

Unshadowing the Stories of Yesterday's Failed Battle of Let Examinees

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ABSTRACT

This phenomenological study aimed to unshadow the failed experiences of the Licensure Examinations for Teachers (LET) examinees, how the examinees cope with the failed experience during the LET, and the insights they have on their experience. The study utilized a qualitative design using a descriptive phenomenology approach, with ten failed LET examinees selected through snowball sampling. The researchers used Colaizzi's Method of Data Analysis as a data analysis tool. The results revealed that the experiences of failed LET examinees are associated with themes such as Time Management, Unpreparedness, Learning Environment, and The Effect of the Support System. Moreover, the study revealed the coping mechanism of failed LET examinees with the themes: Negative Reinforcement, Diverting attention to other things, and Good Support. Furthermore, the failed LET examinee's insights showed the themes: Setting goals, Health and Expectations, and Integration of Optimism and Pessimism. The analyzed findings of this study unveil the various experiences encountered by the failed LET examinees and how they cope. Thus, this study contributes significant knowledge to examinees who will take the LET in the future and will retake the LET.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Philippines' Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) administers the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) as a standardized test. According to the PRC, it is designed to assess the competency and proficiency of prospective teachers in their respective disciplines and to ensure that they satisfy the minimum standards necessary to teach in the country. Passing the LET is essential to obtain a Professional Teaching License in the Philippines, which is required to practice education in the country legally. As stated by Llego (2021), some LET takers need help with the test despite all the planning and studies. The article indicates some LET test-takers might have trouble with anxiety about tests or time management, which can have a negative effect on how they perform. There needs to be more support and resources for LET takers [1]. The article states that some test-takers may come from low-income households, making it more challenging to

receive study materials and join review classes. In addition, some can get overwhelmed by the variety of information they must learn, which means they may need help knowing where to begin or how to prioritize when studying. Igcasama, Layao, Magallano, and Maloloy-on (2021) sought to identify the factors affecting Saint Michael College of Caraga's performance on the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) [2]. The result supported Weiner's attribution theory, according to which the successes and failures of learners are attributed to their motivation, abilities, efforts, luck, and the complexity of the learning task. It also entails that outstanding LET performance was associated with a higher and more resilient level of academic motivation.

Despite the difficulties posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, in 2020 [4], there are multiple testing centers nationwide. The PRC states that 28,973 teachers in elementary schools and 54,179 teachers in secondary schools passed the examination. It corresponds to a passing rate of 20.77 percent for elementary teachers and 25.46 percent for secondary teachers. In 2021, 29,047 elementary school teachers and 43,817 secondary school teachers passed the exam [5]. It corresponds to a passing rate of 32.59 percent for elementary school teachers and 36.22 percent for secondary school teachers. In 2022, 54.43 percent of the 91,468 primary teachers and 50.94 percent of the 139,534 secondary teachers who took the Licensure Examination for Professional Teachers (L. E. P. T.) passed. Over the past three years, the success rate of primary and secondary LET takers has increased significantly. In a study conducted by Espartero (2022) [6], Spearman's rho test indicated that there is indeed a correlation between the seriousness of problems and four factors involved in this study, namely: the student factor ($p = .271$, $p = .001$), home and family factor ($p = .203$, $p = .010$), school factor ($p = .195$, $p = .013$) and personal factor ($p = .204$, $p = .009$), however, this correlation represents a small effect. Concerning the correlation between individual characteristics and problems encountered on the board exam, this finding lends support to the study of Badua (2020, cited in Espartero, 2022) [7], which confirms that some students with excellent academic performance have failed the licensure examination due to personal issues, illness, and exam-related anxiety. In addition, Espino, Nely, Roman, Fe, Magno, and Glenda (2011, as cited in Espartero, 2022) [7] discovered a highly significant positive correlation between academic and teaching performance regarding the relationship between school factors and board exam problems.

According to Pregoner (2020), the most common characteristic of the three respondents was that they did not enroll in a review center; the following factors explain why they did not pass the licensing exam. First is the Physical Factor; during the interview, two of the participants reported feeling ill. Moreover, they concurred that they were both sleep deprived. The Second is Environment Factor, which demonstrates that the environment affects all retake exam performance. One participant stated, "Actually, it's not conducive; it's so noisy because I'm not the only one here, and when I arrived home, the music was playing." Third is the psychological aspect in which the participants revealed that they were highly overconfident before taking the teacher licensure examination, despite failing it. Fourth is the Mental Factor, and it was discovered during our interview process that both participants experienced mental blockage during the exam. In addition, one of the participants described her experience as follows: "Mental block was also present; despite breathing in and out, the participant was lost in thought." Both disclosed that ambiguous terms hinder their ability to perform at their peak. They also agreed that the lengthy questions and options could have been more problematic, mainly using complex vocabulary. Last is Preparedness, and the participants shared that they lacked preparation and study time because they both had jobs during their teachers' licensure examination endeavor [8]. They stated that you will only succeed if you prepare and study. Sadiq and Saeed's (2017) study was designed to investigate the issues students face during board examinations. The study demonstrates that students confront specific and genuine issues during exams that cause anxiety and mental anguish and hinder their academic progress. Students are discouraged and uneasy because of the poor physical environment, the management and administration of examinations, and technical errors. Most participants found these problems to be challenging during examinations [9].

Analyzing the life experiences of those who failed the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) is essential for several reasons. First, it can shed light on prospective teachers' obstacles and difficulties when preparing for the examination. Educators and policymakers may establish specific

strategies to support and prepare future candidates if they grasp these obstacles. Second, analyzing the experiences of those who did not pass the exam can help identify flaws in the present education system, such as insufficient training for teachers or poor education quality, which could contribute to the low pass rates. Lastly, studying the experiences of unsuccessful candidates may offer valuable insights for individuals who plan to retake the examination, enabling them to comprehend better what is expected and how to prepare for it.

In this study, we investigated the factors and coping mechanisms of the examinees who failed the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET). However, several studies show the major reasons why they failed the LET: poor time management and a lack of motivation or eagerness. The urgency to conduct this study is because the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) results are soon to be released by the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC). This study can provide better suggestions and recommendations to fellow examinees and relevant studies to future researchers. Hence, to convey that the Licensure Examination for Teachers must be passed to have the authority to teach in public.

This study intends to examine how examinees cope after failing the LET exam and identify the possible reasons for failing it. This study will aid in laying the foundation for a better environment for future teachers. The findings of this study will also be helpful for prospective LET examinees to be prepared and avoid the possible negative factors they may encounter during their exams. Moreover, this study can be a beneficial resource, a foundation, and a guide for future researchers who intend to conduct additional or related research.

This study aims to comprehend the circumstances surrounding the students' failure to pass the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) exam in various schools and majors. This study examines factors, difficulties, and insights the examinees may have while dealing with this problem. This study sought to answer the following research questions: (1) what challenges contribute to the failure experiences in the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET)? (2) How do they cope after failing the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET)? (3) What insights can you share with the participants? This study focuses on examinees who have failed the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET). We have chosen ten (10) individuals who will be interviewed and will be part of our qualitative study. Every participant will be invited during their varying schedules and availability. Furthermore, the answers will be analyzed, compared, and taken down.

2. METHOD

Explaining in this section, the writers delineate the parts of method. The parts cover research design, research data, and data analysis.

2.1 Research Participants

The study's participants were Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) examinees who failed. The research participants will comprise ten (10) LET examinees in different Schools and Majors. Creswell (1998) indicated that the number of participants in a phenomenology study ranges from 5-25 participants [10]. In addition, Snowball is a non-probability sampling technique whereby additional units are engaged to fill up the sample. Snowball sampling can benefit research regarding people with specific criteria who would be hard to find otherwise Simkus (2023) [11]. This strategy depends on initial sampling respondents referring additional people they think have the desired trait to them. This technique has certain drawbacks, such as nonrandom selection processes, relationships between network size and selection probabilities, reliance on informants' subjective assessments, and privacy issues (Johnson, 2014) [12]. The participants were selected based on the criteria that they have effectively and truthfully about their lived experiences and how they cope with failing the Licensure Examination for Teachers. The participants were selected based on the criteria in which they have taken the Licensure Examination for Teachers at most four times.

2.2 Research Instrument

The participants were asked open-ended questions in an interview. After the participants were selected, the participants were given informed consent, which included the researchers, who also acknowledged the participant's right to withdraw from the study. Furthermore, the Republic Act 10173, or the Data Privacy Act, was taken with utmost sincerity in line with confidentiality. The research recruitment and interviews only conclude once the data gathered from the participants become redundant and data saturation has already been achieved (Merriam, as cited in Grundmeyer, 2015) [13]. Furthermore, as the limited face-to-face set-up slowly presents limitations to conducting personal activities, all research activities were conducted face-to-face or via Zoom Online Platform depending on the availability and location of the possible participants, including the data collection. The researchers have sent informed consent to the prospective participants. They emphasized that the information obtained from them has remained confidential as stated by Republic Act 10173 or the Data Privacy Act of 2012. However, if the prospective participants refuse the invitation or withdraw during the interview, the researchers will acknowledge their right to do so. Personal meetings and Zoom Meetings were used as the primary means of engagement and interviewing, which is an effective method for acquiring data. In addition to the follow-up questions based on the participant's responses, an interview guide was employed. This strategy provided a natural discourse in which participants were free to share their experiences and insights regarding the study; hence, it would provide a rich amount of data for the analysis. The researchers recorded each session to transcribe the entire interview.

