

# Critical Reflections and Using Bourdieu-Scheerens Framework in Transformative Mixed Methods Teachers' Licensure Review Evaluation

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**Abstract.** This methodological paper presents critical reflections on transformative mixed methods based on a published study titled “Evaluation of University Review Program for Teachers’ Licensure Examination: A Transformative Mixed Methods Study Using Bourdieu-Scheerens Framework” in the *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*. We introduce the paper in the introductory part and situate its contribution to transformative mixed methods literature. Our reflections reveal that the lead researcher’s personal and professional backgrounds, social awareness, and social responsibility were pivotal in the development of the LET Intensive Review and the Bourdieu-Scheerens framework used in the transformative mixed methods evaluation. The dominance of the qualitative research approach in the paper unveils the researcher’s educational orientation and identity. Finally, transformative mixed methods research holds immense potential for a contextually and culturally grounded educational evaluation.

**Keywords:** Bourdieu; Scheerens; transformative mixed methods; teachers’ licensure review; Tawi-Tawi

## 1. Introduction

This paper presents reflections and descriptions of processes and critical decisions made in employing transformative mixed methods in our published study, “Evaluation of University Review Program for Teachers’ Licensure

Examination: A Transformative Mixed Methods Study Using Bourdieu-Scheerens Framework," in the *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research* (Colicol et al., 2022).

The study relates to the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) Intensive Review, also called the Intensive LET Review, evaluation of the Mindanao State University-Tawi-Tawi College of Technology and Oceanography (MSU-TCTO) program that assists would-be teachers in taking their licensure examination to become licensed professional teachers (LPTs) (Colicol et al., 2022). A program evaluation was necessary to provide feedback to the university management and further identify the course of action and appropriate policy to adopt. The study utilized a transformative mixed methods exploratory sequential design (Creswell, 2014; Mertens, 2007, 2010), utilizing the integrated Bourdieu-Scheerens framework, coined from the theories of anthropologist-sociologist Pierre Bourdieu and educationist Jaap Scheerens (Bourdieu, 1977, 1984; Scheerens, 2011).

Essentially, Bourdieu's framework gives the study its transformative paradigm and substance as it is used to explain the qualitative part of the LET Intensive Review study, which tackles issues of power, inequality, and marginalization (Bourdieu, 1977, 1984). The following quantitative section is informed by Scheerens's approach of quantifying educational outcomes to gauge the program's effectiveness (Scheerens, 2011). The ethnographic research design in the qualitative research section elucidates the complexities and nuances: the reviewees' constraints in attending the review, concerns about taking the government's board examination, and their hopes and aspirations as aspirant teachers (Colicol et al., 2022). Following the ethnographic presentation is the descriptive research design of the quantitative research (McCombes, 2023) in which the university or institutional LET performance accounting for first timers' elementary and secondary education graduates' licensure performances are presented and analyzed. This validates whether the review is indeed effective based on the research participants' narratives presented in the qualitative part of the study (Colicol et al., 2022).

The quantitative and qualitative findings are presented in the paper's conclusion. Inferences were drawn through the integrative analysis of the results to come up with the transformative mixed methods findings, which state that the LET Intensive Review is effective based on the elementary level LET results, considering there were significant differences in the LET results before and during the implementation of the review program for the elementary level. Furthermore, it was found that teacher agency and administrator agency play a crucial role in the review effectiveness. Hindering LET success are the lack of motivation, weak educational foundation, financial concerns, and the field of specialization at the secondary level. These factors are areas of improvement in the review.

By employing a transformative paradigm in mixed methods research, the MSU-TCTO's LET Intensive Review evaluation contributes to transformative mixed

methods research (TMMR) (Haynes-Brown, 2025; Hunt-Anderson, 2023; Mertens, 2022, 2007, 2010). The transformative paradigm in TMMR is an overarching framework for mixed methods researchers “who place priority on social justice and the furtherance of human rights” (Mertens, 2010, p. 469). Mixed methods research “is an approach in which the researcher collects, analyses and interprets both quantitative and qualitative data, integrates the two approaches in various ways and frames the study within a specific design” (Doyle et al., 2016, p. 624). Simply put, mixed methods research combines the strengths of quantitative and qualitative research approaches for a better understanding of a certain phenomenon under investigation (DeCuir-Gunby, 2020; Fa'bregues et al., 2021; Haynes-Brown & Shannon-Baker, 2021; McCrudden & Marchand, 2020; Perez et al., 2023). Broadly, considering a quantitative-qualitative continuum, mixed methods research can be “pure” mixed (i.e., quantitative and qualitative approaches are of equal status), qualitative dominant mixed methods (QUAL+quan research), and quantitative dominant mixed methods (QUAN+qual research) (Johnson et al., 2007).

Simple mixed methods designs are convergent parallel mixed methods, explanatory sequential mixed methods, and exploratory sequential mixed methods (Creswell, 2014). These three differ in the timing of quantitative and qualitative data collection and analyses, following the investigator’s research purpose and objectives. For the convergent parallel mixed methods, the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data and their integration and analysis are conducted at roughly the same time. In contrast, the explanatory sequential and exploratory sequential mixed methods follow a sequence in quantitative and qualitative data collection since one will depend on or build on the other before mixed methods conclusions can be drawn. The explanatory sequential mixed methods, which is more oriented to the quantitative approach, uses a qualitative approach to support and explain quantitative results. On the other hand, the exploratory sequential mixed method begins with a qualitative research approach and uses its results as a springboard for further study using the quantitative approach.

