to the respondents, the most significant barrier to student progress measurement through tests and exams is classroom management, then student academic performance, alignment and conformity of academic programs with the Department of Education, and the instructional process, with co-curricular activities ranking as the least significant barrier. The findings showed that because tests and examinations must adhere to the requirements specified by the accrediting body, the tests and examinations created by teachers are actually a huge difficulty for the school during accreditation. Poor academic performance of the students might be ascribed to a variety of causes.

Some of this may be due to instructor factors, some may be related to the school environment, some may be related to the family, and some may be due to student factors. But whatever the elements that affect students' academic performance may be, the school must make every effort to improve them. Otherwise, there will always be a problem area that stops the school from taking the first step toward accreditation. Co-curricular activities are pursuits that the school is expected to pursue or participate, both within and outside of the classroom. It can be in a form of competition, be it academic or non-academic like sports, and the like that would broaden the experience of the students. To pursue these co-curricular activities, a school has to spend money and since the school is self-sufficient, they have to follow strictly the budget of the school year.

Table 6 presents the respondents' perceptions on how the school laboratory might hinder the accreditation process. They've identified and ranked specific characteristics of the lab as potential obstacles. The most prominent barrier is the inadequacy of school facilities, followed by lack of necessary equipment and supplies. It's crucial for the accreditation process that the lab is well-equipped and functional, with sufficient resources for various experimental activities. This ensures quality education and meets students' needs. However, the substantial cost associated with acquiring such equipment and maintaining facilities could impede schools, particularly those in urban areas, from seeking accreditation. The respondents ranked the lack of school supplies as one of the biggest obstacles, despite the fact that schools may readily supply them because they are less expensive than facilities and equipment.

Table 5: Respondents' perception about instruction as hindrance which prevent the school in from undergoing accreditation

Item Statements	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
a. Alignment and conformity of Academic programs with the Department of Education	3.86	Agree
b. Co-curricular activities	3.79	Agree
c. Instructional process	3.81	Agree
d. Classroom management	3.89	Agree
e. Academic performance of the students	3.89	Agree
f. Measuring the progress of the students through tests and examinations	4.12	Agree
Average Weighted Mean	3.90	Agree

Legend: 1.00 - 1.79 = Strongly Disagree; 1.80 - 2.59 = Disagree; 2.60 - 3.39 = Neither Agree nor Disagree; 3.40 - 4.19 = Agree; 4.20 - 5.00 = Strongly Agree

Table 7 indicates the respondents' perception of the library as a potential obstacle for schools in urban areas seeking accreditation. Respondents agreed that the library's organizational structure was the most significant barrier. This was followed by the library collection, staff qualifications, offered services, and the qualifications of the head librarian. The library's atmosphere and its furniture and equipment, with an average score of 3.71, were viewed as the least significant barriers. These results suggest that respondents believe their institution's library organizational structure and resources do not meet the necessary standards for accreditation.

As illustrated in Table 8, the respondents identified physical aspects of the school, particularly classroom lighting, as major hindrances to accreditation, with a weighted mean value of 3.88. Following classroom lighting, respondents listed the state of school buildings, room ventilation, school environment, and restroom conditions as impediments to accreditation. Although factors like campus layout, attractiveness, and water availability were ranked lower, they were still identified as obstacles.

Table 9 shows that the respondents agreed that all aspects from students' services are hindrances. The most important factor that prevents a school from undergoing accreditation is staff qualification, which has a weighted mean value of 3.87. Next on the list are student programs or co-curricular activities, the office organization, and the school's student assistance program, both of which have a weighted mean of 3.72. The qualification of staff members who will give services to students, such as guidance counselors and librarians, in the sense that they are licensed as a primary requirement for accreditation, is crucial. The student services office must take the initiative to tell students about the programs offered by the guidance and other offices for their welfare.

As shown in Table 10, the respondents expressed a belief that all aspects of school community services are hindrances to accreditation for schools in urban areas. According to their views, the most significant component is the school's community service and involvement. This is followed by the school's outreach activities, school-community relations, and finally, school's social awareness and concern.

