

Quality in Sync: Examining the Harmonisation Touchpoints of Philippine Teacher Education Quality Assurance Standards and Practices

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ABSTRACT The underperformance of Philippine teacher education programs is frequently attributed to the fragmented coordination among quality assurance (QA) agencies. Addressing this challenge, there is a growing imperative to harmonise the country's higher education QA system. This study explores how greater coherence might be achieved by identifying areas of convergence in QA standards and practices within the regulatory frameworks of State Universities and Colleges (SUCs). Grounded in a preliminary study using Multi-Grounded Theory, six theoretical QA standards and seven conformance practices were uncovered. Using heat mapping analysis, the study revealed strong convergence in curriculum structure, faculty qualifications, infrastructure, and student support. Similarly, alignment was evident in curriculum design, faculty recruitment, performance monitoring, and institutional collaboration. Despite existing variations, these shared areas present opportunities to develop a more coherent QA framework, paving the way for a unified QA system that enhances teacher education quality to better meet evolving national priorities and global education standards.

INTRODUCTION

The year one report of the Second Congressional Commission on Education (EDCOM II) (EDCOM II 2024), titled "Miseducation: The Failed System of Education," presents an overview of the current state of education in the Philippines, highlighting the alarming conditions besetting both basic and higher education. The notable lack of coordination among QA agencies is thought to critically underpin major educational challenges, such as the continuing decline of teacher education performance in the past decade (Generalao et al. 2022; Orbeta and Paqueo 2022; EDCOM II 2024). In light of this, EDCOM II (2024) advocates for a comprehensive review and harmonisation of the country's higher education QA system as a priority measure to address the persisting challenges plaguing the country's higher education ecosystem.

This emphasis on quality assurance harmonisation is not a new phenomenon (Hiép 2020). In fact, this emerged in the 19th century and continued towards post-World War II, where an increased attention in the development of global education standards was observed, laying the early groundwork for QA practices harmonisation (Hiép 2020). In the Philippines, this initiative began in the 20th century but became only more pronounced more

than five (5) years ago during a round table convergence between public and private higher education institutions (HEIs) (Tabora 2018). The same resonates in a recent recommendation to streamline QA processes to enforce uniform quality standards across HEIs, encouraging collaboration and sharing of best practices among quality agencies, and creating a more cohesive national quality system (Lausa 2019), without necessarily consolidating them into a single entity (Aldaba et al. 2024). However, while QA harmonisation has long been recognised as a critical necessity, national measures and strategic plans have not come to full fruition, yet (EDCOM II 2024).

The importance of QA harmonisation may be traced back to its role in fostering collaboration among QA key stakeholders (Ryan 2015). On a supra-national level, QA harmonisation promotes transparency and accountability among educational programs and institutions, providing a common ground for informed decision making and assessment of qualifications (Alzafari and Ursin 2019). It also facilitates cross-border mobility among graduates and professionals (Alzafari and Ursin 2019), through enhanced curricular programs as a consequence of shared standards and guidelines (Almurayh et al. 2022; Oktarina et al. 2023). Consequently, this leads to strengthening trust, confi-

dence and collaboration among institutions (Al-murayh et al. 2022), which essentially impinge on the fundamental role of educational institutions on human resource and economic development, currently foregrounded by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4 on Quality Education. Anent this, Bateman and Coles (2017) underlined that coordination in QA is a growing concern not only in Philippine higher education, but also in the Asia-Pacific region, as manifested through several harmonisation and regionalisation initiatives among Association of Southeast Asian member-states. Therefore, the implementation of a harmonised QA system is imperative to maximise the benefits of QA mechanisms now implemented in the country, through the authority afforded to the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) by Republic Act 7722, also known as the Higher Education Act of 1994 (RA 7722 1994). Using this jurisdiction, the commission becomes the primary agency in charge of policing HEIs (such as SUCs) and their academic programs, paving for the introduction of a variety of QA mechanisms (for example internal and external QA) to uphold its mandate (Malolos and Tullao 2018).

