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Strengthening Assessment in the Expanded Tertiary Education Equivalency and Accreditation Program: Best Practices, Challenges, and Policy Directions for Evidence-Based Reform

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Abstract. The Expanded Tertiary Education Equivalency and Accreditation Program (ETEEAP) in the Philippines provides a non-traditional academic pathway that recognizes prior learning and professional experience to grant degree equivalency for adult learners. While ETEEAP offers opportunities for inclusive higher education, inconsistencies in assessment practices and institutional support mechanisms remain significant challenges. This study investigates the best practices, implementation barriers, and support needs in ETEEAP assessment, with the goal of strengthening alignment with Republic Act No. 12124. A mixed-methods design was employed, involving survey questionnaires and open-ended responses from 285 participants, including ETEEAP assessors, students, alumni, and top-level administrators. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, while qualitative responses were coded thematically to capture stakeholder perspectives. Findings show strong agreement on the relevance and reliability of current assessment tools; however, challenges persist, including assessor workload, limited digital infrastructure, and insufficient training. The study recommends the development of a unified and standardized assessment framework, institutionalized capacity-building programs, and enhanced alignment with the quality assurance mechanisms of the Commission on Higher Education. These evidence-informed recommendations contributed to the formulation of a multi-dimensional model aimed at improving the consistency, transparency, and sustainability of ETEEAP assessment practices. In conclusion, the study underscores the importance of implementing stakeholder-driven reforms to ensure ETEEAP's continued effectiveness as a credible and inclusive mechanism for academic recognition and lifelong learning in the Philippine higher education system.

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1. Introduction

The Expanded Tertiary Education Equivalency and Accreditation Program (ETEEAP) serves as the Philippines' flagship Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) initiative, offering a formalized academic pathway for working professionals and individuals with substantial experiential learning to earn academic degrees. By recognizing work-based knowledge, skills, and competencies as equivalent to formal academic instruction, ETEEAP addresses long-standing barriers to higher education for adult learners and non-traditional students.

Regulated by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), the ETEEAP draws on internationally recognized RPL frameworks, such as Canada's Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition, Australia's RPL system under the Australian Qualifications Framework, and the United Kingdom's Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning. These systems affirm that workplace-acquired competencies and life experiences are valid foundations for academic credentialing, supporting equitable and inclusive access to higher education (Alves et al., 2020; UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, 2019; Walters, 2020).

These global models collectively support inclusive, competency-based education systems that recognize informal and non-formal learning. In response to these international developments and the global call for inclusive, lifelong learning pathways, ETEEAP provides a parallel academic track that acknowledges professional expertise and practical experience, particularly for those unable to pursue conventional higher education routes.

The enactment of Republic Act No. 12124, or the ETEEAP Act of 2024, marked a significant policy milestone by institutionalizing the program as a core component of the Philippine higher education system. As highlighted by the Second Congressional Commission on Education of the Philippines (2025), the legislation reaffirms ETEEAP's role in expanding access to tertiary education and promoting credentialing equity for professionals with verifiable prior learning.

The Act mandates the implementation of transparent, credible, and standardized assessment systems aligned with CHED's quality assurance policies and the country's sustainable development goals. Among its key provisions are the institutionalization of validated assessment tools, the application of criteria-based evaluation frameworks, the systematic training of assessors, and the establishment of robust institutional safeguards to ensure academic integrity and consistency across programs.

Despite its transformative intent, the implementation of ETEEAP continues to hinge on the clarity, consistency, and credibility of its assessment processes. However, this goal is challenged by the persistent absence of standardized guidelines and frameworks (Bolton et al., 2017; Marchard et al., 2016; Tywabi,

2020). Specific issues include the lack of validated assessment tools, insufficient assessor preparation and training, limited digital infrastructure, and varied interpretations of academic equivalency criteria (Khunoethe & Reddy, 2023; Makhatsane, 2020). These factors compromise the fairness, reliability, and academic rigor of ETEEAP outcomes, ultimately limiting its full potential as a national mechanism for inclusive credentialing and lifelong learning.

This study addresses critical gaps in both empirical literature and policy implementation by examining the institutional realities that shape assessment practices under ETEEAP. While existing scholarship underscores the theoretical value of RPL in expanding access to higher education (Assinger, 2023; Deutscher & Winther, 2022), limited empirical research has explored how implementation-level practices and institutional enablers affect program quality and sustainability. In particular, there is a pressing need to investigate how assessment tools, assessor capacity, and policy alignment influence the consistency, equity, and credibility of ETEEAP delivery. The lack of empirical grounding restricts CHED's ability to enforce quality assurance across institutions and impedes the development of coherent, scalable RPL policies.

To address these gaps, this study introduces a multi-dimensional framework that identifies both strategic enablers and operational challenges in ETEEAP implementation, discussed under the theoretical and conceptual framework. In this context, strategic enablers refer to institutional and procedural factors that enhance assessment effectiveness, including: (1) validation of prior learning, (2) recognition of professional expertise, (3) engagement with faculty and program staff, (4) availability of assessment resources, and (5) training and development for assessors. Operational challenges include workload constraints, limited scheduling flexibility, and gaps in administrative coordination. Assessment frameworks are defined as the policies, rubrics, and evaluative systems used to determine the academic equivalency of prior learning.

Accordingly, the primary objective of this study is to examine best practices, implementation challenges, and institutional policy directions that shape ETEEAP assessment. It seeks to:

1. Identify strategic enablers that influence effective ETEEAP implementation.
2. Analyze the challenges experienced by assessors and other key stakeholders.
3. Propose institutional frameworks to strengthen and standardize assessment practices in alignment with Republic Act No. 12124 and CHED's quality assurance mechanisms.

A concurrent mixed-methods research design was adopted to provide a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected from ETEEAP assessors, students, alumni, and administrators to capture both measurable trends and lived experiences. The findings aim to inform evidence-based policy reforms and contribute to a more transparent,

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consistent, and credible ETEEAP implementation across the Philippine higher education system.

1.1 Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

This study is grounded in three interrelated theoretical perspectives that support adult learning and RPL within ETEEAP: Knowles' theory of andragogy, Kolb's experiential learning theory, and the constructivist learning paradigm. These theories collectively provide the foundation for analyzing how strategic enablers and operational challenges influence the quality and consistency of assessment practices under the ETEEAP.

Knowles' theory of andragogy (1984, as cited in Staunton, 2021) emphasizes that adult learners are self-directed, goal-oriented, and bring rich life and professional experiences that should be integrated into the learning process. This theoretical orientation closely aligns with ETEEAP's design, which recognizes experiential learning as equivalent to formal academic achievement. The theory reinforces the value of flexible, learner-centered, and contextually relevant assessments—hallmarks of ETEEAP's competency-based approach.

