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Performance Profile of Bachelor of Science in Agribusiness Management Graduates in the Licensure Examination for Agriculturists

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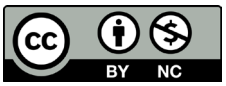

ABSTRACT

This study explored the performance of Bachelor of Science in Agribusiness Management (BSAM) graduates in the Licensure Examination for Agriculturists. It investigated the strategies used by examinees in preparing for the exam, analyzed the passing rate trend over four years, and identified common problems encountered during preparation and the examination itself. The research also documented recommendations and suggestions from the graduates who had taken the exam. The study utilized a descriptive research design. Complete sampling was employed, with the respondents comprising BS Agribusiness Management graduates from Davao Oriental State College of Science and Technology (DOSCST) between 2013 and 2016 who participated in the Licensure Examination for Agriculturists (LEA). A researcher-developed questionnaire served as the primary data collection instrument. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency counts and percentages. The findings of the study are intended to provide valuable insights for future examinees, instructors, academic administrators, and curriculum developers. By understanding the performance profile of agribusiness management graduates in the licensure exam, the study aims to improve the program and enhance future graduates' preparedness.

Keywords: Agribusiness management, Davao Oriental, examination preparation, licensure examination, passing rates.

INTRODUCTION

Agribusiness management education integrates principles of economics, agriculture, commerce, and management (Bairwa et al., 2014). As a rapidly evolving field, it continues to spark debate over its classification as a distinct discipline (Harling, 1995). Recognized for its strong domestic and international employment prospects, agribusiness management is one of the most promising fields of study (Puri, 2012). The program allows students to tailor their education by selecting courses that align with their interests, including farm management, commodity procurement and marketing, labor and personnel management, public policy, and global food issues (MSU, 2016).

Agricultural economics departments have shown adaptability by integrating agribusiness into undergraduate and graduate curricula, though Ph.D. and research programs have been slower to adjust to evolving industry demands (Heiman et al., 2002). A study titled "Project Jobs Fit: The Dole 2020 Vision," conducted by the Philippine Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), predicts that agribusiness will become a significant source of employment within the next five to ten years due to the increasing number of hard-to-fill positions in the sector (KEG). Reflecting this demand, the agribusiness management program has experienced steady growth, with 12 graduates in SY 2012-2013 and SY 2013-2014, increasing to 40 in SY 2014-2015 and 70 in SY 2015-2016. However, the school passing rates in the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) licensure examination for agriculturists have fluctuated, with 35.42% in 2013, 28.36% in 2014, 20.37% in 2015, and 32.94% in 2016 (PRC, 2016). Beyond formal education, internships prepare students for their careers by providing hands-on experience in real-world settings. These opportunities allow students to bridge the gap between theoretical learning and practical application (Kaşli and Ilban, 2013). Internships also help students explore their skills, interests, and career options, providing valuable insights into professional life (Walo, 2001; Ko, 2007; Lee, 2008).

A study by Baticados et al. (2014) examined the entrepreneurial abilities and competencies among students at the University of the Philippines Los Baños, focusing on those enrolled in the BS Agribusiness Management and Master of Management programs. The research revealed that BSABM students showed proficiency in risk-taking, goal-setting, and planning, whereas MM students exhibited stronger skills in opportunity identification, persistence, and networking. Significant elements that impacted these competencies included participation in symposiums, engagement in organizations, and a family background in business, according to Sito (2017). In the Philippines, the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) was established by Presidential Decree No. 223 in 1973 and modernized under RA 8981 in 2000 to regulate and oversee various professions while upholding technical and ethical standards in line with government initiatives (Tullao Jr., 2003).

