



FAILURE OF CRIMINOLOGY GRADUATES IN PASSING THE CRIMINOLOGIST LICENSURE EXAMINATION

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative research study was completed in May 2026 which examined the reasons for repeated failure in the Criminologist Licensure Examination (CLE) among criminology graduates in Isabela Province who had failed the examination at least twice, addressing the lack of qualitative insights into the lived experiences of repeat examinee beyond existing quantitative data. The study aimed to identify the reasons for not passing the CLE, explore how these factors contributed to failure, assess their effects on subsequent examination attempts, and describe the coping strategies employed by participants. Using a descriptive qualitative design, the researchers conducted semi-structured interviews with 10 purposively selected criminology graduates through snowball sampling, with interviews carried out either in person or online while ensuring ethical safeguards such as informed consent and anonymity. Findings revealed that repeated failure was influenced by interconnected academic, psychological, and socioeconomic factors, including poor review habits characterized by inconsistent schedules and lack of determination, poor time management caused by distractions and work-study conflicts, financial constraints that limited access to review materials, and anxiety stemming from family expectations. These challenges negatively affected participants' mental health, leading to anxiety, low self-confidence, rumination, disappointment, fear of failing again, and pressure from peers, which further weakened performance in later attempts. Despite these difficulties, participants coped through support from family and friends, devotion to God through prayer and faith, and the development of resilience by reframing failure as an opportunity for growth. The findings suggest that educators and institutions should strengthen structured review programs, time management training, and mental health support services to improve passing rates and align with RA 11131 standards, while policymakers may consider providing financial assistance for review preparation; furthermore, future researchers may expand similar

investigations to other professions. Overall, the study contributes participant-centered insights that can help improve CLE preparation and resilience in high-stakes licensure examination contexts.

Keywords: *Criminology Graduates, Criminologist Licensure Examination (CLE), Examinee Experiences, Repeated Failure*

INTRODUCTION

Failure in high-stakes examinations is a complex experience that may affect an individual's self-perception, motivation, emotional well-being, and subsequent decisions. Failure may be understood as a subjective interpretation of not achieving one's goals or expectations and is influenced by how individuals perceive their abilities (Dweck, 2006). In licensure examinations, the consequences of failure can be particularly significant because examination results may determine access to professional practice, employment opportunities, and career advancement. Repeated unsuccessful attempts may further result in academic disappointment, emotional stress, reduced confidence, and financial difficulties. According to Weiner (1985), individuals interpret failure by attributing its causes to factors such as effort, ability, or external circumstances, and these attributions may subsequently influence their coping strategies and future behavior.

Licensure examinations are important mechanisms for regulating entry into professional practice and determining whether graduates possess the knowledge, skills, and competencies required in regulated professions. They serve not only to establish professional standards and protect public welfare but also to provide evidence of graduates' readiness to assume professional responsibilities. In the Philippines, professional licensure examinations are administered by the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) and serve as national benchmarks for professional qualification. Examination outcomes may also provide higher education institutions with information regarding the effectiveness of their academic preparation and areas that may require improvement.

In the field of criminology, passing the Criminologist Licensure Examination (CLE) is a fundamental requirement for professional practice in the Philippines. The examination is governed by Republic Act No. 11131, or the Philippine Criminology Profession Act of 2018, which repealed Republic Act No. 6506 and strengthened the regulatory framework of the criminology profession. Under Section 17 of the law, an examinee must obtain a weighted average rating of at least 75% and must not obtain a rating below 60% in any subject to pass the examination. Examinees who obtain the required weighted average but fail to meet the minimum subject rating are subject to the provisions on deferred results and retaking of the concerned subject. These requirements demonstrate the academic standards expected of aspiring criminologists and underscore the importance of adequate examination preparation.