2.3 Research Design

Creswell (2013) stated that qualitative research is an approach in which they obtain data based on participants' arbitrary experiences; it pertains to specific interpretations and actions seen in a social occurrence [10]. The qualitative research utilized a descriptive phenomenological approach in the inquiry using Colaizzi's Method of Data Analysis to explore the lived experiences of failed Licensure Examination for Teachers examinees as a research design. The qualitative study aimed to comprehend a particular occurrence from the participants' viewpoint (Creswell, 2013). Bhandari (2022) states that qualitative research involves gathering and interpreting non-numerical data (such as manuscripts, recordings, or audio) to acknowledge notions, viewpoints, or observations effectively [14]. It has the potential to attain in-depth words of a dilemma or to create future research topics. On the other hand, MasterClass (2021) mentioned that pragmatic analysis concerns textual analysis or what a speaker implies and the listener infers [15].

Descriptive phenomenology is a method broadly utilized in research to explore and describe human lived experiences (Husserl, as cited in Wirihana, Welch, Williamson, Christensen, Bakon, and Craft, 2018) [16]. Descriptive phenomenology is principally valuable in parts where there is only limited research Morrow, Rodriguez, and King (2015), as was the case of this study. A phenomenological method is used to investigate human experiences (lived experiences) [17]. This research aimed to describe the significance of a person's experiences (Merriam, 2002) [18]. Phenomenology is a primary method of inquiry that focuses on studying a person's lived experiences in a particular phenomenon, as stated by Neubauer, Witkop, and Varpio (2019) [19]. Thus, the classic' phenomenological research method, in conjunction with the Husserlian framework of descriptive research, focuses on seeking realities in the form of manifestations of phenomena, as well as in the form of a subjectively constructed life world made up of interconnected, lived experiences (Crotty, as cited in Qutoshi, 2018) [20].

Moreover, the researchers employed Colaizzi's Method of Data Analysis. Wirihana et al. (2018) claimed that Colaizzi's (1978) method of data analysis could be used reliably in understanding people's experiences [16]. The reliability and credibility of the study's results under this method of data analysis were ensured since it requires a robust and rigorous process. Colaizzi's method of phenomenological data analysis demonstrated a dynamic tactic to obtain the depiction of those

people's lived experiences. It entails comprehending the information and spotting crucial remarks later transformed into articulated meanings.

The researchers conducted a qualitative study on the failed Licensure Examination for Teachers Examinees, following the four general criteria of Lincoln and Guba (1985): credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Participants provided informed consent letters, and the information was kept confidential following Republic Act 10173. The study involved familiarization, identifying significant statements, formulating meanings, clustering themes, developing a detailed description, and building the fundamental structure. The study's credibility was achieved through Colaizzi's 7-step data analysis, which allowed for member-checking and validation of the research instrument. Transferability was achieved through the study's relevance to different participants and contexts, and the study's dependability was ensured through consistency in data collection, analysis, and procedures. Confirmability was achieved through objectivity and careful adherence to Colaizzi's Data Analysis seven-step procedures [21].

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Challenges that Contribute to the Failure Experience in the Licensure Examination for Teachers

Presented in Table 1 is the set of emergent themes extracted from their cluster theme pertinent to the challenges that Contribute to the Failure Experience in the Licensure Examination for Teachers. Upon gathering information from the participants, the researchers collected various challenges that Contribute to the Failure Experience in the Licensure Examination for Teachers. The emergent themes the researchers have established under the first research question are Time-Management, Unpreparedness, the Learning Environment, and The Effect of the Support System.

Table 1 Challenges that Contribute to the Failure Experience in the Licensure Examination for Teachers

Emergent Themes	Cluster Themes	Formulated Meaning
Time-Management	Hectic Work Schedule due to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The Examinees are having a hard time balancing their time because of work responsibilities. • The Examinees had to sacrifice their review time just to finish their work pending. • The Examinees do not have adequate time to review and relax due to work responsibilities. • The Examinees had no adequate time to sleep and rest which is not healthy just to catch up on their review lessons and workloads.
	Hectic Schedule Due to Various Commitments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Examinees are having a hard time utilizing their time due to a hectic schedule because of various commitments outside of reviewing and working. • The Examinees had to deal with other responsibilities such as chores and studying for a master's degree. • Miscellaneous responsibilities affected the time of studying for the board and working to support their families.
	Imbalanced Utilization of schedules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Examinees did not manage their available time well due to other activities • The Examinees had to study until dawn and sacrifice their rest which might affect their health. • The Examinees had to study the whole week and every minute that is available. This might cause breakdowns, burnout, anxiety, and stress.
Unpreparedness	Pressure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-pressure affected the judgment of the Examinees. • The pressure caused anxiety and stress to the participants. • Peer-Pressure affected the confidence and judgment of the Examinees.
	Inadequate Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The lack of preparation of the Examinees affected the way they answered the board exam. • The Examinees did not prepare and provide time to review. • The Examinees' lack of dedication to open their notes and review caused their inadequate knowledge before taking the LET.
	Too much confidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Examinees who had studied confidently affected their

Learning Environment	Review Center as Learning Environment	<p>performance during the LET.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too much confidence affected the Examinees' judgment and calculation during the LET. • Examinees who enrolled in Review Center expected too much from their review. • Examinees who enrolled in Review Center expected too much that all lessons that they had reviewed will come out in the LET Exam. • The ambiance of the Review Center affected the performance of the Examinees. • The Expectations from the Review Center affected the review strategies of the Examinees. • The travel to the review center consumed ample time for the Examinees. • The confidence brought by the ambiance of the Review Center affected the judgment and performance of the Examinees.
	Self-Review as Learning Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The environment during the self-review affected the strategies of the Examinees. • Self-review did not Examinees the study with the right materials and lessons. • Self-review as a Learning strategy is not for everyone.
The Effect of the Support System	Insufficient Support from Family and Acquaintances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient support from family and acquaintances affected the confidence of the Examinees. • Insufficient support from family and acquaintances affected the performance of the Examinees. • The Examinees longed for support from their family and friends for a boost of inspiration to review.
	Peer-Pressure from Family and Acquaintances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The opinions and expectation from the family and acquaintances of the Examinees affected their performance. • The opinions and expectations of the family and acquaintances burdened the Examinees. • The validation from the family and acquaintances of the Examinees caused them anxiety and stress.

Hectic Schedule Due to Work. This cluster theme pertains to how hectic schedules due to work responsibilities affected the time management and schedule review of the examinees that brought failed experience in the Licensure Examination for Teachers. Abenoja, Accion, Aguilar, Alcasid, Amoguis, Buraquit, Mama, Pacete, and Pame (2019) claim that the impacts of working as a student depend on the sort of job employed, including full-time versus part-time and on-campus versus off-campus employment. The time spent working diverts attention from studying, which can result in negative repercussions, including lower grades [23]. A hectic schedule due to work has affected the time of the participants on balancing their time to spend reviewing as observed by the following statements below:

I was busy then, balancing my time with working and reviewing. Sometimes, I can't review because I am too tired from work. (P1)

It is challenging for me since I have work and just want to relax after my shift. This is also the cause of my lack of dedication to my study and lack of seriousness toward the exam. (P3)

Uhhh... actually, sir uhhh. While I was reviewing uhh. I was working, and at the same time, I was doing my master's degree, and then uhhh.. My review was every Saturday and Sunday because I enrolled in a review center. So if uhhh... but I took a one-month leave from my job because I couldn't focus, so I took a one-month break so that I could study properly, and that is how I manage everything. (P8)

Ahh.. during that time, I was working, so I didn't enroll in a review center. I do a self-review, but I don't do a lot of reviews, maybe that's why I failed, why I didn't pass on the first take because I didn't... I didn't focus on the review since I was busy working and had a hectic schedule during that time. (P9)

With the hectic schedule due to the examinees' work responsibilities, time deprivation affected their performance during the review and caused the failed experience. Participant 1 implied that they had to choose between resting or reviewing due to the hectic work schedule. By this, resting means there is no suitable time to study. Participant 3 and Participant 9 implied that their hectic schedules and choosing between resting and reviewing them affected their motivation and dedication to preparing for the exam. Participant 8 emphasized that due to their hectic schedules because of work responsibilities, the only days in the week they used for reviewing were every Saturday and Sunday, and they deprived themselves of rest during those days. Thus, due to their work responsibilities, the participants' needed help to utilize their full-time reviewing, which affected their performance and caused the failed experience. Several studies have revealed that students' physical and emotional health might suffer from the combination of full-time schooling and part-time employment. Furr and Elling (2000) discovered that mixing employment and academic duties can result in worse exam results and overall academic progress.

