Research Paper

Accreditation Readiness and Institutional Quality: An Assessment of Stakeholder Experiences

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Abstract

Accreditation is a vital mechanism for ensuring quality assurance, institutional credibility, and continuous improvement in higher education. This study examined accreditation readiness, stakeholder satisfaction, and perceived challenges at a Philippine higher education institution following the accreditation visit by the City College of Calamba (CCC) during the second semester of Academic Year 2024–2025. Using a convergent parallel mixed-methods design, quantitative data were collected from 525 administrators, faculty members, non-teaching personnel, and students, complemented by qualitative thematic analysis of open-ended responses. Results indicated a high level of accreditation readiness (M = 4.23, Excellent) and stakeholder satisfaction (M = 4.30, Very Satisfied), with administrators reporting the most favorable perceptions. Challenges were rated as considerable (M = 3.64), primarily related to administrative support, time constraints, and resource limitations. No significant differences were found across stakeholder groups, suggesting a shared institutional experience. A strong positive relationship was found between accreditation readiness and stakeholder satisfaction (r = .894, p < .001), while the relationship between readiness and perceived challenges was negligible (r = .133, p < .001). Thematic analysis yielded four major themes: institutional proactivity, operational barriers, integrated support systems, and empowered teamwork, which reinforced the quantitative findings. The results highlight that preparedness enhances stakeholder satisfaction but does not fully mitigate operational challenges. The study contributes a stakeholder-centered perspective to Philippine accreditation literature and proposes an action plan to strengthen accreditation readiness through inclusive, coordinated, and sustainable quality assurance practices.

Keywords: *Accreditation Readiness, Stakeholder Satisfaction, Mixed-Methods, Quality Assurance*

INTRODUCTION

Accreditation is a core mechanism for assuring academic quality, strengthening institutional credibility, and promoting continuous improvement in higher education. Beyond compliance, its effectiveness depends on institutional preparedness and the meaningful engagement of key stakeholders—administrators, faculty, staff, and students. Despite its importance, institutions often encounter challenges related to readiness, coordination, and stakeholder satisfaction.

In the Philippine context, accreditation is overseen by agencies such as CHED, PACUCOA, ALCUCOA, and AACCUP, which uphold national standards in instruction, governance, research, and community service. While accreditation enhances institutional credibility and access to academic and funding opportunities, it is resource-intensive, requiring extensive documentation, systematic self-assessment, and broad participation (AACCUP, 2019). As a result, institutions frequently face constraints such as unclear standards, limited training, and resource shortages, which may affect both stakeholder satisfaction and institutional performance.

Although accreditation is widely recognized as a quality assurance mechanism, Philippine studies have largely focused on compliance and outcomes, with limited attention to stakeholder

experiences. This gap is significant, as accreditation success is shaped not only by adherence to standards but also by shared perceptions, collaboration, and sustained commitment among stakeholders.

Addressing this gap, the present study adopts a stakeholder-centered perspective, consistent with Attree's (2025) work on structured stakeholder engagement in accreditation. The study examines institutional accreditation readiness and explores stakeholders' satisfaction and challenges during the accreditation process, highlighting the roles of institutional proactivity, integrated support systems, and empowered teamwork. Anchored in a mixed-methods approach, the study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. How may the administrators, faculty, non-teaching personnel, and students describe the institution's level of accreditation readiness?
2. How may the stakeholders describe their level of satisfaction regarding accreditation procedures?
3. How may the stakeholders describe the frequency of the challenges they encountered in the accreditation process?
4. Is there a significant difference between the assessments of the administrators, faculty, non-teaching personnel, and students regarding the institution's readiness for accreditation, their satisfaction with the accreditation process, and the level of challenges encountered in the accreditation process?
5. Is there a significant relationship between the described level of accreditation readiness and perceived level of satisfaction and level of challenges encountered in the accreditation process?
6. What themes can be identified from the meanings derived from stakeholders' accreditation experiences?
7. What action plan may be implemented to improve institutional accreditation readiness?

Overall, this study contributes to accreditation literature by providing a stakeholder-centered, evidence-based analysis of accreditation readiness within a Philippine higher education institution. By integrating the perspectives of key stakeholder groups, it offers practical insights to support sustainable quality assurance and continuous institutional improvement.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Enhancing Institutional Quality

Quality in higher education is a multifaceted concept shaped by diverse stakeholder perspectives. Students often assess quality based on educational relevance and degree value, faculty emphasize research productivity and student outcomes, while external stakeholders focus on value for money and societal impact. The absence of a universal definition has led scholars to argue for recognizing these varied perspectives rather than imposing a single standard, emphasizing that quality is ultimately defined by the purpose and outcomes of higher education (Giller, 2023).

Higher education institutions face increasing pressure to enhance quality and innovation, with accreditation serving as a central mechanism for maintaining academic standards. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated changes in accreditation practices, prompting institutions to reassess quality in digital and non-traditional learning environments. The expansion of online education further underscores the need to integrate technological advancements while maintaining rigorous quality benchmarks.

Accreditation engages key stakeholders—students, faculty, and administrators—in institutional governance and quality assurance. Evidence from India shows that governance structures influence accreditation outcomes and support continuous improvement (Patra & Singh,

2024). Beyond compliance, accreditation enhances institutional credibility, transparency, global recognition, and graduate employability (Kumar et al., 2021). Its effectiveness relies on leadership commitment, faculty engagement, and strategic resource allocation, positioning accreditation as a driver of institutional resilience and adaptability.

International case studies reinforce accreditation's strategic value. Experiences from Armenia highlight its role in governance and internal quality assurance, with emerging AI-driven assessments strengthening institutional autonomy (Topalidou, 2024). Similarly, Garwe (2024) demonstrates how systematic self-evaluation and stakeholder engagement improve institutional performance. Together, these studies emphasize accreditation as a tool for continuous quality enhancement and national development.

Finally, the interaction among Outcome-Based Education (OBE), accreditation, and university rankings significantly influences institutional quality and reputation. OBE promotes student-centered learning and employability through measurable competencies, while accreditation ensures academic standards and global alignment. University rankings further shape institutional visibility by assessing research output, faculty expertise, and graduate success, affecting enrollment, funding, and stakeholder confidence (Priya et al., 2024).

