

“If At First You Don't Succeed”: Exploring the Lived Experiences of Successful Filipino Licensure Examination Retakers

Dweezil Zoe N. Ilano

Xavier University - Ateneo de Cagayan, Cagayan de Oro City, Northern Mindanao, Philippines

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2025.914MG0083>

Received: 06 March 2025; Revised: 17 March 2025; Accepted: 19 March 2025; Published: 29 May 2025

ABSTRACT

The study explored the lived experiences of fifteen (15) successful Filipino licensure examinations retakers from various professions in Cagayan de Oro and its neighboring areas. Specifically, this study investigated exam retakers' experience of failing and overcoming, and the process that occurred in between. Using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), several themes were identified. These themes centered on their initial experience of failure as a negative event that led to a sense of incompetence, shame, sadness, and pain among others. Failure was attributed to uncontrollable misfortunes. Facilitative factors enabled retakers to successfully pass. These include the use of effective coping strategies, receiving emotional and instrumental support, and being driven by both personal and social goals. Following a successful retake of the examination are the practical benefits of having a professional license and positive shift in one's understanding of failure. Implications for developing or strengthening college-based or department-based support programs for professional licensure examinees and retakers are discussed.

Keywords: Coping, Motivation, Licensure Examination, Successful Retake, Interpretative Phenomenological Approach

The Problem

INTRODUCTION

Failing in an important endeavor, such as taking the licensure examination, can be very frustrating to some people. The experience could dampen the spirit and the morale, but how it actually looks and feels like and what it means to test takers whose expectations were unmet is yet to be known and understood in depth. Equally interesting and relevant is studying how these individuals deal with the failure, proceed with the day-to-day demands of life, why they finally decided to retake the exam, how they prepared for it, what sustained their efforts, and how they received the positive news that they finally passed. Their experience of failing and overcoming, and the process that occurred in between, could give courage and empowerment to those who also missed the licensure examination on their first or few takes and aspire to establish themselves professionally in their chosen discipline. Henceforth, this study is particularly interested in exploring the lived experiences of individuals who had to retake the licensure examination and finally passed the exam. Most importantly, the overall meaning-making of their experiences.

It is worth knowing how retakers overcame the experience of failure and what helped them in the process, the process they underwent as they moved from failure to eventually retaking the licensure examination. Their experiences could significantly shed light on those relevant factors and conditions, including their motivations, that may have largely contributed to successfully pass their examination.

It is recognizable that individuals have different experiences, practices, and strategies when preparing for the licensure examination. Some usually make rigorous preparations and strategies to ensure that they are prepared on the day of the examination. Understandably, the outcome of taking the licensure examinations can vary, with a percentage of candidates emerging with successful results and another percentage facing the frustration brought by failure. Individuals who fail the examination also vary in terms of how they respond to the

experience. More often than not, test takers dread the idea of failing. Yet, not everyone gives up on their pursuit of achieving something important just because of prior failed attempts.

There could be several facilitative factors, e.g., the presence of social support and employment of effective coping strategies, that may have helped test takers to cope with the failed attempt to pass the licensure examination on their first take, or even second take until they eventually passed. Firstly, people should recognize that although faced with the same failure experience, individuals could vary in the coping strategies that they use to deal with it. Coping is defined as the thoughts and behaviors mobilized to manage internal and external stressful situations (Algorani & Gupta, 2023), and coping strategies may be adaptive or maladaptive way (Thompson et al., 2010). Moreover, what may be considered an effective coping strategy could also depend on what they perceived as helpful or beneficial in their journey, i.e., from receiving the news that they failed the exam to retaking the said exam.

Secondly, given the subjective nature of how individuals perceive situations, it stands to reason that exam retakers also have distinct motivations for retaking the licensure examination. Motivation is defined as the impetus that gives purpose or direction to behavior and operates in humans at a conscious or unconscious level (American Psychological Association, n.d.). To be motivated means to progress or to be in motion to do something (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Exam retakers are motivated to pass the exam as it gives them a sense of honor and prestige and a competitive edge over those who are non-passers (Aquino & Balilla, 2015). Remarkably, motivation has two types, i.e., *extrinsic motivation*, which focuses on the motivation that arises from outside of the individual and involves external rewards, and *intrinsic motivation*, which focuses on the internal motivation that arises within the individual and something that contributes to the gratification one oneself (Cherry, 2022). However, it is recognizable that an individual may have both at the same time. What these specific intrinsic and extrinsic motivations are, and whether indeed both are present at the same time, as well as the combinations of which, as experienced by successful exam retakers, are to be ascertained.

Social support, more often than not, is cited by extant studies and literature as a resilience factor essential for maintaining psychological health in the face of a stressful situation (Ozbay, Johnson, Dimoulas, Morgan, Charney, & Southwick, 2007). This can come from exam retakers' family and relatives, peers, the school they graduated from, former teachers, or even review centers they enrolled in as they prepare for test-taking. For instance, review classes provided by the universities or colleges from which they graduated offer beneficial factors that may influence the test taker's performance in the examination (Herrero, 2015). Similarly, enrolment and active attendance to review courses conducted by review centers also help test takers have an increased chance of passing the licensure examination. In fact, pre-board mock examinations administered by universities or colleges and review schools are found to be important in the process of preparation for the examination (Herrero, 2015).

Apart from the employment of coping strategies, receipt of social support, and intrinsic and/or extrinsic motivations, the meaning-making that comes with the entire experience of test taking, failing, retaking, and finally passing the licensure examination is important. How these retakers make sense of the whole experience adds further depth to understanding what they had to go through, what helped, and how they successfully went through.

The experiences of these successful licensure examination retakers are to be explored in the hopes of inspiring and motivating other retakers in the licensure examinations to continue to strive despite their initial failed results. In the present times, some inquiries were made by the researcher as to department- or college-based programs dedicated to helping those who failed the licensure examinations, and there are few to no programs or interventions at all. At the same time, no specific studies have investigated in-depth the process behind failing and overcoming, their coping, and the motivations for retaking, especially among test retakers who come from an Eastern and collectivistic culture. Additionally, there are only a limited number of published research on the phenomenon of interest. Hence, the need to provide more empirical evidence as a way of coping with failure and motivating oneself to retake the licensure examination.

By and large, this explorative study is aimed at providing us with a rich and deeper understanding of the lived experiences of licensure examination retakers, whose prior experience of failure in test taking eventually led to

a successful retake. What happened in between and the relevant and beneficial resources, internal and external, that were received and expended and worked in their favor could significantly increase our knowledge and appreciation of factors salient to overcoming failure in licensure examinations.

Theoretical Framework

This research study is a phenomenological study that looks into the experiences of successful licensure examination retakers, that is, their journey from failing in their first or few takes of the licensure examination to eventually retaking and passing the examination. More specifically, the meaning they attached to the experience, their motivation(s) to retake, their ways of coping after failing the exam, the factors that facilitated their decision to retake the examination, including what and how they sustained their efforts throughout the experience of retaking the examination, were investigated. In the attempt to explore and understand the said phenomenon as experienced by the participants, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was employed. Through IPA a detailed examination of the participant's life world and how they made sense or gave meaning to their experiences, or the meaning-making process, were emphasized.

The researcher explored the said experiences of the participants through the process of interpretative activity. A two-stage interpretation process or double hermeneutic was involved whereby the participants' meaning making was taken into account. At the same time, the researcher tried to make sense of the meaning that participants have of the participants' experiences, while bracketing any potential biases in doing so.

As IPA commits to viewing a person as a cognitive, linguistic, affective, and physical being (Smith & Osborn, 2003), this study likewise gave importance to the varied, yet idiographic or unique elements of each participant's experience. The study also recognizes that each participant's experience is influenced by contextual factors such as the environment they belong to and the cultural practices and beliefs they take on.

To appreciate in full the idiographic journey of successful licensure examination retakers, this study included a small sample size, specifically fifteen (15) individuals, with the aim of detailing their perceptions, feelings, and behavior instead of making general claims (Smith & Osborn, 2003). A flexible data collection instrument through a semi-structured interview was utilized to explore their unique journey, allowing both researcher and the participants to engage in a dialogue or narrative and being open to other questions otherwise not initially considered. From the narrative account of the participants, emerging themes were arrived at.

Statement of the Problem

The present study aimed to explore the lived experiences of successful licensure examination retakers with regard to their experiences in retaking the licensure examination. Specifically, this study aimed to answer the following research questions:

1. How was the experience of failing the licensure examination?
2. What facilitated the successful retaking of the licensure examination?
3. How was the experience of eventually passing the licensure examination?

Significance of the Study

Licensure examinations are considered pivotal and may even be a humbling experience for different individuals. The Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) has been administering and conducting licensure examinations for various professions since it was established in 1973. Hence, there have already been many examinees across the nation yielding differences in results – those who successfully passed and those who failed. This current research study is particularly interested in exploring the experiences of those who initially failed the licensure examination on their first, or few takes but eventually succeeded on their latest retake.

As per the personal observation of the researcher, there are little to no studies regarding the experiences of licensure examination retakers who have to undergo failure and retry for several attempts before finally passing. The stories of how successful licensure examination retakers actually made it through the journey and what helped them along the way could be a robust and rich source of information and inspiration for the scientific community and for those aspiring to take a licensure examination and pass the exam; more so for those who failed and searching for ways to effectively get through the experience of failure and attain the coveted passing mark.

The results of this study can be beneficial for the respective colleges or departments, as study findings may be able to provide valuable baseline data for the improvement or development of their programs or curriculum, particularly in helping their students to amply prepare, especially those who are bound to take the licensure examination after graduating. Apart from strengthening the knowledge base of future licensure examination test takers, department-initiated programs, such as resilience-related modules or interventions, may help bring them through the targeted and desired student outcomes, which could, among others, mental, physical, behavioral, and emotional readiness, regardless of the licensure examination results. Additionally, the results of this study may also guide colleges or departments in developing and/or establishing support groups for licensure examination first-time takers and retakers alike as they embark on this undertaking (taking the licensure examination) where personal stakes and investment of internal and external resources could be expectedly high.

Overall, by acknowledging and discussing the experiences of failing, bouncing back, and eventually succeeding, people can create a more supportive and empathetic society where individuals, particularly test takers, feel comfortable sharing the challenges they encountered and significant turning points and promotive factors and conditions that led to the positive outcome, i.e., passing on their retake.

