

# Board Licensure Examination for Psychometrician Performance from 2014-2018: A Correlational Study

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**Abstract** – *In the Philippines, one gauge of educational quality is the performance of graduates in the licensure examinations conducted by the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC). This study aimed to assess and correlate the board licensure examination results for psychometricians for academic years 2014-2018 towards developing an action plan to improve the licensure examination results of the program. Specifically, it sought to assess the board licensure performance of the participants per academic year; established a correlation among the results of the licensure examination from 2014-2018, and proposed an action plan that aimed to optimize the learning experience of the students while they are enrolled in the university for the improvement of the licensure examination. Using the PRC results of the one hundred forty-seven (147) psychology students who took the board licensure examination from academic years 2013-2018, this study employed a descriptive-correlational research design. The frequency, percentage and correlation analysis were used as statistical treatments. It can be concluded that the university's performance in terms of BLEPP is above NPP except for the 2017 licensure examination result and there is no significant relationship between the institution and the NPP. It can be concluded that the university is producing globally competitive psychometricians in delivering psychological services pertaining to psychological interventions, psychological assessments, and programs. From the results, it can be suggested that the university headed by the psychology department may continuously propose an action plan that would further improve its National performance in the BLEPP. Also, it may be suggested that a reinforcement program may be incorporated into the new curriculum for BA and BS Psychology programs.*

**Keywords** – *Institutional Passing Percentage, National Passing Percentage, Psychometrician*

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## INTRODUCTION

Psychometricians, together with psychologists and other mental health practitioners, play a very vital role in nation-building. However, the role being played by them is not yet realized by many since the field of psychology is just a new field, specifically in the Philippines. Sometimes, incoming students who are unsure of the program that they want to take in college enroll in programs that they think are easy and will not bring them pressure and so many responsibilities. Previously, these students chose to enroll in programs like psychology thinking about these things and not regarding the field as an essential one.

To introduce psychology and its significance in promoting mental health awareness among Filipinos, the Psychology Act of 2009 otherwise known as RA 10029 was issued in the year 2010. This Act acknowledges that psychologists and psychometricians have a critical role in the development and progress of the country, specifically in each individual person. It also acknowledges the diverse specializations in psychology and the diverse functions specific to the varied specializations. Moreover, this act also recognizes the significance of the psychological services that practicing psychologists and psychometricians provide to different types of individuals and identifies the need to protect people who will need their help from by preventing inexperienced or untrained individuals from offering psychological services. With these, RA 10029 shall nurture assiduous, upright and competent psychologists and psychometricians whose standards of service and practice shall be globally competitive and excellent through the administration of credible, effective, and inviolable licensure examinations and the promotion and

imposition of regulatory activities, programs and measures that enhance their professional well-being and growth [1].

With all the positive things mentioned above as to the possible contributions that a licensed psychologist and psychometrician could contribute to mental health awareness in the Philippines as well as the assistance and help, they could provide to clients, this research undertaking was started. This academic undertaking was conducted to assess and establish a correlation between to board licensure performance of the Psychology students of the Lyceum of the Philippines University-Batangas from Academic Years 2013-2018 respectively. The researchers deemed it necessary to conduct such a study for to address the need to improve the licensure examination results of the graduates in the Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science in Psychology.

Many schools including the university consider the successful completion of the licensure examination and having a high Institutional Passing Percentage (IPP) as one of the significant standards for assessing the effectiveness not only of the Psychology program but also of other curricula [1]. With these, this study intended to create a system-wide improvement measure to optimize the student's learning experience while they are enrolled in the university. The activities proposed in this action plan are also designed to meet the skills and competencies expected in the Philippine Qualifications Framework and the ASEAN.

Also, this research study is limited in terms of findings. This study is restricted only to the limited number of the university's graduates who took the Board Licensure Examination for Psychometricians (BLEPP) as first-timers, so it may not be generalized elsewhere. Another, since the researchers only focused on the relationship between the National Passing Percentage (NPP) and the IPP as well as the differences that exist between them when participants were grouped based on their profile variables, other variables were not considered such as the participants' academic performance in each board subject, on-the-job-training performance, and their work performance. With the above-mentioned limitations of the study, further research should be conducted to enrich the conclusions made and to further explore the topic at hand.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