Davao Oriental State College of Science and Technology (DOSCST) ensures that producing the best quality and globally competitive graduates is one of the school's higher education standards and conclusively as a preparation and readiness for its graduates entering the real world of their chosen career. Citing the DOSCST Agribusiness Management Program Educational Objectives, the program aims to (1) incorporate technologies and information that promote well-rounded, capable professionals in agribusiness, (2) continue to undertake relevant research to improve the productivity and profitability of the marginalized communities through Agribusiness-technology

transfer, and (3) maintain a corps of ethical standard and contented socially responsible entrepreneur amid globally competitive business environment (DOSCST, 2016). The agribusiness management program of DOSCST has existed since 2013.

The study aimed to determine the performance profile of Bachelor of Science in Agribusiness Management graduates in the Licensure Examination for Agriculturists from 2013 to 2016. The study hopes to establish baseline data to understand and find the performance profile of Bachelor of Science in Agribusiness Management Graduates in the Licensure Examination for Agriculturists. The findings of the study would be helpful to the examinees. They would guide them in assessing and evaluating their readiness and preparedness for taking the licensure examination with a higher possibility of passing the exam. This would also help them determine the best time to take the licensure examination to recognize their strengths and weaknesses, knowledge, skills, and attitude necessary to ace their exam performance.

METHODOLOGY

Data Collection

The respondents were Bachelor of Science in Agribusiness Management graduates of DOSCST main campus SY 2013-2016, who had taken the Licensure Examination for Agriculturists (LEA). The researcher designed a questionnaire based on the questions used by different authors from related studies and some questions relevant to the sample and purpose of the study. It was used as the key instrument in obtaining the necessary information needed. In gathering data, a personal interview was conducted to back up the information gathered. The researcher conducted a survey to the BS Agribusiness Management Graduates who had taken the licensure examination for agriculturists to attain the information needed to profile the performance of the graduates in the licensure examination and asked the respondents to provide information written in the questionnaire.

However, some of the respondents resided in faraway places. With this, the researcher used other means of communication, such as the internet via Facebook and email, text messaging, and call. The collected data was tabulated and analyzed. The final results were summarized for the researcher's analysis.

Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency counts and percentages. Answers were precisely analyzed to maintain the accuracy of the study. Accumulated information and data from the answered survey questionnaires were ranked to enumerate the factors according to how often the respondents do them to affect their success in passing the examination. The researcher was used the mean formula multiplied by 100 to determine the percentages of the gathered data.

Where:

x =mean percentage
f = total frequency of data
n = total population of BSAM graduates who took LEA

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the results and findings of the study on the performance profile of a Bachelor of Science in Agribusiness Management in the Licensure Examination for Agriculturists.

Socio-demographic profile of the respondents

The socio-demographic profile of a study/research affected participation, including demographic traits like age and gender, with younger individuals and female participants exhibiting a higher likelihood of engaging. Moreover, how often students checked their email, their attitudes toward research, the perceived significance of the survey topic, and worries about confidentiality all contributed significantly to their readiness to respond. The results emphasized that meticulous survey design, clear communication of the survey's purpose, and anonymity guarantees could improve response rates, thus enhancing the reliability and representativeness of online survey data in educational research (Saleh and Bista, 2017).

The socio-demographic profile of the respondents is shown below. These included the age (present age and the age during the exam), gender, civil status, religion, GPA, year graduated, and occupation. Among the 16 total number of respondents of BSAM graduates in DOSCST (main), most of them are 22-25 years old, in which 18.75% were 25 years old, 31.25% were 24 years old, 25% were 23 years old,18.75% were 22 years old, and the remaining is 27 (6.25%) years old and 36 (6.35%) years old (Table 1). Most respondents were in the age range who had taken the exam at age 19, while the remaining were aged 24 to 3. Females dominated the respondents, accounting for more than half (75%) of the population rather than the males with 25%. This means that most of the graduates who took the exam were female rather than male. The majority (93.75%) of the respondents were single in status, followed by married with 6.25%.

Regarding religion, most respondents (56.25%) were Roman Catholic; most were Christian by birth. It was followed by Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) and Four Square with 12.50% and Iglesia ni Cristo, UCCP and FGRMI with 6.25%.