Scope and Limitations

The study focused on fifteen (15) successful licensure examination retakers across various professions and who are residents of Cagayan de Oro and its neighboring cities and municipalities.

The researcher focused on exploring the lived experiences of these successful retakers, what it was like to fail, what conditions or factors facilitated in overcoming the experience of failure and paved the way for a successful retake in the licensure examination, how it was like to finally pass, and the meaning they may have possibly made from the entire experience.

Definition of Terms

Coping. It is defined as the thoughts, behaviors, and beliefs utilized by an individual to manage internal and external stressful situations. This also refers to the conscious effort and voluntary mobilization of acts of an individual that aims to reduce or alleviate the stressors. There are two (2) different types of coping:

Adaptive Coping. This coping style is utilized among individuals who are working out their problems to reduce their negative emotions through productive and non-destructive ways. This type of coping usually involves dealing with the present problem.

Maladaptive Coping. This type of coping strategy is utilized among individuals and usually involves ways or activities that are generally counterproductive or destructive ways for an individual. This type of coping may also try to get away from the present problem.

Failure. It is a phenomenon that occurs when there is a contradiction between what an individual is aiming to achieve compared to what essentially happens. This is a terminology used to describe the given undertaking.

Licensure Examination. These are typically administered by governmental organizations to regulate a specific profession. These are done through individuals undergoing a test that will determine whether or not they possess the required knowledge and skills to practice one's profession.

Motivation. It is the primary reason that gives individuals the purpose or direction to produce a certain behavior or results when needed or aimed. This is voluntarily done among individuals as they try to achieve certain goals and/or aspirations. Consequently, this study refers to two (2) main types of motivation:

Extrinsic Motivation. This is a type of motivation that mainly focuses on external rewards an individual may benefit from. This usually aims at tangible outcomes such as rewards, money, etc., and may not necessarily be satisfying a psychological need.

Intrinsic Motivation. This type of motivation focuses on the internal rewards that primarily arise within an individual, and these usually involve gratifications for the individual after the completion of a task. This may include esteem, competence, autonomy, etc.

Psychological Needs. It is defined as the psychological nourishment for an individual's life, which allows an individual to function, flourish, and grow. These needs are considered equally important among other needs an individual shall have.

Retaker. This is an individual who failed a licensure examination conducted by the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) and is bound to apply and retake the examination.

Successful Retaker. These are individuals who are able to successfully pass a licensure examination.

Social Support. It is defined as the physical and emotional comfort received from the different sets of people of an individual. This can also be a part of a community of people where an individual is loved, cared for, valued, and thought well of by others.

Emotional Support. This is defined as the comfort and security received by a person where an individual feels that they are being understood and/or cared for by their surroundings. Typically, it is intangible.

Review Of Related Literature and Studies

This section of the study presents related studies and literature considered essential to understanding the current study of interest. Results from the studies of other researchers are incorporated to have more objective ideas and explore the similarities and differences of the presented concept as well.

Motivation for Taking and Retaking a Licensure Examination

There have already been many attempts to define the concept of motivation which always boils down to understanding that the definition is the perspective from which these attempts come (Grigorescu, 2021). According to Chan et al. (2018), the term motivation is derived from the Latin word "*movere*," which means "to move". Human motivation and cognition are complicated, and it may not be adequate to define the whole concept of motivation. However, in this study, the concept of motivation shall be defined as the impetus that gives purpose or direction to behavior such as preparing to retake the licensure examination, and it operates in humans at a conscious or unconscious level. This study also recognizes the link between motivation and fundamental psychic processes that study stimulation, persistence of an action or commitment, the process of decision and pursuit of a goal, and the feeling of control in doing so (Grigorescu 2021). Furthermore, motivation is considered as part of our adaptation with our environments in order for us to survive optimal conditions (Glanzer, 1958; Harlow, 1965; Morris, 1967; Spielberger, 1994; Pink, 2011) as when the pressure and expectation to succeed or achieve a goal is high.

This study tries to understand the motivations of licensure examination retakers and why passing the examination is important to them. It is primarily understood that a licensure examination is conducted to ensure that there is a specific standard or set of competencies that are being implemented and followed by various individuals (Ong et. al., 2012) along with their corresponding ethical codes that shall be strictly regulated by a government agency mandated to regulate such. In the Philippine setting, the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) is tasked to scientifically and consistently determine the competence of

Filipino professionals through the provisions of Professional standards and also the judicious issuance of Professional Identification Cards to Professionals who are under its jurisdiction; examples of these are Psychologists, Psychometricians, Criminologists, Electrical Engineers, and many more. Also, these professions have their respective Professional Regulatory Boards (PRBs) over-seeing them – to ensure continuous improvement of its professionals as well as improving the educational and professional standards here in the Philippines. As mentioned, some professions regulated by the Professional Regulation Commission, across all the regions, require the graduates to successfully pass a licensure examination for them to have a head start in their respective career paths. Those who pass the board examination will not only gain honor and prestige but will also have a competitive edge over those who have not (Pachejo & Allaga (2017)).

One of the motivating factors of individuals to take the licensure examination is the increased income and a good start in the profession; they see the examination as a mark of success and the essential starting point for becoming a professional (Oatme (2022)). As earlier mentioned, licensure examination is considered to be an essential requirement to practice one's profession (Binayao & Dales, 2020). It is believed that passing the licensure examination can be a stepping stone for most professions – to start their respective professional undertakings or even to progress more into their corresponding careers. It is consistently held that once an individual successfully passes the licensure examination, there is a higher chance of finding a job or starting a job that can support themselves as well as their families (Aquino & Balilla, 2015). However, we also have to bear in mind that not everyone can pass a licensure examination. There will always be a percentage of test takers who will have to face failure in the first take, or first few takes, or never pass at all. As much as one would want to ace it on the first attempt, there are experiences in this life wherein one has to try again to achieve one's goals and aspirations. It is clear that motivation, as a fundamental behavioral trait of man, is an important factor to consider in the attempt to explore and understand the experiences of successful licensure examination retakers. Having said that, one can proceed to explore what help test takers cope with their failure in the licensure examination.

Coping with Stressful Situations

Coping is defined as the thoughts and behaviors mobilized to manage internal and external stressful situations (Algorani & Gupta, 2023). These are conscious responses that help a person face and adapt to a novel situation, especially a situation that is stressful. People vary in the ways by which they handle stressful situations. When faced or subjected to a stressor, people have distinct coping styles or strategies. Coping strategies can be categorized into two, i.e., (1) *adaptive coping*, which generally focuses on how an individual confronts stressors or problems with optimism and flexibility, and at the same time recognizing and changing unhealthy emotional reactions; and (2) *maladaptive coping*, which prompts an individual to escape from the problem and to engage in unhealthy practices such as withdrawal from people and substance use (Thompson et al., 2010). Examples of adaptive coping include seeking counsel from others or airing out one's problem to trusted individuals, and looking for a solution to the problem or struggle. The latter example is a proactive response and reflects a sense of agency. Emotional support-seeking has long been recognized as an effective strategy to fight stress and negative emotions (Oatme et al., 2020). Extant literature also outlines four major categories of coping, namely, (1) *problem-focused* which addresses the problem that causes the distress (e.g., active coping and planning); (2) *emotion-focused* which aims to reduce the negative emotions associated with the problem (e.g., positive reframing, acceptance, and humor); (3) *meaning-focused* where individuals use cognitive strategies to derive and manage the meaning of the situations at hand; and lastly, (4) *social coping or support-seeking*, which involves reducing stress through seeking emotional or instrumental support from their peers (Algorani & Gupta, 2023).

Overall, studies show that high levels of adaptive coping appeared to act as a protective factor from the negative

consequences of a stressor, whereas maladaptive coping, such as rumination or the repetitive thinking on negative feelings or stressful experiences and their consequences, deters the person from overcoming the stressful situation (American Psychiatric Association, 2020; Thompson et. al., 2010).

It would be noteworthy to identify the ways by which licensure examination retakers perceive the failure they have experienced and the ways by which they accordingly cope with the situation they find themselves in.

Importance of Social Support

Closely associated with adaptive coping is social support. According to Social support refers to the psychological and material resources provided by a social network to help individuals cope with stress (Cherry, 2023). This social network could include one's family members, friends, colleagues at work, neighbors, health professionals, support, and sometimes even strangers (Canadian Mental Health Association, 2016). Oftentimes, the best support individuals can receive comes from individuals or groups of people closest to them and receiving such support provides feelings of acceptance beneficial to a person's physical and emotional health (Canadian Mental Health Association, 2016). However, different people in your life may provide different kinds of support. Social support also refers to actual resources provided by social interactions or relationships to deal with stress or a sense of attachment to a person or group which is considered to be "caring or loving" (Fu, Wang, Xiang & Xie, 2021). Support can be in the form of emotional concern, instrumental aid, information, or appraisal (Fu, Wang, Xiang & Xie, 2021).

Social support has been shown to provide for the successful management of stress and stressful events (Binayao & Dales, 2020; Verdadero et al., 2022). It reduces psychological distress and promotes adjustments that counteract high-stress levels. For instance, social support was found to be a protective factor that decreases psychological problems among individuals, such that the low levels of which resulted to high level of anxiety, stress, and depression among college students was found to result from low levels of support (Binayao & Dales, 2020). Support networks typically promote healthy psychological growth, which may also promote self-determination.

As indicated by Self-Determination Theory (SDT), the social environment could promote or hinder the formation and development of an individual's autonomous motivation by facilitating or threatening the three psychological needs – *autonomy*, *competence*, and *relatedness* (Ryan & Deci, 1985). Furthermore, work and family are important support sources, and prior research has provided a great deal of evidence for their buffering effect in weakening emotional burnout (Duke et al., 2009; Hur et al., 2015; Kinman et al., 2011). An environment that supports human basic psychological needs is theorized to contribute to healthy consequences, such as proactivity, integration, and well-being, whereas an environment that thwarts human basic psychological needs is thought to promote negative consequences, such as passivity, fragmentation, and ill-being (Guertin, 2020).

