

## A profile of graduate education programs in the Philippines

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**I**n 2013, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) Task Force on Graduate Education called for an assessment of the state of graduate education programs in the Philippines. This assessment produced a comprehensive report on the state of graduate education programs in the country based on available CHED databases.<sup>1</sup> Focusing on enrollment and graduation data in the master's and doctoral programs for school year (SY) 2011–2012, some of the highlights of the report are presented in this *Policy Note*.

There are 2,299 higher education institutions (HEIs) in the Philippines, 656 of which are state universities and colleges (SUCs) while 1,643 are private HEIs. A total of 647 HEIs (28%) offer master's programs and 313 (14%) offer doctoral programs. The analysis presented here is based on clean data from the CHED databases representing 76 percent and 92 percent of HEIs that offer master's and doctoral programs, respectively. Unreliable data were excluded from the analysis

and as such, the frequencies presented underestimate actual population data.

### Master's programs

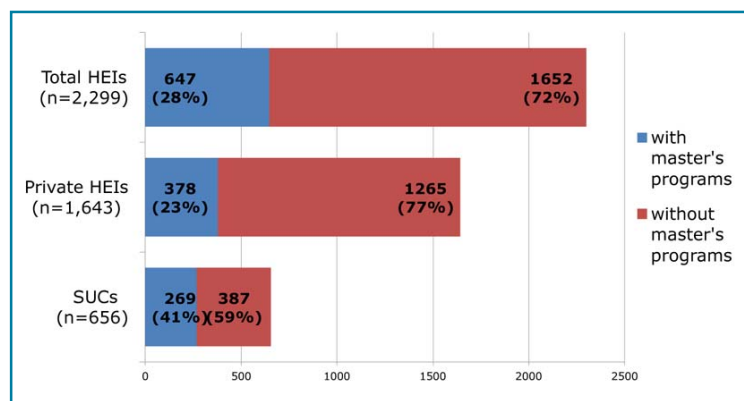
**HEIs with master's programs.** Of the 647 HEIs that offer master's programs, 378 (59%) are private HEIs and 269 (41%) are SUCs. Forty-one percent of the 656 SUCs and 23 percent of the 1,643 private HEIs in the country have master's programs (Figure 1). The top three regions with the most number of HEIs that offer master's programs are the National Capital Region (NCR) with 126 HEIs (20%), Central

<sup>1</sup> The assessment was carried out through the PIDS-CHED research project "An Assessment of the State of Graduate Education Programs in the Philippines" conducted by the Ateneo de Manila University. The author acknowledges the members of the research team, namely, Avegale C. Acosta, Nico A. Canoy, Aileen S. Garcia, Katrina May Dulay, Anne Marie Topacio, Alyda Yasmin Keh, Richard Martin Bautista, Ailen Marylou Bigay, and Kimberly Dollete Ngo. She also thanks the research consultants, namely, Dr. Lota A. Teh and Dr. Ma. Celeste T. Gonzales.

*PIDS Policy Notes* are observations/analyses written by PIDS researchers on certain policy issues. The treatise is holistic in approach and aims to provide useful inputs for decisionmaking.

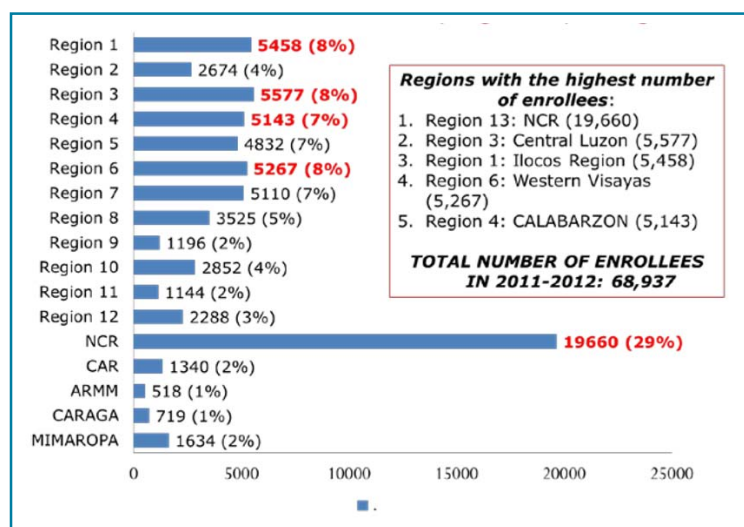
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**Figure 1. Overall number of HEIs offering master's programs in the Philippines**



\* Total number of HEIs: 2,299

**Figure 2. Number of enrollees in master's programs per region**



Luzon and CALABARZON with 60 HEIs each (61%), and Central Visayas with 54 (8%).