Despite the importance of the CLE, concerns regarding examination performance have persisted. Historical records of the PRC indicate relatively low national passing rates during several examination periods. The eight examination schedules from March 2003 to October 2006 recorded an average national passing rate of 32.82%, while six examination schedules from May 2007 to September 2009 recorded an average of approximately 31%. The lowest passing rate during the latter period was 27%, recorded in March 2008. Although these figures represent historical examination periods, they demonstrate that challenges in CLE performance have persisted over time and warrant continued investigation into the circumstances associated with unsuccessful attempts.

Previous studies indicate that examination failure may result from the interaction of academic, psychological, and socioeconomic factors. Academic preparation and study habits are important determinants of performance, with inadequate study practices and weaknesses in learning strategies associated with poorer academic outcomes (Cahapay, 2021; Credé & Kuncel, 2008). Psychological factors, including test anxiety, low self-efficacy, and emotional stress, may likewise interfere with concentration, motivation, and examination performance (Putwain & Daly, 2014). Socioeconomic conditions, such as financial limitations, competing responsibilities, and limited access to quality review programs, may further constrain the time and resources available for examination preparation (Baticulon et al., 2021). These findings suggest that failure in professional licensure examinations cannot be attributed solely to academic ability but may reflect the combined influence of personal, psychological, socioeconomic, and environmental circumstances.

The challenges may be more pronounced among examinees who experience repeated failure. A subsequent examination attempt requires not only renewed academic preparation but also the ability to manage the emotional and practical consequences of previous unsuccessful attempts. Repeated failure may affect confidence, motivation, perceptions of ability, and decisions to continue pursuing the examination. Qualitative evidence suggests that repeat examinees may experience discouragement, isolation, and reduced motivation, yet their coping strategies remain insufficiently explored (Abella, 2025). More specifically, limited research has examined how graduates who repeatedly fail the CLE understand the reasons for their failure, what factors influence their performance in subsequent attempts, and how they cope with the effects of repeated unsuccessful examinations. Existing research has largely emphasized predictors of examination performance rather than the experiences and coping processes of graduates who have encountered multiple failures.

Understanding repeated CLE failure therefore requires attention to the experiences of examinees beyond their examination scores. Examining how graduates interpret their failures, identify contributing factors, respond to challenges, and cope with repeated unsuccessful attempts may provide a more comprehensive understanding of the problem. Such evidence may assist higher education institutions, review programs, and other stakeholders in developing interventions that address not only academic preparation but also the psychological, social, and socioeconomic challenges experienced by repeat examinees.

Therefore, this study explored the reasons for failure among graduates who did not pass the Criminologist Licensure Examination. Specifically, it examined the reasons and factors contributing to their failure, the factors affecting their performance in succeeding examination attempts, and how they coped with the effects of experiencing at least two unsuccessful attempts. By focusing on repeat CLE examinees, the study seeks to provide empirical insights into the multidimensional nature of examination failure and contribute evidence that may inform more responsive academic, psychological, and examination-preparation interventions.

Research Questions

1. What are the reasons for participants not passing the Criminologist Licensure Examination?
2. How do these reasons contribute to the failure of the respondents in passing the Criminologist Licensure Examination?
3. How do these reasons affect the performance of the respondents in passing the succeeding Criminologist Licensure Examination?
4. How do respondents cope with the effect of at least two or more failures in passing the Criminologist Licensure Examination?

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive qualitative research design to explore the experiences, difficulties, factors associated with failure, and coping strategies of criminology graduates who had experienced repeated unsuccessful attempts in the Criminologist Licensure Examination (CLE). Qualitative descriptive research provides straightforward descriptions of phenomena based on participants' accounts and is appropriate for examining real-life experiences without extensive theoretical interpretation (Sandelowski, 2000). The participants were ten (10) criminology graduates from the Province of Isabela who had experienced at least two unsuccessful attempts in the CLE and voluntarily agreed to participate; individuals who had not taken the examination or who passed on their first attempt were excluded. Snowball sampling was used to identify participants who met the established criteria. A researcher-developed semi-structured interview guide was used to gather data on participants' preparation, reasons for unsuccessful attempts, factors affecting their performance in subsequent examinations, and coping with repeated failure. Prior to data collection, participants were informed of the study's purpose, procedures, confidentiality measures, and their rights, and informed consent was obtained. Interviews were conducted using the approved guide, after which the responses were transcribed, organized, and carefully reviewed. The data were analyzed thematically through repeated reading of the transcripts, identification and coding of significant statements, grouping of related codes, and development of recurring themes (King, 2004). The researchers discussed the emerging themes with a research consultant to support the credibility of the interpretations and minimize potential bias. Ethical principles were observed throughout the study, including voluntary participation, informed consent, the right to withdraw without penalty, confidentiality, privacy, and the

