



## LIVED EXPERIENCES OF STUDENT-PARENTS IN PASSING THE CRIMINOLOGIST LICENSURE EXAMINATION: AN APPLICATION OF ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION THEORY

**Jasley Babe M. Eulogio<sup>1i</sup>,  
Sherlyn O. Longakit<sup>2</sup>,  
Melany Jane M. Flor<sup>2</sup>,  
Jhunlord A. Sabanal<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Faculty Member, MAEd,  
Department of Arts and Sciences Education,  
University of Mindanao Bansalan College,  
Ramon Delos Cientos St. Bansalan,  
Davao del Sur, 8005,  
Philippines  
[orcid.org/0000-0002-7542-6781](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7542-6781)

<sup>2</sup>Alumni,  
College of Criminal Justice Education,  
University of Mindanao Bansalan College,  
Ramon Delos Cientos St. Bansalan,  
Davao del Sur, 8005,  
Philippines

### **Abstract:**

Student-parents often face greater challenges in both parenting and schooling compared to traditional students. Their experiences worsened during the COVID-19 pandemic, as they had to juggle remote learning, childcare, and household responsibilities, often without adequate support. This qualitative study aimed to explore the experiences, coping strategies, and insights of student-parents in passing the Criminology Licensure Examination (CLE). This study collected data from five (5) student-parents who successfully passed the CLE through in-depth interviews. The gathered data were analyzed using thematic analysis. Results revealed that student-parents faced significant challenges during their CLE preparation, including inconsistent review schedules, difficulties balancing their responsibilities, financial struggles, mental health concerns, and challenges in applying for the exam. Despite these obstacles, they managed to cope through faith in God, strong support systems, and a positive attitude. They also emphasized the importance of having a positive mindset, striving for academic growth, and strengthening one's faith in preparation for the licensure exam. The study's findings suggest that administrators and teachers play a crucial role in fostering the academic

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<sup>i</sup> Correspondence: email [jasleyeulogio@umindanao.edu.ph](mailto:jasleyeulogio@umindanao.edu.ph)

growth of their students, ensuring they are well-equipped and prepared to take their licensure examinations.

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**Keywords:** student-parents, criminologist licensure examination, achievement motivation theory, phenomenology, qualitative methods, thematic analysis, Philippines

### **1. Introduction**

The journey to college completion for students with children often looks dramatically different from what is traditionally thought of as the "typical" college experience. Most of the nearly four million undergraduate student parents take longer to earn degrees than their peers without children and often do not do so on the first try. Student-parents, as opposed to typical students, are considered adult students with parental obligations. These students are dealing with difficulties that are unique to them. The literature also implies that this group of students in higher education is not provided adequate attention and support, even though they require significant assistance (Sallee & Cox, 2019; Cruse *et al.*, 2020).

In the United States, time poverty or the lack of adequate time for the day-to-day responsibilities of student parents, is a common experience. Many student parents balance work, school, and family needs without access to affordable child care, flexible course and work schedules, or convenient transportation. This balancing act often falls apart when one aspect is out of place, leading many student parents to leave college before completing. Relatively, student parents' educational aspirations are repeatedly set aside to deal with family and life circumstances out of their control. Experiences of homelessness, domestic violence, addiction, child illness, and mental health issues, among others, affect their ability to remain enrolled. In addition, student parents' decisions to leave college are often affected by work—factors such as inflexible schedules, commuting challenges and the need to work significant hours to meet their family's basic needs, which were cited as major considerations (Contreras-Mendez & Cruse, 2021).

In the Philippines, college students involved in early motherhood face various challenges as these dual roles (parenting and schooling) are not easy. Student mothers need to balance their time as parents and students. Combining motherhood and studying without settling the activities over the other is a great dilemma for student mothers (Sicam *et al.*, 2021).

