



Trend of Customs Broker Licensure Examination of the Philippines

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Abstract

This study analyzes the trend of the board examination performance in Customs Brokers Licensure Exam amongst schools in the Philippines. The research method used in this study was a quantitative trend analysis to objectively determine the passing percentage of the schools in Customs Brokers Licensure Examination. The findings and results of the study provide a clear picture of the schools' performance revealing that there was a fluctuation pattern between schools' performances on Customs Brokers Licensure Examination.

Keywords: Customs Brokers Licensure Examination, trend analysis, school performance

Introduction

Licensure examination plays a vital role in determining the performance of the school in terms of the quality of education they possess. This eventually guarantees the efficiency and effectiveness of the schools on the degree courses they normally offered. Generally, it will indicate higher standard of performance of instructional system and reflects the schools' efficiency as well as the intellectual capacity of the students' performance of the school if they consistently perform well in board examination. It entails quality education standards and used as guidance and preference by enrolling students in choosing and selecting schools that best suit to what the global professional market needs. This study explores on a four-year trend analysis of school performance in the Customs Brokers' Licensure Examination in the Philippines.

The Licensure Examination for Customs Brokers is given by the Professional Regulation Commission to those qualified individuals desiring to join the ranks of licensed customs brokers and eventually engage in the practice of customs brokerage. Given only once a year, the board examination now consists of four (4) subjects namely: tariff laws and international trade agreement; warehousing; transportation and cargo handling operations; customs laws and implementing rules and regulations; and practical computation of customs duties and taxes and other charges. This was made pursuant to the Professional Regulatory Board for Customs Brokers (PRBCB) Resolution No. 1 series of 2007 (Llorando, 2010). Moreover, Commission on Higher Education (CHED) Memorandum Order No. 11 states that Bachelor of Science in Customs Administration aims to prepare individuals to meet the requirements of professional customs brokers in the Philippines. It seeks to develop customs brokers who are competent and knowledgeable in the import and export operations. After completion of the Proceeding of the Global Summit on Education program and passing the

licensure examination, the graduates can pursue a career in customs brokerage and related professions (Regalario, 2008).

The examination is given to test the graduates' knowledge, progress, skills, and qualifications in a particular profession. The customs broker examination is a valuable way to determine whether an individual has an exhaustive understanding of all import regulations (Tucker, 2010). Being a customs broker, he/she must possess the expertise in import and export. Expertise means, the knowledge of entry procedure, documentary requirements, and customs valuation, (Delaney, 2010). Therefore, the schools play a vital role in producing quality graduates in admission to the licensure examination. So it is very important to look into the performance of each school offering Customs Administration Program. The analysis of the licensure examination gives indications to be globally competitive professionals especially in the field of Bachelor of Science in Customs Administration in the Philippines (Nambio, 2004).

The gaps in knowledge based on the schools performance on Customs Brokers Licensure Examination in the Philippines include: (1) No precise selection process as required for the qualification of applicants to take the licensure examination. Strict selection process such as passing a mock board examination before taking the exam will give higher passing percentage. (Students cannot be prevented to take the board exams, but those taking without preparation and considered "suicidal" has high percentage of failure.); (2) No adequate preparations before taking the licensure examinations. Adequate preparations for the licensure examination help examinees in mastering the scope of examinations and increase their chance of passing such as enrolling in a review center; (3) No sufficient monitoring system on the performance of schools and review centers. There must be a proper monitoring and supervision on the performance of schools and review centers to meet the required standards with regard to its teaching instruction and facilities. Schools can recommend to their students what course of action to take, whether to enrol in a recommended review center or within the review course offered by the school. (4) Less training and development seminar to further develop the skills and knowledge of customs administration students to be globally competitive and have better career opportunities. (5) No harmonized school curriculum for the Bachelor of Science in Customs Administration program. Harmonization of school curriculum is essential for it affects the theoretically-based knowledge and fictional visions of the students.

