STRENGTHENING THE TEACHER PIPELINE: ACADEMIC, LET, AND EMPLOYMENT TRENDS AMONG BACHELOR OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION GRADUATES

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ABSTRACT: *This study investigated the predictive relationship between academic metrics, Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) performance, and employment status of Bachelor of Physical Education (BPED) graduates of Negros Oriental State University. Using a descriptive–correlational tracer design, data were gathered from 33 graduates through documentary analysis of Competency-Based Assessment (CBA) results, LET ratings, and employment records. Results indicated that BPED graduates demonstrated performance ranging from fairly satisfactory to very good across the three Competency-Based Assessments (CBA 1, CBA 2, and CBA 3), reflecting consistent but varied levels of academic achievement. LET ratings similarly revealed outcomes that clustered around the satisfactory to nearly very good range, with stronger performance in General Education and Professional Education compared to the Major Field. Correlation and regression analyses showed that CBA 3 was significantly associated with LET Major performance, suggesting its predictive value, while CBA 1 and CBA 2 did not exhibit significant relationships with LET General and Professional Education results. In terms of employment, the majority of graduates were able to secure work within one year, primarily in CHED, DepEd, and private schools, though a portion were employed in non-BPED-related sectors such as BPOs and social services. Statistical tests further revealed that CBA scores and LET results were not significantly associated with employment status, underscoring the influence of external factors such as labor market conditions and opportunities. The findings emphasize the importance of strengthening academic preparation, particularly in major field competencies, while also expanding institutional support to enhance employability.*

Keywords: Competency-Based Assessment; Licensure Examination for Teachers; academic performance; tracer study; Physical Education.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) remains the ultimate benchmark of teacher competence in the Philippines. It serves not only as a prerequisite for entering the teaching profession but also as a performance indicator of teacher education institutions (TEIs). Success in the LET is viewed as an affirmation of quality education, while poor outcomes often lead to questions about curricular relevance, instructional delivery, and institutional support [1; 2].

Previous studies have consistently emphasized that academic preparation is a strong determinant of LET performance. Course-based assessments and pre-licensure examinations have been identified as predictive measures of success in the licensure examination [3; 4]. More specifically, competency-based assessments (CBAs) provide structured measures of graduates' readiness in General Education, Professional Education, and their area of specialization. These indicators reflect the alignment between institutional programs and the competencies tested in the LET [5; 6].

Tracer studies further extend this conversation by connecting licensure outcomes with employment trajectories. Studies have shown that passing the LET improves employability but does not always guarantee job permanence or alignment with specialization [7; 8; 9]. For physical education graduates, employment pathways are uniquely diverse, spanning classroom teaching, coaching, sports management, and fitness industries [10; 11]. Despite this, limited research has been devoted to understanding the predictors of LET performance and employability outcomes among Bachelor of Physical Education (BPED) graduates.

At Negros Oriental State University (NORSU), the College of Teacher Education has continuously produced BPED graduates, many of whom enter the teaching profession. However, there remains little empirical evidence on how their academic performance, specifically measured through competency-based assessments, translates into LET success and subsequent employment outcomes. Addressing this gap is essential for evaluating program effectiveness and ensuring that physical education graduates are adequately prepared for both licensure and professional practice.

Thus, this study investigates the relationship between academic achievement, LET results, and employment outcomes of NORSU BPED graduates. By focusing on competency-based assessments and licensure results as predictors, and tracing employment trajectories, this research seeks to generate practical insights that can inform program improvement, strengthen pre-service preparation, and enhance graduate employability.

Specifically, it purports to shed light to the following questions:

1. What is the respondent's profile in terms of
   1.1 CBA 1 final grade;
   1.2 CBA 2 final grade;
   1.3 CBA 3 final grade;
   1.4 LET rating in General Education;
   1.5 LET rating in Professional Education;
   1.6 LET rating in Major; and
   1.7 LET general average?
2. Is there a relationship between the graduates' performance in
   2.1 CBA 1 vs. GenEd LET Result;
   2.2 CBA 2 vs. ProfEd LET Result; and
   2.3 CBA 3 vs. Major (P.E) LET Result?
3. Do graduates' academic achievement in CBA 1, CBA 2, and CBA 3 significantly predict their LET ratings in terms of:

3.1 General Education;

3.2 Professional Education; and

3.3 Major (P.E), respectively?

4. What regression model may be adopted in predicting the ratings in the LET?

5. What is the employment status of BPED graduates in terms of:

5.1. Type of job;

5.2. Time gap or period spent before first employment; and

5.3. Alignment of first employment to the BPED degree obtained?

6. Is there a significant association between the graduates' performance in CBAs and their employment status?

7. Is there a significant association between the graduates' LET performance and their employment status?

8. What recommendations can be proposed to improve the LET performance and employment of the graduates?

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Academic Preparation and LET Performance

Numerous studies highlight the importance of academic preparation as a predictor of Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) performance. Dionio *et al*. [6] found that General Weighted Average (GWA) and academic performance in teaching demonstrations and internships strongly predicted LET results. Similarly, Fiscal and Roman [3] emphasized that course-based assessments and qualifying exams provide early indicators of licensure success. Makiling *et al*. [12] further demonstrated that professional and general education courses significantly influence LET outcomes. Consistent with these findings, Igcasama *et al*. [2] observed that in- and off-campus pre-service education was the strongest factor influencing licensure results, while facilities and resources had a weaker role.