Kolb's experiential learning theory (1984, as cited in Cherry, 2023) further contributes to this framework by conceptualizing learning as a four-stage cycle involving concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. In the context of ETEEAP, this theory validates the use of portfolios, practical demonstrations, and real-world evidence as credible academic outputs. It supports the program's emphasis on assessing non-traditional learning in workplace or community settings, thus strengthening the reliability and legitimacy of RPL processes.

In addition, the constructivist learning paradigm posits that learners construct knowledge through authentic, context-driven interactions with their environments. This perspective affirms that meaningful learning occurs not only within academic institutions but also through lifelong, experiential engagement in the workforce or civic spaces (Staboulis & Sytziouki, 2021). Constructivism thus underpins the program's recognition of informal and non-formal learning and provides a lens to assess the institutional flexibility required to support such learning.

Informed by these theoretical perspectives, the study introduces a conceptual framework that examines the conditions that either enable or hinder the implementation of credible assessment practices in ETEEAP. The framework identifies five key strategic enablers: validation of prior learning; recognition of professional expertise; engagement with faculty and program staff; availability of assessment resources; and training and development for assessors. At the same time, it highlights several operational challenges, including assessor workload, limited scheduling flexibility, and inadequate administrative and technological support. These constructions are analyzed considering institutional policy directions, particularly those aligned with Republic Act No. 12124 and the CHED's quality assurance standards.

This combined theoretical and conceptual framework guides the study's inquiry into how institutional practices, assessment strategies, and stakeholder experiences converge to shape the quality and scalability of ETEEAP implementation. It provides a structured lens for identifying gaps, proposing reforms, and promoting consistent and inclusive assessment systems for adult learners across Philippine higher education institutions.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Recognition of Prior Learning and Policy Foundations

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) has become a globally endorsed strategy to enhance educational access, address skills gaps, and promote lifelong learning by validating knowledge gained outside traditional academic pathways (Raciti et al., 2024; UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, 2019). The concept varies across countries—commonly referred to as Prior Learning Assessment in the United States, Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning in the United Kingdom, and Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition in Canada, yet all share a commitment to assessing informal, non-formal, and experiential learning for academic and professional advancement (Alves et al., 2020).

RPL frameworks are underpinned by inclusive education policies that promote alternative pathways to credentialing. Aligning these forms of learning with national qualification standards fosters both equity and workforce responsiveness (Staboulis & Sytziouki, 2021). Similarly, Harris et al. (2011) emphasize that RPL policies must be grounded in constructivist principles that recognize knowledge as context-based and personally constructed. Despite broad policy support, however, implementation often struggles due to fragmented guidelines, underdeveloped infrastructure, and inconsistent institutional commitment (Assinger, 2023; Chetty & Moodley, 2022).

In the Philippine context, the ETEEAP formalizes RPL through Executive Order No. 330 (1996) and Republic Act No. 12124 (2025). This legal foundation mandates transparent assessment frameworks, standard equivalency criteria, and trained assessors to ensure national credibility (Kilag et al., 2025). While ETEEAP has widened access for adult learners and mid-career professionals, persistent challenges include inconsistent institutional readiness, lack of standardized rubrics, and limited faculty training (Dilla & Ibarra, 2022; Navarro, 2024). Insights from global RPL models emphasize the importance of policy coherence and institutional accountability (Duvekot, 2020; Meghnagi & Tuccio, 2023). These lessons are highly relevant to the Philippine setting, where aligning CHED's quality assurance mechanisms with Republic Act 12124 can institutionalize a more credible and standardized ETEEAP implementation.

2.2 Assessment Methods and Standards in RPL

Assessment methods and standards lie at the heart of RPL, serving as the mechanism through which experiential and informal knowledge is validated for academic or professional equivalence. Internationally, RPL assessment approaches have evolved to include structured rubrics, competency-based checklists, e-portfolios, oral validation, and performance tasks, all aimed at

ensuring fairness, credibility, and alignment with established learning outcomes (Meghnagi & Tuccio, 2023; Stephens, 2023). As Marion et al. (2024) emphasize, balanced assessment systems in RPL must integrate authenticity, transparency, and alignment with curricular outcomes to maintain academic integrity and stakeholder trust.

Scholars argue that the absence of consistent and transparent standards can lead to subjective evaluation and limited portability of credentials (Garnett & Cavaye, 2015; Harrison, 2018). The findings of Miguel et al. (2016) reinforce this concern, highlighting how RPL participants often perceive assessments as ambiguous or inadequately explained, leading to anxiety and reduced confidence. In response, Stephens (2023) calls for robust quality assurance frameworks that include the development and validation of tools such as scoring rubrics and standardized evaluative criteria.

The digitalization of assessment has further enhanced transparency and efficiency. Heinonen and Tuomainen (2022) highlight how digital tools facilitate documentation, peer moderation, and feedback, reinforcing the reliability and validity of RPL assessments. This aligns with international calls for more accessible and scalable RPL systems (Meghnagi & Tuccio, 2023).

In the Philippine context, the ETEEAP mandates the use of structured assessment tools to uphold the credibility of degree equivalency (Republic of the Philippines, 2025). These include institutional rubrics, portfolios, skill demonstrations, interviews, and written evaluations to determine alignment with CHED-prescribed learning outcomes (Kilag et al., 2025). However, empirical studies point to variations in implementation, with some institutions lacking standardized benchmarks or underutilizing assessment documentation (Dilla & Ibarra, 2022).

Navarro (2024) adds that learners value the rigor of assessment but seek greater clarity and standardization in the process. To ensure credibility, national efforts must focus on assessor training, rubric development, and periodic tool validation. Drawing from global best practices, the Philippines can institutionalize a unified, transparent assessment framework to ensure consistent, equitable RPL across all ETEEAP institutions.

2.3 Engagement with Faculty and Program Staff

Faculty and program staff play a pivotal role in the effective implementation of RPL. As key agents in the assessment process, their active involvement ensures that evaluation practices remain pedagogically sound, context-sensitive, and aligned with institutional standards (Duvekot et al., 2020). Engagement in RPL extends beyond procedural compliance—it encompasses faculty buy-in, collaborative rubric development, participation in assessor calibration, and mentorship of learners in evidencing prior learning (Pokorny, 2012).

Globally, studies show that faculty who are well-oriented and trained in RPL principles are more likely to approach assessments with fairness, transparency,

and academic rigor (Garnett & Cavaye, 2015). Miguel et al. (2016) emphasize that a strong understanding of adult learners' diverse experiential contexts enables faculty to make more nuanced and holistic judgments of learning equivalency. However, engagement is often constrained by limited institutional support, inadequate training, and the lack of recognition for RPL-related responsibilities (Assinger, 2023; Stephens, 2023).