This study aimed to assess and correlate the board licensure examination results for psychometricians for academic years 2014-2018 towards the development of an action plan to improve the licensure examination

results of the program. Specifically, it sought to assess the board licensure performance of the participants per academic year; established correlation among the results of the licensure examination from 2014-2018; and proposed an action plan that aimed to optimize the learning experience of the students while they are enrolled in the university for the improvement of the licensure examination.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

### **Research Design**

In conducting this study on to board licensure examination performance of the psychology students at the university, the researchers employed the quantitative descriptive correlational study. As cited by Shaugnessy [2] quantitative method is the design in which events can be quantified so that the data can end up being numbers. It is a method that is concerned with the understanding of what is happening in the situation being studied as viewed by the participants and attempts to understand the entire environment. Descriptive research is used to give the researchers a picture or description of the present condition while correlational research on the other hand will determine if there exist significant relationships among variables under study and to predict future events from present knowledge [3].

### **Research Respondents**

The total participants of this study were one hundred forty-seven (147) psychology students from the university who took the board licensure examination for psychometricians from academic years 2013-2018. From the results provided by PRC, only first-takers were considered regardless of their General Weighted Average (GWA). Since the researchers were interested in this specific set of participants, they used the total population sampling. It is a type of purposive sampling technique where the whole population of interest is studied [4]. Since the size of the target population is manageable and it is being set apart by an unusual and well-defined characteristic, this sampling technique is the most practical to use.

### **Measures**

The primary tool that the researchers utilized was the official results provided by PRC based on IPP and the NPP based on October 2014, and October 2015 are both valid and reliable tools since they are certified true and correct by the PRC.

### **Data Gathering Procedure**

The researchers came up with the topic of this study and the possible variables to include based on the literatures available from several resources. Aside from the need for the researchers to comply with the university's research requirements, there also exists a need to conduct a study about the assessment of BLEPP. Once the rationale of the research was established, the researchers then sought permission from the university officials to conduct the study. When permission was granted, they started reviewing significant literature and studies to gather additional background information about the topic. They obtained the results of the BLEPP by seeking consent from the College Dean to access the data of the licensure examination results provided by PRC. Upon getting the data, they were submitted to the Statistician for statistical treatment followed by analysis.

### Data Analysis

The data gathered in this study which were mainly quantitative in nature were tallied and tabulated using the frequency distribution table. It presented the score values and their incidence of occurrence for easier analysis of each variable. Percentage was used in determining the passing percentage of the board passers while Pearson-r allowed the researchers to utilize both direction and degree of the relationship between variables. It measured the extent to which paired scores occupy the same or opposite positions within their own distributions. It was specifically used in computing a significant relationship among the board performances of the students from five academic years.

### Ethical Consideration

Ethics should be considered in conducting every research. In this study, the researchers considered the General Ethical Standards and Procedures - Standard III.J Code of Ethics (Psychological Association of the Philippines, 2017). Also, in getting the data, permission was sought by the researchers to the officials of the university through their College Dean for data privacy reasons. Confidentiality of the data collected especially the participants' personal information and their responses was given utmost importance. With regard to the literature and studies used in this study, ethical consideration was also applied by properly citing the references.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The first specific objective of this research study is to assess the board licensure performance of the participants per academic year. With this, the first four

tables will summarize the BLEPP result per academic year highlighting the performance of the first-timers since this is one of the limitations of this study. Since BLEPP started in October 2014 when the first batch of examiners took the test, table 1 shows the data from that examination. Based on the table, it can be gleaned that the school performed quite well in the 2014 licensure examination wherein 41.18% or 14 out of 20 first-timers passed. A total of 1,290 out of 3,283 passed the BLEPP given by the Board of Psychology in October 2014 (PRC, 2014). This means that there was a 38.3% NPP. From this, it can be said that the IPP is 1.87% higher than NPP for October 2014 BLEPP. This result indicated that it is quite a good start for the university to obtain the presented rating for it is the first BLEPP organized by PRBP.