Hectic Schedule Due to Various Commitments. This cluster theme pertains to how hectic schedules due to various commitments affected the examination's time management and schedule review, leading to a failed experience in the Licensure Examination for Teachers. As stated by Clarke (2022), being busy is frequently regarded as a badge of honor and a measure of one's self-worth, and having little free time is seen as a clear sign of social standing. However, over-committing oneself can severely impact physical and emotional well-being and the capacity to preserve wholesome relationships. Being extremely busy and exhausted may cause stress or low self-esteem. When praised and encouraged, busyness may wind up over-committing the self with various obligations, appointments, commitments, and responsibilities [24]. Anxiety disorders, depression, and substance use disorders are among the more severe mental health conditions that this may bring on. A hectic Schedule Due to other Commitments has affected the time of the participants on balancing their time to spend reviewing due to other personal errands and commitments of the participants as observed by the following statements below:

But when I'm at home, because we have a Sari-Sari store. So, sometimes my review is interrupted because someone is buying. I will go upstairs to give the what they are buying, then come back downstairs to review again. (P1)

During that time, I don't have the time to review my lessons and I don't have time to do some self-review. (P4)

Actually, while I was reviewing, I was working, and at the same time, I was doing my master's degree, and then. My review was every Saturday and Sunday because I enrolled in a review center. So I took a one-month leave from my job because I couldn't focus, so I took a one-month break so that I could study adequately, and that is how I manage everything. So while I was studying, I took one month off, and every Saturday and Sunday, I had to study for my master's degree. I was able to do it, so it's just time management. So I will set a time, what time I study. I set time aside for the review in LET, and I also set aside time to review for my master's degree since there are also exams in it. (P8)

Participant P1 had other responsibilities besides reviewing, which affected their studying time. Participant P4 had no time to review due to various commitments, which caused a lack of preparation and a failed experience. At the same time, participant P8 had to balance their time between reviewing for the Licensure Examination for Teachers and their master's degree Class. As stated by Hovdhaugen (2018), students' physical and emotional health might undoubtedly suffer from the combination of continuous learning and part-time employment, as several studies have revealed. It could harm a student's academic achievement [25].

Imbalanced Utilization of Schedules. This cluster theme pertains to the unbalanced utilization of schedules that affected time management and plans for a review of the examinees who brought failed experience to the Licensure Examination for Teachers. According to Mayilsamy and Priya (2021), imbalanced usage of schedules refers to a situation when resources are not distributed balanced, resulting in unequal workload allocation and consequent performance

degradation. Setting goals and priorities and preference for the organization were positively related to perceived control, whereas mechanics of time management were negatively related to perceived control of time [26]. Imbalanced Utilization of Schedule has affected the time of the participants on balancing their time to spend reviewing and preparing as observed by the following statements below:

So I do it usually at 9 pm or 10 pm and I review until dawn. There were times when I really couldn't review because I can't comprehend the questions - so I won't review that day so I just rest. (P1)

I manage my time by studying twice a day. I spend 4 hours every morning and 4 hours in the evening. (P2)

I manage my time by reviewing every Saturday and Sunday. Then I teach every Monday to Friday, but when I have vacant time. I often go to my school to review. So it's not easy for me to manage my time during those times. (P4)

1 week before the exam, I did not read. I enjoy preparing for the exam. If I keep on reading, I'd be more stressed. (P6)

Participant P1 had an imbalanced utilization of their schedule as they had to review during the evening and until dawn, which compromised their health and focus. Participant P2 and Participant P4 had an imbalanced schedule of reviewing and preparing for the Licensure Examination for Teachers. Participant P6 had no schedule during the last week before the LET, which caused them to be more stressed. According to Burton and Campbell (2019), students who use unbalanced schedules are more likely to need help managing their time during exams. This may lead to hasty studying, a lack of thorough preparation, and general exam unpreparedness [27].

Unpreparedness. This emergent theme pertains to the experiences related to the participants' encounter regarding their unpreparedness during the Licensure Examination for Teachers that caused the failed experience to them. The cluster themes that build this emergent theme are Pressure, Inadequate Knowledge, and too much Confidence. The preparedness of the takers makes or breaks them. On exam performance, being unprepared can have a significant impact. According to Yusefzadeh, Iranagh, and Nabilou (2019), the effects of being unprepared include test anxiety, which can result in extended study times, higher university dropout rates, exam failures, and mental and physical health problems. As the date of an exam approaches, and students remain unprepared, however, the averseness of the impending exam increases. Studying then becomes increasingly likely and serves the function of reducing the aversive properties of the upcoming exam [28].

Pressure. This cluster theme pertains to how pressure affected judgment and confidence and caused anxiety to the participants while preparing for the Licensure Examination for Teachers. According to Ahmad, Gul, and Zeb (2022), exam stress is a severe issue for students and can have detrimental effects like poor performance, a rise in dropout rates, and issues with physical and mental health. According to Newport Institute Staff (2022), academic pressure might arise from societal expectations, lofty goals set by students themselves, or expectations from their families [29]. These participants tend to point accusing fingers at the influence of negative peer pressure and poor time management as being responsible for poor academic performance [30]. The pressure has affected the participant's judgment and preparation, which affected their performance as observed by the following statements below:

Distracted because others said, "You won't pass the Board exam." "Don't put too much effort, because it won't all come out in the Exam." Societal pressure because they have the temptation if I should be really focused on reviewing? Should I really prepare myself for the exam? Because they say, only 20% will come out, so you're not sure if everything you reviewed is there. (P1)

I felt the pressure that time before, during, and after the LET. I am aware that I lack preparation which adds to the pressure. During those days, I was not relaxed and calm - I was tense. (P2)

I was pressured back then as a volunteer teacher, all of my workmates are already licensed. It is only me who was waiting for it and claiming it in the future that I could gain the title. (P5)

The participants' confidence and judgment had been clouded due to the pressure they felt. Participant P1 questioned their judgment and ability due to the pressure that occurred. Participant P2 felt pressured while preparing for the Licensure Examination for Teachers, which caused anxiety and tension. On the other hand, Participant P5 felt pressure because they kept comparing their situation with their coworkers. Most students will suffer from test anxiety at some time, according to Butler, Quigg, Bates, Jones, Ashworth, Gowland, and Jones (2022), and 80% of young people report feeling exam pressure negatively impacted their mental health, according to a study published by the British Psychological Society [31]. According to UNC-Chapel Hill Learning Center (2021), exam stress can be caused by various things, including fear of failure, a lack of grasp of the content, intense pressure to succeed, inadequate preparation, a history of failing tests, excessive pressure, and perfection [32].

Inadequate Knowledge. This cluster theme refers to the need for more preparation of the participants in terms of reviewing their lessons. Participants' inadequate Knowledge and preparation affected their performance. According to Pandey (2021), the lack of a specific type of Knowledge is referred to as inadequate Knowledge. The partial eclipse of knowledge phenomenon is brought on by the accumulation of Knowledge on the one hand, the absence of an effective educational system on the other, and the social environment [33]. Inadequate Knowledge has affected the performance of the participants, which caused them to experience failed results during the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET), as observed by the following statements below:

Lack of preparation really affects my performance in taking the LET, because I also have work in a private school. Most of my time is there. (P2)

It is challenging for me since I have work and just want to relax after my shift. This is also the cause of my lack of dedication to my study and lack of seriousness toward the exam. (P3)

Lack of preparation really affects my performance in taking the LET. (P7)

The inadequate knowledge and lack of preparation during the review and before the Licensure Examination for Teachers affected the performance and results of the participants. Participant P2 states they need more preparation and adequate knowledge and information before taking the LET. Participant P3's lack of knowledge caused them to lose their dedication. Participant P7 expressed his thoughts about their experience during the preparation and that they are aware of their lack of presentation, which affected their performance during the LET. As stated by Day and Goldstone (2012, reference from Taking Learning Seriously, 2022), the transfer is more likely to fail when learners need to grasp what they have learned and are unaware of how, where, and when their information is acceptable [34].

Too Much Confidence. This cluster theme refers to the exam expectations of the participants as well as their overconfidence, which clouded their performance during the Licensure Examination for Teachers. As stated by Islam (2020), a tendency toward overconfidence will prevent you from acting appropriately when it is needed. Even if they do not hear back and want to move on, doing this could make them unlikable to others. When everyone's opinion is disclosed, they can be shocked by the response or failure. They risk losing valuable relationships and failing, even if they succeed. Failure in personal or professional life is frequently caused by "overconfidence," which I repeat often [35]. Overconfidence clouded the judgment of the participants, which caused them failed experience and perform poorly during the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET), as observed by the following statements below:

I'm really confident because I really know that I studied and I answered correctly. Maybe I have calculations there that differed a little. (P1)

Expectations versus reality. My goal at that time was to pass but I was wrong. Even if I did not enroll in any review center and I did self-review. I was still optimistic about a positive result and I think it affected my preparation and result. (P2)

Okay, so at that time, uhmm... actually, I was studying well. So I'm confident that I can pass it, so at that time, ahhh... it's the day of the board exam, and I answered very quickly because I was confident since I already knew the questions and the answers because I enrolled in a review center. So too much confidence because it's like what is it uhmm... what's it called? That's where I failed because, ahhh... but after the board exam, I felt like I couldn't pass the exam, and I'm confident that I won't really pass it. So when the LET results came up, I didn't pass because it was like, I was thinking ahead of myself. (P8)

Despite the participants' confidence upon taking the Licensure Examination for Teachers, their confidence dwindled as they took it poorly due to overconfidence and exam expectations. Participant P1 expressed confidence during the exam yet was surprised with the result. Participant P2 had set their expectations high, which resulted in failed experiences due to being assertive towards the preparation for the Licensure Examination for Teachers. Overconfidence may induce a student to spend less time studying, resulting in poor exam grades. On the other hand, Ballard and Johnson (2015, referenced by Magnus & Peresetsky, 2018) argue that expectations could become self-fulfilling, possibly because of the student with higher expectations [36].