The preceding mixed methods models can be used further in more advanced mixed methods, including transformative mixed methods that use “a theoretical lens from social justice or power” (Creswell, 2014, p. 97). A transformative worldview guides transformative mixed methods researchers. It came into being around the 1980s to 1990s when researchers increasingly recognized the limitations of postpositivist assumptions because they were not addressing prevailing marginalization issues in society. Transformative researchers include critical theorists, Marxists, feminists, participatory action researchers, racial and ethnic minorities, indigenous and postcolonial peoples, persons with disabilities, and members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transexual, and queer communities. A research inquiry with a transformative lens intervenes in politics and contains a political and action reform agenda to counter social oppressions and injustices (Mertens, 2007, 2010).

Transformative mixed methods research is highly relevant for research and development in developing countries such as the Philippines, where there is a myriad of social challenges such as unemployment, lack of education, poverty, drug or substance abuse, extrajudicial killings, and attacks against political activists and journalists (Arzadon & Colicol, 2024; Estrada, 2010; Human Rights Watch, 2024). These problems are also reflected in the Bangsamoro, where there are harsher social realities due to its disadvantaged context as a result of long years of animosities and conflicts between Muslim secessionist groups and the Philippine government, mainly for cultural identity and political reasons (Colicol et al., 2022).

This paper examines the use of transformative mixed methods in our published paper and reflects on its development considering the motivations and intentions of our lead researcher, who is also a part of the researched community within the conflict-ridden Bangsamoro, Philippines. The following research questions are posed: (a) What informs the transformative mixed methods study and the development of the Bourdieu-Scheerens framework used for evaluating the MSU-TCTO's LET Intensive Review? and (b) How is the Bourdieu-Scheerens framework deployed in the transformative mixed methods LET Intensive Review evaluation? The study commences with the conception of the transformative mixed methods study, followed by the lead researcher's positionality, the background of the study, the approach in the LET Intensive Review and the development of the transformative mixed methods study, the rationale of the study, the methodology, the presentation of results, a discussion, and concluding remarks and key takeaways.

## 2. Conception of the Transformative Mixed Methods Study

The study was conceived as a course requirement in the lead researcher's Advanced Research Design course for his PhD program at the College of Education, University of the Philippines, under the guidance of Dr. Teodora Salubayba, his course professor. The course description states as follows:

*"This course is designed to help you develop a critical understanding of the advanced research designs in education and the social sciences. You will be provided with the experience and opportunity to try out advanced mixed methods research designs and enhance your creativity and resourcefulness in combining quantitative and qualitative approaches in conducting research. Particular attention will be given to field work and writing, and appreciation of online data gathering using qualitative and quantitative techniques. Review of the ethical concerns and issues in conducting various studies in education will also be taken."*

The course has an asynchronous mode of delivery, allowing the PhD students to accomplish class requirements independently. Their course professor designated times for class meetings, consultation, monitoring, and feedback, which were helpful in accomplishing their tasks. Moreover, they were provided with all the necessary reading materials sent weekly via email. A progress report submission every week or every other week was an incentive to write the

final requirement, the initial version of the published transformative mixed methods study. Students were required to submit a part or parts of the paper (e.g., introduction, related literature, methodology) corresponding with the topics discussed as they progressed in the course.

Since the paper was intended for the final requirement in the course, the researcher ensured that the research project would be doable within a semester so that he could pass the course. He planned to publish the final output in the course in a reputable journal; thus, a well-thought-out paper was conceptualized that had relevance for the local context, significant theoretical and methodological contributions, and the quality meeting publishing requirements. The research aligned with his values and advocacy of empowering marginalized sectors in the Philippine society in terms of education. Moreover, he was involved in the actual implementation of the researched project (the LET Intensive Review), serving as the proponent and coordinator in the first two years of the program Academic Year (AY) 2015-2016 and AY 2016-2017 prior to enrolling for his PhD studies as a scholar of Mindanao State University-Tawi-Tawi College of Technology and Oceanography (MSU-TCTO), where he is currently employed as a faculty member.

Since the course is about mixed methods, the paper is dominantly anthropological/sociological, which is his orientation in specializing in the field of educational anthropology. This is relevant in transformative mixed methods where the notions of power and inequality are central (Creswell, 2014; James, 2014; Johnson et al., 2007; Mertens, 2010). Though his field is heavily qualitative, delving mainly into culture, the course enabled him to apply his training in quantitative research. Before taking the advanced research design course, he took two courses in statistics in education, focusing on parametric and non-parametric statistical tests to equip himself with quantitative as well as qualitative research methods.

Both research databases (e.g., qualitative, quantitative) (Creswell, 2014) were required as his resources in research complemented each other to further understand a phenomenon that a purely quantitative or qualitative research alone could not offer. Being situated in a remote and isolated island province in the southern Philippines, the university needs more dynamic faculty and researchers who can handle different research approaches and designs, including mixed methods research. Unlike in the mainland Philippines, MSU-TCTO, as an island-based university, has limited options for remote hiring highly competent individuals to offer specialized subjects owing to its location from the mainland. Additionally, there were threats to security since it is situated in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), which is conflict ridden. Furthermore, there are high levels of poverty and inequality due to political and economic marginalization, both at the regional and national levels (Russel et al., 2004).