CHED has issued standard curriculum or minimum requirement for this degree under CHED memo 11-S2005. Minimum units on general education courses; Business Core; Customs Core; Tariff Core; PE/NSSTP totalling 138 units. However, each colleges offer different curriculum which suit their own customs administration program. To compound some matters, schools may differ on total units required on this particular degree and offered subjects that may not be the same. Should a student wishes to transfer, some of their subjects taken may not be credited for the simple reason that such subjects may have different descriptive titles even if such program is the same. Total units required will also differ. CHED put up a minimum requirements and sample program of study but enhancement and harmonization should be the responsibility of the Professional Regulation Board for Customs Broker as mandated by RA no. 9280, otherwise known as Customs Broker Act of 2004. As of the present, there was no action by the board and the harmonization and projected change in the curriculum due to modernization and ASEAN integration has not been instituted. CHED Memo no. 11 issued in the year 2005 as a guide is still used as a sole reference to customs administration program.

It is important that the knowledge gaps must be addressed by the schools and the government. On the part of the schools, it must have an adequate facilities and resources, qualified customs administration faculty, and reliable review centers to tie-up with, to attain high-passing percentage. Moreover, on part of the government, strict regulations should be implemented before allowing a certain school to offer Customs Administration Program, by not allowing those schools and review centers that were non-compliant. This study aims to further improve the school's performance in the Licensure Examination for Customs Broker.

(1) Schools. The results of this study will provide the schools the necessary tools to improve its customs administration program and its performance in the licensure examination. (2) Government. The results of this study also serve as indicators for the government to properly assess and evaluate the performance of the schools whether to continue or discontinue its Customs Administration Program. (3) The researchers. The results will personally contribute in the foundation of knowledge and clearer view of information in behalf of the school where the researchers are currently enrolled. It will help the researchers to persevere in the licensure examination and eventually lift up the level of performance of our school. (4) Future researchers. The results of this study will be beneficial for future researchers as basis for their reference and help them innovate and conceptualize new techniques and strategies in data analysis.

Conceptual Framework

This study is anchored on the theory of Tucker (2010) that explains that Customs Brokers Licensure Examination is a written examination for measuring the skill, knowledge, intelligence, capacities, and aptitudes of an individual in granting licenses especially to practice customs broker profession. It is also a procedure of submitting a statement to such conditions as will lead to its acceptance or rejection. The Bachelor of Science in Customs Administration graduates must understand and pass the Customs Broker Licensure Examination to prove that they have the expertise in the entry procedure, requisite document as on imports and exports, classification, valuation, rates of duty and applicable taxes and other charges for imported and exported articles (Delaney, 2010).

A licensure examination is a big help to determine easily the factors and elements in measuring the ability, capability and performance of a school. It will give directly a clearer picture on the schools' individual national passing percentage based on their standings right after the examination. It will also spot a trend or pattern that will be an important indicator in forecasting analysis and results that can lead to beneficial actions on schools and students improvement, curriculum building, upgrading of facilities, sufficient conduction of self-improvement seminars and on-the-job trainings in order to be well-prepared examinee and to stay globally competitive.

Customs Broker Licensure Examination in the Philippines is an annual event held once on the month of October which is conducted by the Professional Regulatory Board for Customs Brokers. The "board" shall have the authority to conduct the licensure examination under the supervision and administration by the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC).

CHED maintains a standard for Higher Education Institutions (HEI) to get at least 50 % passing percentage based on the National Passing percentage for three consecutive years for board courses. Failure to do so will not just be a shame to the institution, but a cause for sanctions which could result to termination of license to offer such degree program. The advantage of attracting students is an added advantage to the schools if such schools' graduates have performed consistently well in the board examination.

In order to identify and understand the trend, the results of the customs broker licensure examination for the years 2009, 2010, 2011, and 2012 must be taken. An analysis on its yearly performance showing the regional and national results must be revealed in order to get the trend or pattern. Once pattern is established, the researchers can now proceed on analyzing the findings which can be the basis in recommending proposals of action.