Table 6: Respondents' perception about Laboratory as hindrance which prevent the school in from undergoing accreditation

Item Statements	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
a. Sufficiency of school facilities	3.65	Agree
b. Sufficiency of school equipment	3.71	Agree
c. Sufficiency of school supplies	3.81	Agree
d. Maintenance of school supplies	3.76	Agree
Average Weighted Mean	3.73	Agree

Legend: 1.00 - 1.79 = Strongly Disagree; 1.80 - 2.59 = Disagree; 2.60 - 3.39 = Neither Agree nor Disagree; 3.40 - 4.19 = Agree; 4.20 - 5.00 = Strongly Agree

Table 7: Respondents' perception about Library as hindrance which prevent the school in from undergoing accreditation

Item Statements	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
a. Qualification of the head librarian	3.67	Agree
b. Organizational structure of the library	3.75	Agree
c. Qualification of the library personnel	3.92	Agree
d. Library collections	3.73	Agree
e. Library services	3.86	Agree
f. Library furniture and equipment	3.89	Agree
g. Library ambiance	3.79	Agree
Average Weighted Mean	3.80	Agree

Legend: 1.00 - 1.79 = Strongly Disagree; 1.80 - 2.59 = Disagree; 2.60 - 3.39 = Neither Agree nor Disagree; 3.40 - 4.19 = Agree; 4.20 - 5.00 = Strongly Agree

Table 8: Respondents' perception about Physical Plant as hindrance which prevent the school from undergoing accreditation

Item Statements	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
a. The school environment	3.66	Agree
b. The campus plan and appearance	3.61	Agree
c. School buildings condition	3.62	Agree
d. Classroom ambiance	3.75	Agree
e. Room ventilation	3.69	Agree
f. Room lighting	3.88	Agree
g. Rest room condition	3.72	Agree
h. Sufficiency of water	3.66	
Average Weighted Mean	3.70	Agree

Legend: 1.00 - 1.79 = Strongly Disagree; 1.80 - 2.59 = Disagree; 2.60 - 3.39 = Neither Agree nor Disagree; 3.40 - 4.19 = Agree; 4.20 - 5.00 = Strongly Agree

Table 9: Respondents' perception about Student Services as hindrance which prevent the school in from undergoing accreditation

Item Statements	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
a. The Office organization	3.72	Agree
b. Qualification of the personnel	3.87	Agree
c. Awareness on Guidance programs	3.78	Agree
d. Student programs or co-curricular activities of the school	3.87	Agree
e. School student assistance program	3.8	Agree
Average Weighted Mean	3.81	Agree

Legend: 1.00 - 1.79 = Strongly Disagree; 1.80 - 2.59 = Disagree; 2.60 - 3.39 = Neither Agree nor Disagree; 3.40 - 4.19 = Agree; 4.20 - 5.00 = Strongly Agree

Table 10: Respondents' perception about School Community Relation as hindrance which prevent the school in from undergoing accreditation

Item Statements	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
a. School outreach programs	3.77	Agree
b. School community service and involvement	3.82	Agree
c. School social awareness and concern	3.66	Agree
d. School community relations	3.73	Agree
Average Weighted Mean	3.75	Agree

Legend: 1.00 - 1.79 = Strongly Disagree; 1.80 - 2.59 = Disagree; 2.60 - 3.39 = Neither Agree nor Disagree; 3.40 - 4.19 = Agree; 4.20 - 5.00 = Strongly Agree

*Measures that were implemented by the school in order to address the identified hindrances
Philosophy and Objectives*

The groups of administrators, teachers and staff and students complete their observations with regards to the measures as a group taken by the school in order to address the problems within the area of Philosophy and Objectives while parents were

quiet about the said area. The administrators see to it that the philosophy and objectives of the schools are clearly integrated in the curriculum. The faculty members take their share of thinning out the mission and vision of the school through reading it out loud, explaining and discussing it during the orientation at the beginning of the school year. The staff and student leaders also give their share in making the

mission and vision of the school known to all through helping the administrators post the mission, vision, goals and objectives of the schools.

Administration

The administrators advised the department heads pursue graduate studies (Master's Degree and Doctorate Degree) for them to be qualified for the office they occupy and for them to widen their technical skills. Putting the right persons at the right positions is the name of the game for them. They tried had to be consistent of the school policies. In terms of the school curriculum, the administrators ensure that the school curriculum is in line with the one implemented by the Commission on Higher Education and Department of Education.

Faculty

According to the responses, the administrators and faculty members confirm that the administration supports faculty members in their pursuit of obtaining graduate degrees. For faculty members who wanted to pursue graduate study, the administrators worked to arrange timetables and even urged them to participate in workshops and trainings for professional development. The educators concurred that their managers should push them to attend seminars and seek graduate degrees and they acknowledged that the subject load assignments are split up according to their areas of specialization.

Instruction

According to the respondents, faculty members were encouraged to use varied instructional materials and multimedia for variation. This is to give the students activities that will develop and hone their higher order thinking skills to improve the test and examination scores of the students and to improve further their class standing.

