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# ROLE OF THE COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION IN PROMOTING QUALITY EDUCATION

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# **ROLE OF THE COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION IN PROMOTING QUALITY EDUCATION**

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## **Abstract**

Quality education is seen as an important contributor to the country's economic development. The role of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) in promoting this quality education is embodied in its legal mandate. As a government agency mandated to ensure that the delivery of quality education is observed by schools of higher learning to ultimately attain the national development goals and improve the economic condition of the Philippines, CHED was given enough authorities to perform its bi-focal roles of being regulatory or developmental. Acknowledging the significance of accreditation in promoting quality education, quality assurance activities and the different accrediting bodies recognized by CHED are also presented in this paper. Further, this study also identified different role indicators that were used in the development of an instrument that can be used to hasten the classification process of the policies and guidelines issued by CHED through its CHED Memorandum Orders (CMOs). Acknowledging the limitation that this paper analyzed only the CMOs issued from 2013 to 2017, this study recommends further analysis of other CMOs issued in the past or will be issued in the future so that CHED's performance can be gauged more appropriately.

## 1. Introduction

Education is recognized to be a global need. Recognizing its importance in promoting self-sufficiency and world peace, world leaders saw to it that when they drafted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights after the World War II, they also declared, once and for all, the basic human rights that should be accorded to every human being, regardless of economic, social, cultural, and political circumstances. The member-nations of the United Nations specifically included “the right to basic education” as part of the 30 Basic Human Rights. As such, the UDHR became an instrument that compelled all national governments to be responsible in providing what is needed to make sure that basic education is accorded to all its citizens (UDHR, 1948).

Decades after the historic promulgation of UDHR in 1948, the Global Education for All Meeting (GEM) was held in 2012, whereby the United Nations Education Services and Children’s Organization (UNESCO) urged its member states to implement and monitor the Education for All (EFA) program (UNESCO & DepEd, 2017) . So from a global standpoint, education has the capacity not only to promote self-sufficiency and world peace, but can also be considered as a factor that can contribute to a country’s economic development since according to studies, an individual’s level of education significantly affects his economic status: the higher the level of education, more economic opportunities become available to the individual.

Similarly, looking through the perspective of industry practitioners, human capital is considered as the company’s best resource such that the importance of having a quality education prior to employment cannot be underestimated (Karaboga & Sehitoglu, 2016). This idea that an individual’s level of education can affect his economic status can be related to human capital theory which emphasizes that education plays a significant role towards an individual’s personal development and ultimately the country’s economy. It further states that since an individual is able to achieve its optimum capacity for growth through proper education, it thereby gives the country’s policymakers an inherent responsibility to make sure that the country’s educational system is geared towards proper directions (Jin & Jin, 2014; Symaco, 2013).

In the context of education as a driver of economic development, the aspirations of the Filipinos to improve the lives of the marginalized sector can be seen through the provision of basic education and life skills, thereby helping them become more self-sufficient, are embodied in the Philippine Education for All (EFA) of 2015 program and the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2011–2016. The EFA law and the PDP 2011–2016 are government mechanisms that ensure access to basic education and that life skills learning are available to Filipinos, both young and old.

In line with these EFA of 2015 and PDP 2011–2016, economic initiatives were also geared towards the improvement of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) from 6.5% in 2014 to 8.5% by the end of 2016, cut down unemployment rate from 7% to 6.5% by 2016 and ultimately bring down the poverty incidence from 25.2% in 2012 to 18% by the end of 2016 (UNESCO & DepEd, 2017).

However, since EFA's initiatives are mainly focused on functional literacy, studies had shown that the employment that may be generated by the beneficiaries of the program maybe focused on subsistence level only because in the true context of economic development, basic education is insufficient to address a country's GDP issues, and this is where higher education plays a very significant role since it is through higher education that meaningful decision-making skills and better opportunities necessary to have an impact in the country's economy are developed and arise from (Browne & Shen, 2017 and Faruq & Taylor, 2011).

Furthermore, higher education is also seen as an underlying factor that contributes to the individual's propensity to engage in entrepreneurial activities especially with the Filipino youths now, since they are found to have more inclination to become entrepreneurs after they had earned their respective degrees, which ultimately contribute to the economic development of the country (Gozun & Rivera, 2017).

Having established the importance of education in economic development, it is, therefore, necessary that it is not just something that is only good on paper. To have a significant impact to the development of a country, education, therefore, must be of good quality and something that is transformative in nature so that it can also generate a labor force who is equipped to make a difference. But if these assumptions are correct, the government needs to do something for this to become a reality, such as investing in higher and more advanced education.