Trend Analysis is the practice of collecting information and attempting to spot a pattern, or trend, in the information. According to Calmorin (2007), an analysis describes the part of an object: kind, quantity, and proportion. Although trend analysis is often used to predict future events, it could be used to estimate uncertain events in the past, such as how many schools offering customs administration met the National Passing Percentage as set by CHED and based on data which schools could be predicted to continue to do so. Should a trend emerged, such as maintaining, increasing or decreasing in the passing average percentage

performance, then the important task of seeking what made them perform or fail should be investigated and of course, try to emulate or learn from their mistake to say the least and take such information to an advantage. The increase as well as the decrease in percentages shall be carefully observed and analyzed in order to arrive at a higher level of accuracy in understanding the pattern or trend.

This study concentrates on a 4-year trend analysis of Customs Brokers Licensure Examination from the year 2009 to 2012. In order to understand the pattern or trend of the schools' performance, monitoring on a yearly basis must be done. The performance of the schools in each region as well as the national passing percentage must be monitored and presented in order to better facilitate understanding of the trend. The importance of understanding the performance per region is crucial in order to track as to what specific field do most of the schools excel or fail. This can be a basis for a more comprehensive study to improve on the weak areas. Likewise, this can also be the basis in identifying its strength.

The yearly performance of the schools and the regional and national results will give a practical understanding on the development of a significant change that occurred during the year 2009 to 2012. It sorts to view the reason of the line inconsistency of a 4-year Customs Brokers Licensure Examination which schools reached the national passing percentage every year.

The trend on the four-year study shall be understood after having thoroughly analyzed the data. This shall be used in understanding how the schools per region are performing yearly. With this, HEIs offering the customs administration program can now benchmark on the best practices of the performing schools. Likewise, they can also benchmark on improving the deficiencies and lapses of the stakeholders involved; students, higher education institutions, and the PRC.

Objectives

The main objective of this study is to determine the performance of schools offering Customs administration in Brokers Licensure Examination and find any pattern or trend that might render useful in elevating or assisting to progressively improve examinee's collective performance. This study specifically aims to discover the trend of the annual performance of schools within the regional classification for year 2009, 2010, 2011, and 2012.

Method

The researchers adopted a quantitative trend analysis approach, which typically concentrates on measuring or counting and involves collecting and analyzing numerical data. Data mining is employed in this research; hence, there is no actual gathering of data using a self-made questionnaire. The main tools in the gathering and collection of the data of the study were the records already available from the internet specifically retrieved from the official gazette of Professional Regulatory Commission website that has the authority on the releasing and posting of the licensure examinations. Data mining was applied by the researchers and made a record review of the schools that consecutively took the Customs Broker Licensure Examination from 2009 to 2012. All schools offering BSCA and whose graduates took the Customs Broker Licensure Examination in the 4-year time were included. First, the researchers identify schools' performance by its region; its annual national performance on Customs Brokers Licensure Examination from 2009 to 2012 and the national passing percentage of the schools. The data gathered were then presented, analyzed and interpreted. The researchers used the trend analysis method which is able to collect information and attempts to spot a pattern or a change and development of a line in terms of school performance in Customs Broker Licensure Examination.

Results and Discussion

This part presents the performance of the thirty-one selected schools on a per region basis that consecutively took the Customs Brokers' Licensure Examination from the year 2009 to 2012. To give a vivid picture of the performance of the selected thirty-one schools in the Customs Broker Licensure Examination, the mode of presentation has been done with the aid of tables and graphs. In this manner, the reader could readily see actual figures in details. With these data on hand, it would be easy to make certain comparisons and outright evaluation of the thirty-one schools that performed-well or need improvement.

On a per region basis, Region IX as seen in Graphs 1-4 had posted a significant declining trend that gives rise to many questions on the determinants and causes which possibly affect the performance of the schools. Next are Regions IV, VII and NCR which posted remarkable increase throughout the period as seen in Graphs 1-4. Increase in trend signifies that schools from these regions exerted more effort and adopted intensive improvement techniques on student's development and formulation of an effective review program that suits the need of every student. Lastly, regions that denote the fluctuating pattern include regions III, VI, XI, and XII, which vary from the number of examinees and number of passers. This fluctuation of line denotes an unstable movement throughout the period.