Their educational backgrounds were the same since they were all college graduates. There are eight (50%) BSAM graduated from SY 2012-2013, three (1.75%) graduated from SY 2013-2014, two (12.50%) graduates in SY 2014-2015 and three (18.75%) graduated in SY 2015-2016. In terms of Grade Point Average (GPA), half (50%) of the respondents belong to Group D (2.51-3.0), followed by Group C (2.01-2.50) with six (37.50%) respondents, and lastly, two respondents that belong to Group B (1.51-2.0). The majority (68.75%) of the respondents were employed, while the remaining 31.25% were unemployed.

Table 1. Socio-demographic profile of the respondents.

Socio-demographic Profile	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Age		
22 yrs old	2	12.5
23 yrs old	4	25
24 yrs old	5	31.25
25 yrs old	3	18.75
27 yrs old	1	6.25
36 yrs old	1	6.25
Total	16	100

Age taken the exam		
19 years old	1	6.25
20 yrs old	4	25
21 yrs old	5	31.25
22 yrs old	3	18.75
23 yrs old	1	6.25
24 yrs old	1	6.25
32 yrs old	1	6.25
Total	16	100
Gender		
Male	4	25
Female	12	75
Total	16	100
Civil status		
Single	15	93.75
Married	1	6.25
Widow	0	0
Total	16	100
Religion		
Roman Catholic	9	
Seventh Day Adventist	2	
Iglesia ni Cristo	1	6.25
Four Square	2	56.25
UCCP	1	12.5
FGRMI	1	6.25
Total	16	100
Grade Point Average (GPA)		
Group A 1.0-1.5	0	0
Group B 1.51-2.0	2	12.5
Group C 2.01-2.5	6	37.5
Group D 2.51-3.0	8	50
Total	16	100
Year graduated		
2012-2013	8	50
2013-2014	3	18.75
2014-2015	2	12.5
2015-2016	3	18.75
Total	16	100
Occupation		
Employed	11	68.75
Unemployed	5	31.25
Total	16	100

BSAM Examinees from 2013-2016

The Bachelor of Science in Agribusiness Management was offered in the year 2013. There were 134 graduates in the program, of which 101 were female, and 33 were male. The Bachelor of Science in Agribusiness Management is one of the DOSCST courses that allows agriculturists to take the licensure examination.

Below is the number of BSAM graduates who took the licensure examination for agriculturists from 2013-2016. The examinees were classified into four categories: first-time takers, second-time takers or repeaters, enrolled in a review center, and self-review. These categories were broken down into other specific classifications, passed, and failed for better understanding.

Table 2 shows three (18.75%) first-time takers who passed the licensure examination, while 13 (81.25%) failed. Two repeaters: one (50%) passed, and the other failed. In terms of those enrolled in a review center, four (33.33%) passed, while eight (66.67%) failed. Regarding those who did self-review, one (25%) passed the licensure exam, while three (75%) failed.

Table 2. Number of BSAM examinees per category.

Examinees	First takers	Second takers	Review centers	Self-review	Total
Passed	3 (18.75%)	1 (50%)	4 (33.33%)	1 (25%)	9 (36%)
Failed	13 (81.25%)	1 (50%)	8 (66.67%)	3 (75%)	25 (64%)
Total	16	2	12	4	34

The trend of passing rate of BSAM in the licensure examination for agriculturists

Presented in Table 3 is the percentage of BSAM examinees that passed the licensure examination for agriculturists. As presented, in 2016, there were seven (7) BSAM examinees, but no one passed. In 2014, there were three (3) BSAM examinees, in which one (33.33%) first taker passed. For the year 2015, with two (2) BSAM examinees, one (100%) repeater passed. As for 2016, wherein there were 6 BSAM examinees, two (33.33%) first takers passed the licensure examination for agriculturists.

Table 3. Percentage of BSAM examinees who passed LEA.