### 3. Positionality and Reflexivity of the Lead Researcher

His interest in the issue of power is rooted in his experiences. He comes from Sindangan, Zamboanga del Norte, in mainland Mindanao, among the poorest provinces in the Philippines (Simeon, 2016). He belongs to the Indigenous community in Mindanao, most of whom are disadvantaged in Philippine society (Rodil, 1999; Ty, 2010). He completed his primary schooling at a secluded and remote school in his small village in Siayan Municipality, which shares a border with Sindangan Municipality. The Indigenous People (IP) used to live in the lowlands; however, owing to land dispossessions through the government's unfair policy on agrarian reform and resettlement programs in the past, the IPs receded to the island's mountainous and forested interior (Rodil, 1999). Most of the IPs are found in these areas, although a minority today, usually the educated ones, also have residences in the central or lowland areas. This background is important in understanding his motivation in pursuing a study related to power relations, that is, transformative mixed methods, a research approach aimed at giving voice to and empowering the oppressed and underrepresented communities for social transformation, equality, and social justice (Creswell, 2014; Mertens, 2022, 2007, 2010).

After graduating high school in his hometown in Sindangan, Zamboanga del Norte, in mainland Mindanao, he went to Tawi-Tawi to study at MSU-TCTO since it offered low tuition fees and scholarship opportunities for poor but deserving college students. MSU-TCTO has a multicultural and peace-building mandate, aiming at healing the Muslim-Christian conflicts in the past and promoting unity and peace among Muslims, Christians, and the Lumads on the island of Mindanao, in the southern part of the Philippines (Mindanao State University System, 2013; Russel et al., 2004). He is currently a professional teacher. He obtained his Bachelor of Elementary Education degree from MSU-TCTO, where he graduated with flying colors. He landed in the Top 10, garnering 8<sup>th</sup> place in the 2010 LET, which led to his joining the faculty of the university. He currently holds an assistant professorship in the College of Education.

### 4. Background of the Transformative Mixed Methods Study

From 2006 to 2010, he studied at MSU-TCTO for his undergraduate education. He also lives there, being a hired faculty at the same university. To live with Muslims and experience their unique cultures and traditions led him to realize that they are just like any Filipinos, who are wonderful and kind people. Nonetheless, his years of residence there also unveiled various societal inequalities due to the inadequacies of local government institutions. Owing to his many experiences back in mainland Mindanao, he witnessed fully functioning infrastructures and established government institutions.

In its 2009 report, the Asian Development Bank (2009) recorded Tawi-Tawi as having the highest poverty incidence in the Philippines. This finding could be attributed partly or wholly to the years of distress and conflict involving Muslim Filipinos in the Southern Philippines. Furthermore, the province has inadequate political representation at both the regional and national levels.

The disadvantaged context of Tawi-Tawi translates into the education sector. The educational performance of students in the basic and higher education levels is lower than the national average based on the national achievement tests and the government board examination results, revealing education inequity and inequality issues (Colicol et al., 2022, 2023). From 2011 to 2015, he taught at MSU-Tawi-Tawi as a college instructor where he observed and was concerned about the many education performance issues among our students. Many were weak at reading and writing; thus, few graduates passed the LET.

From April to May 2015, as an adult participant out of the 28 chosen participants (24 high school students and four adults) he joined the Philippine Youth Leadership Program (PYLP) hosted by Northern Illinois University and funded by the US Department of State. The PYLP consists of one month of leadership training and a follow-up workshop, where they implemented their respective community projects in their respective target communities in the Philippines and then presented them to the program coordinators of PYLP in a formal gathering held in the Philippines. That training left a lasting impact on him. It enhanced his confidence and cultivated his leadership skills. It became instrumental in the conception of the LET Intensive Review to address some of our pressing educational issues in the community in Tawi-Tawi. In the first semester, AY 2015–2016, he prepared and submitted the LET Intensive Review proposal to the then College of Education Dean, Dr. Wilham M. Hailaya, who polished the proposal further before endorsing it to the Office of the Chancellor channeled through the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs of MSU-TCTO, Prof. Benecito L. Maratas. Former Chancellor Atty. Lorenzo R. Reyes initiated the program in 2016, implementing it from January to May, during weekends, on Saturdays and Sundays. In 2019, Chancellor Dr. Mary Joyce Z. Guinto-Sali officially institutionalized the review as one of the university's regular programs.

## **5. Approach in the LET Intensive Review and the Development of the Transformative Mixed Methods Research Paradigm and the Bourdieu-Scheerens Framework**

A thorough understanding of the background of the educational situation in the province guided the MSU-TCTO College of Education in the implementation of the LET Intensive Review program in the MSU-TCTO College of Education. Everything was set and prepared before commencing the review. Students were provided with a conducive learning environment in a fully air-conditioned room. A high standard and high expectations for all the reviewees were set in addition to stricter rules and discipline in the review to facilitate their entry into the LET. For example, only 39 seconds were allotted for each item in the assessment after each lecture or workshop, putting them under more pressure than the actual LET. They were taught techniques and strategies to ensure their passing the LET. In addition, they were introduced to an elimination technique to detect the correct answer in a multiple-choice type of tests, the mode of assessment in the LET. The actual LET was simulated in the review assessment tests and the pre-board examinations using answer sheets similar to those used

in the LET. All the preparations were made with the view to compensating for the contextual disadvantages. Since it was about equity, to rise above the challenges and be on par with or even surpass other colleges and universities in the country, we needed to double or triple efforts to achieve our collective goals. More importantly, faculty had to be aware that they were subjected to the same imbalances of power relations as regard the educational inequality in the country. Moreover, at the national level, the situation of the Philippines as a developing country had to be understood. The country has been facing an educational crisis, as evidenced by international and national assessments and studies. What is observed in the BARMM is the compounded scenario of the country's national education.