Cultural Factors Affecting Motivation, Cognition, Emotions, and Coping Responses

Apart from social support as an essential component to promote effective coping from setbacks in life, such as failure in a licensure examination, there are other contextual factors that come to the fore, affecting how licensure retakers cope and recover from failure. It is interesting to explore how one's cultural group and concomitant cultural beliefs influence how Filipino retakers view their experiences of failure. For one, passing a licensure examination is both a personal achievement and a family's pride, most especially in the Filipino household. Filipinos belong to a collectivistic culture and tend to possess an interdependent construal of the self (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Accordingly, for people with an interdependent construal of self, like us Filipinos, our expressions of emotions and motives are largely and significantly shaped by consideration of the reaction of others (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Easterners, such as Filipinos, see themselves depending to a large extent on how significantly their society see them and relate to them. For instance, the Filipino concept of *hiya* or "shame" could imply that one of the possible reasons an individual would strive to pass the licensure examination is to avoid the embarrassing and uncomfortable feeling of failure (Pe-Pua & Marcelino, 2000). This is perhaps one of the reasons why Filipinos strive to do the best that they can, such as passing the licensure examination, in order not to disappoint family members and to avoid feelings of shamefulness and humiliation that they experience from other people. Somehow, in the Filipino culture, a family member's failure is a family's shared experience of shame, and in the same way, a family member's success is a shared experience of victory and celebration.

Per PePua & Marcelino (2000), in most Filipino households, children are expected to somehow give back or pay back to their parents in some ways after they have completed their education. This is not quite something new to most. Unfortunately, there are also those individuals who are not just expected to but are even obliged to provide for the needs of their families, making it even more important for them to look for and land a job that can sustain and provide for their necessities. Some individuals strive to be successful in their chosen professions in order to provide even more for their respective families, and obtaining a professional license is one step. Hence, it is important and beneficial for the licensure examination retakers to receive the utmost support from their families and from their friends as the latter's support can significantly uplift their psychological well-being as they give their best effort to obtain a professional license.

Finding Meaning in Failure

Failure is said to occur when there is a disconnect between intended achievement goals and what essentially happens (Townsend, 2022). Inevitably, mental and emotional struggles accompany failure (Townsend, 2022). However, the nature and intensity of these struggles, and how these impact a person may be experienced differently by people. Every individual may perceive failure in different ways, depending on experiences, beliefs, and assumptions held (Mirchevski, 2019). Hence, it is important to explore how licensure examination retakers understand what failure means to them, and how overcoming the setback may change their initial perception of the failure.

According to Eyler (2018) and Steuer & Dresel (2015), creating an environment where failure is seen as a valuable opportunity for learning is essential for individuals to overcome their fear of failure. It really is important to learn that failing is a part of life and is something inevitable. People do not get to avoid this; rather, they look for other means to strive and continue moving forward. Seeing failure as an opportunity for exploration and improvement can be a great way of understanding and reframing it into a positive experience.

Understanding the value of acknowledging the experiences of failure allows individuals to introspect and gain a more insightful assessment of themselves, leading to a greater understanding of their current situation and may even then result in a better result, such as passing the examination. As we acknowledge and understand our experiences, it can also contribute to a more balanced and realistic understanding of success, highlighting the challenges and obstacles that individuals face along the way. It is essential to cultivate a culture that embraces both success and failure, recognizing that they are interconnected and part of a broader narrative.

In the context of licensure examinations, there could be several reasons that lead to failure in the exam. For instance, among criminology board examination test takers, some of these reasons included (1) high level of difficulty of the exam, (2) some items in the examination were not discussed in school, (3) pressured by thoughts related to the personal and social consequences of failing the examination, (4) high monetary cost entailed in taking the examination, (5) the language used in the exam is difficult to understand, and (6) and not having enough time to study or review for the examination (Albina et al., 2021). Certainly, the list does not encompass all other factors to which test takers may potentially attribute their failure.

Perceived Level of Self-Efficacy

On an individual level of analysis, the achievements of our personal goals, such as passing a licensure examination, give us a sense of personal pride coming from a perceived sense of self-efficacy, in which an individual believes in his/her capabilities to execute a particular goal and shows control over one's motivation (Bandura, 1977). Goal achievement also indicates a sense of competence that one has succeeded in a difficult task and attained the desired outcome (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Furthermore, this sense of competence also brings us a sense of happiness and fulfillment, which in turn increases our personal motivation to achieve (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Individuals with a high level of self-efficacy may produce a feeling of increased competence that can enable them to undertake difficult tasks such as eventually passing a licensure examination regardless of the subsequent retakes (Coe, 2016). Self-efficacy partnered with sufficient effort may then result in or produce larger changes in successful outcomes if it is well-executed. Furthermore, moral support from the family also helps individuals gain confidence and increase their level of self-efficacy in taking the licensure examination. This enhances their belief that they would be able to successfully pass the examination. Certainly, passing the

licensure examination leads to more confidence in their professional capabilities (Choe & Yang, 2009) and a high level of self-efficacy. The accolades and recognition received from others would even give a boost to one's confidence. Furthermore, achieving a goal, such as passing the licensure examination could provide a certain level of fulfillment as this would mean becoming a full-fledged professional in one's chosen field.

Similarly, according to the Social Comparison Theory by Leon Festinger (1954), people have no objective standard by which to evaluate their abilities; they do so largely by comparing themselves to others. In the same way, individuals who are taking licensure examinations do not have this fixed standard regarding when to actually pass. However, it is people's societal expectations and family or peer pressure that give them the objective standard that they should be taking and passing the licensure examination in one take only. Accordingly, theory of Festinger (1954), because of these comparisons, people either engage in the phenomenon called (1) *upward social comparison* or (2) *downward social comparison*. With downward social comparison, search for similar targets of comparison, which tend to be biased toward people who are slightly inferior to or worse off than ourselves, in order to feel somehow good about ourselves (Gilovich et al., 2016). On the other hand, with upward social comparison, people compare themselves with people who are better than they are in various domains of life.

Thus, it could be better to engage with upward social comparison instead so we can have opportunities for improvement with whatever we aspire to in life; also, when we engage in such type of social comparison, an individual shall also have an increased level of self-efficacy, wherein it is believed that we can attain whatever it is that we aspire when we, in ourselves, also believe so. Aside from having said self-efficacy, we also come to realize that there are other economic factors to consider that could also influence an individual retaking the examination.

Contextual Factors that May Contribute to Failing in the Licensure Examination

According to the Self-Determination Theory of Ryan & Deci (2017), self-determined motivation is encouraged when individuals can satisfy their psychological need for autonomy. Some studies have shown that this need can be frustrating when individuals face disadvantageous economic and social conditions (Manganelli et al., 2021). In addition, the Programme for International Student Assessment (2018) indicated that less household wealth often translates into fewer educational resources. In relation to the present study, preparing to take or retake a licensure examination can be costly. There might be some individuals who experience difficulties in terms of the availability of study resources or materials for them to review for the examination. Financial support from the family is thus an essential consideration to be made when deciding to retake a licensure examination (Albina et al., 2021).

Spirituality is another contextual factor that may help us understand the experience of failure and overcoming. According to Ocampo and Aragon (2018), Filipinos are well known for their strong faith and belief in supernatural beings. This belief system has long existed even before, and this is due to our rich history, culture, and religious beliefs. Even now, in modern times, more often than not, when things get difficult, God becomes our last resort (Ocampo & Aragon, 2018). In relation to this present study, retakers have probably come to a point wherein their faith is tested, and their belief in a supernatural being has been challenged. People hold different moral values. Moral values are defined by Althof and Berkowitz (2006), as cited in Ocampo and Aragon's (2022) study, as human behavior that guides our actions. With that, there are individuals who uphold their strong belief in a supernatural being and lift every life undertaking to the latter, even that of retaking a licensure examination. Hence, to some individuals, failure in the exam may be interpreted as "not the right or appointed time to achieve the desired result." On the other hand, other individuals would resort to blaming the Divine when they fail to achieve their goal such as passing the licensure examination. As Filipinos, our lives are closely linked with our religion, religious beliefs, or spirituality (Jocano, 2000, as cited in Ocampo & Aragon, 2022). Spirituality is an indispensable part of our everyday lives. Thus, it would be worth knowing how spiritual beliefs of Filipino successful exam retakers experienced failure and overcame failure.

Overall, this study acknowledges that several factors could be at work when it comes to dealing with a failure, such as failing in the licensure examination. More so, there are also several conditions that may facilitate or hinder effective coping with the experience. For a rich and comprehensive understanding of what Filipino

successful licensure examination retakers went through, this study shall look into their stories, stories that could shed significant light as to effective ways of surmounting what aspiring professionals may consider as a significant setback such as failure to acquire a professional license.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study is qualitative research that utilized the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). It particularly aimed to explore the experiences of successful licensure examination retakers among various professions, including what the experience of failing the examination was like for them, how they coped with the experience of failure, how they were able to overcome the said failure experience, how they pursued retaking the examination, how the experience of passing the examination was like, and how they understood the journey they went through from failing to succeeding.

An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was deemed appropriate for this research study as it explored and aimed to provide an in-depth understanding of their life-world and insights into real-world problems. Further, qualitative research, at its core, asks open-ended questions whose.

Moreover, one of the strengths of IPA is its ability to explain processes and patterns of human behaviors that can sometimes be difficult to quantify. Since this research focused mainly on the experiences of the successful licensure examination retakers and the facilitative factors or conditions that helped along the way, the researcher opted to explore the stories per participant in order to have an in-depth understanding of their experiences through a one-on-one semi-structured interview. This enabled the participants to share how they made sense of their world. This also enabled the researcher of this study to make sense of the participants' responses as the latter tried to make sense of their world.

Research Environment

This study was conducted in Cagayan de Oro City, and the participants were successful Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) licensure examination retakers. Moreover, the participants of the study included residents of Cagayan de Oro City and its neighboring cities and/or municipalities. The researcher decided to conduct this study within the locality as the researcher observed that there were only few studies that focused on successful licensure examination retakers who reside in the said area.

In the local setting, taking and passing the PRC licensure examination is essential to professionals as it is a legal proof to practice their profession in the Philippines. Accompanying possession of a PRC professional license are benefits and advantages such as authority to practice, professional identification, increased employability, and better compensation, among others.

Participants and Sampling Procedure

The study focused on fifteen (15) successful retakers of a licensure examination from various professions. The participants were specific individuals who have experienced failing the licensure examination and had to retake it prior to eventually passing. Moreover, the participants of the study were residents of Cagayan de Oro City and/or its neighboring cities and municipalities.

