

THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS: ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS AND CREATING IMPACT ON THE EYES OF THE STAKEHOLDERS

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Abstract. The study aimed to analyze the results of the accreditations by Commission of Higher Education (CHED), The Philippine Association of Colleges and Universities Commission on Accreditation (PACUCOA), and International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 9001 vis-a-vis its impact to the institution as perceived by the stakeholders.

Sixty – eight (68) faculty members, forty – three (43) alumni members and one hundred sixty – four (164) students participated in the study as research respondents. The data analyzed is from AY 2010 – 2015 including the admission, enrolment, graduation, and board passing rate. The present study utilized quantitative and qualitative research design.

The results of the study showed that the Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific (MAAP) successfully passed the accreditation process by CHED, PACUCOA, and ISO with some areas or opportunities for improvement. It also shows that the quality of education is the most benefited aspect by the accreditation process as perceived by the stakeholders.

Keywords: MAAP, CHED, PACUCOA, ISO

1. Statement of the problem and its background

Introduction

The accreditation process is one way to ensure the quality education in an academic institution as seen in their outputs such an increase in the passing rate of board passers, success in employment and the higher level of competence of the graduates (Abesamis, 2008). According to Adelman as cited by Ching (2013), accreditation is a method of quality control and policy whereby, as an outcome of deliberation or examination, whether the institution or its programs are granted based on the qualification set by the accrediting agency as complying with the required mandatory standards. However, in the Philippines, it is noticeable that the quality of education in several higher education institutions (HEI's) have worsened over time as cited by Conchada and Tiongco (2015) as showed in low passing rate in the national board exams. Improving the quality of higher education institutions is thus one of the concerns and driving force on why some of the government agencies such as CHED are continuously discovering different ways to address the issue. In the Maritime Higher Education Institutions (MHEIs), there are some issues on the quality of education earned by the students. It is the vision of all MHEI's to be globally competitive by producing skilled and proficient human resources. However, the task is demanding as these institutions need to constantly verify and check their existing policies against the international standards. To address the demand of the competitive world market, the CHED issued policies in relation to compliance of all MHEI's in the country. Thus, there is a need to determine the impact of accreditation at the Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific so that other maritime higher education institutions in the Philippines who will undergo voluntary accreditation will have the foundations and basis in modifying their policies, procedures, and systems in education.

Statement of the Problem

The general problem of the study is: What are the results of accreditation to the Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific vis – a – vis its impact to the institution as perceived by the stakeholders during the academic year 2010 – 2015?

Specifically, this study sought answers to the following questions: (1) How may the profile of the Bachelor of Science in Marine Transportation and Bachelor of Science in Marine Engineering be described in terms of years of offering, years of accreditation and admission rate? (2) How may the results of accreditation by CHED requirements on the two programs? (3) How may the results of accreditation by PACUCOA requirements on the two programs? (4) How may the results of ISO for the Management System Certification be described in terms of Quality management system, management responsibility, resource

management, product realization, measurement, analysis and improvement, performance evaluation and improvement? (5) Is there significant difference on the perceptions of faculty, MAAP alumni, and students on the effects of accreditations? (6) How may the respondents have perceived being the most beneficial aspect of accreditation? (7) How may the results of CHED assessments, PACUCOA accreditation and ISO certification affect the institution in terms of admission rate, graduation rate and board passing rate?

Significance of the Study

The findings are deemed important to the maritime industry, administration, faculty members and future researchers.

2. Review of related literature

Quality Assurance Framework in the Philippines

As mandated CMO-No. 46-s2012, it explains the QA framework used in the Philippines: (1) the fitness for purpose in terms of quality was used by the international organization for assessment and accreditation. This standpoint expects the institution to convert into learning outcomes, programs, and systems their vision, mission and goal. (2) Exceptional for quality should be used for being distinctive, meaning above very high standards, or conformance to norms based on a system of comparability using conditions and standards.

Resistance to Quality Assurance and Accreditation

In the study of Wang (2014), he emphasized the significance of teacher's and student's participation in QA and accreditation to help define quality in higher education in China. Jarvis (2014) opposes that there is an increasing global popularity of using QA in managing higher educational institutions as regulatory tool. Lucas (2014), argue the existence of the academic resistance to Quality Assurance practices.