Learning Environment. This emergent theme describes the learning environment of the Participants while preparing for the Licensure Examination for Teachers and how it affected their performance. The cluster themes that build this emergent theme are Review Center as Learning Environment and Self-Review as Learning Strategy. The psychological, social, cultural, and physical surroundings in which learning takes place are referred to as the learning environment by Rusticus, Pashootan, and Mah (2022), and they impact student achievement and motivation. By supplying adequate lighting, lowering noise levels, and positioning furniture to encourage cooperation and involvement, teachers can create a physical atmosphere that is more favorable to learning [37]. Realyvásquez, Maldonado, Arredondo, Baez, Carrillo, and Hernández (2020) found that ambient illumination, noise levels, and temperature affected how well students perform in online classes. The built environment's sensory inputs, such as temperature, lighting, and noise, are included in the physical environment and can impact how people learn and perform through cognitive, psychological, and emotional mechanisms [38].

Review Center as Learning Environment. This cluster theme pertains to the participants' experiences as they enroll in the review center and how it factored into their failed experience in the Licensure Examination for Teachers. Review centers were described by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED, 2007, cited in Lopez, 2019) as hubs that provide programs or courses of study meant to update and improve the knowledge, competencies, and skills of students who have already studied in any formal school to get them ready for upcoming licensure examinations given by any license-giving body, such as those provided by the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) [39]. The learning environment in the Review Center has affected the performance of the participants in different circumstances as it is observed by the following statements below:

I even went to a review center and then, I only have almost 3-4 hours of sleep because of the review. When I review, I travel from Ormoc to Tacloban and vice-versa. Then, that's it, I did everything, sad to say. (P1)

Do not expect that all of the things that you reviewed from the review center will appear. No. Even if you study intensely if you are not reviewing what is in line with your major. Sometimes, the questions in the board exams are different and difficult. (P6)

So I'm confident that I can pass it, so at that time. It was the day of the board exam, and I answered very quickly because I was confident since I already knew the questions and the answers because I

enrolled in a review center. So too much confidence affected my performance. (P8)

Participant P1 stated that their travel to the review center consumed ample time. The travel time could have just been used to review and relax, as the trip to the review center deprived them of some sleep and rest. Participant P6 stated that only some of the things they reviewed in the review center went to the actual exam, which caused them to have inadequate knowledge. Participant P8 implied they were too confident because they enrolled themselves in a review center, which they expected to teach them all the pointers. All the participants pointed out that their enrollment in the review center affected their performance and judgment, as they expected all of their lessons to come out during the board exam. It caused them to become confident and need to prepare more for the exam. It takes effort and planning to create a learning environment that is favorable to learning. They ought to be produced via deliberate actions, such as having pleasant interactions with pupils and acting positively. That would encourage learning activities in a classroom setting (Becton, 2017, reference on Usman & Madudili, 2019). Hence the acknowledgment of Shamaki's (2015, referenced by Usman & Madudili, 2019) opinion stating that "the ideality of the educational system is likely to determine educational attainment or achievement" is an environment for learning [40].

Self-Review as Learning Strategy. This cluster theme pertains to the participants' experiences as they indulge themselves and self-review while preparing for the LET as their learning strategy. Self-studying anytime, anywhere, and using any method other than those recommended by a review center is referred to in this context as "self-review" for the LET or any other exam. They select and locate their study resources and schedule and organize their exams RevYOU (2020) [41]. The learning environment during self-review has affected the performance of the participants as observed by the following statements below:

I manage my time, in my room, I have posted a lot of manila papers on my wall. Every time I wake up, every time I'm lying on my bed, I'm just gonna read the manila paper. I have a lot of reviewers and then I go to church asking for guidance if I can really do it. I asked for a sign from my mom – now she's an angel to me. When you actually take the board exam, you don't really announce it - you are only the one that knows it. Don't tell everyone because people's expectations are too high. So I manage my time by reading my notes every time I have time. (P1)

Expectations versus reality. My goal at that time was to pass but I was wrong. Even if I did not enroll in any review center and did a self-review. I was still optimistic about a positive result and I think it affected my preparation and result. (P4)

Ahh.. during that time, I was working, so I didn't enroll in a review center. I do a self-review, but I don't do a lot of reviews, maybe that's why I failed, why I didn't pass on the first take because I didn't... I didn't focus on the review since I was busy working and had a hectic schedule during that time. (P9)

Self-review as a learning strategy works for some, but for these participants, it did not. Participant P1 clearly stated that during the review preparation, they stuck some manila papers with notes in their rooms and spent their entire time reviewing, even briefly. Participant P4 did not enroll in any review center because they self-reviewed, which even caused them to become overconfident, which resulted in a failed experience and result. Self-review can hinder the time spent reviewing, especially for those examinees who are busy and cannot focus on reviewing, as happened to Participant P9.

The Effect of the Support System. This emergent theme pertains to how the support system of the participants is vital and affects their performance. The cluster themes that build this emergent theme are Insufficient Support from Family and Acquaintances and Peer- Pressure from Family and Acquaintances. Social support plays a vital role for teenagers to lessen the effects of stressful situations and stressors through the help of peers in the group (Esen & Gundogdu, 2010) [42].

Insufficient Support from Family and Acquaintances. This cluster theme implies that insufficient support from family and acquaintances of the participants during their preparation affected their performance during the Licensure Examinations for Teachers. According to the OECD (2022), lack of social support represents the proportion of people who claim to have no friends or family to turn to in difficult times [43]. The lack of support from the family and friends of the participants has affected their performance during the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) as it is observed by the following statements below:

It's not easy, since I am self-supported during the review. At least I'm self-supporting and even I am in a difficult situation. I am still fighting. (P4)

There isn't a support system in my family because I stayed in the boarding house for one month and didn't go back to our hometown. (P8)

But other people would comment that the degree I got would be wasted, and that's how I felt when I got the result. It looked like I was okay that I didn't get to pass the exam, but at the back of my mind, I felt sad because I thought about my family, my parents, and the thought that they wouldn't be proud of me. (P9)

Support from family and acquaintances really can affect the motivations of the participants. However, in the case of the participants, the insufficient support from their loved ones affected their performance and caused failed experiences in the Licensure Examination for Teachers. Participant P4 stated that they find it hard to deal with due to the lack of emotional support from their loved ones, and it affects them. Due to their review preparation, they had to be away from their family, which affected the emotional and moral support that they received from them. Participant P9 clearly stated that the validation from their loved ones affected them; it affected their way of thinking and confidence. Silva (2020) asserts that social support affects children's academic performance favorably and that higher levels of social support enhance academic achievement by elevating dispositional optimism [44]. On the other side, instability and family problems might have a negative effect on a student's drive to learn. Furthermore, Baltà, Torre, Peña, and Renta (2021) found that university students indicated that their homes were distracting environments while learning online and were more likely to be stopped by roommates or close relatives [45].

Peer-Pressure from Family and Acquaintances. This cluster theme infers to the pressure they felt concerning the opinion of their family and acquaintances, which affected their performance during the Licensure Examination for Teachers. Reach Out (2021) mentioned that peer pressure describes various social groups' impact on a person's thoughts and actions. Peer pressure can vary in intensity for young people. Their classmates may actively influence them at times, and at other times they may be merely following along. The basis of these two circumstances is looking for permission [46]. The pressure from the family and friends of the participants has affected their performance during the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) as it is observed by the following statements below:

Societal pressure because they have the temptation if I should be really focused on reviewing? Should I really prepare myself for the exam? Because they say, only 20% will come out, so you're not sure if everything you reviewed is there. (P1)

Actually, sir, I always smile, even though I have a lot of problems. The pressure is constant, but I just smile it all away and always go with the flow. (P8)

But other people would comment that the degree I got would be wasted, and that's how I felt when I got the result. It looked like I was okay that I didn't get to pass the exam. (P9)

The validation means something to the participants and the comments and opinions of other people and their families. It matters to them how it affected them to experience such a failed experience during the Licensure Examination for Teachers. Participant P1 implies that the

comment of their acquaintances affected their strategy and performance. The comment serves as a hindrance for the P1 participant to perform well. Participant P8 shared that they experience pressure and try to conceal their genuine emotion by smiling and acting as if they are okay, which is how the peer pressure affected them emotionally. Participant P9 is afraid of what other people will say to them and of the tendency to question their capability and the degree they completed if they fail to pass the Licensure Examination for Teachers. The central issue stressed in this cluster theme emphasizes the effect of peer pressure on the participants' performance, which caused them to have a failed experience. As mentioned by Temitope and Ogonsakin (2015, reference from IJCIT, 2022), Many teenagers in society experience peer pressure, and professionals have recognized that this peer pressure can have detrimental effects on young people that can be avoided by educating and training young people to deal with these effects [47].