In 2012, a seminal legislation was born, birthing the “Policy-Standard to Enhance Quality Assurance (QA) in Philippine Higher Education Through an Outcome-based [OBE] and Based QA Framework,” subsequently ushering the operationalisation of the CHED’s programmatic QA mechanisms (CHED Memorandum Order [CMO] No. 46, Series of 2012; Sipacio 2015). This is implemented in coordination with other QA partners, such as the Accrediting Agency of Chartered Colleges and Universities, Inc. (AACCUP), which is primarily responsible for accreditation matters of SUCs (AACCUP 2022; Sipacio 2015). These programmatic QA mechanisms (CMO No. 46, S. 2012; Cuyegkeng et al. 2013) are fundamentally two-handed. The one hand covers regulatory processes aimed at enforcing Policies, Standards and Guidelines (PSGs) for program development and implementation (Malolos and Tullao 2018), issuing government authorisation via Certificate of Program Compliance (COPC) (CMO No. 14, S. 2019), and monitoring and evaluating of program compliance in accordance with the PSGs (CMO No. 46, S. 2012). The second hand incorporates developmental processes, such as voluntary accreditation through AACCUP (Dotong and Laguador 2015;

Malolos and Tullao 2018), and the awarding of Centres of Excellence and Development for excellence in program compliance (CMO No. 26, S. 2007; Dotong and Laguador 2015). These mechanisms are perceived to potentially boost the effectiveness of both QA procedures and raise the quality of HEIs and academic outcomes (CMO No 46, S. 2012).

Surprisingly, despite the prevalence of a multitude of QA processes birthed by CMO No. 46, S. 2012, outcomes of teacher education programs have consistently been cellar-dweller when compared against other board programs in the country (Orbeta and Paqueo 2022; Bautista et al. 2023; Bayudan-Dacuycuy et al. 2023; EDCOM II 2024). This continuing de-escalation of outcomes is therefore an outright indication that the country’s teacher education is in a state of emergency, thereby strengthening the call for QA coordination (Generalao et al. 2022). Yet, literature review reveals that QA complementarity, concomitantly expected through the rationalisation of the QA framework to OBE, is vaguely identifiable, as disaggregated agenda among accrediting agencies and the muddled translation of quality practices in HEIs are still perceptible, including the profoundly recognisable nuances in evaluation approaches and standards (Tabora 2018). Consequently, this creates a discord, compounding the issue of attaining high quality teacher education outcomes in most SUCs of the country (EDCOM II 2024; Generalao et al. 2022; Orbeta and Paqueo 2022).

In light of these articulations, the study believes that a harmonised QA framework is necessary to improve the quality of teacher education programs, and consequently their outcomes (Ryan 2015). If such concern remains unresolved, sustainability and credibility of CHED’s programmatic QA mechanisms (Al-Jaber and Elayyan 2018) will be jeopardised and may exacerbate the alarming condition of teacher education outcomes in the country. Thus, consistent with Izmailova et al. (2020), Ghimire and Timilsina (2022) and Seyfried and Pohlenz (2018) who posit that the absence of a common QA model remains an indispensable priority, this study argued for the necessity to analyse the QA standards of the various programmatic QA mechanisms, along with the QA conformance practices of SUCs. This study therefore examined the intersections and divergence of the QA standards across QA mechanisms and the conformance practices of SUCs to bring about an enlight-

ened appreciation of the harmonisation touch-points that may instigate the development of a QA harmonisation framework or model for teacher education. In foresight, this will aid in aligning the national QA standards with international frameworks (Yingqiang and Yongjian 2016), thereby contributing new information to the current knowledge base surrounding QA and serving as a foundation for an intra-national QA harmonisation in aid of higher education regionalisation and harmonisation initiatives.

Objective

The study answered the following objective:

1. Determine the commonalities of the QA standards and conformance practices employed by Philippine SUCs in developing and implementing teacher education curricular programs.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopted a descriptive quantitative research design, employing heatmap analysis as the primary analytical tool to map the frequency and distribution of categorical variables, namely, the theoretical constructs of quality assurance (QA) standards and conformance practices. Descriptive quantitative designs are particularly effective for systematically characterising phenomena as they exist within a specific context (Creswell and Creswell 2023), making it suitable for examining patterns within institutional QA processes. Heatmap analysis, a data visualization technique that employs a matrix of color-coded cells to represent the intensity or presence of specific variables across dimensions (Soria 2022), was selected due to its capacity to reveal patterns of convergence, divergence, and relational density within complex datasets. This methodological choice enables a more granular interpretation of institutional QA configurations, offering empirical clarity on which standards are most consistently upheld and where variability persists. Given the exploratory nature of the inquiry and the multidimensionality of QA practices, this approach facilitates a comprehensive and visually intuitive analysis that supports evidence-informed conclusions and actionable insights.