Laboratories

Administrators and the faculty members responded and explained the measures taken by the school to address the hindrances in the area. The administrators used to schedule budget hearing for the allotment of funds for the improvement of laboratories, other facilities and equipment of the schools. According to the faculty members they were consulted by their respective department heads or

chairmen regarding the needs of the department for budget hearing.

Library

The administrators stressed that they tried hard to look for qualified librarian and advised them to attend seminars and trainings in order to be up dated to the current trends in managing the library. The administrators also included the library in the budget hearing through the head librarians. And the administrators tried their best to increase the budget allotted to the library expenses. The staff claimed that they asked the faculty regarding the books that they need for instruction. This is to consider the books needed and the books that are used by the faculty members in teaching their respective subjects. The faculty members on the other hand submits list of books that they need. This is done every end of the school year in order to purchase the books recommended by the faculty members for the next school year.

Physical Plant

The administrators do budget hearing for the allocation of funds to be spent for school's physical development. This is done annually. In this budget include the school repair and renovation, beautification and improvisation of the physical aspects of the school.

Student Services

The administrators, faculty and staff claimed that the school is trying to give fairness to the students by providing different services like guidance, library, clinic, school canteen and stores and the provision of complete facilities for their use. The faculty and the staff also stated the same as what the administrators said.

Community Relations

The administrators the teachers and the staff claimed that school community service is already part of the programs offered by their school. There were very outreach programs like community clean up and the like. They tried hard to establish linkage and involvement with the community. Significant difference among the perceptions of the respondents with regard to the areas that hinder their schools from undergoing accreditation.

Table 11 shows a uniform perception among students, staff, instructors, and school administrators that certain factors act as barriers to their schools' accreditation process. The p-values corresponding to different areas that may hinder schools from undergoing accreditation, according to respondents' perceptions. In hypothesis testing, a p-value less than 0.05 usually indicates a statistically significant difference. However, all the p-values listed here are much greater than 0.05. This means that, statistically, there is no significant difference in the perceptions of respondents regarding how these various areas might prevent their schools from undergoing accreditation. The p-value is quite high in all areas, which suggests that the respondents' views are largely consistent across these areas. These areas include Philosophy and Objectives, Administration, Faculty, Instruction, Laboratories, Library, Physical Plant, Student Services, and School Community Relations.

The implication of the findings to school management Philosophy and objectives

The school's philosophy and goals serve as the school's road map and compass in order to actualize its existence. The mission and vision of their institution are not well known to the respondents who are students. This might be ascribed to another issue, namely the lack of clarity in the school's mission and vision, for which the faculty members were not involved in the creation of the aforementioned elements of the philosophy and aims. Additionally, neither the instructors nor the employees at the institution are familiar with its philosophies or goals. According to this scenario, the school should carefully

undertake a campaign to spread information about its goal, vision, philosophy, and objectives so that even the professors and staff are knowledgeable about it. Even though the respondent institutions' mission and vision statements may be displayed in a variety of high-traffic areas on their campuses, everyone already understands these values.

Administration

The respondents agreed that administration is one factor that prevents schools from getting accreditation, which implies that they hold the administration accountable for its performance and are dissatisfied with the way administrators operate the school. They even thought it might prevent the institutions from applying for accreditation. Parents, students, and other staff members are generally dissatisfied with how the school is run.

Faculty

There is a program for faculty development that is largely regarded as being insufficient in the faculty sector. As a result, there aren't often opportunities for teachers to participate in seminars that would improve their capacity to deliver high-quality instruction. In addition, teachers are so overworked that they are unable to advance their academic credentials. Because of this, the majority of teachers are not academically qualified. They lack the chance to participate in graduate programs and raise their level of education. As a result, teachers lack proficiency and are out of touch with current events and innovative approaches to teaching their particular disciplines.

Table 11: Difference among the perceptions of the respondents with regard to the areas that hinder their schools from undergoing accreditation

Area	Mean Square	P - value
Philosophy and Objectives and Objectives	25.249	0.684
Administration	7.343	0.958
Faculty	2.725	0.976
Instruction	2.273	0.977
Laboratories	0.568	0.984
library	3.792	0.962
Physical Plant	12.758	0.797
Student Services	4.607	0.908
School Community Relations	1.262	0.981

Instruction

The Faculty's shaky basis can be blamed for the deficiencies. Strong, capable faculty members who are academically qualified and continually work to advance and update both academic qualification and teaching competency have a significant impact on students' academic achievement. Upgrading the method of instruction entails making the teacher aware of the various ways to assess student learning rather than solely relying on one or two methods, such as written quizzes and tests, to gauge the students' intelligence. As the saying goes, "No one can give what he/she does not possess." Holistic measurement is required. The variation between academic and extracurricular activities is unbalanced since pupils don't participate in enough co-curricular activities. This implies that both pupils and teachers may be monotonous and bored. All of these are seen as threats to school accreditation and must be handled by competent administrators in a timely and effective manner.