Furthermore, this study adhered to McClelland's Achievement Motivation Theory (1951). McClelland recognized human motives associated with the accomplishment motive, the affiliation motive, the sexual motive, and the power motive. In his later work, *The Achieving Society* (McClelland, 2015), he narrowed his focus to the need for achievement, affiliation, and power. McClelland's thesis postulates, in essence, that people are motivated to varying degrees by their need for Achievement, need for Power,

and need for Affiliation and that these wants are acquired or taught over an individual's lifetime. In other words, most people will demonstrate a combination of three demands. It is highly related to this study as it would explain why these student-parents were motivated to pass the Criminology Licensure Examination (CLE).

Moreover, a review of the existing literature revealed a lack of studies examining student-parents' experiences passing the Criminology Licensure Examination. Most research on this topic has employed quantitative methodologies, with only a limited number of qualitative studies available. Furthermore, no studies specifically addressing this subject have been identified in both local and international contexts. This gap in the literature underscores the need for further qualitative exploration to gain a deeper understanding of the challenges, coping strategies, and experiences of student-parents in this academic and professional pursuit. The study explores these lived experiences using a qualitative approach and draws on McClelland's (1951) Achievement Motivation Theory to further analyze the results.

On the other hand, the findings of this study are expected to be beneficial not only to Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) but also to the families and loved ones of these individuals. The study may serve as a foundation for HEIs in developing programs and support systems tailored to the unique needs of student-parents, aiding them in both their academic journey and future professional endeavors. Furthermore, it provides valuable insights for the families and loved ones of student-parents, fostering a deeper understanding of the challenges they face and the support they require.

This study may face hurdles with the intricacies of analyzing the combined obligations of student-parents preparing for the Criminology Licensure Examination. Balancing scholastic and parenting responsibilities frequently results in time limitations, financial pressures, and emotional strain, potentially impacting participant availability and readiness to partake in the study process. Despite these constraints, the study seeks to provide significant insights into the distinctive experiences, difficulties, and coping strategies of student-parents. Identifying these constraints, such as scheduling conflicts, budget limits, and external pressures, enables the research to circumvent probable challenges while yielding significant findings. This study highlights the resilience and perseverance of student-parents, emphasizing the significance of institutional and family support networks in promoting their academic achievement. Notwithstanding these limitations, the research aims to highlight the determination and aspirations of student-parents as they endeavor to reconcile their educational pursuits and parental duties while preparing for career progression.

## **2. Methods**

### **2.1 Study Participants**

The research focused on five student-parents who were once Criminology students. During the study, the participants were officially licensed as Criminologists. The study used purposive sampling to ensure the representation of diverse experiences within the

community. Before starting the research, thorough orientation sessions were conducted with the identified participants to explain the study's objectives, methodology, and scope. Informed consent was obtained from the student-parent participants as a testament to their voluntary participation. This ethical protocol ensured that all involved parties fully understood and were willing to contribute to the study's findings.

One-on-one interviews were the primary data collection method. The research aimed to delve deeply into the lived experiences of these student-parents. This qualitative method, albeit employing a limited sample size, provides a comprehensive and detailed examination of the phenomenon. The study sought to encapsulate the complex nature of participants' experiences by permitting them to articulate their accounts, encompassing the obstacles encountered, strategies employed for coping, and future objectives (Neubauer *et al.* 2019).

## **2.2 Material/Instrument**

The research technique employs interviews, verified interview guide questionnaires, and voice recorders as the principal devices for data gathering. These methods allow researchers to obtain in-depth insights directly from participants, ensuring a thorough comprehension of their experiences. An experienced team evaluates the interview guides to verify their efficacy and relevance. This method includes gathering comments and suggestions for modifications, thereby improving the quality and rigor of data collection. The interview guides were meticulously written to produce responses that delve into various aspects of the participants' experiences as student-parents aiming to pass the CLE. Utilizing existing research and literature pertinent to the study's subject, the questions are crafted to elucidate the intricacies and complexities of the participants' lived experiences. Moreover, the questions have been modified to align with the social circumstances of the participants, assuring relevance and sensitivity.