**Table 1**  
**October 2014 BLEPP Result**

	Passed	Failed	Conditional	Total	Passing Percentage
<b>First Timers</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>41.18%</b>
Repeaters	0	0	0	0	0.00%
Overall	14	20	0	34	41.18%
<i>National Passing Percentage:</i>				<i>39.31%</i>	<i>Above National</i>

**Table 2**  
**October 2015 BLEPP Result**

	Passed	Failed	Conditional	Total	Passing Percentage
<b>First Timers</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>53.13%</b>
Repeaters	2	4	0	6	33.33%
Overall	19	19	0	38	50.00%
<i>National Passing Percentage:</i>				<i>46.15%</i>	<i>Above National</i>

The second table will also answer the first objective of this research study for the academic year 2015. PRC (2015) announced that 2,061 out of 4,466 passed the BLEPP given by the Board of Psychology, meaning, the NPP had a 7.8% increase from the October 2014 NPP of 38.3% to 46.15%. Despite this increase in the NPP, the IPP also increased by 11.65% which means that the IPP is again higher than the NPP by 6.98%. From here, it can be suggested that the university's performance for the second time has improved. Of the total of 32 first-timers who took the examination, 17 of them passed and 15 failed. Aside from this, the 2015 BLEPP performance of the University also brought

recognition by producing a Top 6 performer in the name of Ms. Almira Joy A. Dela Roca, the first recorded topnotcher in the Southern Luzon Area.

**Table 3**  
**October 2016 BLEPP Result**

	Passed	Failed	Conditional	Total	Passing Percentage
<b>First Timers</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>65.52 %</b>
Repeaters	3	3	0	6	50.00%
Overall	22	13	0	35	62.86%
<b>National Passing Percentage:</b>					<b>50.46% Above National</b>

Table 3 also presents the data obtained for the first objective of this study for the October 2016 BLEPP. It can be seen in the table that the university's rating has improved a lot considering the number of first-timers who took the exam. Of the 29 total psychology students who took the examination, 19 of them passed and 10 failed. As gleaned on the table, the NPP as reported by the PRC (2016) is 50.46% and the IPP is 65.52%. This is again a good sign that Psychology's performance is getting better compared with the previous examination conducted by the PRC and the PRBP. This is also supported by the statement from PRC CHED in 2004 that the quality of the program being offered by a certain university also depends on the performance in the board examinations of its graduates or the so-called IPP. If the passing percentage of those first-time takers is relatively high, it is a good measure of program excellence [5].

**Table 4**  
**October 2017 BLEPP Result**

	Passed	Failed	Conditional	Total	Passing Percentage
<b>First Timers</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>50.00%</b>
Repeaters	1	0	0	1	100.00%
Overall	18	17	0	35	51.43%
<b>National Passing Percentage:</b>					<b>56.97% Below National</b>

Table 4 reflects the 2017 BLEPP result. It can be noticed that the performance of the university in this year's licensure examination did not turn out well for its performance is below the NPP of 56.97% against the school's rating of 50.00%. As seen in the data presented, from the 34 students who took the licensure examination, 17 passed and 17 failed.

The decrease in the IPP may be attributed to the Commission on Higher Education's (CHED) newly

implemented policy where schools do not have the right to control the students in taking the licensure examinations. A Mock Board is available to any graduating psychology student at the university as a study aid for the BLEPP. The Mock Board accurately identified success or failure on the licensure examinations for 75% of the participants of a previous study [6]. From the mock board examination administered by the Psychology Department, 35 took the said pre-boards and only 7 passed whereas 28 failed and were allowed to re-take the exam through removal exam. The findings indicate that the Mock Board and its results can be a valid and effective supplement to board preparation activities.

**Table 5**  
**October 2018 BLEPP Result**

	Passed	Failed	Conditional	Total	Passing Percentage
<b>First Timers</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>72.22%</b>
Repeaters	0	4	0	4	0.00%
Overall	13	9	0	22	51.43%
<b>National Passing Percentage:</b>					<b>47.73% Above National</b>

Table 5 indicates the recently concluded licensure examination for BLEPP. It is shown on the data obtained that this is the best performance of the school considering its passing rate of 72.22% against the NPP of 47.73% (PRC, 2018). From here, it can be concluded that the university has recovered from its previous performance of below NPP. From the 18 students who took the exam, 13 of them passed and only 5 failed. Overall, the university's performance is highly comparable with other schools and universities located in the Southern Luzon area. Many schools consider the successful completion of the licensure examination as one of the significant benchmarks for assessing the effectiveness not only of the Psychology program but also of other curricula [1].

**Table 6**  
**Correlation between the IPP and the NPP**

Academic Years	r	p-value	Interpretation
2014-2018	.310	.612	Not significant

The BLEPP performances of first-timers from the university or the IPP and the NPP were also analyzed to identify their correlation. Table 6 above displays the result of the correlation using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient r. The table shows that the first-timers' performance from the university is not related to

the NPP as reflected by the low value of correlation coefficient ( $r = .310$ ,  $p = .612$ ).