Accreditation Readiness

Accreditation readiness is a strategic process that aligns higher education institutions with academic standards while promoting excellence in teaching, learning, and institutional performance. Central to this process is systematic self-assessment of policies, academic programs, faculty qualifications, student outcomes, and institutional effectiveness, enabling institutions to identify gaps and implement continuous improvement strategies (Vronscki, 2024). Effective readiness is supported by dedicated teams, stakeholder collaboration, technology-enabled reporting, and investments in faculty development and student-centered initiatives (Qaheadmin, 2024).

Despite its value, accreditation poses challenges, including resource limitations, documentation demands, and evolving standards (Team Creatrix, 2024). Studies emphasize the need for innovative administrative strategies, strong leadership, and sustainable funding to enhance readiness (Ormilla & Dupra, 2023). Proactive models, such as Pasco-Hernando State College's Bridge to Success Quality Enhancement Plan, demonstrate how structured, outcomes-focused interventions can align accreditation requirements with institutional accountability and student success (Pasco-Hernando State College, 2025).

Assessment of Stakeholders' Experiences

The accreditation process in higher education relies on active stakeholder engagement to ensure academic quality and institutional credibility. Accrediting agencies establish standards, while government bodies regulate frameworks to uphold accountability. Institutions, faculty, and administrators implement these standards through self-assessment and curriculum alignment. Students and employers contribute insights to keep programs relevant to industry needs, fostering transparency and continuous improvement (Qaheadadmin, 2024).

A bibliometric analysis highlights trends in accreditation, emphasizing quality assurance, accountability, and collaboration. The shift toward student-centered accreditation and data-driven models enhances efficiency, yet challenges such as resource constraints and regulatory complexities persist. Addressing these requires strategic leadership, stakeholder engagement, and a commitment to continuous improvement.

Hashish et al. (2025) provide insights into nursing education accreditation, showing its impact on program quality, institutional credibility, and graduate preparedness. While faculty and

alumni value its role in reputation-building, students seek greater transparency. Challenges like administrative burdens and resource limitations underscore the need for institutional support. Despite these, accreditation drives curriculum enhancement and teaching improvements. A participatory approach, sufficient resources, and structured feedback mechanisms can optimize the effectiveness of accreditation, ensuring long-term benefits for education and professional readiness.

Mechanisms and Policy Changes to Enhance Stakeholder Engagement and Satisfaction

Requa (2021) examined strategies for making accreditation more efficient and meaningful, finding that institutions adopting an integrated approach achieved stronger engagement and outcomes. However, assessing student learning remained challenging due to unclear outcome-based evaluation designs. The study emphasized periodic review of planning documents and professional development to shift accreditation from a compliance exercise to a tool for institutional improvement.

As higher education undergoes digital transformation, effective stakeholder engagement, aligned policies, and clear communication are essential for sustaining quality. Participatory decision-making, structured feedback mechanisms, and data-driven evaluations—such as satisfaction surveys and learning analytics—support continuous improvement while maintaining quality standards (OECD, 2023). Accreditation systems must balance accountability with flexibility to avoid constraining innovation.

Evidence from other sectors reinforces this need for balance. In healthcare, JCI accreditation improved patient safety but introduced procedural complexity (Poremski et al., 2020). Similarly, the virtual accreditation of Macau University of Science and Technology demonstrated how accreditation can validate excellence while identifying areas for improvement in governance, faculty development, and risk management (QAA, 2022). Flexible accreditation policies, investments in digital infrastructure, and faculty development are therefore critical to sustaining quality, institutional credibility, and innovation in digital higher education.

RESEARCH METHOD
Research Design

This study employed a mixed-methods convergent parallel design, enabling the simultaneous collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data to comprehensively assess the institution's accreditation readiness. This approach enabled the comparison and triangulation of findings across multiple data strands, thereby strengthening the validity and depth of the results (Dovetail Editorial Team, 2023). The quantitative component involved administering a structured survey to administrators, faculty, non-teaching personnel, and students, measuring accreditation readiness, stakeholder satisfaction, and perceived challenges against predefined indicators.

These data were subjected to statistical analysis to identify patterns and differences across stakeholder groups. Concurrently, qualitative data were collected from the same respondents through open-ended questions embedded within the same Google-based survey instrument, allowing participants to elaborate on their experiences and perceptions. Collecting both closed-ended and open-ended responses simultaneously from a single set of respondents ensured methodological alignment and facilitated direct integration of quantitative and qualitative findings.

Respondents' Description

The study used G*Power analysis to determine the minimum sample size for a correlation study. Based on a medium effect size, acceptable alpha level, and sufficient power, at least 134

respondents were required. To enhance robustness and enable subgroup analyses, 525 respondents were surveyed.

Stratified random sampling ensured proportional representation of administrators, faculty, non-teaching personnel, and students. Eligibility required official affiliation during the accreditation period, direct involvement in or exposure to accreditation activities, and participation in the recent accreditation exercise. Administrators, faculty, and staff had to be currently employed, while students had to be officially enrolled during the academic year of accreditation.

Data were collected one week after the institution's accreditation during the second semester of 2024–2025 via a Google Form containing both quantitative and qualitative items. Completion took 20–30 minutes, allowing thoughtful responses and integration of both data types. The final sample comprised 13 administrators, 41 faculty members, 15 non-teaching personnel, and 456 students, for a total of 525 respondents (Table 1).

Table 1. Distribution of Respondents

Type of Respondents	Population Size	Sample Size	%
Administrators	25	13	2.5%
Faculty	81	41	7.8%
Non-teaching Personnel	71	15	2.9%
Students	3345	456	86.9%
Total	**3588**	**525**	**100%**

Instrument and Data Analysis

The study employed a self-developed questionnaire, rigorously validated for face, content, and construct validity through expert review and pilot testing, yielding a Cronbach's alpha of 0.96, indicating excellent reliability (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The instrument included closed-ended items on a 5-point Likert scale measuring satisfaction, frequency of challenges, and perceptions of institutional readiness, as well as open-ended questions to elicit qualitative insights into experiences, barriers, and suggestions for improvement.

