

Trends in Licensure Examination Success Among Psychology and Teacher Education Graduates

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ABSTRACT

The study delved into identifying trends in the licensure examination pass rates at Rizal Technological University, Philippines, for the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LEPT) from 2010 to 2019 and the Psychometrician Licensure Examination (PLE) from 2014 to 2019. Since data mining was used in this study, there was no data collection using a specific instrument. The study used the quantitative trend analysis method, which typically focuses on counting or gauging and requires acquiring and analyzing numerical data. The results of the study show that pass rates have changed over time. The results of this study's examination of the ten-year duration in the LEPT suggest that results have varying percentages, comparable to the outcomes of the study's review of the six-year period in the PLE. The study's findings indicate that the retakers' performance significantly impacted the outcomes of both exams. The General Weighted Average (GWA) of the licensure test years included in this study falls below the passing rate of 75% in the areas tested for both license examinations. Professional Education is the area that requires the most emphasis for LEPT, whereas Industrial Psychology is the area that requires the most attention for PLE. The study's findings help explain the dynamics of licensure examination patterns and provide insight into how policymakers, educators, and industry leaders may work together to improve pass rates.

Keywords: Licensure Examinations; Teacher Education; Psychometrician; Higher Education; Licensure Pass Rate

Introduction

Universities and colleges play a significant role in developing a particular country. These institutions hone potential public and commercial sector leaders, managers, educators, engineers, and other professionals. The word "hone" implies that these academic institutions must generate graduates and graduates of exceptional quality. The Philippine Commission on Higher Education (CHED) has issued several memoranda that clearly state the competency standards, curricula, and course specifications, among other things, in the offering of various courses by universities and colleges in the Philippines, with a particular emphasis on board courses or those courses that call for board or licensure examinations. This is done to ensure the quality of graduates.

Passing the licensure examination is a requirement in all board courses in the Philippines. The minimum proficiency necessary for their chosen profession is assumed to be held by graduates who passed the licensure examination in their respective courses. The results of graduates on the certification tests indicate the quality of Education that a specific university or college offers. The Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) in the Philippines is entrusted with examining how much these universities and colleges do in terms of licensure exams. This monitoring provides stakeholders with valuable data that can serve as a foundation for policy and decision-making. Universities and colleges may also use the performance data as a foundation for their plans for program enhancement.

Rizal Technological University (RTU) is one of the state universities in the Philippines. It also offers college degrees that have board exams. This research is focused on its two-degree offering, which has licensure examination, namely, Bachelor of Secondary Education for the Licensure Examination for Professional Teachers (LEPT) and Bachelor of Science in Psychology for the Psychometricians Licensure Examination (PLE).

In the case of the LEPT, education graduates must pass the Licensure Examination for Professional Teachers to receive a certificate of registration from the Board for Professional Teachers and lawfully practice their profession. LEPT is one of the most significant educational reforms undertaken in the Philippines. Based on Republic Act 7836, commonly known as the Professionalization Act for Teachers, this was implemented by the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC). To guarantee the quality of Education provided to Filipino students, the government supports several educational reforms and processes applied in basic Education and higher education institutions. As teachers are regarded as the foundation of Education, the Department of Education (DepEd) rigorously oversees their adherence to the standards established when recruiting them (Department of Education Order No. 3, 2016 and Department of Education Order No. 7, 2015). Passing the Licensure Examination for Teachers is one of the highlighted requirements for teacher education graduates to become professional teachers as stated in RA 7836 (Republic Act No. 7836, "Philippine Teachers Professionalization Act of 1994), also known as the "Philippine Teachers Professionalization Act of 1994."

For the PLE, "Psychometrician" refers to a regular person with a current certificate of registration from the Professional Regulatory Board of Psychology and a current professional psychometrician identification card, both issued under RA 10029 or the Philippine Psychology Act of 2009. For psychometrists, all candidates for registration to practice psychometrics must complete a certification exam. The examination is composed of four areas, namely, Theories of Personality, Psychological Assessment, Abnormal Psychology, and Industrial Psychology.

