PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHERS TO PROGRAM ACCREDITATION STRATEGIES: ITS RELATION TO SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

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Abstract: This study aimed to determine the perceptions of teachers to program accreditation strategies and its relation to school performance. The descriptive survey and correlational research design was used employing quantitative method. The data were gathered through the survey questionnaire and administered to the sixty (60) respondents from teaching personnel of the studied educational institution. The data gathered were analyzed through frequency, percentage, weighted mean and pearson correlation. The findings of the study revealed that instructions, library, faculty, research and community extension has something to do with the school performance. Thus, it shows that there is a significant relationship between program accreditation strategies and school performance. Thus, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between program accreditation strategies and school performance is rejected. Given the overall results, the study recommends that faculty development plan which is formulated based on the findings of the study should be adopted by the studied educational institution.

Keywords - **Perceptions, Program Accreditation, Strategies, School Performance, Teachers**

I. INTRODUCTION

Accreditation is a process where educational programs or institutions are reviewed to determine if they meet certain standards of quality. It is not a ranking system but an assurance that a program or institution meets the established quality standards (Conchada & Tiongco, 2015). Moreover, accreditation provides an opportunity for academic institutions to demonstrate that they are committed to maintaining their programs' quality and that their programs are performing at the level required by the professions they serve. Programs undergo periodic accreditation to ensure that they continue to meet quality standards set by the profession. The results provide lasting benefits to students, the institution, employers, the professions, and society as a whole (Corpuz, 2003; NIAD-UE Japan, 2010).

In the Philippines, the accreditation comes from different accrediting agencies certified under Federation of Accrediting Agencies of the Philippines (FAAP) and is authorized by the Philippine Commission on Higher Education (CHED) . One of those agencies is the Philippine Association of Colleges and Universities Commission on Accreditation commonly known as PACUCOA. It is an accrediting agency where the studied educational institution submits for accreditation (Ordonez & Ordonez, 2009).

The private accrediting agencies give formal recognition to an educational institution by attesting that its academic program maintains excellent standards in its educational operations, in the context of its aims and objectives. They identify schools whose competence and performance in a particular field warrant public and professional recognition; guides students in their choice of quality schools, colleges and universities that will meet their individual needs; helps institutions of learning achieve maximum educational effectiveness through self-evaluation and self-discipline; and enlists the cooperation of institutions of learning, and professional associations in the mission of advancing the interest of education (Alson,2018). A lot of Higher Educational Institutions (HEI) is applying for accreditation thinking that will them improve their school performance (Gutierrez, 2016).

The school performance is positive effects of school and its actors to attaining the goals, related to the academic achievement and personal development of students; according to the social constructivist view, dependent on the social views of the school stakeholders (Ercegovac et. al, 2017). Meanwhile Rumburger & Palardy (2005) stated that performance can be measured using test scores, dropout rates, transfer rates and even the attribution rates of the students. Other measures can also be consider depending on how individual perception in the manner of measuring performance (Stefiel et.al, 2005).

The studied educational institution is sixty (60) years in the industry. As of May 31, 2019, it has two hundred five (205) employees where one hundred forty three (143) of it is in teaching. It offers fourteen (14) programs with government recognition where nine (9) programs where formally granted accreditation by the PACUCOA. Even though the school is now enjoying accreditation, still teachers have their own perceptions on the program accreditation strategies applied by the school considering other programs is yet to be accredited.

Thus, this study was conducted to determine the perceptions of teachers to program accreditation strategies and its relation to school performance. Through this better strategies will then be formulated.

II. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

A perception refers to individuals' way of understanding, recognizing and interpreting certain information (Freeman, 2003). In an organizational context, perception is an intellectual process on how an individual or groups of individual see, judge and practice information to the organization to achieve the desired result (Elsback, 2003).

Program Accreditation is a trend in the Philippine Higher Educational Institutions (O'donnel, 1987). It is a process to ensure quality of education in an academic institution with the aim of producing graduate who will pass the board examination and for non-board course; they will have a high level of employability (Barlis, et. al, 2017). The quality assurance for program accreditation spells out criteria needed for the school to be accredited (Ruiz & Sabio, 2012).

The school performance on the other hand is linked to school effectiveness (Magulod, 2017). A broad term but commonly measures through students achievement and school reputation to the community (Precillas, 2016).

In the context of the study, the independent variables are anchored on the area of measurement in accreditation. The areas to consider are instructions, faculty, library, research and community extension (PACUCOA). On the other hand the dependent variable indicators are patterned on the concepts of Emery (2020) in terms of school performance.

Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework of the study based on the theoretical anchors mentioned above.
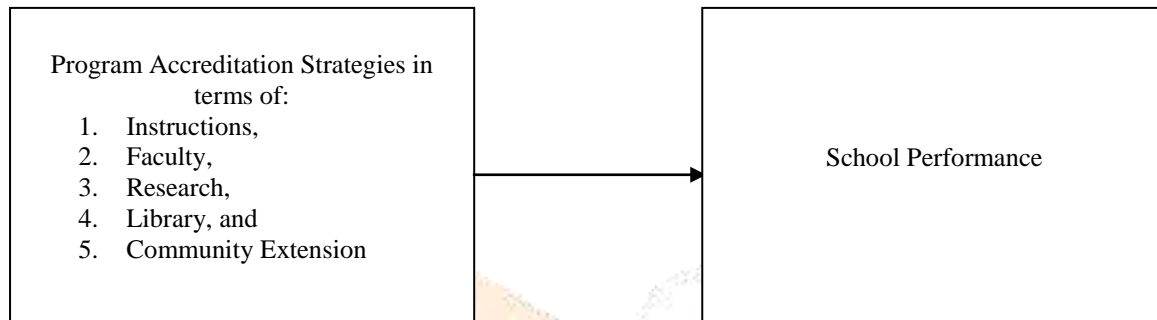
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│ Program Accreditation        │            │                             │
│ Strategies in terms of:      │            │                             │
│   1. Instructions,           │───────────▶│    School Performance       │
│   2. Faculty,                │            │                             │
│   3. Research,               │            │                             │
│   4. Library, and            │            │                             │
│   5. Community Extension     │            │                             │
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Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study

III. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study aimed to determine the perceptions of teachers on program accreditation strategies and its relation to school performance in one of the higher education (HEI) in General Santos City.

Specifically, it sought answers to the following question:

1. What is the level of perception on the current program accreditation strategies in terms of:
   1.1 Instructions?,
   1.2 Faculty?,
   1.3 Research,
   1.4 Library?, and
   1.5 Community Extension?
2. What are the strengths and weaknesses (SW) on the identified program accreditation strategies?
3. What is the level of perception of the school's performance?
4. Is there a significant relationship with program accreditation strategies and school performance?
5. What strategies can be formulated based on the findings?

IV. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study used descriptive-survey method of research, which includes gathering, classification, and presentation of data. This research methodology is appropriate in determining and formulating strategies for the perceptions of teachers in program accreditation strategies in terms of instructions, faculty, research, library and community extension and its relation to school performance.

Since the study involved assessing the present condition of the teachers' perceptions to program accreditation strategies, the researcher finds this method appropriate in the case of formulating better strategies for school organizational performance.

Research Locale

The study was conducted in one of the private non-sectarian school in General Santos City. It is a private higher educational institution (HEI) in the Region 12. It exists in the industry for sixty (60) years. It offers undergraduate programs and masters programs. As of 2018, it caters more than seven thousand (7,000) students coming from different areas in South Central Mindanao. It has two hundred five (205) employees as recorded last May 30, 2019.

Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study were the sixty (60) teachers of the studied private non-sectarian school.

They were considered as respondents because they were the main subjects of the study. They were asked about their perceptions on identified program accreditation strategies and its relation to school performance as a basis of formulating strategies. Thus, they answered the questions considering they were knowledgeable enough on the information needed in the conduct of the study.

Data Analysis

The gathered data were treated statistically using frequency, weighted mean and pearson correlations.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Perceptions and SW Analysis

The bases of formulating strategies on the indicators on the perceptions of teachers on program accreditation strategies were from the survey questionnaire answered by the respondents. Items with *strongly agree* and *agree* interpretation, having a numerical equivalent of 3.41 to 5.0 were considered as strengths. On the other hand, items having *neutral*, *disagree* and *strongly disagree* interpretations with 3.40 and below numerical equivalents were considered as weaknesses. Thus, strategies need to be enhanced to assure the quality in surpassing the accreditation requirement being applied by the school.

Specifically, the perceptions of teachers on program accreditation strategies were the following:

The Table 1 shows the perceptions of teachers in terms of their instruction strategies.