The research participants, comprising former student-parents who have passed the CLE, were selected using purposive sampling, aligning with the study's specific aims and objectives. This approach allows for the intentional selection of participants who can provide valuable insights into the research topic. Additionally, a minimum sample size of at least 5 participants was sought to ensure data saturation and comprehensiveness. This acknowledges the effort required to establish rapport and trust with participants, underscoring the commitment to capturing diverse perspectives. The research was conducted across various locations in Davao del Sur. The study seeks to include various settings to capture a wide range of experiences and views, enriching the findings. This comprehensive data collection aims to provide significant insights into student-parent experiences balancing dual roles (Parker *et al.*, 2023).

## **2.3 Design and Procedure**

This study employed a qualitative phenomenological research design to delve into student-parent experiences in their journey toward passing the CLE. By allowing the

student-parents to share their experiences, the research provides a deep understanding of their lives as having dual roles.

Stringent protocols were followed to uphold the highest ethical standards throughout the research process. Participation in the study was entirely voluntary, with each potential participant given the autonomy to decline involvement in the interview without repercussions. Moreover, participant information, including personal details such as name, age, and affiliation, was kept strictly confidential to safeguard their privacy and confidentiality.

Before the commencement of data collection, all participants were granted informed consent, guaranteeing that they were adequately apprised of the study's objectives, procedures, and prospective advantages and disadvantages. This process underscored their right to privacy and their capacity to disengage from the study without penalties. Ethical sensitivity was enhanced by refraining from investigating sensitive topics related to physical, psychological, or socioeconomic concerns unless the participants themselves initiated the process. This research maintains the principles of academic integrity and authenticity. It is a unique endeavor that is devoid of any form of fabrication or plagiarism. We made every effort to guarantee the credibility and trustworthiness of the research findings by adhering to the most stringent ethical standards in research conduct and reporting. The research aims to significantly contribute to comprehending the lived experiences of individuals affected by armed conflict by adhering to these ethical commitments.

## **2.4 Ethical Considerations**

The study prioritizes voluntary participation, providing participants with a clear explanation of the research's nature and allowing them to make an informed decision while adhering to rigorous ethical standards. Participants' data is protected by maintaining the seclusion and confidentiality of their personal or professional information. The informed consent procedure should be straightforward, free of technical jargon, and emphasize the potential advantages of the study. The questionnaire is distributed exclusively with the appropriate authorization. Informed consent is obtained to safeguard the identity of the participant. It is important to note that the research does not incorporate high-risk scenarios related to physical, psychological, or socioeconomic issues within its scope.

## **2.5 Role of the Researchers**

Our primary objective as researchers was to conduct research that would offer new and significant perspectives to both the scholarly and broader communities. Clark and Vealé (2018) contend that qualitative research is primarily conducted by the researchers themselves, who are responsible for data collection and analysis. We are committed to maintaining the highest ethical standards when handling confidential information from study participants.

In our research endeavors, we must acknowledge our dependence on prior research, whether for information, data, concepts, or methodology. Additionally, we guarantee that each participant is fully informed and has the autonomy to determine whether or not to participate in the study. Lastly, as researchers, we guaranteed that the information obtained from informants was managed with the utmost confidentiality.

## **2.6 Data Analysis**

Data analysis involves systematically organizing and condensing data, requiring researchers to interpret the findings through extensive reading, thorough study, and reflection. Due to its time-intensive nature, this process demands active engagement, with researchers delving into textual content to uncover underlying meanings (Ravindran, 2019).

Participants' interview responses offer valuable insights, encompassing their experiences, coping, and insights. The primary aim is to gain a deeper understanding of student-parents experiences handling their dual roles as they journey toward professional advancement.

Thematic analysis, the qualitative data analysis methodology selected for this investigation, entails identifying patterns or themes within the data (Villegas, 2022). Researchers designate titles and categorize these themes to guarantee that the data is accurately represented. Researchers subsequently analyze these themes to derive conclusions and insights from the data.

## **2.7 Trustworthiness of the Study**

The findings' credibility, transferability, reliability, and confirmability are all improved by the meticulous participant selection, transparent methodologies, ethical considerations, and rigorous data analysis that underpin the study's reliability. The comprehensive participant selection process and engagement strategies serve to fortify trustworthiness. The selection of participants who voluntarily agreed to participate in the study interviews was facilitated using random sampling, a recognized research procedure. Participants were granted the discretion to approve or decline the interview, guaranteeing ethical engagement practices and confidentiality.