In the Philippines, the ETEEAP underscores faculty engagement as a foundational element. Republic Act No. 12124 mandates faculty to serve not only as assessors but also as academic integrators who map prior learning against CHED-defined learning outcomes. Kilag et al. (2025) assert that active faculty involvement enhances the credibility of assessment decisions and reinforces institutional accountability. Nonetheless, local research points to variations in faculty training, role clarity, and institutional support across ETEEAP-implementing institutions (Dilla & Ibarra, 2022; Navarro, 2024).

To address these gaps, the best practices recommend integrating RPL duties into formal workload allocations, providing continuous professional development on assessment frameworks, and involving faculty in the participatory design of equivalency matrixes (Duke et al., 2020; Garnett & Cavaye, 2015). These strategies not only improve assessment quality but also promote a culture of support for adult learners and non-traditional pathways. International models underscore that meaningful faculty engagement is essential for sustainable RPL implementation. These insights are highly relevant to ongoing ETEEAP reforms, which require coordinated institutional strategies to ensure quality assurance and equitable assessment under Republic Act 12124.

2.4 Availability of Assessment Resources

The availability of assessment resources is a critical enabler in the effective implementation of RPL, ensuring institutions can evaluate experiential learning with fairness and credibility. As Meghnagi and Tuccio (2023) assert, the strength of RPL systems hinges on access to validated instruments, trained personnel, and appropriate support infrastructure. Conversely, the absence of calibrated rubrics, digital systems for portfolio assessment, and assessor orientation materials undermines consistency and transparency (Harrison, 2018; Marion et al., 2024).

Standardized and competency-based assessment tools are essential to ensure comparability across institutions and programs (Stephens, 2023). Digital platforms further enhance assessment logistics, particularly in managing diverse forms of learning evidence. Ouyang et al. (2024) emphasize that knowledge management systems play a growing role in enabling efficient, scalable RPL processes. However, Raciti et al. (2024) caution that even well-resourced institutions may underuse these tools without adequate training and support for both assessors and candidates.

In the Philippine context, the ETEEAP offers a formalized RPL pathway, yet disparities in assessment resource availability persist across institutions. Sayang (2025) notes that while ETEEAP has positively influenced professional mobility,

many implementing institutions lack access to standardized rubrics, digital tools, and orientation modules. These resource gaps often result in varied assessment practices and diminished comparability of learning equivalency. Agtarap et al. (2024) further report that assessors face logistical constraints—especially in remote or blended learning environments—which hinder timely and reliable evaluation of student portfolios and outputs. To maximize the potential of ETEEAP under Republic Act No. 12124, higher education institutions (HEIs) must invest in scalable assessment infrastructure.

This includes developing national templates, training toolkits, and digital platforms for portfolio submission, peer moderation, and outcome mapping. Without these, the credibility and efficiency of the RPL process remain limited, particularly in addressing the needs of adult learners and non-traditional students. International experience consistently shows that resource adequacy—physical, digital, and human—is foundational to effective RPL implementation. The Republic Act 12124 provides a policy lever for Philippine HEIs to mobilize and institutionalize robust assessment support systems that can ensure quality-assured, transparent, and equitable RPL.

2.5 Training and Development for Assessors

The effectiveness of RPL relies not only on sound policies and tools but also on the competence of assessors. Globally, research affirms that structured training enhances the consistency, fairness, and credibility of RPL evaluations (Chetty & Moodley, 2022; Harrison, 2018). Stephens (2023) highlights that assessors without adequate training may misinterpret rubrics, leading to inconsistent judgments that undermine the reliability of assessment outcomes. As RPL frameworks increasingly incorporate digital portfolios and workplace-based evidence, Raciti et al. (2024) argue that continuous professional development must be embedded in RPL systems.

ETEEAP in the Philippines has identified assessor training as a critical area for improvement. Dilla and Ibarra (2022) report that many assessors rely on institutional discretion or personal teaching experience, often lacking formal preparation in competency-based assessment and portfolio evaluation. This results in inconsistencies in how prior learning is recognized across institutions. Similarly, Agtarap et al. (2024) observes that educators face challenges in assessing non-traditional evidence due to limited exposure to flexible assessment models and a lack of orientation in evaluating experiential learning.

These challenges highlight the need for standardized, CHED-aligned training programs that build assessor capacity in key areas, such as validation techniques, scoring protocols, equivalency mapping, and quality assurance. Such training not only ensures institutional coherence but also promotes the credibility and scalability of ETEEAP as a national RPL framework. International models reinforce the view that assessor development is indispensable to maintaining academic integrity in RPL. Systematic training—delivered through workshops, certification programs, and digital learning platforms—has proven effective in improving assessment consistency and confidence among evaluators (Garnett &

Cavaye, 2015; Meghnagi & Tuccio, 2023). Drawing on these insights, Philippine HEIs can implement ongoing capacity-building initiatives in alignment with Republic Act No. 12124 to professionalize the role of assessors and institutionalize quality-assured RPL practices.

2.6 Assessor Workload and Scheduling Challenges

The effectiveness of RPL assessment depends not only on assessor competence but also on manageable workloads and supportive scheduling systems. International studies consistently identify workload pressures as a barrier to effective RPL implementation. Assessors are frequently tasked with RPL responsibilities in addition to their regular teaching and administrative duties, limiting the time available for in-depth portfolio reviews, interviews, and documentation (Assinger, 2023; Duvekot et al., 2020). Stephens (2023) cautions that such overload can compromise assessment quality and reduce faculty motivation to participate in RPL programs.

In the Philippines, similar patterns are evident within the ETEEAP. Dilla and Ibarra (2022) note that assessors often face challenges related to insufficient release time and administrative burdens, which hinder their ability to conduct thorough evaluations. Sayang (2025) adds that logistical issues—such as coordinating with adult learners, balancing concurrent institutional duties, and the absence of digital tools—further constrain assessor capacity and efficiency. These operational constraints not only affect the consistency and rigor of assessment but also threaten the sustainability of RPL implementation across institutions. Without formal recognition of the time and effort required for RPL activities, institutions risk diminishing both faculty engagement and the credibility of the process.

Best practices in international RPL systems emphasize the importance of institutional policies that support assessors through workload redistribution, dedicated RPL hours, and flexible scheduling systems. Streamlining administrative processes and integrating digital tools can further alleviate time constraints and improve workflow efficiency. Under Republic Act No. 12124, Philippine HEIs have a legal foundation to implement structural reforms in workload planning. Recognizing RPL duties as part of official teaching or extension functions, providing release time, and allocating administrative support are necessary steps to ensure quality-assured and sustainable ETEEAP implementation.