Coping Mechanism after the Failed Experience in the Licensure Examination for Teachers

Presented in Table 2 is the set of emergent themes extracted from their cluster theme pertinent to how participants cope after failing the Licensure Examination for Teachers. The researchers established emergent themes under the second research question: Emotions after the Results, Diverting Attention to Other things, and Support.

Table 2 Coping mechanisms of the participants after failing the Licensure Examination for Teachers

Emergent Themes	Cluster Themes	Formulated Meaning
Negative Reinforcement	Accepting the failure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The examinee accepted the outcome of the LET and proceeded to enjoy and forget the situation. • Eating the examinee’s favorite food helps the examinee to move forward and accept the situation.
	Anxiety Alleviation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The examinee accepted the situation but couldn’t accept the ratings. • Other people would tell the examinee to stop crying but the examinee could not help but cry about the result. • The examinee could not lie about the sadness and heartache the examinee felt after hearing about the result. • The examinee experienced anxiety and is stressed about the review and finances. • The examinee reaches the point of thinking about suicide, leaving the place alone, and wanting to disappear.
	Pressured about other people's status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stress and anxiety lead the examinee to think about negative thoughts. • The examinee was under pressure since all the examinee’s workmates are already licensed, teachers. • The examinee was having trouble facing people after failing and carried the feeling of not being good enough. • The examinee experienced peer pressure since some of the examinee’s friends passed the LET.
Diverting attention to other things	Hangout with Family, Friends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hanging out and talking to friends and family helped the participant in preserving good mental health. • Spending time with family and friends helped in distracting the participant from the result. • Hanging out with friends helped in getting rid of the sadness.
	Work distraction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The examinee did many things such as being productive in work that helped him move on. • Failing the LET leads the examinee to keep busy with work. • The examinee likes to have loads of work thus, leading to being a workaholic as a distraction to self and to the mind of the examinee to take its worries away. • Being busy at work helped the examinee to get distracted, and the examinee’s concerns disappeared.
	Going on a trip or vacation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Going to the mall and beach leads the participant to be distracted. • Traveling and wandering around helped the examinee to put the mind at ease.

	Leisure and Entertainment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercising helped the participant to cope with the situation, and to be distracted at the same time. • Playing sports helped the examinee to get distracted and relieved. • Watching inspirational videos helped the participant in facing problems like failing the LET.
Good Support System	Self-motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Praying and self-motivation helped the participant handle the problems. • The examinee told himself/herself to give the best he/she can in the next take. • Conditioning the mind in believing that as long as there are chances you can still try and do the best you can in the next exam. • The examinee was motivated again to study by thinking that he/she is doing all this for his/her parents.
	Family and Peer Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The examinee was comforted by his/her family knowing that he/she was badly reviewed for the LET. The family also told the participant that the Board Exam will always be there and that there are still chances to pass it. • The examinee gets comforted by friends saying that the participant could ace the next exam. The principal also told the participant that what matters is how the participant performs well in school. The examinee received support from friends through chat telling her that it's not her time yet and that maybe in the next take, she can pass it.

Negative Reinforcement. This emergent theme pertains to the examiners' emotions after knowing they have failed the Licensure Examination for Teachers. The cluster themes that build this emergent theme are Accepting Failure, Anxiety Alleviation, and Pressured about other people's Status. Emotions have a significant impact on how we live our lives, as stated by Cherry (2022). Whether we are joyful, indignant, depressed, bored, or frustrated influences the choices we make. The feelings they arouse affect the activities and interests we choose. We may navigate life more easily and steadily by better understanding our emotions [48]. According to Salzer (2020), when it comes to failing at anything in life, particularly when it comes to failing at something significant with a lot on the line, like the bar exam, shame is precisely what you might feel—as well as possible humiliation, unworthiness, guilt, and embarrassment that makes you want to hide under some blankets and never talk again with anyone [49].

Accepting the Failure. This cluster theme pertains to the participants' emotions, wherein they accepted that they failed the Licensure Examination for Teachers. As Salters (2022) mentioned, acceptance entails letting your sentiments be what they are without trying to judge or influence them. It entails being conscious of their feelings and recognizing that they exist without attempting to repress or push them away [50]. Accepting failure has become an effective coping measure for the participants as it is observed by the following statements below:

I manage the pressure by accepting the fact that I failed. Then enjoy and forget about that information. (P2)

I'm only mildly sad; I deal with it by indulging in my preferred foods and accepting the outcome. Just accept the result and move on. (P3)

I accept that I failed the LET, but I can't help to accept that I got a rating of 72.60. (P4)

Acceptance is a realization that what has occurred has occurred and that there is nothing they can do now to change anything that has happened in the past. Participant 2 handles the situation by accepting failure and choosing to enjoy and forget about it. Participant 3 is only slightly sad about it and decides to accept and move on from the situation. Participant 3 indulges in food, convincing Participant 3 to accept the outcome. Participant 4 accepted failing the Licensure Examination for Teachers but could not accept the rating of 72.60. Following Ajjawi, Boud, Zacharias, Dracup, and Bennett (2019), failure can aggravate all stressors, exacerbating unpleasant feelings [51].

Anxiety Alleviation. This cluster theme describes the intense emotions the participants felt before the Licensure Examination for Teachers and after failing the Licensure Examination for Teachers. Most participants likely expressed these intense feelings such as stress, depression, sadness, and anxiety. JD ADVISING (2019) claims that if someone fails the bar test, they will likely experience various emotions. The difficulty in separating emotions after failing the bar exam is one of the more irritating aspects. Sadness, or depression, is one of their most intense emotions. Their personal and interpersonal connections may suffer as a result [52]. Anxiety Alleviation has become an effective coping measure for the participants as it is observed by the following statements below:

I really cried, maybe it was just the past few days. The pain is still there; it won't really go away. Other people said that I shouldn't cry but my tears would just fall suddenly. Because it can't really be avoided. (P1)

I experienced anxiety during the review, I couldn't help but be stressed about the review and financially. (P4)

I cannot really diagnose myself, but I keep on thinking about ending my life, trying to go somewhere alone far away from here and at the same time I just want to disappear. (P5)

At that time, I was very fed up, because of stress. My anxiety keeps on telling me "What content will appear on the exam". I had a lot of negative thoughts that time. (P6)

Actually, sir, I felt depressed during that time because I cried when I looked at the results and wondered why my name wasn't on the list of passers. I also had a hard time sleeping. (P8)

Most participants suffered intense emotions after failing the Licensure Examination for Teachers. Participant 1 could not help but cry and embrace sadness. Participant 2 was heartbroken by the results. While participants 4 and 6 suffered from anxiety and could not help but stress about the review and the content appearing in the exam. Participant 5 had thoughts about committing suicide and wanting to disappear. Participant 8 felt depressed at that time, which resulted in difficulties sleeping. According to Mármol and Rodríguez (2019), they put much effort into it but were unsuccessful. This can be highly upsetting and discouraging. They can immediately become anxious if they do not pass the bar test. They also probably have plans to go back and study. However, failing the bar exam can hurt them professionally and personally [53].

Pressured about other People's Status. This cluster theme refers to the participants' emotions in which they are pressured about the status of those who have already passed the Licensure Examination for Teachers. Morin (2022) states that peer pressure is the power exercised by members of the same social group. The phrase is also used to explain how this influence causes the person to conform in order to fit in with the group [54]. Pressure about other people's status has affected the judgment and performance of the participants during the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) as it is observed by the following statements below:

At first, it was hard for me to accept that I failed the LET (3rd time). Because I was under pressure as a volunteer teacher, all my workmates are already licensed, and I am the only one who is waiting for it. (P5)

Another thing is I prayed to give me strength to face people, especially those people who passed the LET. The feeling of not being enough because I failed the LET. (P7)

There is pressure for sure since some of my friends have already passed the LET, and I think about myself and what could happen to me. When am I going to pass the exam? (P9)

Experiencing pressure can lead to good and bad things, but for Participant 5, it did not turn out to be good; Participant 5 experienced pressure at work since all the participant's workmates were already licensed teachers. Participant 7 prayed for strength to face people, especially those

who passed the Licensure Examination for Teachers. Lastly, participant 9 experienced the pressure of knowing that some of the participant's friends already passed the exam and were left to question themselves. Children's Health (2022) mentioned that harmful peer pressure can impact mental Health. It can lower one's self-esteem and result in poor academic performance, estrangement from family and friends, or escalating depression and anxiety [55].

They are diverting Attention to Other Things. This emergent theme pertains to the participants' experiences wherein they use distractions to forget about the result of their Licensure Examination for Teachers. The cluster themes that build this emergent theme are Hangout with Family and Friends, Work distraction, Going on a trip or vacation, and Leisure and Entertainment. As stated by a website called EduBirdie (2022), humans need diversions to enjoy themselves and avoid thinking about unpleasant things. This notion derives from John Stuart Mill's utilitarian view of human nature and the desire to avoid suffering (distressing thoughts) and to experience pleasure (distractions) [56]. Mental health problem is one issue that might cause distraction. This is significant because people adapt stress management techniques to fit their mental health conditions. These coping techniques frequently involve increased television viewing, social media use, or other stress-relieving activities. As a result, pleasure would be increased, and suffering would be reduced. Wiebe (2019) asserts that you sought distraction because you were hiding the underlying issues [57].