## **3. Results and Discussion**

### **3.1 Experiences of Student-Parents towards Passing the Licensure Exam**

The student-parents who took the CLE shared their experiences while preparing for the licensure exam, based on the in-depth interviews conducted. There are four main themes that emerged and are presented in Table 1, which include: *Inconsistent Review Schedule*, *Financial Constraints*, *Mental Health Issues*, *Conflict in Marital and Parental Duties*, and *Exam and Application-Related Difficulties*.

### 3.1.1 Inconsistent Review Schedule

Student-parents preparing for the licensure exam face multiple challenges that impact their review process and overall well-being. One of the most significant difficulties is the inconsistent review schedule, often disrupted due to external factors such as the pandemic. Sudden postponements or changes in review formats, like those experienced during pandemic-related restrictions in the Davao Region, created significant anxiety and hindered their ability to maintain study momentum. The unpredictability of review sessions further complicates their preparation, making it difficult to establish a stable study routine.

**Table 1:** Experiences of Student-Parents towards Passing the Licensure Exam

Essential Themes	Core Ideas
Inconsistent Review Schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review schedules were canceled due to the pandemic.</li> <li>- Unpredictable review schedules.</li> </ul>
Financial Constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Facing financial difficulties in paying for the review.</li> <li>- Struggling to provide financial support for the family while reviewing.</li> <li>- Difficulty in providing child support.</li> <li>- Challenges in paying for exam review and application fees.</li> </ul>
Mental Health Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Experienced stress during review sessions.</li> <li>- Anxiety due to the review, exam, and family responsibilities.</li> <li>- Experienced depression.</li> </ul>
Conflict in Marital and Parental Duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Unable to assist a partner in childcare.</li> <li>- Misunderstandings caused by a long-distance relationship.</li> <li>- Difficulty in fulfilling parental responsibilities.</li> <li>- Struggling to balance multiple roles.</li> </ul>
Exam and Application-Related Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Difficulty answering exam questions.</li> <li>- Struggled with the PRC application process.</li> </ul>

Below is the sample response of the student-parent who took the CLE:

*"nag struggle pod me kay kaduha jud me nahunong ug review kay pag una namong review na undang me kay pandemic."* (SP-001)

We have struggled because we have stopped reviewing twice due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

This finding is relevant to the study of Li (2022), who analyzed the rapid global shift to online education necessitated by the pandemic. It discussed the benefits (like accessibility) but heavily focused on limitations, including technical issues, lack of face-to-face interaction, and difficulties in practical assessments, all contributing to disruptions and changes from established review schedules and methods. It offered recommendations for navigating this sudden transition.

### 3.1.2 Financial Constraints

Student-parents preparing for the licensure exam reported significant financial constraints during their review period. They struggled to afford the necessary review program fees while simultaneously facing difficulties in providing adequate financial support for their families and meeting child support obligations due to the time dedicated to studying.

Below is the sample response of the student-parent who took the CLE:

*"Sa akong number one jud financial syempre naa naman tay anak kanang kulang jud ug financial"* (SP-002)

For me, my number one problem is financial difficulty. I have a child, and I struggle financially.

The economic repercussions of the pandemic placed considerable financial strain on students, potentially hindering their ability to pursue or prepare for examinations. Wang (2024), through a comprehensive global survey, investigated the pandemic's wide-ranging effects on higher education students. Their findings revealed significant financial hardships, including loss of income, increased difficulty covering tuition and living costs, and heightened anxiety about prospects, which directly impacted students' capacity to fund educational expenses such as review program fees.

Further illustrating this point, Kapasia *et al.* (2020) examined the situation in West Bengal, India, reporting widespread financial distress among students during lockdowns. This study highlighted difficulties in affording necessary resources for online learning and meeting general educational costs, suggesting that financial pressures forced students to struggle with expenses related to exam preparation.