Data Sources

The data for this study were derived from a preliminary qualitative inquiry that examined QA standards and conformance practices in teacher education curriculum development and implementation across Philippine SUCs. Utilising the three-stage process of the Multi-Grounded Theory (empirical, theoretical, and internal), the initial investigation generated six theoretical categories representing core QA standards: curriculum structure, physical resources, human resources, student support, teaching and learning, and program performance. Furthermore, seven QA conformance practices emerged: designing structured curricula, validating curricular standards, maintaining systematic documentation, enforcing standards-based faculty recruitment, conducting performance monitoring, mitigating institutional constraints, and strengthening administrative support. These categories were derived from an extensive analysis of disaggregated data sources, including key informants' interviews of 12 academics from four representative SUCs and from various documentary sources, ranging from PSGs in teacher education, along with accreditation and program compliance evaluation tools and instruments. The evolved theoretical categories collectively formed the conceptual foundation upon which the present study was built.

Data Analysis

To identify points of convergence and divergence among quality assurance (QA) standards and conformance practices across QA mechanisms and SUCs, a series of heatmap analyses was conducted. This approach was adapted from the methodological framework of Balagtas (2021), utilizing Microsoft Excel's conditional cell formatting features. Heat mapping serves as a visual analytic technique wherein quantitative values, corresponding to multiple categorical variables, are systematically displayed in a matrix format via rows and columns, to illustrate presence-absence interrelationships. Given that the foundational study was originally qualitative in nature, a process of data transformation was undertaken to assign categorical values to the emergent theoretical categories. Each identified QA standard and conformance practice was encoded in a spreadsheet, with corre-

sponding data sources arrayed along the X-axis (for example, interviews, document analyses), and the theoretical categories aligned along the Y-axis. To operationalize the mapping, dichotomous numerical codes (that is, 1 = presence, 2 = absence) were assigned to each cell to denote whether a specific standard or practice was evidenced in a particular data source.

Beyond the presence-absence analysis, a secondary heat mapping procedure was conducted to examine the relative dominance (that is, high-low frequency distribution) of the identified QA standards and conformance practices. This procedure mirrored the initial steps, with the exception of numerical value assignment. Instead of binary categorization, absolute frequency counts were used to quantify the recurrence of each standard or practice across the designated data sources. For instance, if the standard pertaining to *curriculum structure* appeared 10 times within the CHED's Certificate of Program Compliance (COPC) tool, it was assigned the value "10" to reflect its prevalence, irrespective of whether the reference was explicit or inferred contextually. This quantification process was applied uniformly across all theoretical categories. Throughout the research process, stringent ethical protocols were upheld. Thus, the study was granted Ethics Clearance by the Philippine Normal University, The National Centre for Teacher Education.

RESULTS

Intersection and Divergence of the QA Standards

Results of the heat mapping of teacher education quality assurance standards are presented in

Table 1, highlighting the presence or absence interrelationships based on disaggregated data sources. As shown in Table 1, four theoretical categories consistently emerged across all data sources: *curriculum structure*, *human resources*, *physical resources*, and *student support*. In contrast, two categories, *teaching and learning* and *program performance*, were found to be incompletely convergent.

Meanwhile, Table 2 depicts the heat mapping of the high-low interactions of the emerged quality assurance standards based on disaggregated data sources. Looking at the table, *physical resources* appears to be the most frequently coded theoretical category, indicative of its dominance in terms of the number of inductive (open) codes that have emerged across data sources. This was followed by *human resources* and *curriculum structure*, obtaining the second and third highest open codes. Occupying the fourth and fifth ranks are *teaching and learning* and *student support*, and *program performance* at the nethermost.

Intersections and Divergence of the QA Conformance Practices

The second phase of heat mapping analysed the intersections and divergence of QA conformance practices employed by Philippine SUCs. Found in Table 3 is the heat map of the presence-absence analysis of the quality conformance practices across interview sources, identifying four (4) significant practices well-documented in all SUCs. These pertain to *structuring quality curriculum*, *standards-based hiring policies*, *breaking barriers*, and *improving quality of learning*.