use of codes or aliases to protect participant identities. All collected information was securely maintained and accessed only by the research team.

RESULTS

Table 1. Reasons for not passing the Criminologist Licensure Examination

Theme	Description	Representative Participant Quote
Poor Review Habits Reflecting Lack of Determination	Participants described their preparation as inconsistent, unstructured, and insufficient to cover the required CLE topics. Irregular study schedules, limited review days, and difficulty maintaining discipline resulted in inadequate preparation and limited opportunities for repeated practice.	<i>“Not enough preparation time and poor study methods. Even though I exerted effort in reviewing, it was not consistent and was not enough to cover all the topics.” (P2)</i>
Poor Time Management	Participants experienced difficulty allocating sufficient time for the extensive CLE coverage while managing competing responsibilities. Some struggled to follow planned study schedules because of distractions, competing activities, and employment demands.	<i>“Sometimes I set a specific time for reviewing... but in the end, I do something else, such as using my phone instead of reviewing.” (P3)</i>
Financial Constraints and Work–Review Burden	Financial limitations affected participants’ ability to access review centers, books, and other preparation resources. Some participants worked while reviewing to finance examination-related expenses, resulting in reduced study time,	<i>“Working while reviewing for the CLE was a double burden. Sometimes there was overtime, so my review became a ‘whatever happens’ approach. Sometimes I could only study for one</i>

	fatigue, and difficulty maintaining their planned review schedules.	<i>hour instead of the four hours I had planned.” (P4)</i>
Anxiety Due to Family Expectations	Participants reported experiencing pressure and anxiety arising from family expectations to pass the CLE. These expectations contributed to worry, difficulty concentrating, and concerns about disappointing family members, particularly among participants who perceived themselves as carrying significant family responsibilities.	<i>“I was anxious and highly pressured because of my parents’ expectations, especially because I was expected to be the first uniformed personnel in our family, which affected my focus and retention of knowledge.” (P6)</i>

Table 2. Contribution of these Reasons to the Failure of the Respondents in Passing the Criminologist Licensure Examination

Theme	Description	Representative Participant Quote
Psychological Distress and Anxiety	Participants described how inadequate preparation, limited review resources, and the pressure associated with the CLE affected their psychological well-being. Anxiety and emotional strain reduced their concentration, motivation, and confidence, particularly as the examination approached.	<i>“It really affects my mental health, especially since it takes a lot of effort, time, money, and determination. It affected my confidence, making it difficult to stay focused and motivated.” (P10)</i>
	Repeated unsuccessful attempts contributed to self-doubt and reduced confidence among participants. Previous	<i>“My confidence in myself fades because of my previous failures, so I</i>

Loss of Self-Confidence Following Previous Failures	failures made some examinees question their ability to succeed, particularly in difficult or technical subjects, and increased their fear of committing mistakes during the examination.	<i>struggled to perform well in technical subjects such as law enforcement. It was as if my mind froze because of my fear of making mistakes."</i> (P5)
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Table 3. Impact of Previous Failures on Subsequent CLE Performance