Hang out with Family and Friends. This cluster theme refers to participants who spend time with their family and friends to deal with the results of the Licensure Examination for Teachers. According to Gallup research, socializing for six hours daily is essential for happiness and lowers stress (Lamb, 2019) [58]. Confiding with their friends and family is a beneficial method of reducing stress. Face-to-face interaction can lower the incidence of mental illnesses like depression and anxiety, according to Psychology Today (reference from Road to Heaven, 2018) [59]. Social interaction with friends and family can offer emotional support to individuals through life's problems. Diverting attention by hanging out with family and friends and acting busy to be distracted is an effective coping measure by the participants as it is observed by the following statements below:

I hang out and talk with friends and family to lighten my mood. Talking to them helped me to preserve my mental health. (P2)

I socialized with my family and friends and spent the time just to distract myself and help me move on from the result. (P3)

Actually, me and my friends, sir, also go out hmm... we unwind from things to get rid of sadness. (P8)

Spending time with family and friends helped the participants forget and get rid of the sadness for a little while. Participant 2 hung out with family and friends because it helped the participant preserve their mental health. While participant 3 spends time with family and friends since it distracts the participant and helps in moving on from the result. Participant 8 stated that spending some quality time with friends helps in getting rid of sadness. According to Oswald, Clark, and Kelly (2019), best friends exhibit more upkeep behaviors, while close friends participate in more maintenance activities than casual friends; close friends are more optimistic, supportive, open, and interactive. As a result, more maintenance behaviors were displayed as the friendship got closer [60].

Work Distraction. This cluster theme pertains to the tasks the participants did for them to be busy and get rid of negative thoughts, especially the results of the Licensure Examination for Teachers. According to the Center for Professional Recovery (2018), workaholism is another typical coping strategy. Although less usually discussed, it involves working long hours to avoid confronting uncomfortable or disturbing thoughts or feelings. Workaholism is another manifestation of grief, whether it be from a traumatic event or significant changes in one's life; anger, guilt, depression, and other unpleasant emotions may be regarded as things one can avoid by concentrating on the activities at hand [61]. Diverting the attention of the participants to other

things and acting busy by work to be distracted is an effective coping measure by the participants, as it is observed by the following statements below:

I did many things just to distract myself; I indulged myself in things that are products such as work that would help me to stand up and move on. (P3)

In my case, I have no choice because I failed the LET. What I did is I kept myself busy with work. (P7)

I am the kind of person, sir, that likes to work more so that I can, ahmm... must do a lot of work so that I can take my mind off my worries. So, it's something like what we called a "workaholic." I have become a workaholic (inaudible). I work to distract myself. (P8)

I was distracting myself with work, sir. If I am busy, I get distracted, and my concerns disappear. (P9)

Work is another thing that the participants consider distracting themselves from the examination outcome. Participant 3 likes to use work as a distraction since it helps the participant stand up again and move on from the situation. Participant 7 had no choice in the result, so Participant 7 indulged in working on getting distracted. Participant 8 is a workaholic and likes to work because it helps distract the self, and work takes the worries away from the mind. If Participant 9 gets busy with work, the participant will get distracted, and all the participant's concerns will disappear. According to research so far, some characteristics of workaholism, such as enjoyment of one's work, have positive associations with extraversion, favorable work-family spillover, career satisfaction, work engagement, a sense of purpose in life, and positive affect, as stated by Andreassen, Hetland, and Pallesen (2019) [62].

Going on a Trip or Vacation. This cluster theme refers to how participants deal with the results, and participants would go on trips or vacations on beaches or malls to unwind from the things that have been bugging them. People can relax, improve their mood, and think more favorably while on vacation since it takes their minds off their problems. According to studies, even brief vacations of four nights might provide individuals with enough healing time to boost their mood (Latitude Aviation, 2022) [63]. Having a vacation to breathe is also an effective way to distract and a coping mechanism the participants by the participants as it is observed by the following statements below:

I went to the mall; I went to the beach, and I rented a villa for myself. (P6)

I was distracting myself by having me and my boyfriend wander from place to place. (P8)

Yes, we wandered and traveled around to ease the mind. We went to the beach and the church to ask for guidance. (P9)

A good vacation can help us reconnect with who we are, serve as a means of self-discovery, and aid in our return to feeling our best, but most importantly, it can serve as a form of self-distractions. Participants 6, 8, and 9 all wander to distract themselves from the results of the Licensure Examination for Teachers. Participant 9 stated that wandering around helps the mind to be at ease. According to Lapelosova (2020), traveling is a constructive means of escape. Wanting a vacation from the daily schedule, job, obligations, and people is expected. Also, having difficulties while away from home can serve as a diversion from the problems people are trying to escape [64].

Leisure and Entertainment. This cluster refers to the participants who watched videos and did exercises to forget and be distracted from the outcome of the Licensure Examination for Teachers. As Li, Zeng, and Li (2021) mentioned, leisure activities can enhance physical and mental health and are essential for regulating the body and mind, reducing life stress, and offering a pleasurable experience [65]. Being distracted by entertainment and leisure is an effective coping mechanism the participants by the participants as it is observed by the following statements below:

My daily routine, doing exercise - you probably know from my Instagram that I always work out. That's all I do to cope and distract myself. (P1)

I played sports just to distract myself - it made me relief. (P2)

I watched inspirational videos. Big help. For example, I have problems and I watch inspirational videos. It makes me realize that "I am not alone" (P10)

Doing what they love, especially in their free time, and watching videos to be entertained is a great way to create a distraction for themselves. For participants 1 and 2, exercising and playing sports helped distract them from the result and helped them cope with the situation and be relieved. According to Hackett (2018), entertainment is about expressing an emotion; it distracts from the unmet requirements of our deepest emotions. It does not address suffering, emptiness, or a lack of value in oneself. It merely makes them temporarily numb [66].

Good Support System. This emergent theme pertains to the friends and family of the participants who showed their support before, during, and after the Licensure Examination for Teachers. The cluster themes that build this emergent theme are self-motivation and family and peer support. Hood (2020) defines a support system as a group of people who can offer material or emotional help to one another. These social networks will improve general health and have been demonstrated to lessen stress and worry. When someone has a support system, they know they can turn to them for help [67]. It implies that they have individuals they can rely on when things get complicated. Moreover, Kapil (2020) mentioned that recovery is a journey that each individual undertakes with the objectives of hope, empowerment, and autonomy. For many people who struggle with mental health issues, recovery is frequently attainable. A strong support network of individuals, who like, respect, and trust is one of several things that help someone recover. They could be neighbors, close friends, instructors, clergy members, or students [68].

Self-motivation. This cluster theme pertains to the support that the participants gave themselves to be motivated, move forward in life, and never give up even after failing the Licensure Examination for Teachers. Self-motivation is the internal force that prompts one to take action toward a goal, as stated by Eatough (2022). Even when people do not want to, it pushes them to move forward. Because self-motivation involves regularly reminding oneself of the broader vision, it helps to maintain a sharp focus. Self-motivation enables them to see their everyday obligations as a component of their long-term objectives and consider how their actions relate to their life's purpose [69]. Self-motivation has affected the confidence of the participants as it is observed by the following statements below:

I coped during that time by self-motivation, and I prayed that I would be able to handle the problems that were causing me problems. (P4)

[I told myself that I will give my best next time. (P6)

I told myself that everything was going to be fine. there are still many chances for example you failed the exam, but that doesn't mean that you have failed everything. There are still many chances, and you can just try and try until you run out of chances. (P9)

What I did was pray and think that I am doing this for my parents. Because of that it motivates me to pick-up my reviewers and study. (P10)

Being self-motivated entails being more resilient because achieving goals takes time and effort. For Participant 4 they were praying, and self-motivation helped handle the problems that the Participant faced. Participant 6 is motivated to give all the best in the next take. While participant 9 conditioned their mind to believe that there are still chances and that they can still try and do their best in the next exam. Lastly, participant 10 is motivated again to study by thinking that all this is for the Participant's parents. According to Whitener (2020), when they learn about and develop the finest version themselves, motivation will keep them going. It is inextricably linked to purpose

because without knowing their life's purpose, it is difficult to know their destination and what drives them to get there. They are more likely to have the self-motivation to persevere and succeed when the going gets difficult if they remind themselves of their goal [70].

