

# The Relationship of Active Participation of Accounting Students in Academic Competitions, and Academic Performance on their CPA Licensure Examination's Performance

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## ABSTRACT

The board exam for the Certified Public Accountant is denoted as one of the most difficult licensure examinations. This study could motivate and improve the student's performance in their licensure examination since the researchers examined if there is a relationship between the DHVSU BSA graduates' active participation in accounting academic competitions and academic performance on their CPA licensure examination. A quantitative correlational research design was used where one hundred forty-six BSA graduates were surveyed using a validated researcher-made question via Google Forms. To analyze and evaluate the quantitative data, weighted mean, frequency simple percentage, and Chi-Square Test of Independence were utilized. The findings showed that accounting graduates' academic performance and CPALE eligibility, and their active participation in accounting-related academic competition and CPALE eligibility have a significant relationship, while there is no substantial relationship between their academic performance and their involvement in accounting-related academic competition. Considering the results, researchers suggested that the Don Honorio Ventura State University's accounting students should take part in academic competitions, and the university itself should incorporate academic competition activities for each department.

## THE PROBLEM AND ITS BACKGROUND

### Introduction

Professionals holding bachelor's or master's degrees in accounting are in high demand in the current employment environment (UAB Online Degrees, 2022). Accounting is the foundation of every business requires the ability to monitor money and ensure everything is in order, regardless of size. Accounting courses in the Philippines can equip businesses with the necessary skills for success. Accounting is the language of business and is essential for maintaining financial order. Accounting is a knowledge that is necessary for many commercial occupations, and possessing it will make you stand out as a candidate. The CPALE or Certified Public Accountant Licensure Examination is a requirement for becoming a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) in the Philippines. The Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) administers the CPALE, which is among the most difficult examinations in the Philippines (APAC Monetary, 2022).

Since 2016 the CPALE passing rates have been falling, the public is not overly surprised by this. The average passing percentage for the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, the equivalent American organization to our local CPAs in the Philippines, is 50%. The two CPA associations' differences are rather noticeable, and it appears that our own CPAs are falling behind (Guardian, 2022). Educational establishments have a significant impact on CPA candidates' performance. Several universities the offer accounting programs won't be successful unless they are paired with qualified instructors who are knowledgeable and skilled in accounting and related fields (Calubayan, 2020).

Receiving a quality education is a significant opportunity available to all individuals. This opportunity involves acquiring new knowledge that is essential for grounding young people in their principles and traditions.

Enhancing academic achievement has been a major concern for students, and today, extracurricular activities play a role in improving students' academic performance. Guest and Schneider (2003) have pointed out that researchers have identified a positive correlation between extracurricular activities and students' academic performance.

Extracurricular activities are crucial for young people to develop well-rounded individuals and enhance their competitiveness in the job market and graduate school applications. They provide opportunities for personal development and critical thinking skills. Balancing extracurricular activities with academics leads to significant improvements, better time management, and increased interest in school. Schools should design activities to strike a balance between academic participation and personal growth.

The Philippine government, through the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC), conducts a licensure examination for graduates of various board courses, including the Bachelor of Science in Accountancy. Upon completion, students must take the Board Licensure Examination for Certified Public Accountants, held biannually usually during the month of May and October. Successfully passing the CPA Licensure Exam grants individuals the privilege to practice as Certified Public Accountants in the country. This achievement has motivated researchers to explore whether extracurricular activities, such as accounting-themed quiz bowls as well as academic performance, can improve a student's chances of passing the exam.

The Philippines' Certified Public Accountant Licensure Examination or CPALE is challenging, with only 20% of first-time examinees passing. Research suggests that active participation in academic competitions can enhance accounting students' success. Students who participate in competitions tend to achieve higher grades, have better critical thinking skills, and have greater confidence. Academic competitions also provide a platform for practicing answering complex questions under timed conditions. However, there is limited research on the relationship between academic performance, participation in academic competitions, and CPA licensure examination performance of BSA graduates. The study aims to search and discover the correlation between the active participation in academic competition, and academic performance of the BSA graduates' CPA licensure examination.

## RELATED LITERATURE

The CBL or Competition-based learning method improves or promotes problem-solving, motivation, innovation, and teamwork. It also encourages both creative and critical thinking skills through real-world problem-solving (Hossen R. et al., 2022). According to Park Y. H. et al. (2019), the innovative board game approach alters the negative perceptions of accounting, resulting in more enjoyable learning and improved attitudes of the students toward the subject. Rellin R. et al. (2020) show that the accounting culture affects skill development, encouraging the competitiveness and accountability of the students, and their preparation for future challenges, it was also highlighted the benefits of extracurricular activities on students' performance, it also showing that parental influence and guidance, broadening horizons and aiding cognitive development also has a small impact. Turning the session into games in accounting subjects increases the performance, motivation, problem-solving, decision-making, teamwork, and critical thinking skills of the students, especially the accounting principles.

On the other hand, multiple studies underscore the impact of various factors on accounting education and CPA exam success. According to Dr. Encio (2022), a moderate link between academic performance and passing rates, while mock board results later emerged as crucial for CPA Licensure Exams. Esaga et al. (2022), revealed minor effects from financial status, peer pressure, and parental influence on students' decisions, emphasizing the complexity of influences. Ganas E. & Russell R.L. (2023) emphasized the strong connection between academic performance, attitude toward accounting, and motivation for CPALE success, noting a negative link between the curriculum and success, signaling a need for reforms. In this comprehensive exploration, it becomes evident that a multifaceted approach is vital. Notably, enhancing academic performance alone may not suffice.

According to Calubayan (2020), sending students to regional and national competitions or contests may improve their chances of passing the CPA Licensure Exams. One study from the National Longitudinal Study discovered that engaging in certain activities can enhance achievement while potentially diminishing academic performance. These extracurricular pursuits help students prepare for the future, fostering a competitive spirit,

cooperation, leadership, and diligence, and providing a platform for nurturing their creative abilities. Despite not being part of the core curriculum, co-curricular activities are crucial, enabling young individuals to shape their lives holistically. It is important to purposefully structure school activities to balance academic participation and foster comprehensive development in students. The majority of those surveyed claim that participating in academic competitions such as Annual Regional Convention (ARC), National Accounting Quiz Showdown (NAQDOWN), and Regional Midyear Convention (RMYC) and reviewing prior to class are commonplace, if not actively encouraged, in the accounting culture of the university, (Rellin et al.,2020).