This study aimed to investigate the trend of the licensure examination performances of the LEPT (2010-2019) and PLE (2014-2019) at Rizal Technological University. Much research in the LEPT has been carried out, but in aspects like predictors, the relationship between Licensure Exam for Teachers (LET) performance and school, teacher, and student profiles. These research articles focus on factors as significant predictors of passing the licensure examination, including teachers' competence (Quiambao et al., 2015; Visco, 2015), school facilities (Quiambao et al., 2015; Faltado, 2014), curriculum and teaching, and admission and retention rules. Additionally, research on the demographics of the graduates, including their gender (Ferrer et al., 2015), age (Delos Angeles, 2019), high school average (Ferrer et al., 2015; Delos Angeles, 2019), and IQ (Quiambao et al., 2015), was also of great interest. Conversely, studies that relate to performance on the licensure exam correlated with the graduates' scores on other exams, including the admission exam (Ferrer et al., 2015), the Otis-Lennon School Ability Test (OLSAT), the English proficiency test (Hena et al., 2014), and the Culture Fair Intelligence Test (Kalaw, 2017) are also taken into account. Though many studies have been made regarding LEPT, only some studies focus on the trend of examinees' performance. The PLE is also an exception to this norm because there are few studies on it, which makes this study more or less the first.

It was anchored to two essential theories to guide the research: Bandura's Self Efficacy Theory by Bandura (1977) and Participative Leadership Theory by Davis (1995). According to Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory (1977), one's beliefs determine how to carry out a plan of action in a hypothetical event. In other words, self-efficacy is the genuine conviction that a person can achieve in a specific circumstance. This clarifies the scenario in which aspirants for licensure should have confidence in their ability to pass. The Participative Leadership Theory by Davis (1995) was also significant in this research since passing the licensure examination is a two-way process, and the institution significantly impacts students' chances of passing. According to the theory, team members' participation in accomplishing goals is crucial regarding consultation, decision-making, management by objectives, and shared decision-making.

The outcome of this research would provide valuable baseline data for program improvement strategies in managing the two courses, which will improve students' performance on licensure exams in the future.

Research Questions

This study aims to look into the trends in how well the two programs/courses mentioned above from Rizal Technological University performed on the licensure exams. Concerning its objectives, the study explicitly aimed to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the trend of the Bachelor of Secondary Education (LEPT) and Bachelor of Science in Psychology (PLE) performance in the Licensure Examination?
2. What is the performance of the Bachelor of Secondary Education (LEPT) and Bachelor of Science in Psychology (PLE) in the Licensure Examination as compared to the national passing percentage (NPP)?
3. What is the Bachelor of Secondary Education (LEPT) and Bachelor of Science in Psychology (PLE) trend in the Licensure Examination regarding the areas being tested in each licensure examination?

Methodology

Research Design and Procedures

The researchers used a quantitative trend analysis method, which usually focuses on tallying or gauging and entails gathering and examining numerical data (Tan et al., 2015). Since data mining is used in this study, there is no actual data collection utilizing a customized instrument.

The Philippine Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) was primarily contacted for the data gathered and used in this study. A letter was sent to the office in charge of keeping track of the outcomes of the licensure exams in the Philippines. The PRC formally provided the necessary data after the request was approved. Results of the LEPT from 2010 to 2019 and the PLE from 2014 to 2019 were among the information gathered. For the PLE, the data collection began in 2014 because it was the year the PRC began keeping records for the aforementioned licensure exam for Rizal Technological University (RTU). The passing and failing percentages of the test takers are included in the statistics received from PRC and the overall passing percentage.

Additionally, based on the aforementioned years, the examinees' performance results for the LEPT and PLE were requested. The performance of the examinees in the particular areas covered by the licensure exam was examined using the data for the individual performance results. For LEPT, the areas tested are general Education, Professional Education, and specialization, while for PLE, the areas tested are theories of personality, psychological assessment, abnormal psychology, and industrial psychology.

Participants

Participants are the graduates of Rizal Technological University, Philippines, licensure exam takers of LEPT (2010-2019) and PLE (2014-2019). There were 2,340 takers of LEPT for the last ten years and 697 takers of PLE for the six years; this is a total of 3,037 participants.

Data Analysis

The study uses data mining to obtain data from the Philippine Professional Regulation Commission (PRC). The data obtained were analyzed and interpreted. This study used no instrument to acquire data from a particular group of respondents. The participants' licensure scores were obtained from the PRC in their databank of licensure exam results. The acquired data were then presented, examined, and interpreted. The researchers employed the trend analysis method, wherein gathered data was tested using the mean and percentage formula to look for trends or changes in the examinees' performance in the LEPT and PLE relative to the years under study.