What is the Importance of QA and Accreditation and its Relationship?

Quality Assurance is a state of conditions that may spearhead to the attainment of comprehensibility and transparency among areas of concerns. The transparency should be visible, it only means that the quality assurance and accreditation should make institutions evident of performance, it also letting the required outcomes to be experienced and felt by the faculty, staff and students.

3. Conceptual framework

The study presents a theoretical framework based on the independent and dependent variables. The independent variables considered are the components of CHED assessment, the criteria of PACUCOA and the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 9001 by DNV – GL criteria.

The dependent variable used in the study is the impact on the effectiveness of accreditation in terms of admission, graduation, and board passing rate and the evaluation of MAAP faculty, alumni and students on the accreditation of CHED, PACUCOA, and ISO. The perceptions of the respondents were used to validate the results of the accreditation.

4. Methodology

Methods and Techniques of the Study

The study utilized the quantitative and qualitative type of research. Descriptive type of research was utilized to explain and interpret conditions or relationship that exists, the perceptions of the respondents, the present conditions of processes and the effects that are evident or trends that are developing (Best and Kahn, 1998).

Population of the Study

Sixty-eight (68) MAAP faculty members, forty-three (43) alumni and one hundred sixty four (164) students of the Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific (MAAP) were used as the respondents of the study in the survey.

Research Instrument

The research instruments used in conducting this study were self-made questionnaire intended for the faculty members, alumni and students of MAAP. Several procedures in validating the instruments were repeatedly done to obtain accurate results. Likewise, the study used secondary data for the documentary analysis of CHED assessment, PACUCOA accreditation and ISO assessment results from 2010 – 2015 for the two (2) programs offered by MAAP. The research questionnaire focused on the areas evaluated by CHED and PACUCOA. This is followed by unstructured interviews to supplement the original information from the survey.

5. Findings

Part 1. Profile of the Bachelor of Science in Marine Transportation and Bachelor of Science in Marine Engineering.

From the time of establishment, MAAP is committed to continuously improve its system in producing qualified and competent graduates by submitting to different types of

accreditations. From the statutory and regulatory requirements to various third party accreditations that will check the existing quality policy of MAAP. The ISO started its verification from 2000 up to present, while PACUCOA started in 2012.

Part 2. Accreditation Ratings of the Two (2) Programs by CHED

In the area of faculty, based on the assessment made of CHED in the two (2) programs offered by MAAP, it showed that the area of faculty is not compliant with the requirements. They found out that one (1) faculty member is not a BSMT degree holder. The said faculty member was given a chance to take BSMT program in a maritime institution using the Expanded Tertiary Education Equivalency and Accreditation Program (ETEEAP).

Part 3. Accreditation Ratings of the Two (2) Programs by PACUCOA

Table 1. Results of PACUCOA Accreditations for the 2 Programs offered in MAAP

Areas of Evaluation	Program	
	BSMT	BSMarE
Philosophy and Objectives	4.13	4.13
Faculty	4.22	4.22
Instructions	4.53	4.53
Laboratories	4.83	4.83
Research	3.32	3.32
Library	4.03	4.03
Students Services,	4.17	4.17
Social Orientation and Community Involvement	4.05	4.05
Physical Plant and Facilities	4.58	4.58
Organization and Administration	4.21	4.21

Based on the report made by PACUCOA on the area of laboratories, “Latest model and impressive state – of – the – art simulators and computer – based training equipment approximating those used in the industry were provided” was found out to be one of the strengths of MAAP.

On the other hand, Research Area though it has the lowest score, the PACUCOA accreditors found it to have a strong management commitment for research activities as gleaned from the provisions of the MAAP Research Manual.

Part 4. Accreditation Ratings of MAAP on ISO 9001

Based on the results of certification, it showed that MAAP is compliant with the certification standards of ISO 9001:2015. It is also stated in the report that the facilities are well maintained all throughout the campus including renovation of cadet’s dormitories, efforts to improve the system of grades submission to Registrar through the On-line Grading

System (OGS), very strong and effective leadership by top management in driving the risk-based thinking.

Part 5. The Effects of Accreditations as Perceived by Internal Stakeholders

It can be gleaned from table 2 that among areas of evaluation, MAAP faculty members rated the organization as the highest area with 4.98 mean score while the area of library got the lowest score with 4.66. MAAP alumni rated the facilities as the highest with 4.98 mean score while the area of research scored the lowest with 4.16. MAAP students gave 4.92 mean score to the faculty while extension services has the lowest with 4.60.

