

Compliance among Higher Educational Institutions Offering Bachelor of Science in Criminology Programs in Region 10: A Case Study

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ABSTRACT

This study revealed that majority of the higher education institutions offering Bachelor of Science program in Region 10 are non-compliance or failed to meet regulatory standards, despite the efforts of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) in ensuring the delivery of tertiary quality education. The study aimed to understand the underlying factors or gaps that hindered these institutions from adhering to the regulatory guidelines set forth by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED). Through a descriptive qualitative case study design, eight participants from non-compliance higher education institutions offering the program in Region 10 were selected via purposive sampling to participate in in-depth interviews, providing insights into the underlying factors hindering compliance. The data gathered from the interviews will undergo a qualitative research thematic analysis. Findings reveal administrative instability, unsupported efforts, insufficient budget allocation, inadequate faculty salaries, and the return service requirement for faculty as significant barriers to compliance. Moreover, the study highlights the impact of CHED's leniency in enforcing regulatory mandates across all institutions as a contributory hindrance to compliance. Stakeholders' perspectives underscore the tension between financial considerations and maintaining educational integrity, emphasizing the importance of adhering to regulatory requirements to ensure educational quality. Additionally, the comparison between compliant and non-compliant institutions demonstrates the critical role of dynamic quality assurance mechanisms and strategic planning in driving compliance efforts. Furthermore, CHED's monitoring, scholarship provisions, and standardization mandates are identified as influential factors shaping institutional practices. These findings illuminate the complexities surrounding compliance with standards in Criminology programs and emphasize the need for collaborative efforts to address underlying challenges and promote educational quality. Based on these conclusions, recommendations are proposed to enhance regional and institutional policies, including the development of comprehensive compliance strategies, prioritization of strategic planning initiatives, and collaboration between regional authorities and educational institutions to strengthen monitoring mechanisms and promote a culture of compliance. Implementation of these recommendations aims to improve the overall quality and effectiveness of Criminology programs in region 10.

Keywords: Administrative Stability; Budget; Commission On Higher Education; Criminology; Education; Financial Stability; Higher Education; Leniency; Non-Compliance; Stakeholder.

1. Introduction

Compliance with educational standards is a critical element in ensuring the delivery of quality higher education. In the Philippines, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) enforces Policies, Standards, and Guidelines (PSGs) to safeguard the academic integrity and effectiveness of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) (Aldaba et al., 2024; Armas & Jose, 2024).

However, despite these regulatory mechanisms, many HEIs continue to face challenges in fully meeting compliance requirements (Bustos-Orosa & Symaco, 2024; Chao Jr, 2021). This issue becomes more pressing in professional programs such as the Bachelor of Science in Criminology, where academic quality directly impacts the competence of graduates entering fields essential to public safety, law enforcement, and justice administration (Patalinghug et al., 2023; Sumad-on et al., 2022).

The criminology discipline demands not only theoretical knowledge but also practical skills necessary for crime prevention, investigation, and rehabilitation (Habiatan, 2019; Agnew, 2018; Siegel, 2017). Graduates are expected to embody both competence and ethical responsibility as future criminologists. Yet, non-compliance with CHED standards—manifested through inadequacies in curriculum, faculty qualifications, facilities, and performance

monitoring—weakens institutional credibility and compromises graduate preparation (Chao Jr, 2023; Clear, 2019). A 2024 CHED report revealed that in Region 10, only 37% of HEIs offering criminology programs were fully compliant with core requirements, underscoring systemic gaps in academic quality and governance.

The framework for these programs is guided by CHED Memorandum Order No. 5, series of 2018, which sets the PSGs for the Bachelor of Science in Criminology. The PSGs provide the minimum requirements for curriculum design, faculty credentials, facilities, and quality assurance mechanisms to ensure that criminology graduates are well-prepared to meet professional and societal demands. These standards serve not only as regulatory measures but also as benchmarks of quality and accountability for HEIs. Despite their significance, varying degrees of adherence among institutions highlight the persistent gap between regulatory intentions and actual educational practices (CHED, 2022).

Understanding compliance, however, requires more than identifying structural or administrative deficiencies. Compliance behavior is deeply shaped by psychological, organizational, and contextual factors (Peat et al., 2021; Langervoort, 2022)). Institutions may comply to gain legitimacy, avoid sanctions, or in recognition of the intrinsic value of quality standards (Schaer, 2023). Conversely, non-compliance may stem from resource limitations, competing priorities, or lack of institutional commitment. Such patterns adhered to the Behavioral Compliance Theory of Cialdini (2016), which emphasizes that compliance is not merely regulatory but is influenced by principles of persuasion such as authority, social proof, and commitment (Mortensen & Cialdini, 2017; Li & Hoffman, 2022).