Table 1: Heat mapping of presence-absence interrelationships of theoretical categories of QA standards across disaggregated data sources

Theoretical categories	Data sources				
	CMO	COPC	COE/COD	AACCUP	INTERVIEWS
Curriculum structure	1	1	1	1	1
Human resources	1	1	1	1	1
Physical resources	1	1	1	1	1
Teaching-learning	1	2	1	1	1
Student support	1	1	1	1	1
Program performance	2	2	1	1	1

Source: Author

Legend: CMO=CHED Memorandum Orders; COPC=Certificate of Program Compliance; COE/COD=Centre of Excellence/Centre of Development; AACCUP=Association of Accredited and Chartered Colleges and Universities in the Philippines

Table 2: Heat mapping of high-low interrelationships of the emerged quality assurance standards from disaggregated data sources

Theoretical categories	CMO	COPC	COE/ COD	AACCUP	INTERVIEW	Total
	<i>f</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>f</i>	
Curriculum structure	7	2	3	19	14	31
Human resources	10	11	3	41	27	65
Physical resources	5	46	8	54	20	113
Teaching-learning	1	0	1	44	2	46
Student support	3	3	7	13	2	26
Program performance	0	0	3	2	2	5

Source: Author

Legend: CMO=CHED Memorandum Orders; COPC=Certificate of Program Compliance; COE/COD=Centre of Excellence/Centre of Development; AACCUP=Accrediting Agency of Chartered Colleges and Universities, Inc.

ers, and performance monitoring. Meanwhile, three (3) other conformance strategies were found to be exhibited either in two or three SUCs. These include *validating curriculum quality, establishing paper trail, and maximising administrative support*.

The last heat mapping displays the high-low interplay of the seven (7) quality conformance practices across disaggregated sources. Table 4 reveals that quality conformance practices centred on *structuring curriculum quality, breaking barriers, and standards-based hiring* emerged as top strategies of the four SUCs. This was followed by *validating curriculum quality and establishing paper trail* both tied at the fourth rank, while *performance monitoring and maximising administrative support* occupy the nethermost ranks.

DISCUSSION

This study critically examined the convergence and divergence of QA standards and conformance

practices in teacher education, as situated within the institutional and policy frameworks of Philippine SUCs. Foremost, the heatmapping analysis revealed that QA mechanisms consistently demand a rigorous approach to ensuring quality *curriculum structure*. This includes comprehensive curriculum planning, iterative revisions and alignment with prescribed standards set forth by QA agencies, such as the CHED. While Ornstein and Hunkins (2018) underscore the iterative nature of curriculum design, more recent scholarship affirms that such cycles must be grounded in evidence-informed practice to remain responsive to dynamic educational demands (Salandanan 2020). Contemporary quality indicators in *curriculum structure* pertain not only to content sequencing, such as prerequisite and advanced courses, but also to the epistemological orientation of the curriculum, whether broad, specialised, traditional, or interdisciplinary (Morris and Adamson 2010). In the Philippine context, these elements are heavily shaped

Table 3: Heat mapping of presence-absence interrelationships of theoretical categories of QA conformance practices across disaggregated sources

Theoretical categories	Data sources			
	SUC 1	SUC 2	SUC 3	SUC 4
Structuring quality curriculum	1	1	1	1
Validating curriculum quality	1	1	2	1
Performance monitoring	1	1	1	1
Establishing paper trail	1	1	1	2
Standards-based Hiring	1	1	1	1
Breaking barriers	1	1	1	1
Maximising administrative support	1	1	1	2

Source: Author

Legend: SUC=State Universities and Colleges

Table 4: Heat mapping of high-low interrelationships of quality conformance practices based on disaggregated data sources

<i>Theoretical categories</i>	<i>SUC 1</i>	<i>SUC 2</i>	<i>SUC 3</i>	<i>SUC 4</i>	<i>Total inductive codes</i>
Structuring quality curriculum	19	11	10	12	52
Validating curriculum quality	5	5	0	5	15
Performance monitoring	5	5	1	3	14
Establishing paper trail	6	3	6	0	15
Standards-based Hiring	7	4	4	4	19
Breaking barriers	15	9	8	1	33
Maximising administrative support	6	4	2	0	12

Source: Author

Legend: SUC=State Universities and Colleges

by the CHED's Policies, Standards, and Guidelines (PSGs), which function as the blueprint for program accreditation and curriculum compliance. However, the rigid adherence to standardisation may suppress institutional innovation (Lestari et al. 2024), particularly in teacher education, where contextual responsiveness is essential.