However, given the very limited financial resources available to a country, prioritizing an increase in government support will always be a dilemma for governments (Annabi, 2017). Sadly, the belief that investments made by the government in advanced levels of education or on a very good educational system will yield high skilled technicians and professionals is somehow seen to be easier said than done for poor countries such as the Philippines (Tullao & Cabuay, 2013).

But whether it is and will be difficult for the government to finance a very good education system given its meager financial resource, it still needs to ensure that it provides a mechanism that promotes the delivery of higher learning and advanced education. It cannot just let higher education institutions (HEIs), or any institutions for that matter, operate and offer educational programs to the public according to their whim. HEIs must be monitored, evaluated, and regulated to ensure that their educational services meet certain standards in relation to the

global and national development goals. In the Philippines, the government agency mandated to oversee those tasks is the Commission on Higher Education (CHED).

To be fair in evaluating the performance of an agency, it is of paramount importance that the evaluation is entrenched to the main purpose why the agency was created in the first place. In the case of CHED, it is RA 7277.

Republic Act 7277, otherwise known as the Higher Education Act of 1994, created the Commission on Higher Education. With the passing of this law, CHED was mandated to be the overseer of the implementation of quality higher education in the Philippines. As such, CHED performs different roles in exercising the powers and functions through the policies and guidelines it creates. The policies and guidelines made by CHED are being disseminated to all concerned through the issuance of CHED Memorandum Orders or CMOs. Respective institutions, organizations, or individuals are being ordered, advised, or sanctioned through the issuance of a CMO uploaded and presented on the CHED website, numbered chronologically and on an annual series basis.

With the foregoing, this paper has tried to assess how CHED has been addressing issues relating to the promotion of quality of higher education. Specifically, it assessed how CHED exercised its mandated powers and functions in relation to the performance of its regulatory and developmental roles towards the attainment of quality higher education in the country in the past five years by assessing the CMOs issued from year 2013–2017.

### **1.1 Objectives of the Study**

This paper will review and evaluate how the CHED has exercised its mandated roles in ensuring the delivery of quality of higher education in the Philippines.

Specifically, it tried:

- to identify and assess the quality assurance mechanisms employed by CHED to ensure a reliable delivery of quality education in HEIs in the Philippines;
- to review and compare the roles of different CHED-recognized quality assurance agencies in the Philippines;
- to identify the CHED Memorandum Orders issued by the Commission and evaluate whether they were more regulative or developmental; and
- to propose an instrument that can be used to evaluate the CMOs issued in the past or will be issued in the future.

## **1.2 Significance of the Study**

Taking into consideration the level of authorities and powers the CHED has in improving the education system of the country in pursuance of quality higher education, CHED must see to it that they recommend and implement regulatory policies which are not “anti-developmental and counterproductive” (Tullao, 2001). Thus, it is vital to know what constitutes regulative policies. In the same manner, CHED is not only mandated to regulate HEIs operations, but it is also mandated to ensure that HEI’s delivery of educational services are in consonance with the national development agenda and will redound to the development of the nation as a whole. Therefore, it becomes important for CHED to perform two roles sensibly: one that is regulative in nature and the other one that is developmental.

But how do we know that CHED is more keen on being regulative or developmental? As for any evaluation process, there must be an instrument that will be used to assess something, in this case, the CHED’s regulatory and developmental roles. Unfortunately, during the conduct of this research, the researcher was not able to find an instrument that will do just that. And with no such mechanism, it would be difficult to qualify CHED’s performance in relation to its regulatory and developmental roles.

The task of identifying whether CHED’s activities were geared more on the performance of its regulatory or developmental role, therefore, becomes the main objective of this paper. With the opening of economic portals brought about by the ASEAN integration, this paper can provide insights on how CHED and the country’s policymakers can reconsider their future actions so that CHED’s activities are more in-sync with regional and national development goals.

## **2. Review of Related Literature**

### **Quality of Education**

In the exigency of performing its mandate to oversee the Philippine HEIs’ delivery of quality education, CHED may perform measures to guarantee that their identified standards are being met by the HEIs. But what actually is meant by quality of education?

Quality of education is defined differently depending on how it is being used. Some may relate it to quality of educational programs, facilities, and teachers that help students acquire the necessary academic skills; but for some authors, it is an element that significantly influences economic growth and development (van der Bij, Geijsel, & ten Dam, 2016; and Asiyai, 2015).

In the context of the Philippines, CHED defined quality of education in its CMO No. 46, series of 2012, otherwise known as the “Policy Standard to Enhance Quality Assurance in Philippine Higher Education through an Outcomes-based and Typology-based Quality

Assurance” as a fitness for purpose, as evidenced by excellence or distinction, and as a concept that is transformative in nature.