Despite the existence of CHED regulations, a significant gap remains in understanding why many criminology schools in Region 10 continue to struggle with compliance. Existing monitoring reports identify deficiencies in facilities, faculty qualifications, and curriculum delivery, yet they fail to fully explain the specific institutional and contextual factors driving non-compliance. There is also limited exploration of the perspectives of key stakeholders such as deans, who directly manage criminology programs and can offer critical insights into institutional challenges and strategies. Furthermore, little comparative analysis exists between compliant and non-compliant institutions, both within and outside the region, making it difficult to identify best practices that can inform improvements in criminology education. Lastly, while CHED's regulatory frameworks are in place, there is insufficient analysis of how these policies themselves facilitate or hinder compliance among HEIs in Region 10.

Addressing these gaps, the present study investigates the compliance of HEIs offering BS Criminology programs in Region 10 by examining the structural, organizational, and behavioral factors influencing adherence to CHED PSGs. It also explores the perceptions of stakeholders, compares institutional practices across compliant and non-compliant programs, and evaluates the impact of regulatory frameworks on compliance outcomes. Ultimately, this research contributes to higher education governance by offering insights that can inform CHED, HEIs, faculty, and students in strengthening criminology education. By generating evidence-based recommendations, it seeks to enhance professional competence, uphold institutional credibility, and reinforce the justice system's broader mandate.

1.1. Study Objectives

The primary objective of this research was to identify the factors contributing to non-compliance among higher educational institutions offering Bachelor of Science in Criminology programs with CHED's policies, standards, and guidelines (PSGs). The findings served as the basis for developing a policy program with specific standards. Specifically, the study sought to determine the factors that lead to non-compliance among higher educational institutions in Region 10, to explore the perspectives of stakeholders, particularly program deans, regarding their perceptions and experiences on non-compliance issues, to compare the practices of non-compliant institutions with those of compliant ones within and outside the region in order to identify best practices in delivering criminology programs, and to examine how existing regulatory frameworks and policies influence the role of higher educational institutions in either promoting or hindering compliance with CHED standards.

2. Methods

2.1. Research Design

This study employed a qualitative case study design to explore compliance and non-compliance practices among Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) offering Bachelor of Science in Criminology programs in Region 10. A descriptive-qualitative approach enabled the collection of rich data on institutional practices, factors contributing to non-compliance, and their implications on educational quality. Data were gathered through in-depth interviews, supplemented with document review and observations, to capture participants' experiences and perspectives (Harrison et al., 2020; Piekkari & Welch, 2018).

2.2. Role of the Researcher

The researcher served as interviewer, facilitator, and data analyst, ensuring credibility by triangulating accounts and observing ethical protocols. Informed consent was obtained from participants, and confidentiality was strictly observed in line with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Cuevas, 2020). Interviews were conducted at times and places convenient to participants, lasted 15–45 minutes, and were recorded and transcribed for analysis. Follow-up interviews were arranged when necessary to clarify emerging themes.

2.3. Research Participants and Setting

Participants included eight deans and program heads from non-compliant criminology programs in Region 10, identified through purposive sampling with reference to CHED records. Region 10, Northern Mindanao, comprises five provinces and eight cities, with 34 HEIs offering BS Criminology programs. Of these, only nine institutions were compliant, while 24 were identified as non-compliant, serving as the context for this study. Data saturation was achieved with eight participants, meeting Creswell's and Morse's recommended threshold for case studies. Prior to the conduct of interviews, informed consent was obtained from all participants, ensuring their voluntary participation and acknowledgment of the study's purpose, confidentiality measures, and ethical safeguards.

2.4. Data Collection and Analysis

Interviews followed a semi-structured guide, allowing participants to share detailed insights into compliance and program management. All interviews were transcribed verbatim, stored securely, and analyzed using Yin's (2009) six-step process: planning, designing, preparing, collecting, analyzing, and sharing. Recurring patterns were coded into themes, which were verified against participants' narratives to ensure reliability.