Family and Peer Support. This cluster theme refers to the support, whether in esteem or emotional support. Support comes from family, and friends helped the participants to continue fighting in life despite the outcome of the Licensure Examination for Teachers. According to Doom (2019), how people feel about their connections is the most crucial social support indicator. Their emotional and physical health will improve if they experience the love and support of their social network [71]. In addition, the Mayo Clinic team (2022) states that having good friends is beneficial to health. Friends can help celebrate happy occasions and offer support during difficult times. Friendships minimize loneliness and isolation while also providing the opportunity to provide much-needed company [72]. Friends can also improve self-confidence and self-worth, boost happiness, and reduce stress. Moral support from the Participant's family and friends has affected the confidence of the participants as it is observed by the following statements below:

My TL made me rest for 2 hours. My cousin who is in Cebu called me and he comforted me and said it's okay. They said that they knew that I review badly and also my family knows that - my dad and my siblings. They said that it's okay for me to fail because they said that I did everything. That it's not my time - it's not for me yet. They also said that the Board Exam is always there, there are more chances. (P1)

At that time my friends really comforted me by saying that "That's okay, you can ace it in the next LET" and "You're performing well in the school", and the principal said "Sirsir what matters is how you work/perform well in the room". (P7)

Through chat (Friends of ma'am) they would say, "salig lang, Mae" because it's not your time right now; maybe it's for the next LET; just recover from the failure and trust the Lord always. (P8)

It can be easier to be positive in everyday life if they have a strong network of family and friends to lean on. The family of Participant 1 told Participant 1 that the Board Exam will always be there and that there is still a chance to pass it. Participant 7 was comforted by the participant's friends stating that the participant could ace the subsequent examination. While Participant 8 received support from friends through chat, they told the participant that it was not their time yet and that maybe they could pass the Licensure Examination for Teachers in the next take. Those who receive support from their family members may feel more confident about themselves, and this increased self-worth could serve as a psychological tool to promote optimism, positive emotions, and better mental health (Symister & Friend, 2003, reference Thomas, Liu, & Umberson, 2018) [73].

Insights shared by the Failed Licensure Examination for Teachers Examinees

Presented in Table 3 is the set of emergent themes extracted from their cluster theme pertinent to the What is your advice for the future Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) takers? Upon gathering information from the participants, the research collected various pieces of advice for future Licensure Examinations for teacher takers. The researchers established the emergent themes under the first research questions: Setting Goals, Health and Prayers, Habits and Expectations, and Strategies.

Table 3 Insights shared by the Failed Licensure Examination for Teachers Examinees

Emergent Themes	Cluster Themes	Formulated Meaning
Setting Goals	The vitality of having personal goals and strong faith in passing the examination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The examinee's advice is to set their objectives in order to have a clearer vision while taking the test. • The examinee's advice is to have a strong faith in God. • The examinees give the advice to have a strong mentality during or after the

		exam.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The examinee's advice is to not rush yourself or not pressure yourself.
The Importance of Having Goals and Discipline		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Examinee's advice is to discipline yourself in every aspect of life before, during, and after the exam. • The examinee's advice is to relax a week or days before the exam. • The Examinee's advice is to socialize and have fun sometimes.
The consciousness of health and well-being		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Examinee's advice is to discipline yourself in every aspect of life before, during, and after the exam. • The examinee's advice is to relax a week or days before the exam. • The Examinee's advice is to socialize and have fun sometimes. • The Examinees prepare their well-being for the upcoming examination. • The Examinees have been given tips on what to do before the examination. • Superstitious beliefs are also included.
Habits and Expectation	Habits and minimizing expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The examinee's advice is to have a healthy body in order to have a strong mind. • The examinee's advice is to stand up multiple times if whatever the result is. • The examinee's advice is to not overwork yourself. • Examinee's advice is not to expect that everything you reviewed will appear in the exam.
	Emotional Insights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The examinees have set their boundaries about confidence because they believe that too much confidence can ruin everything. • The examinees compared their previous experiences. • The examinees were deprived of the result.
Integration of Optimism and Pessimism	Knowledge as Power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The examinees are aware of the shuffle and changes in exam questions. • The examinee's readiness. • The examinees have an acquaintance who passed the LET.
	Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The examinees are aware of what will happen in the future. • The examinee's advice is to have consistency during the review.
	Interest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The examinees have created different strategies to pass the examination. • The examinee's determination to pass the exam. • The examinee created boundaries and limitations to prioritize studies.

Setting Goals. This emergent theme pertains to the examinee's ways of setting goals, prioritizing health, and always having strong faith in God. The cluster themes that build this emergent theme are the vitality of having personal goals and strong faith in passing the Examination, the importance of having goals and discipline, and the consciousness of health and well-being. Dotson (2018) states that goal-setting helps students focus on desired outcomes and provides a clear path to success [74].

The vitality of having Personal Goals and Strong Faith in passing the Examination. This cluster theme pertains to having sturdy goals and faith to pass the Examination of the participants. Lumontod III (2018) indicated that students had a higher amount of time spent in preparation for the Examination makes them more active and motivated [75]. The vitality of having personal goals and strong faith in passing the Examination is one of the insights that the participants learn during their experience in the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) as it is observed by the following statements below:

My advice is that you should not give in to your personal problems and just focus on your goals and always pray. (P4)

Trust God, and always think that life is not a race, we have different paths that we are going to take. Do not focus on others' achievement/s. Focus on the things on your own achievements. Try to relax. Try to socialize yourself with positive people for you to have

that positive outcome. (P5)

Set your inspirations while taking the exam to avoid negative thoughts. (P7)

Okay uhhh.. I can't say a lot sir, just trust and have faith in the Lord sir. He is the one who will take care of it. If something happens or if you fail the examination, just pray always, until you achieve your dream. Have trust and faith in the Lord since this is the strongest and most powerful thing to do. (P8)

Participants 4, 5, 7, and 8 stated that having a goal and strong faith would help. Concrete plans, faith, and effort would reciprocate the effort.

The Importance of Having Goals and Discipline. This cluster theme pertains to the discipline of oneself to achieve the desired goals. The examinees mentioned that they need to have fun sometimes by socializing, but with great moderation. Also, one of the essential virtues for success in life is discipline. According to Şimşir and Dilmaç (2020), self-control is a skill that supports human adaptations [76]. The importance of having goals is essential as it helps to achieve the desired goals of the future Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) examinees as is observed by the following statements below:

My advice for LET takers before, during, and, after the exam is you must stay calm right before and after the exam. Prayer may work too and be confident, and stay positive for the outcomes. (P2)

Ahh... perhaps my advice is that, ahh.. three days before the exam, you should relax or finish your review before the exam to avoid a mental block, and then, in the months leading up to the LET, just review, review, and review. Then during the exam, just relax and don't be nervous; just pray to the Lord and ask for the Lord's guidance, after the exam is ahh.. just pray for the result and accept whatever the result is, whether it fails or passes, because you must remind yourself that at least you tried rather than not even trying at all. (P9)

Pray, review, self-discipline. Think about the people that depend on you. Socialize, and talk to your friends. Just think about "who are you getting up for". (P10)

Participant 9 and Participant 2 stated that keeping themselves calm and asking the Lord's guidance before taking the exam helped them focus. Participant 10 also mentioned that they need to socialize to motivate themselves. Lumuntod (2018) mentioned that people with a larger group of friends and significant others are usually happier. It also said that religion infused such connectivity [75].

The Consciousness of Health and Well-being. This cluster theme pertains to examinees preparing and calming their inner selves mentally, emotionally, and physically for the upcoming examination. Pu, Zhang, Tang, and Qiu (2020) state that health-conscious people tend to understand their health better, pay attention to individual health problems, and then take restorative measures to ensure their health [77]. Prioritizing the health of the future Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) examinees is vital to perform at their best as is observed by the following statements below:

They need to prepare themselves. They need to be prepared mentally, socially, emotionally, and physically. Because that's all there, in the board exam. And then, be on time - be early. Just a piece of advice - wear color red, wear anything that is red. Because it is a lucky charm, one more thing, trust yourself - you should stick to your answer. This is all I teach you, if you are confused with your answer just always go with the letter C, because C can be A, B, and D, and C is for Christ. Don't forget to pray before taking the Board Exam. Prepare your foods because it's strict. It is really the last thing, one thing after you finish taking the exam before you leave the room, kick your chair and go straight and never look back. (P1)

Get a good night's sleep. Fuel up or eat nutritious food. Keep a positive frame of mind. Don't pay attention to what other people are doing. Be prepared and focus on calm breathing and positive thoughts. (P3)

Perhaps my advice is that, three days before the exam, you should relax or finish your review before the exam to avoid a mental block, and then, in the months leading up to the LET, just review, review, and review. Then during the exam, just relax and don't be nervous; just pray to the Lord and ask for the Lord's guidance, after the exam is just pray for the result and accept whatever the result is, whether it fails or passes, because you must remind yourself that at least you tried rather than not even trying at all. (P9)

Participant 1 states that being prepared for well-being might help, and the examinee applied superstitious beliefs. Participant 3 has a healthy lifestyle that helps her to have a positive mind and to focus. Participant 9 states that be confident; it might lead takers to unexpected things. According to Espinosa (2018), A person's conduct and attitude toward their health, nutrition, and lifestyle are referred to as being "health conscious." It is the condition of knowing how healthy the person is and actively engaging in behaviors, lifestyle choices, and activities supporting good health. Everyone should be aware of their level of health [78].

Habits and Expectations. This emergent theme pertains to the examinees applying effective habits and how they anticipate the upcoming results of the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET). The cluster themes that build this emergent theme are Habits, Minimizing Expectations, and Emotional Insights. Jafari, Aliaghaei, and Khatony (2019) mentioned that study habits are behaviors and abilities that can boost motivation, transform studying into a process with high returns, and ultimately improve learning [79].