Theme	Description	Representative Participant Quote
Disappointment and Self-Blame	Participants experienced disappointment, guilt, and self-blame following unsuccessful examination attempts. These emotions affected their confidence, motivation, and willingness to immediately retake the CLE. For some participants, disappointment resulted in postponing a subsequent examination attempt until they felt more prepared and confident.	<i>"First and foremost, I was very disappointed in myself and blamed myself because I was not able to give my full capabilities during the examination. I put too much pressure on myself, which affected my performance, so I decided not to take the CLE for the third time because I was not yet confident after my previous failures."</i> (P6)
Fear of Repeated Failure	Participants expressed anxiety about experiencing another unsuccessful attempt. Fear was associated with previous failures, accumulated expenses, lost time, and expectations from family members. These concerns increased psychological pressure and influenced participants' perceptions of	<i>"I also experience fear of failing because if I fail for the third time, I have already spent so much and wasted a lot of time. Then there is the pressure from my family: 'You are taking it again, so you should do well this time.' You are the eldest and a role model for your younger siblings."</i> (P3)

	their readiness for subsequent examinations.	
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Table 4. Coping Mechanisms Employed in Dealing with Multiple Failures

Theme	Description	Representative Participant Quote
Family and Peer Support	Participants relied on family members and friends for emotional encouragement, motivation, advice, and reassurance after unsuccessful examination attempts. Their support helped reduce emotional burden, strengthen confidence, and encourage participants to continue pursuing their goal despite previous failures.	<i>“Even during review days, they always motivated me and boosted my confidence. After I failed, they were still there by my side and helped me through their advice and personal experiences, which really helped lessen the burden I was carrying.” (P9)</i>
Spirituality and Prayer	Participants used prayer and religious devotion as sources of emotional relief, strength, and guidance when dealing with the stress and uncertainty associated with repeated examination failure. Spiritual practices helped them manage distress and regain a sense of calm after unsuccessful attempts.	<i>“Prayer became one of my ways of coping with the effects of failure. As much as possible, I go to church and pray every day to somehow clear my mind from the stress I am experiencing.” (P1)</i>
Resilience and Renewed Determination	Participants responded to repeated failure by maintaining their goal of passing the CLE and using their unsuccessful experiences as motivation to improve. Rather than	<i>“Repeated failure affected my dream of passing the examination... but despite the challenges, my desire to pass remained strong.”</i>

	abandoning their goal, they described failure as an opportunity to recognize weaknesses, become more disciplined, and strengthen their determination to succeed.	<i>Instead of ending the dream, repeated failure strengthened my determination." (P2)</i>
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DISCUSSION

I. Reasons for not passing the Criminologist Licensure Examination

1. Poor Review Habit Reflecting a Lack of Determination. This indicate that inconsistent and unstructured review practices contributed to participants' failure to adequately prepare for the Criminologist Licensure Examination (CLE). Although participants reported exerting effort in reviewing, their preparation was characterized by irregular study schedules, limited review days, and difficulty sustaining a disciplined routine. This lack of consistency may have reduced their ability to cover the broad range of CLE topics, reinforce important concepts, and identify areas requiring further improvement. The findings suggest that effort alone may not be sufficient when preparation is not supported by systematic planning and sustained study practices. This is consistent with Broadbent and Poon (2015), who found that effective study strategies and time management are associated with better academic performance. Similarly, Zimmerman (2020) emphasized that self-regulated learning involves managing time, organizing learning activities, and monitoring progress toward academic goals. In the present study, participants' difficulty maintaining structured review routines may therefore reflect challenges in regulating their preparation rather than an absence of motivation to pass. For repeat CLE examinees, developing a consistent and structured review routine may be particularly important because it can provide opportunities to address previous knowledge gaps, strengthen retention, and improve preparedness for subsequent examination attempts.

