Revisiting Program Accreditation and its Implication to Quality Assurance Management Culture of a Higher Education Institution

SIGNO, Cristina M.

0000-0001-8548-2210; Cavite State University. City of Carmona, Cavite, Philippines. cmsigno@cvsu.edu.ph

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A B S T R A C T

This study revisits program accreditation procedures in higher education institutions, examining their implementation, challenges, and best practices while assessing their impact on quality assurance management culture. It explores key factors such as strategic leadership, management support, task force commitment, record management, and communication in fostering a collaborative, inclusive, and forward-thinking institutional culture.

A descriptive-evaluative research design was employed, utilizing surveys and key informant interviews to gather quantitative and qualitative data. Participants included 47 administrative council members, 295 permanent faculty members, and nine key informants from a state university. The survey measured accreditation implementation levels and identified challenges and best practices. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and the Mann-Whitney U-test to compare perceptions between administrators and faculty members, while qualitative responses underwent thematic analysis.

Findings reveal that accreditation is highly implemented, with shared commitment across stakeholders. Strategic leadership, faculty engagement, and structured quality assurance mechanisms significantly influence the institution's quality culture. However, challenges such as personnel shortages, time constraints, and resource limitations persist. Best practices include proactive leadership, diligent accreditation teams, and robust documentation systems.

The study highlights accreditation's role in fostering a sustainable quality assurance culture and recommends strengthening institutional support, expanding training, and enhancing collaboration to sustain accreditation excellence. These findings contribute to policy recommendations for improving accreditation processes and ensuring long-term institutional success.

RESUMO

Este estudo revisita os procedimentos de acreditação de programas em instituições de ensino superior, examinando sua implementação, desafios e melhores práticas, ao mesmo tempo em que avalia seu impacto na cultura de gestão da garantia de qualidade. Ele explora fatores-chave, como liderança estratégica, apoio da gestão, comprometimento da equipe de acreditação, gestão de registros e comunicação, na promoção de uma cultura institucional colaborativa, inclusiva e voltada para o futuro.

Foi adotado um desenho de pesquisa descritivo-avaliativo, utilizando questionários e entrevistas com informantes-chave para coletar dados quantitativos e qualitativos. Os participantes incluíram 47 membros do conselho administrativo, 295 professores permanentes e nove informantes-chave de uma universidade pública. O questionário avaliou os níveis de implementação da acreditação e identificou desafios e melhores práticas. Os dados quantitativos foram analisados por meio de estatísticas descritivas e do teste de Mann-Whitney para comparar percepções entre administradores e docentes, enquanto as respostas qualitativas foram submetidas à análise temática.

Os resultados revelam que a acreditação é altamente implementada, com um compromisso compartilhado entre os envolvidos. A liderança estratégica, o engajamento dos docentes e os mecanismos estruturados de garantia de qualidade influenciam significativamente a cultura institucional. No entanto, persistem desafios como escassez de pessoal, restrições de tempo e limitações de recursos. As melhores práticas incluem liderança proativa, equipes de acreditação dedicadas e sistemas robustos de documentação.

O estudo destaca o papel da acreditação na promoção de uma cultura sustentável de garantia de qualidade e recomenda o fortalecimento do apoio institucional, a ampliação da capacitação e a melhoria da colaboração para manter a excelência na acreditação. Essas descobertas contribuem para recomendações políticas para aprimorar os processos de acreditação e garantir o sucesso institucional a longo prazo.

Introduction

Education today transcends geographic boundaries, fostering global competition and collaboration. Graduates are now expected to meet international standards to remain competitive and align with their global counterparts. This necessitates universities and colleges to adopt robust quality assurance (QA) management systems as a fundamental component of institutional governance and strategic planning (Ruiz & Junio-Sabio, 2012).

Quality assurance is a systematic process of assessing and evaluating institutional performance based on established internal and external benchmarks. According to Edwards (2005) and Gamage et al. (2020), QA encompasses mechanisms that measure whether an institution's services align with or exceed stakeholders' expectations. It includes the assessment of inputs, processes, and outputs to ensure the consistent delivery of quality education. Ruiz and Junio-Sabio (2012) emphasize that QA verifies the institution's adherence to quality standards, thereby fostering accountability and excellence.

Thus, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) in the Philippines formalized the adoption of QA through Memorandum Order (CMO) No. 46, series of 2012, which introduced a Quality Assurance Framework for higher education institutions (HEIs). This framework defines quality in three dimensions: (1) Fitness for Purpose: Ensuring that programs align with institutional missions and societal needs; (2) Exceptionality: Promoting excellence in academic and administrative performance; and (3) Culture of Quality: Embedding quality as an inherent aspect of institutional operations and decision-making.

Furthermore, to operationalize this framework, CHED sets minimum standards for program implementation, enforced through mechanisms such as: accreditation by recognized accrediting agencies, evaluation by Regional Quality Assurance Teams (RQAT), and participation in other quality assurance processes. The implementation of these standards ensures that HEIs remain responsive to societal demands and global changes, thereby strengthening their capacity to produce graduates with the skills and competencies needed in a dynamic world.

Accordingly, this study revisited program accreditation to analyze its implications for the QA management culture of a higher education institution. Program accreditation serves as a tool to measure institutional adherence to quality standards and to identify areas for improvement. Specifically, the study sought to: (1) examine the demographic profile of participants involved in the accreditation process; (2) assess the extent of implementation of accreditation procedures within the university; and (3) identify common challenges and best practices in accreditation. Additionally, accreditation is widely regarded as a critical mechanism for ensuring quality assurance in higher education. However, traditional approaches often fail to acknowledge the complexities and challenges that institutions face during accreditation processes. This study revisits accreditation through a critical lens, examining not only its benefits but also its limitations. Unlike previous studies, this research

incorporates a comparative analysis with other institutions, offering a broader perspective on accreditation challenges and their implications for institutional governance.

Moreover, accreditation is central to QA management because it ensures compliance with established standards, encourages continuous improvement, and enhances institutional credibility. It is not merely a procedural requirement but a driver of strategic development. As Ruiz and Junio-Sabio (2012) highlighted, accreditation fosters a culture of quality that permeates all aspects of institutional operations, from curriculum design to administrative services.