### 3.1.3 Mental Health Issues

Student-parents preparing for licensure exams often contend with adverse mental health effects during their review. The inherent difficulties of the review process frequently induced stress, while the overall situation led some to experience depression and anxiety, resulting in considerable emotional distress for these parents.

Below is the sample response of the student-parent who took the CLE:

*"Unya kuan pud depressed pud kay syempre nagukod pud sa idad lisud pud kaau"* (SP-003)

I also felt depressed, partly because I'm worried about my age regarding getting into law enforcement, and it's also very difficult.

The period of preparing for high-stakes examinations, already stressful, was further compounded by the mental health challenges associated with the pandemic. Research by Roberts *et al.* (2023) among U.S. college students identified significantly elevated levels of mental health distress during the pandemic, including heightened

symptoms of anxiety, depression, and stress. The study linked these increases to pandemic-related uncertainties, academic pressures inherent in disrupted studies and upcoming exams, and social isolation. Corroborating these findings, Porcelli (2020) compared student stress and anxiety levels before and after the pandemic's onset. Their study reported a notable rise in both metrics, attributing this increase to fears surrounding COVID-19, the abrupt shift to online learning modalities, and pervasive uncertainty about academic performance and the pandemic's trajectory, all relevant factors for individuals undergoing review.

#### **3.1.4 Conflict in Marital and Parental Duties**

Student-parents preparing for the licensure exam described experiencing significant conflict in balancing their study commitments with family responsibilities. The demands of the review period made it difficult for them to adequately fulfill their expected roles and duties as both spouses and parents.

Below is the sample response of the student-parent who took the CLE:

*"Kay parent naman ko nya naa nay duha kabuok na anak dili lng kay kana ra akong ma focus kay kailangan pud ka mangita sa inyung panginabuhì" (SP-004)*

As a parent, I have 2 children. And they are not just my focus; I also need to look for ways to earn a living.

For students with familial responsibilities, the pandemic intensified the challenge of balancing academic pursuits with personal duties. Abuhammad (2020) explored the difficulties parents face supervising their children's distance learning. Their analysis documented challenges related to time constraints, lack of resources or familiarity with the required technology and subject matter, and the general stress of managing children's education alongside other responsibilities. This illustrates the increased burden and potential for role conflict experienced by student-parents attempting to manage their review or studies. Furthermore, while focusing on child mental health, the narrative review by Bornstein (2020) extensively discussed the amplified pressure and burden on parents and caregivers during the pandemic. The review highlighted the compound stress from managing lockdowns, economic instability, health fears, and children's needs, directly reflecting student-parent difficulties when trying to dedicate time and resources to academic or review commitments amidst demanding family duties.

#### **3.1.5 Exam and Application-Related Difficulties**

Student-parents also encountered significant hurdles in the licensure process itself. They described struggles with the PRC application procedures, particularly impacted by the COVID-19 surge, and also faced challenges answering questions effectively once they reached the actual examination stage.

Below is the sample response of the student-parent who took the CLE:

*"Problema pod me basig dili na pod madayun among exam kay katong una na postpone"*  
 (SP-001)

We were also concerned that our exam might not push through again because the previous one was postponed.

Beyond scheduling and personal challenges, the processes of examination and application themselves presented difficulties exacerbated by pandemic-related changes. Itani *et al.* (2022) investigated the impact of the pandemic on assessment processes within engineering education. The study detailed the shift towards online examinations, the associated challenges in maintaining academic integrity, difficulties in adapting practical assessments for remote delivery, and the potential consequences these changes had on student stress and performance, indicating hurdles beyond mere content mastery. In the medical field, Saad *et al.* (2022) described significant alterations to student assessments and examinations necessitated by COVID-19. This work covered the move away from traditional examination formats, the implementation of virtual assessments like OSCEs, and raised concerns about the adequacy of evaluating clinical skills remotely, thereby highlighting how changes to the process and nature of examinations created new obstacles for candidates.