In addition, Pattaguan (2018) found in its study that, involvement in various academic competitions while still studying was especially beneficial in the achievers' board exams because the contest includes updates or content in the accounting field/industry. According to Siddiky R. Md. (2019), students engaged in Co-Curricular activities (CCA) demonstrate stronger performance on state assessments compared to those not involved. It is also discovered that participation in Extracurricular activities (ECA) positively impacts students' grade point averages and boosts the likelihood of their persistence through graduation. These two studies demonstrate the possible advantages of CCAs and ECAs.

Calubayan's (2020) study found that a student's performance on board exams is influenced by a number of characteristics, including their high school academic standing, OLSAT nonverbal skills, college GWA, college scholarship, and attitude toward accounting. A statistical analysis demonstrates the negative correlation between school components and the Board Licensure Examination for Certified Public Accountants. These aspects include instructor competency and school resources and infrastructure. For the examinees, the biggest obstacle was a lack of confidence brought on by new subjects and questions they encountered in the study and on the real board test. The evaluations by respondents who passed and those who did not on the licensing examination showed significant differences in assessments of their attitudes toward accounting, instructor competency, and school resources and facilities.

In addition, mock board exams are not a guarantee that the accountancy graduates will pass the CPALE, but they can help the students to pass the CPA Licensure Examinations (Abella, et al. 2022). Factors such as students' learning habits and attitudes, as well as subject teachers' teaching methods, can affect their ability to pass the exam. Indicators of tracking rate and exam passing abilities include GWA (Yap 2023). Graduation rates are often considered a reliable measure of the quality of education that one school provides. The majority of passing CPA Licensure Examinations are single males with high GWA and study habits, attitudes, and professor teaching methods can all affect whether a student passes an exam.

Hence, the quality of review habits and resources, the students' attitude toward learning, and their avoidance of pointless activities that lower their productivity are all aspects of preparation that have an impact on the board test (Acang et al. 2021). It's also mentioned that compromising one's physical health shouldn't be done since it can affect how well one performs. In addition, the following factors, which are presented in no particular order, were also found to have an impact on the respondents' performance on the CPALE: mental and physical state and condition, limitation of unnecessary activities, and mental state and condition.

The curriculum, review facilities, availability of current content, and high-quality instruction don't appear to be associated with performance on the pre-board and CPA licensing exams, according to Bote et al. (2022). Nonetheless, there is a larger chance of passing the CPA Licensure Examination if one has a higher pre-board exam rating. Similarly, research respondents disclosed that the biggest factor influencing a candidate's success on the CPA exam is not enough time spent preparing and that the biggest challenge facing applicants is agreeing to retake the exam (Al-Duwaila N. & AL-Mutairi A., 2020). A school can examine its current curriculum and suggest methods to improve it in light of previous board results, to achieve a 100 passing percentage shall be accomplished shortly (Salcedo et al., 2021).

It is undeniable that having a competitive academic advantage in the field of accounting will be an edge in taking the certified public accountant licensure examination. Each student should hone their skills to their finest on every board subject to increase the probability of passing. Determining the factors that affect the performance of undergraduate students can be used to further understand and improve the educational approach in every school in teaching accounting subjects. Academic competitions and extracurricular activities provide the

students with knowledge that cannot be attained in the four corners of classrooms. It will give a glimpse into the reality of what the actual board examination will be like and how intense the pressure they will be facing. Thus, it is important for students to solely focus on what lessons they will be learning in a typical classroom situation. Giving extra attention to other factors such as academic competitions and extracurricular activities aligned with the program can be a key to accomplishing a good performance in the CPALE.

On the other hand, the related literature and studies that the researchers gathered have similarities to the current study, specifically to the dependent variable which is the level of performance in the CPA Licensure Examination. This study uses a correlational method for the researchers to identify the association between the two variables, the independent and dependent, the active participation in accounting-related academic competitions as well as the academic performance and the level of performance in the CPA Licensure Examination respectively.

To aid the researchers in understanding as well as comparing findings of similar studies, studies from both local and foreign are used. Multiple studies highlight the positive impact of engagement in competition-based learning, co-curricular activities (CCA), and extracurricular activities (ECA) on students' academic performance and exam success. From these, motivation, teamwork, and critical thinking hold a crucial role in success, specifically in accounting education and the CPA licensure exam. There is an agreement that academic performance, as measured by grade point average (GWA) also high school academic ratings, holds a substantial correlation with success in CPA licensure examinations. Thus, strong foundational knowledge and skills are essential for passing these exams.

The critical factors and key determinants to succeed in the CPA exam that are repeatedly being mentioned are motivation and attitude toward accounting, availability of resources, preparation, review quality, mock board exam, academic competition participation, and mental and physical state of students. Positive attitude and motivation levels are also key in determining better outcomes in academic performance and CPALE success.

Curriculum changes and teacher competency are also highlighted in several studies, while some studies found a negative connection between the curriculum and the success of takers in CPALE. It also suggests that a higher mock board exam score, which can be influenced by the curriculum and teaching quality, increases the chances of passing the CPA Licensure Examination. Good health maintenance and stress management are also important for better performance during reviews and exams. In addition, factors such as peer pressure, financial status, parents' influence, and school facilities, can indirectly affect students' decisions and performance.

In conclusion, this study provides further information on whether there is a significant association in the respondents' level of CPA Licensure Examination performance when grouped according to their profile.

### **Statement Of The Problem**

Since there is a lack of research on the specific relationship between active participation in academic competition, academic performance, and CPA licensure examination performance. The study aimed to fill in the gaps by exploring the following research questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of the respondents as to:
  - 1.1. Age?
  - 1.2. Sex?
  - 1.3. Year Graduated?
  - 1.4. Employment Status?
2. How may the academic performance of the respondents be described?
3. How may the active participation of the respondents in accounting academic competitions during

undergraduate years be classified?

4. What is the level of performance in the CPA Licensure Examination of the respondents?

5. Is there a relationship between active participation in academic competitions and academic performance and CPA licensure examination performance?

6. Is there a significant association between the respondents' level of CPA Licensure Examination when grouped according to their demographic profile?

The results of the research offer valuable insights that can be leveraged to create programs and support systems that aid accounting students increase their chances of successfully passing the CPA licensure examination.

## **Hypothesis**

### **I. Statement of the Problem Number 5**

#### **A. Academic Performance and Participation in Accounting-Related Academic Competition.**

- Null Hypothesis (H0)

There is no significant relationship between the active participation and the students' academic performance of accounting students in academic.