The Customs Broker Licensure Examination was generally fluctuating for the period 2009-2012 as seen in Graph 5. However, in terms of passing percentage from year to year, the 2009-2010 licensure examination fluctuation in the performance of the schools is evident. Schools whose average rating is low predominantly improved the next year but those who have fared well dipped in the next year exam. The 2010-2011 results however gave us a picture of improvement on most of the schools in their marks. On per region basis, Region VI had generally posted significant increase in percentage throughout the period. It pictures out that they have the best schools pertaining to the program Bachelor of Science in Customs Administration. The schools from Region XII and NCR are getting a good flow throughout the period. Lastly, the region that landed a bad flow of results is the Region VII. It is shown that although its average NPP is slightly improving, the average still falls below the national passing percentage.

The result of trend analysis showed the significant factors affecting the trend performance in the whole regions of the Philippines. These factors are student's interest, quality and competency of teachers, improvement of curriculum, closure of non-performing schools, number of examinees, and better selection program of review centers specializing in Customs Administration.

As to direction and degree of their relationship on the students interest, quality and competency of teachers and improvement of curriculum are positively related (Viray, 1970). According to Lambert (1975), there is a relative endowment of having a good performance of the students between teachers morale and schools leader behaviour. On the other hand closure of non-performing schools, number of examinees, and better selection program of review centers are negatively related with the trend performance. This means that the lower number of examinees and poor selection program of review centers, the higher probability of schools not to perform well that will result to closures (Robles, 1996).

Different schools have different admission policies. Some have pre-qualification examination before acceptance. Some have open admission with selective retention while others just admit anyone who wants to enrol. High academic standard is every school's perennial goals; however, the economic and financial considerations are also factors to reckon with. An academic institution cannot maintain a class with a few numbers of students especially when it is far below the break-even point. Moreover, the remedial or intervention expense for the academe with poor performing students might prove costly too. Albeit all these considerations, the standard to maintain the National Passing Percentage required is a mandate.

Table 1
School's performance in Customs Brokers' Licensure Examination

FIRST-TIME TAKERS					
	YEAR	2009	2010	2011	2012
	National Passing Percentage (NPP %) for particular year	(33.81%)	(29.71%)	(41%)	(40%)
REGION	SCHOOLS	School Passing % in particular year			
III	School A	75	30	0	0
	School B	50	58.33	40.74	57.14
IV	School C	47	68.75	94.74	81.82
	School D	0	50	20	0
	School E	45	48.94	36.07	68.75
	School F	7	0	25	14.89
VI	School G	12	9.09	50	50
	School H	17	50	0	0
	School I	75	50	0	100
	School J	35	55.17	40.91	36.36
VII	School K	0	0	0	0
	School L	50	45.45	33.33	50
	School M	0	14.29	33.33	50
	School N	33	21.95	36.67	40.63
	School O	0	28.57	50	43.75
	School P	39	20.69	25	20
IX	School Q	8	20	33.33	30.43
	School R	50	66.67	33.33	28.57
XI	School S	67	66.67	62.5	69.23
	School T	10	25	0	33.33
	School U	48	21.74	38.89	31.15
XII	School V	80	50	100	75
XII	School W	100	33.33	0	0
NCR	School X	47	35.29	54.29	81.25
	School Y	47	40	55	52.27
	School Z	75	12.5	22.22	66.67
	School Aa	100	33.33	33.33	14.29
	School Bb	60	45.71	61.36	58.14
	School Cc	33	32.19	39.68	42.34
	School Dd	20	31.58	26	32.69
	School Ee	39	48.48	56.1	46.15
TOTAL Number of Schools Passed		19	20	9	17

The above table shows the overall performance of schools in Region 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, and NCR. These are the regions offering Customs Administration Program. The above table shows that during the 2009 Board Examination 19/31 or 61.29% schools got above the National Passing Percentage (NPP). It also shows that on the year 2010, 20/31 or 64.52% of the schools got above NPP. Moreover in the 2011 only 9/31 or 29% schools were able to reach the NPP and on 2012 17/31 or 54.84% reached above NPP.