Given the borderless nature of education, QA initiatives must align with international standards to ensure graduates' competitiveness globally. The adoption of globally recognized benchmarks and practices fosters mobility for students and faculty, strengthens international collaborations, and enhances institutional reputation on a global scale.

In conclusion, the evolving educational landscape underscores the indispensable role of QA in ensuring institutional effectiveness and stakeholder satisfaction. By revisiting and refining program accreditation processes, universities can reinforce their QA management culture, addressing challenges and capitalizing on best practices to achieve sustained excellence. This alignment with CHED's QA framework and international standards equips HEIs to navigate the demands of globalization while maintaining their unique institutional identities.

Methods

This study employed a descriptive-evaluative research design to examine the demographic characteristics of participants, assess the extent of implementation of accreditation procedures, and determine significant differences in perceptions among participant groups. This approach was chosen to capture and evaluate the current state of accreditation processes and practices within the university context. The participants of the study included 47 members of the administrative council and 295 permanent faculty members of Cavite State University (CvSU). Additionally, nine key informants were interviewed, comprising the Director of the Institutional Development Office (IDO) and eight Quality Assurance Coordinators representing CvSU's satellite campuses. The inclusion of these key informants aimed to provide deeper insights into the challenges and best practices in accreditation from leadership perspectives. All participants provided informed consent to ensure ethical compliance and voluntary participation.

Conversely, the primary data collection tool used in this study was a survey questionnaire divided into three sections. Part I focused on the demographic profile of the participants, including gender, age, highest educational attainment, length of service, current position, and the number of times engaged in accreditation activities. Part II assessed the extent of implementation of accreditation procedures using a 5-point Likert scale, while Part III contained open-ended questions to gather qualitative data on the challenges and best

practices encountered during accreditation processes. To ensure the validity and reliability of the research instruments, the questionnaire was reviewed by three expert validators, who provided feedback and suggested revisions. Afterwards, it was pilot-tested, yielding a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.989, indicating a high level of reliability.

Moreover, the data collection combined quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative data from the survey were analyzed using descriptive statistics, such as mean, standard deviation, frequency distribution, and percentage, to describe the participants' demographic characteristics and perceptions of accreditation practices. The Mann-Whitney U-test, a non-parametric statistical tool, was utilized to determine significant differences in perceptions between administrative council members and permanent faculty members regarding the implementation of accreditation procedures. Qualitative data from open-ended survey responses and key informant interviews were thematically analyzed to identify recurring problems and challenges in accreditation. This analysis provided context and depth to the quantitative findings.

Alternatively, ethical considerations were strictly observed throughout the research process. Informed consent forms were distributed and signed by all participants to ensure voluntary participation, and confidentiality was maintained by anonymizing responses during the presentation of findings. Overall, the study aimed to understand the demographic characteristics of administrators and faculty members involved in accreditation, evaluate the extent of implementation of accreditation procedures across CvSU, identify challenges encountered during accreditation, and suggest areas for improvement. Additionally, it sought to compare the perspectives of administrative council members and faculty members to provide a holistic understanding of accreditation practices at CvSU.

Results and Discussions

The following discussions present the results of the study:

1. Demographic Profile of the Participants

The participants of the study were administrative council members and permanent faculty members of the university across campuses.

1.1. Age

The age of the participants was categorized into three groups: young-aged (34 years and below), middle-aged (35 to 49 years), and old-aged (50 years and above), following the classification framework used by Nuestro (2012) to illustrate the clustering of age among research participants.

Table 1.
Age of the Participants

Age	Administrators		Faculty		Total	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Young Aged (34 and below)	5	10.6	90	30.5	95	27.8
Middle Aged (35 to 49)	20	42.6	133	45.1	153	44.7
Old Aged (50 and above)	22	46.8	72	24.4	94	27.5
Total	47	100.0	295	100.0	342	100.0

Table 1 highlights the distribution of participants' age, divided between administrators and faculty members. Among administrators, the old-aged group (50 and above) comprised the largest proportion, with 22 individuals, or 46.8% of the group. Research suggests that older administrators are often relied upon for their extensive experience and capacity for handling complex decision-making tasks, as noted by Nuestro (2012). This finding aligns with organizational studies emphasizing the critical role of age and experience in leadership positions (Gomez et al., 2020).

Conversely, among the faculty members, the majority fall within the middle-aged group (35–49 years), totaling 133 individuals, or 45.1% of the faculty. This age group often represents individuals at the peak of their professional expertise, balancing innovation with established teaching practices (Pascua et al., 2019). The young-aged faculty members (34 and below) rank second, with 90 individuals, or 30.5%, reflecting a growing presence of younger educators in the academic workforce. Meanwhile, the old-aged group (50 and above) accounts for only 24.4%, suggesting a smaller proportion of older faculty members compared to administrators.

These results underscore differences in age distribution between administrative and teaching roles, which may reflect variations in career paths and job demands. Research indicates that administrative positions often favor seasoned professionals, while academic roles increasingly attract a mix of younger and middle-aged individuals to align with evolving educational paradigms (Santos & Cruz, 2021).

1.2. Sex

The table below presents the sex distribution of the participants, categorized into male and female groups. This demographic data is essential for understanding the gender composition of the respondents across different roles, such as administrators and faculty members.

Table 2.
Sex of the Participants

Sex	Administrators		Faculty		Total	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Male	18	38.3	95	32.2	113	33.0
Female	29	61.7	200	67.8	229	67.0
Total	47	100.0	295	100.0	342	100.0

Table 2 reveals the sex distribution of participants, showing a predominance of female participants across both administrators and faculty members. Among administrators, 61.7% (29) are female, compared to 38.3% (18) who are male. This finding reflects a growing trend of female leadership in various sectors, including education. Research has shown that, while men still occupy a significant proportion of leadership roles and still prove a higher level of reliability in their verdicts of leadership styles (Collado et.al, 2024), there has been a noticeable shift toward greater female representation in administrative positions, particularly in education (Duhaylungsod & Ramos, 2020).