Table 2. 5-point Likert Scale

Weight	Range	Qualitative Description		
5	4.21-5.00	Excellent preparation	Excellent Experience/ Very Satisfied	Major challenges encountered
4	3.41-4.20	Very Satisfactory preparation	Very Satisfactory Experience/ Moderately Satisfied	Considerable challenges
3	2.61-3.40	Satisfactory preparation	Satisfactory Experience/ Slightly Satisfied	Moderate challenges
2	1.81-2.60	Needs improvement	Challenging Experience/Dissatisfied	Minimal challenges
1	1.00-1.80	Poor preparation	Poor Experience/Very Dissatisfied	No significant challenges

Quantitative data were tested for normality, confirming suitability for parametric analyses using ANOVA and Pearson's correlation. Data were processed in SPSS, with descriptive statistics (weighted means) summarizing central tendencies (Field, 2018). One-way ANOVA examined differences among stakeholder groups (administrators, faculty, staff, students), while Pearson's r assessed linear relationships among key variables, including readiness, satisfaction, and challenges (Pallant, 2020; Cohen et al., 2014).

Qualitative responses were analyzed via thematic analysis following structured coding, theme development, and refinement (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This mixed-methods approach integrated quantitative and qualitative findings, providing comprehensive insights into stakeholder experiences and engagement with accreditation processes.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
Level of Accreditation Readiness

Table 3 shows accreditation readiness across ten indicators for four stakeholder groups. The overall mean was 4.23 (Excellent), indicating strong confidence in institutional preparedness. The highest-rated item was "The preparation process contributed to institutional improvement" (M = 4.37), while the lowest was "Adequate resources were provided" (M = 4.11), suggesting some logistical concerns.

Administrators rated readiness highest (4.48), followed by students (4.24), with faculty (4.15) and staff (4.14) slightly lower, reflecting their closer involvement in implementation. These findings underscore the value of collaborative stakeholder engagement (Vronscki, 2024) and highlight both the impact of accreditation on institutional improvement (Qaheadmin, 2024) and persistent resource challenges (Team Creatrix, 2024).

Table 3. Accreditation Readiness

Indicators	Administrators		Faculty		Staff		Students		Composite	
	Mean	VD	Mean	VD	Mean	VD	Mean	VD	Mean	VD
1. Clear accreditation guidelines	4.38	E	4.24	E	4.47	E	4.32	E	4.32	E
2. Sufficient Training and orientation	4.46	E	4.05	VS	4.40	E	4.20	E	4.20	E
3. Communicated requirements and standards	4.54	E	4.10	VS	4.20	E	4.24	E	4.23	E
4. Effective preparation coordination	4.46	E	4.27	E	4.07	VS	4.32	E	4.31	E
5. Adequate resources	4.23	E	3.95	VS	3.53	VS	4.18	VS	4.11	VS
6. Mock accreditation exercises	4.54	E	4.02	VS	3.87	VS	4.13	VS	4.12	VS
7. Sufficient administrative support	4.54	E	4.22	E	4.00	VS	4.28	E	4.27	E
8. Accessible documents and materials	4.62	E	4.32	E	4.47	E	4.23	E	4.26	E
9. Reasonable and structured timeline	4.38	E	3.90	VS	4.00	VS	4.12	VS	4.14	VS

10. Contribution to institutional improvement	4.62	E	4.44	E	4.40	E	4.35	E	4.37	E
Overall Mean and Verbal Description	**4.48**	**E**	**4.15**	**VS**	**4.14**	**VS**	**4.24**	**E**	**4.23**	**E**

Note: E - Excellent Preparation; VS- Very Satisfactory Preparation; S- Satisfactory Preparation; NI - Needs Improvement; P - Poor Preparation

Level of Satisfaction with Accreditation Procedures

Table 4 shows stakeholders' satisfaction with accreditation procedures, with a composite mean of 4.30 (Very Satisfied). The highest-rated item was "Teamwork and collaboration were evident among all stakeholders" (M = 4.41), and the lowest was "The process met my expectations" (M = 4.17), indicating some unmet individual expectations.

Administrators reported the highest satisfaction (M = 4.48), followed by students (M = 4.30), faculty (M = 4.29), and staff (M = 4.25). Slightly lower ratings by faculty and staff may reflect concerns about preparation or resources. These results highlight the importance of inclusivity, transparency, and feedback in accreditation (OECD, 2023), as well as the need to enhance communication and professional development to meet expectations (Requa, 2021; Poremski et al., 2020).

Table 4. Accreditation Procedures Satisfaction

Indicators	Administrators		Faculty		Staff		Students		Composite	
	Mean	VD	Mean	VD	Mean	VD	Mean	VD	Mean	VD
1. Organized accreditation process	4.62	VS	4.24	VS	4.13	MS	4.25	VS	4.25	VS
2. Faculty, staff, students, and administrators Preparedness	4.62	VS	4.00	MS	3.93	MS	4.25	VS	4.23	VS
3. Panel's constructive feedback	4.62	VS	4.34	VS	4.40	VS	4.36	VS	4.37	VS
4. Teamwork and collaboration of stakeholders	4.62	VS	4.49	VS	4.00	MS	4.41	VS	4.41	VS
5. Institutional improvement Contribution	4.69	VS	4.51	VS	4.40	VS	4.39	VS	4.40	VS
6. Alignment of process and expectation.	4.46	VS	4.05	MS	3.93	MS	4.18	MS	4.17	MS
7. Provision for Clear guidelines and expectations	4.62	VS	4.17	MS	4.27	VS	4.27	VS	4.27	VS

	Administrators		Faculty		Staff		Students		Composite	
8. Accreditor's constructive feedback	4.62	VS	4.41	VS	4.53	VS	4.27	VS	4.30	VS
9. Process contribution to professional growth	4.62	VS	4.41	VS	4.47	VS	4.26	VS	4.28	VS
10. Institution's future ability to meet accreditation standards	4.61	VS	4.26	VS	4.40	VS	4.36	VS	4.36	VS
Overall Mean and Verbal Description	**4.48**	**VS**	**4.29**	**VS**	**4.25**	**VS**	**4.30**	**VS**	**4.30**	**VS**

Note: VS - Very Satisfied; MS - Moderately Satisfied; SS - Slightly Satisfied; DS - Dissatisfied; VD - Very Dissatisfied

Level of Challenges Encountered

Table 5 outlines the challenges faced by administrators, faculty, staff, and students during accreditation, with a composite mean score of 3.64 (Considerable Challenges Encountered), indicating significant hurdles. The most frequently reported challenge was the need for more administrative support (M = 3.81), while the least cited was difficulty addressing the accreditation panel's concerns (M = 3.49). Administrators reported the highest level of challenge (M = 3.92), followed by faculty (M = 3.80), staff (M = 3.71), and students (M = 3.62), all identifying considerable strain on resources, communication, and support systems.