Table 1. Demographic Profile among the Participants of the Study

Participant Code	Profession	Gender	Age
P01-LPT-01	Professional Teacher	Male	27
P02-CRIM-01	Criminologist	Male	31
P03-RPM-01	Psychometrician	Female	26

P04-LPT-02	Professional Teacher	Female	26
P05-RPM-02	Psychometrician	Female	27
P06-RCE-01	Civil Engineer	Male	28
P07-CPA-01	Certified Public Accountant	Female	26
P08-CB-01	Customs Broker	Female	28
P09-CE-02	Civil Engineer	Male	26
P10-RMT-01	Medical Technologist	Female	24
P11-MED-01	Physician	Female	28
P12-DENT-01	Dentist	Female	28
P13-REE-01	Electrical Engineer	Male	27
P14-MID-01	Midwife	Female	23
P15-RPSY-01	Psychologist	Male	32

The study used a purposive sampling method. Prior to the actual data gathering, a pilot interview with two participants was conducted. This preliminary step allowed for the evaluation and potential revision/s of the research questions, which also ensured coherence with the research problems.

Data Gathering Procedure

Through purposive sampling method, specifically snowball sampling, the researcher selected fifteen (15) adult participants from various professions, who are residents of Cagayan de Oro and/or its neighboring cities and municipalities, who retook their licensure examinations and successfully passed the said exam.

From the pool of potential participants, the researcher contacted each through text messages, e-mail, or phone calls. After receiving their confirmation, they were given an Informed Consent Form (ICF) (see Appendix A and/or B) to explain the purpose of the research study. They were also informed that their responses would be audio-recorded for transcription purposes only to be done during the data interpretation, and they would be given the opportunity and freedom to decide whether they wanted to be part of the study.

Once each participant's informed consent to participate in the research was obtained, the researcher scheduled the date and time for an in-depth semi-structured interview via video conferencing applications such as Zoom or Google Meeting. Their responses were voice-recorded for data analysis purposes. The semi-structured interview encompassed a range of researcher-made questions pertaining to their experiences in retaking the licensure examination, their understanding of the concept of failure, their coping strategies, and the factors that motivated and influenced their decision to persistently retake the examination despite their previous failed attempt(s). Their responses to these questions were probed as necessary.

During the interview, participants' personal details or demographic profiles were obtained. After which, the researcher proceeded with the semi-structured interview. Their responses were transcribed verbatim. All participants were debriefed after the interviews. They were also assured as to the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses.

Interview transcripts were analyzed accordingly. The researcher initially coded participants' responses. Along the way, membership check was also executed in this study as the researcher made sure to confirm to the participants the accuracy of the data analyzed based on their perspectives or responses drawn from the interview. From the list of codes, themes were generated. In the process of identifying themes, the researcher did memo writing to ensure that her thoughts and reflections about the participants' responses are duly recorded. This was also a way to capture emerging themes.

The themes generated during the analysis were submitted to and validated by two (2) external and professional researchers to ensure that the identified themes comprehensively represented the data or responses from the participants. The researcher then secured a certification from the validators to attest that the themes were duly audited (See Appendix E and F).

Validity and Reliability of Instruments

A researcher-made semi-structured interview question (Appendix C) was used in data-gathering. This was content-validated by experts in the field to ensure that the interview guide is comprehensive enough to explore the participants' experiences of failure, their ways of coping with the failure, their motivations for retaking, and experience of eventually passing the licensure exam.

Prior to conducting an actual interview with the participants of this study, the researcher conducted a pilot one-on-one interview with two (2) participants. These participants were also successful licensure examination retakers. This procedure was done to ensure that the researcher-made semi-structured interview protocol was comprehensive, understandable, and aligned with the research questions at hand. Said participants' responses were not included in the interview transcripts that were analyzed.

Ethical Considerations

Purpose of the Research

This study aimed to explore the lived experiences among successful licensure examination retakers and their motivation and coping strategies practiced to retake. The data gathered in this study will contribute to the body of knowledge, and the results of this study can be beneficial for respective colleges or departments as study findings may be able to provide valuable baseline data for the improvement and development of their department-initiated activities, particularly in helping their students prepare for board courses. Apart from strengthening the knowledge base of future licensure examination test takers, colleges or departments can also include resilience-related modules or interventions to help bring them through the targeted and desired student outcomes, which could, among others, mental, physical, behavioral, and emotional readiness, regardless of the licensure examination results. Additionally, the results of this study may also guide the respective colleges or departments in developing and establishing support groups for licensure examination first-time takers and retakers alike as they embark on this undertaking (taking the licensure examination) where personal stakes and investment of internal and external resources could be expectedly high.

Participant Selection

This current research aimed to gather fifteen (15) participants across various professions regulated by the Professional Regulation Commission, which was done through purposive sampling, through referrals, and/or personal knowledge of the researcher. To be part of this research study, one must be a retaker in the licensure examination, a resident of Cagayan de Oro City and/or its neighboring cities and municipalities, must be a passer of the examination after retake. Consequently, the criteria for exclusion are those individuals who successfully passed the licensure examination in one take.

Voluntary Participation and Obtaining Informed Consent

Target participants were not coerced into joining the study. Only those who wanted to participate were handed the Informed Consent Forms (ICF) and Certificate of Consent (CoC). Participants who chose to participate in the study, were directed to a consent clause wherein they were asked to affix their signatures as a sign of their consent, confirming their knowledge that any further action in the interview will mean their willingness to be involved.

Procedures and Durations

The interview session duration was around 30 - 45 minutes, depending on the responses of the participants during the whole duration of the interview. Only one participant was interviewed per session. Participants' responses during the interview were voice-recorded for data analysis only. Honest stories and experiences were highly encouraged and appreciated to have a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of interest in this present study.

Risk of Participation

The researcher made sure that risk management was observed throughout the duration of this study. As the interview deals with the recollection of previous experiences of failure in the licensure examination/s, it is possible that it may raise issues or feelings that the participants would like support in dealing with. If this happens, the researcher would first respond with psychosocial professing as an initial intervention. The protection of its participants is the utmost priority throughout this study.

Participation in this study did not only focus solely on negative experiences but also on the motivation to succeed after failing the licensure examination. This included the participants' coping strategies. However, when participants considered some questions as "too personal" or if talking about such would make them uncomfortable, they were given the option not to answer and to proceed to the next one. Participants were also allowed to withdraw their participation in the research study at any time without influencing their relationship with the researcher in any way; this was highlighted in the informed consent form (ICF).

Withdrawal Criteria

The participants were given the freedom to withdraw at any time, for whatever reason, without penalty or loss of benefits to which they are otherwise entitled and without disclosing the reason for leaving. This was clearly stated in the informed consent form (ICF). The participants have the right to stop participating in the study even in the middle of the data-gathering process without any consequences. Participants are to inform the researcher, and they would be given the freedom to withdraw without any obligations. The participants' decision to withdraw would not influence the researcher in any way possible.

Benefits of Participation

The benefit the participants obtained from participating in this study was the opportunity to contribute to scientific knowledge. This would be an avenue for the participants to look back into their experiences towards becoming a successful passer in the licensure examination as a retaker. At the same time, they would also be able to share to potential retakers of licensure examination their success story, including what helped them along the way. In doing so, they can impart wisdom and hope to other individuals who are aspiring to become professionals one day.

Confidentiality

The responses gathered shall be handled with high levels of confidentiality with respect to both information about the participants' involvement in the study and the information they provided. The researcher may present or publish the results of the study. If ever, the participants' anonymity shall be ensured. Results shall be presented in aggregates in order to avoid connecting specific ideas to a specific person. All hard copies of documents and recordings were identified only by participant codes or numbers and duly stored in a locked cabinet. Any data that has been stored in an online storage or sharing service has been password-protected to ensure the security of the stored data.

Anonymity

The anonymity of the participants was clearly stated and defined in detail in the informed consent form (ICF). The names of the participants were not included in the transcriptions, and their identities were labeled with

participant codes or numbers for the researcher's monitoring. Only their e-mail addresses or contact numbers were noted for any follow-up sessions, queries, sharing of the results and findings of the study, and means of communication between the researcher and the participant should the need arise.

Data Management and Storage Plan

All hard copies of documents and recordings were identified only by a participant code number and stored in a locked cabinet. All soft copies were stored virtually in a password-protected file, and the identity of the participants were not identifiable in either the voice recording or the transcript. The interview notes and transcripts were also kept in a locked cabinet, and the electronic copies were kept on the local hard drives of the researcher's computer, which is password-protected. Upon completion of this research study, any data gathered that may connect to the participants shall be destroyed.

The thesis adviser and all its Oral Defense Committee only had access to the summary of findings presented in a table and write-ups. The collected online raw data from the participants would be destroyed or deleted either not more than a year after the completion of this study or if the data has already served its intended purpose.

Language Used in the Study

The primary language that was used for the Informed Consent Form (ICF) was both English and Cebuano. The in-depth interview was done through whatever the client was comfortable using; this was in English, Cebuano, or Tagalog, or mixed. The participants, who were of legal age, were also expected to understand adequately the said languages.

Role of Researchers or Primary Investigators

The role of the researcher in this study is to take responsibly take charge of the overall research endeavor, from its conceptualization up to the possible publication of the protocol. The researcher abided by the documentary requirements from the Xavier Ateneo Research and Ethics Board (XAREB) in processing the IREB, conducting interviews with participants during the data-gathering phase, analyzing and storing the transcription and recordings for safekeeping, obtaining and comparing resources, following approved techniques, and keeping all other data with utmost confidentiality and anonymity. If necessary, the researcher in this study will responsibly disseminate the results among concerned parties or individuals that can benefit most from this study.

Rights and Responsibilities of the Participants

The role of the participant in this study was to be as honest and expressive of one's experience in retaking the licensure examination without making an impression or any reservations. The researcher made sure that the participants' ethical rights for voluntary participation were upheld. They were engaged in an in-depth interview with questions about this study, which included their own experiences or understanding of certain concepts (i.e., failure, motivation, coping, etc.). In the interview, they were allowed to express their thoughts and feelings and shared their experiences as they wished. There were no right or wrong responses during the interview as it was purely one's individualistic understanding and experience in retaking the licensure examination.