Table 1
Instructions

INDICATORS	WEIGHTED MEAN	INTERPRETATION
1. Instructional guide is well prepared and used.	4.00	Agree
2. Textbook and references are well stated in the course outline.	4.10	Agree
3. Technology is used in teaching.	2.40	Disagree
4. Appropriate number of students per class of teachers.	2.75	Neutral
5. Teaching strategies are visible.	4.30	Strongly Agree
General Weighted Mean	3.51	Agree

The general rating for the instructions is "agree" with a general weighted mean of 3.51 which means that the program accreditation strategies receive positive perceptions from teachers. The indicator 5 "teaching strategies are visible" got the highest rating of 4.30 which is interpreted as strongly agree. Evidences on this indicator are the integration of their teaching strategies in the instructional guide and the documentation exhibits in the accreditation office. While the indicator 3 "technology is used in teaching" got the lowest rating of 2.40 which is interpreted as moderately disagree. This is because of the number of students that the school had; the existing educational technology was not that enough to cater them.

Table 2 below shows the perception of teachers on program accreditation strategies in terms of faculty.

Table 2
Faculty

INDICATORS	WEIGHTED MEAN	INTERPRETATION
1. Teachers earned appropriate masters and doctorate degree.	4.60	Strongly Agree
2. Teachers are teaching subjects in their field of specialization.	4.75	Strongly Agree
3. Teachers are updated of trends/issues in their field of profession.	2.60	Disagree
4. Teachers are attending conferences and seminars related to their profession and the subjects that they are handling.	3.35	Neutral
5. Non Masters Teachers are given assistance to their schooling.	2.50	Disagree
General Weighted Mean	3.56	Agree

The general rating for faculty is "agree" with a general weighted mean of 3.56 which means the program accreditation strategies receive positive perceptions from teachers. The indicator 2 "teachers are teaching subjects in their field of specialization" got the highest rating of 4.75 which is interpreted as strongly agree. This indicator supports the school in its bid for quality education. This is one of their major factors in producing good number of passers in the licensure examination and the employability of graduates. However, indicator 2 "non-masters' teachers are given assistance to their schooling" got the lowest rating of 2.50 which is interpreted as disagree. This is because majority of the teachers now are master's degree holders and they are being prioritized for a higher degree for academic scholarship.

Table 3 shows the perceptions of teachers as to program accreditation strategies in terms of research.

Table 3
Research

INDICATORS	WEIGHTED MEAN	INTERPRETATION
1. Teachers are research oriented.	2.40	Neutral
2. Research seminar is conducted to strengthen the research of the teachers.	3.60	Agree
3. Research incentive is given for every output presented.	4.75	Strongly Agree
4. Research fair is conducted for faculty.	3.55	Agree
5. Research productivity is visible for every faculty.	1.80	Strongly Disagree
General Weighted Mean	3.22	Neutral

The general rating for research is "neutral" with a general weighted mean of 3.22 which means the perceptions from teachers on research strategies is on a neutral stand. The indicator 3 "research incentive is given for every output presented" got the highest rating of 4.75 which is being interpreted as strongly agree. The school budgeted incentive for teachers who are productive in research. In every output presented there is an equivalent incentive to be received. However, it is contradictory to the indicator 5 "research productivity is visible for every faculty" which receives a lowest rating of 1.80 and interpreted as strongly disagree. Despite incentive given by the school, teachers are not that productive in doing research.

Table 4 below shows the perceptions of teachers on program accreditation strategies in terms of library.

Table 4
Library

INDICATORS	WEIGHTED MEAN	INTERPRETATION
1. Enough volumes of books are available in the library.	3.60	Agree
2. Books in the library are updated from time to time.	2.75	Neutral
3. Internet and online journals are used to back-up the learning from the books.	3.95	Agree
4. Professional librarians are present in the library.	4.10	Agree
5. Number of professional librarians is enough in ratio to the number of students.	3.55	Agree
General weighted Mean	3.59	Agree

The general rating for library is "agree" with a general weighted mean of 3.59. This data tells that the program accreditation strategies on the area of library receive moderately agree perceptions from teachers which shows that the library provides satisfactory services to its clientele. Indicator 4 "professional librarians are present in the library" got the highest rating of 4.10 which is interpreted as agree. This is reliable from the human resource office where it shows that there were six (6) professional librarians and two (2) para-librarians handling the library in its operation. However, indicator number 2, "books in the library are updated from time to time" got the lowest rating of 2.30 and interpreted as neutral. Data implies that teachers perceive that library needs updating for books and needs archiving for the old ones.

Table 5 below shows the perceptions of teachers on program accreditation strategies in terms of community extension.