These findings highlight ongoing challenges in balancing stakeholder roles with limited resources, echoing Qaheadadmin (2024) and Hashish et al. (2025). The need for enhanced support aligns with the view that accreditation requires sufficient resources to avoid overburdening stakeholders. Improving communication, refining processes, and strengthening stakeholder readiness will be crucial for future accreditation cycles.

Table 5. Frequently Encountered Challenges

Indicators	Administrators		Faculty		Staff		Students		Composite	
	Mean	VD	Mean	VD	Mean	VD	Mean	VD	Mean	VD
1. Gathering and organizing documents	3.54	CC	3.98	CC	3.80	CC	3.65	CC	3.68	CC
2. Time constraints	3.92	CC	4.07	CC	3.46	CC	3.54	CC	3.89	CC
3. Addressing the accreditation panel's concerns	3.77	CC	3.46	CC	3.27	MCE	3.50	CC	3.49	CC
4. Coordination among stakeholders	3.92	CC	3.54	CC	3.40	CC	3.53	CC	3.54	CC
5. Need for more training or	4.08	CC	4.00	CC	4.07	CC	3.87	CC	3.89	CC

	awareness sessions									
6.	Unclear accreditation criteria	3.85	CC	3.61	CC	3.20	MCE	3.47	CC	3.50	CC
7.	Unbalanced workload distribution	3.69	CC	3.66	CC	3.47	CC	3.44	CC	3.47	CC
8.	Technical or logistical issues	4.15	CC	3.85	CC	3.53	CC	3.51	CC	3.55	CC
9.	Need for more administrative support	4.23	CC	4.07	CC	3.93	CC	3.77	CC	3.81	CC
10.	Stressful process	4.00	CC	3.71	CC	4.27	MJ	3.54	CC	3.58	CC
Overall Mean and Verbal Description		**3.92**	**CC**	**3.80**	**CC**	**3.71**	**CC**	**3.62**	CC	**3.64**	CC

Note: MJ - Major Challenges; CC - Considerable Challenges; MCE - Moderate Challenges; MI - Minimal Challenges; NO - No Significant Challenges

Significant Difference Between Stakeholder Assessments

Table 6 shows no significant differences in the perceptions of the four groups regarding preparedness (F = 1.083, p = .371), satisfaction (F = 1.896, p = .151), or challenges (F = 0.751, p = .531), as all p-values exceeded 0.05. This indicates a general consensus across stakeholder groups on the institution's accreditation performance.

Although administrators reported higher levels of preparedness (M = 4.48) and satisfaction (M = 4.61) compared to students and staff, these differences were not statistically significant. The findings suggest a unified experience, supporting the idea that accreditation is most successful when all stakeholders are engaged, as noted by Qaheadadmin (2024) and Hashish et al. (2025). While no significant differences were found, subtle variations in perceptions highlight the need to address resource gaps and administrative challenges in future accreditation cycles.

Table 6. Difference Between the Stakeholders' Assessments

Item	Mean Administrators	Mean Faculty	Mean Staff	Mean Students	F-value	p-value
Level of Preparedness	4.48	4.15	4.14	4.24	1.083	0.371
Level of Satisfaction	4.61	4.29	4.25	4.30	1.896	0.151
Level of Challenges encountered	3.92	3.80	3.71	3.62	0.751	0.531

*The test is significant (p < .05),

Significant Relationship Between Readiness, Satisfaction, and Challenges Encountered

Table 7 shows a strong positive correlation between accreditation readiness and stakeholder satisfaction (r = .894, p < .001), indicating that greater preparedness increases satisfaction. In contrast, readiness was weakly correlated with challenges encountered (r = .133, p < .001), suggesting that preparedness alone does not reduce procedural difficulties.

These results indicate that while readiness enhances satisfaction, challenges such as documentation and time constraints persist (Hashish et al., 2025). Addressing these requires system-level interventions, including improved digital infrastructure, administrative support, and structured processes aligned with quality standards (OECD, 2023; Qaheadadmin, 2024; Requa, 2021).

Table 7. Significant Relationship Between Readiness, Satisfaction, and Challenges Encountered

		r-value	Degree of Correlation	p-value
Level of Preparedness	Level of Satisfaction	.894*	High	<.001
	Level of Challenges	.133*	Negligible	<.001

*The test is significant (p < .05),

Legend: .90-1.00 Very High Correlation, .70-.90 High Correlation, .50-.70 Moderate Correlation, .30-.50 Low Correlation, .00-.30 Negligible

Emerging Themes from Stakeholders' Accreditation Experiences

The participants' significant experiences during the accreditation process reflected a dynamic interplay of preparation, participation, and institutional learning. Their narratives demonstrated an evolving commitment to quality assurance, operational efficiency, and collaborative engagement across stakeholder groups.

Institutional Proactivity and Coordination

Table 8 highlights the proactive and coordinated actions taken by the institution in its accreditation preparation, emphasizing the role of structured planning and heightened readiness. Participants noted that clear roadmaps and task deadlines helped them manage their time effectively and avoid last-minute rushes, with one faculty member sharing, "We managed our time better and avoided cramming." This underscores the value of anticipatory planning and shared responsibility. Similarly, students appreciated their involvement, with one noting, "We practiced how to behave and greet accreditors," reflecting the attention given to behavioral readiness.

These findings align with the best practices for accreditation described by Chasokela and Manokore (2024), particularly the emphasis on proactive preparation, inclusive participation, and structured planning. The institution's efforts to establish clear timelines, assign tasks, and engage stakeholders across all levels mirror the chapter's advice on forming dedicated teams and ensuring broad involvement. Furthermore, the focus on communication and task delegation in Table 7 aligns with the chapter's guidance on effective communication and task management with accreditation agencies. Overall, both findings reinforce the importance of a coordinated, inclusive, and reflective approach to accreditation, fostering preparedness and reducing stress throughout the process.