Other researchers examined contributory elements within academic training. Dela Fuente [13] stressed the influence of teacher quality, student factors, and review classes in shaping LET outcomes for pre-service physical science teachers. Maramag *et al.* [14] highlighted that graduates from institutions with higher accreditation status and faculty with doctoral degrees performed better in the LET compared to those from less accredited institutions. These findings reinforce the notion that academic rigor, institutional quality, and structured competency-based assessments (CBAs) are critical determinants of licensure examination success.

Contributing Factors to LET Results

Several studies explored the multifaceted factors affecting LET outcomes. Bullag and Hucalinas [15] revealed that discrepancies in institutional LET performance stemmed from curriculum alignment and program implementation. Segumpan *et al*. [16] compared the results of elementary and secondary education graduates and found consistent underperformance in some areas, stressing the need for targeted academic interventions. Abao *et al*. [17] analyzed LET results across different programs and noted variations influenced by institutional practices and student preparedness. Macalinao *et al.* [18] also documented declining LET passing rates nationwide, urging teacher education institutions (TEIs) to enhance curriculum and assessment alignment with PRC standards.

Further, Repayo *et al.* [5] emphasized that graduates' academic achievement, particularly in major courses, plays a crucial role in predicting LET success. Dela Cruz *et al*. [4] echoed this by finding that academic performance and pre-board results correlated with LET outcomes, making them reliable predictors of licensure performance. Collectively, these findings demonstrate that a combination of individual preparation, institutional quality, and systemic curriculum alignment directly shapes LET success.

Graduate Tracer Studies and Employability

Graduate tracer studies provide insights into the relationship between licensure results and employability. Dumdumaya and Silvestre [7] found that while most Bachelor of Physical Education (BPED) graduates in Bukidnon secured teaching-related jobs, many held temporary positions, reflecting employment instability. Similarly, Berja [8] reported that BPED graduates in Bicol were largely employed but noted a significant portion were engaged in non-teaching jobs or further studies. Fabunan [19] emphasized that Arellano University graduates were highly employable, though many initially worked in contractual positions. Pardo and Relon [9] also observed that while graduates in North Luzon were employed, many faced low salaries and limited opportunities in public schools.

Other tracer studies reinforce these findings. Francisco and Aquino [20] examined BSEd graduates in Batangas and found high LET passing rates but challenges in aligning employment with specialization. Patulin *et al.* [21] reported that most graduates of Surigao Del Norte State University found relevant jobs in DepEd, though job satisfaction was influenced more by workplace conditions than salary. Arbis *et al*. [22] noted that graduates of St. Paul University Surigao had high employability and found their academic programs highly relevant. Vidania *et al*. [25] confirmed that Isabela State University graduates valued their educational qualification as the main factor in their employability but highlighted challenges of underemployment and job mismatch. Cornillez *et al*. [23] also found that Eastern Visayas State University graduates were generally employed quickly, with curriculum relevance being an important factor. Sensal *et al.* [24] added that program outcomes such as communication, critical thinking, and leadership skills were deemed highly useful by teacher education graduates in Surigao.

Institutional and Curriculum Factors

Institutional support and curriculum design are vital in shaping both licensure and employment outcomes. Bullag and Hucalinas [15] showed that institutional evaluation of program outcomes helped identify weaknesses in LET performance. Abao *et al.* [17] and Segumpan *et al.* [16] recommended strengthening alignment between curriculum and LET standards to improve national passing rates. Cahapay [1] stressed that LET serves as a measure of TEIs' instructional quality, and poor performance necessitates curriculum reforms and enhanced faculty development.

Lovin and Savu [10] explored the employment satisfaction of Romanian physical education graduates and revealed that while professional skills were relevant, weaknesses in management and communication limited employability.

Saquing *et al*. [11] underscored the importance of teaching competence, innovation, and curriculum responsiveness in ensuring PE graduates' readiness for teaching and other career pathways. These studies confirm that curriculum alignment, institutional quality, and holistic skill development remain key contributors to licensure and employability outcomes.

Physical Education–Specific Studies

Physical education graduates face unique challenges and opportunities in licensure and employment. Dumdumaya and Silvestre [7] highlighted that while most BPED graduates secured teaching jobs, contractual employment limited their stability. Berja [8] noted similar trends, emphasizing the importance of curriculum review to enhance employability in both teaching and non-teaching sectors. Saquing *et al.* [11] found that graduates perceived competencies such as innovative teaching strategies, communication skills, and problem-solving as critical in their professional practice. Lovin and Savu [10] reported that international PE graduates faced employment challenges linked to skill mismatch but also demonstrated high adaptability. These findings collectively suggest that physical education programs must go beyond technical preparation and emphasize holistic development, employability skills, and curriculum alignment with industry demands.

3. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is significant because it addresses the limited scholarship on the academic, licensure, and employment outcomes of Bachelor of Physical Education graduates. By focusing on NORSU BPED graduates, the research provides localized evidence on how competency-based assessments and licensure performance shape employability, thereby contributing to the enhancement of teacher education quality.

For Negros Oriental State University, the findings will provide feedback on the effectiveness of its BPED curriculum and competency-based assessments. The study will guide program review, faculty development, and curriculum enhancement, particularly in aligning coursework with licensure standards and labor market demands.

For students and graduates, the study will highlight the academic components most relevant to LET success and career placement. It will serve as a guide for prioritizing academic preparation and professional development, especially for those aiming to enter the teaching profession or related physical education fields.

In the broader educational landscape, the study is equally valuable for policymakers and accrediting agencies such as CHED. The findings will contribute empirical evidence on program quality and effectiveness. It will provide insights for refining curriculum standards, competency-based education, and licensure alignment specific to physical education.

For employers and the Department of Education, the study will shed light on the employability of BPED graduates, including job alignment, tenure, and readiness. This information is crucial for recruitment and professional development of beginning teachers in physical education.

4. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study utilized a descriptive–correlational and tracer research design. The descriptive approach was used to profile the competency-based assessments (CBA 1, CBA 2, and CBA 3), Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET)performance, and employment outcomes of NORSU BPED graduates. The correlational component determined the relationship between CBAs and LET results, while regression analysis was applied to identify which CBA areas significantly predicted LET performance. The tracer component documented the employment outcomes of graduates, including job type, job alignment, and time gap before first employment.

Respondents of the Study

The respondents were 33 BPED graduates of NORSU who completed their degree and took the LET within the covered academic years. Total enumeration was applied since the cohort size was small and all graduates were deemed essential to ensure comprehensive data coverage.

Research Instruments

The study employed two instruments: a documentary analysis guide and a graduate tracer survey questionnaire. The documentary analysis guide was used to collect graduates' academic performance in CBA 1 (General Education), CBA 2 (Professional Education), and CBA 3 (Major in PE), as well as their LET ratings in General Education, Professional Education, and Major (PE). The graduate tracer survey, adapted from the CHED standard tracer tool, gathered employment-related data such as job type, employment alignment, and time gap before first employment. Instruments were validated by experts and pre-tested for clarity and reliability.

Data Gathering Procedure

Approval to conduct the study was obtained from the NORSU administration and the College of Teacher Education. Ethical clearance was secured to comply with research standards and the Data Privacy Act of 2012. Academic data were collected from the registrar's office and faculty records, while LET performance was validated using PRC records. The tracer survey was distributed through email, social media, and mobile messaging platforms, with follow-ups conducted to maximize participation. Informed consent was obtained from all respondents, and data were encoded and cross-checked for accuracy.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were used to present the profile of CBAs, LET performance, and employment outcomes. Spearman's rho correlation was employed to examine the relationships between CBA scores and LET results. Multiple regression analysis was conducted to identify which CBA components significantly predicted LET performance in General Education, Professional Education, Major (PE), and overall average. To analyze the relationship between LET results and employment status, a chi-square test of association was used.

Ethical Considerations

The study followed strict ethical guidelines to ensure voluntary participation, informed consent, and confidentiality of data. Records were coded to protect respondent identity, and findings were presented in aggregate form. Data were stored securely in password-protected files and accessed only by the researcher.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1.1 CBA Final Grades

Grade	CBA 1		CBA 2		CBA 3	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
95 & above Excellent (E)	4	12.12	2	6.06	4	12.12
92-94 Very Good (VG)	11	33.33	5	15.15	6	18.18
90-91 Good (G)	6	18.18	3	9.09	5	15.15
88-89 Very Satisfactory (VS)	3	9.09	4	12.12	5	15.15
85-87 Satisfactory (S)	4	12.12	9	27.27	5	15.15
83-84 Fairly Satisfactory (FS)	5	15.15	10	30.3	8	24.24
Total	33	100	33	100	33	100

Legend:

    95 & above Excellent (E)
    92-94 Very Good (VG)
    90-91 Good (G)
    88-89 Very Satisfactory (VS)
    85-87 Satisfactory (S)
    83-84 Fairly Satisfactory (FS)

The results reveal that CBA 1 (General Education) had the highest proportion of graduates achieving Very Good (33.33%) and Excellent (12.12%) ratings. This suggests that the graduates displayed stronger competency in the general education component, which aligns with prior research indicating that general education courses serve as foundational predictors of LET performance [12; 13].

