

Investigating the Macro Perspective Affecting the Passing Rate in Board Examinations: A Take-off Point in Designing a Causal Model

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Abstract

Tagoloan Community College is now challenged with producing graduates who are globally competitive, most especially graduates who are going to take board examinations. The study aimed to investigate the factors affecting the board examination performance of TCC in the board examinations. This study used the descriptive method of research, using a researcher-made questionnaire, focused group discussion and guided interviews to gather data. With three sets of respondents, adding up to a total of 147, it was found out that among the three courses (Criminology, BEED and BSED), and in the four years that TCC took part in the board examinations, the passing rate achieved was never below the National Passing Rate. The performance of TCC can be said to have started unsatisfactorily, but has been improving to render a good to a very good performance level. When the data gathered from all the sets of respondents were summarized, it was found out that it was the internal and stable factors over which the examinees can exercise an amount of control that affect their performance. It is the "Moving Automobile Causal Model" that best fits and represents the factors that have direct effect on the performance of TCC. Another model was also created, the "Airplane Taking-Off Model", to show all the attributions that are perceived by the respondents and are proven by other researches to have bearing on the results of the board examinations. Two review programs are proposed to be implemented by TCC.

Keywords: Passing Rate, Board Examinations, Causal Model

Introduction

Passing the licensure examinations given by the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) can be one of the greatest achievements in a college graduate's life. The examination is intended to prove the graduates' knowledge, progress, skills and qualifications in a particular profession. Moreover, the performance of the graduates in an institution who take the licensure examination determines the quality of education the school provides, which eventually guarantees the efficiency and effectiveness of its graduate's application of the things he or she has learned in his or her chosen profession or career. It was also suggested in one of the author's readings that a higher standard of performance of the instructional system and consequently, the performance of the students in the licensure examinations reflects the institution's efficiency as well as the intellectual capacity of the students that the school has cultivated in the span of time that the

students have remained in its portals. TCC is now challenged with producing graduates who are globally competitive, most especially graduates who are going to take board examinations. In the college's course offerings, two departments are faced with the challenge of conquering the board examinations: the College of Education and the College of Criminology. Moreover, this study was conducted because the researcher has seen the 'JUST' good turn-out of the licensure examinations of board courses in the college which she is presently connected. It is worthy to take note that licensure or board examinations are given by a nation to its people to ensure the efficiency of a job, especially the jobs that play a crucial part not only to a particular industry, but to the whole society, wherein the future of a nation is indeed at stake. In the author's case, she is concerned that the reviewees will be the future teachers and policemen in the country and the future of the exam-takers depends on their performance in the licensure examinations. The author took into consideration the following Licensure Examinations for Teachers and Licensure Examination for Criminologists for four consecutive years starting from 2009 to 2012. This study focused on the PRC data from 2009 since this was the first time that the college produced graduates to take part in the licensure examinations, and only up to 2012 because this is the duration of the conduct of the author's study.

Table 1. Performance of TCC in the Licensure Examination for Criminologists

Year	Takers	Passed	Failed	Percentage
2009	15	6	9	46.4 %
2010	10	10	0	100 %
2011	23	21	2	90 %
2012	16	12	4	75 %

Source: PRC

Table 2. Performance of TCC in the Licensure Examination for Teachers

Year	Course	Takers	Passed	Failed	Percentage
2009					
	BEED	48	9	39	19 %
	BSED	19	7	12	36.84 %
2010					
	BEED	13	6	7	46.15 %
	BSED	8	6	2	75 %
2011					
	BEED	36	20	16	55.56 %
	BSED	14	9	5	64.29 %
2012					
	BEED	32	30	2	93.75 %
	BSED	5	4	1	80 %

Source: PRC

Tables 1 and 2 show the performance of Tagoloan Community College (TCC) for four consecutive years in the licensure examinations given by the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC). The rate of passers is generally good, but not good enough if the school wants to maintain and improve its standing and claim its provision of quality education at a lesser

price, for the residents of Tagoloan and its neighboring municipalities. Thus, this study aims at determining the factors that have a great impact in predicting the outcome of the board examinations and to create a review program that could enhance the performance of the board courses of the said institution.