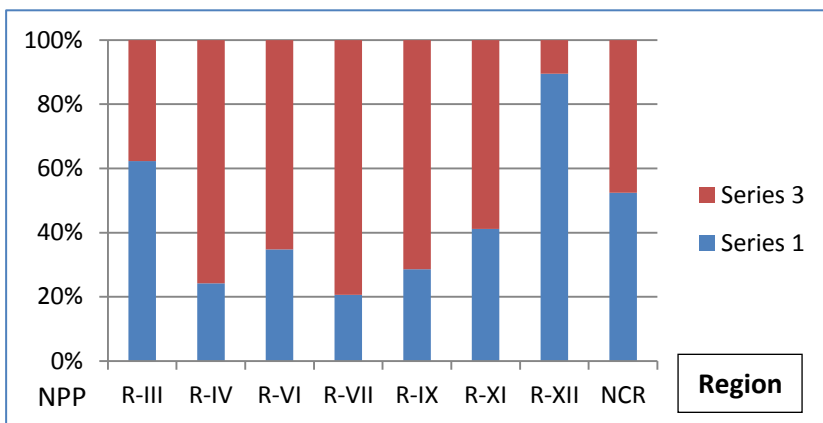


Figure 1. Average National Passing Percentage of Schools per Region in 2009

This graph shows that Region XII got the highest average NPP of 90%. Then second to the highest is Region III with 62.5% average NPP and then followed by the National Capital Region with 52.62% average NPP. During this year 2/19 schools garnered 100%, one is from Region XII and the other is from the National Capital Region as seen in Table 1. Of all the Regions offering Customs Administration Program, Region VII got the lowest average NPP with 20.33%. And also 11 out of 31 schools failed to obtain a National Passing Percentage which in-fact 4/11 of the said schools got a ZERO passing percentage as shown in Table 1. Thus, the rest of the schools need improvements and enhancements on the Bachelor of Science in Customs Administration Program they implemented. Choosing and selecting review programs will generally address the needs of the students to perform well on the Customs Brokers Licensure Examination.

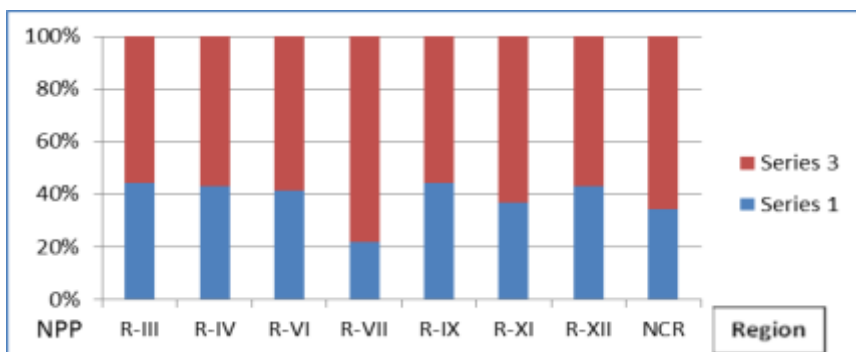


Figure 2. Average National Passing Percentage of Schools per Region in 2010

The Region who got the highest average NPP is Region III with 44.17% as shown in the above graph, followed by Region IX 43.35% and Region IV with 41.92%. Still during this year, Region VII is the one that got the lowest average NPP with 21.82%. This time 11/31 schools failed to reach above the NPP in which 2/11 schools got ZERO passing percentage as seen in Table 1. This is a significant event and year that pursues school administrators to strive more for excellence and deliver more qualified customs administration students who will bear the pride and honour of the school in passing the Customs Brokers Licensure Examination and it can gain the trust and confidence of the public who seek the guidance in choosing a better and quality schools.