In CBA 2 (Professional Education), most graduates clustered within the Fairly Satisfactory (30.30%) and Satisfactory (27.27%) levels, with only 6.06% attaining Excellent. This indicates relative difficulty in professional education competencies, consistent with Dela Fuente [13], who found that pre-service teachers often struggle with professional subjects due to the broader scope of pedagogy and assessment. Similarly, Igcasama *et al*. [2] noted that while pre-service exposure contributes significantly to LET performance, insufficient resources and institutional constraints can hinder mastery of professional competencies.

For CBA 3 (Specialization in Physical Education), results were mixed, with 24.24% rated as Fairly Satisfactory and 18.18% as Very Good. Although some excelled, the relatively high proportion of lower-level ratings suggests challenges in mastering specialized content. Studies on BPED graduates support this, as many encounter a mismatch between content mastery and the demands of licensure examinations [7; 11]. These findings imply that while graduates develop core knowledge, gaps remain in discipline-specific competencies that require strengthened curriculum alignment.

Overall, the CBAs demonstrate that graduates are performing within the satisfactory to very good range, with strengths in general education but notable weaknesses in professional and specialized domains. This reflects national trends reported by Abao, Petancio, Sanchez, and Sumalinog [17], where LET results often show stronger performance in general education compared to professional and major subjects. The data affirm that CBAs can serve as early indicators of licensure readiness, supporting earlier findings that diagnostic and pre-board assessments are reliable predictors of LET outcomes [4;16].

Table 1.2 LET Ratings

Rating	General Education		Professional Education		Major (P.E)		Average	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
90-91	3	9.09	1	3.03	1	3.03	1	3.03
88-89	7	21.21	4	12.12	3	9.09	2	6.06
85-87	10	30.3	9	27.27	4	12.12	8	24.24
83-84	5	15.15	7	21.21	4	12.12	6	18.18
79-82	6	18.18	11	33.33	12	36.36	14	42.42
75-78	1	3.03	1	3.03	8	24.24	2	6.06
70-74	0	0	0	0	1	3.03	0	0
65-69	1	3.03	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	33	100	33	100	33	100	33	100

The LET performance of the 33 BPED graduates shows a concentration within the 79–87 rating range, with the majority scoring between Satisfactory to Very Satisfactory. Specifically, 30.30% of graduates in General Education achieved 85–87, while 33.33% in Professional Education and 36.36% in Physical Education majors scored in the 79–82 brackets. This suggests that while most graduates passed the licensure examination, relatively few achieved Excellent or Very Good ratings.

General Education emerged as the strongest area, with 9.09% attaining scores of 90–91 and 21.21% in 88–89. This confirms earlier findings by Makiling *et al*. [12] and Abao *et al*. [17] that teacher education graduates tend to perform better in general education subjects compared to specialization and professional domains.

Table 2.1: Relationship Between the Respondents' CBA 1, 2, and 3 grades and Their LET Rating.

GPA vs. LET Ratings	Spearman Rho	Degree of Relationship	p-value	decision
CBA 1 vs. LET GenEd	0.311	Low	0.078	Non-Significant, Fail to Reject the Null
CBA 2 vs. LET ProfEd	-0.222	Negative Low	0.215	Non-Significant, Fail to Reject the Null
CBA 3 vs. LET Major	0.508	Moderate	0.003	Significant, Reject the Null

*Adapted from Calmorin.
An r ± 0.00 denotes zero correlation.
An r from 0.01 to ± 0.20 deals on negligible correlation
An r from ± 0.21 to ± 0.40 denotes low or slight relationship.
An r from ± 0.41 to ± 0.70 indicates marked or moderate correlation.
An r from ± 0.71 to ± 0.90 shows high relationship.
An r from ± 0.91 to ± 0.99 denotes very high correlation.
An r ±1.0 indicates perfect relationship.

In Professional Education, although 27.27% scored 85–87, a significant portion (33.33%) fell in the 79–82 range, indicating middling performance. This supports the conclusion of Dela Fuente [13] that professional education subjects pose considerable challenges to pre-service teachers due to their theoretical depth and practical application requirements. Similarly, Segumpan *et al.* [16] emphasized that volatile trends in licensure outcomes are often linked to gaps in pedagogy and assessment training.

The weakest performance appeared in Major (Physical Education), where only 3.03% reached 90–91 compared to 24.24% clustered in 75–78 and another 36.36% in 79–82. This reflects national-level findings that specialization remains a stumbling block for many licensure takers [7;11]. In particular, the inconsistency in specialized preparation often leads to underperformance compared to general education areas, as noted by Maramag *et al.* [14].

The analysis of the relationship between the Competency-Based Assessments (CBAs) and the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) ratings of BPED graduates from NORSU revealed mixed outcomes. For CBA 1 and LET General Education, a low but positive correlation (ρ = 0.311, p = 0.078) was observed, though the relationship was not statistically significant. This finding suggests that while General Education competencies may provide a foundational influence on LET performance, they are not strong predictors of success. Similar to the study of Fiscal and Roman [3], pre-licensure assessments such as pre-LET results can serve as preliminary indicators of readiness, but they do not consistently guarantee licensure achievement.