Furthermore, in the case of faculty members, 67.8% (200) are female, while 32.2% (95) are male. This higher percentage of female faculty members is consistent with trends observed in many academic institutions worldwide, where women have increasingly become the majority in teaching roles (Torres & Pascual, 2019). This gender imbalance in faculty may reflect broader societal shifts toward gender equality in education, as well as the growing enrollment of women in higher education fields.

Conversely, the overall gender distribution, with 67.0% female participants and 33.0% male participants, highlights the broader societal trend of women taking up more prominent roles in education, both in administrative and teaching positions. However, despite this increase, gender disparities still exist, particularly in leadership and decision-making roles, where men continue to hold a significant proportion of top positions (Andrade, 2018).

Also, this data points to the ongoing conversation about gender equity and representation in educational settings, particularly in leadership. Further research could explore how gender affects decision-making and career progression in higher education and whether gender parity in faculty and administrative roles translates to changes in institutional policies or educational outcomes.

1.3. Educational Attainment

The educational attainment of the participants is categorized into bachelor's degree, master's degree, and doctoral degree. This classification is crucial for understanding the qualifications of both administrators and faculty members, as educational background often influences leadership roles and teaching responsibilities in academic institutions.

Table 3.
Highest Educational Attainment of the Participants

Highest Educational Attainment	Administrators		Faculty		Total	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Bachelor's Degree	6	12.8	0	0.0	6	1.75
Masters' Degree	14	29.8	255	86.4%	269	78.65
Doctorate Degree	27	57.4	40	13.6	67	19.6
Total	47	100.0	295	100.	342	100.0

Table 3 shows the highest educational attainment of the participants, showing distinct patterns between administrators and faculty members. Among administrators, the majority hold a doctoral degree, with 27 individuals (57.4%) having completed a PhD. This is consistent with the common practice in many academic institutions where higher administrative positions, such as deans and university officials, require advanced qualifications to manage complex academic and operational duties (Alcantara & Mendez, 2019). Fourteen administrators (29.8%) hold a master's degree, while six administrators (12.8%) have a bachelor's degree. The relatively low percentage of administrators with only a bachelor's degree aligns with the policy guidelines of higher education institutions, where administrators are expected to meet minimum qualifications as stipulated in institutional manuals, such as

the University Manual of Operations (2009). The manual outlines the educational qualifications necessary for university officials and the flexibility for appointing qualified individuals to non-academic roles (University Manual, 2009). Specifically, Article 12, Section 1f allows the University President to appoint individuals to administrative positions without requiring specific educational qualifications, provided they meet the other criteria for competence and experience.

Alternatively, the educational profile of faculty members presents a more uniform pattern. All faculty members in the study have obtained a master's degree, with 255 individuals (86.4%) holding a master's degree and 40 individuals (13.6%) holding a doctoral degree. This mirrors the Civil Service Commission (CSC) Memorandum Circular No. 10, series of 2012, which outlines the educational requirements for faculty positions in State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) and Local Colleges and Universities (LUCs). According to the memorandum, a master's degree is the minimum educational requirement for teaching positions in higher education institutions (CSC, 2012). This policy ensures that faculty members are well-prepared to deliver specialized and high-quality education in their respective fields.

Overall, the educational distribution reveals that while the administrative staff are generally more advanced in terms of educational qualifications, the faculty maintain a robust academic background, with a significant portion possessing master's or doctoral degrees. This distinction in qualifications between administrators and faculty may be indicative of differing roles and responsibilities within the institution, where administrators focus on institutional management and leadership, while faculty primarily engage in teaching and research.

1.4. Length of Service

The length of service of the participants is categorized into four groups: less experienced, more experienced, much experienced, and very much experienced. These categories help to contextualize the experience levels of the participants, which is particularly relevant in understanding the depth of expertise and professional development that each group brings to their roles, whether as administrators or faculty members. Length of service is often a key factor in assessing an individual's proficiency and leadership capability within an organization, especially in educational institutions.

The data from Table 4 demonstrates a significant disparity in length of service between administrators and faculty members. Among administrators, the majority fall into the very much experienced category, with 34 participants (72.3%) having over 16 years of experience. This high percentage reflects the established expectation that administrative positions in higher education institutions require significant experience, as these roles are typically filled by individuals with extensive knowledge of university operations, governance, and strategic management. The University Manual of Operations (2009) outlines the necessary qualifications for administrators, emphasizing the importance of a proven track record in higher education leadership (University Manual, 2009). This aligns with the idea that

administrators are typically selected from among those with long careers in academia, contributing to their proficiency in complex decision-making.

Furthermore, the remaining administrators are divided into the much experienced (14.9%) and more experienced (10.6%) categories, with a very small number (2.1%) classified as less experienced. The high proportion of very much experienced administrators further supports the notion that leadership in higher education demands a wealth of professional experience, as well as familiarity with the institution's long-term goals and challenges.

Table 4.
Length of Service of the Participants

Length of Service	Administrators		Faculty		Total	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Less Experienced (5 and below)	1	2.1	46	15.6	47	13.7
More Experienced (6 to 10)	5	10.6	90	30.5	95	27.8
Much Experienced (11 to 15)	7	14.9	72	24.4	79	23.1
Very Much Experienced (16 and above)	34	72.3	87	29.5	121	35.4
Total	47	100.0	295	100.0	342	100.

Conversely, faculty members exhibit a more evenly distributed length of service across categories, although the more experienced group (30.5%) comprises the largest proportion, with 90 individuals. This is closely followed by very much experienced faculty (29.5%), and much experienced faculty (24.4%). The presence of faculty members in these categories suggests a well-established pool of educators with considerable experience, which is crucial for delivering quality education and mentorship to students. However, 46 faculty members (15.6%) are categorized as less experienced, reflecting the dynamic nature of academic staffing, where younger faculty members or those in early-career stages are continually entering the workforce.

The less experienced faculty group's relative size (15.6%) could be attributed to factors such as the Civil Service Commission (CSC) guidelines on hiring faculty members, which require a certain level of education and competencies but allow flexibility in terms of experience. Faculty members in the less experienced category may also represent those in the earlier stages of their academic careers, who may have completed their master's degrees or doctoral programs recently but still have limited years of teaching or administrative experience (CSC, 2012).