In terms of quality as a fitness for purpose, CHED emphasized that HEIs should be able to show evidence of vertical articulation in terms of how they translate their visions, missions, and goals into their overall academic performance. Similarly, quality, as evidenced by excellence or distinction, has something to do with the HEIs capacity to deliver and perform beyond the minimum standards set by the CHED. And last but not the least, quality as a concept that is transformative basically pertains to the HEIs’ culture of excellence. Meaning, quality of education should not only be seen on papers but must be demonstrated by how the HEIs operate as an academic institution and ultimately being able to produce the quality of graduates that can actually compete globally (Licuanan, 2016; RA 7722, CMO 46, s.2012).

Consequently, if CHED wants to assess the quality of education in the Philippines, the adage “what gets measured, gets done” seems to prove a point. Although there are countless ways that governments can use to measure the quality of education, accreditation is apparently one of the most recognized and effective mechanisms that can be adapted in addressing this issue.

To do this, instruments with pre-identified indicators and criteria are used to measure the quality of education (Sumskaite & Juknyte-Petreikiene, 2016). For example, the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) has the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area which serves as its basis in evaluating HEIs. Under these standards, the following indicators are observed: quality inside an education system (efficiency & effectiveness), quality of subjective character, and equality of access to higher education (Petrovskiy & Agapova, 2016).

## **Quality Assurance**

Recognizing that the graduates of HEIs will eventually form part of the country’s labor force, accreditation serves as a means of quantifying the HEIs delivery of quality of education because it serves as a measuring rod of how efficient and effective an institution is in the delivery of its services to its clientele. With issues of globalization, steep competition among institutions, and socio-political changes looming on the horizon of HEIs all over the world, accreditation bodies see to it that HEIs under their jurisdiction are able to meet these changes through updated and high-quality education to assure its students and other stakeholders that their graduates will be at par with the graduates of other institutions of higher learning (Hou, 2011).

Towards this end, Philippine HEIs are encouraged to undergo accreditation so that quality of program offerings may be measured if it is at par with other HEIs offering the same program in the country. Adriano (2003) stated that it is through accreditation that HEIs are evaluated based on identified indicators. Benefits of being accredited by an accrediting body may be seen as a means of improving the present level of academic standards offered by the HEI. Its benefits also transcend to other stakeholders such that accreditation status of HEIs serves as a guide for parents in choosing their children's school because graduates of HEIs that have high accreditation status are seen to have better job opportunities since companies would rather hire graduates who are from schools of reputable record in terms of its adherence to high quality standards. Another significance of accreditation is giving the HEI more capacity to source out funds from benefactors who considers the level of accreditation before they give their support. Ultimately, those HEIs who has shown consistent adherence to standards and have acquired the highest accreditation level benefit from deregulations and enjoy autonomy in operating their institutions.

Aside from rules which prove to be restrictive at times, the CHED also sees to it that standards in terms of quality of education are met by HEIs by subjecting themselves to voluntary accreditation procedures (Tullao, 2001). This process of continuous self-improvement and evaluation of HEIs against certain standards set by accrediting bodies is aptly termed as quality assurance.

Quality assurance is defined as “an ongoing process of evaluating and enhancing the quality of a higher education system, institution, or program to assure stakeholders that acceptable standards of education, scholarships, and resources for delivery are being maintained. Quality assurance is about ensuring that there are mechanisms, procedures and processes in place to ensure that the desired quality is delivered” (Licuanan, 2016, p. #).

As part of its quality assurance activities, CHED does not only implement projects and programs to enforce the policies, standards, and guidelines (PSGs) for academic programs and conduct monitoring of compliance and phase out/closure of non-compliant programs offered by HEIs, but it also implements Institutional Quality Assurance Monitoring and Evaluation (IQuAME) accreditation and compliance with international standards.

Historically speaking, quality assurance activities such as accreditation of programs and HEIs was inexistent before. Adriano (2003) noted that, in the Philippines, voluntary accreditation was first conceived in the late 1950s by private educators who believed that quality of education must be measured, monitored, and developed through a system of standards. Seen as an effective mechanism of quality assurance, the Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities (PAASCU); the Philippine Association of Colleges and Universities–Commission on Accreditation (PACU-COA); and the Association of Christian Schools, Colleges



and Universities–Accrediting Agency (ACSCU-AA) paved the way for the implementation of voluntary accreditation in the country.

There are two umbrella organizations which are recognized by CHED, the Federation of Accrediting Agencies in the Philippines (FAAP) and the National Network of Quality Assurance Agencies, Inc. (NNQAA).

The FAAP serves as the country’s umbrella organization of accrediting agencies coordinating body of other accrediting associations in the Philippines such as the PAASCU, the PACU-COA, and the ACSCU-AAI. The PAASCU accredits Catholic schools, the PACU-COA accredits the non-sectarian schools, and ACSCU-AAI accredits the Protestant schools (Adriano, 2003; and CHED, 2014).