2.7 Support and Communication with Administration

The effective implementation of RPL depends not only on the competence of assessors but also on robust institutional support and clear administrative communication. International research highlights that successful RPL systems are underpinned by strong internal coordination, where institutional leadership aligns policies, resources, and personnel to facilitate the validation of prior learning (Duvekot et al., 2020). In contrast, unclear protocols and fragmented communication can delay processes and result in inconsistent application of standards.

In the Philippine context, the ETEEAP reflects how institutional commitment shapes program success. Navarro (2024) stresses that top-level administrative buy-in is essential for coherent RPL implementation. This includes establishing clear workflows, resource allocation, and guidance for both assessors and learners. Without such engagement, practitioners often face conflicting interpretations of CHED regulations and lack sufficient documentation support.

Stephens (2023) similarly notes that interdepartmental collaboration is vital for maintaining quality assurance. Fragmented implementation arises when academic and administrative units operate in silos, undermining program efficiency and policy coherence. Global models show that administrative support must go beyond compliance to include continuous dialogue, dedicated RPL units, and structured feedback mechanisms. These approaches enhance institutional readiness and promote consistent delivery of RPL services.

Republic Act No. 12124 offers a legislative foundation for embedding these practices within Philippine higher education. To strengthen ETEEAP implementation, institutions must improve communication protocols, define administrative roles clearly, and establish integrated support structures. These actions are essential for sustaining a transparent, coordinated, and quality-assured RPL system.

2.8 Technological and Logistical Challenges

Technological readiness and logistical planning are critical to the effective implementation of RPL, particularly in hybrid or remote settings. Digital platforms for portfolio submission, assessment, and feedback enable assessors and learners to engage efficiently in the process (Agtarap et al., 2024). Without centralized systems, tracking progress and validating evidence becomes difficult, compromising assessment transparency.

Stephens (2023) highlights that underdeveloped digital infrastructure remains a major barrier to scaling RPL in many institutions. In the Philippine ETEEAP context, Sayang (2025) reports that manual processing remains common, leading to delays in documentation, increased administrative burdens, and limited accessibility—especially for adult learners in remote areas. These limitations hinder the scalability, equity, and credibility of RPL delivery under ETEEAP.

Globally, digitally enabled RPL systems have demonstrated improved efficiency and inclusiveness. Integrated platforms that support portfolio management, automated tracking, and remote assessor access are now considered standard in many successful RPL frameworks. These international models offer actionable pathways for the Philippines to modernize its systems.

In line with Republic Act No. 12124, Philippine HEIs must invest in scalable digital tools, develop logistical frameworks for flexible assessment delivery, and train staff in digital RPL systems. Without these reforms, ETEEAP risks falling short of its promise to deliver equitable, credible, and accessible RPL.

2.9 Curriculum and Assessment Alignment

Alignment between curriculum outcomes and RPL assessment criteria is a cornerstone of quality assurance. For RPL to be credible, assessments must reflect well-defined learning outcomes that align with institutional and program-level standards (Marion et al., 2024). This ensures that evaluations measure relevant competencies rather than arbitrary indicators. Meghnagi and Tuccio (2023) emphasize that RPL tools should incorporate both general and discipline-specific outcomes to allow systematic mapping of experiential learning to academic equivalences.

In the Philippine context, ETEEAP implementation reveals ongoing challenges in achieving this alignment. Dilla and Ibarra (2022) report that the lack of curriculum-embedded rubrics often leads to inconsistent matching of prior learning with course objectives. Sayang (2025) further notes that in some programs, outcome mapping is unclear, increasing reliance on assessor discretion and risking subjective judgment. Strengthening alignment between curricula and RPL assessments is vital for standardizing practices and safeguarding academic rigor. Without this, recognition decisions may lack consistency and transparency across institutions.

Global best practices in RPL highlight the importance of linking competency-based curricula with assessment strategies to uphold validity and comparability. These lessons are particularly relevant as Philippine HEIs align their ETEEAP implementation with the standards set by Republic Act No. 12124. Integrating outcome-based curriculum design with clear assessment matrixes can significantly enhance the credibility and reliability of ETEEAP certifications.

3. Methodology

This study employed concurrent mixed methods design to examine the strategic enablers, operational challenges, and institutional policy directions that shape ETEEAP assessment practices. This approach enabled the collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data in parallel, allowing for the identification of measurable trends and in-depth stakeholder insights necessary to inform reforms aligned with Republic Act No. 12124 and CHED quality assurance policies.

The research was conducted at the Technological University of the Philippines (TUP), a CHED-deputized institution implementing ETEEAP. Using purposive sampling, 285 participants were selected, including 202 students and alumni, 58 assessors, and 25 administrators. All completed both the survey and the open-ended qualitative prompts. To provide contextual depth and support interpretive accuracy, several exogenous variables that may influence the study's outcomes were documented.

These included age, gender, academic position, teaching experience, highest educational attainment, years of involvement in ETEEAP, and area of expertise. Although not subjected to inferential statistical testing, these variables were used

to construct respondent profiles—covering administrators, assessors, and alumni—to aid in the interpretation of stakeholder perspectives.

A total of 25 administrators participated in the study. Most were aged 41–50 years, with a few under 30 and several aged 60 and above. The majority held doctoral ($n = 11$) or master's degrees ($n = 8$), while others had baccalaureate or other qualifications. In terms of institutional roles, most served as department heads, followed by deans, directors, and vice presidents. Notably, the majority had more than six years of involvement in ETEEAP, reflecting extensive experience in program oversight and implementation.

Among the 58 ETEEAP assessors, most were also aged between 41–60 years, with only a few in their 20s or over 60. A significant portion ($n = 42$) had more than 10 years of teaching experience. Their areas of expertise were distributed across academic fields ($n = 27$), industry-specific domains ($n = 6$), and a combination of both ($n = 25$). The majority held master's degrees ($n = 39$), followed by doctorate and other qualifications. More than half ($n = 28$) had been involved in ETEEAP for over six years, indicating a seasoned group of assessors.

Of the 202 students and alumni surveyed, the majority were aged between 31–50 years, with no respondents under 30 or over 60. Most had been engaged in the ETEEAP program for one to three years ($n = 120$), followed by those with less than one year ($n = 45$), or four to six years ($n = 35$) of involvement. Only one participant reported more than six years of participation, suggesting that most were relatively recent entrants to the program.

Quantitative data was gathered through a structured, expert-validated questionnaire covering five domains: assessment validity, learning outcome alignment, institutional support, policy clarity, and implementation challenges. Items were rated on a five-point Likert scale, and pilot testing produced Cronbach's alpha of 0.93 (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011), indicating high reliability. Descriptive statistics, including weighted means and standard deviations, were used to analyze responses.