In contrast, the correlation between CBA 2 and LET Professional Education yielded a negative low association (ρ = -0.222, p = 0.215), also not statistically significant. This implies that higher grades in professional education assessments did not correspond to better LET ProfEd scores, indicating a possible misalignment between institutional assessments and licensure competencies. Segumpan *et al*. [16] highlighted a similar issue in their analysis of national LET trends, where fluctuations in Professional Education performance reflected systemic gaps in teacher preparation. Likewise, Dela Fuente [13] emphasized that pre-service teachers often encounter difficulties in professional education components, necessitating curricular recalibration and targeted interventions to enhance teacher readiness.

The strongest result was found between CBA 3 and LET Major (Physical Education), where a moderate positive and statistically significant correlation was recorded (ρ = 0.508, p = 0.003). This indicates that CBA 3 serves as a reliable predictor of specialization performance in the LET. The finding is consistent with the work of Dionio et al. [6], who established that specialization-related academic performance is a strong determinant of licensure outcomes. Similarly, Makiling *et al*. [12] and Bullag and Hucalinas [15] observed that when institutional assessments are closely aligned with specialization content, student performance on internal examinations mirrors their outcomes in national licensure tests.

Overall, these findings underscore the varying predictive validity of the CBAs. CBA 3 demonstrates clear alignment with LET specialization results, while CBA 1 and CBA 2 exhibit limited predictive power, echoing earlier studies that identified discrepancies between academic metrics and licensure performance [5; 14]. For NORSU BPED graduates, this highlights the importance of sustaining and further strengthening specialization-focused assessments while simultaneously reexamining the design and alignment of General and Professional Education assessments. As suggested by Vidania et al. [25] and Pardo and Relon [9], tracer studies of this nature are crucial in providing evidence-based insights for curriculum review, ensuring that teacher education programs remain responsive to licensure demands and labor market expectations.

Table 3.1 Regression Analysis on the Predictive Relationship of Academic Metrics (CBA 1, CBA 2, CBA 3) and LET Performance

Dependent Variable	Predictor	R²	Adj. R²	F-statistic	p-value	Interpretation
LET General Ed	CBA1	0.073	0.044	2.456	0.127	Not Significant
LET Professional Ed	CBA2	0.077	0.047	2.570	0.119	Not Significant
LET Major (P.E)	CBA3	0.281	0.258	12.142	0.002	Significant

The regression analysis revealed important insights into the predictive relationship between the graduates' competency-based assessments (CBA 1, CBA 2, and CBA 3) and their corresponding performance in the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET). For LET General Education, the regression model with CBA 1 as the predictor yielded an R² of 0.073 and an adjusted R² of 0.044, with $F_{(1,31)} = 2.456$ and p = 0.127. This indicates that only 7.3% of the variance in General Education scores could be explained by CBA 1, and the model was not statistically significant. This result aligns with Cahapay [1], who found that general cognitive variables such as GPA and entrance test scores influence licensure outcomes but do not always translate into strong predictive validity.

Similarly, the regression model for LET Professional Education with CBA 2 as the predictor demonstrated an R² of 0.077 and an adjusted R² of 0.047, with $F_{(1,31)} = 2.570$ and p = 0.119. This suggests that only 7.7% of the variance in Professional Education scores could be explained by CBA 2, and the relationship was not significant. This finding echoes Segumpan *et al.* [16], who reported systemic weaknesses in professional education preparation among pre-service teachers, often reflected in inconsistent LET performance across different cohorts.

The most notable result emerged in the regression analysis of LET Major (Physical Education) and CBA 3. The model produced an R² of 0.281 and an adjusted R² of 0.258, with $F_{(1,31)} = 12.142$ and p = 0.002. This indicates that CBA 3 significantly predicted 28.1% of the variance in Major examination scores, demonstrating a meaningful and statistically significant predictive relationship. This finding is consistent with the results of Dionio et al. [6] and Makiling et al. [12], which both identified specialization-related academic performance as the most reliable predictor of licensure outcomes. Moreover, the alignment between institutional specialization assessments and licensure content validates the effectiveness of the BPED curriculum in preparing graduates for discipline-specific competencies, as also emphasized by Saquing *et al.* [11] in the context of Physical Education programs.