Under the umbrella of the NNQAA are the Accrediting Agency of Chartered Colleges and Universities in the Philippines, Inc. (AACCUP) and the Association of Local Colleges and Universities Commission on Accreditation, Inc. (ALCU-COA) (CHED, 2014).

These accreditation organizations basically accredit institutions by program offerings to assess how they fair with the minimum requirements of the CHED for each accreditation levels. Although of varying jurisdictions and quality, four levels of accreditation are used in evaluating institutions and passing each level of accreditation signifies that the HEI benefits specific administrative autonomy and access to incentive funds. Consequently, the higher the accreditation level, the higher the benefits that the HEI gets (Adriano, 2003).

According to CHED data (Table 1), as of 2017, there are 671 HEIs with accredited programs which accounts for 28.01% of the total number of CHED recognized HEIs. On a program level, there are 6,830 programs that have passed accreditation on different levels. The first level of accreditation is the Candidate status, followed by Levels I, II, III, and IV.

Based on the CHED consolidated data for the 2016-2017 period, there are 1,222 programs that underwent and passed the Candidate status, 2,188 for Level I status, 2,711 for Level II status, 1,675 for Level III status, and only 256 programs were given a Level IV status.

Although consistently increasing in number, the percentage of HEIs with accredited programs—less than 30% of the total HEIs in the country and an annual average rate of less than 2% from 2012-2013 to 2016-2017—remains low. This is probably because although accreditation is recognized as a very good mechanism towards quality assurance, the process itself entails a lot of documentation and record keeping capabilities on the part of the HEI. This could be seen as one major concern on the part of most institutions who lack internal systems for maintaining data on the

various quality performance indicators such that they are obliged to get additional manpower to comply with the accreditation requirements, which of course, entails additional expenses (Bernardo, 2017).

**Table 1. Licensure Performance and Accreditation Status of Higher Education Institutions in the Philippines**

Indicator	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
<b>Accreditation</b>					
No. of HEIs with Accredited Programs	515	566	606	636	671
% of HEIs with Accredited Programs	22.4	24.47	25.38	26.63	28.01
No. of Accredited Programs by Level:					
Candidate Status	984	1,195	1,356	1,266	1,222
Level I	1,173	1,345	1,641	1,962	2,188
Level II	1,343	1,644	1,835	2,307	2,711
Level III	725	851	1,199	1,353	1,675
Level IV	110	152	181	189	256
<b>Total (Excluding Candidate Status)</b>	<b>3,351</b>	<b>3,992</b>	<b>4,856</b>	<b>5,811</b>	<b>6,830</b>

Source: CHED, OPRKM-Knowledge Management Division

### Centers of excellence and/or Centers of Development

Similar to the accreditation process, CHED adopted quality assurance measures—quality improvement projects—to promote quality education aimed at improving institutional capacities and capabilities of HEIs for providing quality education. Quality improvement projects include faculty development; HEI management development; and the establishment of R&D Centers, COEs/CODs, and National Agriculture and Fisheries Education System (NAFES) (CHED, 2016).

Higher status than being identified as COEs/CODs are the “Autonomous status” and the “Deregulated status”. The CHED’s Handbook on typology, outcomes-based education, and institutional sustainability assessment presented a rather clear distinction among “Autonomous,” “Deregulated,” and “Regulated” statuses. After due evaluation and the HEI has demonstrated “exceptional institutional quality and enhancement through internal QA systems, and has demonstrated excellent program outcomes through high proportion of accredited programs, presence of Centers of Excellence (COE) and/or Development (COD), and/or international certification”, the HEI may be granted an “Autonomous” status. Similarly, those HEIs that had “demonstrated very good performance in all indicators” may be granted a “Deregulated” status. On the other hand, those who were not able to get either an excellent or very good performance rating and still demonstrates good performance outcomes will be treated as “Regulated” HEIs.

### R&D: Access and Development

Another facet of quality higher education is its strong connection to information and communications technology (ICT) and research and development (R&D) activities of HEIs. In

the Philippines, HEI programs are aligned to the national development goals. Aside from encouraging HEIs to offer programs that are in demand and responsive to the needs of industry, both domestic and international, CHED supports relevant and responsive research, development and extension (RDE) and gender and development programs of HEIs (CHED, 2016).

However, in the global research field, the Filipinos' research talent was observed by other nations as "less strong" compared to other ASEAN countries, especially in terms of research outputs. However, citation impact of Filipino researchers seems to be a little higher compared to the world average, which is believed to have been affected by international collaborations that Filipinos are known to be good at (Killingley & Ilieva, 2015). In fact, based on CHED data, out of the 777 Philippine scholarly journals, only 28 of the country's scientific journals made it to the Thomson Reuters and Elsevier's Scopus database, 19 of which had an impact factor of zero, and the remaining 9 had an impact factor of less than 1 (Tecson-Mendoza, 2015).