### 3.2 Coping Strategies of Student-Parents in Preparing and Upon Taking the Licensure Exam

The coping strategies of student-parent police officers who took the CLE were identified during the in-depth interviews. As they shared their ways of overcoming challenges, three main themes emerged, which are presented in Table 2: faith-oriented coping, support system, and positive attitude.

**Table 2:** Coping Strategies of Student-Parents  
 in Preparing and Upon Taking the Licensure Exam

Essential Themes	Core Ideas
Faith-Oriented Coping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Asking for God's help and guidance.</li> <li>- Asking God for strength.</li> <li>- Praying for positive exam results.</li> <li>- Believing that God will help and intervene.</li> </ul>
Support System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Receiving support from family, friends, and relatives.</li> <li>- Receiving financial support from in-laws and other people.</li> <li>- Receiving motivation from family and other people.</li> </ul>
Positive Attitude	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Believing in the effectiveness of time management.</li> <li>- Maintaining goal orientation.</li> <li>- Motivating oneself.</li> <li>- Showing perseverance and resilience.</li> <li>- Focusing on the positive side.</li> <li>- Knowing how to handle problems.</li> </ul>

### 3.2 Faith-Oriented Coping

Faced with numerous challenges, student-parents preparing for the CLE emphasized their reliance on spiritual coping mechanisms. They described actively asking for God's continuous guidance and strength throughout the experience, trusting in His intervention and praying specifically for help in achieving a successful exam outcome. Below is the sample response of the student-parent who took the CLE:

*"Akoa ning share na prayer is the best sword. Og kinahanglan e balance gyud ninyu ang tanan dapat kablo mo mo dala sa mga problema"* (SP-004)

What I want to share is that prayer is the best sword. And you need to balance everything and know how to handle problems.

Religious and spiritual beliefs often serve as significant coping mechanisms, particularly in challenging circumstances such as preparing for high-stakes examinations or navigating crises like the recent pandemic. Research indicates that individuals frequently turn to faith for solace and strength. For example, studies exploring coping strategies during the COVID-19 pandemic, such as the work by Del Castillo and Alino (2020) focusing on Filipino Christian youth, revealed that positive religious coping, including prayer, seeking God's guidance, and trusting in divine intervention, was strongly associated with psychological well-being and resilience during periods of heightened stress and uncertainty. This reliance on faith often involves asking God for strength, guidance, and favorable outcomes, such as success in examinations, reflecting a belief in divine help and providence as a core coping resource (Upenieks & Ellison, 2022).

#### 3.1.1 Support System

Student-parents preparing for the CLE emphasized their support network's vital role during the review and exam period. They reported receiving significant encouragement from family, friends, and relatives throughout their struggles. Specifically, many highlighted crucial financial assistances provided by their in-laws, acknowledging that this combined support system was instrumental in helping them navigate that challenging time.

Below is the sample response of the student-parent who took the CLE:

*"Akong kuan ato bahin sa financial nag support man pud akong igsoon nya akng ginikanan ug akong ugangan gi supportaan pud mi niya"* (SP-002)

I got financial support from my siblings and in-laws; they have shown their support for us and me.

The role of social support networks is widely recognized as crucial for navigating academic and personal challenges. Perceived support from various sources, including family, friends, relatives, and extended connections like in-laws, significantly contributes

to an individual's capacity to cope with stress and maintain motivation. Kohls *et al.* (2021) found that perceived emotional support from family and friends was positively associated with psychological well-being and negatively associated with psychological distress among university students during the pandemic. Furthermore, support is not limited to emotional aspects; tangible support, such as financial assistance from family members or others, can alleviate significant burdens, particularly for students facing economic pressures alongside academic demands (Chronister *et al.*, 2021).

### 3.1.2 Positive Attitude

Despite difficult times, student-parents actively employed a positive attitude to navigate their struggles during exam preparation. This constructive mindset was demonstrated through their emphasis on proactive strategies such as effective time management, maintaining a clear focus on goals, cultivating self-motivation, and methodically addressing problems. Central to their approach was a strong belief in the power of positive thinking and the importance of perseverance.