In totality, this distribution reveals the complexity of staffing in higher education institutions, where administrators tend to have far more years of service due to the nature of the roles, while faculty members show a more diverse range of experiences. This diversity in experience levels is essential for fostering a balance between fresh perspectives and seasoned expertise within academic institutions.

1.5. Number of times engaged in Accreditation

The number of times engaged in accreditation is categorized into four groups: less experienced, more experienced, much experienced, and very much experienced. This categorization provides insight into the level of involvement and familiarity the participants have with accreditation processes, which are a critical aspect of quality assurance in higher education. Accreditation involvement is often tied to an individual's role within the institution, with both administrators and faculty members playing essential roles in ensuring that academic programs meet established standards.

Table 5.
Participants' Number of Times Engaged in Accreditation

Number of Times Engaged in Accreditation Age	Administrators		Faculty		Total	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Less Experienced (5 and below)	16	34.0	193	65.4	209	61.1
More Experienced (6 to 10)	16	34.0	69	23.4	85	24.9
Much Experienced (11 to 15	3	6.4	18	6.1	21	6.1
Very Much Experienced (16 and above)	12	25.5	15	5.1	27	7.9
Total	47	100.0	295	100.0	342	100.0

Table 5 reveals the extent of the participants' engagement in accreditation activities, with a notable disparity between administrators and faculty members. Faculty members overwhelmingly fall into the less experienced category, with 193 individuals (65.4%) reporting fewer than five times of involvement in accreditation processes. This suggests that while faculty members are involved in accreditation, their engagement tends to be more sporadic and dependent on specific accreditation cycles. Faculty engagement may also vary by program, with those in higher-level accredited programs (such as those with Level 3 or Level 4 accreditation) being required to participate more frequently than faculty in programs with lower-level accreditation (e.g., Level 1 or Level 2) (Cabrera & Garcia, 2020). Faculty with specialized programs or those undergoing re-accreditation may have more opportunities to be involved in multiple rounds of assessment, contributing to a higher frequency of engagement.

In contrast, administrators are more evenly distributed across categories, although a majority (34.0%) fall under the less experienced group. However, 12 administrators (25.5%) report having been engaged in accreditation 16 times or more, positioning them in the very much experienced category. This could indicate that administrators, particularly those in leadership roles such as deans or accreditation officers, are often deeply involved in accreditation processes, as they oversee and manage the accreditation procedures for entire departments or faculties. Administrators may have a more strategic role in accreditation, involving them in the preparation of documents, organizing site visits, and liaising with accreditation bodies.

The more experienced category (6-10 times) is also significant, with 16 administrators (34.0%) and 69 faculty members (23.4%) falling within this range. This indicates that mid-level faculty and administrators are frequently involved in accreditation, possibly as part of ongoing quality assurance efforts or as members of accreditation teams.

The distribution across the four categories reflects the crucial role that accreditation plays in ensuring quality and accountability in educational institutions. Accreditation processes typically require extensive collaboration between faculty and administrators, with faculty members contributing through their expertise in specific academic areas and administrators providing organizational support and strategic direction. The varying levels of experience reflect the different ways faculty and administrators interact with accreditation: faculty may be more directly involved in specific program assessments, while administrators handle broader institutional accreditation efforts.

It is also noteworthy that the level of experience in accreditation is likely influenced by the institution's accreditation status. Institutions undergoing initial accreditation or re-accreditation cycles may involve both faculty and administrators in more frequent engagement with the process, while those with established accreditation may experience less frequent involvement.

2. Extent of Implementation of Accreditation Procedures

The following table presents the extent of implementation of accreditation procedures as perceived by both administrative council members and permanent faculty members. These perceptions provide valuable insight into how effectively accreditation processes are being carried out within the university. Accreditation is a crucial activity that directly impacts the university's standards of education and overall academic reputation. Effective implementation of these procedures requires strong leadership, continuous training, and coordinated efforts across various departments.

Table 6 demonstrates that both administrators and faculty members perceive the accreditation procedures as being highly implemented. Both groups expressed strong agreement that the university management supports accreditation and quality assurance activities. Specifically, both administrators (mean = 4.81) and faculty (mean = 4.52) rated the support for quality assurance activities very highly. The finding that resources are allotted for quality assurance activities also received strong support, with administrators (mean = 4.64) and faculty (mean = 4.23) both perceiving this aspect as highly implemented.

One notable observation is the differences in perception regarding the continual training of accreditation task forces. While both groups rated this item as "implemented" rather than "highly implemented," administrators gave a higher rating (mean = 4.21) compared to faculty (mean = 3.83). This discrepancy highlights a potential area for improvement in providing ongoing professional development for faculty who are less frequently engaged in accreditation tasks.

Table 6.
Extent of implementation of Accreditation Procedures

QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCEDURES IN ACCREDITATION	ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS			PERMANENT FACULTY MEMBERS		
	Freq	S.D.	Verbal Interpretation	Freq	S.D.	Verbal Interpretation
1. There is strong support from management relative to quality assurance activities.	4.81	0.398	Highly Implemented	4.52	0.611	Highly Implemented
2. The management encourages colleges to submit programs to accreditation and other quality assurance activities.	4.94	0.247	Highly Implemented	4.76	0.481	Highly Implemented
3. Resources are allotted for quality assurance activities.	4.64	0.529	Highly Implemented	4.23	0.776	Highly Implemented
4. The University has a strong quality assurance center.	4.62	0.534	Highly Implemented	4.39	0.729	Highly Implemented
5. The quality assurance center is headed by a Director.	4.98	0.146	Highly Implemented	4.59	0.831	Highly Implemented
6. The quality assurance center is the clearing house of ideas and depository of necessary documents.	4.34	0.700	Highly Implemented	4.29	0.803	Highly Implemented
7. Accreditation task forces are created to work on quality assurance activities.	4.83	0.380	Highly Implemented	4.60	0.683	Highly Implemented
8. Accreditation task forces are trained to handle the job.	4.21	0.690	Highly Implemented	3.83	0.988	Implemented
9. Accreditation task forces are continually trained in doing their tasks.	3.91	0.775	Implemented	3.82	1.017	Implemented
10. There is continuous training for old and new faculty accreditors in the university.	4.04	0.779	Implemented	3.93	1.011	Implemented
11. The University allows faculty accreditors to benchmark in other Universities.	4.36	0.705	Highly Implemented	4.27	0.835	Highly Implemented
12. The University has an Internal Assessment Board composed of faculty accreditors.	4.81	0.398	Highly Implemented	4.63	0.667	Highly Implemented
13. Orientations are conducted related to quality assurance processes and activities.	4.55	0.544	Highly Implemented	4.31	0.842	Highly Implemented
14. There is sharing of resources within the university system.	4.51	0.621	Highly Implemented	4.39	0.795	Highly Implemented
15. Mock accreditation is conducted to check the readiness of documents for evaluation.	4.49	0.688	Highly Implemented	4.42	0.765	Highly Implemented
16. Documents as required in quality assurance activities are collected long before the scheduled accreditation.	4.02	0.821	Implemented	4.15	0.866	Implemented
17. Preparatory activities are conducted prior to quality assurance visits.	4.47	0.654	Highly Implemented	4.36	0.741	Highly Implemented