Qualitative data came from open-ended written prompts aligned with the study's framework. A thematic analysis was conducted following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase process: data familiarization, code generation, theme identification, theme review, theme definition and naming, and final reporting. An inductive coding approach was applied, allowing key themes to emerge from the data without imposing preconceived categories. To ensure trustworthiness, the researcher re-reviewed codes and themes after a two-week interval and engaged in peer debriefing with a qualitative research expert.

Findings were integrated during interpretation, with qualitative insights enriching and contextualizing survey trends. This supported the mixed methods design in capturing the complexity of ETEEAP assessment practices. All ethical protocols were observed. Participation was voluntary, with informed consent secured from all respondents. Confidentiality and anonymity were upheld

throughout. The study was formally approved by the University Research Council.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Strategic Enablers and Challenges in ETEEAP Assessment

This section presents findings using a concurrent mixed-methods approach, integrating quantitative data with qualitative narratives from students, assessors, and administrators. Thematic subsections highlight key dimensions of ETEEAP assessment practices and challenges, each supported by summary tables and interpretive analysis. This structure ensures a holistic and evidence-based discussion aligned with the study's objectives.

4.1.1 Validation of prior learning

As shown in Table 1, assessors affirmed the authenticity of the ETEEAP process with high agreement that it accurately reflects participants' skills and knowledge (WM = 4.60, SD = 0.62). Students and alumni similarly viewed prior learning assessments as credible, emphasizing their alignment with real-world competencies and formal academic standards (Garnett & Cavaye, 2015; Staboulis & Sytziouki, 2021). One student noted, *"The program's comprehensive assessment allowed me to gain recognition for skills acquired through work and life experiences."*

Another added, *"It helped me reflect on my experiences, promoting confidence."* Validation of prior learning serves as a strategic enabler of inclusive academic recognition, affirming learners' experiential knowledge while aligning with the lifelong learning principles underpinning ETEEAP (Klein-Collins et al., 2021a; Dilla & Ibarra, 2022).

Table 1: Validation of Prior Learning

Indicators	W M	S D	VI
The ETEEAP assessment process accurately reflects participants' skills and knowledge.	4.6 0	0. 62	Strongly Agree
Assessments are well-designed to evaluate practical knowledge and real-world applications.	4.5 9	0. 62	Strongly Agree
Access to clear criteria for evaluating students' prior learning is ensured.	4.5 7	0. 60	Strongly Agree
Standards for assessment are consistently applied across different students.	4.5 7	0. 60	Strongly Agree
Assessment criteria align well with ETEEAP's learning objectives.	4.5 5	0. 57	Strongly Agree
Categorical Mean	4.5 8	0. 60	Strongly Agree

4.1.2 Recognition of professional expertise

Assessors affirmed that their professional expertise is well-integrated into the assessment process, with the highest mean score observed for the item *"The importance of professional expertise in assessments is recognized"* (WM = 4.60, SD = 0.59). Other items, including the utilization of industry knowledge (WM = 4.55) and alignment with institutional standards (WM = 4.59), received similarly high

ratings. However, opportunities for professional upskilling were rated slightly lower (WM = 4.31), indicating room for growth in assessor development. As presented in Table 2, these findings reflect the strong appreciation of professional expertise in ETEEAP assessments, though continuous development support remains necessary. Qualitative narratives echoed these results. Assessors emphasized their dual roles as evaluators and learners, gaining insights through student engagement. One stated, *“Being able to connect with students in different industries contributed knowledge to me.”*

Several called for standardized assessment tools and updated training modules. While ETEEAP strongly values professional expertise in its assessment processes, sustained institutional investment in continuous assessor development is necessary to maintain quality and relevance (Assinger, 2023; Heinonen & Tuomainen, 2022; Winstanley & Cunningham, 2023).

Table 2: Recognition of Professional Expertise

Indicators	WM	SD	VI
Professional expertise is fully used in ETEEAP assessments.	4.55	0.73	Strongly Agree
Industry knowledge is valued in the assessment process.	4.55	0.65	Strongly Agree
Guidance is offered to align assessments with institutional standards.	4.59	0.62	Strongly Agree
Opportunities to improve skills for ETEEAP assessments are provided.	4.31	0.80	Agree
The importance of professional expertise in assessments is recognized.	4.60	0.59	Strongly Agree
Categorical Mean	4.52	0.68	Strongly Agree

4.1.3 Engagement with faculty and program staff

Faculty involvement in ETEEAP implementation emerged as a critical strategic enabler, with the item *“Faculty involvement contributes to the successful implementation of ETEEAP”* receiving the highest rating (WM = 4.66, SD = 0.61). The overall categorical mean of 4.50 (SD = 0.66) reflects strong agreement across all items, particularly regarding collaborative communication, feedback integration, and access to support mechanisms. As shown in Table 3, assessors consistently affirmed the value of faculty engagement in improving assessment outcomes and credibility.

Qualitative narratives reinforce this quantitative pattern. Assessors acknowledged the supportive role of faculty and program staff in facilitating effective assessments. One noted, *“We work as partners in helping the students fulfill their requirements and degree.”* Another added, *“Faculty cooperation makes the assessment process more credible and smoother.”* In sum, collaborative partnerships

between assessors and faculty significantly enhance the integrity and effectiveness of ETEEAP assessments. These relationships support not only content alignment but also process credibility, echoing earlier findings on interprofessional cooperation in lifelong learning systems (Dilla & Ibarra, 2022; Klein-Collins et al., 2021a).

Table 3: Engagement with Faculty and Program Staff

Indicators	WM	SD	VI
Communication with faculty regarding assessment standards is regular.	4.29	0.70	Agree
Feedback is valued in program improvements.	4.50	0.68	Strongly Agree
Collaboration with faculty enhances the quality of the assessment process.	4.59	0.62	Strongly Agree
Faculty involvement contributes to the successful implementation of ETEEAP.	4.66	0.61	Strongly Agree
Opportunities to discuss assessment challenges with program staff are available.	4.47	0.71	Strongly Agree
Categorical Mean	4.50	0.66	Strongly Agree

4.1.4 Availability of assessment resources

While the availability of assessment resources received generally positive ratings (categorical mean = 4.37, SD = 0.71), specific limitations were noted. The highest-rated item was *"Sufficient resources are available to conduct thorough assessments"* (WM = 4.41, SD=0.68), followed closely by items on updated tools and accessible materials. These results are presented in Table 4. Qualitative responses underscored these findings. Assessors pointed to the need for more standardized and centrally available materials, such as common templates and toolkits. One assessor suggested, *"An updated assessment template across departments is needed."* Another shared, *"Centralized tools will help deliver faster results."*

These responses highlight the operational necessity for unified materials to support efficiency. The accessibility and diversity of assessment resources remain essential enablers in ETEEAP implementation. As emphasized by Assinger (2023) and Marion et al. (2024), the standardization and continuous updating of tools directly enhance assessment quality, credibility, and operational coherence in RPL systems.