Passed LEA (%)	2013	2014	2015	2016
First takers	0.00%	33%	0.00%	40.00%
Repeater	No takers	No takers	100.00%	0.00%
Overall	0.00%	33.33%	50.00%	33.33%

Figure 1 below illustrates the trend of the passing rate of Bachelor of Science in Agribusiness Management in the Licensure Examination for Agriculturists. Based on the result illustrated, the highest rating of BSAM first takers was in 2016, with a 40% passing rate, while the lowest was in 2013, with 0%. Regarding the performance of repeaters, in 2015, the BSAM had the highest rating with a 100% passing rate. The passing rate of the BSAM first takers of LEA increased from 2013 to 2014 but declined in 2015 because no one passed. In 2016, the trend of first-taker passers increased by 40% from 0%. It shows that from 2013 to 2016, only 2015 had a BSAM repeater examinee who passed on LEA.

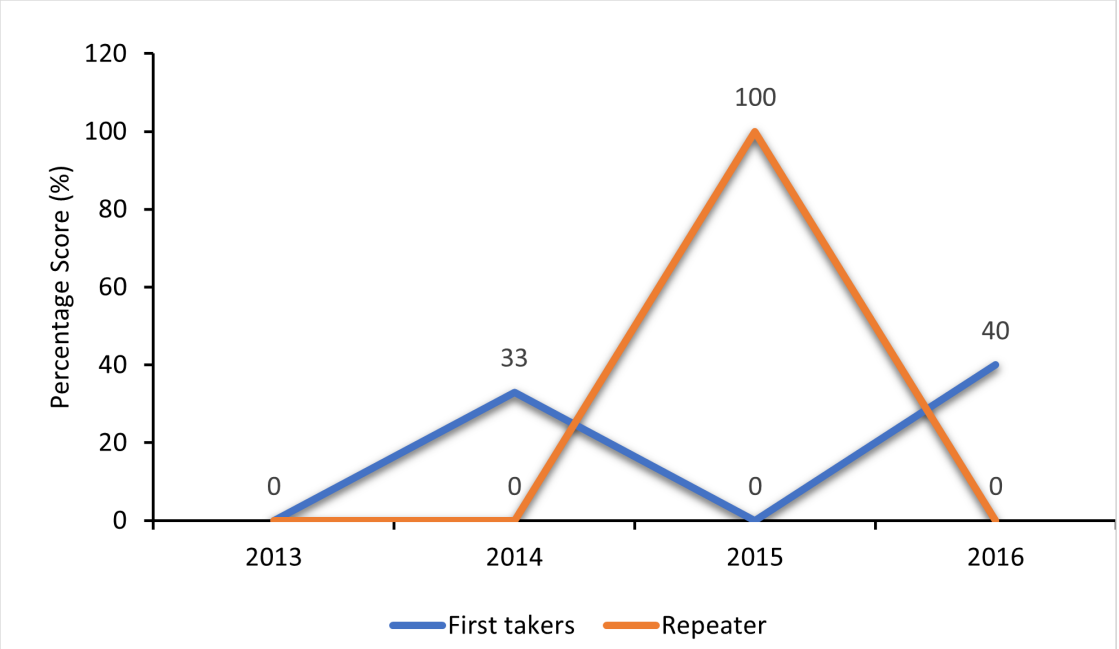

Figure 1. Trend of passing rate of BSAM in the licensure examination for agriculturists.

BSAM graduates who passed the licensure examination for agriculturists

Shown below is the number of BSAM graduates of DOSCST (main campus) who passed the licensure examination for agriculturists (LEA) from year 2013-2016 (Table 4). In 2013, with seven examinees, none had passed; in 2014 and 2015, each had one passer, and in 2016 with two passers. Figure 1 Given the results, there are a total of four BSAM graduates who passed the licensure examination.

Table 4. BSAM graduates who passed the licensure examination for agriculturists.