Should the participant feel uneasy or uncomfortable during the whole duration of the interview, the participants were ensured that they could discontinue or cease the interview session and reminded that this would not have any effect on the researcher, let alone the whole procedure of this study. The researcher fully respected each and every individual participating in this present study.

Sharing the Result

The research findings are available to the researcher's instructor and will be submitted to the Department of Psychology at Xavier University - Ateneo de Cagayan. The full report of this thesis paper will be archived

through the XU Online Database so that it will be accessible to the students and other readers who may need any information from this research study.

This research may be published after further deliberation from the respective panelists. The researcher made sure that the results presented in this study did not contain any raw data or the personal information of the participants. The copies of the data were anonymized and was made available only to the thesis mentor. In the event that a research participant would want to secure a copy of the final analysis report, they may contact the researcher. The participants will be informed of the date of presentation and publication of this research paper.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

The researcher declares to be employed at the Professional Regulation Commission Cagayan de Oro Regional Office X. In no way is the office or Commission or other entities or organizations involved in the researcher's financial interest. Moreover, the successful retakers in the licensure examination were not obliged to participate in gaining something in return, and their participation was purely voluntary, which was made clear since the start of the study through the Informed Consent Form (ICF).

Researcher Detail and How to Contact Researcher

The participants were given the researcher's contact information through e-mail address (20140004589@my.xu.edu.ph) for their concerns or queries regarding the study and the semi-structured interview. This mode of communication allowed them to ask follow-up questions during and after the data gathering.

Presentation And Interpretation of Data

This chapter presents the results of the study. The findings reflect the phenomenon of interest, that is, the experiences of successful Filipino licensure examination retakers. The themes and subthemes generated from the data are presented in this section.

Table 2. Participants' Experience of Failing the Licensure Examination

A. Unpleasant/ Negative Experience Associated with Failure		Exemplar
A.1. Sense of Incompetence		<i>"Para sa akua ang failure lisud siya ma accept ug dili siya dali malimtam, ug then dili buot pasabot nga diha lang ka pirmi..."</i>
		<i>"Pagka bagsak nako sa exam bitaw... panan-aw nako saako kaugalingon kay bugok kaayo bitaw..."</i>
A.2. Shame, Sadness and Desire to Isolate Oneself		<i>"...considering pud gusto nako akong kauban, akong mga batchmates, kay sa ako na part murag ulaw kaayo na ma left behind, kapoyan nako makig uban saila..."</i>
		<i>"...adto na time kay sad jud kaayo ko... days after sa results sa board exam, akong mga batchmates, nag celebrate na sila kay naka pasar sila. Pero ako kay silent lang"</i>
A.3. Pain due to Criticism or Ridicule from Others		<i>"...sakit siya kay nabagsak ka tapos ang mga feedback pud gikan siamong relatives kay negative kaayo, maot jud kaayo... dili ka ganahan ug gawas sainyo kay mahadlok ka maka dungog ug mga storya nga dili mayo..."</i>
		<i>"First of all jud, akong mga kauban sa trabaho... gina ignan nagyud ko nila nga "wala ni siya future", ni ana paj ud siya nga "di ka kapasar mag take kag board exam"."</i>

A.4. Observed Behavioral Changes		<i>"Late na nako na-realize... naay ga change sa akong habits. Kanang gamay nalang kaayo kog kaon, sige nako ug ignan na di na daw kaayo ko ga kaon. Nag niwang na diay ko.. nag change diay akong appetite..."</i>
		<i>"...the whole-time nag hulat ko sa results kay kasukaon kaayo ko. Then pag release sa results, nag lain gyud akong pamati..."</i>
B. Attributing Failure to Uncontrollable Misfortunes		<i>"Physically pud, not ready also. Considering also na wala ko na suportahan financially. Wala man jud mi kwarta... murag kapoy na jud kaayo. Kay kung maka review man gud ka maam, much better. Murag mas better dayun imong knowledge kay naa baya uban topics</i>
		<i>"Katong time na nag sakit si mama, mao pud to naka affect saako... in the middle ko adto sa review ug nanawag sila na wala na daw si mama..."</i>

Participants shared how their experiences were like when they failed the licensure examination. Two themes emerged from their narratives, namely, the unpleasant or negative experience associated with failure, and their attributing failure to uncontrollable misfortunes.

Firstly, they characterized their experience of failure as unpleasant or negative. Specifically, they felt a sense of incompetence or inadequacy. For instance, a participant shared that *"...something [is] missing... something [is] lacking..."*. This statement connotes that failure in the licensure examination made one feel incompetent due to the inability to achieve something that one truly desired or wished for. To them, failing the exam meant unattainment of their goals, one that is difficult to forget. As one participant shared, *"Lisud siya ma accept ug, dili siya dali malimtam (It's difficult to accept; it's difficult to forget)."* Failing the exam was also experienced by them as painful and self-degrading, e.g., *"Pagka bagsak nako sa exam bitaw... panan-aw nako saako kaugalingon kay bugok kaayo bitaw."* (When I failed the exam, I saw myself as too dumb). The sense of incompetence experienced by the participants is also similar to the heightened frustration and disappointment found to be experienced by other licensure exam retakers (Paler and Muegna, 2024).

In addition to feeling incompetent, participants expressed feelings of shame, sadness, and a desire to isolate themselves from others. These were specifically indicated by having thoughts and fears of being criticized by others, wanting to give up, having low self-regard, and wanting to detach from their peers and batchmates. To cite, a participant expressed *"...I was so down jud adto nga time nga naka ingon jud ko nga "dili nako mu take."* (I was so down at that time tha I told myself I will never take the exam again). This statement conveys intense feeling of sadness brought about by the experience of failure. Another participant mentioned that *"...days after sa results sa board exam, akong mga batchmates, nag celebrate na sila kay naka pasar sila. Pero ako kay silent lang..."* (Days after the results of the board exam came out, my batchmates celebrated while I kept silent). This statement somehow suggests the desire to isolate or distance oneself from the celebratory mode of the others, a mode that one cannot be entitled to have. Some other participants expressed a dislike to leave their house as staying at home was a way to avoid receiving or hearing any possible criticism from others. As they avoided interacting with others, this also made them feel different from their peers, and losing interest going out with the latter. They also felt envious of their peers' success for passing the licensure examination, an envy triggered by the latter's social media posts of having passed the exam and the congratulatory comments generated by such posts. These comparisons that participants made about themselves as failures and their peers as passers and achievers can further exacerbate their inadequacy (Orehek & Kruglanski, 2018) and take a toll on their decision and motivation to try again.

Furthermore, what made the experience difficult for the participants to bear was the feeling of pain due to criticism or ridicule they got from others. Accordingly, societal criticisms arose due in part to other people's expectations of them as well as the overall negative reception shown to them by others. To participants, "failure" has a negative connotation to others. Some participants hear and/or receive negative comments concerning them because they failed. What hurt more was the fact that these negative comments came from

people closely related to them, i.e., family members, relatives, friends, officemates, and neighbors. To quote a participant, “...*sakit siya kay nabagsak ka tapos ang mga feedback pud gikan sa imong relatives kay negative kaayo, maot jud kaayo... dili ka ganahan ug gawas sa inyo kay mahadlok ka maka dungog ug mga storya nga dili mayo.*” (It is painful because you failed and your relatives give you very negative feedback... you would not like going out of the house for fear of hearing negative stories about you.). Another participant also recalled what his workmates said, “...*akong mga kauban sa trabaho... gina ignan na gyud ko nila nga "wala ni siya future. Ni ana pajud siya nga "di ka kapasar mag take kag board exam.*” (My workmates told me that I don’t have a future... that I cannot pass the board exam.). Indeed, receiving from significant others unfavorable responses such as criticism, mockery, or discouragement negatively impacts the individual (Paler & Muegna, 2024).

A closer examination of this particular experience by participants points us to relationships with significant people and how we view such relationships. For one, passing the licensure examination is a personal achievement and a family's pride, especially in the Filipino culture. Filipinos belong to a collectivistic culture and tend to possess an interdependent construal of the self (Markus & Kitayama, 1993). As Filipinos, we tend to consider how others view us, and part of which is how they view our undertakings. We strongly associate ourselves as fundamentally connected to other people (Giacomin & Jordan, 2017). Hence, receiving negative comments from significant people in our lives, especially from our family or relatives, is hurtful. It also lowers our self-esteem, and may lead us to questioning our capabilities. We expect support, not ridicule, especially from people in our circle. This ridicule, outright or perceived, could indeed make one prefer to stay at home and emotionally feel safe than going out and joining a gathering of friends or relatives wherein one only becomes the topic of unpleasant conversation or comments.

Understandably, the sense of incompetence, feeling of sadness, shame and isolation, and the pain of being criticized or ridiculed can bring out changes in one’s behavior. Participants reported behavioral changes following their failure in the examination. These behavioral changes were also noticeable to others. One participant said, “... *naay ga change sa akong habits. Kanang gamay nalang kaayo kog kaon, sige nako ug ignan na di na daw kaayo ko ga kaon. Nag niwang na diay ko.. nag change diay akong appetite.*” (My habits changed. I eat very small amount of food. They always tell me that I no longer eat, that I am already skinny. My appetite changed.). The change in appetite perhaps was the body’s response to the distressing examination result. Another participant reported feeling nauseous and ill upon receiving the failing mark (“The whole time I waited for the results, I was so nauseous. When the results came, my body really felt bad.), probably due to heightened emotions caused by waiting for the exam results, and eventually receiving the negative news.

Secondly, several participants attributed their failure to uncontrollable misfortunes. One of the repeated answers among the participants in the study is their mental unpreparedness to take the examination. One particular cause for this unpreparedness is the lack of financial support. To quote, “...*considering also na wala ko na suportahan financially. Wala man jud mi kwarta... murag kapoy na jud kaayo.*” (Considering that I was not receiving financial support, it was somehow very tiring.). Specifically, the lack of financial support from the family in order to attend review classes significantly led to exhaustion while reviewing, an exhaustion that eventually developed into being mentally unprepared to take the examination. This finding is consistent with another study which says that family support for all expenses of the individual strongly influences one's performance in the licensure examination (Herrero, 2015). Hence, having little to no support from one's family is considered one of the existing challenges in one's preparation for the exam; less household wealth often translates into fewer educational resources (Programme for International Student Assessment, 2018).