	Mean	SD		Mean	SD	
18. Self-surveys are conducted prior to scheduled visit.	4.47	0.654	Highly Implemented	4.37	0.771	Highly Implemented
19. Team effort is practiced for a successful quality assurance visit.	4.74	0.488	Highly Implemented	4.49	0.704	Highly Implemented
20. The University has identified quality procedures for year-round implementation.	4.38	0.739	Highly Implemented	4.32	0.807	Highly Implemented
21. The assessment results by the third-party evaluator guide the university's improvement of products and services.	4.60	0.538	Highly Implemented	4.38	0.746	Highly Implemented
22. Stakeholders are involved in the conduct of meetings related to quality assurance.	4.17	0.732	Implemented	4.13	0.869	Implemented
23. The collection, organization, and presentation of documents are presented in templates like the Program Performance Profile.	4.66	0.562	Highly Implemented	4.55	0.683	Highly Implemented
24. Round-table meetings are conducted among concerned officials, area heads, and task force assigned to accreditation.	4.51	0.688	Highly Implemented	4.45	0.721	Highly Implemented
25. The university ensures prompt compliance to evaluators' recommendations.	4.28	0.772	Highly Implemented	4.25	0.873	Highly Implemented
Overall	**4.49**	**0.388**	**Highly Implemented**	**4.34**	**0.566**	**Highly Implemented**

The importance of management encouragement for submitting programs to accreditation was echoed in interviews with key stakeholders. The Director of the Institutional Development Office (IDO) emphasized that administrative leadership, particularly the University President, has been instrumental in empowering quality assurance champions within the institution. This empowerment has fostered a culture of supportive leadership across the university, including branch campuses, where administrators are described as not only supportive but also hands-on in driving quality assurance initiatives.

In the same vein, quality assurance coordinators mentioned during the FGD that their administrators, aside from being supportive, "are very hands-on". They mentioned the unyielding assistance extended by their heads and admin strengthens their quest for quality accreditation processes. (…"yung unending support po ng aming head, ng aming admin). QA coordinators also affirmed that the constant and steady work relationship of faculty members and administrators impacts on the commitment of faculty members to pursue and complete their accreditation jobs. They explained that it is about working hand-in-hand among faculty members and administrators. (…"yun pong working hand-in-hand" among faculty members and administrators). This means that administrators work together with accreditation task forces in completing their tasks such as checking the documents and editing videos. Most of

the interviewees see the success in accreditation as collective effort among administrators and faculty member.

These findings align with those of Alibin, Angelia, and Biton (2012), who emphasized the importance of collaborative meetings and consultations among various stakeholders involved in accreditation. They found that successful accreditation is not only dependent on individual efforts but also on collective planning, implementing, and evaluating practices. Continuous training, as well as collaborative efforts, play an essential role in improving the quality of educational services provided by the institution.

Overall, administrators and faculty members rated the quality procedures and processes as *highly implemented*. Administrators and faculty members' responses complement as they all share the same quality management procedures. Regardless of rank or position in the university, everyone regards accreditation as an important activity participated and executed to the best of their ability. They commit themselves to work efficiently for the success of accreditation notwithstanding the countless hurdles in the process.

The shared university environment of the participants where these different quality conditions are apparent contribute to similarity in perspectives. Their experiences with the different quality conditions are common and that the practices on the learning environment, teaching-learning system, assessment system, and outcomes are shared by everyone whether administrators or faculty members.

Regardless of position, rank, or role in the university, satisfactions to different quality conditions are the same. Participants adhere to the same meaning of quality. Among them is a shared culture of quality brought by unity, teamwork, and convergence of thoughts and actions.

2.1. Significant Difference on the Extent of Implementation of Accreditation Procedures as Perceived by the Participants

Table 7 presents the analysis of whether there is a significant difference in the perceptions of administrators and faculty members regarding the extent of implementation of quality assurance processes and accreditation procedures.

Table 7.
Significant Difference on the Extent of Implementation of Accreditation Procedures as Perceived by the Participants

Position	Mean	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney Z-test Approx.	P value	Remarks
Administrative Council Members	4.49	189.72			
			-1.362	0.173	Accept Ho
Permanent Faculty Members	4.40	168.60			

The data in Table 7 shows that the computed Mann-Whitney Z-test approximation is -1.362, with a p-value of 0.173, which is greater than the significance level of 0.05. This indicates that there is no significant difference in the perceptions of administrators and faculty members regarding the extent of implementation of quality assurance processes and accreditation procedures.

This lack of significant difference suggests that both groups share similar perspectives on how quality assurance processes are implemented, as reflected in their mean scores of 4.49 (administrators) and 4.40 (faculty). The slight variance in means and mean ranks does not constitute a statistically significant gap, underscoring a shared understanding and alignment in evaluating accreditation practices.