**Master's program offerings.** The most widely offered master's programs are Education (62% of all HEIs with master's programs), Public Administration (34%), and Business Administration (29%). The other programs that landed in the top 10 are Teaching, Educational Management, Nursing, Agriculture, Management,

**Table 1. Most widely offered master's programs, nationwide**

Program	Number of HEIs which Offer the Program	Percent of All HEIs with Master's Programs (N = 491)
Education	303	62
Public Administration	169	34
Business Administration	142	29
Teaching	121	25
Educational Management	90	18
Nursing	76	15
Agriculture	65	13
Management	58	12
Information Technology and Mathematics	57	12
English	50	10

Information Technology and Mathematics, and English (Table 1).

**Enrollment in master's programs.** Based on 76 percent of enrollment data for SY 2011–12, 68,937 students were enrolled in master's programs (Figure 2). Estimating actual population data, this translates to about 91,891 master's students.

Fifty-one percent of master's students were enrolled in private HEIs and 49 percent were enrolled in SUCs. Majority of them (28%) were enrolled in HEIs in the NCR. The other regions with the most number of enrollees were Central Luzon, Ilocos Region, Western Visayas, and CALABARZON, with 7–8 percent each of the total number of enrollees (Figure 2).

The master's programs with the most number of enrollees are Education (35% of all enrollees), Business Administration (9%), and Nursing (9%). The other programs that landed in the top 10 are Educational Management, Public Administration, Teaching, Management, Information Technology,

**Table 2. Master's programs with the most number of enrollees, top 10 nationwide**

Program	Enrollees in 2011–2012	
	Number	Percentage*
1. Education	23,855	34.60
2. Business Administration	6,230	9.04
3. Nursing	6,087	8.83
4. Educational Management	3,750	5.44
5. Public Administration	3,606	5.23
6. Teaching	2,552	3.70
7. Management	1,672	2.43
8. Information Technology	1,639	2.38
9. Psychology	996	1.44
10. Master of Arts	629	0.91

\* Percentage out of a total of 68,937 enrollees

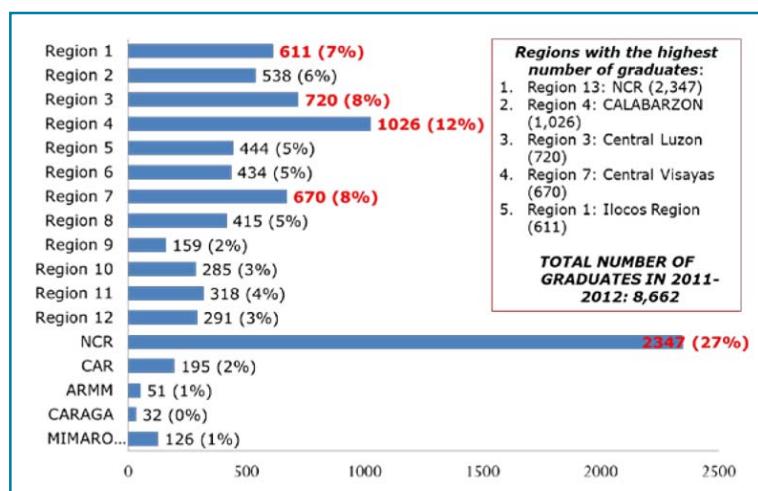
Psychology, and Master of Arts programs not specified (Table 2).

**Graduation from master's programs.** There were 8,662 graduates of master's programs in SY 2011–2012 (Figure 3). Estimating actual population data, this translates to about 11,397 master's program graduates.

Forty-five percent of the total graduated from private HEIs and 55 percent graduated from SUCs. Majority of the graduates came from HEIs in the NCR (27%) and CALABARZON (12%). The others graduated from HEIs in Central Luzon, Central Visayas, and Ilocos Region (7–8 percent each of the total) (Figure 3).

The master's programs with the most number of graduates were Education (27% of total), Nursing (14%), and Business Administration (11%). Educational Management, Public Administration, Teaching, Management, Information Technology, Master of Arts programs not specified, and Public Health were the other programs that landed in the top 10 (Table 3).

**Figure 3. Number of graduates of master's programs per region**



### Doctoral programs

**HEIs with doctoral programs.** Only 313 (14%) of the 2,299 HEIs in the country offer doctoral programs. One hundred sixty-three (52%) are private HEIs and 150 (48%) are SUCs. Twenty-three percent of the 656 SUCs and only 10 percent of the 1,643 private HEIs in the country have doctoral programs (Figure 4). Most of these doctoral programs (19%) are offered in Metro Manila-based HEIs. The others are offered by HEIs located in Central Luzon and Western Visayas (10% each), and Central Visayas (9%).

**Doctoral program offerings.** The most widely offered doctoral programs are Educational Management (45% of all HEIs with doctoral programs), Education (72%), and Public Administration (19%). The other programs that landed in the top 10 are Business Administration, Philosophy, Management, Development Education, Science Education, Educational Administration, and Business Management (Table 4).