Theoretical Framework of the Study

The theoretical framework of this study is based on Wiener's Attribution Theory (Weiner, 1974) and Cronbach and Snow's Aptitude Treatment Interaction Theory (Cronbach & Snow, 1989). The Attribution Theory of Weiner outlines a method for scrutinizing and understanding motivation and achievement in the academe, which is appropriate for the study at hand. In the said model, the proponent outlined the processes through which learners form causal beliefs (Weiner 1985, 2005). A basic assumed principle of the model is that learners are affected factors found in the environment (characteristics of the learner's home or school environment) and by personal factors (past experiences and stock knowledge). The above-mentioned factors affect the types of beliefs or attributions that learners are possible to make.

On the other hand, according to the Aptitude-Treatment Interaction (ATI) theory, there are some instructional strategies (treatments) which are more or less effective for particular individuals or groups only depending upon their specific abilities. ATI suggests that optimal learning can be achieved when the instruction is exactly matched to the abilities of the learner. Weiner's Attribution Theory outlines the identification of the factors affecting the board examination performance of Tagoloan Community College. Moreover, when these causal factors are identified and a causal model is thus created, Cronbach and Snow's Aptitude Treatment Interaction (ATI) Theory will guide in the formulation of a review program that would ensure the success and best board examination performance of Tagoloan Community College.

The framework of the study is anchored on the premise that success or failure of a student taking an examination, particularly a board or licensure examination depends greatly on several factors as perceived by the reviewers and the reviewees and those who have successfully passed the examination already.

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to examine and investigate the macro-perspective affecting the passing rate in board examinations of Tagoloan Community College and create a causal model of students' board examination performance as a basis for a review program for board courses of Tagoloan Community College.

Research Design

This study used the descriptive method of research with the use of quantitative and qualitative research designs.. This study was conducted at Tagoloan Community College in Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental. The respondents of this study are the fresh graduates of Bachelor of Science in Criminology, Bachelor of Elementary Education and Bachelor of Secondary Education of Tagoloan Community College for the School Year 2012-2013, who is undergoing review in preparation for the licensure examinations on September and October for teachers and criminologists respectively. The Review Instructors/Reviewers of the above mentioned courses are also part of the respondents of the study. Additional respondents are the available Alumni of Tagoloan Community College who have reviewed with the present Review Instructors/Reviewers and have taken the Board Examination at least once and successfully passed it.

Methods

Universal sampling was applied to the graduates of Bachelor of Science in Criminology, Bachelor of Elementary Education and Bachelor of Secondary Education of Tagoloan Community College for the School Year 2012-2013 who are undergoing review in preparation for the Licensure Examinations for Teachers (LET) on September 2013, and Licensure Examinations for Criminologists on October 2013. Thus, there were fifty-five (55) respondents from the College of Criminology and sixty-one (61) from the College of Education, fifty-six (56) from Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEED) and five (5) from Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSED) Major in Filipino. The alumni who are also board passers from the above-mentioned colleges and who were available during the conduct of this study were also made as respondents. There were a total of twenty-four (24) alumni who participated in the study, five (5) from the College of Criminology and twenty-one (21) from the College of Education; fifteen (15) BEED graduates and four (4) BSED graduates. All of the Review Instructors/Reviewers of the above mentioned courses were also part of the respondents of the study; six (6) reviewers for the College of Criminology and only one (1) for the College of Education. The reviewers from the College of Criminology are part of the department's teaching force; both fulltime and part-time. However, for the College of Education, there was only one reviewer during the conduct of this study. Previous review sessions from the past years provided three to five invited reviewers from different HEIs; both state and private. Consequently, during the conduct of the study, only one has committed to become the reviewer of the college, since the other lecturers had similar commitments to other colleges, universities and review centers. In summary, there are one hundred forty-seven (147) respondents.