Other examples of unfortunate situations as contributing factor to failure in the examination is illness and/or death of a family member. An excerpt from a participant stated “...*katong time na nag sakit si mama, mao pud to naka affect sa ako... in the middle ko adto sa review ug nanawag sila na wala na daw si mama.*” (That time my mother got sick and it really affected me. In the middle of my review class, they called me and told me that Mama was gone). We expect test takers to amply prepare and be ready to take the exam. However, we must also understand that facing any major stressors at this particular period or point in time could highly interfere with their overall preparation for the licensure examination.

Despite the experience of failing the licensure examination, participants decided to pursue retaking the examination. Table 3 shows the factors that facilitated their successful retaking of the examination.

Table 3. Factors that Facilitated Participants' Successful Retaking of the Licensure Examination

C. Utilizing Adaptive Ways of Coping with Failure		Exemplar
C. 1. Engaging in Pleasurable Activities to Channel Unpleasant Emotions due to Failure		<i>"...sige rako ug tanaw K-Drama... hilig man gud ko mag overthink bitaw... mao to nga naka huna-huna ko nga sige nalang uy, bawi rako sunod..."</i>
		<i>"pero naa puy times nga di na ko kasabot sa akoang feelings, nakoy mga notebook or journal na ginasulat nako akong gaka feel or sa cellphone sa notes kung kapuyan ko, napa na sya sakong mga notes bale remembrance..."</i>
C.2. Exercising Self-Discipline in Preparing for the Retake		<i>"Nagpadayon gihapon ko ug review, tapos ang kalahian lang karon is at least dili na kaayo ko lost... nag bago pud akong study habits..."</i>
		<i>"Oo, nag intensive najud ko na review adto nga time, as in no phone during that time, ginatago nako ug ginalock akong phone sa drawer. Para focused jud ko sa pag review for retake. Uban sad nako akoang partner, kuyog mi ato niya nga magreview sad so murag ginamotivate namo ang usag usa, wala mi nag kinompetensyahay kay gatabang mi sa each other..."</i>
C.3. Maintaining Optimism Amidst Failure		<i>"Failure, for me, is a necessary entity for the people to appreciate the things that they are aspiring to have. I feel like the world cannot function without the polarity of the other, so mura siya'g it's difficult for us to experience joy without experiencing sadness, so in the same manner, it's difficult for us to experience success and happiness without having to experience failure."</i>
		<i>"I think personally, since naka-tulo man jud ko naka try ug take, para saako is an opportunity to improve myself instead of thinking it negatively... So mao na akong gi buhat saakong 3rd retake unya nakita pod nako ang result dayon nga nakapasar nako. So my failure became an opportunity for me to learn, grow, and develop..."</i>
D. Receiving Emotional and Instrumental Support from Others		<i>"...my partner became my main support, gasto baya jud kaayo...in terms jud of emotional and financial support, gitabangan jud ko niya... siya nag bayad saako ug saako accommodation..."</i>
		<i>"...grabe ka chada mu tudlo among lecturer sa review center... mao nang nakatabang saako pud"</i>
E. Motivations and Drivers to Retake the Examination		
E.1. Self-Imposed Standards		<i>"...I know kaya nako bitaw, kanang maningkamot ko kay I know eventually maka pasar ko..."</i>
		<i>"...always wear your faith with actions... kinahanglan jud siya nay paningkamot, bale hard work jud para makapasar..."</i>
E.2. Social Goals		<i>"...akong gina believe nga, basin murag na feel nako gina disappoint nako akong parents... dili ko gusto ma disappoint sila"</i>
		<i>"...akong huna-huna kay kailangan nako pasaron, unya wa pa nako mabuhay, mao nang naningkamot ko para saakong parents... [giving back]"</i>

E.3. Perceived Expectations	Social	<i>"Ang lisod man gud saamo.. sa Maranao culture, ang uban kay mag expect jud dayon nga nga pasar lage ka..."</i>
		<i>"...especially those people nga naay negative comment about sa imoha, saimo pag take sa exam."</i>

Factors that facilitated the participants' decision to retake the examination and to eventually pass the retake are grouped into three themes, namely, utilizing adaptive ways of coping with failure, receiving unsolicited emotional and instrumental support from others, and motivations and drivers to retake the examination.

In the face of failure in the licensure examination, participants utilized several adaptive ways of coping with failure. In particular, they engaged in pleasurable activities to channel the unpleasant emotions brought by failure. This engagement in pleasurable activities consisted of efforts to avoid, minimize, and distract oneself from the problem, or to seek something positive in a negative event. A participant channeled one's tendencies of spiraling to one's negative thoughts about the failure into watching television or dramas. As expressed, *"...sige rako ug tanaw K-Drama... hilig man gud ko mag overthink bitaw... mao to nga naka huna-huna ko nga sige nalang uy, bawi rako sunod"*. Evidently, the participant tried to distract oneself from the pain of failing the licensure examination by engrossing oneself in other pleasurable activities. Another participant journaled one's feelings as a way of channeling or displacing unwanted negative feelings. Accordingly, it worked for the participant. Indeed, some individuals are uncomfortable turning to others for help when faced with problems, such that this type of coping could work for them.

In addition to diverting their unpleasant emotions to pleasurable activities, all of the participants actively engaged in proactive preparation for their planned retake of the examination. They accepted their fate and decided to move forward despite their failure in the licensure examination. Specifically, they exercised self-discipline in preparing for the retake. Participants focused on trying to address the problems they encountered on their failed first take or first few takes of the exam by searching for and applying solutions to the problem(s). To cite, *"Nagpadayon gihapon ko ug review, tapos ang kalahian lang karon is at least dili na kaayo ko lost... nag bago pud akong study habits."* (I continued reviewing for the retake. Unlike before, I am no longer lost. I changed my study habits). Another effective strategy that worked for them was enrolling in an intensive review, *"...nag intensive najud ko na review adto nga time, as in no phone during that time, ginatago nako ug ginalock akong phone sa drawer. Para focused jud ko sa pag review for retake."* (I did intensive review at that time. Did not use my phone at that time, locking my phone in the drawer in order for me to focus on my review for the retake). These exemplars reveal self-agency at work in the participants. According to Bandura (2006), self-agency involves not only the deliberative ability to make choices and action plans but also the ability to construct appropriate courses of action and to motivate and regulate their execution. True enough, participants' responses highlighted the conscious efforts made by them instead of just sitting back and doing nothing while hoping to pass the licensure examination successfully. Strategies aimed to solve a problem or to alter the source of stress, more often than not, is effective (Carver et al., 1989). Moreover, when a person is already aware of one's areas for improvement, one is able to efficiently identify factors that could be of help for the retake. This also means that one can be more equipped with the whole preparation, and at the same time becoming more confident of oneself in the process. It is also important to note that the participants were intent on their goal to retake, and to retake with a successful outcome.

As participants disciplined themselves to focus on their preparation for the retake of the licensure examination, some of them also kept on maintaining an optimistic disposition amidst their experience of failure. They realized and gave importance to their experience of failing in the examination. To them, the failure was a necessary part of their journey. It made them better individuals at the present, stronger and even wiser than they were before. To quote, *"Failure for me is a necessary entity for the people to appreciate the things that they are aspiring to have. I feel like the world cannot function without the polarity of the other... it's difficult for us to experience joy without experiencing sadness, so in the same manner, it's difficult for us to experience success and happiness without having to experience failure."* Optimism helped another participant to keep on pursuing the dream of eventually passing the board exam despite several failed attempts. To quote, *"...since naka-tulo man jud ko naka try ug take, para sa ako is an opportunity to improve myself instead of thinking it*

negatively... So mao na akong gi buhat sa akong 3rd retake unya nakita pod nako ang result dayon nga nakapasar nako." (I took the exam thrice. And retaking again is an opportunity to improve myself instead of thinking about it negatively. So that's what I did on my 3rd time to take the exam. And I saw the fruit of which, I passed.). These individuals mustered the courage to keep on trying. And as they did so, they kept a positive outlook in order to attain their goal of successfully passing the licensure examination. Several participants attested that being hopeful and having a positive mindset are essential to successfully retaking the licensure examination. Apparently, when people understand the interconnectedness of success and failure, when they are optimistic, they equip themselves with the necessary tools and strategies to overcome obstacles, achieve long-term success, and foster personal growth (Banay, 2024).

An external yet crucial facilitating factor to participants' successful retake of the examination is their receiving unsolicited emotional and instrumental support from others. All participants expressed receiving support from various individuals (e.g., family, partner or significant other, peers, and review centers) and in various forms (emotional, financial, and instrumental such as review notes and helpful lectures or inputs from reviewers and lecturers). To cite, *"...my partner became my main support, gasto baya jud kaayo...in terms jud of emotional and financial support, gitabangan jud ko niya... siya nag bayad sa ako ug sa ako accommodation."* (My partner was main source of support. [retake] is very costly. My partner supported me emotionally and financially, even my accommodation [for the review]). A significant observation made by the researcher is the fact that most support received by participants from their significant social networks are unsolicited. This kind of "transaction" or dynamics exemplifies the collectivistic nature of the Filipino culture whereby unsolicited help is a norm, reflecting somehow the sense of *pakikipagkapwa* of the giver or the source of support (Pe-Pua, 1991). On another vein, having good lecturers at the review center where one is enrolled is regarded as another source of support. One participant highlighted the importance of having efficient and effective lecturers in the review center. As mentioned, *"...grabe ka chada mu tudlo among lecturer sa review center."* (Our lecturer in the review center teaches us really well). Undoubtedly, retakers perceive being provided with faculty members who use good teaching strategies and comprehensive examples in their examinations as essential instrumental support that they can receive (Bangaysiso et al., 2024).

The participants' goal to retake and to successfully do so was apparently driven by some factors. Participants were motivated to retake the examination for due to self-imposed standards, social goals, and the need to meet perceived social expectations. A few participants identified setting personal standards they want to achieve, based on what they believe they can do. To quote, *"I know kaya nako bitaw, kanang maningkamot ko kay I know eventually maka pasar ko."* (I know I can. I will work hard because I know I will eventually pass the exam.) Indeed, the chances to pass are higher for those who believe that they have the efficacy to do so. There were also few other participants whose reference for achieving the goal of a successful retake are the licensed professionals in the family or their batchmates. They want to be like their successful family members and to pass the retake along with their batchmates. Another self-imposed standard is to practice their profession as it makes them proud. Realistically, passing the licensure examination would help us kickstart our careers. Moreover, is a requirement for those who want to flourish in their chosen professions (Banal, 2024). Alongside achieving their personal standards, is the emphasis placed on perseverance and focus amidst moments of doubt in retaking the examination, striving regardless of what others would say.