- Alternative Hypothesis (H1)

There is a significant relationship between the active participation and the students' academic performance of accounting students in academic.

#### **B. Academic Performance and CPA Licensure Examination Performance**

- Null Hypothesis (H0)

There is no significant relationship between the students' academic performance and their CPA Licensure Examination performance.

- Alternative Hypothesis (H1)

There is a significant relationship between the students' academic performance and their CPA Licensure Examination performance.

#### **C. Participation in Accounting-Related Academic Competition and CPA Licensure Examination Performance**

- Null Hypothesis (H0)

There is no significant relationship between the students' active participation in accounting-related academic competition and their CPA Licensure Examination performance.

- Alternative Hypothesis (H1)

There is a significant relationship between the students' active participation in accounting-related academic competition and their CPA Licensure Examination performance.

### **II. Statement of the Problem Number 6**

#### **A. Age and CPA Licensure Examination Performance**

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- Null Hypothesis (H0)

There is no significant association between their age and their CPA Licensure Examination performance.

- Alternative Hypothesis (H1)

There is a significant association between their age and their CPA Licensure Examination performance.

#### B. Sex and CPA Licensure Examination Performance

- Null Hypothesis (H0)

There is no significant association between their sex and their CPA Licensure Examination performance.

- Alternative Hypothesis (H1)

There is a significant association between their sex and their CPA Licensure Examination performance.

#### C. Year Graduated and CPA Licensure Examination Performance

- Null Hypothesis (H0)

There is no significant association between the year they graduated and their CPA Licensure Examination performance.

- Alternative Hypothesis (H1)

There is a significant association between the year they graduated and their CPA Licensure Examination performance.

#### D. Employment Status and CPA Licensure Examination Performance

- Null Hypothesis (H0)

There is no significant association between their employment status and their CPA Licensure Examination performance.

- Alternative Hypothesis (H1)

There is a significant association between their employment status and their CPA Licensure Examination performance.

### **Theoretical Framework**

#### **Expectancy Theory**

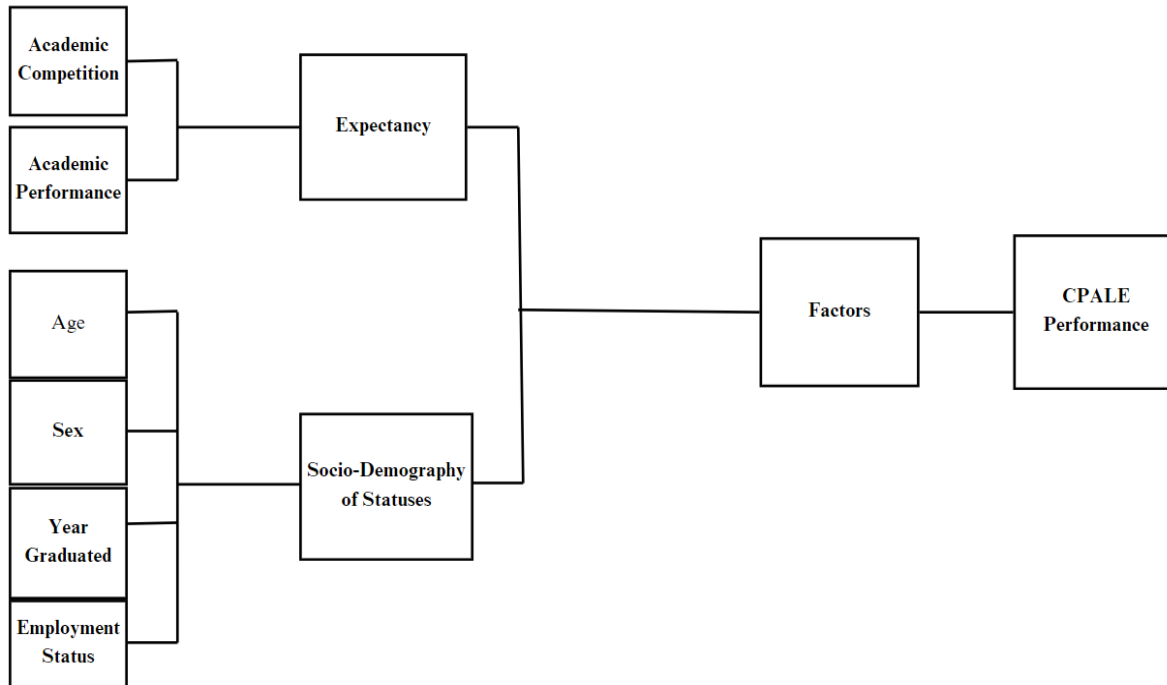
Expectancy theory proposes two cognitive mediating factors (perceived likelihood of success and the value of success) that are likely to be altered by changing the cooperation-competition dimension. An educational strategy (TGT) that modifies cooperation competition is outlined, with expectation theory used to anticipate differing influences on student performance. A total of six empirical research on TGT are examined. Overall, the data supports the utility of TGT as an educational tool and the relevance of the expectancy theory to the literature on cooperation and competition (DeVries D.L & Edwards K.J., 1974).

#### **Socio-Demography Of Statuses Theory**

The socio-demography of statuses displays an individual's accomplishments within a community as well as their social and demographic characteristics. The term "demographic profile" describes characteristics, such as race,

age, gender, or income, that characterize a person's situation. The demographic characteristics of DHVSU CPALE takers included age, sex, year of graduation, and work status in this study. Sex is the biological term for what makes a person male or female. The term "employment status" describes how the respondents are legally classified as either self-employed, employed, or unemployed.