Collection of Data

The instruments that were used in this study are researcher-made. A questionnaire was given to the reviewees and board passers of Tagoloan Community College who all underwent review with the current reviewers and took the board examination at least once. A guided interview was further conducted with the reviewees and alumni to gain a deeper insight on the perceived factors affecting the board examination performance. The reviewers for both the Criminology and Education licensure examinations were also interviewed about what they think are the factors that have great influence on the board examination performance. A Focused Group Discussion (FGD) was conducted with the reviewers to further enhance the data collected from the questionnaires and the guided interviews. The guide questions for the FGD were a product of the brainstorming activities done by the researcher and her adviser.

Treatment of Data

Statistical techniques were used to analyze the results obtained from the gathered data. These techniques include frequency counts, mean and percentage. The gathered data from the questionnaires, the guided interviews and the focused group discussions were analyzed further to understand the factors that affect the passing rate in the board examinations.

Findings

Among the three courses (Criminology, BEED and BSED) and in the four years that Tagoloan Community College took part in the board examinations, the passing rate achieved by the graduates of the college was never below the National Passing Rate for every year. The performance of Tagoloan Community College in the board examinations can be said to have started unsatisfactorily (having a Good performance rating only during the first year that TCC took part in the board examinations, but has been improving to render a generally very good performance level. Using Weiner's Attribution Theory as basis, it was found out that according to the reviewers; it is the unstable and internal factors which the reviewees can exercise a certain

amount of control that affect the board examination performance of Tagoloan Community College.

On the other hand, according to the reviewees, it is also the unstable and internal factors over which the reviewees can exercise an amount of control affect the board examination performance of Tagoloan Community College. Moreover, according to the alumni board passers, it is the external and unstable factors over which the reviewees do not have direct control that affects the board examination performance of Tagoloan Community College.

When the data gathered from all the three sets of respondents of the study were summarized, it was found out that it was the internal and stable factors over which the examinees can exercise an amount of control that affect the board examination performance of Tagoloan Community College.

However, when the data gathered from only the reviewees and alumni board passers were analyzed, it was found out that they believe it is the external and unstable factors that are beyond the control of the examinees that affect the board examination performance of Tagoloan Community College.

The reviewer-respondents of the study adhere to the “Catapult Causal Model”.

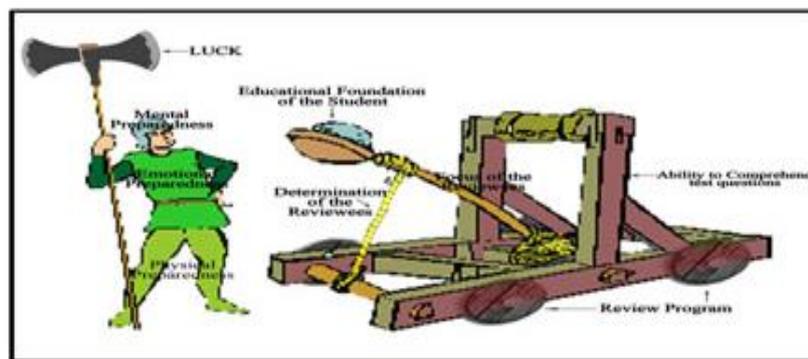


Figure 1: “The Catapult Model of the Reviewers”

The reviewee-respondents of the study adhere to the “Bi-Pedal Causal Model”.



Figure 2: “The Bi-Pedal Model of the Reviewers”

The alumni board passer-respondents of the study adhere to the “Wagon Causal Model”.