Table 2. Perceptions of the Stakeholders on Accreditations

Areas of Evaluation	Faculty		Alumni		Students		Total	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Philosophy	4.90	0.27	4.76	0.35	4.63	0.50	4.71	0.44
Faculty	4.77	0.37	4.49	0.77	4.83	0.32	4.92	0.25
Instructions	4.75	0.38	4.62	0.46	4.89	0.25	4.81	0.34
Laboratories	4.85	0.40	4.66	0.40	4.84	0.31	4.81	0.35
Research	4.72	0.54	4.16	0.50	4.71	0.47	4.68	0.54
Library	4.66	0.44	4.81	0.36	4.75	0.41	4.74	0.41
Extension Services	4.77	0.36	4.21	0.48	4.63	0.45	4.60	0.47
Facilities	4.84	0.30	4.98	0.11	4.87	0.25	4.88	0.25
Organization	4.98	0.10	4.76	0.40	4.94	0.23	4.71	0.43
OVERALL	4.78	0.19	4.60	0.22	4.78	0.17	4.75	0.19

Scale of Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
4.50 – 5.00	Strongly Agree
3.50 – 4.49	Agree
2.50 – 3.49	Neither Agree nor Disagree
1.50 – 2.49	Disagree
1.00 – 1.49	Strongly Disagree

On the findings, the process led the administration to be supportive in trainings and personal development of the faculty and students and in practicing fair and reasonable judgement to the concerns of faculty and students. On the part of alumni, accreditation led MAAP to an environment that is conducive to educational activity and relaxation. Lastly, students strongly agree that this has led in producing sufficient and competent faculty members.

Part 6. Comparison of Perceptions towards Accreditation between Faculty and Students

Among the areas of evaluations, the perceptions of the respondents when grouped according to faculty/ alumni and students is significant on Philosophy, Faculty, and Instructions, therefore the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference on their perceptions is rejected. In the areas of laboratories, research, library, extension services, facilities and organization, the perceptions of the respondents are not significantly different,

therefore the null hypothesis is accepted. In overall, the perceptions of the respondents when grouped according to faculty/ alumni and students are significantly different therefore the hypothesis is rejected.

Part 7. The Perceptions of the Respondents on the Benefits of Accreditation Process.

Table 3. Ranking of Benefits of the Accreditation Process as Perceived by Stakeholders

Benefits	Faculty		Alumni		Students		Total		Rank
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	
Welfare of Faculty and Students	6	8.8	17	39.5	30	18.3	53	19.3	2
Personal Development	1	1.5	8	18.6	14	8.5	23	8.4	3
Quality of Education	59	86.8	18	41.9	102	62.2	179	65.1	1
Improvement of the classroom or work environment	0	0.0	0	0.0	6	3.7	6	2.2	5
Improvement of the Quality System	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	2.4	4	1.5	6
Improvement of Physical Facilities	2	2.9	0	0.0	8	4.9	10	3.6	4
Total	68	100.0	43	100.0	164	100.0	275	100.0	

In the interview made with the stakeholders on the perceived effects of accreditation, one (1) faculty member said, *“Accreditation helps the management to determine its strengths and weaknesses’ when it comes to quality of education. Accreditation process guides the management towards different approach in education. They also make suggestions on how to improve the existing policies and procedures that will cater the needs of the learners”*.

Another faculty member said, *“With the help of accreditation, I was able to push myself to finish my master’s degree”*. In addition, one faculty member also said, *“Because of the accreditation, I was able to push myself to study and take my BS degree even at my age. I believed that it is indeed a great help for me. It will help not only for myself but also to my students. I can be able to transfer my experiences and ideas to them”*. *“It is just that we have that kind of checking and accreditation”*.

Furthermore, one (1) alumnus said, *“I experienced the transformation of MAAP from an ordinary Academy to a world class maritime institution. Let’s continue in improving our system and commitment to produce world class seafarer. The quality of education here in MAAP is incomparable to other maritime institutions”*.

On the other hand, students of MAAP viewed accreditation as, *“It is one way to improve the performance of the Academy for the benefit and welfare of the students”*.