**Enrollment in doctoral programs.** Looking at 92 percent of enrollment data for SY 2011–12,

10,455 students were enrolled in doctoral programs (Figure 5). Estimating actual population data, this translates to about 11,364 doctoral students. A total of 51 percent of doctoral students were enrolled in private HEIs and 49 percent were enrolled in SUCs. Majority of students (28%) were enrolled in HEIs in the NCR. The others were enrolled in HEIs in Central Visayas (9%), CALABARZON (8%), and Western Visayas and Cagayan Valley (7% each) (Figure 5).

**Table 3. Master's programs with the most number of graduates, top 10 nationwide**

Program	Graduates in 2011–2012 Number	Percentage*
1. Education	2,378	27.45
2. Nursing	1,249	14.42
3. Business Administration	958	11.06
4. Educational Management	385	4.44
5. Public Administration	544	6.82
6. Teaching	340	3.93
7. Management	267	3.08
8. Information Technology	132	1.52
9. <i>Master of Arts</i>	99	1.14
10. Public Health	96	1.11

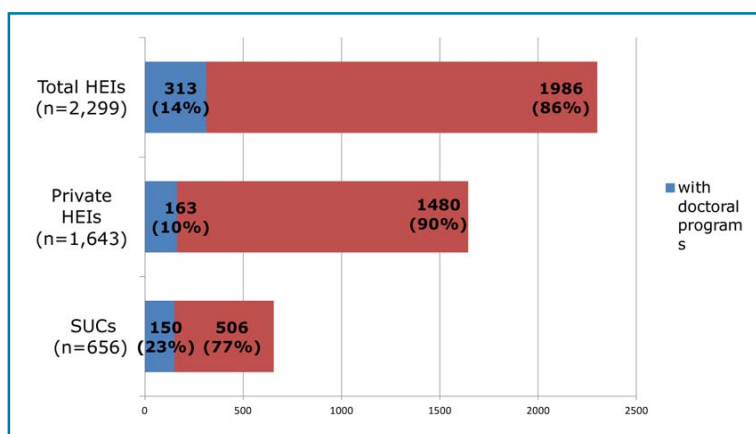
\* Percentage out of a total of 8,662 graduates

The doctoral programs with the most number of enrollees in SY 2011–2012 are Educational Management (27% of all enrollees), Education (14%), and Business Administration (4%). The other programs that landed in the top 10 are Management, Public Administration, Development Education, Philosophy, Educational Administration, Science Education, and Psychology (Table 5).

**Graduation from doctoral programs.** There were 1,208 graduates of doctoral programs in SY 2011–2012 (Figure 6). Estimating actual population data, this translates to about 1,313 doctoral graduates. Of all doctoral program graduates, 53 percent graduated from private HEIs and 47 percent graduated from SUCs. Majority of students graduated from HEIs in the NCR (26%), and CALABARZON, Cagayan Valley, Central Visayas, and Central Luzon (8–9% each).

The doctoral programs with the most number of graduates in SY 2011–2012 are Educational Management (30%), Education (12%), and Philosophy (5%). The other programs that

**Figure 4. Overall number of HEIs offering doctoral programs in the Philippines**



\* Total number of HEIs: 2,299

**Table 4. Most widely offered doctoral programs, nationwide**

Program	Number of HEIs that Offer the Program	Percent of HEIs with Doctoral Programs (N = 287)
Educational Management	128	45
Education	72	25
Public Administration	54	19
Business Administration	36	13
Philosophy	30	10
Management	26	9
Development Education	18	6
Science Education	18	6
Educational Administration	14	5
Business Management	13	5

landed in the top 10 are Public Administration, Business Administration, Educational Administration, Management, Development Education, Doctoral Programs not specified, and Business Management (Table 6).

### Summary and policy implications

Out of approximately 92,000 students enrolled in master's programs in SY 2011–2012, around 12,000 graduated. For doctoral programs, approximately 11,400 were enrolled in the same period and around 1,300 graduated.

The top master's program in terms of number of enrollees and graduates is Master of Arts (MA) in Education (which also includes MA in Educational Management and MA in Teaching). Second is Master's in Nursing and third is Master in Business Administration (MBA), which also includes MA Management.

In terms of doctoral programs, Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Education tops the list in terms of number of enrollees and graduates. Education here includes PhD in Educational Management, PhD in Education, PhD in Development Education, PhD in Educational Administration, and PhD in Science Education. PhD in Business Administration (which includes PhD in Management and PhD in Business Management) and PhD in Public Administration are also top programs.