To address this issue and encourage further research activities, CHED issued Memorandum Order (CMO) No. 53, Series of 2016 and Resolution No. 549-2017, which indicated the guidelines for its Journal Incentive Program (CHEDJIP) and identification of the recognized research journals (Batch 2 grantees) for 2017-2019. To further strengthen the research capabilities of the Philippine universities, the CHEDJIP grantees were given financial support to further enhance their publication capacities and other activities to encourage the conduct and publication of quality researches (CHED CMO No. 66, 2017; CHED CMO No. 50, 2017).

Based on CMO Nos. 53 and 66, series of 2017, there are two batches of CHEDJIP grantees for the 2017-2019 period. Each batch has two categories, the Journal Challenge (JC) and Journal Incubators (JI). Below are the grantees of the program:

Batch 1 Grantees for the CHEDJIP Journal Challenge are:

1. Asia-Pacific Social Science Review – De La Salle University
2. DLSU Business & Economics Review - De La Salle University
3. Philosophia – Philippine National Philosophical Research Society
4. The Philippine Journal of Systematic Biology – Association of Philippine Taxonomists, Inc.
5. Philippine Studies: Historical and Ethnographic Viewpoints – Ateneo de Manila University
6. Philippine Journal of Veterinary Medicine – College of Veterinary Medicine, University of the Philippines-Los Baños

Batch 2 Grantees for the CHEDJIP Journal Incubation are:

1. The Normal Lights – Philippine Normal University

2. Asia Pacific Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (APJMR) – Lyceum of the Philippines-Batangas
3. PRISM – Negros Oriental State University
4. Mindanao Journal of Science and Technology – University of Science and Technology of Southern Philippines/MUST
5. Philippine Journal of Public Administration – National College of Public Administration and Public Governance, University of the Philippines-Diliman
6. Philippine Journal of Otolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery – Philippine Society of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery
7. Philippine Journal of Medicine – Our Lady of Fatima University
8. Bicol University R&D Journal – Bicol University

Batch 2 Grantees for the CHEDJIP Journal Challenge are:

1. Humanities Diliman: A Philippine Journal of Humanities – University of the Philippines-Diliman;
2. Acta Medica Philippina – University of the Philippines-Manila;
3. Kritike: An Online Journal of Philosophy – University of Santo Tomas;
4. Journal of Environmental Science and Management – University of the Philippines-Los Banos;
5. Kritika Kultura – Ateneo de Manila University;

Batch 2 Grantees for the CHEDJIP Journal Incubation are:

1. The Palawan Scientist – Western Philippines University
2. Recoletos Multidisciplinary Research Journal – University of San Jose Recoletos
3. Kasarinlan: Philippine Journal of Third World Studies – University of the Philippines-Diliman
4. Journal of Science and Engineering and Technology – Southern Leyte State University
5. Journal of Educational and Human Resource Development – Southern Leyte State University
6. Science Diliman: A Philippine Journal of Pure and Applied Sciences – University of the Philippines-Diliman
7. Social Science and Development Review – Polytechnic University of the Philippines
8. Social Science Diliman – University of the Philippines-Diliman

### **Roles of the Commission on Higher Education Towards Quality Education**

Through the years, the country's educational system has gotten complicated due to the proliferation of both public and private HEIs, such that the government needs to give more attention to the quality of its educational system through specialized managing and monitoring activities (Fielden, 2008). In the Philippines, this specialized managing and monitoring activities are being done by CHED.

CHED was created under RA 7722 in 1994. It is mandated with the responsibility of overseeing the Philippines' higher education system. All tertiary programs offered by State universities and colleges (SUCs), CHED-supervised higher education institutions (CHEIs), private higher education institutions (PHEIs), and community college (CCs) are under the supervision of the CHED (Musa & Ziatdinov, 2012; RA 7722, 1994).

As stipulated in RA 7722, below are the powers and functions of the Commission:

- a. Formulate and recommend development plans, policies, priorities, and programs on higher education and research;
- b. Recommend to the executive and legislative branches priorities and grants on higher education and research;
- c. Set minimum standards for programs and institutions of higher learning recommended by panel of experts in the field and subject to public hearing, and enforce the same;
- d. Monitor and evaluate the performance of programs and institutions of higher learning for appropriate incentives as well as the imposition of sanctions such as, but not limited to, diminution or withdrawal of subsidy, recommendation on the downgrading or withdrawal of accreditation, program termination or school closure;
- e. Identify, support, and develop potential centers of excellence in program areas needed for the development of world-class scholarship, nation building, and national development;
- f. Recommend to the DBM the budgets of public institutions of higher learnings as well as general guidelines for the use of their income;
- g. Rationalize programs and institutions of higher learning and set standards, policies, and guidelines for the creation of new ones as well as the conversion or elevation of schools to institutions of higher learning, subject to budgetary limitations and the number of institutions of higher learning in the province or region where creation, conversion, or elevation is sought to be made;
- h. Develop criteria for allocating additional resources such as research and program development grants, scholarships, and other similar programs; provided, that these shall not detract from the fiscal autonomy already enjoyed by colleges and universities;
- i. Direct or redirect purposive research by institutions of higher learning to meet the needs of agro-industrialization and development;
- j. Devise and implement resource development schemes;
- k. Administer the Higher Education Development Fund, as described in Section 10, which will promote the purposes of higher education;
- l. Review the charters of institutions of higher learning and SUCs including chairmanship and membership of their governing bodies and recommend appropriate measures as basis for necessary action;
- m. Promulgate such rules and regulations and exercise such other powers and functions as may be necessary to carry out effectively the purpose and objectives of this Act; and

- n. Perform such other functions and duties as may be necessary for its effective operations and for the continued enhancement, growth or development of higher education.

Having these inherent mandates, CHED is authorized to set policies, standards, and guidelines on how an HEI should be managed to make sure that enhanced competitiveness of graduates is achieved.

Consequently, as a government agency, CHED is mandated to monitor and oversee the operations of all HEIs (Table 2) in the country. This task is humungous considering that as of the first half of 2017, the Philippines has 2,396 HEIs, including State Universities and Colleges' Satellite campuses. Out of that figure, 1,710 are private HEIs and only 233 are SUCs. Interestingly, among the almost 2,000 private HEIs in the country, there are only 75 of them that were granted with either Autonomous/Deregulated status.

**Table 2. List of Public, Private, and Autonomous/Deregulated Higher Education Institutions in the Philippines as of June, 2017**

INDICATORS	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
<b>Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)</b>					
Total HEIs (excluding SUCs Sattelite campuses)	1,871	1,923	1,935	1,934	1,943
Total HEIs (including SUCs Sattelite campuses)	2,313	2,374	2,388	2,388	2,396
<b>Public</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>227</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>233</b>
State Universities and Colleges (SUCs)	111	112	112	112	112
SUCs Sattelite Campuses	442	451	453	454	453
Local Colleges and Universities (LCUs)	95	98	101	102	107
Others (include OGS, CSI, Special HEI)	13	14	14	14	14
<b>Private</b>	<b>1,652</b>	<b>1,699</b>	<b>1,708</b>	<b>1,706</b>	<b>1,710</b>
Sectarian	345	359	360	359	351
Non-Sectarian	1,307	1,340	1,348	1,347	1,359
<b>Autonomous/Deregulated Private HEIs</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>

Source: <http://web.ched.gov.ph/higher-education-indicators/>

In the face of the ASEAN integration and globalization of the economies, the significance of the role of higher education and HEIs in the Philippines cannot be underestimated. More than it being the primary overseeing government body, CHED has a bi-focal role that can be categorized as either developmental and regulatory (Tullao, 2001). To adapt to the changing times, and in the context of internationalization of education, CHED's Chairwoman, Dr. Patricia Licuanan, also asserts that CHED needs to perform both its regulatory and developmental role.

But what does "regulation" means? According to OECD (2002), regulation refers to the "impositions of rules of government, backed by the use of penalties that are intended specifically to modify [...] behavior of individuals and firms in the private sector".

In the context of higher education, (Licuanan, 2016, p. #) stated that given its mandates, CHED's regulatory role "consists of promulgating policies and standards for various types of internationalization arrangements to ensure compliance with existing laws, the effective delivery of intended outcomes."

Having mentioned its legal mandates above, CHED's regulatory roles ensure that the minimum standards and guidelines prescribed by CHED on the establishment of an HEI and the operation of its programs in terms of curriculum, qualified dean and faculty, laboratory facilities and equipment, library facilities, and other support services are in order. In short, CHED enforces and regulates PSGs, regulates HEI permits to operate, and issues government authorization to operate to HEIs. Issues on the establishment or closure of private HEIs, course offerings, curricular development, building specifications, and tuition fees are also regulated by the CHED.

On the other hand, CHED's developmental role "includes the provision of advisory and technical assistance in the development and design of internationalization programs, training and capacity building, and information to guide choices and safeguard the legitimate interest of all stakeholders" (Licuanan, 2016, p. #).

Obviously, those programs and activities related to research and development, either of human resource or of other non-human resources such as "Identification of Centers of Excellence/Centers of Development, voluntary accreditation, faculty development in priority disciplines, financial assistance to promote and support Research and Development (R & D) Projects of HEIs" are considered as developmental.