Year	Examinees	Passed
2013	7	0
2014	3	1
2015	2	1
2016	6	2
Total	18	4

Strategies used in preparation and during the examination

An examination strategy is used prior to setting for the examination. Developing an examination strategy and an approach to working efficiently throughout the exam is important. Results were achieved by interviewing the respondents and answering a set of statements with yes or no answers (Hopkins, 2005).

Presented below were the strategies used by the BSAM graduates in preparation for the licensure examination (Table 5). Results were computed through frequency counts. As shown, strategy number 14 is used mainly by the examinees. This means the examinees usually plan their study routine based on how, what, and when they study. This study plan/routine was indicated as a guideline for their studies. Most of the respondents also used strategy numbers 3 and 12. Most of them attended review centers and took notes during lectures. Thus, the examinees used strategies 8, 9, and 13 the least.

Table 5. Strategies used by the graduates in preparation for the examination.

Strategies	Frequency
1. Made a definite time to study daily	10
2. Made a definite time to study during free time	12
3. Attends review center	13
4. Listens attentively during lecture	11
5. Reviews lessons from college lectures	12
6. Visits instructors for additional lessons	10
7. Provides/Buys reviewers or book references	10
8. Raises questions during discussion for clarification	6
9. Always present during review schedules	8
10. Answers self-made questionnaires/quizzes in reviewing	10
11. Visits online sites about the topics for additional information	11
12. Take notes during lectures	13
13. Involved in other review activities outside the scheduled review	5
14. Have personal study plan	15

The graph shows that having a personal study plan, taking notes during lectures, and attending review centers are the top three strategies commonly used by the examinees for LEA, while being involved in other review activities outside the scheduled review is the least technique the examinees used.

Students who effectively manage their time by structuring their schedules, establishing clear priorities, and minimizing procrastination often attain greater academic success (Sayari, 2017). Alsalem et al. 2017, disclosed differences in the effectiveness of time management related to gender and academic discipline, indicating that tailored strategies might be required. According to Sweller (1998), high cognitive load, especially from unnecessary sources, can overwhelm working memory, complicating the processing of new information and subsequently obstructing learning. He highlighted the significance of instructional design that reduces extraneous load and maximizes cognitive load to improve learning results.

Note-taking is the practice of recording information captured from another source. The writer records the essence of information by taking notes, freeing their mind from recalling everything. Piolat (2005) highlighted the necessity of instructing students in efficient note-taking techniques that balance documenting information and fostering a ctive engagement and comprehension.

To wrap it up, note-taking allows students to become effective learners. The taking of notes facilitates learning. When one takes notes, he attends to what is said and done; he analyzes and thinks rapidly about what he sees and hears; and finally, he records his observation. Attending to, analyzing, and doing something about a specific lecture means the student actively engages in activities essential to effective learning. Attending review centers was one of the strategies the examinees used to prepare for the licensure examination. Most were enrolled in a review center and the same review class offered by Davao Oriental State College of Science and Technology in collaboration with the Bachelor of Agricultural Technology and the Bachelor of Science in Agribusiness Management programs.

Review centers provide quality instruction and guidance for nervous test takers and folks who cannot do it independently. Participants get hands-on mentoring, plenty of exercises, or mock exams. The advantage of being enrolled in a review center is that it has standard programs and has done the research for the examinees. It will also share

experiences about taking the test. It will share tips and techniques on how to pass an exam.

Review centers are educational institutions primarily focused on helping their student clients pass a particular exam (Table 5). Although a student can conduct one's review to prepare for an exam, review centers help enhance the review process in many different ways. First, review centers help provide focus. Because of the vast experience of review centers on the tests that are given, they can better determine the concepts or subjects from which test questions will most likely be taken. Second, review centers provide guidance (see Figure 2). They follow a well-established curriculum, standard, or format of review that can help students conduct reviews most efficiently. Thirdly, review centers provide expertise. Review professors can share their vast experience with students, which can help them with their exams. Finally, review centers provide compulsion. Because students pay for the review, they cannot take one's review easily or with little effort.