Results and Discussion

Trend of the Bachelor of Secondary Education (LEPT) and Bachelor of Science in Psychology (PLE) performance in the Licensure Examination.

The trend for the performance for the LEPT is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. The Trend of the Performance for the LEPT

Year	First Timer	Repeater	Over-all
2010	64.33	12.80	35.86
2011	63.16	13.11	45.06
2012	73.56	23.96	49.75
2013	79.34	31.68	55.91
2014	49.13	15.81	30.00
2015	68.63	17.74	45.99
2016	65.36	18.60	43.27
2017	70.61	23.16	49.49
2018	75.84	18.16	33.56
2019	66.27	11.38	46.64
Over-all	67.62	18.64	43.55

For LEPT, it must be noted that RTU-LEPT first-time takers for all the years being studied have garnered the highest passing percentage in the year 2013, with a percentage of 79.34. However, it is noteworthy also to see that in the same year, the overall passing percentage was also the highest among the years being studied. The same observation

was seen in the year 2014, where RTU-LEPT first-time takers got the lowest passing percentage in the years being studied with 49.13%, which incidentally the overall passing percentage can also be seen in its lowest percentage of 30.00%. It is alarming to see that in 2019, repeaters just got a passing percentage of 11.38% compared to 66.27% of the first-timers. This gives us the idea that the RTU-LEPT repeaters or retakers greatly affect the overall passing percentage. It must be noted that the "retakers" performance is generally poor. The overall performance of the retakers for all the years being studied was 18.64% as compared to the 67.62% of the first-time takers. These results were comparable to those of Nool and Ladia's (2012) study on the LET performance of public universities and colleges in Central Luzon between 2009 and 2012. First-timers outperformed repeaters, whose poor performance adversely influenced the overall passing percentage (Antiojo, 2017).

The trend of the performance for the PLE is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. The Trend of the Performance for the PLE

Year	First Timer	Repeater	Over-all
2014	50	0	50
2015	54.55	0.00	54.5
2016	45.99	0.00	45.99
2017	56.92	50.00	56.65
2018	45.16	31.58	43.36
2019	70.00	63.64	69.40
Over-all	53.77	24.20	53.32

In the first six years of the implementation of the PLE in which RTU has religiously participated, it is worth noting that no repeaters have taken the examinations in the years 2014-2016. However, for the years 2017-2019, it can be observed that repeaters or retakers have influenced the passing percentage of RTU-PLE takers. Comparing the first takers and retakers, the same observation was also seen as to the LEPT, that first takers have a higher passing percentage than retakers. Even though there were no retakers in the years 2014-2015, it can be observed that only 24.20% have been acquired for the years 2017-2019, as compared to 53.77% of the first-time takers. This implies that the same trend happened for the RTU-PLE takers compared to the RTU-LEPT takers. It means that, generally speaking, the retakers have a great deal of influence in the passing percentage for both licensure examinations. In the study of Camuyong et al. (2018), they admit that in their institution, their passing percentage in the PLE has been consistently low, though they did not mention the influence of retakers to this low passing percentage, they, however, attributed such low passing percentage on weaknesses of their institution's program in terms of curriculum, faculty advancement and resources of the institution.

Performance of the Bachelor of Secondary Education (LEPT) and Bachelor of Science in Psychology (PLE) in the Licensure Examination as compared to the national passing percentage (NPP)

The performance in the LEPT as compared to the NPP is shown in Table 3. The national passing percentage (NPP) has been used as one of the criteria for evaluating a particular institution's performance on a licensure examination to determine whether or not that institution has done an excellent job of preparing its students for a particular course. A good performance was seen in the last ten years of the RTU-LEPT. This is manifested by the fact that in almost all licensure examinations from 2010-2019, RTU-LEPT garnered above the national passing percentage (ANPP) rating except for 2014, precisely the second conduct of the examination in that particular year. RTU-LEPT garnered an overall rating of 44.15% for the ten-year span, which is higher than the ten-year NPP of 34.25%. The highest rating that RTU-LEPT garnered was in 2018, with 63.27%. It was also the year that the NPP was among the highest in the years included in this study, with 48.03%. The year 2019 was also seen with a high national passing percentage; to be exact, it was the same as the year 2018 at 48.03%; however, RTU-LEPT NPP was not comparable to the year where there was a high NPP with only 53.50% even lower than that of 2017 examination at 60.27% where a lower NPP was seen at 46.37%.