Human resource capacity emerged as a central pillar in facilitating these processes. The qualifications, adequacy, and sustained professional development of instructional and non-instructional personnel are consistently prioritised across QA frameworks (Lausa 2019). UNESCO (2023) emphasises that ensuring educators are adequately recruited, trained, and professionally supported within a well-governed and well-resourced system is vital for achieving quality education outcomes. Given that teachers remain the most critical agents in curriculum implementation (Onukwu et al. 2020), strategic manpower planning becomes indispensable. Ongoing professional growth opportunities are not merely desirable but necessary for sustaining curriculum quality, enhancing pedagogical competence, and enabling institutional transformation (Oghene 2016; Obuya 2024; Ireri et al. 2024; Asim 2024). Yet, challenges persist in aligning institutional resources with national QA expectations, particularly in resource-constrained SUCs, where funding and infrastructure lag behind normative policy requirements.

In addition to *human resource* capacity and *curriculum design*, the findings of this study underscore the integral role of *physical resources* in the success of teacher education programs. While the literature has traditionally emphasised the centrality of qualified personnel and robust curricular

structures (Lausa 2019), this study affirms that the availability, relevance, and functionality of physical infrastructure are equally pivotal in driving programmatic outcomes. Indeed, the quality and adequacy of instructional and non-instructional physical resources surfaced as a critical dimension in achieving comprehensive educational effectiveness, particularly within the context of QA mechanisms applied in Philippine SUCs. Recent research supports this perspective, highlighting that the success of any curriculum implementation effort is significantly influenced by the physical learning environment (Sharma 2024). This is particularly salient in teacher education programs, where experiential and practice-based learning modalities require specialised spaces such as simulation rooms, laboratories, and media centres. QA frameworks increasingly recognise that infrastructure readiness must not be treated as an afterthought but rather as a foundational component of curriculum development. Thus, institutions are encouraged to embed physical resource planning into the broader scope of strategic and academic planning (Derese and Senapathy 2022).

The importance of aligning *physical resources* with instructional goals is further emphasised by studies noting the synergistic relationship between infrastructure and learning outcomes. For example, Espinosa et al. (2024) argue that access to modern facilities, such as ICT-enabled classrooms and subject-specific laboratories, not only enhances pedagogical delivery but also contributes to student engagement and retention. This is particularly true in contexts where digital transformation is a key feature of educational innovation. The COVID-19 pandemic exposed and amplified dis-

parities in physical resource distribution, underscoring the urgency of resource resilience in supporting hybrid and remote teaching modalities (Mohlen and Prummer 2022). Moreover, while traditional literature often identifies classrooms, books, desks, and chairs as the core of physical infrastructure (Eric and Ezeugo 2019), more recent definitions expand the concept to include digital learning environments, assistive technologies, and sustainable infrastructure that aligns with the goals of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) (UNESCO 2023). These broadened conceptions encourage institutions to rethink what constitutes essential infrastructure in teacher education, moving beyond mere physical presence toward functionality, accessibility, and inclusivity. Investment in physical resources should therefore be prioritised not only as an enabler of instructional quality but also as a strategic driver of institutional competitiveness and resilience and even national growth (Hussain and Afzal 2023).

Meanwhile, in line with SUCs mandate to develop high-quality human capital, teacher education is fundamentally geared toward cultivating what the International Organisation for Standardisation (2015) aptly termed “intangible human resources.” These refer not only to content knowledge and pedagogical skills but also to the values, dispositions, and adaptive expertise of future educators. In the context of Philippine SUCs, this mission underscores the strategic importance of ensuring that teacher education programs produce competent professionals who will form the backbone of the country’s basic education workforce. Findings of this study highlight *student support and management* as a critical QA standard within SUC-based teacher education. As a QA domain, student support encompasses both academic and non-academic services aimed at enhancing student development and academic success. These include administrative processes, policies on admission, retention and promotion, as well as broader systems of guidance, counseling, and wellness services. Student support is also described as a range of services provided both to individual learners and student groups (Hoferichter et al. 2022; Teixeira 2023). According to Prananto et al. (2025), robust student support mechanisms, particularly those related to academic advising, career guidance, and mental health, significantly impact retention and performance in higher education. In the

Philippine setting, this translates into an urgent need to institutionalise coherent policies on student admission and progression, not only to fulfill CHED and accreditation requirements but also to elevate program quality by recruiting and retaining high-potential candidates (Abao et al. 2023).