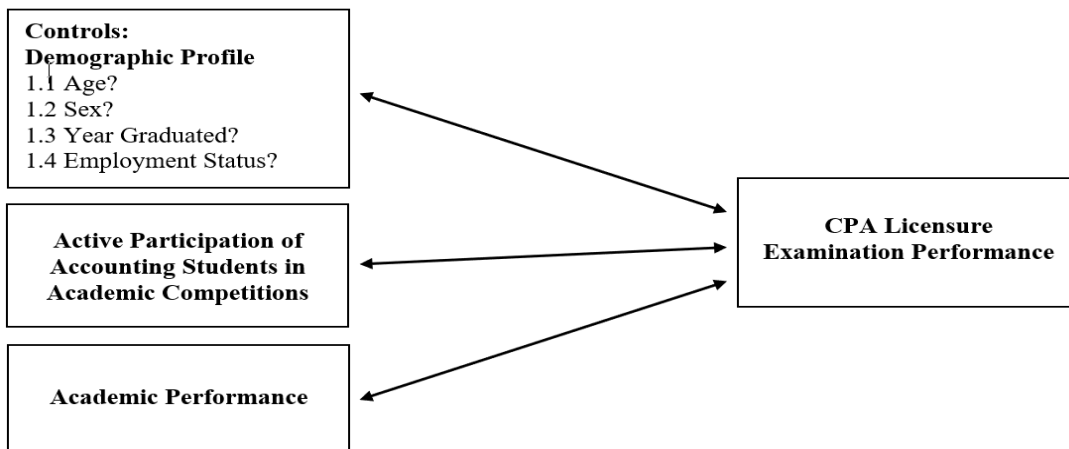
Figure 1. Theoretical Framework



### Conceptual Framework

This research evaluates the relationship between the active participation of accounting students in academic competitions to their CPA Licensure Examination performance at the Don Honorio Ventura State University, Pampanga. The conceptual framework of this study used an Independent Variables - Dependent Variables (IV - DV) model and it is represented as follows:

Figure 2. Conceptual Framework



### Significance Of the Study

The research was made to determine the relationship between the active participation of accounting students in academic competition and academic performance on their CPA Licensure Examination of BSA graduate years 2020, 2022, and 2023 at Don Honorio Ventura State University. Thus, the study merited the following individuals:

**ACCOUNTANCY STUDENTS.** The students benefit the most from this research study. The students may be motivated to join competitions and improve their academic performance and the probability of passing the CPALE.

**UNIVERSITY'S BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN ACCOUNTANCY PROGRAM.** The program benefits from the findings of this study as they play a significant role in the improvement of student performance in their CPA Licensure Examination.

**FUTURE RESEARCHERS.** The findings of this study aid future researchers in their future related studies. In addition, this study provided them with a background or overview of the accounting students' academic performance and how they are participating in academic competitions as part of their performance on the CPA license exam.

### **Scope And Delimitation**

This study focused on the Relationship between the Active Participation of Accounting Students in Academic Competitions and Academic Performance on their CPA Licensure Examination Performance. The study involved the alumni of Don Honorio Ventura State University, Pampanga, batches 2020, 2022, and 2023 Bachelor of Science in Accountancy who already took their Certified Public Accountant Licensure Examination. The researchers excluded the year 2021 due to the reduction of the number of years of the Bachelor of Science in Accountancy from a 5-year course to a 4-year course.

### **Acronyms**

- ARC - Annual Regional Convention
- CBL - Competition-based Learning
- CCA - Co-Curricular Activities
- CPA - Certified Public Accountant
- CPALE - Certified Public Accountant Licensure Examination
- ECA - Extracurricular Activities
- GPA - Grade Point Average
- GWA - General Weighted Average
- NAQDOWN - National Accounting Quiz Showdown
- PRC - Professional Regulation Commission
- RMYC - Regional Midyear Convention

### **Definition Of Terms**

**Academic Performance.** The capacity of an academic student to finish assignments. It is assessed using objective criteria, such as the final course grades and the grading point average. (Matalka, 2022)

**Accounting.** The tracking and recording of financial transactions. Both individuals and businesses use it to assess their well-being and financial success. (Tobin, 2023)

**Bachelor's Degree.** An undergraduate degree that can be earned by enrolling in an academic institution and studying a topic of your choice. It is also known as a college degree. (Coursera, 2023).



CPALE. The Certified Public Accountant Licensure Examination is the last hurdle to the lucrative fields of accounting and maybe law (Guardian,2022).

Extracurricular Activities. These are voluntary activities that are not part of the standard school curriculum. They concentrate on a particular activity, objective, or purpose. These kinds of activities take place in an institutional setting but outside of regular school hours. (Barge, 2020).

The Professional Regulation Commission (PRC/Commission). This is the national government's licensing and regulating body for the practice of regulated professions.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The research methodology helped the researchers to determine the relationship between the active participation of accounting students in academic competitions, and academic performance on their CPA licensure examination's performance.

### **Research Design**

This study's research design utilized quantitative correlational research to investigate the relationship between BSA graduates on their CPA licensure examination, their active participation in academic competition, and their academic performance. The results of the correlational study were applied to predict events and determine the prevalence and correlations between variables by leveraging available data and knowledge. As beneficial as the approach is, care needs to be taken when using it and when interpreting the results (Comiskey, C., et al., 2015). With a correlational research design, variables are examined and their statistical relationship is assessed without attempting to control for other factors. This type of study is non-experimental (Price P., 2017).

### **Population Of The Study**

The respondents are Certified Public Accountant Licensure Examination (CPALE) takers of Bachelor of Science in Accountancy from Don Honorio Ventura State University. The researchers chose to include all the CPALE takers, 146 in total, considering that the university only has a small population in relation to it.

The list of CPALE takers of Don Honorio Ventura State University was obtained by requesting the documents from the Philippine Regulatory Commission Main Office through email.

A total population was applied by the researchers. It is the use of the whole respondents' population that falls under the same criteria set by the researchers in order to get the accurate representation, without any biases, of the needed data to fulfill and satisfy the objective of the whole study (Lund Research, 2012).

### **Research Instrument**

Google forms were used by the researchers in gathering the data. Google Forms is constantly used in making surveys, asking respondents, making schedules for events, and collecting various information (DataScope, 2023). This functionality facilitates the inclusion of various question formats like brief responses, paragraphs, multiple-choice selections, checkboxes, dropdown menus, linear scales, and multiple-option grids, streamlining the process.

Questionnaires created with Google Forms are used to gather primary data. Survey research is acquiring information from respondents by answering questions (Check & Schutt, 2012). It permits a range of approaches to information gathering, instrumentation, and respondent recruitment. According to McLeod, S.A (2023), a questionnaire is a research instrument comprising a series of questions to accumulate data from respondents. It can be thought of as a kind of written interview.

The researchers were not able to adopt questionnaires from related studies and thus developed their own. The researchers sought the advice of the consultant, adviser, and Finance and Accountancy professors as validators that helped the researchers design a new questionnaire. The study was guided by six research questions but only

four were used in the survey questionnaire considering that the fifth and sixth research questions were used to conclude the data gathered by the use of statistical treatments.

To test and validate the questionnaire, the researchers run a Cronbach test with the help of their research adviser and statistician to disseminate the Google Form to the 15 respondents from another school to determine its reliability.