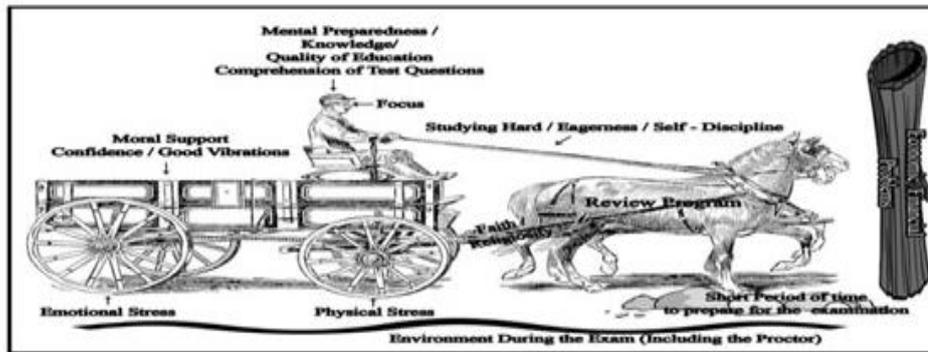


Figure 3: “The Wagon Model of the Alumni Board Passer”

However, it is the “Moving Automobile Causal Model” that best fits and represents the factors that influence or have direct effect on the board examination performance of Tagoloan Community College.

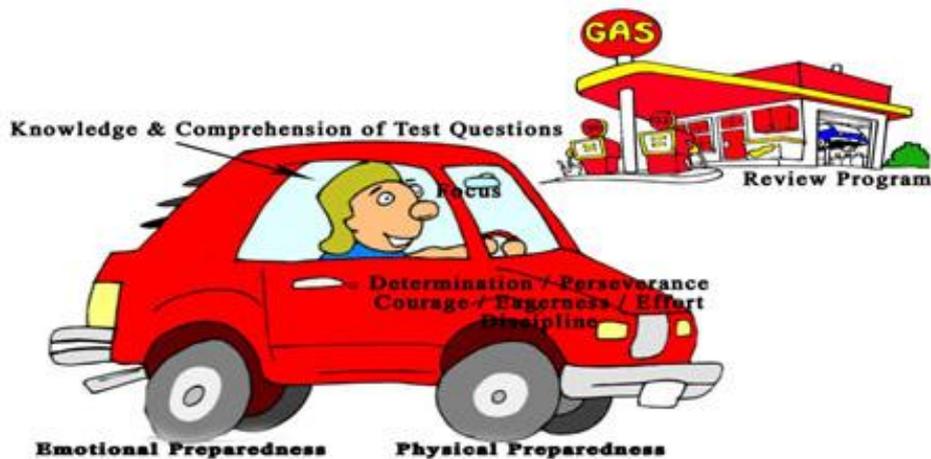


Figure 4: “The Moving Automobile Casual Model”

“Airplane Taking-Off Model”, on the other hand, is also created to cover all attributions that were mentioned by the respondents of this study and other factors mentioned by different researches that are known to have an effect on the success or failure in the board examinations. This causal model can be used and made as a basis in the creation of review programs across different board courses among different colleges and universities.