Furthermore, the findings align with the results in Table 6, where both groups rated the parameters related to accreditation as highly implemented. This consistency highlights a unified approach to the accreditation process, which could stem from the institution-wide efforts to institutionalize quality assurance practices. Both administrators and faculty members appear to have internalized the processes, reflecting a mature culture of accreditation within the university.

Moreover, interviews with participants provide deeper insights into these findings. Both administrators and faculty members referred to accreditation as a "way of life" within the university. They described a deeply embedded "culture of accreditation" where members at all levels understand and actively participate in the procedures. This culture is shaped by regular training sessions, mock accreditations, and continuous collaboration among stakeholders, which foster a shared commitment to quality assurance.

Likewise, the participants noted that their frequent involvement in accreditation activities contributes to their aligned perceptions. Both groups are well-acquainted with the processes, timelines, and documentation requirements, leading to a common understanding of the implementation standards.

Additionally, these findings are consistent with prior research highlighting the importance of cultivating a shared culture in implementing quality assurance mechanisms. According to Alibin, Angelia, and Biton (2012), fostering collaboration and a sense of shared responsibility among stakeholders promotes consistent and effective implementation of accreditation procedures. Additionally, Gutierrez and Marquez (2020) emphasized that regular engagement in accreditation activities enhances stakeholders' familiarity and confidence, reducing variability in perceptions.

In summary, the absence of significant differences in perceptions suggests that the university has successfully standardized its quality assurance processes, ensuring a uniform understanding and approach across various roles. This uniformity is a critical strength, as it ensures coherence in the implementation of accreditation standards, irrespective of the participants' positions. Nonetheless, while perceptions are aligned, the data also suggests

potential areas for enhancement, such as strengthening continual training and encouraging further collaboration between administrators and faculty.

3. Problems Encountered in Accreditation

The identification of problems in accreditation serves as a basis for future improvements in the university's accreditation processes. Both administrators and faculty members shared valuable insights into the challenges they face during accreditation activities, highlighting areas that require attention to improve efficiency and effectiveness in future efforts.

3.1. Administrators' Perspective

On one hand, administrators identified the top three challenges they encounter during accreditation as: 1) lack of personnel in the quality assurance office, 2) reluctance of faculty members to engage due to other assignments, and 3) insufficient time to prepare the voluminous documents required for accreditation. These issues reflect both structural and logistical concerns that can hinder the smooth implementation of accreditation processes.

A key issue highlighted by administrators is the lack of sufficient staff in the quality assurance office. This shortage of personnel contributes to the overwhelming workload on existing staff, especially during peak accreditation periods. To address this, administrators suggested that hiring additional staff could alleviate the strain on the existing workforce, thereby improving efficiency. This finding echoes the concerns of Cruzada, Onate, and Arinto (2012), who identified faculty members' struggles with multiple responsibilities as a significant barrier to effective accreditation in higher education. The added responsibilities of faculty members beyond their teaching duties can exacerbate the stress associated with accreditation preparation (Cruzada, Onate, & Arinto, 2012).

Another significant concern raised by administrators is the insufficient time allocated for preparing accreditation documents. The complexity and volume of documentation required for accreditation make it difficult for faculty and staff to manage within the limited timeframes available. The completeness and quality of these documents are often contingent on the number of task force members working on them and the amount of time they can dedicate to the task. As time is a critical factor, administrators suggested that more time and resources should be allocated for document preparation to ensure that the accreditation process is completed successfully.

3.2. Faculty Members' Perspective

On the other hand, from the perspective of faculty members, the most commonly identified problems were: 1) insufficient supplies, 2) lack of personnel in the quality assurance office, and 3) inadequate facilities required for accreditation activities. These issues reflect the challenges related to the infrastructure and resources needed to support accreditation. However, despite these challenges, faculty members expressed a strong commitment to the university and its accreditation processes. They emphasized that, despite the deficiencies, the

university has always managed to successfully complete the accreditation process, demonstrating resilience and dedication.

Similar to administrators, faculty members also raised concerns about the shortage of personnel in the quality assurance office. The absence of sufficient support staff affects their ability to efficiently manage accreditation-related tasks. In addition, faculty members pointed to the inadequate facilities required to properly prepare for and execute accreditation activities. The lack of adequate space and resources can hinder the smooth running of accreditation processes, further complicating the workload of faculty and staff.

Both administrators and faculty members agreed on the issue of personnel shortage in the quality assurance office. This common concern indicates a structural challenge that requires immediate attention. Furthermore, faculty members expressed concerns regarding the tough demands from accreditors, which administrators also highlighted as one of the most challenging aspects of the accreditation process. These demands often result in added pressure on both faculty and administrative staff, requiring them to meet rigorous standards within a limited timeframe.

Alternatively, beyond the accreditation process itself, administrators and faculty members also identified several challenges encountered after accreditation. For administrators, the primary concern was compliance with accreditors' recommendations. Ensuring that the university adheres to the suggestions and requirements put forth by accreditors is essential for maintaining accreditation status, but it can be a complex and time-consuming process. This challenge aligns with the findings of Cabañero-Verzosa (2014), who discussed the importance of responding to accreditation feedback to improve institutional practices and maintain accreditation standing.

In contrast, faculty members highlighted issues related to the storage of accreditation documents. The large volume of documents generated during the accreditation process can become difficult to manage and store properly, leading to concerns over the long-term accessibility and preservation of critical records. This issue is closely tied to the infrastructure and resource challenges that faculty members face during the accreditation process.

Moreover, both administrators and faculty members pointed to budgetary concerns, particularly regarding liquidations and reimbursements related to accreditation expenses. The financial burden associated with accreditation activities, including travel, materials, and other costs, can strain the university's resources. This is especially true in cases where the university has limited financial resources to cover such expenses. Human resources concerns were also raised, particularly regarding the allocation of sufficient personnel to manage post-accreditation tasks such as follow-up activities and ensuring compliance with accreditation requirements.

In conclusion, the challenges identified by both administrators and faculty members highlight the need for improvements in staffing, resources, and time management during the

accreditation process. Addressing these issues will help streamline the accreditation process, reduce the workload on faculty and staff, and improve the overall quality of the accreditation process. As suggested by Alibin, Angelia, and Biton (2012), fostering a culture of collaboration and communication among all stakeholders is critical to addressing accreditation-related challenges effectively. Further investment in resources, personnel, and infrastructure will be crucial for ensuring the long-term success of the university's accreditation efforts.