In summary, the regression analysis highlights the differentiated predictive power of academic metrics. While CBA 1 and CBA 2 showed limited and statistically insignificant effects on LET General and Professional Education outcomes, CBA 3 emerged as a strong and significant predictor of LET Major performance. This underscores the importance of enhancing specialization-focused assessments in NORSU's BPED program while reexamining the structure and content validity of general and professional education assessments to better align with national licensure demands [15; 5].
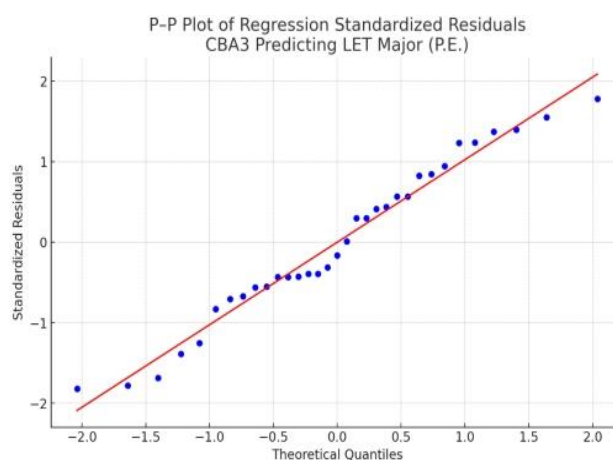
Figure 4.1 P–P Plot of Regression Standardized Residuals for CBA 3 Predicting LET Major Rating

The regression analysis revealed that CBA 3, which evaluates specialization performance in the Bachelor of Physical Education program, emerged as a significant predictor of LET Major (P.E.) results among NORSU graduates. The model yielded an R² value of 0.281 (Adj. R² = 0.258), indicating that approximately 28.1% of the variance in LET Major scores could be explained by CBA 3 performance. The corresponding regression equation, LET Major (P.E.) = 32.47 + 0.58(CBA 3), suggests that each incremental increase in CBA 3 grade leads to a 0.58-point rise in LET Major rating, highlighting the importance of specialization mastery in predicting licensure success. Assumption diagnostics confirmed the robustness of the model. The linearity assumption was satisfied, as supported by the moderate Spearman correlation ($\rho = 0.508$, p = 0.003) and the scatterplot trend suggesting a straight-line relationship. The normal P–P plot further indicated that residuals approximated a normal distribution, thereby validating the normality assumption [17]; [16]. Homoscedasticity was also observed, with residuals displaying relatively constant variance across fitted values, while the independence of errors was assumed due to the cross-sectional design involving distinct individual respondents. Moreover, no significant outliers were detected, as CBA 3 scores clustered between 83 and 95 without extreme deviations.

Collectively, these findings affirm that the regression model meets the assumptions of simple linear regression, strengthening the evidence that CBA 3 is a reliable predictor of LET Major performance. This outcome aligns with earlier studies which emphasize that specialization competencies are critical determinants of licensure outcomes [6]; [12]. International evidence also supports this trend, showing that discipline-specific knowledge strongly influences both examination performance and employability [10]; [11]. In the context of NORSU BPED, the results underscore the need to maintain rigorous alignment between specialization

assessments and the Professional Regulation Commission's LET framework. By ensuring that CBA 3 remains reflective of licensure standards and professional practice, the

institution can further enhance graduates' competitiveness in both national examinations and the labor market.

Table 5.1 Employment Status of BPED Graduates

Employment Status (First Employer)	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Typical Time Gap Before Employment	Related to BPED? (Yes %)
BPO	11	33.3%	2 weeks – 8 months; 1 case = 3 yrs.+	0%
CHED	11	33.3%	0 – 1 year	82%
Private School	6	18.2%	3 months – 1 year 1 month	100%
DepEd	1	3.0%	3 months	100%
DSWD	2	6.1%	1–3 months	0%
Private Business	1	3.0%	4 months	0%
Government Internship Program under DOLE	1	3.0%	3 years	100%
Total	33	100%		

The employment outcomes of the 33 BPED graduates from NORSU reveal both encouraging trends and areas of concern regarding alignment between academic preparation and professional trajectories. As shown in Table 5.1, the largest proportion of graduates (33.3%) initially found work in the Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) sector. However, none of these positions were directly related to their BPED degree, highlighting the persistent issue of job mismatch reported in national and international tracer studies [25; 23]. An equally large share (33.3%) secured employment with the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), where 82% of the roles were related to their academic background, indicating that institutional and government agencies remain important absorbers of teacher education graduates. Private schools employed 18.2% of respondents, all in positions directly aligned with their specialization, while only a single graduate (3.0%) entered the Department of Education (DepEd), again in a teaching role related to BPED. A smaller percentage found employment in non-teaching government service through the Department of Social Welfare and Development (6.1%) and private businesses (3.0%), both of which were unrelated to their degree. Notably, one graduate (3.0%) entered the Government Internship Program under DOLE, with a substantial delay of three years before securing this employment, though the role was still related to BPED.

The findings suggest that while a significant proportion of graduates eventually secure employment related to their degree, a considerable number initially engage in non-specialization jobs, particularly in BPO and private enterprises. This reflects the dual realities emphasized in recent literature: while teacher education programs develop employable graduates with strong competencies [7; 11], labor market mismatches and delayed absorption into teaching positions remain prevalent [8; 9]. The average time gap before employment ranged from two weeks to one year for most graduates, with some extreme cases extending to three years, indicating both efficient placement and structural delays in job absorption. Consistent with international findings, employment relevance appears strongest in education-related institutions, where professional competencies and specialization skills are most valued [10].