One of the least used strategies of the respondents is being engaged in review activities outside the scheduled review, such as group studies. Being involved in group studies enhances the ability to learn the material and ensures one is ready for projects or exams. It can entertain new ideas and give a fresh perspective on the material. However, most of the respondents were not able to participate in this activity.

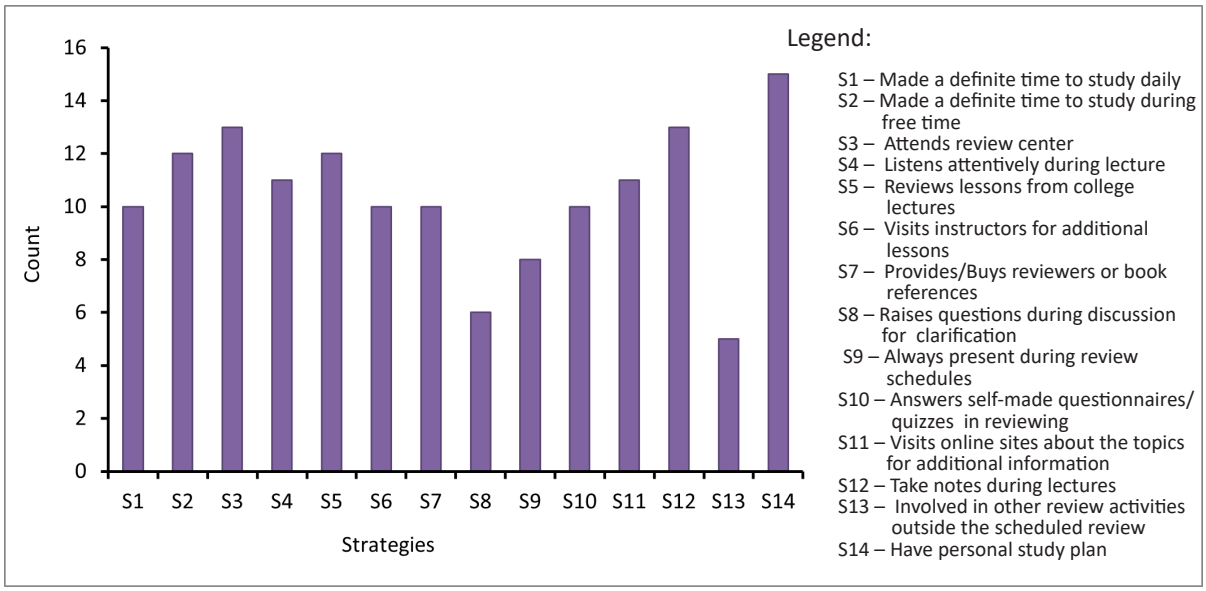

Figure 2. Number of examinees who used these strategies for the licensure examination.

Common problems encountered by the examinees

Everyone experiences difficulties with studying at one time or another, and overcoming these challenges is all part of the learning process, particularly when you have a large workload. Table 5 shows the common problems encountered by the examinees in preparation and during the licensure examination for agriculturists. Results were computed through frequency counts. The results show that during preparation for the examination, majority of the respondents have too many responsibilities during their review and they do not have enough time to review for the examination. During the examinations majority of the respondents encountered problems like nervousness, low self-confidence, not emotionally and mentally prepared and lack of sleep.

Table 6. Common problems encountered by the examinees.