The preceding qualitative perspectives come from transformativist and constructivist paradigms or worldviews, whereby people make sense of the occurrence of social inequality in society, paving the way for social actions and engagements to achieve equality and social justice. Based on Ghiara's (2020) ontological, epistemological, and methodological pluralism in research, transformativism and constructivism aligned with postpositivism afford a paradigm driven by quantifiable information to address problems in the social world. These served as the basis for developing the Bourdieu-Scheerens framework. The TMMR framework was used to illuminate social issues and consequently address them. Bourdieu-Scheerens is an integrated framework from various theorists with different disciplinal orientations (Bourdieu, 1977, 1984; Scheerens, 2011). Bourdieu is renowned in the fields of anthropology and sociology, while Scheerens specializes in the field of education. Their theories were combined but the salient characteristics or elements of each were maintained. Johnson et al. (2007) maintain that mixing different paradigms and theoretical perspectives to achieve a research objective is possible and practical, following Dewey's philosophy of pragmatism (1907). As such, in this study, different paradigms are integrated into a single research approach to arrive at a target evaluation outcome. The complementarities of perspectives suit the mixed methods research.

Sheerens's (2011) education model underscoring context, input, process, and output guided the flow of the research inquiry and the presentation of the data in the paper. The model fits well with the framework of the study since it is exploratory sequential, beginning from the qualitative phase to explain the school context, school inputs, and school processes, then proceeding to the quantitative phase to analyze the school outputs and validate earlier qualitative findings with quantitative data.

Bourdieu's (1984) social theory as an explanatory framework illuminates the qualitative phase of the transformative mixed methods study since it tackles agency and structure, embedding notions of power relations. In the context of the LET Intensive Review, the faculty/review committee members, lecturers, and reviewees were the agents of social action amid the structure characterized by the environment of Tawi-Tawi.

At first, writing this mixed methods paper posed a challenge to the lead researcher as he was used to a single database (Creswell, 2014) that is used for either pure qualitative or quantitative. Shifting back and forth in the mixed methods to relate data or findings in one database with the other database became problematic. He doubted the compatibility of data integration in drawing inferences. In addition, his actual writing was complicated by alternating between the hard science writing style (quantitative) and the more dynamic narrative style in writing (qualitative). It took some time to adapt to a mixed-methods approach. Later, the approach became more familiar, and utilizing a single research approach or a combination of different approaches became easy. Eventually, he realized that an adjustment in the mixed method approach entails the adjustment of personal values and the way we look at research in general. After the publication of the paper in a journal, he acquired more confidence in his writing. He could not have imagined he already embodied a mixed methods repertoire, enabling him to accept a mixed methods research approach and sustain its application in the later works that also deployed a mixed methods approach but were explanatory sequential in design.

## **6. Rationalizing the Transformative Mixed Methods Exploratory Sequential Design**

It was mentioned earlier that the study should reflect the lead researcher's values, beliefs, and identity as specializing in educational anthropology (Shannon-Baker, 2016). Hence, a heavily qualitative and sequential design study was preferred. The intention was to elaborate on power and marginalization issues to give voice to the less represented community, represent them in scholarship and discourse, address their educational needs, and challenge educational inequality (Veñegas et al., 2023). Considering the ontological, epistemological, and methodological pluralism in mixed methods (Ghiara, 2020) and following Scheerens's (2011) education model, the first three research questions focusing on school context, school inputs, and school process are devoted to qualitative inquiry, while the remaining two focus on school outputs are on quantitative research inquiry. Scheerens's (2011) education model utilized quantifiable school outputs to measure education quality. Thus, combining qualitative and quantitative methods in a single study is further justified at the methodological level.

Bourdieu's social theory as an explanatory framework in the qualitative part became crucial in the exploration of the LET reviewees' experiences within their sociocultural context, within the university, and within the LET review itself, where the target knowledge and skills to be learned to pass the LET are unpacked, discussed, and committed to memory and embodied. Literature on the core-periphery model and urban-rural divide in education substantiated Bourdieu's theory in the paper to situate the study within the body of literature on core-periphery and urban-rural divide frameworks. Power issues within these dichotomies are salient as far as the study is concerned. The remoteness or isolation of the many island communities in the province is a factor that compounds the education inequality gap both at the provincial and national levels (Colicol et al., 2022).