4. Best Practices in Accreditation

While accreditation has posed challenges to stakeholders, the following are best practices that have been imminent throughout the years:

4.1. Strategic Leadership

Participants agree that undergoing accreditation is a test of leadership. Strategic leadership is key to a successful survey visit. As such, the requisite are leaders with foresight to lay down long and short term strategic and development plan. Key informants' claim the vast transformation that the university has embarked on due to the strong and robust leadership of its university president. The university president is a major accreditation player as he directs the academic community to embrace accreditation. He leads and walks with them throughout the journey. Participants claim that leadership is vital to meet the end goal of quality assurance management.

4.2. Committed faculty members/accreditation task force members

Accreditation has ignited the faculty members/accreditation task force members to achieving quality performance. They are accreditation back bone. Described as brilliant minds and hearts, hardworking, persevering, goal-oriented, dedicated, determined, committed, patient, kind, cooperative, united, organized, team player, and other positive attributes, refer to faculty members as accreditation task force, faculty members recognize the importance of collaborative effort and teamwork. Their commitment to accreditation has set aside their personal concerns and takes pride that despite work overload, the welfare of the university remains of utmost concern.

4.3. Diligence of the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Center Director

The Quality Assurance Director has held the strongest grip in accreditation. He orchestrates the plan and makes sure everything is in place. Participants opined that management and organization of documents have greatly been influenced by the director. He has the answer for questions and doubts. Accreditation has been revitalised by his inspiration and actions.

4.4. Determined Faculty Accreditors as Internal Assessment Board (IAB) Members

Accreditation requires laborious examination of relevant documents. The IAB has shown the careful and meticulous evaluation of documents in self-surveys and mock

accreditation. Through them, accreditation task forces have prepared themselves to the possible accreditation environment. The results of preliminary examination guide them on what else to be done based on the suggestions and recommendations made by IAB.

These best practices illustrate the collective efforts of leaders, faculty, and staff in creating a robust accreditation framework. Strategic leadership, faculty dedication, the expertise of the Quality Assurance Director, and the rigorous work of the IAB exemplify the collaborative culture essential for sustaining quality assurance in higher education. These practices underscore the importance of a shared vision, meticulous planning, and commitment to continuous improvement, ensuring the university remains aligned with both national and international standards of excellence.

5. **Availability of Management Resources**

Accreditation poses significant demands on institutional resources, requiring careful planning, allocation, and management to address challenges effectively. Despite these demands, fidelity to the availability and utilization of management resources has enabled institutions to overcome logistical and operational hurdles, ensuring successful accreditation outcomes. Key resources—funding, facilities, records management, and communication systems—are pivotal to achieving accreditation goals.

The availability of accreditation funds is regarded as a cornerstone of successful accreditation and is widely recognized as a best practice, even amidst some limitations. Financial support is indispensable, as accreditation activities require resources that extend beyond the academic domain, encompassing support services, infrastructure, and logistics. Accreditation task forces, regardless of their dedication and expertise, depend on sufficient financial backing to execute their tasks effectively. The provision of an adequate budget ensures that necessary facilities, such as accreditation rooms and equipment, meet the required standards, creating an environment conducive to a seamless accreditation process.

Additionally, facilities management is another critical element. Accreditation, being evidence-based, necessitates meticulous records management. Institutions have adopted innovative practices such as maintaining dedicated physical and virtual accreditation rooms to ensure the safety, organization, and accessibility of all required documents. These secure and systematic arrangements not only streamline accreditation preparation but also facilitate smoother interactions with external accreditors during survey visits.

Furthermore, efficient records management plays a crucial role, as accreditation is heavily reliant on the availability and integrity of evidence to support institutional claims. The establishment of centralized documentation systems ensures that all relevant materials are readily available and properly stored. This practice minimizes redundancies, enhances data accuracy, and simplifies the accreditation process, aligning with the evidence-based approach required by accrediting bodies.

Moreover, communication resources are equally vital to the accreditation process. , Communication skills among stakeholders is a dire need so effective leadership is achieved (Collado et.al, 2024). Additionally, effective communication facilitates coordination and collaboration among stakeholders, ensuring that responsibilities are clearly defined and executed efficiently. According to Figueroa et al. (2002), communication is cyclical and

relational, involving dialogue and information-sharing that leads to mutual agreement and collective action. Institutions that prioritize open, inclusive, and engaging communication among stakeholders foster a sense of shared responsibility, transforming accreditation tasks into collaborative and manageable endeavors. The presence of efficient communication channels ensures that all parties are well-informed, aligned, and prepared to meet accreditation standards, ultimately contributing to the institution's success.

In summary, the availability and strategic management of essential resources—funding, facilities, records, and communication—are integral to successful accreditation. Institutions that prioritize resource adequacy and efficiency not only address the logistical challenges of accreditation but also create a sustainable framework for continuous quality improvement. These practices underscore the importance of resource-driven strategies in aligning institutional processes with accreditation goals, thereby fostering a culture of excellence and accountability.

6. University's Quality Assurance Management Culture

Accreditation is defined as a "deliberate and systematic process" of monitoring academic procedures such as teaching, learning, administration and other factors that have a direct impact on the overall functioning of the institution. It is a mechanism that assures stakeholders that the mandates of the institutions are achieved (Anane & Addaney, 2016). Likewise, quality assurance is defined as the existence and utilization of "mechanisms, procedures, and processes" certifying that quality services are effectively and efficiently delivered to all the stakeholders (CMO 46, s2012).

The impact of accreditation to the university's quality assurance management culture can be represented by a model as shown in Figure 1. It is an input-process-output model to describe the interrelationship of sub-systems within a system.