2.5. Trustworthiness and Ethics

Credibility was established through triangulation and member checking, while dependability was ensured by maintaining consistent interview protocols. Transferability was addressed through detailed documentation of procedures, enabling replication in similar contexts. Confirmability was secured through transparent recordkeeping and validation of findings. Ethical considerations included voluntary participation, privacy, confidentiality, and avoidance of risk. The study was guided by Creswell's (2021) ethical framework, with CHED's endorsement ensuring legitimacy. Moreover, the study was conducted in accordance with ethical standards and approved by the Research Ethics Board of the PHINMA Cagayan de Oro College.

3. Result and Discussion

The perspectives shared by the participants provided nuanced insights into the underlying factors and lived realities of non-compliance among Higher Education Institutions offering the Bachelor of Science in Criminology program in Region 10. Their narratives, drawn from years of administrative leadership, revealed not only institutional challenges but also behavioral and organizational dynamics that shape compliance practices. From their accounts, several themes emerged that collectively illustrate how structural limitations, leadership perspectives, and regulatory frameworks intersect to influence the extent to which institutions align—or fail to align—with CHED standards. These themes are presented in the succeeding sections.

3.1. Specific factors that lead to non-compliance among higher educational institutions offering Bachelor of Science in Criminology programs in region 10?

This research study endeavors to examine the tangled factors contributing to the non-compliance observed among select higher educational institutions within region 10 that offer a Bachelor of Science in Criminology. By examining the underlying reasons behind this non-compliance, the study aims to uncover the challenges and issues faced by these institutions in adhering to requisite standards.

3.1.1. Administrative Instability Leads to Non-compliance

Administrative instability emerged as a major factor leading to non-compliance, disrupting institutional coherence and creating confusion among faculty and staff. Frequent leadership changes, particularly in government schools, often result in discontinuity of programs and inconsistency in policies. As one participant shared, *"Another is frequent changes in leadership, particularly in local government schools. Whenever there is a new local chief executive, it is a usual scenario that previous school president will be replaced, and his/her program most often is discontinued and/or replaced by the succeeding school president"* (P5, line 554-557). Similarly, another participant noted, *"Changes of school administration particularly in the disbursement of funds due to the existence*

of management committee” (P1, line 3-4). Such disruptions compromise long-term planning, weaken accountability, and ultimately impede compliance with CHED standards.

3.1.2. Unsupported Efforts and Disregarded Requests

Lack of administrative support further compounds the difficulties of compliance, as program heads and faculty experience repeated denial or delays of their requests. One participant explained, *“Convincing the management to approve my program development plan, aligning with CHED standards, poses a challenge on my part”* (P1, line 11-12). Another emphasized, *“Despite our request for the purchase of books and laboratory equipment, school administrator/owner will not immediately or regularly purchase them for alleged lack of budget”* (P8, line 1037-1039). These sentiments illustrate how administrative disengagement results in frustration, disempowerment, and stalled program improvements, limiting the institution’s ability to meet compliance standards.

3.1.3. Insufficient Budget Allocation Impedes Compliance and Sustainability in Education Programs

Inadequate funding consistently surfaced as a critical barrier to program compliance and sustainability. Participant 1 stressed, *“Lack of regular budget allocation for the program, especially to finance purchase of books, laboratory equipment”* (P1, line 8-9), while Participant 5 echoed, *“In my own assessment, lack of budget is one of the factors why some schools offering criminology are not compliant with the requirements set forth by Commission on Higher Education”* (P5, line 548-550). Without consistent financial resources, institutions struggle to acquire learning materials, improve facilities, and support faculty development, resulting in a cycle of unmet requirements and diminished educational quality.

3.1.4. Inadequate Faculty Salaries Strain Both Recruitment Efforts and Teaching Quality

Low salaries for faculty members emerged as a major factor undermining both retention and compliance with CHED’s requirements. As one participant lamented, *“It is very difficult to comply with the faculty requirement because of the very low salary which is only Php 12,000 a month and is not commensurate to the CHED’s requirement for those with at least a master’s degree”* (P8, line 1032-1034). Another added, *“Most of the faculty are fresh graduates, however after 2 years, they usually join the national agencies because of low salary”* (P6, line 734-735). Inadequate compensation not only drives faculty turnover but also prevents institutions from attracting qualified applicants, diminishing the overall quality of instruction and hindering compliance with faculty qualification standards.