There needs to be more proof that there is consistency in the RTU-LEPT passing percentage, as it varies through the years. This might be because the NPP for the ten-year duration has been varying also. This implies that the examination has a varying degree of difficulty or degree of ease for the ten-year duration as included in this study. This is different from what Diamante (2022) found about LEPT performance; there was a downward trend in the LEPT passers and an upward trend in the non-passers. Though RTU-LEPT for the ten-year duration, in general, has been higher than the NPP, the recent Accrediting Agency of Chartered Colleges and Universities in the Philippines (AACUP) Technical Review and Recommended Board Action (2023) recommendation suggests that the RTU-College of

Education (RTU-CED) still has to initiate programs to increase its performance in the LEPT, to be exact, at least 50% higher than the national passing percentage (NPP) of the professional regulation commission.

Table 3. Performance in the LEPT as Compared to the NPP

Year	Passing Percentage	National Passing	Remarks
2010	40.47	23.32	ANPP
	29.94	25.86	ANPP
2011	42.68	26.28	ANPP
	46.13	31.45	ANPP
2012	42.94	24.85	ANPP
	55.16	43.51	ANPP
2013	52.49	39.61	ANPP
	57.67	39.75	ANPP
2014	41.70	29.57	ANPP
	20.98	34.41	BNPP
2015	43.45	31.64	ANPP
	47.87	41.75	ANPP
2016	39.27	35.43	ANPP
	45.32	33.78	ANPP
2017	34.68	25.46	ANPP
	60.27	46.37	ANPP
2018	37.86	29.91	ANPP
	63.27	48.03	ANPP
2019	27.31	25.95	ANPP
	53.50	48.03	ANPP
Overall	44.15	34.25	ANPP

Legend: BNPP = below the national passing percentage, ANPP = above the national passing percentage

The PLE results, on the other hand as shown in Table 4, suggest that in the past six years, they garnered an overall passing percentage of 53.32% as compared to the PLE-NPP of 51.23%, though in general, this is still above the national passing percentage, this is just 2.09% difference. This is primarily because, exploring the six-year duration of the examination, the RTU-PLE results show that in 2016-2018, RTU-PLE was below the national passing percentage.

Table 4. Performance in the PLE as Compared to the NPP

Year	Passing Percentage	National Percentage	Remarks
2014	50.00	39.31	ANPP
2015	54.55	46.15	ANPP
2016	45.99	50.46	BNPP
2017	56.65	56.97	BNPP
2018	43.36	47.73	BNPP
2019	69.40	66.73	ANPP
Over-all	53.32	51.23	ANPP

Legend: BNPP = below passing percentage, ANPP = above passing percentage

The highest passing percentage of the takers of PLE was obtained in 2019 at 69.40%; however, we must take into account that in that same year, the NPP was also 66.73%, while the lowest passing percentage was obtained in the year 2018 with 43.36% which accordingly the NPP that year was 47.73%.

This also implies that just like the LEPT, the PLE has a varying degree of difficulty and ease; hence, there needs to be more proof of the consistency of the results of the PLE as Camuyong et. al (2018) stated in their study that PLE in their institution reflects that their institution has a consistently low passing rate compared to the national passing percentage. Though not similar can be said for RTU, as there were years where the institutional passing percentage (IPP) was higher than the NPP, it must be noted that there were years where the IPP was lower than the NPP, also the fact that within six years, RTU only has 2.09% difference in its overall performance in its IPP versus the NPP.

The trend of the Bachelor of Secondary Education (LEPT) and Bachelor of Science in Psychology (PLE) in the Licensure Examination in terms of the areas being tested in each licensure examination

The LEPT results for the areas being tested have obtained 74.18% for GE, 71.28% for PE, and 73.04% for SP, with an overall GWA (general weighted average) of 72.35% as shown in Table 5. Taking into consideration that in the LEPT exam, a taker must obtain 75% to pass the exam, the individual performance of the RTU-LEPT takers for the past ten years in the areas being tested has been below 75%; it follows that even the overall GWA for all the areas was also below 75%. It was only in the year 2017 that the RTU-LEPT takers surpassed the 75% passing rates for all the areas being tested, with 79.57% for GE, 81.89 for PE, and 89.15% for SP, and for the following years, 2018 and 2019, the ratings were again at 73.42% and 72.87% respectively.