## 7. Methodology of the Transformative Mixed Methods Study

The integrated Bourdieu-Scheerens framework informs the research methodology of the study. Ethnography as a research design was used in data gathering to capture the nuances and mediations of power. The formal writing of the study started in 2019. The lead researcher reflected on and recorded his experiences in the province of Tawi-Tawi during his student years (2006–2010), teaching years (2011–2017), and handling the review as coordinator (2016–2017). In the 2018 LET Intensive Review, a colleague (co-author) assumed his role since he had commenced his PhD studies as a faculty-scholar of MSU-TCTO at UP in the National Capital Region of the Philippines. He reviewed available LET review records, reports, assessment results, and LET review photos. He also involved his co-faculty (co-authors) to gather more data from key actors in Tawi-Tawi while he was in Manila pursuing his PhD studies. They contributed substantially through their experiences in the review, from the academic year (AY) 2018 to 2019. They reflected on their experiences as faculty and as a part of the LET review committee guided by a set of questions he sent them. They also conducted additional interviews with chosen key actors, who were enrolled in the review from batches 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2019 and immediately passed the LET. Open-ended questions derived from the study's framework were used to elicit reviewees' experiences and views about the LET Intensive Review. Face-to-face interviews were not feasible since the key actors had already graduated and had left the university. Nonetheless, they remained within their network of communication as alumni of the review program, enabling them to be interviewed online via Messenger, which is the easiest mode of communication within the province of Tawi-Tawi. Their consent to involve them in the research was willingly obtained since we had been their former course instructors while they were still at the university for their pre-service education and training. We also committed to sharing cash incentives with them as an expression of gratitude for their involvement in the study, although some mentioned this was not necessary.

Five open-ended questions were sent to our key actors. The questions related to (a) their reviewees' successes in the LET, (b) reflections and realizations after the LET review, (c) challenges experienced and how they overcome them, (d) the strengths and weakness of the LET review program, and (e) general impressions about the review program. The questions were tailored to achieve the study's objectives by answering all the qualitative research questions. The key actors were given adequate time to answer the questions and there were opportunities to ask questions and clarify information during the process. After completing their responses, they submitted them to my colleagues, who conducted an initial analysis of the data before sending them to me as lead researcher in Manila for consolidation and further analysis. Our exchanges continued until 2021 during the COVID-19 pandemic. In early 2022, the paper was accepted for publication in a journal.

Since the mixed methods study is exploratory sequential, we began responding to the first three qualitative questions which focus on (a) the context of the study,

(b) the school inputs, and (c) the school processes, arranged according to the structure of Scheerens's education model. The data was analyzed iteratively to answer each research question, bearing in mind the Bourdieu-Scheerens framework and the related literature on the core-periphery model and urban-rural divide.

The following quantitative phase used descriptive design to ascertain the research participants' claims in the previous qualitative approach that the review effectively contributed to their success in the LET. The licensure performance trends after the LET Intensive Review of participants who had taken the LET were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The further analysis considered the licensure performance trends in the previous years without the review as a reference for comparison of licensure performance before and during the review periods. To test whether there were significant differences between the means of licensure performances before and during the review periods, the Mann-Whitney *U* test was used for the elementary level and the independent samples *t*-test for the secondary level. The Mann-Whitney *U* test, a nonparametric test, was used for the elementary level since the data in one variable were not normally distributed.

## **8. Presentation of Results using the Bourdieu-Scheerens Framework**

The flow of data presentation in the paper is guided by Scheerens's (2011) education model, which foregrounds the school context, the school inputs, the school process, and the school outputs. The explanations, except for the school outputs, draw from Bourdieu's (1977, 1984) social theory, which underlines the mediations of power.

### **8.1 School Context**

Under the school context, in the results of the paper, we explain how the reviewees are affected by the broader society. We cited secondary sources demonstrating the contextual factors and characteristics that disadvantage the reviewees as far as location/remoteness, access to technology, education quality, and institutional support are concerned. In a sense, we represent the voices of the reviewees in writing and paint a picture of the real situation in the southernmost part of the country. These comprise issues that the local, regional, and national governments need to attend to should we want to achieve a fair, just, and developed society where no locality, province, or region is left behind in terms of developments. This context part of the paper is indispensable because it lays the foundation of the mixed methods study as truly a transformative one. Needless to say, it should be enough justification to convince readers that educational programs and projects must be directed in the southernmost part of the country so that the people there will eventually enjoy better lives through better access to quality education and better livelihood opportunities. Furthermore, proper contextualization of the study also has to do with conveying how the school inputs, processes, and outputs are derived.

## 8.2 School Inputs

The discussion of school inputs in the transformative mixed methods study focuses on our strategies to help pre-service teachers cope with and pass the LET and mitigate dismal institutional performance in the licensure examination. The school inputs include the review, the workforce, the resources, the equipment facilities, and the administrative support. The review was conceptualized based on the perceived problem in the context, where most of the graduates hardly passed their board examinations, which is an equity issue in Philippine education. We drew lecturers and resources for the review from the local context and managed to maximize our outputs to cope with the national standards. We were able to obtain the full support of the administration as they saw the gradual increments and the leap in our institutional performance per year.

## 8.3 School Processes

In this part, we explained our efforts since we started the review program and how it fared through the years of the implementation, from 2016 to 2019. This component is crucial since it unveils the various factors and processes affecting the pre-service teachers in the review and the LET Intensive Review program in general. The voices of the reviewees (i.e., in quotations) are mainly heard in this part. It explains the different ways they navigate the review processes, such as the challenges they face from home to school, the complexities of the review, and their gradual improvements and successes during the review implementation. The data are presented in a manner corresponding to Bourdieu's social theory as the explanatory framework used. This part is important because it shows how the school inputs are converted to school outputs in the form of measurable outcomes. It concretizes our overall approach in the review program and, at the same time, reveals our strengths, weaknesses, and areas of improvement, requiring further action to be taken for the next batches of the LET Intensive Review.