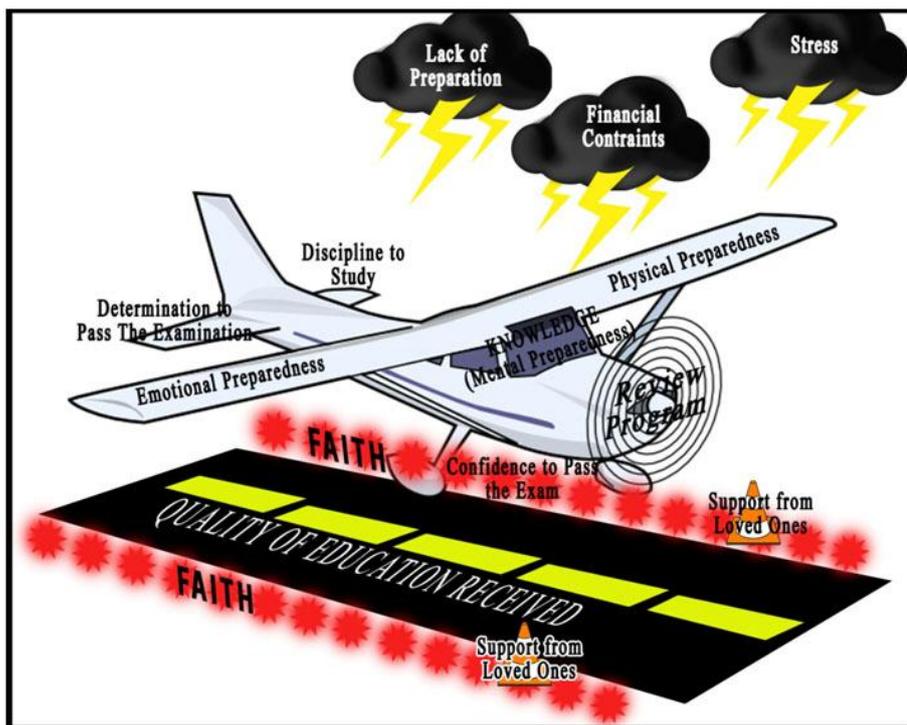


Figure 5: “The Airplane Taking-Off Model”

Two improved and enhanced review programs are therefore proposed to be used or implemented by the College of Education and College of Criminology taking into consideration the identified factors that affect the passing rate in the board examinations.

Proposed Education Review Program

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SUMMER (ENROLLMENT/ADMISSION OF FRESHMEN)
Entrance Examination Evaluation of Grades in Senior Year in High School Screening (Qualifying Interview)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FIRST YEAR – FIRST SEMESTER
Taking of Subjects Prescribed in the Course Prospectus with Strict Adherence to the Retention Policy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FIRST YEAR – SECOND SEMESTER
Taking of Subjects Prescribed in the Course Prospectus with Strict Adherence to the Retention Policy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SUMMER
Evaluation of Grades from Previous School Year Students with Unsatisfactory Performances will be Advised to Shift Seminar for Education Instructors on Current Trends & Issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SECOND YEAR – FIRST SEMESTER
Taking of Subjects Prescribed in the Course Prospectus with Strict Adherence to the Retention Policy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SECOND YEAR – SECOND SEMESTER
Taking of Subjects Prescribed in the Course Prospectus with Strict Adherence to the

Retention Policy	
• SUMMER	
Evaluation of Grades from Previous School Year Students with Unsatisfactory Performances will be Advised to Shift Seminar for Education Instructors on Current Trends & Issues	
• THIRD YEAR – FIRST SEMESTER	
Taking of Subjects Prescribed in the Course Prospectus with Strict Adherence to the Retention Policy	
• THIRD YEAR – SECOND SEMESTER	
Taking of Subjects Prescribed in the Course Prospectus with Strict Adherence to the Retention Policy	
• SUMMER	
Evaluation of Grades from Previous School Year Students with Unsatisfactory Performances will be Advised to Shift Seminar for Education Instructors on Current Trends & Issues REFRESHER COURSE FOR INCOMING SENIOR STUDENTS	
• FOURTH YEAR – FIRST SEMESTER	
ACHIEVEMENT TEST for Graduating Students (which will serve as Diagnostic Examination)	

START OF INTENSIVE REVIEW PROGRAM		
1	START OF THE LAST SEMESTER FOR GRADUATING STUDENTS	
2	ORIENTATION MEETING FOR REVIEW SESSIONS TO BE CONDUCTED INTRODUCTION AND GIVING OF INITIAL REVIEW MATERIALS	
3		
4		
5	PRACTICE TESTS TWICE A WEEK 150 ITEMS for each practice test (PREFERABLY DURING WEEKENDS)	
6		
7		
8		
9	PRESENTATION OF PRACTICE TEST RESULTS INDIVIDUAL DIALOGUES WITH REVIEWERS REGARDING RESULTS	
10	START OF CORE-CONTENT REVIEW SESSIONS ONCE A WEEK (SATURDAYS) ONE (1) SUBJECT PER DAY	
11		
12		
13		
14		
15		
16		
17		
18	PREPARATION FOR GRADUATION	
19	GRADUATION DAY	
20		
21		