Table 8. Accreditation Preparation Experiences

Formulated Meanings	Codes
• Numerous orientation sessions, seminars, and trainings • Interview simulations and mock evaluations • Workshops and TWG assemblies	Capacity Building and Orientation
• Clear communication of objectives, procedures, and timelines • Timely updates and information dissemination	Communication and Information Dissemination

• Faculty-student communication and social media notices	
• Clear roadmaps and QA guidelines	
• Advanced planning and early task delegation	Strategic Planning and Time Management
• Meeting deadlines and structured timelines	
• Strategic planning and ongoing progress monitoring	
• Coordination and teamwork across offices	Collaboration and Stakeholder Involvement
• Collaborative effort from all stakeholders	
• Unified participation of faculty, staff, students, and administrators	
• Engagement and commitment despite time constraints	
• Clear designation of roles and responsibilities	Role Assignment and Team Structure
• Workload sharing among personnel	
• Distribution of tasks per office/area	
• Orientation of students on expected behavior	Student Awareness and Behavioral Readiness
• Practicing recitation and classroom behavior	
• Politeness, respect, and uniform policies	
• Increased student awareness and preparation	
• Organized, updated, and centralized documentation	Documentation and Evidence Management
• Evidence preparation and compliance tracking	
• Digitized records and document accessibility	
• Facility upgrades, cleanliness, and restroom renovation	Facility and Logistics Preparation
• Equipment preparation (computers, labs)	
• Enhanced logistics and physical environment	
• Visible leadership involvement and commitment	Leadership and Administrative Support
• Strong administrative support and guidance	
• Core group leadership and coordination	
• Accreditation ceremony and opening events	Accreditation Day Events and Protocols
• Entertainment programs and welcoming accreditors	
• Observation visits and stakeholder interviews	
• Self-study and internal audits	Self-Assessment and Continuous Improvement
• Evaluation and identification of areas for improvement	
• Commitment to continuous quality enhancement	

Organizational, Technical, Emotional, and Logistical Obstacles

Challenges revealed in Table 9 offer a critical perspective on institutional limitations, spanning organizational, technical, emotional, and logistical dimensions. A student shared, "We were afraid of making mistakes because it might affect the school's image," reflecting the emotional

pressure tied to accreditation. Faculty also raised concerns over role ambiguity and the absence of standardized onboarding, which led to performance gaps and inconsistent documentation.

These challenges closely align with the findings of Hossain (2024) on B-schools in Bangladesh seeking accreditation from the Bangladesh Accreditation Council (BAC). Despite a shared commitment to quality assurance, both contexts struggle with limited infrastructure, unclear systems, and inadequate institutional support. Together, these findings underscore the urgent need for structured processes, sufficient resources, and psychosocial preparedness to strengthen accreditation readiness and institutional resilience.

Table 9. Challenges Encountered

Formulated Meanings	Codes
• Time constraints and workload overload • Overlapping responsibilities • Insufficient preparation period • Balancing academic/regular duties with accreditation tasks	Time Management and Workload Balance
• Difficulty in organizing, printing, filing, and duplicating documents • Lack of systematic document tracking • Retrieval of old/unendorsed files	Documentation and Evidence Management
• Lack of printers, copiers, office supplies, paper, and IT equipment • Poor internet connectivity and LMS issues • Broken or outdated laboratory and office equipment	Resource and Equipment Limitations
• Poor communication of guidelines, announcements, and schedules • Inconsistent updates and last-minute changes • Lack of clarity in instructions	Communication and Information Dissemination Gaps
• Limited student awareness and involvement • Nervousness, anxiety during observations/interviews • Lack of orientation or briefing for students	Student Awareness and Readiness
• Lack of support or participation from some faculty/staff • Uneven task distribution • Inadequate initiative from key personnel or area chairs	Stakeholder Engagement and Role Accountability
• Inadequate orientation/training for new personnel • Absence of standardized templates and transition protocols • No clear briefing on expectations or procedures	Preparation System and Onboarding Gaps
• Facilities too small or inadequate • Insufficient classrooms, libraries, or temperature-controlled waiting areas • Limited space for accreditation activities	Facilities and Physical Environment Constraints

• Data privacy issues and improper access to files • Difficulty securing signatures or validated reports • Lack of standardized compliance monitoring	Policy, Compliance, and Data Security Issues
• Financial constraints for materials and operations • No honoraria or funding for publication or fieldwork • Budget limits affecting equipment, books, etc.	Financial and Budgetary Constraints
• Emotional stress, anxiety, and performance pressure among students and staff • Difficulties adjusting to expectations or new protocols • Fear of affecting institutional image	Psychosocial and Emotional Challenges

Forward-looking Recommendations for Additional Support or Resources

Building on the previously identified challenges, participants proposed forward-looking recommendations to enhance the accreditation process, as outlined in Table 10. These suggestions reflect a collective vision for a more sustainable and proactive system. For instance, calls to "make accreditation part of regular operations so we don't cram" and to "involve students more in planning and execution to foster shared responsibility" reveal a strong desire to shift from a culture of reactive compliance toward one of continuous, embedded quality improvement.

This forward-thinking perspective closely mirrors the aspirations of business schools in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, as discussed by Al-Marzouq et al. (2023). In both contexts, stakeholders advocate for integrating accreditation into routine institutional functions, aligning it with long-term strategic planning, and broadening engagement across internal communities, especially students and faculty.

The shared emphasis on fostering participatory, systematized accreditation cultures underscores a critical recognition: sustainable quality assurance is not achieved through isolated efforts, but through ingrained, collective responsibility. By institutionalizing accreditation as an ongoing practice rather than an episodic obligation, educational institutions can mitigate last-minute pressures, enhance coherence, and ensure meaningful, lasting improvements in academic quality.