2. Poor Time Management contributed to participants' difficulties in preparing adequately for the Criminologist Licensure Examination (CLE). Participants reported difficulty allocating sufficient time to cover the extensive examination content, maintaining planned review schedules, and avoiding competing activities that displaced study time. These challenges were further intensified for participants who were simultaneously managing employment and examination preparation. The findings suggest that time management was not simply a matter of having insufficient time but also involved difficulties in prioritizing, organizing, and consistently allocating available time to review activities. This is consistent with Razali et al. (2018), who emphasized the importance of time management in academic performance and achievement. Similarly, Tumin et al. (2020) found that working students commonly experience time constraints while attempting to balance employment and academic responsibilities. In the present study, competing work and personal responsibilities reduced the time available for sustained

examination preparation, making it difficult for participants to maintain their intended review schedules. Thus, effective time management appears to be an important component of CLE preparation, particularly for examinees who must balance examination preparation with other responsibilities.

3. Financial Constraints and Work–Review Burden. The findings indicate that financial constraints created a substantial work–review burden among participants preparing for the Criminologist Licensure Examination (CLE). Participants described working to finance review fees, daily allowances, and examination-related expenses, while employment demands, including overtime, reduced the time available for planned review. Financial limitations also affected access to preparation resources, with some participants relying on free online materials instead of purchasing books or enrolling in formal review programs. Thus, financial hardship affected examination preparation through both limited resources and reduced study time. It is consistent with Stogner (2022), who noted that the financial demands associated with criminology licensure can create additional difficulties for graduates who must balance employment and examination preparation. Similarly, Tumin et al. (2020) found that working students commonly experience time constraints and difficulties maintaining their academic commitments while fulfilling employment responsibilities. In the present study, the need to earn income was not merely an additional responsibility but a practical necessity for some participants, making the preparation process more difficult to sustain. It suggests that financial circumstances can indirectly contribute to examination failure by limiting access to review resources, reducing available study time, and increasing the burden of balancing work and preparation. Therefore, support mechanisms that provide affordable or accessible review materials and flexible preparation options may help reduce the disadvantages experienced by financially constrained examinees.

4. Anxiety Due to Family Expectations. The pressure to pass, particularly when examinees were expected to become role models, contribute to family pride, or fulfill expectations associated with their future careers, created additional emotional strain that affected concentration, confidence, and knowledge retention. Although family expectations can motivate examinees to persist, excessive pressure may become counterproductive when failure is perceived as disappointing loved ones. This finding is consistent with Son et al. (2020), who found that stress and anxiety can negatively affect concentration and academic effectiveness, while Damian and Roberts (2015) noted that firstborn individuals may experience greater achievement-related pressure. Similarly, Ng and Wang (2019) highlighted the influence of family expectations on academic experiences, while Pascoe et al. (2020) emphasized the value of stress-management strategies and social support in maintaining academic functioning under pressure. Overall, the findings suggest that supportive and realistic family expectations may help CLE examinees manage examination-related anxiety, whereas excessive pressure may hinder effective preparation and performance.

II. Contribution of these Reasons to the Failure of the Respondents in Passing the Criminologist Licensure Examination

1. Psychological Distress and Anxiety contributed to participants' difficulties in passing the Criminologist Licensure Examination (CLE). Inadequate preparation, limited review resources, repeated examination failures, and the pressure associated with the high-stakes nature of the CLE appeared to increase worry, self-doubt, and emotional strain, which in turn affected participants' concentration, motivation, and confidence during preparation and examination. The findings suggest that psychological difficulties can interact with academic challenges, creating a cycle in which inadequate preparation increases anxiety, while anxiety further interferes with effective learning and examination performance. This is consistent with Berutu and Mutiawati (2023), who associated anxiety with fear, excessive worry, and negative expectations that may interfere with learning, while Deb et al. (2015) reported a relationship between examination-related anxiety and psychological difficulties among students. Overall, the findings demonstrate that failure in the CLE cannot be attributed solely to academic preparation; psychological factors also play an important role in shaping examinees' ability to concentrate, sustain motivation, and perform effectively during the examination.