In examining the heatmap for QA conformance practices, the results suggest that Philippine SUCs are actively implementing strategic measures aligned with both the qualitative and quantitative requirements of QA frameworks. In the domain of *structuring quality curriculum*, the recognition and integration of legitimate internal and external stakeholder perspectives have emerged as essential for fulfilling quality assurance (QA) imperatives. Contemporary discourse emphasises that inclusive curriculum development, characterised by openness, plurality, and meaningful participation, enhances both the cultural and contextual relevance of curricular offerings (Akintayo et al. 2024; Cappiali 2023; Arnaiz-Sánchez et al. 2023; UNESCO 2023). When stakeholders, including students, faculty, and community representatives, are actively engaged in the planning process, curricula are more likely to be socially responsive, pedagogically relevant, and practically implementable (ELEMS-IKWEGBU 2024). Indeed, a curriculum grounded in stakeholder engagement not only reflects diverse educational needs but also promotes equity and sustainability at local, national, and global levels (UNESCO 2023). Within this participatory framework, students’ involvement is particularly critical. Their input ensures that curriculum content aligns with learner needs and aspirations, thus fostering deeper engagement and learning. This learner-centred orientation affirms that curriculum subject matter holds value only insofar as it resonates with students’ lived experiences and future goals. As such, embedding stakeholder voices, especially students’, at the inception of curriculum planning is not merely a procedural consideration but a normative requirement of socially attuned education systems (Elems-Ikwegbu 2024).

Regarding *standards-based faculty hiring*, the analysis reveals that teacher education curriculum development within Philippine SUCs is closely tied to compliance with rigorous human resource standards. This alignment reflects the high premium placed by quality assurance bodies, such as the CHED, on faculty credentials and expertise. CMO No. 74 and 75, Series of 2017, alongside recent QA

instruments, such as those issued by the Accrediting Agency of Chartered Colleges and Universities in the Philippines, Inc. (AACCUP 2022), explicitly articulate qualification benchmarks, typically requiring at least a master's degree in a discipline aligned with the curricular area. Furthermore, SUCs have institutionalised faculty hiring policies that operationalise these benchmarks, incorporating structured recruitment mechanisms guided by both mandatory and performance-based criteria. Recent findings underscore the necessity of faculty recruitment processes that prioritise disciplinary alignment, pedagogical competence, and communication acumen (Cosgriff-Hernández et al. 2023; Opada et al. 2024). The professionalisation of hiring practices ensures the availability of adequately prepared faculty, which in turn supports compliance with CHED's Certificate of Program Compliance (COPC) requirements. Importantly, while CHED mandates minimum qualifications, SUCs are afforded discretion in policy development, provided institutional practices meet or exceed national standards (CMO 74 and 75, S. 2017; AACCUP 2022).

Another convergent conformance practice, metaphorically termed *Breaking Barriers*, reflects the inherently social nature of higher education institutions. As SUCs are embedded within broader sociocultural systems, the success of their educational operations increasingly depends on inter-institutional cooperation and resource interdependence. This was evident in their strategic deployment of both internal and external networking mechanisms to address resource deficiencies. Internally, resource-sharing practices, such as joint use of laboratories and facilities, were reported as essential strategies for optimising limited infrastructure. Externally, SUCs actively pursued partnerships with local governments and publishing entities to expand access to instructional materials, particularly textbooks and specialised references. Effective institutional linkages not only help mitigate disparities in resource allocation but also foster innovation and inclusivity in teaching and learning processes (UNESCO 2023). However, the uneven capacity among SUCs to harness such partnerships highlights persistent structural inequities. In resource-constrained contexts, faculty often rely on personal funds or open-access digital repositories to sustain instructional continuity, an increasingly common practice in higher education systems navigating austerity. By integrating these

resource-sharing strategies, SUCs not only enhance instructional delivery but also demonstrate responsiveness to quality assurance imperatives. These adaptive mechanisms contribute to the broader goal of sustaining functional, equitable, and resilient teacher education programs, even amid systemic limitations.