Table 10. Additional Support or Resources Recommended

Formulated Meanings	Codes
• More time for preparation • Advance notice and year-round readiness • Dedicated timeline for accreditation activities	Time Allocation and Early Preparation
• Organized and digitized document management • Centralized repository or document tracking system • Standardized templates and filing protocols	Document Management and Digital Systems
• Stronger coordination among offices • Clear task assignments and communication • Inter-office collaboration to avoid duplication	Interdepartmental Coordination and Communication
• Additional personnel for document handling • Dedicated accreditation team	Dedicated Accreditation Personnel

• Project managers or point persons for each area	
• More training on accreditation standards and procedures • Orientation for students and staff • Tutorials and mock drills	Training and Awareness Programs
• Better communication strategies • Consistent updates and feedback mechanisms • Use of multiple platforms for information dissemination	Communication and Feedback Systems
• Reliable and fast internet • Improved IT infrastructure (e.g., LMS, routers, cloud storage) • Access to platforms for uploading, editing, and tracking documents	Technology and Infrastructure Support
• Availability of printers, copiers, scanners, and office supplies • Improved logistics for printing and reproduction • Streamlined processes for physical output	Equipment and Logistical Resources
• Additional classrooms, labs, libraries • Renovation of comfort rooms • Climate-controlled venues and waiting areas	Facilities and Physical Environment
• Inclusion of students in preparations • Awareness campaigns and student-led initiatives • Role of students in interviews, compliance, and discipline	Student Engagement and Participation
• Increased financial support from the administration or the government • Budget for supplies, infrastructure, and support staff • Funds for compliance and external benchmarking	Financial and Budgetary Support
• Clearer guidelines and policies • Defined standards from accrediting agencies • Flowcharts, manuals, and sample documents for reference	Clarity of Accreditation Guidelines
• External consultants or peer institutions for benchmarking • Sharing of best practices and insights from other schools	External Collaboration and Benchmarking
• Culture of continuous documentation • Making accreditation documentation part of regular operations • Sustainability and long-term improvements	Institutionalization of Accreditation Culture

Formulated Meanings	Codes
• Support for mental well-being and motivation • Encouragement and recognition of faculty and student contributions	Motivation and Morale Support

Strategies to Enhance Stakeholders' Collaboration

The study also revealed important strategies for strengthening stakeholder collaboration, emphasizing the need for intentional trust-building, clear communication, and structured teamwork, as summarized in Table 11. Participants acknowledged that cultivating a collaborative culture is not automatic; it requires deliberate effort and supportive systems. For instance, one participant noted, "Clear role assignments will help avoid confusion and prevent others from feeling left out." At the same time, another highlighted the importance of motivation, stating, "We should reward and recognize hard work to keep people motivated."

These findings align closely with best practices identified by Team Asana (2025), which emphasize that effective collaboration depends on fostering a culture of trust, establishing communication norms, recognizing achievements, and using shared tools. Asana underscores that collaboration must be cultivated as a core value—one that supports open dialogue, co-creation, and a psychologically safe environment. Echoing the participants' feedback, the article also advocates for clear role definition and the strategic use of collaborative tools to streamline workflows and avoid information silos. Both sources stress that sustainable collaboration flourishes when teams are not only structurally aligned but also emotionally invested, supported, and recognized. By integrating these practices, institutions can build inclusive, high-performing teams that operate with shared purpose and collective accountability.

Table 11. Strategies to Enhance Stakeholders' Collaboration

Formulated Meanings	Codes
• Regular, open, and multi-channel communication • Clear, consistent updates and memos • Use of digital platforms for updates and coordination • Scheduled feedback sessions	Clear and Ongoing Communication
• Defined and assigned roles for each group • Delegation of specific tasks based on expertise • Clarity on each stakeholder's contribution	Role Clarity and Task Delegation
• Early announcements and action planning • Year-round preparation mindset • Advance designation of responsibilities	Advance and Strategic Planning
• Regular coordination meetings and interdepartmental consultations • Formation of task forces or cross-functional teams • Shared responsibility across units	Collaborative Structures and Joint Planning
• Conduct of orientations, workshops, and training • Mock accreditations and simulations • Student and staff awareness campaigns	Capacity Building and Orientation
• Encouraging student voice through surveys, forums, and participation in planning • Inclusion in task execution and school improvements	Student Involvement and Empowerment
• Practice of daily discipline, professionalism, and school policies	Sustained Accreditation Culture

• Institutionalizing accreditation habits beyond scheduled visits	
• Use of shared drives, tracking dashboards, and digital repositories • Leveraging technology to streamline communication and documentation	Use of Technology and Systems Support
• Cultivating respect, openness, and shared ownership • Listening to each group's perspectives and supporting one another	Mutual Respect and Team Culture
• Regular monitoring and recognition of individual contributions • Acknowledging the hard work and commitment of stakeholders	Recognition and Motivation

Proposed Action Plan to Improve Institutional Accreditation Practices

The Action Plan was crafted in direct response to the root causes of difficulties and challenges encountered during the accreditation process, as revealed in the study. Key issues identified include poor time management leading to last-minute preparations, limited faculty and staff awareness of accreditation standards, insufficient training and role clarity, inadequate facilities and technological resources, fragmented communication across departments, and minimal student involvement and integration of feedback. These challenges created bottlenecks in documentation, coordination, and overall institutional readiness.

To address these issues, the action plan outlines nine Key Result Areas (KRAs) with targeted objectives and strategic activities. These include implementing a year-round documentation system, conducting regular capacity-building workshops, improving access to resources and infrastructure, establishing clear communication protocols, assigning specific roles through an accreditation task force, leveraging digital tools for document tracking, promoting student participation in accreditation-related initiatives, institutionalizing feedback mechanisms, and aligning internal policies with accreditation requirements.

Table 12. Proposed Action Plan

Key Result Areas (KRA)	Objectives	Activities	Personnel Involved	Time Frame	Success Indicators
1. Year-round Accreditation Readiness	Institutionalize continuous documentation and preparation	• Establish a calendar for quarterly mock audits • Implement regular area-based document updating per department	QA Office, Department Heads, Admin Staff	Quarterly (Year-round)	100% compliance in quarterly mock audits; updated files in all areas before actual accreditation
2. Capacity Building and Training	Strengthen faculty and staff competencies on accreditation standards	• Conduct accreditation seminars per quarter • Offer online modules and video tutorials	HRD, QA Office, External Speakers	Quarterly	80% faculty/staff are trained annually; 90% satisfaction rating in feedback