Table 4: Availability of Assessment Resources

Indicators	WM	SD	VI
Sufficient resources are available to conduct thorough assessments.	4.41	0.68	Agree
Assessment tools and materials are up to date.	4.38	0.70	Agree
A range of resources is available to support assessment tasks.	4.33	0.73	Agree
Resources are accessible when needed.	4.36	0.77	Agree
Satisfaction exists regarding the variety of tools available.	4.36	0.67	Agree
Categorical Mean	4.37	0.71	Agree

4.1.5 Training and development for assessors

With a categorical mean of 4.11 (SD = 0.90), results suggest a general agreement that training mechanisms are in place for ETEEAP assessors; however, specific areas require further enhancement. As shown in Table 5, items such as “*Guidance on best practices in alternative assessment is available*” (WM = 4.24) and “*Participation in professional development is encouraged*” (WM = 4.14) received relatively high ratings. In contrast, the item on adequacy of training on assessment standards received the lowest means (WM = 3.97), indicating a need to strengthen foundational training.

Narrative responses from assessors affirmed these findings. Many expressed the need for regular, not one-off, training opportunities. One assessor emphasized, “*There should be consistent training, not just one-time orientation.*” Qualitative feedback reinforces the necessity of formalizing recurring training cycles and capacity-building support. In sum, structured and continuous training remains a strategic need for enhancing assessor preparedness and standardizing evaluation practices. As emphasized by Radović et al. (2021) and Chetty and Moodley (2022), sustained professional development is essential in recognition-based programs to uphold both quality assurance and equity in assessment.

Table 5: Training and Development for Assessors

Indicators	WM	SD	VI
Adequate training in assessment standards is provided.	3.97	0.94	Agree
Participation in professional development is encouraged.	4.14	0.91	Agree
Training covers practical aspects of assessment.	4.07	0.93	Agree
Guidance on the best practices in alternative assessments is available.	4.24	0.86	Agree
Resources to enhance assessor skills are accessible.	4.14	0.85	Agree

Categorical Mean	4.11	0.90	Agree
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4.1.6 Assessor workload and scheduling challenges

As shown in Table 6, the results indicate moderate agreement regarding workload-related challenges, with a categorical mean of 3.86 (SD = 0.95). While assessors generally found the number of assigned assessments to be manageable (WM = 4.43, SD = 0.65), other items reflected points of concern. For example, scheduling conflicts (WM = 3.40, SD = 1.20) and feelings of being overwhelmed (WM = 3.36, SD = 1.18) suggest persistent tensions between institutional demands and assessors' existing work responsibilities. One assessor remarked, "*Schedules often overlap with regular work.*"

This reinforces the quantitative trend and highlights how time constraints affect performance and engagement. Suggestions included increasing the number of assessors and redistributing responsibilities, both of which were reflected in supportive scores for "*More assessors would reduce scheduling issues*" (WM = 4.05) and "*Better distribution of responsibilities is beneficial*" (WM = 4.03). These findings are consistent with Khunoethe and Reddy (2023), who underscore the value of equitable workload systems in enhancing assessment reliability. Overall, the results emphasize the need for institutional interventions that reduce bottlenecks and foster sustainable assessment operations under ETEEAP. In sum, achieving long-term sustainability of ETEEAP assessments requires equitable workload distribution and strategic expansion of the assessor pool (Khunoethe & Reddy, 2023; Winstanley & Cunningham, 2023).

Table 6: Assessor Workload and Scheduling

Indicators	WM	SD	VI
The number of assessments assigned is manageable.	4.43	0.65	Agree
Scheduling conflicts are experienced.	3.40	1.20	Agree
The workload sometimes feels overwhelming.	3.36	1.18	Somewhat Agree
More assessors would reduce scheduling issues.	4.05	0.93	Agree
Better distribution of responsibilities is beneficial.	4.03	0.82	Agree
Categorical Mean	3.86	0.95	Agree

4.1.7 Support and communication with administration

As presented in Table 7, this theme received the lowest overall categorical mean of 3.77 (SD = 1.07), signaling a clear area for improvement. While some items were rated positively (e.g., communication and updates), others, such as delays in receiving information (WM = 3.21) and limited administrative support (WM = 3.60) indicate inconsistent coordination. One participant shared, "*Information often comes late or unclear.*"

Such gaps may hinder timely assessments and reduce program efficiency. In sum, strengthening proactive communication systems and institutional responsiveness can significantly enhance administrative support mechanisms (Deutscher & Winther, 2022).

Table 7: Support and Communication with Administration

Indicators	WM	SD	VI
Communication with ETEEAP administration could be improved.	4.07	1.02	Agree
Delays in receiving assessment information are experienced.	3.21	1.27	Somewhat Agree
Coordination with program staff could be streamlined.	3.95	0.94	Agree
Administrative support for assessment schedules is limited.	3.60	1.17	Agree
Timely updates regarding assessment policies are received.	4.02	0.96	Agree
Categorical Mean	3.77	1.07	Agree

4.1.8 Technological and logistical challenges

As presented in Table 8, this theme received a categorical mean of 3.64 (SD = 1.12), indicating general agreement that technological and logistical issues remain a concern in ETEEAP implementation. While respondents appreciated the availability of digital assessment tools (WM = 3.90) and acknowledged the benefit of further training on ETEEAP platforms (WM = 4.10), they also reported challenges in accessing necessary technology (WM = 3.34) and obtaining timely technical support (WM = 3.36). Technical difficulties encountered during online assessments (WM = 3.48) further reflect areas where improvement is needed. One participant noted: *"Sometimes the system does not work properly, and no one is available to fix it quickly."*

Such issues can disrupt assessment flow and undermine the credibility of the evaluation process. In sum, investing in digital infrastructure, enhancing technical support systems, and expanding training opportunities are essential to improving the efficiency and reliability of technology-enabled RPL delivery (Heinonen & Tuomainen, 2022).

Table 8: Technological and Logistical Challenges

Indicators	W M	S D	VI
Technical difficulties are encountered when using online assessment platforms.	3.4 8	1.2	Agree
Access to necessary technology for assessments is limited.	3.3 4	1.1 9	Somewhat Agree
Technical support is not consistently available when needed for assessments.	3.3 6	1.2 4	Somewhat Agree
Digital assessment tools require improvement to enhance efficiency.	3.9	1.0 4	Agree
Additional training on ETEEAP's digital platforms would be beneficial.	4.1	0.9 5	Agree
Categorical Mean	3.6 4	1.1 2	Agree

4.2 Thematic Findings on ETEEAP Assessment Practices

To capture stakeholder experiences and perspectives regarding the ETEEAP, thematic analysis was conducted using inductive coding from qualitative responses of students, alumni, assessors, and administrators. Key patterns were consolidated into 12 themes reflecting strategic enablers and implementation challenges.