FIGURE 1.
University's Quality Assurance Management Culture
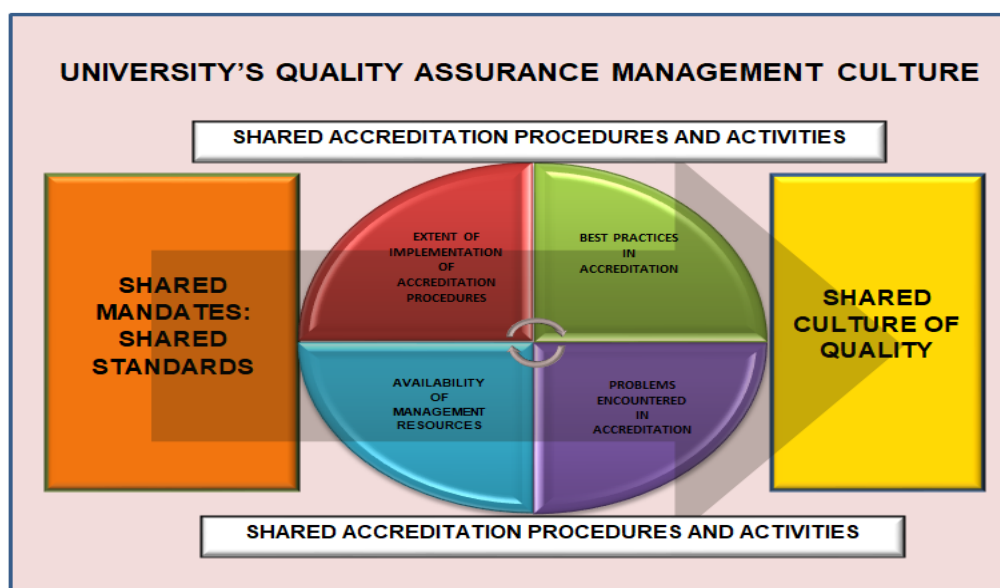
In the attainment of quality assurance management system through accreditation, the strong foundation is anchored in the university's Vision, Mission, and Quality Policy (VMQP).

It addresses quality as fitness for purpose, that is, the realization of the VMGO through shared quality assurance management system.

The academic community have shared knowledge of these basic mandates. The university has been successful in instituting measures to ensure awareness and appreciation of the VMQP. Participants claimed that the long history of quality assurance, particularly accreditation, has created a binding force to advance this university direction. Other efforts include the visibility of the vision, mission, and quality policy in the conspicuous places around the university, and the inclusion of the CvSU 101 as a mandatory subject to curricular offerings.

6.2. CvSU's Shared Culture of Quality: Its Quality Assurance Management System

Accreditation has positively benefited the university, and it has improved the Quality Assurance Management culture of the university anchored on shared culture of quality. Accreditation as a shared vision promotes a culture of quality. Shared vision as used by Senge (1990) explains why people commit to a cause. There is the presence of shared purpose, and value. People looked at single direction towards a common goal. There is a positive vision of learning and growth. Shared vision becomes a motivating force for people who truly believe for a bigger and better university through its quality assurance management system.

As illustrated in the model shown in Figure 1, quality assurance management culture stems from a shared mandate. That is, for the university to live by its vision, mission, and quality policy. Commitment to this mandate means ensuring that these quality mandates are achieved, and the entire university subscribes to it. It is not about memorizing them but living with the doctrine to guarantee quality services.

The CvSU Quality Assurance Management Culture is realized through shared responsibilities, accountabilities, value system and commitment. It is collegial, collaborative, and inclusive.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study underscores the significant role of demographic profiles in shaping the quality assurance management culture of an institution. For Cavite State University (CvSU), the demographic characteristics of its administrative council and permanent faculty members serve as benchmark information instrumental in defining and strengthening its quality assurance framework. These profiles provide a foundation for understanding the dynamics of engagement and contribution to quality assurance initiatives, specifically accreditation processes.

Alternatively, the extent of implementation of accreditation procedures is a vital indicator of the university's commitment to quality assurance. It reflects the status and effectiveness of the institution's quality assurance activities and highlights areas for enhancement. The participants' shared perspectives on accreditation processes demonstrate a

unified commitment to quality, fostering a collaborative environment for improvement and innovation. While challenges and problems in quality assurance processes are inevitable, the willingness of stakeholders to identify, address, and resolve these issues is a testament to their dedication to continuous improvement. Problems, far from being deterrents, provide a framework for refining and advancing the university's quality assurance environment.

Conversely, the CvSU quality assurance management culture stands out for its exemplary professional practices in accreditation, emphasizing a shared culture of quality. This culture is built on the collaborative mandates and interrelationships of key components such as strategic leadership, committed faculty, diligent quality assurance personnel, and efficient resource management. CvSU's model demonstrates how a university can embody the principles of quality assurance to achieve accreditation excellence.

On the other hand, to further strengthen CvSU's quality assurance management culture and practices, several strategies are recommended. First, the institutionalization and dissemination of CvSU's exemplary practices in accreditation across all campuses should be prioritized. This shared culture of quality, characterized by strategic leadership and collaborative efforts, can serve as a model for other institutions striving for accreditation excellence. Persistent challenges, such as the lack of personnel, resource constraints, and time limitations, must be addressed through strategic planning and investment. For instance, hiring additional staff for the quality assurance office, allocating sufficient resources for accreditation activities, and adopting time-efficient documentation processes can significantly mitigate these issues.

Additionally, continuous training and capacity-building programs should be implemented to enhance the skills of accreditation task force members, faculty accreditors, and quality assurance personnel. Such initiatives will ensure that stakeholders are well-prepared for the demands of accreditation and other quality assurance activities. Expanding the scope of research to include other quality assurance mechanisms, such as Regional Quality Assurance Teams (RQAT) evaluations, International Standards Organization (ISO) certifications, and Institutional Sustainability Assessments (ISA), is also essential. This broader approach will provide a more comprehensive understanding of CvSU's overall quality assurance framework and its contribution to institutional growth and development.

Finally, strengthening communication and collaboration among all university stakeholders is imperative. Open, inclusive, and effective communication channels can foster collective action and mutual accountability, ensuring that everyone is aligned with the institution's quality assurance goals. Regular dialogues, consultations, and feedback mechanisms will further enhance the shared culture of quality, ensuring CvSU's sustained commitment to excellence in quality assurance management and globally competitive education.

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