		• Include accreditation orientation in onboarding			
3. Resource and Facility Enhancement	Improve accessibility and adequacy of equipment and facilities	• Upgrade internet and computer lab equipment • Purchase printers, copiers, and scanners • Improve comfort rooms and student lounges	Admin, Property Office, ICT, BAC	Every Semester	Completion of facility upgrades; 100% functional resource availability before accreditation
4. Enhanced Stakeholder Communication and Awareness	Improve awareness and coordination among students, faculty, and staff	• Launch info drives through student leaders • Regularly post accreditation updates via emails/GCs • Hold accreditation town halls or general assemblies	QA Office, Student Affairs, Org Advisors	Monthly	95% stakeholder awareness (as measured in surveys); >3 town halls held annually
5. Assigned Accreditation Task Forces	Promote accountability and distributed workload	• Designate task leaders per criterion • Create rotating accreditation committees with assigned duties	QA Office, Admin, Deans	Start of each school year	100% of areas with assigned focal person; timely submission of required outputs
6. Integration of Technology in Accreditation Processes	Digitize accreditation documentation and workflow	• Create a centralized digital archive (Google Drive/SharePoint) • Develop a submission tracking system with deadlines	MIS/ICT, QA Office	One Academic Year	Fully operational shared drive; 90% of documentation submissions logged before deadline
7. Improved Student Engagement and Participation	Ensure meaningful student contribution to accreditation	• Hold simulation activities and interviews • Conduct pre-accreditation briefings per class • Assign student volunteers for logistics	Faculty, Student Affairs, QA, Class Officers	Prior to visit (2 months)	80% student attendance in briefings; positive feedback from accreditors on student involvement
8. Feedback and Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)	Use past results and feedback for institutional enhancement	• Organize post-accreditation debriefing • Develop action plans per area based on	QA Office, Area Coordinators	After every visit	All accreditor recommendations will be addressed in the next cycle; the CQI report will be submitted every semester

		accreditor comments			
		• Monitor implementation every semester			
9. Policy Review and Compliance Alignment	Ensure alignment of internal processes with accrediting standards	• Conduct annual review of policies • Update manuals and SOPs as per ALCUCOA standards	QA Office, Admin, Legal	Annually	Revised policies distributed; 100% alignment of practices to standards
10. Culture of Excellence and Daily Practice	Foster a mindset of continuous improvement and quality in daily operations	• Encourage documentation as a daily routine • Recognize model departments through awards • Showcase best practices in school-wide events	QA, Admin, Department Chairs	Monthly Recognition	Increase in timely submissions; departments awarded annually

Convergent Parallel Discussion

On the Level of Accreditation Readiness

The convergent analysis shows strong overall accreditation readiness (M = 4.23, Excellent), with administrators (4.48) and students (4.24) rating it highest, and faculty (4.15) and staff (4.14) slightly lower. The top-rated indicator was the process's contribution to institutional improvement, while resource adequacy was weakest. Qualitative themes of Institutional Proactivity and Coordination highlighted structured planning, clear communication, mock exercises, and cross-office collaboration, with students emphasizing participatory involvement.

However, faculty and staff noted operational challenges, including resource limitations and workload balance, such as insufficient printers, unreliable internet, and competing duties. This convergence indicates that while strategic and procedural readiness are strong, logistical gaps persist, suggesting the need for targeted interventions.

On the Level of Satisfaction with Accreditation Procedures

Quantitative data indicate high stakeholder satisfaction with the accreditation process (M = 4.30, Very Satisfied), with administrators reporting the highest satisfaction (4.48), followed by students (4.30), faculty (4.29), and staff (4.25). Teamwork and collaboration received the strongest rating (4.41), while meeting personal expectations received the lowest rating (4.17). Qualitative themes of Integrated Support Systems and Empowered Teamwork highlighted constructive feedback, administrative backing, and collective effort, reinforcing the quantitative findings.

However, qualitative insights reveal procedural nuances, including communication lapses, uneven workload, and unmet expectations, which help explain the slightly lower ratings for "met expectations." Comments such as "The process did not fully meet what I had hoped for" suggest that, while overall satisfaction is high, operational and communicative gaps—particularly affecting faculty and staff—moderately tempered stakeholder contentment.

On the Level of Challenges Encountered

Stakeholders reported considerable challenges during the accreditation process (M = 3.64), with administrators highest (3.92), followed by faculty (3.80), staff (3.71), and students (3.62). The

top challenge was limited administrative support (3.81), while addressing accreditor concerns was lowest (3.49), indicating shared institutional pressures.

Qualitative themes of Organizational, Technical, Emotional, and Logistical Obstacles contextualized these scores, highlighting issues such as time constraints, workload overload, insufficient printers and internet, and emotional stress. This convergence shows that challenges were multifaceted—affecting logistics, resources, and psychosocial well-being—especially for administrators and faculty, and extend beyond what quantitative measures alone capture.

On the Significant Difference Between Stakeholder Assessments

Quantitative analysis found no significant differences among administrators, faculty, staff, and students in perceptions of accreditation readiness (F=1.083, p=.371), satisfaction (F=1.896, p=.151), or challenges (F=0.751, p=.531), indicating broadly shared experiences. Although administrators reported slightly higher readiness and satisfaction, these differences were not significant.

Qualitative findings echoed this consistency in the theme of Shared Institutional Experiences, with all groups citing similar strengths—proactive planning and teamwork—and common challenges, such as resource limitations and communication gaps. References to "time pressure" and "need for better administrative support" appeared across roles, highlighting a unified perception. The convergence of quantitative and qualitative data underscores that accreditation was experienced collectively, rather than in fragmented ways.

On the Significant Relationship Between Accreditation Readiness, Satisfaction, and Challenges

Quantitative analysis revealed a strong positive correlation between accreditation readiness and stakeholder satisfaction (r = .894, p < .001), indicating that higher perceived readiness is closely associated with greater satisfaction. In contrast, the correlation between readiness and challenges encountered was negligible (r = .133, p < .001), suggesting that improved readiness does not substantially reduce the perception of procedural challenges. This statistical pattern highlights that satisfaction is closely tied to preparedness, while challenges persist independently of readiness levels.

Qualitative insights enrich this finding through the theme of Empowered Teamwork vs. Persistent Operational Barriers. Stakeholders explicitly linked satisfaction to feelings of preparedness and collaborative support, with comments such as "We felt ready because everyone was involved and informed," which aligns with the high readiness-satisfaction correlation. However, participants also consistently described ongoing challenges—such as documentation burdens, time constraints, and technical issues—as "inevitable parts of the process," regardless of how prepared they felt. This qualitative emphasis on enduring logistical and administrative hurdles explains why challenges remained salient (and statistically uncorrelated with readiness), underscoring that while readiness fuels satisfaction, it does not eliminate the inherent strains of accreditation compliance.