22	
23	<p style="text-align: center;">REVIEW SESSIONS TWICE A WEEK CORE-CONTENT LECTURES WITH RIGOROUS PRACTICE TESTS (PRE-TEST and POST-TEST per topic) ONE (1) SUBJECT PER DAY</p>
24	
25	
26	
27	
28	
29	PRE-BOARD EXAMINATION
30	LAST FILING AT PRC
31	<p style="text-align: center;">EVERYDAY REVIEW SESSIONS TWO (2) SUBJECTS PER DAY INTENSIFIED LECTURES WITH TEST SIMULATIONS, PREDICTOR EXAMINATIONS, INCLUDING IN-DEPTH RATIONALIZATION</p>
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41	
42	FINAL COACHING
43	BRIEFING WITH PRC
44	EXAMINATION DAY

Proposed Criminology Review Program

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SUMMER (ENROLLMENT/ADMISSION OF FRESHMEN)
<p>Entrance Examination Evaluation of Grades in Senior Year in High School Screening (Qualifying Interview)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FIRST YEAR – FIRST SEMESTER
<p>Taking of Subjects Prescribed in the Course Prospectus with Strict Adherence to the Retention Policy</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FIRST YEAR – SECOND SEMESTER
<p>Taking of Subjects Prescribed in the Course Prospectus with Strict Adherence to the Retention Policy</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SUMMER
<p>Evaluation of Grades from Previous School Year Students with Unsatisfactory Performances will be Advised to Shift Seminar for Education Instructors on Current Trends & Issues</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SECOND YEAR – FIRST SEMESTER
<p>Taking of Subjects Prescribed in the Course Prospectus with Strict Adherence to the Retention Policy</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SECOND YEAR – SECOND SEMESTER
<p>Taking of Subjects Prescribed in the Course Prospectus with Strict Adherence to the Retention Policy</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SUMMER

Evaluation of Grades from Previous School Year Students with Unsatisfactory Performances will be Advised to Shift Seminar for Education Instructors on Current Trends & Issues	
• THIRD YEAR – FIRST SEMESTER	
Taking of Subjects Prescribed in the Course Prospectus with Strict Adherence to the Retention Policy	
• THIRD YEAR – SECOND SEMESTER	
Taking of Subjects Prescribed in the Course Prospectus with Strict Adherence to the Retention Policy	
• SUMMER	
Evaluation of Grades from Previous School Year Students with Unsatisfactory Performances will be Advised to Shift Seminar for Education Instructors on Current Trends & Issues REFRESHER COURSE FOR INCOMING SENIOR STUDENTS	
• FOURTH YEAR – FIRST SEMESTER	
ACHIEVEMENT TEST for Graduating Students (which will serve as Diagnostic Examination)	
START OF INTENSIVE REVIEW PROGRAM	
	1 START OF SECOND SEMESTER FOR GRADUATING STUDENTS
	2
	3 ORIENTATION MEETING FOR REVIEW SESSIONS TO BE
	4 CONDUCTED
	INTRODUCTION AND GIVING OF INITIAL REVIEW MATERIALS
	5
	6 PRACTICE TESTS TWICE A WEEK
	7 (180 items each practice test)
	8 (PREFERABLY DURING WEEKENDS)
	9 PRESENTATION OF PRACTICE TEST RESULTS
	INDIVIDUAL DIALOGUES WITH REVIEWERS REGARDING
	RESULTS
	10
	11
	12 START OF REVIEW SESSIONS
	13 (CORE-CONTENT REVIEW)
	14 ONCE A WEEK (SATURDAYS)
	15 ONE (1) SUBJECT PER DAY
	16
	17
	18 PREPARATION FOR GRADUATION
	19
	20 GRADUATION DAY
	21
	22 REST
	23
WEEK	24
	25