4.2.1 ETEEAP students: Theme 1: Validation of prior learning

Students reported a strong sense of affirmation upon formal recognition of their prior work and life experiences. This process enhanced academic self-efficacy and validated real-world competencies. One student noted, "*The program's comprehensive assessment... allowed me to gain recognition for skills I had acquired through work and life experiences.*" This aligns with RPL principles emphasizing lifelong learning and empowerment (Andersson et al., 2013; Garnett & Cavaye, 2015). In sum, prior learning validation serves as a motivational anchor, reinforcing learner engagement.

4.2.2 ETEEAP students: Theme 2: Practical and contextual assessment

Many students advocated the integration of workplace-based outputs instead of traditional capstones. One student suggested, "*Projects implemented at the workplace should be accepted as thesis equivalents.*" In sum, authentic assessments strengthen relevance and align academic requirements with applied learning (Klein-Collins et al., 2021a; Republic of the Philippines, 2025).

4.2.3 TEEAP students: Theme 3: Academic support and guidance

Calls emerged for clearer academic scaffolding, such as structured rubrics, sample portfolios, and module outlines. *"We should have access to past theses or project samples,"* shared one student. In sum, enhanced academic support mechanisms are needed to boost learner preparedness, echoing moderate quantitative scores on training (WM = 4.11).

4.2.4 ETEEAP students: Theme 4: Learning infrastructure and resources

Students noted barriers related to internet connectivity, LMS access, and lack of industry-specific tools. *"We need access to project-related software and reliable platforms,"* one student stated. In sum, technological readiness remains a barrier to inclusive and effective delivery (Marion et al., 2024).

4.2.5 ETEEAP assessors: Theme 5: Professional growth through assessment

Assessors highlighted how the assessment process facilitated professional learning. *"I also learn from students; this contributes to my growth,"* one assessor shared. In sum, the assessment role is seen not only as evaluative but developmental (Winstanley & Cunningham, 2023).

4.2.6 ETEEAP assessors: Theme 6: Improving assessment practices

Suggestions included standardized templates, continuous training, and alignment of outputs with learning goals. *"We need standard modules and online peer-ready sessions,"* one assessor emphasized. In sum, training is a recognized enabler that needs systemic reinforcement (Chetty & Moodley, 2022; Radović et al., 2021).

4.2.7 ETEEAP assessors: Theme 7: Institutional resources and technological support

Respondents reported limitations in access to LMS, digital references, and devices. *"Online reading resources and stable internet are critical for assessing properly,"* one assessor noted. In sum, technological inadequacies threaten the integrity and efficiency of assessment delivery (Heinonen & Tuomainen, 2022).

4.2.8 ETEEAP administrators: Theme 8: Program Enhancement Initiatives

Administrators emphasized expanding ETEEAP through alumni engagement, outreach, and visibility. *"Promote accessibility for OFWs [overseas Filipino workers] and enhance learning platforms,"* one assessor suggested. In sum, strategic growth depends on external partnerships and inclusive access (Juhnke & Haley, 2024).

4.2.9 ETEEAP administrators: Theme 9: Policy and strategy recommendations

There were strong calls for faculty profiling, needs-based assessor training, and periodic policy review. In sum, a dynamic and data-driven policy framework is vital for sustained relevance (Raciti et al., 2024).

4.2.10 ETEEAP administrators: Theme 10: Management-level challenges

Infrastructure gaps, human resources shortages, and budget constraints were recurring issues. *"We need stronger IT infrastructure for remote delivery,"* one administrator shared. In sum, structural readiness is essential to ensure quality and scalability (Deutscher & Winther, 2022).

4.2.11 ETEEAP administrators: Theme 12: Stakeholder-centered implementation Improvements

Suggestions included improving stakeholder orientation and internal communication. "All stakeholders must be informed and engaged," one administrator noted. In sum, inclusive communication mechanisms enhance program visibility and promote institutional buy-in, as emphasized in studies on organizational change and RPL (Khunoethe & Reddy, 2023; Walters, 2020).

4.3 Cross-Analysis of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

The convergence of qualitative themes and quantitative data substantiates the internal consistency of the findings, revealing shared experiences across stakeholder groups. For example, student appeals for clearer academic scaffolding aligned with the moderate categorical mean for training and development (WM = 4.11), supporting previous findings on the importance of structured academic support mechanisms (Chetty & Moodley, 2022; Radović et al., 2021). Similarly, assessors' concerns about digital limitations and tool access reflected the lower rating on assessment resources (WM = 4.37), resonating with prior studies that emphasize the need for robust digital infrastructure in competency-based education (Bolton et al., 2017; Stephens, 2023).

Administrative observations of delayed communication and coordination corresponded with the lowest categorical mean on support and communication with administration (WM = 3.77), reinforcing similar insights by Deutscher and Winther (2022) regarding the operational challenges in non-traditional learning systems. These cross-validated patterns suggest that strategic gaps are consistently identified, regardless of role, reinforcing the validity and coherence of the mixed-methods results.

These insights are further synthesized in Table 9, which provides a summary matrix of thematic findings categorized by stakeholder group. The table visually consolidates the key themes and summary insights derived from both quantitative indicators and qualitative narratives, thereby enhancing the interpretive value of the integrated analysis.

Table 9: Summary Matrix: Thematic Findings by Stakeholder Group

Stakeholder Group	Theme	Summary Insight
Students	Validation of Prior Learning	Recognition enhances motivation and formal engagement
	Practical and Contextual Assessment	Workplace outputs should count toward academic requirements
	Academic Support and Guidance	Clearer rubrics, outlines, and portfolio references are needed

Stakeholder Group	Theme	Summary Insight
	Learning Infrastructure and Resources	Digital access gaps impact equity and performance
Assessors	Professional Growth through Assessment	Assessment roles foster continuous learning and expertise
	Improving Assessment Practices	Standardization and peer-led training are necessary
	Institutional Resources & Technology	Learning Management System, devices, and digital libraries remain inadequate
Administrators	Program Enhancement Initiatives	Expansion through outreach and alumni engagement emphasized
	Policy and Strategy	Advocated regular policy updates based on implementation data
	Management Challenges	Highlighted human resources, budgetary, and infrastructure limitations
	Stakeholder-Centered Improvements	Stronger communication and orientation campaigns recommended

4.4 Proposed Framework: Strategic Enablers for Advancing Quality Assessment in ETEEAP

This study proposes the Strategic Enablers Framework for Advancing Quality Assessment in ETEEAP, a multi-tiered model specifically designed to institutionalize coherent, credible, and context-responsive assessment systems within the ETEEAP. Informed by empirical findings and aligned with Republic Act No. 12124 and CHED's quality assurance mechanisms, the framework encompasses three interdependent layers: institutional foundations, enabling systems, and operational interventions.