Problems	Frequency
Preparation Time	
1. Does not have enough time to review for the examination	8
2. Have work during review	7
3. The review center does not have enough facilities for the review/lecture	6
4. Study area is not conducive for learning	7
5. The lecturer does not explain the lecture properly	3
6. Too many responsibilities while taking the review	6
7. Does not have enough resources for reviewing	10
During examination	
8. Nervous during the examination	10
9. Low self-confidence during the examination	9
10. Does have difficulty in understanding questions	7
11. Is not emotionally and mentally prepared	9
12. Level of technical difficulty of the exam	9
13. Difficulty in understanding the language used in the exam	2
14. Examinee finds the time allotted not enough to finish the exam	5
15. Lack of sleep	9
16. Financial Problem	4
17. Forgot things needed for the examination	2
18. Late during the exam date	0

The figure below presents the common problems encountered by the respondents in preparing for the examination. Figure 3 illustrates that having too many responsibilities while having a review and not having enough time to review were the most common problems of examinees in preparation for LEA. One of the reasons why most of the respondents cannot focus on their review is because they have other responsibilities. They cannot set the review as one of their major priorities because of other responsibilities, such as family and work, which require more time and effort. This results in insufficient time to review and prepare for the board examination. With too many responsibilities, time was divided, priorities were set to accomplish what was more important, and ended up losing sight of the review.

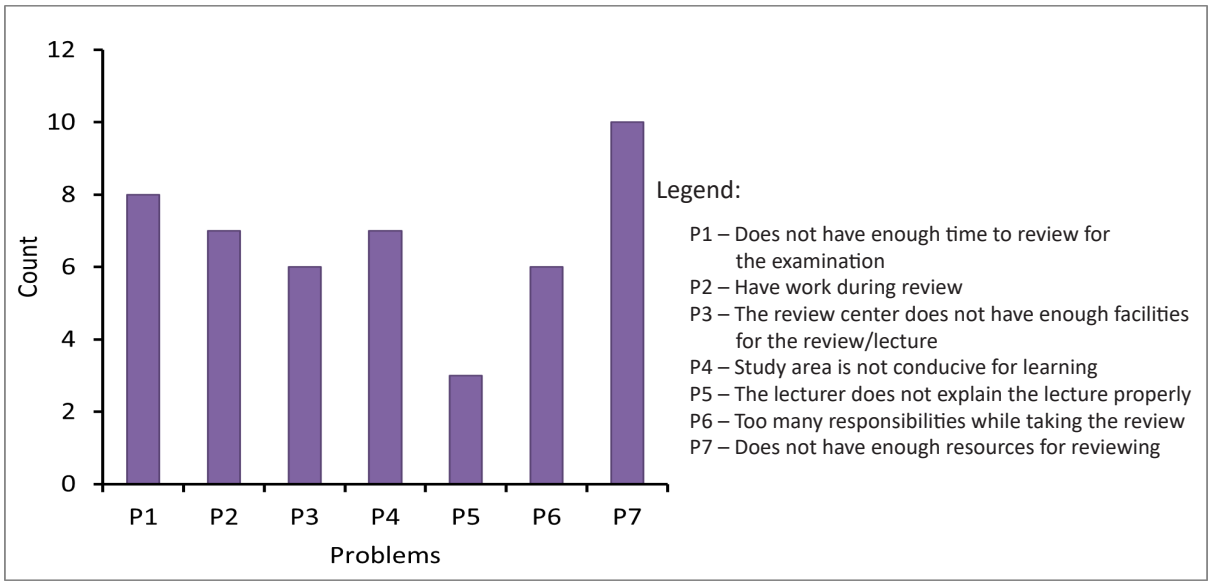

Figure 3. Common problems encountered during preparation time.

The second graph below shows that nervousness, low self-confidence, not being emotionally and mentally prepared, and lack of sleep were the common problems encountered by the respondents during the examination (Figure 4). Nervousness or having or showing feelings of worry, fear, or anxiety is often experienced during examinations. These problems are connected. When a person is experiencing nervousness, it affects the state of mind, resulting in low self-confidence. Fear and anxiety are the cornerstones of low self-esteem. Those who suffer from low self-esteem experience extreme fear and anxiety frequently. According to Keane and Loades 2017, self-esteem is not just a significant risk factor for the onset of mental health issues but also contributes to their persistence over time. Individuals with ongoing low self-esteem are at greater risk for emotional distress, suggesting that tackling self-esteem problems may be essential for both the prevention and treatment of anxiety and depression.