Reliability Statistics		(N = 46)
Scale	Number of Items	Cronbach Alpha
Active Participation of Accounting Students in Academic Competitions	4	0.83

Figure 3. Cronbach Alpha

The researchers were able to do a Cronbach which was processed by the statistician and passed the reliability test having a reliability coefficient of 0.83. This implies that the self-made questionnaire is both valid and reliable.

### Data Collection

In conducting the study, the researchers adhered to the rules, which were as follows: they informed the respondents that they were part of the study, explained the purpose of the study, and requested their consent before conducting the survey in Google Forms.

The survey questionnaire through Google Forms was used by the researchers. Those who graduated in 2020, 2022, and 2023 were selected as respondents. The list of graduates from Don Honorio Ventura State University with the specified dates was requested by researchers for the graduates in their respective batches. The researchers also obtained the list of CPALE takers of Don Honorio Ventura State University by requesting the documents from the Philippine Regulatory Commission, Main Office through email. Then, the researchers initiated contact with each respondent to request their time and participation. The researchers asked the respondents first if they were willing to respond to the survey in accordance with the consideration of the data privacy of the respondents as part of the goal of the study.

### Ethical Considerations

The respondents are all required to submit signed letters of participation which is needed for the study. The researchers discussed openly the objectives of their study in a genuine manner prior to gathering any data. Shahnazarian (2017) discussed that informed consent is an agreement that is voluntarily agreed by the respondents in acknowledging their understanding of the related risk and nature of the study. This kind of procedure ensures the awareness of each respondent about their rights, procedures, the purpose of the research, benefits, and possible risks. Data privacy and confidentiality is observed and performed to the personal information and answers of the respondents. The researchers disclosed that any data or information will only be used for academic purposes. The respondents did not experience any kind of psychological harm, physical harm, or any kind of mistreatment during the process of conducting the study. Additionally, appreciation is shown to the respondents and the researchers did their best to keep a comfortable environment that promotes active association and cooperation.

### Statistical Treatment

To interpret the data collected to a higher standard, the statistician and the researchers used the Chi-Square test which is a correlation analysis, and descriptive analysis. Loeb, S., (2017) stated that descriptive analysis is a method used in recognizing trends in data and dealing with inquiries about who, what, where, when, and the degree of a circumstance. The manual gives a quick rundown of improved strategies for approaching, executing, and conveying quantitative analysis. Thus, in addressing the statement of the problems, the descriptive analysis

is considered the most suitable given its focus on the summarization and presentation of data of significance. For the first four statements of the problem, it was befitting that the descriptive analysis was used. The researchers were able to summarize and present key characteristics of the participants' demographic profiles, such as age, gender, year of graduation, as well as employment status. In the planning of a clear demographic composition of the population presentation, it was proven that the method used was effective. Concerning academic performance, the researchers were able to make a summary of the academic performance metrics, including GPA and other related indicators. To specify academic achievement variability, measures like mean, median, and mode were used to describe the central tendencies and employ measures of dispersion. The third statement of the problem regarding participation in academic competitions was categorized and presented with the creation of frequency distribution or percentages to further illustrate the extent of the participants' involvement during their undergraduate years. For the CPA Licensure examination performance, the analysis was proven effective in the presentation of the distribution of the participants' performance levels in the said licensure examination. This included the summarization of the passing rates, and average scores, and categorized the respondents based on their performance whether it was high, medium, or low. In summary, descriptive statistics, such as frequencies, percentages, measures of dispersion, and central tendency among others, served as useful instruments in the descriptive analysis. These helped the researchers to indicate the characteristics and patterns of the gathered data, showing the appropriate approach in addressing research questions about demographics, academic performance, participation levels, and licensure exam results. It was also proven that the most appropriate method for handling the fifth and sixth statements of the problem was the correlational analysis called the Chi-Square test of Independence. The use of the Chi-Square Test to ascertain whether two variables have a statistically significant relationship, or not as stated by Bobbitt (2020). When the P-value representing the statistical value is less than 0.05, which indicates a substantial correlation between two variables, the null hypothesis shall be rejected. Given that there is no significant relationship between the two variables and the p-value is higher than 0.05, the result would be "Do Not Reject the H<sub>0</sub>". The researchers studied whether there is a significant relationship between the participants' active engagement in academic competitions and their success on the Licensure Examination for Certified Public Accountants. The researchers also studied whether there is a significant relationship between the participants' demographic profile and their success in taking the Certified Public Accountant Licensure Examination. In summary, the researchers concluded that there is a significant relationship between the study's variables through the use of the Chi-Square Test of Independence.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### 1. Respondents Profile

#### 1.1. Respondents Age

Table 1. Frequency and Percent Distribution of Respondents Profile in terms of their Age.

Age	N	%
21 - 23 years old	34	23.30
24 – 26 years old	112	76.70
27-29 years old	0	0.00
30 years old and above	0	0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Table 1 presents the frequency and percent distribution of respondents in terms of their Age. The findings indicate that 23.30%, or 34 out of 146 of the respondents are between the ages of 21 to 23 wherein 15 of the 39 CPALE passers belong to these ages and 76.70%, or 112 out of 146, are between the ages of 24-26 which 24 out of the 39 CPALE passers are in this age range. This supports that between the ages of 20-25 are well prepared for the board exam due to their study habits and determination in comparison to the older ones.

As stated by Carpio (2022), the examiner's age, especially between the ages of 20 and 25, affects how well they prepare for the board exam. When it comes to their study habits and motives, younger age groups could differ from older ones. This supports the requirements according to Presidential Decree No. 692, that the applicant

must be at least twenty-one years old; provided, however, that an applicant who is younger than twenty-one may be permitted to take the tests, and should he pass them, he will not receive the certificate until he achieves the minimum age when taking the CPALE.

### 1.2. Respondents Sex

Table 2. Frequency and Percent Distribution of Respondents Profile in terms of their Sex.

Sex	N	%
Male	36	24.66
Female	109	74.66
Prefer Not to Say	1	0.68
<b>Total</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Table 2 presents the frequency and percent distribution of respondents' profiles in terms of their sex. Results display that 24.66% of the respondents are males, while 74.66% are females. It is also noted that only 1 out of 146 of the respondents preferred not to say his/her sex. While 22 of the 39 CPALE passers are females and 17 out of 39 are males. Overall, most of the respondents who participated in the study and passed the CPALE are females. The percentage of females enrolling in Don Honorio Ventura State University in the Bachelor of Science in Accountancy program is greater than males resulting in the dominance of females in the above-mentioned program.