Table 5
Community Extension

INDICATORS	WEIGHTED MEAN	INTERPRETATION
1. Sustainability of community extension is observed.	4.40	Strongly Agree
2. Teachers are participating in the conduct of community extension.	3.95	Agree
3. Community extension program is well-implemented as planned.	4.10	Agree
4. There is teaching community awareness on the conduct of community extension program.	3.95	Agree
5. Enough budgets are allocated for the conduct of the community extension program.	3.40	Neutral
General weighted Mean	3.96	Agree

The general rating for community extension is "agree" with a general weighted mean of 3.96 which means that the program accreditation strategies receive positive perceptions from teachers. The indicator 1 "sustainability of community extension is observed" got the highest rating of 4.45 which is interpreted as strongly agree. This is a reality when the school was awarded as one of the top 5 outstanding community extension in the country in the year 2018 through partnership with the local government and the department of education. However, indicator 5 "enough budgets are allocated for the conduct of the community extension program" got the lowest rating of 3.40 which is interpreted as neutral. This is because the teachers perceived that budget on community extension need to be increased for expansion or addition of community extension program.

Table 6 shows the summary of the program accreditation strategies and their identified weaknesses

Table 6
Summary of weaknesses on program accreditation strategies

AREA	INDICATOR	WEIGHTED MEAN
Instructions	4. Appropriate number of students per class of teachers.	2.75
Faculty	4. Teachers are attending conferences and seminars related to their profession and the subjects that they are handling.	3.35
Research	5. Research productivity is visible for every faculty	1.80
Library	2. Books in the library are updated from time to time.	2.75
Community Extension	5. Enough budgets are allocated for the conduct of the community extension program.	3.40

Table 6 shows the weaknesses as perceived by the teachers among the different areas of program accreditation strategies which need to be enhanced for better school performance.

School Performance

Table 6 shows the results of the school performance as based adapted indicators.

Table 6
School Performance

INDICATORS	WEIGHTED MEAN	INTERPRETATION
1. The student achievements are high.	3.90	Agree
2. The discipline referrals are low.	3.45	Agree
3. The student attendance rates are high.	3.48	Agree
4. The student graduation rates are high.	3.45	Agree
5. The teacher satisfactions are high.	3.41	Agree
General weighted Mean	3. 54	Agree

As show in table 6, the school performance received a general weighted mean of 3.54 interpreted as agree. This implies that the teachers perceived that the school had a good school performance as results of program accreditation strategies. Indicator 1 "the student achievement are high" got the highest rating of 3.90 and interpreted as agree. Data reveals that teachers believe that the student achievement are increasing such as their test scores, examination rating, portfolio assessment and subject requirements. On the other hand, indicator 5, "the teacher satisfactions are high" got the lowest rating of 3.41 but still interpreted as agree. Date shows that there are instances that some teachers were dissatisfied but in general population their level of satisfaction is high. Thus, it implies that they like their jobs, engaged and even committed in their doings as teachers.

Significant Relationship of Program Accreditation Strategies and School Performance

The study determined if there was a significant relationship among the variables namely program accreditation strategies and school performance.

Based on the data presented in table 7, there was significant relationship between program accreditation strategies and school performance based on the perceptions of teachers.

Table 7
Significant Relationship of Program Accreditation Strategies and School Performance

Variables of the study	Mean	R	p	Decision
Program Accreditation Strategies	3.570	0.689	0.0001	reject
School Performance	3.538			

Significance level : p < 0.05

Therefore, the null hypothesis on these variables is rejected. This signifies that the higher extent of program accreditation strategies, the higher that of the school performance.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

The following conclusions were made out of the findings of the study:

1. The teachers' agree on program accreditation strategies on the areas instruction, faculty, library and community extension, but neutral in the area of research.
2. There were weaknesses identified on each area, indicator 4 for instruction, indicator 4 for faculty, indicator 5 for research, indicator 2 for library and indictor 5 for community extension.
3. There was a significant relationship between program accreditation strategies and school performance.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the findings of the study that there were a need to improve the program accreditation strategies, hence the following were recommended:

1. The school may assess its program accreditation strategies. After which, the school may develop a strategies based on the assessment done that will improve their strategies.
2. There must be an open communication and dialogue in the organization to guarantee sharing of ideas. This will ensure quality strategies to be consistently applied in the organization.
3. The proposed formulated strategies may be adopted by the school for their better program accreditation strategies.
4. Similar studies may be done in the future in a larger scope and using other methodologies to assure reliability, validity and more in-depth scrutiny ensuring better program accreditation strategies. Further studies may be done on program accreditation strategies using the findings of the study to continue developing models and instruments which are more important to the field educational management and human resource management.

VIII. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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