Laboratories

Along with laboratories, adequate school infrastructure and supplies are seen as a barrier to undergoing accreditation. Although it is stated that a brilliant teacher can instruct even while sitting under a tree, this proverb may have been true decades ago, before technology. Today's students prefer to learn more when they apply concepts taught through visuals, audios, or a combination of the two through motion pictures, usually known as video clips. This is because school facilities and equipment are essential. In addition, the school must have certain facilities and equipment in order to receive accreditation.

Library

Both lecturer and students should have access to a sufficient number of books and periodicals in the library for reference purposes. The results suggested that the respondent schools' libraries don't have enough books and that the environment isn't good for learning. It is also alleged that librarians lack qualifications. These things all keep the schools from receiving accreditation.

Physical Plant

Good administrators who can manage to provide solutions to the recognized physical plant problems are required. There is no denying the fact that adequate

funding must be allocated in order to address these issues. These issues can't be resolved in a flash or with the snap of a finger. It necessitates shrewd spending and budgeting abilities over time.

Student Services

The department of student services is not meeting the needs of the students, according to the weaknesses that have been found there. The office's primary responsibility of informing the students of the services it provides appears to be neglected. It can be linked to underqualified staff members who are unable to engage in co-curricular activities that would provide pupils with variety and balance in their academic and extracurricular pursuits. These unquestionably prevent the schools from receiving accreditation.

School Community Relations

Because all of its facets were found to be barriers to school accreditation, it was asserted that the school community relations of the respondents presented a challenge in the process of accreditation. Since the schools are unable to travel outside their walls to provide programs for the community, there were no outreach initiatives. Due to a lack of resources, they seldom ever participate in communal affairs. However, not all outreach initiatives need to be costly. Services might be provided. To fully fulfill this sector, administrators must be imaginative enough to provide services that the community can use.

Discussion

The outcomes of this research align with existing literature, notably illustrating that the challenges to accreditation are multifaceted, encompassing a range of issues from institutional philosophy and objectives to facilities and community services. In line with [Margareth et al., \(2016\)](#); [Bueno \(2019\)](#), faculty involvement in crafting the institution's philosophy and mission was deemed crucial, reinforcing the idea that clarity in a university's vision-mission can enhance the accreditation process. However, as highlighted in this study, many educational institutions in urban areas struggle with this aspect, suggesting a need for more focused efforts in this direction. Administrative challenges, particularly the qualifications of administrators, echo the concerns raised in the works of [Malaluan \(2017\)](#); [Mgaiwa \(2018\)](#); [Gedeon \(2020\)](#). The problems with administrative support in accreditation

were found to be significant but manageable, much like the findings of [Lajus et al. \(2018\)](#); [Malaluan \(2017\)](#). Schools appear to struggle with the absence of structures like an Internal Assessment Board (IAB) or Quality Assurance Office, underlining the need for better organization and clearer guidelines. Faculty-related challenges align with the insights of [Naidoo \(2019\)](#); [Ancheta \(2012\)](#). Interestingly, despite the positive attitudes from faculty members towards accreditation, as noted by [Dumancas and Prado \(2015\)](#), the faculty development program was identified as a major hurdle, suggesting that perceived barriers could be rooted in broader systemic issues. Measuring student progress through tests and examinations emerged as the most significant challenge, which mirrors the concerns raised by [Dela Cruz and Mendoza \(2018\)](#); [Chowdhury \(2019\)](#). Challenges associated with the management and maintenance of laboratory equipment likely reflect the practical difficulties of serving large numbers of students and instructors. The importance of effective HRM practices in maintaining and upgrading library resources, as highlighted by [Santos \(2023\)](#); [Pila et al., \(2016\)](#); [Adetunla and Familusi \(2017\)](#), also resonates in this study. Concerning physical facilities, this study aligns with the observations of [Trigueiro \(2021\)](#); [Patel and Brown \(2021\)](#); [Agboola and Bassey \(2021\)](#); [Lunenberg \(2010\)](#), demonstrating that outdated infrastructure contributes to perceived physical barriers to accreditation. Student services and community services, as discussed by [Nguyen et al., \(2018\)](#); [Alamri and Almazan \(2018\)](#); [Singhavi et al., \(2019\)](#), appeared as critical areas of concern, echoing the findings of [Tapscott \(2010\)](#). The significant role of faculty members' opinions, as noted by [Aamodt et al., \(2018\)](#), [Nguyen and Ta \(2018\)](#); [Absor \(2022\)](#), underscores the importance of their insights in enhancing the quality assurance process. In light of the findings, this study recommends proactive initiatives in addressing the identified challenges. Institutions should prioritize clear articulation of their philosophy and mission, engaging all stakeholders in their formulation and periodic review. It is crucial to enhance administrative support structures, develop more defined guidelines for accreditation tasks, and ensure regular monitoring and evaluation. Further, faculty development programs should be strengthened, aiming to boost faculty competency and foster a positive attitude towards accreditation. Schools should invest in developing more effective methods