## 8.4 School Outputs

The school outputs (Table 1) in the transformative mixed methods study are presented with numerical information to draw statistical inferences and determine whether the qualitative data, as illuminated by the review key actors, are quantitatively supported. This form of verification lies in the strength of the transformative mixed methods approach, whereby one database (qualitative) can be verified using the strength of another database (quantitative). Based on the statistical results, the claims of the review key actors that the review was helpful to them are supported.

**Table 1: Passing percentage ratings in the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) before (2008-2015) and during (2016-2019) the LET Intensive Review periods**

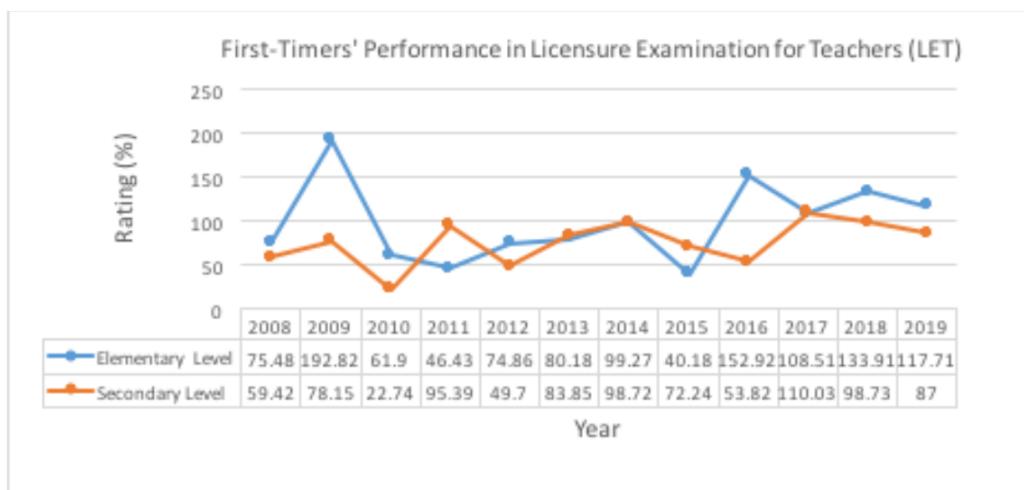
LET year (September)	National passing percentage rating (NPPR)		University passing percentage rating (UPPR)		Adjusted university passing percentage rating (AUPPR)	
	Elementary	Secondary	Elementary	Secondary	Elementary	Secondary
2008	30.47	35.34	23.00	21.00	75.48	59.42
2009 <sup>a</sup>	18.67	28.15	36.00	22.00	192.82	78.15
2010	19.58	25.86	12.12	5.88	61.90	22.74
2011	22.68	31.45	10.53	30.00	46.43	95.39
2012	49.29	43.50	36.90	21.62	74.86	49.70
2013	31.18	39.75	25.00	33.33	80.18	83.85
2014 <sup>b</sup>	35.74	34.40	35.48	33.96	99.27	98.72
2015	31.36	41.75	12.60	30.16	40.18	72.24
2016	30.18	33.78	46.15	18.18	152.92	53.82
2017	26.33	46.37	28.57	51.02	108.51	110.03
2018	20.29	48.03	27.17	47.42	133.91	98.73
2019	31.34	39.68	36.89	34.52	117.71	87

Note. AUPPR =  $(UPPR \div NPPR) \times (100)$

<sup>a</sup>October examination

<sup>b</sup>August examination

Source: Adapted from Colicol et al. (2022)



**Figure 1: Graph of adjusted university passing percentage ratings (AUPPRs) before (2008-2015) and during (2016-2019) the LET Intensive Review periods**

Source: Adapted from Colicol et al. (2022)

The results (Figure 1) show that the trend of performance is ascending from the period before the review to the period when the review was implemented. Overall, statistical means for the elementary and secondary levels during the review period are higher than before the review period. The Mann-Whitney *U* test revealed a significant difference in LET institutional performance or reviewees' LET performance before and during the conducting of the review at the elementary level. However, there were no significant differences in LET

performance before and during the review periods at the secondary level based on the *t*-test analysis results.

### **8.5 Conclusion and Policy Implications of the Study**

The overall findings of the transformative mixed methods study are presented in the conclusion part. Findings were drawn from the integration of qualitative and quantitative results. It was revealed that the LET Intensive Review is effective as far as the general observations of the review key actors and the statistical analysis are considered. For a detailed understanding, individual results from each research approach are presented. The qualitative approach reveals that the review program turned out to have served its purpose owing to the teachers' strong advocacy and power to initiate such a program and the administrators' strong and unrelenting support through the provision of funding and adequate resources. Thus, teacher agency and administrator agency were underscored as the primary factors driving the fulfillment of the program's purpose. Educational foundation, motivation, financial concerns, and field of specialization at the secondary level are areas of improvement in the review. The quantitative results were used to support and verify the review-key actors' claims about review effectiveness. Moreover, based on the general trend (i.e., ascending) of institutional performance and Mann-Whitney *U* Test analysis results, the quantitative aspect of the study shows consistency with the previous qualitative findings.