For NORSU BPED, these results underscore the need to strengthen linkages with public schools and government

agencies such as DepEd to facilitate faster and more consistent placement of graduates into roles aligned with their training. Enhanced career guidance, institutional partnerships, and pre-employment preparation may also mitigate the risk of job mismatch and underemployment, ensuring that BPED graduates not only pass the Licensure Examination for Teachers but also transition smoothly into meaningful careers in physical education and related fields.

Table 6.1 Results of Statistical Tests for CBAs and Employment Status

Test	CBA 1 (GenEd)	CBA 2 (ProfEd)	CBA 3 (Major)
Independent Samples t-test	t(31) = 1.051, p = .302, ns	t(31) = 0.669, p = .508, ns	t(31) = 1.173, p = .250, ns
Mann–Whitney U Test	U = 163.50, p = .308, ns	U = 160.00, p = .372, ns	U = 167.00, p = .252, ns
Point-biserial correlation	$r_{p\beta}$ = .187, p = .299, ns	$r_{p\beta}$ = .119, p = .508, ns	$r_{p\beta}$ = .208, p = .246, ns

The statistical tests conducted to determine the relationship between CBA performance and employment status revealed no significant associations across all domains of assessment. For CBA 1 (General Education), the independent samples t-test yielded t(31) = 1.051, p = .302; the Mann–Whitney U test reported U = 163.50, p = .308; and the point-biserial correlation produced $r_{p\beta}$ = .187, p = .299. These results consistently indicate that CBA 1 scores did not significantly differ between graduates employed in BPED-related and non-BPED-related jobs. Similarly, CBA 2 (Professional Education) showed no significant associations, with t(31) = 0.669, p = .508, U = 160.00, p = .372, and $r_{p\beta}$ = .119, p = .508, confirming the absence of meaningful differences or correlations between academic performance in professional courses and employment outcomes. For CBA 3 (Major), the findings were consistent: t(31) = 1.173, p = .250; U = 167.00, p = .252; and $r_{p\beta}$ = .208, p = .246, all of which are non-significant.

Collectively, these results underscore that performance in CBAs, whether in general, professional, or major field components, was not significantly associated with employment status. In other words, higher or lower CBA scores did not guarantee employment alignment with BPED specialization or immediate entry into the labor market. Interpretation: The absence of significant relationships suggests that graduates' employment trajectories are shaped

more by external factors such as labor market demand, job vacancies, and institutional hiring policies rather than academic metrics alone. This is consistent with findings from other tracer studies, which note that employability often reflects a combination of qualifications, opportunities, and contextual factors rather than exam or coursework performance alone [26; 25; 21; 9].

7.1 Results of Statistical Tests for LET Performance and Employment Status

Test	Statistic	p-value	Interpretation
Independent Samples t-test	1.043	0.306	Not Significant
Mann–Whitney U Test	161.500	0.302	Not Significant
Point-biserial correlation	$r_{p\beta} = 0.184$	0.304	Not Significant, Negligible correlation

The results of the statistical analyses revealed no significant association between LET performance and employment status among the NORSU BPED graduates. The independent samples t-test yielded a value of 1.043 with a p-value of 0.306, indicating no significant difference in LET scores between employed and unemployed groups. This finding was further supported by the Mann–Whitney U test (U = 161.500, p = 0.302), which confirmed that employment outcomes did not significantly vary across levels of LET performance. Moreover, the point-biserial correlation produced a coefficient of r = 0.184 with a p-value of 0.304, suggesting a negligible and non-significant relationship between LET results and employment status.

There is no significant difference in LET performance between graduates employed in BPED-related jobs (e.g., CHED, DepEd, Private School, DOLE) and those in unrelated jobs (e.g., BPO, DSWD, Private Business). Likewise, the point-biserial correlation is negligible (r = 0.184), reinforcing that employment alignment was not associated with LET performance.

These findings suggest that passing or performing well in the LET does not automatically translate into immediate or degree-aligned employment. Instead, employment outcomes appear to be shaped more by external factors such as labor market demand, job opportunities, and institutional hiring practices, rather than purely by licensure performance. Similar insights have been reported in other tracer studies across Philippine TEIs, where LET passers often experience delays or mismatches in employment due to competition and regional job availability [9; 20]. International research likewise emphasizes that employability is influenced by transferable skills, adaptability, and networking, in addition to formal qualifications [10; 11].

For NORSU BPED, these results highlight the need for strengthened career support and institutional linkages. While LET preparation remains a vital component of teacher education, complementary initiatives such as job placement assistance, alumni networks, and collaboration with both public and private sectors can better ensure that graduates achieve employment aligned with their specialization.