Performance monitoring has emerged as a core compliance mechanism among Philippine SUCs in the delivery of teacher education. This is operationalised primarily through systematic oversight of course syllabi implementation and faculty instructional performance. Prior to formal instruction, course syllabi are disseminated to students to promote transparency, foster student engagement, and encourage feedback that can inform curricular refinement. Such preemptive disclosure aligns with best practices in participatory and constructivist pedagogy, which emphasise learner-centred approaches and shared responsibility in educational processes (Aguilar 2023; Houy 2025; Zhu and Atompag 2023). Moreover, academic administrators conduct routine supervision to ensure alignment between instructional delivery and the prescribed curriculum, including the timely coverage of content and the appropriate use of pedagogical strategies. Faculty performance is also monitored across multiple domains, including instructional effectiveness, attendance, workload management, and the adoption of adaptive teaching strategies, particularly critical in times of disruption (for example, pandemic-related shifts) (Adedoyin and Soykan 2020). These mechanisms reflect contemporary quality assurance imperatives, which underscore that curriculum development must be complemented by robust monitoring systems to ensure fidelity in implementation. Monitoring and evaluation is the basis for a school in making decisions on teacher development and promotion (Alfiak et al. 2023; Putri 2024). Without such validation processes, even well-structured curricula risk falling short of intended learning outcomes, weakening overall program credibility and effectiveness. Curriculum development and implementation are inherently interdependent, with the success of one contingent upon the effectiveness of the other. A curriculum, regardless of its design quality, remains incomplete without proper enactment. This underscores the criticality of the "Process" component in Stufflebeam's CIPP model, which serves as the conduit between curricular

intent and educational outcomes. Void of this process, the instructional blueprint risks remaining theoretical, creating a disjunction between design and impact. Thus, for teacher education programs to succeed, robust and context-appropriate monitoring and evaluation mechanisms must be deliberately integrated to ensure the fidelity and quality of teaching and learning implementation (Alfiak et al. 2023; Putri 2024).

CONCLUSION

The theoretical categories of teacher education quality assurance standards and conformance practices have shown patterns of commonalities. Therefore, while different quality assurance mechanisms and methods employ disparate sets of standards, there are areas of convergence that Philippine SUCs might maximise in terms of teacher education quality assurance. Consequently, understanding these convergent quality assurance criteria and conformance strategies not only facilitates CHED authorisation at the outset, but also fosters compliance with other quality measures, thus increasing teacher education curricular programs' credibility and validity. These convergent quality assurance areas could be harmonised in aid of synergistic quality assurance system, without necessarily merging them into a single quality assurance entity. In so doing, SUCs will be guided on optimisable areas in teacher education curriculum development and implementation, saving them from duplicated, muddled, and overlapping quality assurance compliance. In foresight, such a harmonised model may facilitate intra-regional (within the ASEAN region) and international quality assurance coordination, allowing better program quality management beyond national borders.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of the current study offer significant insights that extend beyond the boundaries of the Philippines, presenting a compelling case for the potential to establish a unified system of QA standards for teacher education programs. Despite the existence of diverse and multifaceted QA mechanisms, the study highlights the feasibility of creating a cohesive framework for teacher education that harmonises these mechanisms into a unified standard, which later may be aligned with

global teacher education standards. This convergence of standards could lead to greater consistency in teacher education worldwide, ensuring that programs across various countries adhere to common quality benchmarks while simultaneously addressing the unique disparities and challenges within different educational systems. Such uniformity in quality standards would have a profound impact on the recognition of teacher education credentials, facilitating the cross-border mobility of both faculty and students. This increased mobility would be especially beneficial in mitigating teacher shortages in high-demand regions or countries, where the demand for qualified educators outpaces the local supply. By promoting the exchange of skilled educators across borders, the global education community would benefit from a more flexible and diverse workforce.

Furthermore, the study's findings carry important policy implications, suggesting the need for both national and international policy reforms in teacher education. The establishment of stronger, more clearly defined legal frameworks for quality assurance could foster a more effective and globally relevant teacher education system. Aligning these reforms with the aspirations of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4, ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all, would contribute to the broader global education agenda. Ultimately, these efforts could lead to improved educational outcomes worldwide, addressing both the challenges of teacher shortages and the growing demand for high-quality education.

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DATA AVAILABILITY/SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS STATEMENT

All data have been rightfully disclosed in this paper.

DECLARATION OF GENERATIVE AI IN SCIENTIFIC WRITING

The autor declares that AI was used to improve coherence and language tone without necessarily altering the original thought of the article.

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