2. Loss of Self-Confidence Following Previous Failures. Repeated failure contributed to a loss of self-confidence among CLE retakers, which subsequently affected their concentration, emotional stability, and perceived ability to perform effectively. Previous unsuccessful attempts appeared to create self-doubt and fear of making mistakes, particularly when participants faced difficult or technical examination areas. Rather than viewing the examination solely as a challenge to be overcome, repeated failures may have caused some examinees to perceive subsequent attempts as threats to their sense of competence, making it more difficult to remain confident and focused. This finding is consistent with Pajares (2002), who emphasized that self-doubt can influence how individuals perceive and respond to challenging academic tasks. Similarly, Albina et al. (2022) identified psychological stress and low confidence as important challenges affecting graduates' academic and examination experiences in the Philippine context. Overall, the findings suggest that previous failures may have a cumulative psychological effect, wherein diminished confidence increases anxiety and self-doubt, which may consequently interfere with concentration and performance in succeeding CLE attempts.

III. Impact of Previous Failures on Subsequent CLE Performance

1. Disappointment and Self-Blame significantly influenced participants' experiences following unsuccessful CLE attempts and affected their readiness to undertake subsequent examinations. Failure was often interpreted as a personal shortcoming, leading to feelings of guilt, reduced confidence, and self-imposed pressure. These emotional responses appeared to weaken motivation and, in some cases, contributed to postponing another examination attempt until participants felt more prepared and confident. The finding is consistent with Weiner's (1985) Attribution Theory of Achievement, which explains that individuals who attribute failure to internal and controllable factors, such as insufficient effort or preparation, are more likely to experience

self-blame and negative emotional responses. In the present study, repeated failure may therefore have influenced not only participants' perceptions of their previous performance but also their decisions and psychological readiness for succeeding CLE attempts. This suggests that addressing self-blame and helping retakers develop more constructive interpretations of failure may be important in supporting continued engagement with examination preparation.

2. Fear of Repeated Failure affected participants' confidence, emotional readiness, and willingness to undertake succeeding Criminologist Licensure Examination (CLE) attempts. Previous unsuccessful experiences created apprehension about experiencing the same outcome, while concerns about wasted time, financial expenses, and family expectations intensified this fear. The pressure associated with being expected to succeed, particularly among participants who perceived themselves as family role models, may have further increased anxiety and self-doubt. This finding is consistent with Conroy and Elliot (2004), who explained that fear of failure involves a tendency to avoid situations in which failure may result in shame or negative self-evaluation. Similarly, Kapoor (2020) emphasized that external influences from family, peers, and society can contribute to stress, low self-esteem, and social anxiety, which may affect performance in challenging situations. In the present study, fear of another failure appeared to extend beyond the examination itself, influencing participants' emotional preparation and perceptions of their ability to succeed. These findings suggest that helping repeat examinees manage fear, external expectations, and negative anticipation may be important in strengthening their confidence and readiness for subsequent CLE attempts.

IV. Coping Mechanisms Employed in Dealing with Multiple Failures

1. Family and Peer Support. Supportive relationships provided emotional encouragement, reassurance, advice, and motivation, helping participants manage disappointment and maintain confidence despite previous unsuccessful attempts. Rather than comparing participants with those who had already passed, supportive family members and peers recognized their individual progress and encouraged them to continue pursuing their goal. This finding is consistent with McLean et al. (2022), who associated social support with students' well-being and academic outcomes, and with Szkody et al. (2021), who found that social support can facilitate more effective coping and reduce emotional burden. In the present study, supportive relationships appeared to function as a protective resource that helped participants manage self-doubt, emotional stress, and the pressure associated with repeated failure. Thus, family and peer support may strengthen resilience and encourage continued engagement in examination preparation among CLE retakers.

2. Spirituality and Prayer served as meaningful coping mechanisms for participants dealing with the emotional challenges of repeated CLE failures. Participants described prayer and devotion as sources of comfort, emotional relief, and inner strength, particularly when they experienced uncertainty, stress, and difficulty accepting their examination outcomes. Rather than directly addressing the academic causes of failure,

spirituality appeared to help participants regulate their emotional responses and maintain hope while continuing to pursue their goal. This finding is consistent with Fukofuka (2014), who reported that spiritual engagement may contribute positively to students' well-being and academic experiences. In the present study, prayer appeared to provide participants with a sense of reassurance and emotional stability, allowing them to manage the psychological burden associated with repeated failure. Thus, spirituality may function as a supportive coping resource that helps CLE retakers maintain hope, emotional balance, and perseverance during challenging examination experiences.