CONCLUSION

This study explored the relationship between academic performance, Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) outcomes, and employment trajectories of Bachelor of Physical Education (BPED) graduates from Negros Oriental State University. Findings provided a comprehensive picture of how competency-based assessments (CBAs) function as indicators of licensure readiness and how licensure performance relates, or does not relate, to employment outcomes.

Results from the CBAs revealed consistent strengths in General Education, with many graduates achieving Very Good to Excellent ratings. In contrast, Professional Education and Major (Physical Education) performance were more uneven, with a notable proportion clustering within the Satisfactory and Fairly Satisfactory levels. LET results mirrored these trends, with most graduates scoring within the 79–87 range. While General Education emerged as the strongest domain, Professional Education and the Major exam remained challenging, confirming national trends that highlight specialization as a persistent stumbling block for licensure candidates.

The correlational and regression analyses revealed that CBA 3, which evaluates specialization, was the only significant predictor of LET outcomes, explaining nearly 28% of the variance in Major exam scores. CBA 1 and CBA 2, meanwhile, showed no significant predictive power. This suggests that while broad-based academic preparation contributes to overall competence, discipline-specific mastery remains the most critical determinant of licensure success. Importantly, diagnostic checks confirmed that the regression assumptions were met, reinforcing the robustness of CBA 3 as a predictor of LET Major performance.

Tracer findings on employment outcomes revealed a mixed trajectory. While one-third of the graduates found teaching-related jobs in CHED, DepEd, and private schools, another third entered unrelated fields such as the BPO sector. Employment mismatches and delayed absorption into degree-aligned positions were common, with some graduates waiting up to three years for relevant employment. Statistical tests confirmed that neither CBA performance nor LET results were significantly associated with employment outcomes. This highlights that employability is influenced more by external factors such as labor market demand, job availability, and institutional opportunities than by academic or licensure metrics alone.

RECOMMENDATIONS
Curriculum and Instruction

The findings underscore the need to further strengthen the curriculum of the Bachelor of Physical Education program at NORSU. In particular, greater emphasis must be placed on the alignment of specialization courses with the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) specifications. While CBA 3 significantly predicted LET Major (P.E.) performance, results from CBA 1 and CBA 2 indicated limited predictive validity. This suggests that while specialization is well aligned, improvements are needed in General Education and Professional Education courses. Faculty may consider

revising course content and assessment design through backward curriculum mapping to ensure that classroom learning outcomes mirror the cognitive demands of the LET.

Assessment and LET Preparation

The study highlights the necessity of improving the validity and reliability of institutional assessments. Diagnostic and mock LET examinations should be institutionalized to provide students with early indicators of readiness. Furthermore, the predictive regression model (LET Major = $32.47 + 0.58*CBA3$) may be used as an internal advising tool to identify at-risk students and provide timely intervention. Faculty development in test construction, item analysis, and competency-based assessment is also recommended to strengthen the quality of CBA 1 and CBA 2, thereby ensuring closer alignment with LET competencies.

Student Support and Enrichment

Given that performance in Professional Education and Major areas continues to pose challenges, student support mechanisms must be enhanced. Structured remediation programs, small-group tutorials, and targeted review sessions should be implemented to help students master difficult domains. Mentoring from alumni who have successfully passed the LET may also provide practical strategies and motivation. In addition, student development activities focusing on test-taking skills, stress management, and self-regulated learning are encouraged to improve overall preparedness.

Practicum and Field Partnerships

Employment results suggest that while many graduates eventually secure positions aligned with their specialization, a significant proportion initially enter non-teaching fields such as BPOs. Strengthening practicum placements and school partnerships with DepEd and private institutions may help reduce job mismatch by exposing students to real teaching environments and connecting them with potential employers early on. Collaboration with government agencies, particularly CHED and DepEd, may also foster smoother transitions from graduation to employment.

Career Services and Employability

Since both CBA and LET performance were not significantly associated with employment outcomes, it is evident that external factors such as labor market conditions and hiring practices play a stronger role in shaping employability. To address this, the university must strengthen its career services through job placement programs, alumni networks, and linkages with both public and private schools. Employability workshops focusing on job applications, interview skills, and career adaptability will further support graduates in navigating the labor market.

Faculty Development and Quality Assurance

Faculty members must be continuously supported through training in licensure exam trends, innovative pedagogy, and discipline-specific certifications. Regular quality assurance measures, including curriculum reviews and assessment audits, should be conducted to monitor alignment between institutional assessments and LET performance. This continuous feedback loop will help ensure that the BPED program maintains its relevance and responsiveness to both licensure demands and the needs of the labor market.

Policy and Institutional Support

Institutional commitment is crucial to sustain the improvement of the BPED program. Resources should be allocated to upgrade facilities, equipment, and instructional technologies that directly support specialization and practicum requirements. Policy reforms that protect time for LET review, streamline course loads, and prioritize faculty development must also be adopted. Institutional linkages with schools, government agencies, and community partners should be expanded to facilitate both licensure preparation and employment opportunities.

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