As shown in the results, the study deals with power relationships, illuminating how the faculty and students in a university challenge oppressive structures that have been marginalizing the population owing to the remoteness of the location, the history of conflict, inequality, and poverty in the area. Collectively, they aimed to change the status quo for an equitable quality education in the region and the country. Future directions and plans are embodied in the policy implications of the study. The need to attend to the education inequality in the province is emphasized by paying attention to those students living on the remote islands of the province.

## **9. Discussion**

As a new area of research, there are scant studies applying the transformative mixed methods approach, especially in developing nations such as the Philippines. This study adds to the existing body of knowledge in transformative mixed methods by representing a unique situation of the southern Philippines where culture, ethnicity, religion, geographical location, and social class intersect in the process of marginalization. The study invoked the UNESCO post-2015 and the Muscat Global Education position papers that emphasize attention to disadvantaged contexts in providing quality and equitable education (Sayed & Ahmed, 2015).

The application of the transformative mixed methods paradigm in the study is a function of the researcher's motivation and intention inspired by personal observations, experiences, and historical understanding of the social oppression and injustices in Mindanao. In this context, the positionality of the researcher

must be presented and understood as it provides the background and context of the need to design the study as a transformative mixed methods in essence. Thereby, the lead researcher presented his personal experiences of oppression and professional backgrounds for the readers to understand the context and the underlying motivations behind the paper. On his part as a researcher, understanding his positionality and being able to critique it in the process of the research are imperative to eliminate or minimize the biases and produce a reliable and credible contribution to knowledge production.

Inequality and marginalization are seemingly not an issue for the reviewees and the local inhabitants. These have not, in fact, been tackled as a core concern despite the obvious reason that they are implicated in the low education quality in Tawi-Tawi and the BARMM. Indeed, such is the case when people's actions are naturalized by prevailing social structures (constraints) (Bourdieu, 1977, 1984), making the situation appear perfectly fine. Doing nothing will maintain the status quo and perpetuate inequality. In this situation, it takes someone (a researcher) who can position himself as an insider (emic) and, at the same time, an outsider (etic) in order to analyze and critique the situation of oppression and thereby point out inequality in education as a form of social injustice in the society. This pressing social problem cannot be resolved unless it is pointed out as an injustice and raised as a problem needing constructive action. Adopting the role as the prime movers in implementing the LET Intensive Review in Tawi-Tawi was the point of take-off in addressing the issue of education inequality in the province and the country.

Accordingly, we were able to raise our performance in the board examination and introduced a new perspective on elevating education in the province. The review, which was initially experimental, was the beginning of undertaking a much more worthwhile endeavor through the transformative mixed methods study that followed. More than simply an account of something, the study represents the voices of the review key actors. It embodies the aspirations of aspiring teachers who wish to achieve their dreams, educate their respective communities, and contribute to the growth of the nation. The reviewees echoed their challenges, hopes, and aspirations while taking the LET review. Some voiced having difficulty attending the review due to financial concerns and the distance of the review venue from their home island communities. Apparently, in the past, many prospective LET takers coming from this remote island province have been longing for adequate institutional support through the right people to talk to in the process of preparing for their board examinations. It was significant for the community that they were afforded access to institutional agents (Barrett & Martina, 2012) such as ourselves from the MSU-TCTO, who facilitated their taking review lessons in the province of Tawi-Tawi without necessarily having to go to mainland Mindanao for a review at a huge cost for the travel, accommodation, and review registration fees.

The researchers' education, training, and ability to handle mixed methods greatly benefitted the study. In fact, the lead researcher could not have conceptualized and led the holding of the transformative mixed methods study

if he had not taken educational anthropology and advanced research design courses that were instrumental in carrying out a transformative mixed methods study for the first time. The University of the Philippines Diliman, where he enrolled for his doctoral studies, and the Mindanao State University-Tawi-Tawi that sent him for schooling, bestowed on him institutional capital, paving the way for expanding his social and cultural capital. He was able to network and link with colleagues online who were not equally adept with the transformative mixed methods approach in research. The knowledge and research skills he acquired are embodied capital from an academic institution (Bourdieu, 1977, 1984) the faculty of which acted as institutional agents (Barrett & Martina, 2012) for students who are eager to learn. Therefore, the experiences of marginalization can only be brought into scholarship and community discourse when someone has a full understanding of the social situation and is able to bring the voices of the victims into the public domain, where they can be discussed and given further attention (Veñegas et al., 2023). In his case, his education is a prerequisite to utilizing the power of transformative mixed methods in transforming people's social lives through a study.

The lead researcher's personal and educational backgrounds shaped the framework of the transformative mixed methods study. Bourdieu's social theory mainly originates from anthropology and sociology and Scheerens's framework from education. We combined the two as we see them as complementing each other. Foremost, we saw the relevance of applying Bourdieu's framework to enrich the study by tackling the structure-agency relationship, a limitation on Scheerens's education model as far as the transformative paradigm is concerned. Moreover, the former is qualitatively driven, providing an in-depth investigation of a certain phenomenon, such as an occurrence of oppression.

Meanwhile, the latter is quantitatively driven, invoking a calculable account of the educational output of a university. The two could be paired in a single study considering the underlying principles of transformative mixed methods study in which an incompatibility of different paradigms and methods is overcome and resolved (Ghiara, 2020; Johnson et al., 2007). Interestingly, based on the overall results of the study, the constructs of the two theoretical perspectives (e.g., context: field; inputs: agency; process: habitus; outputs: capital) aligned, further justifying the utility of the Bourdieu-Scheerens framework in the study. The framework, however, is open for critique, and further elaboration to enhance and investigate its utility in transformative mixed methods study is recommended.