Below is the sample response of the student-parent who took the CLE:

*"Nag kuan kog motivation na kaya nako ni kay naa nakoy pamilya kaya nako ang exam"*  
(SP-001)

I motivated myself to do this because I have my family.

An individual's disposition, including positivity and proactive coping traits, plays a significant role in managing challenges and achieving goals. Constructs such as effective time management, goal orientation, self-motivation, resilience, and focusing on positive aspects are instrumental. Research by Gregorio (2024) indicated that psychological resilience acted as a protective factor against negative mental health outcomes among students facing pandemic-related stressors, enabling them to adapt and persevere. Similarly, studies emphasize the importance of self-efficacy, the belief in one's ability to succeed in specific situations or accomplish a task, and effective self-regulation strategies, like time management and goal setting, for academic achievement and problem handling (Schunk, 2023).

## 3.2 Insights of Student-Parents about their Experiences

The insights of student-parent police officers who took the CLE were identified during the in-depth interviews. As they shared their insights, three main themes emerged, which are presented in Table 3: develop a positive attitude, aim for academic growth, and strengthen spirituality.

**Table 3:** Insights of Student-Parents about their Experiences

Essential Themes	Core Ideas
Develop a Positive Attitude	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Always motivate yourself.</li> <li>- Do not give up and always persevere.</li> <li>- Challenge yourself and always look at the achievements of other student-parents as motivation.</li> <li>- Always think of your family and children.</li> <li>- Support and love your partner.</li> <li>- Learn from other successful takers.</li> </ul>
Aim for Academic Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Always strive to learn every day.</li> <li>- Focus on reviews and studies.</li> <li>- Take your studies seriously.</li> </ul>
Strengthen Spirituality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Always believe in God.</li> <li>- Do not forget to pray.</li> <li>- Always ask for God's guidance.</li> </ul>

### 3.2.1 Develop a Positive Attitude

Reflecting on their CLE experiences, student-parents emphasized the crucial lesson of cultivating a positive attitude. They advise maintaining strong self-motivation and perseverance, urging individuals never to give up. Key strategies include drawing inspiration from one's family and children, viewing the success of other student-parents as motivation, and continually challenging oneself. Furthermore, they stress the importance of supporting one's partner and learning from the experiences of successful exam takers, believing this overall positivity is highly beneficial for passing the licensure exam.

Below is the sample response of the student-parent who took the CLE:

*"kaya man diay mao rajud diay sge rajud tag paningkamut ani"* (SP-002)

So, it turns out it is possible; we just have to keep striving with this.

Cultivating a positive psychological stance is frequently linked to perseverance and success, particularly for individuals balancing multiple demanding roles, such as student-parents. This involves proactive strategies like continuous self-motivation and steadfast perseverance in the face of obstacles. Research emphasizes the importance of grit, defined as perseverance and passion for long-term goals, in academic achievement, suggesting that individuals who maintain effort and interest despite failures are more likely to succeed (Halperin & Regev, 2021). Furthermore, drawing inspiration from the achievements of peers, especially those in similar circumstances like other student-parents, can serve as a powerful motivator through social comparison and vicarious experience. The intrinsic motivation derived from focusing on family responsibilities and aspirations and maintaining supportive partner relationships also significantly contributes to sustained effort (Mulrenan *et al.*, 2023).

### 3.2.2 Aim for Academic Growth

The journey through CLE preparation taught student-parents the necessity of prioritizing continuous academic development. Their experience underscored the need to actively learn each day and concentrate fully on the review process. They firmly advocate for treating studies with seriousness, as they believe this focused dedication is fundamental to achieving success in the CLE.

Below is the sample response of the student-parent who took the CLE:

*"Salig lang gyud permi unya ayaw undang ug tuon."* (SP-002)

Always believe and do not stop learning.