Also, the granting of University Status to deserving HEIs that have proven their excellence in the areas of instruction, research and extension with highly qualified faculty complement, and very adequate site and building facilities, library and laboratory equipment, and outstanding achievements of students in licensure examinations" are deemed as part of the developmental roles of the CHED (SEAMEO Innovation Technology Report, 2015; Go, 2015).

### **3. Results and Discussion**

The main objective of this paper is to review and evaluate how the CHED has exercised its mandated roles in ensuring the delivery of quality of higher education in the Philippines. Towards the attainment of this objective, indicators were used to assess and classify all CMOs issued from 2013 to 2017 which were available on CHED's website during the data gathering period.

## **CMO Classification Process**

With the above literature, CMOs were then classified based on the indicators of roles stipulated in RA 7722 (1994), SEAMEO Innovation Technology Report (2015), Go (2015), and Licuanan (2016). A checklist (Appendix A) with the identified CHED role indicators was made. The classification process was divided into two stages; the detailed classification first before the general classification. This means that each CMO for a given year is assessed based on the detailed indicators on the checklist.

Each CMO was analyzed using the checklist of CHED roles indicators. Those CMOs which did not qualify to specific indicator were analyzed based on the content of the CMO and are placed on the “Other Regulatory Policies” or “Other Developmental Policies” column depending on their general classifications.

It was only after all of the CMOs had been evaluated that the general classification of whether the CMOs for that year are regulatory or developmental in nature is rendered. The result of this classification process is then utilized as the basis for assessing whether CHED is keen on performing more its regulatory or developmental roles.

## **Findings of the Study**

Based on the CMO numbers, there should have been 231 CMOs issued from 2013-2017. However, when the researcher started downloading the CMOs, there were 20 CMOs that were not [yet?] available on the CHED’s website. Considering that 16 out of the 20 missing CMOs were issued in 2017, the possibility that CHED’s system administrator has not yet uploaded the documents is a big consideration. The other four missing CMOs were from 2015 (3) and 2014 (1).

Based on the published CMOs on CHED website (Table 3), 211 CMOs issued from 2013-2017 were uploaded on their website: 34 CMOs in 2013, 22 out of 23 CMOs in 2014, 35 out of 38 CMOs in 2015, 63 CMOs in 2016, and 57 out of 73 CMOs in 2017, respectively.

In 2013, out of the 44 CMOs, 18 (52.94%) CMOs issued were classified as regulatory while 16 (47.06%) were developmental. In 2014, out of the 22 (100%) CMOs, 5 (31.43%) were classified as regulatory, while 17 (68.57%) were classified as developmental. In 2015, out of the 35 (100%) CMOs, 11 (31.43%) were classified as regulatory, while 24 (68.57%) were classified as developmental. For 2016, out of the 63 (100%) CMOs, 14 (22.22%) were classified as regulatory, while 49 (77.78%) were classified as developmental. And last but not the least, out of the 57 (100%) issued CMOs in 2017, 44 (77.19%) were classified as regulatory, while the remaining 13 (22.81%) were classified as developmental.



**Table 3. Classification of Issued CHED Memorandum Orders 2013-2017**

	2013		2014		2015		2016		2017		TOTAL	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
<b>TOTAL CMOs PUBLISHED*</b>	34	100%	22	100%	35	100%	63	100%	57	100%	211	100.00%
<b>REGULATORY CMOs</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>52.94%</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>31.43%</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>31.43%</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>22.22%</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>77.19%</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>44.08%</b>
Establishment/Closure of Private HEIs	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	3.17%	0	0%	2	0.95%
Course Offerings	4	11.76%	3	13.64%	4	11.43%	4	6.35%	35	61.40%	50	23.70%
Curricular Development	9	26.47%	2	9.09%	5	14.29%	5	7.94%	9	15.79%	30	14.22%
Other Regulatory Policies (Scholarships, etc.)	5	14.71%	1	4.55%	2	5.71%	3	4.76%	0	0%	11	5.21%
<b>DEVELOPMENTAL CMOs</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>47.06%</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>68.57%</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>68.57%</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>77.78%</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>22.81%</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>55.92%</b>
COE&COD Identification	10	29.41%	6	27.27%	15	42.86%	5	7.94%	6	10.53%	42	19.91%
Accreditation	0	0%	1	4.55%	1	2.86%	3	4.76%	0	0%	5	2.37%
Faculty Development	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	12	19.05%	4	7.02%	16	7.58%
Financial Assistance For R&D Projects/Activities	3	8.82%	3	13.64%	4	11.43%	22	34.92%	3	5.26%	35	16.59%
Other Developmental Policies (Scholarships, etc.)	3	8.82%	6	27.27%	4	11.43%	7	11.11%	0	0%	20	9.48%

Source of CMOs: CHED

\*Note: Based on the CMO numbers, CHED was able to issue 231 CMOs from 2013 until the 3rd quarter of 2017. However, only 211 CMOs were available on their website during the data gathering for this paper.