3.1.5. Fear of Mandatory Return Service Inhibits Faculty Development, and Stifling Growth

Faculty development efforts are further limited by fears surrounding return service obligations tied to scholarships. While institutions offer scholarships for master’s degrees to strengthen compliance, many faculty members refuse due to strict service requirements. One participant observed, *“The faculty is hesitant to avail the school scholarship program because they are required to render a return service of 1 year for every 1 semester”* (P3, line 279-281). Another echoed, *“No faculty is willing to pursue in master’s degree as the term of the return service is*

discouraging” (P8, line 1028-1030). These responses reveal how return service policies, when combined with low salaries, dissuade faculty from pursuing further education, thereby weakening the institution’s ability to meet CHED’s faculty qualification standards.

The findings collectively highlight that non-compliance among higher education institutions offering the Bachelor of Science in Criminology program in Region 10 is not the result of a single weakness but rather a convergence of administrative, financial, and policy-related challenges. Administrative instability, insufficient support, and lack of consistent budget allocation create an environment where compliance with CHED’s PSGs becomes secondary to short-term survival and management shifts (Mallillin, 2021; Abdurahman, 2020; Trinidad, 2020; Batugal, 2019). At the faculty level, low salaries and restrictive return service requirements discourage retention and professional development, further compounding the difficulty of meeting faculty qualification standards (Chao, 2021; Malolos, & Tullao 2018).

These interconnected issues weaken both program quality and the credibility of criminology education in the region. Students are directly affected by substandard resources, limited faculty qualifications, and inconsistent program continuity, which may compromise their academic preparedness and professional readiness. At the policy level, the study reveals the urgent need for stronger collaboration between CHED, school administrations, and local government units to align funding priorities, enforce compliance measures, and create more supportive faculty development policies. Addressing these factors holistically will not only raise institutional compliance but also elevate the standard of criminology education, ensuring that graduates are well-prepared to meet the demands of the profession and contribute meaningfully to the justice and law enforcement sectors.

3.2. Perspectives of various stakeholders regarding non-compliance issues in criminology programs.

These themes encapsulate the complexities faced by institutions in complying the education requirements. It has four themes emerged from the core responses of the participants, namely: *profit-driven agenda compromises educational integrity*; *stakeholders experience distress to program non-compliance*, and; *poor graduates result from program non-compliance*.

3.2.1. Profit-Driven Agenda Compromises Educational Integrity

This theme reflects participants’ concern that institutional priorities lean toward financial profit over educational quality. As some participants explained, “They are more after with revenue rather than program quality program compliance standard is not their priority” (P3, line 300–301) and “The school is after for more profits rather than quality education” (P7, line 832). Such perspectives highlight the perception that financial motives compromise the integrity of academic programs, weakening trust between administrators and faculty while eroding the commitment to student-centered learning. This prioritization of revenue over compliance risks undermining the long-term credibility and ethical responsibility of educational institutions.

3.2.2. Stakeholders Experience Distress Due to Program Non-Compliance

Stakeholders consistently described feelings of stress, frustration, and embarrassment when faced with their institution’s non-compliance with regulatory standards. For example, one noted, “Stressful, because we cannot

deliver the expected outcomes to our students” (P1, line 49), while another admitted, “I have difficult experience and it is embarrassing to the CHED and the students considering that the delivery of quality education is compromised” (P3, line 315–316). These sentiments show how faculty and administrators struggle with professional dissatisfaction, psychological burden, and reputational concerns, all of which weaken institutional morale and stakeholder confidence.

3.2.3. Poor Graduates Result from Program Non-Compliance

Participants emphasized the direct link between program non-compliance and the production of underprepared graduates. One stated, “The non-compliance of the program jeopardizes the quality of education, as shown in the result of every PRC licensure examination which is very poor” (P1, line 51–52), while another explained, “The non-compliance of program standards resulted to poor criminology graduates which would in turn result to unemployment of our graduates” (P8, line 1095–1096). These views point to the diminished competencies of graduates, poor licensure examination results, and reduced employability, ultimately tarnishing the reputation of the institution and jeopardizing its role in nation-building.

The study reveals that institutional non-compliance with educational standards produces a ripple effect that compromises the integrity of programs, causes distress among stakeholders, and results in poorly equipped graduates. The themes collectively demonstrate how the prioritization of financial gain over quality undermines trust, reduces morale, and weakens institutional accountability (Canoy, 2020; Sarabia & Collantes, 2020; Alson, 2019). Faculty and administrators not only face professional and emotional struggles but also carry the burden of institutional shortcomings, which translates into compromised teaching delivery and academic performance (Clavecillas & Perez, 2020; Esperanza & Bulusan, 2020; Yazon, & Ang-Manaig, 2019).