Integrated Conceptual Framework of Accreditation Readiness, Stakeholder Experiences, and Institutional Outcomes

Figure 1 presents the Stakeholder-Centered Accreditation Quality Enhancement Framework, illustrating how a dynamic, stakeholder-focused accreditation process drives institutional quality. Institutional inputs—such as leadership commitment, quality assurance structures, policies, and resources—form the foundation for effective accreditation readiness. These processes, including strategic planning, capacity-building, documentation management, and coordinated communication, shape stakeholders' experiences.

Higher readiness levels are linked to greater stakeholder satisfaction, particularly in teamwork, professional growth, and perceived institutional improvement, while operational challenges—time constraints, resource limitations, and workload—may persist. Qualitative themes of institutional proactivity, integrated support systems, and empowered teamwork show how readiness is operationalized, whereas logistical and operational barriers explain the challenges encountered.

The framework emphasizes that accreditation readiness enhances institutional quality and future preparedness when reinforced by continuous feedback and a cyclical quality improvement process. The feedback loop highlights accreditation as an ongoing, sustainable practice that embeds quality assurance into daily operations rather than a one-time compliance activity.
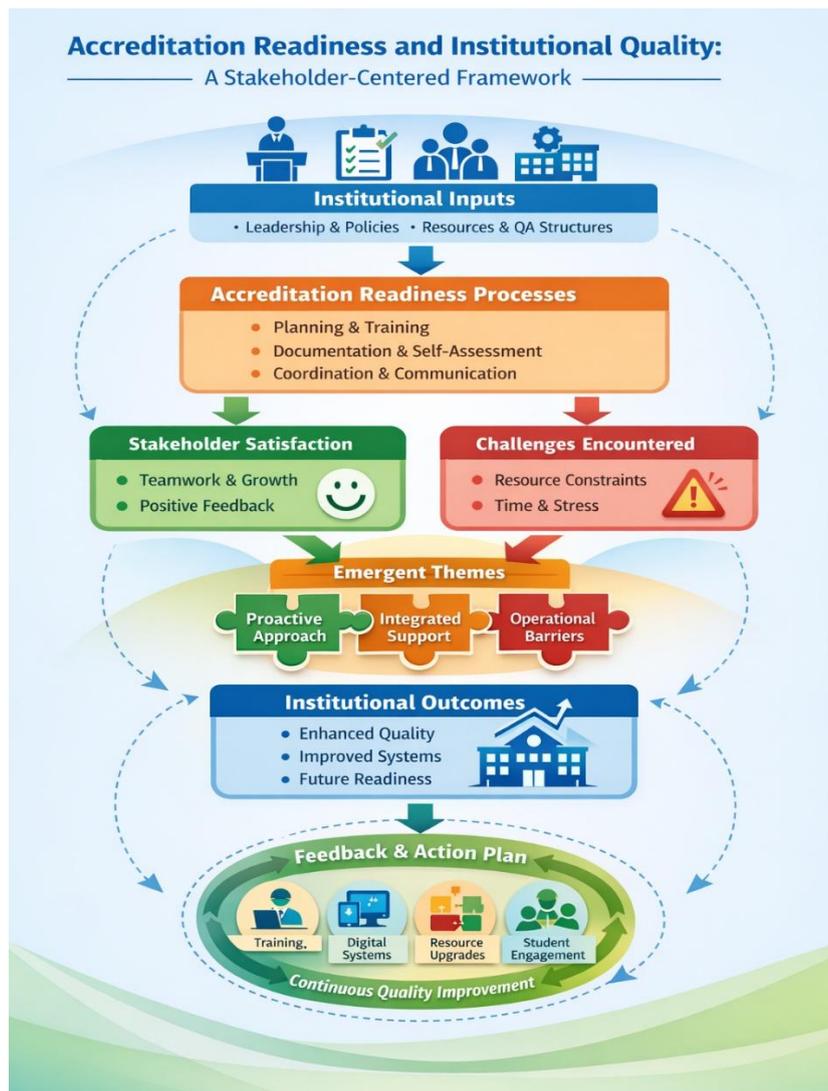
Figure 1. Stakeholder-Centered Accreditation Quality Enhancement Framework

CONCLUSIONS

This study confirms a strong relationship between accreditation readiness and stakeholder satisfaction, supported by proactive leadership, structured planning, and inclusive collaboration. High ratings for readiness (M = 4.23) and satisfaction (M = 4.30) indicate that a coordinated and transparent approach fosters shared ownership and positive stakeholder experiences. The strong correlation (r = .894) underscores preparedness as a key driver of satisfaction rather than a

procedural requirement.

Despite this, considerable challenges remain, particularly in resource allocation, time management, and administrative support. These challenges, rated moderately high (M = 3.64) and weakly related to readiness, point to operational gaps that preparation alone cannot address. Thus, while readiness enhances satisfaction, it does not eliminate logistical constraints.

The emergent themes—institutional proactivity, operational barriers, integrated support systems, and empowered teamwork—highlight accreditation as both a cultural and an operational process that requires collaboration, communication, and stakeholder readiness. Embedding accreditation into daily institutional practice is therefore essential. The proposed nine-point action plan advances this shift through year-round preparation, capacity building, technology integration, and inclusive engagement.

Overall, the study offers a stakeholder-centered framework that positions accreditation as a continuous quality assurance process. When approached as a collective growth opportunity rather than a compliance task, accreditation can strengthen institutional quality, stakeholder trust, and long-term resilience.

LIMITATION & FURTHER RESEARCH

The limitations of this study primarily stem from its context-specific focus, as it was conducted within a single higher education institution, thereby limiting the generalizability of its findings to institutions with different structures, resources, or accreditation experiences. Variability in stakeholder familiarity with accreditation processes, especially among students and some staff, may have affected the depth and accuracy of responses. Additionally, reliance on self-reported data introduces potential for bias and selective recall, particularly because data collection occurred soon after the institution's accreditation cycle. These factors suggest the need for broader, multi-institutional, and longitudinal research to deepen understanding of accreditation practices across diverse educational contexts.

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