As shown on Table 3 above, findings of the study revealed that from year 2013-2017, there were 93 CMOs issued about the following indicators: Establishment/closure of Private Higher Education Institutions (2, 0.95%); Course offerings (50, 23.70%); Curricular Development (30, 14.22%); and other regulatory issuances (i.e. scholarships, etc.; 11, 5.21%). Although in the indicators used in classifying the regulatory CMOs included the building specifications and tuition fees, these indicators were removed from Table 2 due to lack of issuances related to them.

Annual data further showed that in the past five years, most of the issuances were about regulations on course offerings. This was probably attributed to PSGs of course offerings in the Philippines during the 2016-2017 period.

It can be noted that amongst the issuances in the last five years, 2016 and 2017 had the most number of issuances on course offerings. Relating to the academic situation in the Philippines during these years, it is also worth noting that the K to 12 program was first implemented in the school year 2016-2017. The addition of the junior and senior high schools to the Department of Education's curriculum caused the courses offered by the HEIs to also adjust.

Thus, the general education subjects previously found on tertiary education student's program of study will no longer be needed in the future tertiary programs since senior high school graduates are expected to have already taken them in their additional two years in high school. To cater to these changes in the DepEd's curricular offerings, CHED issued several CMOs relating to the revisions/upgrading of the PSGs of previously approved academic programs. In effect, most of the CMOs for 2016 and 2017 reflected these changes.

Other factors that have resulted to the noticeable increase of regulatory CMO issuances were: (1) whether the academic program is a newly offered program by the HEI or (2) that

CHED has ordered revisions on the PSGs of courses offered by HEIs to further regulate the offering of the academic program.

This paper also found out that although there are years when CHED has issued Memorandum Orders which are mostly regulatory in nature, majority of the total number of CMOs issued are found to have adhered to its developmental roles.

In summary, with the 211 (100%) CMOs analyzed if they are towards CHED's performance of its regulatory or developmental roles, 92 (43.60%) were found to be related to its regulatory roles, and 119 (56.40%) were geared towards the fulfillment of its developmental roles. Significantly so, it can be said that collectively from 2013-2017, CHED has performed more of its developmental role than its regulatory role.

However, given that only CMOs issued in the last five years were evaluated, the result of this study could have been different should there be more years added to the sample size. Furthermore, although the result of this study states that CHED has performed more its developmental role, this paper does not guarantee that same result will be generated if different timeline will be used.

#### **4. Conclusion**

Education is an important aspect of a country's economy as it was proven time and again how the level of education contributes to the improvement of an individual's economic status. The mandate of CHED does not only focus on the implementation of rules and regulations. More importantly, it serves as the government's significant partner in attaining not only its higher education related aspirations, but the development of students who are hoped to ultimately take part in the improvement of the country's economy as well.

Consequently, to ensure that the quality of education can produce graduates who are globally competitive and will become the learned labor force of this country, CHED has recognized accrediting agencies that have the means and capability to evaluate HEI programs. In relation to this, CHED encourages all HEIs to undergo accreditation and subject themselves to quality assurance processes because it is only through these activities that the academic programs of HEIs are being evaluated thoroughly, thereby making it a mechanism to improve the HEIs delivery of quality education to its clientele. Different accreditation levels are being awarded to HEIs. These accreditation levels come with different perks and privileges too, thus, ensuring that the efforts and resources of the HEIs are not put to waste.

However, CHED does not only concerns itself towards quality assurance. It was given enough authorities to perform its regulatory and developmental roles to attain its visions and

missions toward national development. This study has proven that based on the policies and guidelines issued by CHED from 2013-2017, data had shown that it has focused more on the performance of its developmental role than its regulatory role. This result might shed some answers to the assertions made by Tullao (2001) that CHED, as an entity that regulates higher education system in the country, must not be too regulative that it becomes anti-developmental and counterproductive.

Furthermore, the instrument that was generated by this study was proven useful to hasten the classification of the CMOs. Has it not been developed, the researcher must have had too much difficulty on how to evaluate and classify the CMOs; more so, the evaluation of which role CHED has been focusing into during the study period.

With these, the researcher hereby recommends that future evaluation of CHED policies and guidelines be made using the proposed instrument developed for this paper. Improvement of the instrument is also recommended to further assist the CHED in evaluating their performance in relation to their regulatory and developmental roles.

Lastly, although it is the responsibility of the government to provide a satisfactory educational system, the financial support that it gives to the fulfillment of this task is just too small to make a huge difference. But, however meager the government support to the education system may be, it must not hinder the Filipinos to aspire for improvement of the educational system.

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## APPENDIX A