As an exploratory sequential design, the transformative mixed methods study is primarily and dominantly qualitative. In other words, the study taps the importance of the qualitative (ethnographic) approach in research over the quantitative approach, which is used to support the former. This design of the paper is explicit in the paper's presentation of the school context, the school inputs, and the school process, heavily relying on observations and narratives of the research participants explained using the research framework. The quantitative approach supporting the preceding qualitative data follows,

showing the school outputs in numerical forms. Of the four components in Scheerens's education model, three components, namely school context, school inputs, and school process, are dedicated to the qualitative approach, and only one, the school output, is dedicated to the quantitative approach in the study.

The integration of the results that form the transformative mixed methods findings are presented in the conclusion of the study. The presentation of the conclusion follows the design of the study. The weight of the qualitative findings dominates and is being supported by the quantitative results. This imbalance in the approach and privileging of certain discourses and methods manifests the researcher's positioning as shaped by personal and professional orientations. Such undertaking should not be taken as downplaying certain research approaches and methods but rather an unveiling of a researcher's creativity to serve the purpose of the research and achieve the desired evaluation goal. The overall results of the study indicate that the LET Intensive Review Evaluation is effective. This strong pronouncement of the results was arrived at based on the results of the quantitative and qualitative approaches in the transformative mixed methods study. Simply put, our approach in the study, combining quantitative and qualitative research approaches, makes it more compelling as compared to when using only a qualitative or quantitative approach in an educational evaluation.

The transformative paradigm distinguishes the study from all other studies, including mixed methods studies. In fact, it is the main reason why the qualitative part dominates in the paper rather than the quantitative part. Personally, we played the role of activists in conducting the research. Advocating for social change in society gives the paper its life and gives us as researchers fulfillment because we know we have done something to emancipate the oppressed. We realized that one of the advantages of transformative mixed methods study is its capability to dig deeper and illuminate the sociopolitical dynamics in a specific context, which a purely quantitative may not be able to do. This kind of approach is eminently suitable for researchers working with marginalized communities, especially for researchers who are themselves a part of the community that is the subject of interest for a study. It holds immense potential for the oppressed to speak to power, challenge unequal power relationships, and transform society into a fairer and more just one (Mertens, 2007, 2010).

## 10. Concluding Remarks and Key Takeaways

The transformative mixed methods study on the LET Intensive Review was primarily informed by the researcher's positionality or personal and professional/educational backgrounds. Foremost, his exposure to and awareness of social injustice were the main sources of inspiration to undertake a transformative mixed methods study based on an initial assessment of the study context consisting of remote rural island communities of Tawi-Tawi in the southern Philippines. His university education afforded him the means to materialize this aspiration through a transformative mixed methods study for social reform. It is helpful for transformative mixed methods researchers to be

conscious of their positionality and intentions because these may intervene and introduce bias into the research process as they sometimes impose their beliefs and actions onto research participants. Transformative mixed methods research speaks of the researchers' identity in the sense of self-conception and belonging to a particular research community. In our modern world, having a pluralist worldview and being able to adapt different paradigms, frameworks, and methods in research is certainly an advantage. Our capability to tackle and respond to the growing social inequalities in society certainly calls for our role beyond researchers who produce knowledge. We are advocates and agents of change for social transformation.

The formulation of Bourdieu-Scheerens's framework in the study of interest was derived from a particular paradigm or worldview inspired by an understanding of the occurrence of oppression and injustice in society. The framework, in turn, guided the study design, which is an exploratory sequential transformative mixed methods characterized by the dominance of qualitative research with quantitative research as a support. The choice of ethnography as the primary method was driven by the researcher's immersion in the community and participation in the lives of the researched participants over a period of time. Furthermore, a descriptive research design on the quantitative part was chosen to determine statistical trends in the reviewees' licensure performance before and during the holding of the review. Data presentation in the paper follows Scheerens's education model composed of the school context, the school inputs, the school process, and the school outputs. Bourdieu's theory was used to explain the first three components and the last component was represented in numerical form following Scheerens's education model, applying statistical methods for analyzing educational performance. The Bourdieu-Scheerens integration was based on pragmatism and on the view that there is pluralism at the levels of epistemology, ontology, and methodology in research. The conclusions of the transformative mixed methods study were drawn from the qualitative and quantitative findings, accentuating the anthropological/sociological value of the study and underlining the role of teachers and administrators in the review effectiveness. With the combined strengths of the quantitative and qualitative research approaches, the credibility of the transformative mixed methods conclusions is strengthened. The study is beneficial for quantitative and qualitative researchers as it provides qualitative and quantitative data and results.

Moreover, transformative mixed methods studies can be utilized in a culturally informed educational evaluation. A culturally grounded study provides context-specific and rich data, which is an appropriate basis for understanding inequality and injustice within the field of education and society. The knowledge generated from transformative mixed methods studies, such as the LET Intensive Review evaluation, may serve as a basis for curriculum enhancement, teaching and learning, leading to students' new understandings.

Future studies may explore the transformative mixed methods further as a methodological framework in educational evaluation. The conflict-ridden and

disadvantaged areas in the southern Philippines are worth exploring further for a thorough understanding of this line of inquiry.

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