At the foundational level, the model underscores the critical role of institutional leadership, policy alignment, and strategic resource allocation. These elements provide the legal, financial, and administrative groundwork necessary for the long-term sustainability of implementation ETEEAP. The enabling systems layer centers on coordinated governance, stakeholder engagement, and transparency through inclusive communication structures and participatory management. This directly addresses challenges identified in the study related to administrative fragmentation, unclear processes, and variable assessor support.

The top tier, operational interventions, defines four actionable domains: (1) standardization of tools and rubrics to ensure fair and consistent assessment; (2) structured training and professional development for assessors; (3) digital integration through LMS platforms and e-portfolios; and (4) academic recognition of industry-validated outputs, such as work-based projects and experiential evidence.

Distinct from generic RPL frameworks, this model is uniquely tailored to the Philippine ETEEAP context. It incorporates localized implementation challenges and the perspectives of institutional stakeholders, offering a targeted, inclusive, and policy-aligned approach. This framework serves as a strategic planning and evaluation tool for HEIs, policymakers, and accrediting agencies aiming to build equitable, outcomes-based, and competency-driven lifelong learning systems. Collectively, its three dimensions offer a transformative blueprint to advance the quality and institutionalization of ETEEAP assessment in support of inclusive higher education reform.

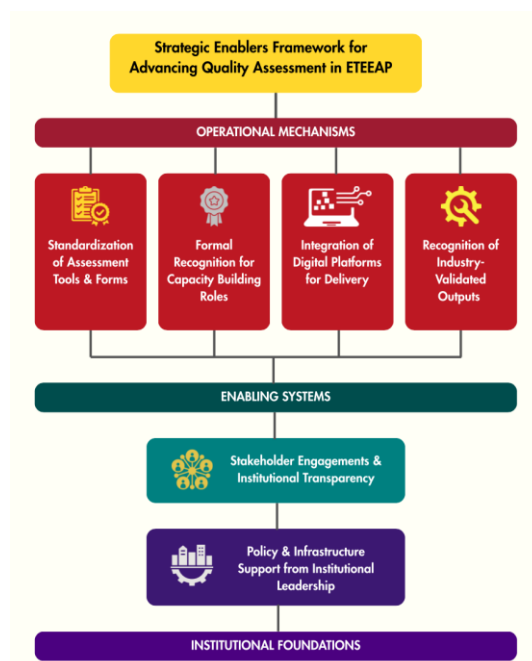


Figure 1: Strategic Enablers Framework for Advancing Quality Assessment in ETEEAP

5. Conclusion

This study explored the best practices, operational challenges, and institutional policy directions influencing assessment implementation under the ETEEAP. Using a mixed-methods design, it captured the perspectives of students, assessors, and administrators. Results confirmed ETEEAP's value as a mechanism

for recognizing experiential learning and professional competencies, with high stakeholder agreement on assessment credibility. Qualitative insights emphasized the need for structured academic guidance, administrative coordination, and digital support tailored to adult learners. Despite these strengths, the research revealed persistent barriers including uneven assessor workload, lack of standardized tools, fragmented communication, and limited training opportunities. These issues highlight the urgency of institutional alignment with Republic Act No. 12124 and CHED's quality assurance mandates.

In response, the study proposes the Strategic Enablers Framework for Advancing Quality Assessment in ETEEAP—a three-tiered model encompassing institutional foundations, enabling systems, and operational interventions. The framework recommends standardizing assessment tools, enhancing assessor training, integrating digital platforms, and recognizing industry-validated outputs as academic equivalents. Unlike generic RPL models, it is uniquely grounded in the Philippine higher education context and informed by stakeholder experience. By fulfilling its objectives, the study contributes to the formulation of evidence-based and scalable reforms in ETEEAP assessment. The proposed framework serves as a strategic guide for HEIs, accrediting bodies, and policymakers committed to embedding inclusive, transparent, and competency-based practices within lifelong learning systems.

6. Limitations and Future Directions

While the mixed-methods design provides a rich, triangulated perspective on ETEEAP assessment, the study has certain limitations. First, the research was conducted within a single ETEEAP-implementing institution, limiting the generalizability of findings across different institutional contexts. Second, the use of self-reported data may reflect individual bias or institutional positionality. Third, the cross-sectional nature of data collection restricts insights into the longitudinal impact of assessment reforms.

Future research should explore comparative analyses across CHED-deputized institutions to capture variations in ETEEAP implementation. Longitudinal studies tracking graduate outcomes, assessor performance, and policy compliance over time would yield deeper insights into the sustainability and impact of assessment reforms. Emerging areas such as AI-driven assessment, blockchain-based credentialing, and international benchmarking of RPL practices also offer fertile ground for advancing both theory and practice in ETEEAP and RPL systems globally.

7. Implications for Policy and Institutional Practice

The findings of this study hold significant implications for real-world policy implementation and institutional practice, particularly in the Philippine context where the ETEEAP is being institutionalized under Republic Act No. 12124. At the policy level, the results emphasize the need for the CHED to formalize a national framework that includes standardized assessment tools, scoring rubrics, and guidelines for evaluating prior learning. These tools must be adaptable to diverse disciplines while ensuring consistency, transparency, and academic rigor.

In practice, this means CHED can require institutions to use validated templates during audits or certification processes, ensuring equivalency decisions are comparable across universities.

At the institutional level, the study provides concrete guidance on improving internal ETEEAP operations. For example, HEIs can integrate ETEEAP assessor roles into official workload distribution and faculty development plans. Institutions can implement localized assessor training aligned with CHED standards, using real-life scenarios and portfolio samples to improve assessment quality and confidence. Moreover, the results suggest investing in digital infrastructures such as centralized learning management systems for portfolio submission, feedback, and tracking to streamline implementation and support learners in remote or international settings.

In terms of program delivery, the study highlights the importance of contextualized assessment. Institutions can recognize workplace-based outputs—such as project implementation reports, process documentation, or industry certifications—as valid equivalents to academic requirements, like theses or practicum reports. This enables working professionals, especially OFWs and community-based practitioners, to complete degree programs without disrupting their employment, thus bringing education closer to real-life application.

Collectively, these implications underscore the need to translate policy into operational tools and localized strategies that enhance the accessibility, credibility, and equity of ETEEAP. By embedding these practices into institutional systems, CHED and HEIs can ensure that assessment processes are not only compliant but also truly responsive to the lived experiences and professional trajectories of adult learners.

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