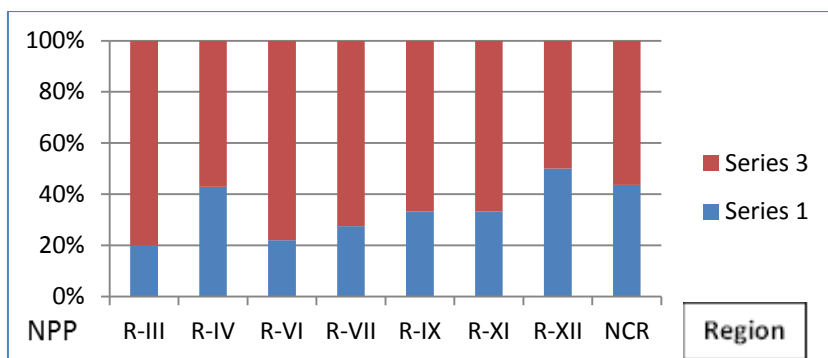


Figure 3. Average National Passing Percentage of Schools per Region in 2011

The above table shows that Region XII got the highest average NPP with 50%, closely followed by Region III and NCR that got 43.95% and 43.50%, respectively. The school that got the highest NPP is from Region III with 94.74% as seen in Table 1. This year is very detrimental for it only got 29% or 9/31 schools that were able to reach above NPP. The decline was more than twice comparing to last year's result as seen in Graph 5. The results also showed that 6/22 schools that were not able reach the NPP got ZERO%. This school is from Region III, 2 from Region VI, 1 from Region VII, 1 from Region XI and Region XII as seen in Table 1.

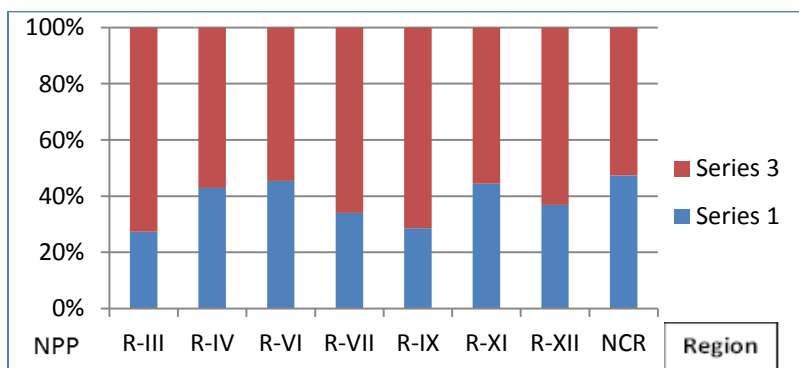


Figure 4. Average National Passing Percentage of Schools per Region in 2012

It can be clearly seen in the graph above that the Region who got the highest average NPP is the NCR with 49.23%, followed by Region VI with 46.59% and Region XI with 44.57%. The Region that got the lowest average NPP is Region III with 28.57%. The school that got the highest NPP is from Region VI with 100% NPP as seen in Table 1. This year 17/31 schools offering Customs Administration Program reached the above NPP but nevertheless 5/14 schools that failed to reach the NPP got ZERO%.

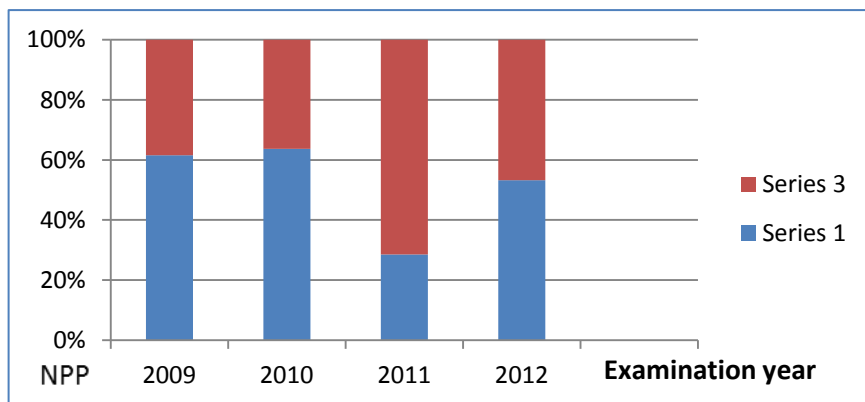


Figure 5. Average National Passing Percentage per Year

Generally, there is a high and low pattern which means fluctuating. Starting from the year 2009, a slight upward pattern on the year 2010 can be observed. On the succeeding year 2011, there is an abrupt downward movement that indicates a slowdown of the performance and then an upward pattern again on the following year of 2012.