These results have important implications that are worth pondering on. First, is the Philippines producing enough master's and doctoral graduates or is there a need to increase their

Figure 5. Number of enrollees in doctoral programs per region

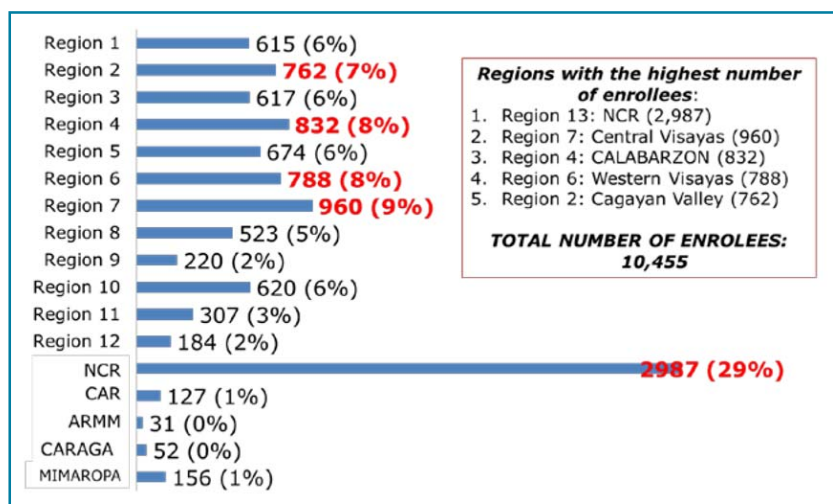


Table 5. Doctoral programs with the most number of enrollees, top 10 nationwide

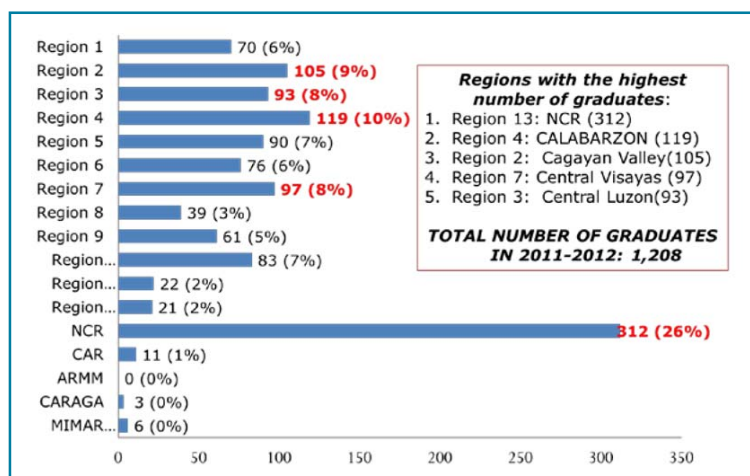
Program	Enrollees in 2011–2012	
	Number	Percentage*
1. Educational Management	2,847	27.23
2. Education	1,442	13.79
3. Business Administration	399	3.82
4. Management	386	3.69
5. Public Administration	353	3.38
6. Development Education	315	3.01
7. Philosophy	296	2.83
8. Educational Administration	249	2.38
9. Science Education	222	2.12
10. Psychology	146	1.40

\* Percentage out of a total of 10,455 enrollees

number? Second, are the top master's and doctoral programs (in terms of number of enrollees and graduates) what the country really needs? Third, should the country invest in programs that are not as popular but are strategic areas for national development?

These questions reflect the need to do a strategic look at the graduate education programs in the country. It is necessary to determine if the skills

**Figure 6. Number of graduates in doctoral programs per region**



and competencies being produced correspond to what the labor market needs. The answers may mean creating support structures and incentive mechanisms that can encourage enrollment in master's and doctoral programs that are not popular yet are critical for meeting the country's development needs.

In addition, given that the top doctoral programs such as Educational Administration, Business Administration, and Public Administration are avenues for developing the leaders of the

**Table 6. Doctoral programs with the most number of graduates, top 10 nationwide**

Program	Graduates in 2011-2012	
	Number	Percentage*
1. Educational Management	366	30.30
2. Education	140	11.59
3. Philosophy	66	5.46
4. Public Administration	54	4.47
5. Business Administration	50	4.14
6. Educational Administration	44	3.64
7. Management	38	3.15
8. Development Education	35	2.90
9. No Name	23	1.90
10. Business Management	19	1.57

\* Percentage out of a total of 1,208 graduates

country's schools, HEIs, and private and public sectors, it is important to ask if their current curricula are adequately preparing our future managers and administrators. Are the HEIs developing the competencies needed to manage schools, corporations, and government organizations? What are the skills needed by practitioners? What are the learning outcomes unique to practice-based environments? This implies a review of existing curricula to ensure that these are helping to produce professionals who can be effective managers.

Graduate education also ensures the steady supply of graduates who can teach master's and doctoral programs later on. But is the country producing them simply to meet this human resource need? While our graduate education programs are needed to produce good teachers and good managers, it is critical to analyze how the country's graduate education system can best serve the needs of the country to meet its development goals. 📄

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