Results indicate that the national passing percentage for each year's examination does not influence the institutional passing percentage. This can be explained by the third variable problem, which is defined as having an intervening variable that is not part of the research process but could explain the relationship or association between two variables [8].

Table 7 above shows the proposed action plan based on the results of the research conducted in order to address the need to improve the licensure examination results of the university's graduates in the Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Arts in Psychology. This is intended to create a system-wide measure of improvement to optimize the student's learning experience while they are enrolled in the university.

As shown in the table, different programs were suggested, starting from the admission policy, skill level assessment, faculty line-up, curriculum review and practicum enhancement. The said programs were in order to establish a baseline of qualifications necessary

for admission into the BS/BA Psychology Programs, to establish a measure for advancement of the student to the next curricular level, to allow the faculty further to develop themselves as competent practitioners in the field in order to provide a wealth of knowledge that the faculty can share to the students, and for continuous updating of the curriculum to equip the students with the expected competencies in the profession, both in the national and international level as well as to intensify the practicum program to allow the students a greater opportunity to apply the concepts learned in the classroom into the real-life setting. In this context, the role of licensure examinations becomes pivotal. Licensure exams serve as a litmus test for graduates' acquired knowledge and skills, reflecting the effectiveness of instruction at their Higher Education Institution (HEI). Thus, poor performance in licensure exams can serve as a red flag, signaling deficiencies within the undergraduate curriculum and reinforcing the need for ongoing improvements in program quality [7].

**Table 7**  
**Proposed Action Plan for the Improvement of Psychology graduates' Performance in BLEPP**

<b>Program</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Strategy/Activity</b>	<b>Persons Responsible/ Participants</b>	<b>Performance Indicator</b>
Admission Policy	To establish a baseline of qualifications necessary for admission into the BS/BA Psychology Programs	Administration of Battery of Exams for BA/BS Psychology students	Psychometrician (CATC) DC Psychology Student Applicant	Students who will be accepted for the BS/BA Psychology Programs should have passed the Battery Exams
Year Level Skills Assessment	1. To provide an assessment tool for the competencies of the students vis-a-vis the program outcomes for Psychology. 2. To establish a measure for advancement of the student to the next curricular level	Comprehensive Examination	DC-Psychology Psychology Faculty members Psychology students	--students before entering the second year level are expected to have passed the comprehensive examination based on subjects taken on their First Year Level

Development of Psychology Faculty Line-up	1. To enhance the qualifications of the members of the faculty of the Psychology Program through further studies and licensure examinations. 2. To allow the faculty to further develop themselves as competent practitioners in the field in order to provide a wealth of knowledge that the faculty can share to the students	Provision of Financial Grants for Graduate Studies	University Officials --President --VPAR/AVPAR --HRMD Director --CEAS Dean --DC-Psychology DC-Psychology Faculty members	--teachers are expected to enroll in their graduate studies for professional growth --Professional subject teachers are expected to have passed the BLEPP
Curriculum Review	1. For continuous updating of the curriculum to equip the students with the expected competencies in the profession, both at the national and international level	Curriculum improvement based on CMO update	Dean-CEAS DC, Psychology Psychology Faculty Members	-The psychology department is expected to have reviewed the curriculum based on the CMO update for Psychology Undergraduate Programs
Increase in practicum hours with students being exposed to different settings	1. To intensify the practicum program to allow the students a greater opportunity to apply the concepts learned in the classroom in a real-life setting	Curriculum enhancement and syllabi update	Dean, CEAS DC, Psychology Psychology Faculty Members	--The department is expected to have revised the syllabus for the Practicum subject with an increased number of hours per setting

## REFERENCES

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The university's performance in terms of BLEPP is above NPP except for the 2017 licensure examination result. There is no relationship between IPP and NPP from 2014 to 2018 BLEPP. The university is producing globally competitive psychometricians in the delivery of psychological services pertaining to psychological interventions, psychological assessment, and programs.. A proposed action was created through different programs and strategies and expected outcomes.

The university, headed by the psychology department, may continuously propose an action plan that would further improve its National performance in the BLEPP. A reinforcement program may be incorporated into the new curriculum for BA and BS Psychology programs. The proposed action plan may be evaluated by the Dean of the College before its implementation. Future research may also be conducted to address the limitations of this study such as the number of participants, the period covered and the variables that were correlated.

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