Table 5. The Trend in the Performance of LEPT in the Areas Being Tested

Year	General Education	Professional Education	Specialization	GWA
2010	68.18	67.82	67.34	67.70
2011	70.53	70.04	71.05	70.56
2012	71.81	71.95	71.17	71.59
2013	73.85	70.97	73.99	72.77
2014	70.18	69.11	70.24	69.79
2015	73.65	70.01	71.55	71.36
2016	76.04	68.90	71.26	71.31
2017	79.57	81.89	89.15	82.10
2018	78.18	72.32	72.13	73.42
2019	79.79	69.77	72.52	72.87
Overall	74.18	71.28	73.04	72.35

Legend: GWA = General weighted average

This is alarming, primarily since the 2023 LEPT now uses the new table of specifications (TOS) for LEPT takers. It is also quite interesting to know that with all the areas being tested, the highest is GE with 74.18% while the lowest is PE with 71.28%. This suggests that although all the areas need to be given attention, it is PE that needs the highest concern. However, since all the areas being tested fall within the passing mark of 75%, it is therefore imperative that all should be given the needed attention. The findings of Maramag et al. (2020), in their study, are inconsistent with the results of this study, where they found out that the LET performance of the teacher education graduates in their field of specialization implies poor academic preparation in their area of specialization not in the area of professional Education. The same results were obtained by Ferrer et al. (2015), who demonstrated the same trend in LEPT scores, with teacher education graduates scoring highest in general Education and lowest in the specialization areas.

For the RTU-PLE takers from 2014 to 2019, the overall taker's GWA was 71.94%, below the individual passing rate of 75% as mandated by the PRC. It is worth noting that in six years, RTU-PLE takers did not register a passing GWA for the six-year duration. This implies that Camuyong et al. (2018) were right when they said that in their institution, there are inadequacies in the curriculum, faculty development, and institutional resources of their Psychology program. Though the same might not be said in RTU, since there were years when the RTU-IPP was above the NPP, considering the results from the areas being tested by the PLE, greater attention is needed to upgrade the RTU-PLE takers' performance.

Considering the areas being tested, all areas also registered below 75% overall GWA for the six-year duration, with industrial psychology being the lowest, 69.85%, and psychological assessment, at 74.26%, being the highest. This suggests that the College of Arts and Sciences of RTU must carefully assess industrial psychology competency. The full result is shown in Table 6.

Table 6. The Trend in the Performance of PLE in the Areas Being Tested

Year	Theories of Personality	Psychological Assessment	Abnormal Psychology	Industrial Psychology	GWA
2014	69.5	70.5	72.5	62.5	67.5
2015	75.82	75.27	74.82	71.73	74.02
2016	72.86	74.69	77.92	69.93	73.07
2017	73.26	74.42	69.03	69.79	71.26
2018	73.36	74.47	69.10	69.90	71.71
2019	70.42	76.21	72.95	75.26	74.56
Over-all	72.54	74.26	72.72	69.85	72.02

Legend: GWA = General weighted average

Conclusion

LEPT and PLE both have inconsistent passing performances. In the ten-year duration that was being explored in this study in the LEPT, the results have varying percentages, which was also similar to the six-year duration results of the PLE. Accordingly, the results of both examinations were greatly influenced by the performance of the retakers. Though both examinations for the duration being explored by the study garnered more years above the national passing percentage (NPP), it can be said that the difference between the IPP and the NPP is not enough to satisfy the quality assurance and accreditation activities of accrediting agencies. Regarding the areas being tested for both licensure examinations, the GWA is below the passing rate of 75%. For LEPT, the area needing the most attention is Professional Education, while for PLE, Industrial Psychology is the area that needs the most attention.

Contributions of Authors

The authors confirm the equal contribution in each part of this work. All authors reviewed and approved the final version of this work.

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Conflict of Interests

All authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

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