Successfully passing the retake of the examination is also motivated by social goals. Some participants are driven to pass the retake in order to make their families proud, not disappoint them. To quote, *"...akong gina believe nga, basin murag na feel nako nga na disappoint nako akong parents... dili ko gusto ma disappoint sila"*. (It comes to me that I've disappointed my parents. I don't want to disappoint them.). To them, it would be waste of their family's financial resources if they will not pass the retake; they have to give back (e.g., *"Akong huna-huna kay kailangan nako pasaron, unya wa pa nako mabuhay, mao nang naningkamot ko para sa akong parents... [giving back]"*). This sample statement exemplifies the Filipino value of *"utang na loob"* to our families. According to Pe-Pua (1991), Filipinos are not directly obligated to help, yet we see the need to give back to others, particularly those who have contributed to our success.

Closely related to social goals as a driver for the participants' retake of the examination is perceived social expectation. Sometimes, the burden of passing the licensure examination also comes from the expectations of

significant people we are with (Bangaysiso et al., 2024), including the bigger group or community we live in. As one participant conveyed, *Ang lisod man gud saamo.. sa Maranao culture, ang uban kay mag expect jud dayon nga nga pasar lage ka.*" (The difficult part in our Maranao culture is that others expect that you immediately the exam.).

Following participants' successful retake of the licensure examination, some perceived benefits were shared. Table 4 presents the participants experience of successfully retaking the licensure examination.

Table 4. Participants' Experience of Successfully Retaking the Licensure Examination

F. Benefits Following One's Successful Retake	Exemplars
F.1. Professional Eligibility and Perceived Career Advancement	<i>"...karon, Nawala najud tanan loads, bale wala nako ga huna-hunaon nga board exam. Pero at the same time, gina look forward nako oher possibilities na mu dugang pa saakong mga qualifications..."</i>
	<i>"...hantod naka work ko... didto sad nako na realize nga dapat jud eligible ko, kay lahi rajud ug naa kay license. Lahi rajud kung board-passer ka"</i>
F.2. Positive Shift in Viewing Failure after a Successful Retake	<i>"...karon, Nawala najud tanan loads, bale wala nako ga huna-hunaon nga board exam. Pero at the same time, gina look forward nako oher possibilities na mu dugang pa saakong mga qualifications..."</i>
	<i>"...hantod naka work ko... didto sad nako na realize nga dapat jud eligible ko, kay lahi rajud ug naa kay license. Lahi rajud kung board-passer ka"</i>

One of the prominent and repeated responses from the participants center on professional eligibility and perceived career advancements following their successful retake of the examination. A participant narrated, *"...hantod naka work ko... didto sad nako na realize nga dapat jud eligible ko, kay lahi rajud ug naa kay license. Lahi rajud kung board-passer ka"*. (When I got a job, I realized that I have to be professionally eligible. It's different when you are a board passer.) Rightly so, possessing a professional license will enable one to choose their preferred workplace – be it in a government or private institution (Damuag et. al., 2024). Not only is a professional eligibility advantageous in terms of employment, it is noted by participants to give them an increased sense of accomplishment and fulfillment. Furthermore, after passing the retake, participants experienced a sense of relief. A participant recalled, *"..karon, nawala najud tanan loads, bale wala nako ga huna-hunaon nga board exam. Pero at the same time, gina look forward nako other possibilities pa na mu dugang pa saakong mga qualifications"*. (Now, the burden is gone. I no longer have to think about the exam. At the same time, I look forward to the possibilities of improving my qualifications). There were also few others who were duly acknowledged and praised by their respective universities or colleges and review centers.

From an initially negative understanding of failure, participant expressed gaining a positive shift on how they view failure after a successful retake. A participated said, *"... failure allows you to improve when you experience that failure. You'd be motivated. It requires you to do more."* To add, some participants emphasized that failure now has a different meaning for them. Failure now serves as a motivation for them to strive harder in order to attain their goals. They now acknowledge that it is normal to feel some anxiety when retaking the licensure examination. Moreover, to them, failure does not necessarily equate to stagnation, and is never the end of every individual's journey. Participants believed that when they started to accept their failure,

then they were able to acknowledge and challenge themselves to become better. Indeed, experiencing failure and eventually overcoming facilitated a positive reframing of their view of failure.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Summary of Findings

The study explored the lived experiences of fifteen (15) successful licensure examination retakers across various professions regulated by the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC). The participants in the study regarded their failure in the licensure examination as a negative experience that led to a sense of incompetence, sadness, isolation, and need to isolate themselves from others as way to avoid possible criticisms or ridicule. Several participants reported receiving negative reception from individuals closely related to them. Nonetheless, the support (e.g., financial, emotional, and as tangible as sharing of review notes), often unsolicited, extended to them by significant people in their lives helped them cope with the experience of failure. Equally important was their proactive and disciplined engagement in activities (e.g., intensive self-review, enrolment in review centers, and avoiding potential distractions in reviewing for the examination among others) that helped them adequately prepare for the retake of the licensure examination. Self-agency was prominent. Accompanying this was a positive mindset, persistence, and focus on the goal of achieving a successful outcome for the retake. These factors that facilitated bouncing back from the experience of failure seemed to have been further reinforced by personal and social goals, goals that are, more often than not, influenced by Filipino collectivistic values such as *“hiya,”* *“utang na loob”* and shared pride over familial achievements. Evidently, their positive mindset, cultural beliefs, personal and social goals, proactive action, and healthy emotions were in unison. These very same facilitating conditions, actions, and motivations were regarded as essential factors that paved the way for eventually passing the retake of the licensure examination. Remarkably, the successful outcome brought about a positive reframing as to how participants viewed failure. For example, what once was an unpleasant, unwanted life event has now been viewed as an essential driver to strive for self-improvement, personal growth, and professional achievement. This positive paradigm shift has been accompanied by participants’ actual experience of the benefits of being granted their professional license, i.e., increased employability in their respective field, career advancement, and acknowledgement and recognition received from families, peers, educational institutions, teachers, and review centers.

While this phenomenological study yielded results that add to the body of knowledge on failing and overcoming in general, and Filipino licensure examination retakers successfully surmounting initial experience failure in particular, some limitations still have to be taken into consideration. First, the results of this study are unique to a specific group of individuals only, i.e., Filipino licensure examination retakers. This means licensure examination retakers from other professions and cultural groups, or retakers of examinations that are not necessarily regulated by a national and professional regulatory body may have their unique set of experiences that are highly different from what were found in this study. Moreover, the results of this study cannot be generalized to a population of licensure examination retakers given the relatively small sample of participants included in this study.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the study explored the lived experiences of successful Filipino licensure examination retakers, specifically looking into their meaning-making process and the conditions, coping strategies, and drivers that set the stage for achieving a successful outcome. From the results, we have come to understand the following points:

1. Negative emotions, deprecating thoughts about the self, observable behavioral changes that are unhealthy or unproductive accompany the experience of failure in the licensure examination.
2. Proactive response to failure and use of effective coping strategies that go hand-in-hand with a positive mindset; goal-directed disposition; and receipt of support, often unsolicited, from one’s relevant social network are experienced to have significantly resulted to an efficient preparation for the retake and eventually achieving the desire outcome, i.e., passing the retake of the examination.

3. A strong support system is important in helping the Filipino licensure examination retakers cope with the experience of failure and prepare themselves for their retake. As support is often unsolicited, somehow it is normative to expect receiving support from significant people without directly asking for it.
4. A negative experience of failure at the start can be viewed more positively in the long run as licensure exam retakers actively pursue achieving their goal of passing the examination. Meaning and fulfillment can be derived from what once was a painful setback.

Recommendations

From the findings of this study, the following recommendations are forwarded:

1. That families, relatives, friends, and other significant people in the lives of those aspiring to become licensed professionals would consistently and generously extend support (e.g., emotional, social, and financial) in ways that best befit the needs of licensure examination takers. A supportive, safe and conducive environment is much needed at a time where focus and discipline are crucial and demanded, especially in the preparation stage.
2. That aspiring professionals be encouraged to keep an optimistic outlook regardless of the challenges or obstacles they may face before and during the licensure examination. Negative comments and perceptions from others are unavoidable, and these retakers need not allow these negative comments to consume their thoughts and undermine their efforts.
3. That licensure examination retakers duly prepare for the examination – mentally, physically, emotionally, and psychologically. This ensures that aspiring professionals are in their proper mental state when taking the examination.
4. That respective departments or colleges from which these individuals have graduated from, include programs that aim to develop or enhance resilience in their students who are future test takers. Such programs could better prepare them to respond to potential experience of failing in the exam in a proactive manner, persevering and persisting to retake until they pass the examination. In addition, creation or provision of a support group for first-time takers and retakers alike as they embark on this undertaking where personal stakes and investment of internal and external resources could be expectedly high.