According to Cruz (2019), yearly research that evaluates gender equality in 153 nations notes that compared to Filipino males, female enrollees have a higher proportion in high school and college. As per the published report by the World Economic Forum (WEF), the 2020 Global Gender Gap Report, 71.3 percent of students enrolled in secondary school are women and 40.4 percent in college, while male enrollees make up just 60.2 percent in high school and 40.4 percent in college.

### 1.3. Respondents` Year Graduated

Table 3. Frequency and Percent Distribution of Respondents Profile in terms of their Graduation Year.

Year Graduated	N	%
2020	14	9.60
2022	111	76.00
2023	21	14.40
<b>Total</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Table 3 presents the frequency and percent distribution of respondents' profiles in terms of their graduation year. This outcome shows that 9.60% of the respondents graduated in the year 2020, 76.00% of the respondents graduated in the year 2022, and 14.40% of the respondents graduated in the year 2023. Consequently, 8 of the 39 CPALE passers are graduates of batch 2020, 24 are from batch 2022 and 7 of the CPALE passers came from batch 2023. Overall, most of the respondents who participated in the study and passed the CPALE graduated in the year 2022. In the years 2020 to 2021, the qualifying exam in DHVSU was not able to push through increasing the number of students that remained in the BSA program as they were not filtered with the qualifying exam. Thus, the graduates were a mixture of students who remained in the BSA program from the years 2020-2022.

### 1.4. Respondents` Employment Status

Table 4. Frequency and Percent Distribution of Respondents Profile in terms of their Employment Status.

Employment Status	N	%
Self-Employed	2	1.40
Unemployed	6	4.10

Employed	138	94.50
<b>Total</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Table 4 presents the frequency and percent distribution of respondents' profiles in terms of their employment status. This shows that 2 out of the 146 respondents (1.40%) are self-employed, unemployed respondents are 6 (4.10%), and 138 (94.50%) respondents are employed. The majority of the CPALE passers or 38 out of 39 are already employed and only 1 is still unemployed. To expound, the opportunities from the program are undeniably versatile; adeptness in task execution proves successful career trajectories and smooth transitions into employment.

According to Rebele and Pierre (2019), graduates of these programs are strategically positioned to seize these opportunities, facilitating relatively smooth transitions into employment and successful career trajectories within the contemporary job market. Conversely, Chua et al. (2019), emphasized the favorable career prospects afforded to accounting professionals in comparison to their counterparts in other industries. These prospects enable them to demonstrate their adeptness in task execution, with employment prospects ranking prominently among Malaysian students, particularly those pursuing accounting studies. Consequently, leveraging insights from existing literature, the emphasis on career prospects emerges as a pivotal factor motivating students to pursue CPA qualifications, thereby enriching the pipeline of prospective professional accountants.

## 2. Respondents' Level of Academic Performance

Table 5. Descriptive Analysis of Respondents' Assessment of their Level of Academic Performance

Indicators	Mean Interval	SD	Verbal Interpretation
GWA in 1st Year Major Subjects	1.6-2.0	0.72	Very Good
GWA in 2nd Year Major Subjects	1.6-2.0	0.69	Very Good
GWA in 3rd Year Major Subjects	1.6-2.0	0.71	Very Good
GWA in 4th Year Major Subjects	1.6-2.0	0.62	Very Good
GWA in 5th Year Major Subjects	1.6-2.0	1.00	Very Good
GWA in 1st Year Minor Subjects	1.6-2.0	0.71	Very Good
GWA in 2nd Year Minor Subjects	1.1-1.5	0.58	Superior
GWA in 3rd Year Minor Subjects	1.1-1.5	0.53	Superior
GWA in 4th Year Minor Subjects	1.6-2.0	0.52	Very Good
GWA in 5th Year Minor Subjects	1.6-2.0	0.64	Very Good
<b>Cumulative GWA</b>	<b>1.6-2.0</b>	<b>0.65</b>	<b>Very Good</b>

Table 5 presents the descriptive analysis of respondents' assessment of their level of academic performance. The analysis of the table indicates a pattern of very good performance in major subjects such as Income Taxation, Cost Accounting, and Auditing in a CIS Environment across the academic years despite having two curriculums, the old and new, which the graduates have experience and regardless of having an additional year for those graduates of the old curriculum, they managed to sustain the academic performance of very good. On the other hand, the graduates of the old and new curricula in their minor subjects show superior performance in such as Art Appreciation, Rizal's Life and Works, and Ethics in the 2nd and 3rd years. Overall, the cumulative performance is assessed as very good. It was taken into account that the subjects are becoming difficult throughout their undergraduate year especially the increasing number of units of major subjects and lesser units of minor subjects in higher year level. This made the students establish better study habits and better adaptability to the subjects and topics resulting in the consistency of their academic performance.

According to Infante (2021), students tend to excel in minor subjects compared to majors due to their personal interests and motivations, perceived lower difficulty, smaller class sizes offering more personalized attention, and alignment of content with their strengths. Meanwhile, majors may require more time and resources, potentially impacting grades differently. Additionally, grading criteria and personal circumstances can also



influence performance across subjects. Overall, a combination of factors contributes to better performance in minor subjects. On a related note, Bacon and Bean (2006) emphasize the strong correlation between grade point average (GPA) and variables of interest to educational researchers. They highlight GPA's potential to significantly augment the statistical power of research endeavors. Similarly, Salcedo et al. (2021) find that cumulative GPA and comprehensive examinations remain pivotal determinants of performance in the CPA board examination.

### 3. Respondents` Level of Participation in Accounting-Related Academic Competition

Table 6. Descriptive Analysis of Respondents` Assessment of their Level of Participation in Accounting-Related Academic Competition

Indicators	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
Average Number of Accounting-Related Academic Competitions Participated	1	0.30	Very Low
Average Number of Accounting-Related Academic Competitions Won	1	0.22	Very Low

Table 6 presents the descriptive analysis of respondents` assessment of their level of participation in accounting-related academic competitions. The results of the study show that only 8 out of the 146 takers joined the academic competitions and just 3 out of 8 participants secured a win. The average number of accounting-related academic competitions participated in and won by the respondents is 1 with a verbal interpretation of "Very Low". These interpretations are caused by the absence of accounting-related academic competitions within the Don Honorio Ventura State University, limited linkages outside the school competitions such as the provincial, regional, and national levels, and the students` prior commitment and priority to their academic endeavors, low confidence, and motivation in participation in academic competitions.