for student progress assessment, aligning these with accreditation standards. Upgrading and maintaining school facilities, including laboratories, libraries, and physical structures, should be a part of the schools' strategic plans. To improve student services, training programs for staff members and expanding personnel in key offices could be instrumental. Community outreach programs need to be better coordinated, and schools should strive for sustainable, self-reliant initiatives. It's critical to foster an open communication culture that ensures transparency and effective information dissemination among stakeholders, as emphasized by [Schönwetter et al., \(2002\)](#). Attention should also be given to enhancing the cooperation and engagement of faculty members in the accreditation process, leveraging their on-ground knowledge and experiences for improvement. Lastly, ongoing research should be conducted to continually identify and address new challenges as they emerge, thus ensuring the persistent relevance and applicability of the accreditation process in improving the quality of education.

CONCLUSION

The core objective of this research was to elucidate the challenges that educational institutions encounter during the accreditation process and to highlight the countermeasures they employ to mitigate these issues. Drawing from our findings, we identified several areas that serve as major roadblocks, spanning administration, faculty, instruction, laboratories, libraries, and physical plant facilities. In the administrative domain, one prominent example of such hindrances is financial constraints, illustrated by instances where institutions struggled to procure necessary resources due to budget limitations. Within the faculty category, inadequacies in faculty development programs surfaced as a considerable impediment, with some faculty members expressing the need for more comprehensive and targeted professional development opportunities. Concerning instruction, a key challenge lay in effectively measuring student progress, with teachers citing difficulties in developing suitable assessment methods to capture student learning accurately. For laboratories and physical plant facilities, issues related to the adequacy and upkeep of infrastructure posed a significant obstacle, as demonstrated by feedback on outdated laboratory equipment and poorly lit classrooms. Within

the library domain, concerns about the organizational structure, such as lack of clear cataloging or digitized resources, emerged as a distinct barrier. Addressing these challenges requires institutions to enhance administrative efficacy, formulate clear objectives, engage stakeholders, allocate resources judiciously, and invest in comprehensive faculty development programs. It also necessitates the alignment of academic programs with instructional methodologies, maintenance and upgrading of physical facilities, and overall enhancement of the campus environment. Interestingly, the research found no significant differences in how administrators, faculty, staff, and students perceive these hindrances, indicating a shared comprehension of the challenges. This finding underscores the importance of fostering collaborative efforts among all stakeholders to devise and implement customized policies, programs, and strategies that effectively tackle these impediments. On the strength of these findings, we recommend that educational institutions place a high priority on addressing these challenges to ensure the quality of education and secure accreditation. Key strategies include investments in competent leadership, securing adequate funding, and developing innovative services to address hindrances effectively. Despite the insights this study offers, it is important to recognize its limitations. The research was primarily confined to urban areas, and as such, the findings may not fully represent the unique challenges of institutions in rural or socio-economically distinct environments. Future research should aim to rectify this by expanding the investigation to more diverse geographical and socio-economic contexts. Moreover, this study prompts a call for further research into other factors that may hinder accreditation, including socio-economic and cultural variables, which could provide additional depth to our understanding and inform the development of policy and programmatic decisions.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

E.G. Claudio was responsible for all aspects of the study. This encompassed formulating the research design, collecting and analyzing the data, interpreting the results, and drafting and revising the manuscript.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no potential conflict of interest regarding the publication of this work. In addition, the ethical issues including plagiarism, informed consent, misconduct, data fabrication and, or falsification, double publication and, or submission, and redundancy have been completely witnessed by the authors.

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ABBREVIATIONS

<i>Ict</i>	Information and communication technology
<i>Paascu</i>	Philippine accrediting association of schools, colleges, and universities
<i>Sdg</i>	Sustainable development goals
<i>Tesda</i>	Technical education and skills development authority

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