Habits and Minimizing Expectations. This cluster theme pertains to examinees building good habits and minimizing their expectations for the LET. According to Yusefzadeh (2019), students will develop less anxiety if they have learning strategies and are goal-oriented. If the individuals involved ignore this, its effects could increasingly harm students' performance [80]. Minimizing expectations will build good habits as it is observed by the following statements below:

Simple, don't really put pressure on yourself. If you want, it's like this when you're tired, rest, if it's okay to fight, then fight again. Don't tire yourself, and don't drain your brain. Because you will have a mental block during the Board Exam. Don't really expect that everything you reviewed will appear because only a few questions will appear. Don't share that you are going to take the board exam – let them be surprised that you have passed. Because their expectations are really something. It's not a burden on you if you ever don't pass because they didn't know, they don't have expectations, and you won't hear anything from them. (P1)

Get a good night's sleep. Fuel up or eat nutritious food. Keep a positive frame of mind. Don't pay attention to what other people are doing. Be prepared and focus on calm breathing and positive thoughts. (P3)

Do not keep your expectations high. Even if the review center told you that you need to be top. If your coping mechanism is low, you might give up. (P6)

Participant 1 did not apply self-pressure and mentioned that LET takers should expect only some things they reviewed to appear during the examination. They should keep everyone from knowing they are taking the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET). Participant P6 states that LET takers should not expect something high, or they might disappoint themselves. A person with bad study habits will not be able to learn well. Most people agree that students learn efficient study techniques in school (Manandhar & Shrestha, 2019) [81].

Emotional Insights. This cluster theme pertains to how participants affect their emotions after they heard that they failed the Licensure Examination for Teachers. Yusefzadeh et al. (2019) state that test anxiety is one of the influential factors causing students to perform poorly [80]. Emotional Insights after the participants heard that they failed the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) as it is observed by the following statements below:

After taking the exam, I locked myself in my room. When the results are out, I was sad, but I cannot do anything about it. (P6)

Do not force yourself, or else the result might not be good. (P7)

Okay, so at that time, uhmm... actually, I was studying well. So I'm confident that I can pass it, so at that time, ahhh... it's the day of the board exam, and I answered very quickly because I was confident since I already knew the questions and the answers because I enrolled in a review center. So too much confidence because it's like what is it uhmm... what's it called? That's where I failed because, ahhh... but after the board exam, I felt like I couldn't pass the exam, and I'm confident that I won't really pass it. So when the LET results came up, I didn't pass because it was like, I was thinking ahead of myself. (P8)

Participant P6 claims that failure has a significant emotional impact on them. It caused them to experience roller coaster emotions after receiving the failed result. Participant P8 asserts that because of the confidence they gained, they failed, which means that their overconfidence affected their performance, leading them to perform poorly. As stated by Scherer and Moors (2019), there is no clear space for the idea of interactions between various aspects of emotion (such as motivation/feeling) and cognition (such as higher-order conceptual processes), which define or situate emotion at the level of perception [82]. The current position may resemble componential-dynamic methods, at least insofar as mental processes' features or configurations constantly change.

Integration of Optimism and Pessimism. This emergent theme describes the strategies Participants applied during the entire review for the Licensure Examination for Teachers. The cluster themes are Knowledge as Power, Awareness, and Interest. Wu, Jing, Gong, Mou, and Li (2021) state that students who adapt their use of learning strategies perceive control over their learning process more favorably [83].

Knowledge as Power. This cluster theme pertains to the awareness of examinees that there is a curriculum change and how examinees ask LET passers about what to expect during the examination. Palomino, Quintana, and Velasquez (2022) state that the most potent organization always has more substantial capabilities than others for finding and collecting helpful knowledge [84]. Equipping adequate knowledge will help the future participants to perform at their best during the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) as it is observed by the following statements below:

Future Licensure Examinees should be prepared themselves for every test question. Like unfamiliar topics. It is Because every year there is a so-called curriculum change. Selve it is usually happened that some of the items may not be introduced to us back in college days. That is why some of us need to enroll in review program. (P2)

My insights after taking the exam are that the more knowledge you have the faster you can answer the questions and not face the battle if you are really ready. (P2)

You must be ready, not only with your knowledge but also with your faith in Almighty God. (P4)

Gain more ideas/knowledge from those people that have experienced upon taking the LET. You need to focus on engaging K-12, because as you know we have the new curriculum guide for K-12. At the same time, we need to ask those people who passed/failed the LET. For you to have an idea. (P5)

Participant P2 shows that Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) takers should be aware of curriculum changes and enroll in the review center. Participant P4 states that they should be knowledgeable when taking the exam. Participant P5 advises gaining knowledge from people who take the examination. Participant P2 the more knowledge, the faster the exam will be finished. Yang, Potts, and Shanks (2018) state that the interactions between past knowledge and other factors influence learning outcomes. Self-regulated learning can further improve the connection between past knowledge and learner engagement [85].

Awareness. This cluster theme pertains to the participants' awareness about setting their interest and eagerness during the review in preparation for the upcoming Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET). Bhagat, Vyas, and Singh (2019) state that student awareness of various learning strategies improved the acceptability and effectiveness of external regulation for adopting various learning strategies [86]. Being aware during the preparation will help to build a better strategy and perform better performance for the future Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET), as it is observed by the following statements below:

Interest and eagerness to pass the LET, that's very important to set on. Because remember you have 5 months to review, ang imong eagerness on the first day kay taas pa kaayo ang level, pag abot nimo sa end wala na murag na kuhaan na imong eagerness compared to the first day. What we so called 'consistency' we should apply that. (P7)

Interest and eagerness to pass the LET, that's very important to set on. Because remember you have 5 months to review, your eagerness on the first day will not be the same until the exam is approaching, your eagerness is one of the factors that will fail you. That's why we should have 'consistency' and apply it. (P8)

Ahh...perhaps they should prepare themselves and be strong, and brave, and that they shouldn't hesitate because during my second take for the LET, one of my friends (inaudible) we were in the same room, and my friend hesitated that time because my friend's co-workers underestimated him/her since my friend didn't pass on the first take of the exam, and so we encouraged my friend to try and try, and we also promised my friend that this will be the last time. Just prepare yourself and remember that God is there to guide you always. (P9)

Participant P7 states that as a LET taker, you should show interest and eagerness from the beginning until the end. Participant P8 is aware of what will happen in the future. At the same time, participants stated that participants should prepare themselves first and be energized when trying again. Chorrojprasert (2020) states that readiness is used to define a learner to acquire knowledge and begin to alter behavior which results in successful and efficient learning outcomes [87].

Interest. This cluster theme pertains to the interest of participants. They applied different strategies to guide themselves in the upcoming examination. Interest is a strong motivator that drives learning, shapes academic and career paths, and is essential to academic success. Harackiewicz, Smith, and Priniski (2019) indicated that having an interest during the preparation will help to build a better strategy and perform better performance for the future Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) [88], as it is observed by the following statements below:

My insight is to pass the next LET because this is my 3rd time taking the LET and the last time. (P4)

I was very shaken. We gathered with my co-teachers, and found-out we have different answers. I was thinking that "omg, basin bagsak nasad ko ani", but at least I tried my best. (P5)

If you want to pass the LET, you must focus on your studies and on your reviews. If you have work, you must practice time management. Whenever you study and review, you must accompany it with a prayer, and that is how you do it. During my review, I also prayed at that time, but I just couldn't focus on my review, sir. (P9)

Participant P3 created strategies when learning (outlines, good notes). Participant P4's goal is to pass the LET. Participant 9 mentioned setting time management. Participant P5 gathered with co-workers to find answers. As these participants, interest motivates the eagerness to review for the Licensure Examination. Wong, Harrigan, and Branch (2020) state that situational interest can positively influence learning by boosting focus and engagement [89].

4. CONCLUSION

The research results revolve around the challenges that affected the participants to experience failed experiences during the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET). These factors and challenges have caused the participants to receive failed results. This research results benefit the participants, aspiring teachers, professors, administrators, and the host school. The findings of this study are essential to the re-takers and aspiring educators since they will now be thoroughly educated about the factors that might prevent them from poor performance because the findings were acquired from legitimate and trustworthy sources. With it, the instructor may now use various strategies to address this challenge. The setting significantly affects the takers' performance. With that stated, ideally, they will find a solution to issues like shifting seats, unsuitable classrooms, loud environments, and others.

Preparing for the Licensure Examination for Teachers is nerve-racking, especially when people do not see their names on the result. Failing the exam can feel like a big blow. Setting a schedule is a must, as it can help the examinees focus more on studying and give them more time to get to know the needed knowledge. As examinees manage their time, they can establish a plan that keeps them on track, and it can help them monitor what coverage or lesson they need to pay attention to and be prepared. This study unraveled the failed experience of LET examinees, the challenges that contributed to their failed performance, coping mechanisms after failing the Licensure Examination for Teachers, and their insights. The findings of this study show what future LET takers should be preparing for and the problems they might experience upon the preparation. Also, it revealed some factors that they might encounter that might cause them problems. This finding plays a pivotal role in the future. LET takers as they can be more aware and prepare and avoid circumstances that they might experience. Becoming a licensed teacher is difficult, so future LET takers should be prepared.

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