“Accreditation helps the management to determine what is best for the institution, faculty, staff and to the students”.

Faculty members on the benefits of the accreditation process, 86.8% said that the quality of education had been beneficial followed by the welfare of faculty and students with 8.8%, and improvement of physical facilities with 2.9%.

On the perceptions of alumni, quality of education ranked first with 41.9% followed by the welfare of faculty and students with 39.5% and personal development with 18.6%.

While the majority of the students with 62.2% believed that quality of education has been beneficial with the accreditation process followed by the welfare of faculty and students with 18.3% and personal development with 8.5%.

Quality of Education. It shows that the faculty members, the alumni, and the students believed that quality of education is the most beneficial aspect of the accreditation process. Accreditation helped the management to determine its strengths and weaknesses’ when it comes to quality of education

Improvement of Physical Facilities. The respondents are well appreciated with the efforts of MAAP to give the state-of-the-art facilities to be used by faculty and students.

Improvement of Quality System. The respondents believed that MAAP quality system has improved because of the accreditation process.

Part 8. The Effects of Accreditation to the Admission, Enrolment, Graduation and Board Passing Rate of MAAP.

Table 4 shows the applicants for admission in MAAP the enrollment sizes, and reflects the number of graduates, while table 5 demonstrates the board passing rate of MAAP from AY 2010 – 2015.

Table 4 The Number of Applicants Who Took the Entrance Examination, Enrollment sizes, and Number of Graduates

Class	Number of Applicants for Admission	Percentage Increase of Applicants (compared to class 2010)	Total Enrollment	Percentage Increase in Enrollment (compared to class 2010)	Total Graduates	Percentage Increase in the Number of Graduates (compared to Class 2010)
2015	3218	-67.46	478	132.04	406	126.82
2014	8671	-12.31	496	140.78	495	176.54
2013	10044	1.58	478	132.04	369	106.15
2012	12441	25.82	249	20.87	202	12.85
2011	9533	-3.59	244	18.45	218	21.79
2010	9888	0	206	0	179	0

Table 5 The Board Exam Passing Rate

Class	Program	National Passing Rate	Program	National Passing Rate
	BSMT		BSMarE	
2015				
2014	87.76	54.42	85.00	59.11
2013	50.00	55.09	83.34	63.05
2012	79.34	54.37	93.94	61.05
2011	83.33	48.3	89.33	54.56
2010	43.33	48.73	92.27	52.97

It only shows that accreditations may have an impact on the performance of MAAP in terms of admission, enrollment, graduation and board passing rate. MAAP management was able determine the appropriate actions on how to run the institution properly based on the demands set by the local and international standards. Accreditation process helps the institution to determine the weaknesses and areas that need improvement. Suggestions from the external reviewing bodies are important to make sure that the existing policies implemented in the institution is working and implemented properly.

In the study of Abesamis (2008), she found out that accreditations contribute significantly to the level of effectiveness of BSMT and BSMarE programs in terms of admission, enrollment, graduation and board passing rate.

6. Conclusions

The Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific started in 1999 with two (2) programs offered – the BSMT and BSMarE. In the year 2000, MAAP instituted the accreditation process with ISO 9001 and with CHED inspections. In 2012, MAAP received its Level 1 accreditation under PACUCOA. MAAP voluntarily submits the institution for accreditation from local and international agencies for continuous improvement and ensure that the institution is compliant with national and international standards. MAAP passed the CHED inspections, the ISO certification and PACUCOA accreditation with some areas for improvements. As perceived by the faculty members and students, the area of organization got the highest mean while the alumni members gave the highest mean to the facilities. As perceived by stakeholders, the quality of education is the most benefited from the accreditation process. Accreditations may have an impact on the performance of MAAP in terms of admission, enrollment, graduation and board passing rate. The perceptions of the stakeholders have significant differences in the areas of concerns. MAAP may consider to focus and give importance on the opportunities for improvement as suggested by the accrediting agencies for the benefit of the institution, faculty, staff and students. External

stakeholders that include sponsoring companies, parents, non-teaching personnel and the community may be included in the study for they may have other perceptions on the impact of accreditations in MAAP. MAAP may continue submitting voluntarily to accrediting agencies that will check and monitor the performance of MAAP.

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