Confidence is essential to our ability to compete in society; when someone does not feel confident, we are less likely to make decisions that give us a financial and social edge. Examinees need confidence to endure the physical and mental demands of test-taking under tremendous pressure. Examination confidence results from proper preparation for the exam, which includes mastering the attributes of examination success. Examination confidence is necessary to overcome the initial frustration of questions that may not be specifically prepared (Hopkins, 2005).

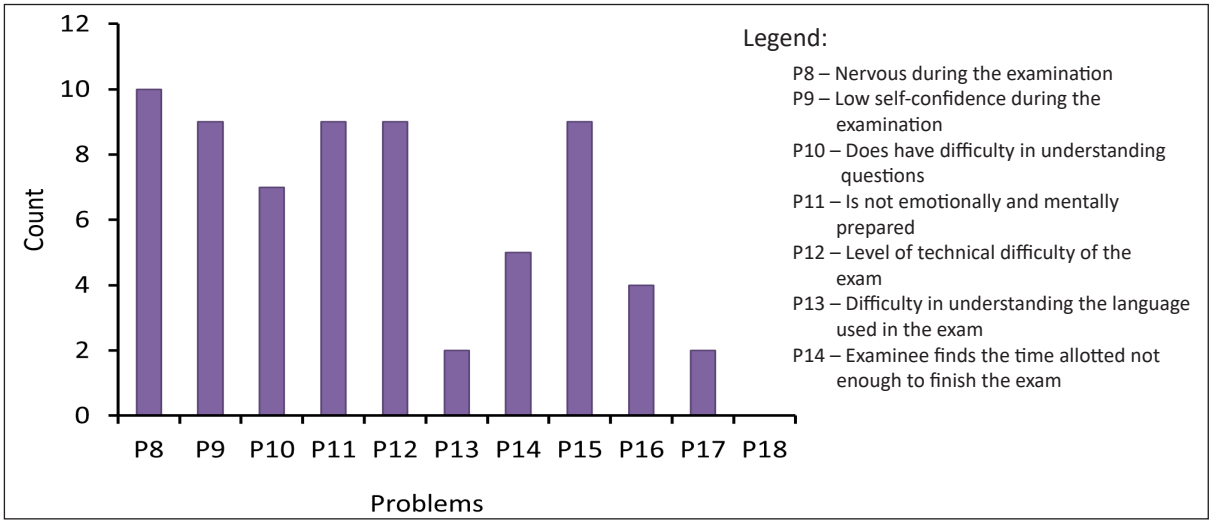

Figure 4. Common problems encountered during examination.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher concluded that most of the respondents were female, single, and aged 22-25 years old. Most were Roman Catholic graduates with a Bachelor of Science in Agribusiness Management from 2013-2016, with an average GPA of 2.51-3.0, and were dominantly employed. There was a total of 16 BSAM examinees, wherein three first-time takers and one repeater passed. Twelve respondents enrolled in a review center, while four did self-review. The trend of the passing rate of BSAM was high in 2016, with 40% for first-time takers, while in repeater BSAM passing rate was high in 2015, with 100%. It was also identified that having a personal study plan, attending review centers, and taking notes during review lectures were used mainly by the respondents as an examination strategy. Most respondents encountered problems in preparation for the exam, such as not having enough time to

review or study for the examination and having too many responsibilities while reviewing. During the examination, most respondents encountered problems such as nervousness, low self-confidence, emotional and mental unpreparedness, and lack of sleep. The majority of the respondents recommended that BSAM students/graduates who are interested in taking the licensure examination should have enough time to focus and study for the exam; all things needed for the examination should be ready three days before the exam, study or review well, ask friends for a group review, always pray, do not be overconfident, do not panic during the exam, focus on studying agriculture subjects and goal setting.

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