According to Canning et al. 2019, students' confidence, motivation, well-being, and ability to study are all negatively impacted by classrooms that prioritize student competition, as evidenced by decades of research on goal frameworks in the classroom. Stress and anxiety are linked to competitive academic contexts, which can frequently cause students to question their own abilities. All students in the classroom, regardless of generational background, may suffer negative consequences from the competitive academic environments that drive students to compare themselves to others to assess their own competency.

### 4. Respondents` CPALE Eligibility

Table 7. Descriptive Analysis of Respondents` CPALE Eligibility

Indicators	N	%
CPALE Passer	39	36.45
Non - CPALE Passer	107	73.29
<b>Total</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Table 7 presents the descriptive analysis of respondents` CPALE eligibility. The result shows that 39 out of 146 respondents or 36.45% of the research population have passed the CPALE, while 107 out of 146, or 73.29% did not pass. It is also observed in the data gathered that the Don Honorio Ventura State University got a low passing rate since there was a significant increase in takers in the year 2023. In May 2023, the university had only 18 passers over 88 takers, and in September 2023 with only 14 passers out of 55 takers. In comparison the number of passers in October 2021, May 2022, and October 2022 with 2, 4, and 1 passer out of 7, 6, and 5 takers respectively. This abrupt increase of takers in 2023 is due to the 1 – 2 years of preparation duration of the students before they take the CPALE. Additionally, the employment opportunity and postponement of the CPALE due to the pandemic can be one of the causes of the increase of takers in the year 2023.



According to a recent study by Valcarel (2018), there were 718,089 test takers overall between May 1932 and 2017, of whom 182,320 passed, or a passing rate of 25%. There were only two occasions in 86 years when the pass rate was higher than the failure rate: in 1942 and 1943, when the pass rate was 55 percent and 61 percent, respectively. In the annals of the Philippine CPALE, the lowest passing percentage ever documented was 6.48 percent (152/2,345) in 1954. In nearly forty years, the lowest passing percentage ever noted was 17.12% in 1993. Ten years later, in October 2003, 19.57 percent (1,454 out of 7,428) was reported, and in May 2003, 19.34 percent (1,075 out of 5,557). Furthermore, the exam in May 2019 had a passing percentage of only 16.47 percent, and the test in September 2019 had the lowest score in records in nearly 65 years, with 2,075 out of 14,492 or 14.32%. These data should be concerning to the Higher Education Institution (HEI) and the BOA, as they guide how to improve the outcome.

Table 8. Descriptive Analysis of CPALE Passers' Number of Takes

Indicators	N	%
First Time Takers	35	89.74
Second Time Takers	3	7.69
Third Time Takers	1	2.56
Fourth Time Takers	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 8 presents the descriptive analysis of CPALE passers' number of takes. The table shows that 89.74% or 35 out of 39 of the research respondents successfully passed the examination on their first take. Wherein the freshness of the accounting knowledge and the duration of preparation can be taken into account behind their success in the first take. No one passed the Certified Public Accountant Licensure Examination on their fourth take since those who did not pass on their first take are either “conditional” as their performance status or did not reach the passing score average which makes them familiar with the type of questions and coverage per component therefore, a higher chance of getting it done on their next take.

In the study of Esaga et al. 2022, Bachelor of Science in Accountancy students do not take the CPALE immediately after they graduate because of several factors such as social influence, parental impact, material situation, and the university’s educative impact. Wherein social influence ranks first as the contributor affecting the decision of graduates to whether to take or not the licensure examination and the university’s educative impact ranks last among the factors.

Table 9. Descriptive Analysis of CPALE Passers' Average

Indicators	N	%
93.75% - 100% (Excellent Performance)	0	0.00
87.50% - 93.74% (Very Good Performance)	2	5.13
81.25% - 87.49% (Good Performance)	11	28.21
75% - 81.24% (Passing Performance)	26	66.67
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 9 presents the descriptive analysis of CPALE passers' average. The outcome indicates that 26 out of 39 CPALE passers who participated in the study obtained a 75 - 81.24% average. While only 2 out of 39 or 5.13% obtained 87.50 - 93.74% average. It also shows that the 2 passers who achieved a very good performance on their CPALE are graduates who came from the batches 2022 and 2023 while 8 passers who garnered a good performance on their CPALE came from 2022, 2 from 2023, and only 1 from the batch of 2020. The passers that achieved a very good and good performance on their licensure examination came from the years 2022 and 2023

which are the pioneers of the new curriculum of the Bachelor of Science in Accountancy of DHVSU. Overall, the CPALE is considered to be one of the hardest licensure examinations due to its nature and broad coverage hence, the majority of the passers have achieved a passing performance and no one got an excellent performance in accordance with the passing requirements set by the BOA.

The CPALE's perceived difficulty stems from its reputation within the accounting field as one of the most formidable government licensure examinations. According to the studies conducted by Oliva et al., 2017, Dimaculangan, 2016, and Fang-asan, 2016, the CPALE is composed of comprehensive and full coverage of the accounting topics that results in the view that it is one of the most difficult endeavors.

Many critics regard it as the nation's most difficult and demanding board licensure exam, according to Abrugar (2019). When compared to other administration agencies' license assessments, the Certified Public Accountant (CPA) board examination is regarded as one of the most difficult in the country, and the designation of exceptional school graduates is predicated on their pre-board assessments (Bala, 2018).

### 5. Test of Significant Inter-Relationships among Accounting Graduates' Participation in Accounting-Related Academic Competition, Academic Performance, and CPALE Eligibility

Table 10. Chi-Square Test of Significant Inter-Relationships among Accounting Graduates' Participation in Accounting-Related Academic Competition, Academic Performance, and CPALE Eligibility

Variables	Academic Performance		CPALE Eligibility	
<b>Participation in Accounting-Related Academic Competition</b>	Chi-Square	0.513	Chi-Square	5.537*
	p-value	0.346	p-value	0.019
	Decision	Do not Reject H <sub>0</sub>	Decision	Reject H <sub>0</sub>
<b>Academic Performance</b>	Chi-Square	-	Chi-Square	24.674**
	p-value	-	p-value	0.000
	Decision	-	Decision	Reject H <sub>0</sub>