At a broader level, the findings focuses on the serious threat to higher education’s mission of producing competent, ethical, and employable graduates. When program standards are neglected, the credibility of institutions suffers, leading to public mistrust and decreased graduate competitiveness in the labor market. Addressing these issues requires institutional commitment to compliance, transparency, and continuous improvement. Strengthening governance mechanisms and prioritizing quality over profit can rebuild trust, improve educational outcomes, and ensure that graduates are capable of contributing effectively to their chosen professions and to society.

3.3. Practices of non-compliant institutions compare with those of compliant institutions in identifying best practices for delivering Bachelor of Science in Criminology programs.

The practices of non-compliant institutions with those of compliant institutions, both within and outside Region 10. The themes emerged from the responses of the participants based on their observed key strategies and approaches employed by compliant institutions to ensure program compliance and quality assurance. Compliant institutions exhibit a proactive approach, continuously refining their strategies and adapting to evolving standards. By fostering a culture of innovation and continuous improvement, these institutions are better equipped to meet the demands of regulatory bodies and deliver high-quality education. Non-compliant institutions can draw valuable insights from these practices, emphasizing the need for proactive planning and strategic alignment to enhance program compliance and overall institutional effectiveness.

There are two themes that had emerged from the responses of the participants, namely: compliant institutions establish dynamic quality assurance mechanisms, and strategic planning and sustainable development initiatives drive program compliance efforts.

3.3.1. Compliant Institutions Establish Dynamic Quality Assurance Mechanisms

Participants emphasized that compliant institutions proactively establish robust quality assurance systems that go beyond minimum regulatory standards. One observed, “They are pro-active and dynamic in terms of compliance to CHED standards; the school should adapt program quality assurance mechanism” (P1, line 59; 70–72). Another explained, “A compliant institution is not just waiting to be told by CHED to do this and that, but doing things ahead and anticipating that these things are really needed in the future” (P5, line 627–629). These insights highlight how compliant institutions anticipate regulatory requirements, implement effective monitoring systems, and continuously improve their academic delivery. Through dynamic quality assurance, these schools not only meet CHED mandates but also strengthen accountability, transparency, and educational excellence.

3.3.2. Strategic Planning and Sustainable Development Initiatives Drive Program Compliance Efforts

Compliant institutions were also observed to rely on clear strategic planning and sustainable development initiatives to secure long-term program compliance. As one participant noted, “There is an approved strategic plan on its program operation on how to sustain program quality” (P1, line 59–60), while another added, “Has sustainable institutional and program development plan, in terms of faculty, library, laboratory facilities and equipment, instruction, among others” (P3, line 339–340). These responses reflect how institutions allocate resources effectively, maintain sustainability in operations, and anticipate future academic needs. Strategic planning provides a roadmap for program development, while sustainable initiatives ensure continuous improvement and resilience against institutional challenges.

The responses of the participants revealed that compliant institutions achieve regulatory alignment through two main strategies: the establishment of dynamic quality assurance mechanisms and the integration of strategic planning with sustainable development initiatives (Maneejuk & Yamaka, 2021; Hanh, 2020; Verdote, 2019). These approaches not only secure compliance with CHED regulations but also ensure that institutions consistently deliver quality education and uphold academic integrity. The proactive stance of compliant institutions—anticipating regulatory demands and embedding continuous monitoring—sets them apart from non-compliant institutions that often lag behind due to reactive or profit-driven decision-making (Salmi & D’Addio, 2021; Chao, 2021; Malolos & Tullao Jr, 2018).

At a broader level, the study underscores that program compliance is not merely a regulatory requirement, but a vital institutional responsibility tied to long-term sustainability and public trust. Non-compliant institutions can learn from these practices by prioritizing forward-looking planning, robust monitoring systems, and financial sustainability. Ultimately, the replication of such strategies will enhance institutional accountability, strengthen stakeholder confidence, and ensure the development of competent, employable, and socially responsible graduates who meet both academic and industry expectations.

3.4. The existing regulatory frameworks and policies governing higher educational institutions in Region 10 influence their role in promoting or hindering compliance with standards for Bachelor of Science in Criminology programs.