A deliberate focus on continuous learning and academic diligence is central to achieving educational goals. This orientation involves actively striving to acquire knowledge daily and concentrating on review and study tasks. Studies on self-regulated learning emphasize that successful students typically engage in proactive learning strategies, set mastery goals (focused on learning and understanding), and take their academic responsibilities seriously (Artino *et al.*, 2022). This contrasts with performance goals, which focus more on demonstrating competence relative to others. Consistent engagement with course material, dedicating focused time for study, and viewing learning as an ongoing process are associated with deeper understanding and better academic outcomes (Ross *et al.*, 2022).

### 3.2.3 Strengthen Spirituality

The challenging experiences during CLE preparation led student-parents to deeply appreciate the importance of reinforcing their spirituality. They found that their faith in God, expressed through unwavering belief, regular prayer, and seeking His guidance, provided crucial support during tough times. Many concluded that this spiritual foundation was vital in helping them navigate and overcome their most difficult moments.

Below is the sample response of the student-parent who took the CLE:

*"Salig lang gyud permi sa Ginoo unya basa lang jud pirme samot na study."* (SP-002)

Just always trust in God, and always keep reading, especially studying.

For many individuals, particularly in culturally religious contexts like the Philippines, actively nurturing one's spiritual life is integral to overall well-being and resilience, extending into the academic sphere. This involves maintaining a consistent belief in God, engaging in regular prayer, and actively seeking divine guidance. Research affirms the positive association between religious and spiritual practices and psychological well-being, suggesting faith can provide a stable anchor during stressful periods, such as intense academic review (Goodwin & Kraft, 2022). Engaging in prayer and fostering a relationship with the divine are seen not merely as coping mechanisms

but as ongoing practices that strengthen inner resources and provide a sense of purpose and direction (Olusegun, 2024).

#### **4. Implications and Recommendations**

The results of this study have implications for the roles of school administrators and teachers in fostering the academic growth of their students, helping them become equipped and prepared for their licensure examinations. Additionally, the results indicate that the police officers experienced distress due to their circumstances. This has implications for these student-parents family members, partners, and loved ones. They should be considerate of these student-parents and show love and support, as this was identified as helpful to them. Words of encouragement and motivation can help them attend to their mental health and become more productive in their review.

Regarding Higher Education Institutions, it is recommended that the schools strengthen their academic projects. The schools could offer more training for teachers and provide students with updated learning materials. Additionally, spiritual activities should be strengthened within the institution, as these were identified as a key way students overcame challenges. Conducting monthly spiritual activities at the college may be beneficial.

Future researchers using this study as a guide are encouraged to further explore the experiences of student-parent passers across a broader scope. This exploration would enrich the data on this phenomenon. Additionally, future researchers could consider finding participants in different locations. This may provide different perspectives on their experiences as student-parents taking the CLE. Lastly, future researchers might utilize focus group discussions (FGDs) for data gathering, as this method could allow for deeper exploration of participants' shared experiences and perspectives.

Overall, this study underscores the significant challenges faced by student-parent police officers as they navigate the demands of family, work and study, and licensure examination preparation. It emphasizes the crucial role of effective coping strategies, particularly drawing on faith, maintaining a positive attitude, and utilizing support systems for their well-being and goal attainment. Despite their adversity, these individuals exhibit considerable resilience, perseverance, and motivation, emphasizing their strength and capacity for growth amidst demanding circumstances while pursuing professional advancement and a better future.

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We have no personal, financial, or other interest that could or could be seen to influence the decisions or actions we are taking or the advice we are giving during my research for this.

### About the Authors

**Jasley Babe M. Eulogio, MAEd** is an Associate Professor 1 of University of Mindanao, Bansalan College, Ramon Delos Cientos Street, Bansalan, Davao del Sur, 8005, Philippines. She finished her master's degree in Education major in Language Teaching at Davao del Sur State College (DSSC), Digos City, Philippines and currently pursuing her Doctor of Philosophy in Applied Linguistics at University of Mindanao-Professional Schools. Her research interests include Social Sciences, Language Education, Educational Assessment, and Applied Linguistics.

**Sherlyn O. Longakit, Melany Jane M. Flor, and Jhunlord A. Sabanal** are graduates of Bachelor of Science in Criminology at the University of Mindanao, Bansalan College.

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