REFERENCES

1. Ackerman, C. (2018). What is the Meaning of Life According to Positive Psychology. Positive Psychology. Retrieved September 10, 2024, on: <https://positivepsychology.com/meaning-of-life-positive-psychology/>
2. Albina, A. C., Balasabas, J. Y., Laquinon, B. J. I., Pampilo, M. H., & Caballero, L. J. (2022). Factors and challenges influencing the criminologist licensure examination performance through the non-passers' lens. *European Journal of Educational Research*. Vol. 11 Issue No. 1, pp 365-380. <https://doi.org/10.12973/eu-er.11.1.365>
3. Albite, R. (2019). A Case Study of Topnotchers' Preparations and Contributory Attributes in Passing the Licensure Examination for Teachers. *Southeastern Philippines Journal of Research and Development*, 24(2), 45-68. <https://doi.org/10.53899/spjrd.v24i2.19>
4. Algorani, E. & Gupta, V. (2023). Coping Mechanism. National Library of Medicine. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK559031/>
5. American Psychology Association (n.d.). Definition of Motivation. Retrieved on March 30, 2023, from: <https://dictionary.apa.org/motivation>
6. Aquino, A. & Balilla, L. (2015). Pre-Teachers' Licensure Examination Plans and Content Knowledge. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education, Arts and Sciences*, Vol. 2 (2). <http://apjeas.apjmr.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/APJEAS-2015-2-144b-LET-PLANS.pdf>
7. Banay, K. (2024). From Setbacks to Success: The Lived Experiences of Retakers of the Licensure Examination for Teachers. *11th International Scholars Conference*, 11(4), 1226-1238. <https://doi.org/10.35974/isc.v11i4.3617>

8. Bangaysiso, J., Sabijon, D., Sayson, Y., Sagayno, R., Pioquinto, P. & Nillama, V. (2024). Thorns of Failures: Views of Non-Passers of Criminology Board Examination. *International Journal of Law and Politics Studies*. 2709-0914. <https://doi.org/10.32996/ijlps>
9. Binayao, B. & Dales, Z. (2020). A Phenomenological Study of the Passers and Non-Passers in the Licensure Examination for Teachers. *International Journal of Innovative Science and Research Technology*. Research Gate. Vol. 5, Issue No. 8. <https://doi.org/10.38124/IJISRT20AUG828>
10. Blanchard, C., Fortier, M., Strachan, S., & Sweet, S. (2012). Testing and Integrating Self-Determination Theory and Self-Efficacy Theory in a Physical Activity Context. *Canadian Psychological Association* Vol. 53, No. 4, p 319-327. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0030280>
11. Briones, M. (2021). Licensure Examination: Students' Intrinsic and Extrinsic Factors as Success Predictor. *Journal of English Education and Linguistics*. Vol. 2 No. 2. <https://jurnal.stain-madina.ac.id/index.php/je2l/article/view/424/496>
12. Cabahug, M. M., Bonghanoy, S. M. A., Tubog Jr., J., Asingua, A. B., Chen, Q., & Tul-id, C. S. (2024). Graduates Are Failing in the Examination: An Ethical Investigation on the Experiences of Board Licensure Examination for Professional Teachers (BLEPT) Takers. *American Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Innovation*, 3(2), 1–6. <https://doi.org/10.54536/ajmri.v3i2.2514>
13. Cherry, K. (2023). How Social Support Contributes to Psychological Health. *Very Well Mind*. Retrieved April 29, 2023, from: <https://www.verywellmind.com/social-support-for-psychological-health-4119970#:~:text=Social%20support%20refers%20to%20the,when%20they%20are%20in%20need>
14. Deci, E. & Ryan, R. (2011). *Handbook of Theories of Social Psychology: Volume 1*. Sage Publications Ltd. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446249215>
15. Damuag, E., Sabijon, D., Nillama, V. R., & Suelto, M. (2024). Retakers Pledge: An Experiential Learning. *International Journal of Law and Politics Studies*, 6(3), 16–31. <https://doi.org/10.32996/ijlps.2024.6.3.2>
16. Di Domenico, S. & Fournier, M. (2013). Socioeconomic Status, Income Inequality, and Health Complaints: A Basic Psychological Needs Perspective. *Springer Science* (2014) 119:1679-1697. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-013-0572-8>
17. DiDona, T. & Oleynikov, A. (2021). Self-determination and Gender Differences. *International Journal of Scientific Research and Engineering Development* Vol. 4 Issue No. 3 P 42-50. <http://www.ijssred.com/volume4/issue3/IJSRED-V4I3P6.pdf>
18. Espartero, J. (2022). Factors that Influenced and Problems Encountered in the Criminologists Licensure Examination. *International Journal of Innovative Science and Research Technology*. Vol. 7 Issue No. 5. ISSN No-2456-2165. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Espartero-Jhetro-Royce/publication/370497614_Factors_that_Influenced_and_Problems_Encountered_in_the_Criminologist_Licensure_Examination/links/645368cb5762c95ac36f5dbc/Factors-that-Influenced-and-Problems-Encountered-in-the-Criminologist-Licensure-Examination.pdf
19. Fiscal, R. & Roman, A. (2021). Pre-licensure examination as Predictor of Licensure Examination for Teachers Result. *International Journal of Evaluation and Research Education (IJERE)*. Vol. 11 No. 1 pp. 136-142. <https://doi.org/10.11591/ijere.v11i1.22133>
20. Fu, C., Wang, X., Xiang, C., & Xie, T. (2021). Differential Effects of Work and Family Support on the Relationship Between Surface Acting and Wellbeing: A Self-Determination Theory Approach. *Sage Publications* Vol. 126(1) 198–219. <https://doi.org/10.1177/003329412111048471>
21. Giacomini, M., Jordan, C. (2017). Interdependent and Independent Self-Construal. In: Zeigler-Hill, V., Shackelford, T. (eds) *Encyclopedia of Personality and Individual Differences*. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-28099-8_1136-1
22. Guertin, C. (2020). A Self-Determination Theory Perspective on the Success and Failure of Eating Regulation in Women: Does Planning and Self-Monitoring the Quality versus the Quantity of Eating Matter? Retrieved May 12, 2023, from: http://ruor.uottawa.ca/bitstream/10393/41532/3/Guertin_Camille_2020_thesis.pdf
23. Kuhutan, F., Jalilul, A., & Asiri, M. (2024). Factors influencing the success in \Nurse Licensure Examination among Bachelor of Science in Nursing graduates in Jolo. *SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY AND HUMAN EXPERIENCE*, 1(1), 1-19. <https://doi.org/10.62596/yv2zxs54>
24. Li., M. (2014). The Pathway Linking Stress to Active Coping: Motivation and the Trait of Resilience. *ACA Knowledge*. <https://rb.gy/8qd4x>

25. Manganelli, S., Cavicchiolo, E., Lucidi, F., Galli, F., Cozzolino, M., Chirico, A., & Alivernini, F. (2021). Differences and similarities in adolescents' academic motivation across socioeconomic and immigrant backgrounds. *Science Direct*. Vol. 182, 111077. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2021.111077>
26. Markus, H. & Kitayama, S. (1991). Culture and the Self: Implications for Cognition, Emotion, and Motivation. Vol. 98 (2) 224-253. American Psychological Association. <https://web.stanford.edu/~hazelm/publications/1991%20Markus%20Kitayama%20Culture%20and%20the%20self.pdf>
27. Mirchevski, B. (2019). Learning from Failure — Good or Bad? Retrieved May 11, 2023, from: <https://medium.com/@brunomirchevski/learning-from-failure-good-or-bad-9da5e128bf54>.
28. Morris, L., Grehl, M., Rutter, S., Mehta, M., & Westwater, M. (2023). On what motivates us: a detailed review of intrinsic v. extrinsic motivation. *Psychological Medicine* 52, 1801–1816. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0033291722001611>
29. Nikitin, J., Burgermeister, L. & Freund, A. (2012). The Role of Age and Social Motivation in Developmental Transitions in Young and Old Adulthood. 3 (166). *Frontiers in Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2012.00366>
30. Ong, Palompon & Banico (2012). Predictors of nurses' licensure examination performance of graduates in Cebu Normal University, Philippines. *Asian Journal of Health*. Vol. 2. link.gale.com/apps/doc/A284552693/AONE?u=phxu&sid=bookmark-AONE&xid=ead00edb
31. Paler, H. & Muegna, K. (2024). Failure to Success: The Lived Experiences of Retakers of the Elementary School Licensure Examination for Teachers. *Psychology and Education: A Multidisciplinary Journal*. Vol. 24 Issue No. 9 Pages 1075-1083. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.13711410>
32. Plasus, M. & Diamante, J. (2020). Determinants of Performance in the Licensure Examination for Fisheries Technologists of Western Philippines University Bachelor of Science in Fisheries Graduates. *Gale Academics Online. Liceo Journal of Higher Education Research* Vol. 6 Issue 2. <http://dx.doi.org/10.7828/ljher.v16i2.1379>
33. Powers, A. (2018). Failing Your Way To Success: Why Failure is a Crucial Ingredient For Success. Retrieved May 18, 2023, from: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/annapowers/2018/04/30/failing-your-way-to-success-why-failure-is-a-crucial-ingredient-for-success/?sh=c778d6f6170a>
34. Puertos, J. (2015). Performance on the Licensure Exam for Teachers among Liceo de Cagayan University Education Graduates. *Liceo Journal of Higher Education Research* Vol. 11 Issue No. 1. <http://dx.doi.org/10.7828/ljher.v11i1.896>
35. Sheldon, K., Ryan, R., & Reis, H. (1996). What Makes for a Good Day? Competence and Autonomy in the Day and in the Person. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* Vol. 22 Issue No. 12. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167296221200>
36. Smith, J. & Osborn, M. (2003). Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. In: J.A. Smith (Ed.), *Qualitative Psychology: A practical guide to research methods* (pp. 51-80). Sage Publications, Inc.
37. Tenny, S., Brannan, J. & Brannan, G. (2022). *Qualitative Studies*. National Library of Medicine. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK470395/>
38. The Lawphil Project (n.d.). Republic Act No.. 8981 - "PRC Modernization Act of 2000". Retrieved April 1, 2023, from: https://lawphil.net/statutes/repacts/ra2000/ra_8981_2000.html
39. University of Melbourne (n.d.). Coping with Failure. Retrieved May 11, 2023, from: <https://services.unimelb.edu.au/counsel/resources/study-related-issues/coping-with-failure>
40. University of Minnesota (2019). Professor Kathleen Vohs Explains How Negative Experiences Can Add Meaning to Life. University of Minnesota. Retrieved April 25, 2023, from: <https://carlsonschool.umn.edu/news/negative-experiences-meaning-kathleen-vohs>
41. University of Rochester Medical Center (n.d.). Self-Determination Theory. University of Rochester. Retrieved April 25, 2023 from: [https://www.urmc.rochester.edu/community-health/patient-care/self-determination-theory.aspx#:~:text=Self%2DDetermination%20Theory%20\(SDT\),our%20habits%20and%20lifestyle%20choices](https://www.urmc.rochester.edu/community-health/patient-care/self-determination-theory.aspx#:~:text=Self%2DDetermination%20Theory%20(SDT),our%20habits%20and%20lifestyle%20choices)
42. Villegas, F. (n.d.). Thematic Analysis: What it is and How to Do It. *Questions Pro*. Retrieved on June 8, 2023, from: www.questionpro.com/blog/thematic-analysis