The themes revealed CHED's significant role in promoting compliance and elevating the quality of criminology education in region 10. Three major themes emerged from participants' responses: "Regulatory Frameworks Ensuring Faculty Competence," "Infrastructure and Resource-Based Compliance," and "CHED's Enforcement of Institutional Accountability."

3.4.1. Regulatory Frameworks Ensuring Faculty Competence

Participants emphasized that CHED's policies on faculty qualifications play a crucial role in strengthening academic delivery. One participant explained that "*CHED's requirement on faculty qualifications obliges schools to hire faculty with graduate degrees and relevant criminology expertise*" (P2, line 145–147), while another noted that "*the policy ensures only qualified and competent teachers handle core criminology subjects*" (P4, line 388–389). These responses reveal that compliance measures push institutions to prioritize faculty competence, thereby improving teaching quality and program credibility.

3.4.2. Infrastructure and Resource-Based Compliance

The importance of facilities and learning resources was another recurring concern. A participant pointed out that "*CHED requires updated laboratory and simulation equipment in criminology schools*" (P1, line 118–119), while another remarked that "*libraries must be improved with criminology references and e-resources for programs to pass monitoring*" (P5, line 602–603). These responses highlight how compliance frameworks extend to physical and learning infrastructures, ensuring students have access to quality resources while also creating challenges for underfunded institutions.

3.4.3. CHED's Enforcement of Institutional Accountability

Participants consistently recognized CHED's enforcement role as vital in maintaining accountability. One participant stated that "*CHED inspections push schools to continuously improve, otherwise they face penalties or closure*" (P3, line 285–286), while another explained that "*accreditation requirements enforce accountability in curriculum, faculty, and student outcomes*" (P6, line 755–757). These insights show that monitoring and evaluation mechanisms compel schools to maintain transparency, align curricula with standards, and sustain institutional quality.

These indicate that CHED's regulatory frameworks strongly shape the compliance of criminology programs in region 10 through faculty competence, adequate facilities, and institutional accountability (CHED, 2023; Malolos, & Tullao, 2018). While these policies elevate educational standards and improve criminology program credibility, they also place pressure on resource-limited institutions to meet compliance demands (Bautista et al., 2023; Orbeta & Paqueo, 2022).

The findings emphasizes that effective regulation not only safeguards quality but also ensures the professional readiness of criminology graduates. By reinforcing accountability and requiring continuous improvement, CHED

contributes to the integrity of criminology education and, ultimately, to the advancement of the criminal justice system in the region.

4. Concluding Remarks

This study revealed the multifaceted nature of non-compliance among higher educational institutions offering Bachelor of Science in Criminology programs in Region 10. Administrative instability, unsupported efforts, insufficient budget allocation, inadequate faculty salaries, and the return service requirement for faculty emerged as significant barriers to institutional compliance. Moreover, the study highlighted the impact of CHED's leniency in enforcing regulatory mandates across all institutions as a contributory hindrance to compliance.

Stakeholders' perspectives further underscored the tension between financial considerations and maintaining educational integrity, emphasizing the importance of adhering to regulatory requirements to ensure the quality of educational outcomes. The comparison between non-compliant and compliant institutions revealed the pivotal role of dynamic quality assurance mechanisms and strategic planning in driving compliance efforts. It also emphasized the critical role of CHED's monitoring, scholarship provisions, and standardization mandates in shaping institutional practices. Overall, these findings illuminate the complexities surrounding compliance with standards in Bachelor of Science in Criminology programs and emphasize the need for collaborative efforts to address underlying challenges and promote educational quality.

5. Future Suggestions

- 1) Strengthen CHED's monitoring and enforcement mechanisms to ensure consistent compliance across higher educational institutions.
- 2) Develop targeted capacity-building programs to support administrators and faculty in achieving and sustaining compliance.
- 3) Encourage stronger collaboration between compliant and non-compliant institutions to share best practices and innovative strategies.
- 4) Impose stricter sanctions, including the suspension or closure of criminology programs or institutions that persistently fail to comply with CHED's standards.
- 5) Conduct further studies focusing on long-term outcomes of compliance, particularly in relation to graduate competencies and employability.

Declarations

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Competing Interests Statement

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

Consent for publication

The authors declare that they consented to the publication of this study.

Authors' contributions

Both the authors took part in literature review, analysis, and manuscript writing equally.

Informed Consent

All participants in this study voluntarily gave their informed consent prior to their involvement in the research.

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