3. Resilience and Renewed Determination. Repeated failure did not necessarily diminish the respondents' goal of passing the Criminologist Licensure Examination; instead, it became a basis for developing greater resilience, discipline, and renewed determination. Although participants experienced doubt, disappointment, fear, and pressure after repeated failures, they gradually reframed these experiences as opportunities to recognize weaknesses and improve their preparation. This suggests that failure can function not only as a setback but also as a reflective experience that encourages examinees to reassess their strategies and strengthen their commitment to their goal. The finding is consistent with Geraga et al. (2025), who reported that retakers may initially experience despair and self-doubt but can eventually reinterpret failure as a learning experience that strengthens determination. Similarly, Henry et al. (2019) emphasized that experiences of failure may contribute to the development of a growth-oriented perspective in which individuals respond to setbacks through greater self-regulation and persistence. In the context of the present study, resilience therefore emerged as an important coping mechanism that enabled respondents to transform previous failures into motivation for renewed preparation. Rather than viewing failure as a final outcome, participants used their experiences to identify areas for improvement, increase discipline, and sustain their aspiration to become licensed criminologists.

Conclusions

Based on the findings, the study concludes that failure in the Criminologist Licensure Examination (CLE) is a complex experience influenced by interconnected academic, financial, psychological, and social factors. Inconsistent review habits, poor time management, financial constraints, anxiety arising from family expectations, and diminished self-confidence affected the participants' preparation and examination performance. Repeated failures further contributed to disappointment, self-blame, fear of failing again, and reduced confidence, which sometimes affected their willingness to immediately retake the examination.

Despite these challenges, the participants demonstrated the capacity to cope and continue pursuing their professional goal. Family and peer support, spirituality and prayer, resilience, and renewed determination helped them manage the emotional consequences of failure and regain motivation. The findings further suggest that repeated failure can become a reflective experience through which examinees recognize their weaknesses, modify their preparation strategies, and develop greater discipline and perseverance. Therefore, CLE failure should not be viewed solely as an academic outcome but as a

multidimensional experience requiring academic preparation, emotional support, accessible resources, and sustained personal determination. Providing appropriate support mechanisms for retakers may help them address the barriers they encounter and improve their readiness for subsequent attempts at the examination.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. **For Criminology Students and Retakers.** Follow a consistent review schedule, prioritize difficult subjects, and use time-management strategies. Seek appropriate support when experiencing anxiety, low confidence, or difficulty coping with failure.
2. **For Criminology Educators and Institutions.** Provide structured CLE preparation, practice examinations, study-skills training, and accessible counseling or stress-management activities before graduation.
3. **For Review Centers and Local Government Units.** Develop affordable and flexible review options, including scholarships, installment plans, and accessible online review materials for financially constrained examinees.
4. **For the PRC and Relevant Agencies.** Provide accessible information on examination preparation and available educational, psychological, and financial support services.
5. **For Families and Support Systems.** Provide encouragement without comparisons or excessive pressure and, when possible, assist with review expenses and household responsibilities.
6. **For Future Researchers.** Conduct studies with larger and more diverse samples and examine interventions that can improve the preparation, well-being, and performance of CLE retakers.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

The study was conducted in accordance with accepted ethical standards for research involving human participants. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, who were informed of their right to participate voluntarily and to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. Participants' identities and responses were kept confidential, and anonymity was maintained in reporting the findings. Data were handled securely and used solely for research purposes in accordance with applicable data privacy principles. The researchers also ensured that participants' well-being was protected throughout the study and that no participant was exposed to unnecessary risk or harm. The researchers declare no conflict of interest and confirm that the study was conducted with academic integrity and without plagiarism.

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