Based on the findings of this study, the trend in the performance on the Customs Broker Licensure Examination is unstable and fluctuating and this pattern is self-similar and repeated from the institutional to the regional and national levels. Thus, it implies an irregular variation of the trend that results into a so-called mirror-effect from the regional to nationwide performance on the subsequent years 2009 to 2012.

Consequently, factors affecting this pattern include poor program on Bachelor of Science in Customs Administration, unsatisfactory students qualification for admission on Bachelor of Science in Customs Administration course, insufficient of training and experience of customs brokers as an academician, and lastly pressured on the ruling of the government for closure of non-performing schools.

The school performance on Customs Broker Licensure Examination of almost all regions denotes a similar fluctuation pattern particularly on regions situated on Luzon and Visayas. The rise and fall of the linear pattern gives emphasis that from the year 2009-2012 Customs Broker Licensure Examination, schools of the different regions almost have the same trends. These similarities of trends were due to the number of examinees from different regions who took the licensure examination that affects the rise and fall pattern.

The school performance on Customs Broker Licensure Examination of the regional performance only reflects the nationwide performance of the schools because there were repetitions on the trends and linear patterns. Regional trend from the year 2009-2012 entirely affect the fluctuating pattern as shown in Figure 1 above.

Conclusion

The trend on Customs Broker Licensure Examination varies depending on the performances of the students as well as the school. The students' interest plays a crucial role in passing any examination that will factor out the probability and possibilities in achieving a good result in any examination. Students' active participation will be the basic formation in nurturing the skills, abilities, and knowledge as it will give the students a special attention on mental aspects, the mental aspect which relates to the total emotional and intellectual response of an individual to external reality. Another factor to catch the students' interest is the quality and competency of the teachers in handling the subject field. It is a way of the students to measure the intellectual capabilities of a teacher and it will determine the chances of getting good scores or a high-rating performance in any given examinations. To top it all, intervention of the school administration as well as the prayers, support, and love of the family will be an added factor in performing well in the examination. Though this factor, it will boost the trust and confidence of our individual ego and even help us in our desire and eagerness to succeed.

Recommendations

To better improve performance on Customs Broker Licensure Examination especially on those schools whose performance is declining, the researchers have formulated the following recommendations:

School curriculum must improve. The curriculum of the school that offers Bachelor of Science in Customs Administration program must base on the subject areas on the scope of examinations stated in Tariff and Customs Code of the Philippines, Section 15, and Article III of R.A. No. 9280 in order to increase the passing percentage in the Customs Broker Licensure Examination (TCCP, 2010).

Recruit and select qualified students. Schools that offer Bachelor of Science in Customs Administration courses must have a flow of recruitment and selection process. Recruitment and selection process will focus on the students' qualifications. **Before admission**, the students must have a good moral character; a high school average of 85 or above, must have passed the entrance exam given by the Bachelor of Science in Customs Administration department coordinator, and belongs to a top students list. **After admission**, they must maintain grades of 2.0 to 2.5; take an admission test for the next year level for the assessment and evaluation of the subject knowledge (Smith, 1978).

Closure of non-performing schools. Schools who offer BSCA courses must actively participate in the yearly Customs Broker Licensure Examination, and produce number of examinees and passers. For those schools that produce less number of examinees and no passers for two consecutive years must close their Customs Administration Program because they are not capable of giving their students the exact knowledge and learning to make them a successful Custom Broker (Barker, 2013).

Hire qualified and competitive instructor. To qualify, as an instructor of Customs Administration must pass the Licensure Board Examination and must have a right knowledge of the Tariff and Customs Law. He/she shall have the heart and the welfare of the students, inculcating to them a deep interest in their studies, exposing them to meaningful experience in life, and instilling in their young minds the ideas of honour, justice, and morality (Khurshid, 2008).

Formulate better review program. Taking board exam is not that easy. It needs effort and time. Before taking the Customs Broker licensure examination, the candidate must undergo a review program that could give a candidate an overview to the scopes of the examinations in order to have a better chance or else it could affect the school performance if the candidate would not perform well in the examination. A better review program taken by the candidates will give more chances of getting higher passing percentage. This will give honour to the school (Llorando, 2006).

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