26	CORE CONTENT REVIEW LECTURES WITH RIGOROUS PRACTICE TESTS PRE-TEST AND POST TEST PER TOPIC	
27		
28		
29		
30		
31		REVIEW SESSIONS
32		TWICE A WEEK
33		ONE (1) SUBJECT PER DAY
34		
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42		
43	PRE-BOARD EXAMINATION	
44	FILING AT PRC	
45	INTENSIFIED LECTURES WITH TEST SIMULATIONS, PREDICTOR EXAMINATIONS, INCLUDING IN-DEPTH RATIONALIZATION	
46		EVERYDAY REVIEW SESSIONS
47		TWO (2) SUBJECTS PER DAY
48	FINAL COACHING INCLUSIVE OF EXAMINATION DAYS	

Conclusions

Licensure examinations for teachers and criminologists provide a valuable framework against which the law enforcement and teaching practice can be measured and certified. The professional license serves as the passport to practice the two professions. The board examinations are very important examinations, as one's career may well depend on its outcome. This of course is a worry for the administration, faculty, reviewers and reviewees of an institution like Tagoloan Community College.

Passing the Licensure Examination for Teachers and Licensure Examination for Criminologists bring prestige not only to the passers or to their families but also to the school where they study. And an understanding why examinees fail the board examinations is an excellent way of recognizing and avoiding the most common pitfalls and traps. The reviewers, reviewees and alumni board passers differ in perspective as to what are the factors that affect the board examination performance of Tagoloan Community College. Nevertheless, the disparity and diversity of their identified factors present an opportunity to improve the passing rate of the reviewees since more and varied factors were surfaced and seen in a new light. The perceived factors, whether internal or external, stable or unstable, or controllable or uncontrollable must be given equal attention and focus.

The reason behind making attributions is to gain a relative control over one's environment, and this can be done by explaining delving deeper into the causes behind attitudes, behaviors and environmental phenomena. In a way, attributions give a certain amount of predictability to our lives and guide us in making the right decisions and taking the correct courses of action, and

coping with consequences of our decisions and actions. Similarly, knowing the factors affecting the board examination performance will enable Tagoloan Community College to predict and act upon the aspects that need to be improved in order to ensure a one hundred percent passing rate in the board examinations every time.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, it is recommended that:

1. To achieve a one hundred percent passing rate for Tagoloan Community College in the board examination every time, the admission and retention policies of the College of Education and College of Criminology should be strictly implemented and followed through to ensure that there will be quality entrant-students and future graduates for the said colleges. It is to be taken note that, although the passing rate of TCC was never below the national passing rates, the school always target for a one hundred percent (100 %) passing rate.
2. To maintain an excellent performance level for TCC, there is a need to strengthen and enrich general education teaching. The members of the faculty must be given opportunities for professional growth by pursuing higher degrees. Tagoloan Community College should provide regular faculty trainings and seminars in various academic fields scholarly strengthening and development.
3. Professional Education Subjects, Criminology Major Subjects and other areas of specialization should be given the same amount of attention and importance in instruction of the undergraduate level.
4. The Professional Regulation Commissions (PRC) learning competencies to be tested in the licensure examinations must be visibly and clearly stated in the course outline and the Outcomes-Based Education Teaching Learning Plan of the faculty members in all subject areas. This is so, because it has been found out that the foundation of the examinees or the quality of education that they receive in college is a major determinant in the results of the PRC-conducted board examinations.
5. The proposed review programs formulated in the course of this study should be implemented by the College of Education and College of Criminology.
6. Attendance to the proposed review sessions must be forcefully encouraged to strengthen the likely positive results in the board examinations.
7. A follow-up investigation to this study is recommended with the inclusion of other relevant variables for further analysis.

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