Table 10 presents the chi-square test of significant inter-relationships among accounting graduates' participation in accounting-related academic competition, academic performance, and CPALE eligibility. The analysis of the row of the table above indicates that the Academic Performance of the respondents has a significant relationship to the CPALE Eligibility with Chi-Square results of 24.674. The p-value of 0.000 is less than 0.05 which indicates the "Reject the H<sub>0</sub>" decision or reject the null hypothesis. This positive relationship is due to the established study habits during their undergraduate years being adapted to their review for their CPALE. Participation in Accounting-Related Academic Competitions has a significant relationship to the CPALE Eligibility with Chi-Square results of 5.537. The p-value 0.019 which is less than 0.05, decides to "Reject the H<sub>0</sub>". This means that their participation in accounting-related competitions becomes their stepping stone and preparation for the licensure examination due to the wide coverage of the competitions, which is close to the real licensure examination. In addition, their participation improved their study habits, and confidence in considering whether to take the CPALE or not. The Analysis of the Academic Performance of the respondents has no significant relationship to Participation in accounting-related academic competitions with Chi-Square results of 0.513. The p-value of 0.346 is greater than 0.05 which indicates "Do Not Reject H<sub>0</sub>" (Accept the null hypothesis). This is caused by the university program and program chair's criteria in choosing the representative of DHVSU in accounting-related academic competitions at provincial, regional, and national levels, without regard to their academic performance. Overall, there is a significant relationship between Accounting Graduates' Academic Performance and CPALE Eligibility, and their Participation in Accounting-Related Academic Competition and CPALE Eligibility. However, it is also concluded that there is no significant relationship between their Academic Performance and their Participation in Accounting-Related Academic Competitions.

According to Micabalo, K. G., & Cruspero Jr, E. C. (2022), the academic performance of accounting students

has a significant relationship with their performance, and the results during undergrad can be influenced by their academic knowledge and understanding academically when passing the CPA Licensure Examination.

Additionally, Pattaguan, E.J.P. (2018), high-performing students who participate in academic competitions while studying are beneficial for their licensure examinations. This is because the content of the competitions often covers the latest updates or content in the accounting field/industry.

### 6. Test of Significant Association of Accounting Graduates' Eligibility to their Demographic Profile

Table 11. Chi-Square Test of Association of Accounting Graduates' Eligibility to their Demographic Profile

Profile	CPALE Eligibility	
<b>Age</b>	Chi-Square	6.859**
	p-value	0.009
	Decision	Reject H <sub>0</sub>
<b>Sex</b>	Chi-Square	9.575**
	p-value	0.000
	Decision	Reject H <sub>0</sub>
<b>Year Graduated</b>	Chi-Square	3.401
	p-value	0.183
	Decision	Do Not Reject H <sub>0</sub>
<b>Employment Status</b>	Chi-Square	1.086
	p-value	0.581
	Decision	Do Not Reject H <sub>0</sub>

Table 11 presents the chi-square test of the association of accounting graduates' eligibility to their demographic profile. The analysis of the row of the table above indicates that the age and sex of the respondents have a significant association with the CPALE Eligibility with Chi-Square results of 6.859 and 9.575, respectively. The p-value of the first two demographic profiles is less than 0.05, which is 0.009 and 0.000, respectively. The decisions are both "Reject the H<sub>0</sub>". This association means that there is a specific age range and gender, and the females, can easily adapt to extensive study habits and determination needed to pass the CPA licensure examination. Meanwhile, the results indicate that the year graduated and the employment status of the respondents do not have a significant association with the CPALE Eligibility with the Chi-Square results of 3.401 and 1.086, respectively. The p-value of the last two demographic profiles on the table is greater than 0.05 which is 0.183 and 0.581, respectively, and the results are both "Do Not Reject H<sub>0</sub>". This lack of associations means that despite the year the takers graduated does not decide whether they will pass the exam or not. The takers' performance in CPALE does not also determine their acceptance in accounting or business-related jobs. Additionally, this course is very in demand in any industry. Overall, age and sex have been associated with passing the CPALE of the respondents, and the year graduated and employment status have not been associated with passing the CPALE of the respondents.

As stated by Cruspero Jr., E. C., and Micabalo, K. G., 66.70% of graduates in 2022 are between the ages of 21 and 24, with a preponderance of female graduates—54 percent—interpreting that age and sex have a major impact on an applicant's ability to pass the CPA Licensure Examination.

In addition, a study by Chi et al., (2022) in Malaysia shows that factors such as students' attitudes to the profession, job security, and stability have not a significant influence on passing the CPA Licensure Examination. Also, the analysis revealed that no matter what year graduates are also insignificantly relevant to the graduates taking the CPALE to pass. This suggests that, in the case of Malaysian accounting students, these factors are a weak determinant of passing the CPA Licensure Examination.

Overall, age and sex have been associated with passing the CPALE of the respondents and year graduated and employment status have not been associated with passing the CPALE of the respondents. As per Herrero (2015), demographic influence is significant for those pursuing CPA Licensure Examinations, and this is increased by

the factors that directly affect the takers when passing the CPA Licensure Examinations.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Summary of Findings

#### 1. Respondents Profile

##### 1.1. Age

There are 23.30% of the respondents or 34 out of 146, are between the ages of 21-23 years old, with 15 of the 39 CPALE passers falling into this age range. Similarly, 76.70% of the respondents, or 112 out of 146, are between the ages of 24-26 years old with 24 of the 39 CPALE passers falling into this window. This shows that compared to older students those between the ages of 20 and 25 are more equipped and prepared for board exams due to their work habits and dedication.

##### 1.2. Sex

There are 74.66% of the respondents are female and 24.66% of the respondents are male. Furthermore, it should be mentioned that just one respondent, out of 146, chose not to disclose their sex. Whereas 17 of the 39 CPALE passers are men, and 22 of the 39 are women. In general, women make up the majority of study participants who passed the CPALE. The majority of students in the said program at Don Honorio Ventura State University are female since a larger number of females than males enroll in the Bachelor of Science in Accountancy degree.

##### 1.3. Year Graduated

9.60% of the participants completed their education in 2020, 76.00% in 2022, and 14.40% in 2023. That means that out of the 39 CPALE takers, 8 are graduates of batch 2020, 24 are from batch 2022, and 7 are from batch 2023. In general, 2022 was the graduation year for the majority of research participants who passed the CPALE. The DHVSU qualifying exam was unable to proceed in 2020 - 2021, which led to an increase in the number of students who continued in the BSA program because they were not screened through the qualifying exam. As a result, a variety of students who enrolled in the BSA program between 2020 and 2022 made up the graduates.

##### 1.4. Employment Status

There are 138 or 94.50% of the 146 respondents are employed, 2 or 1.40% of the respondents are self-employed, and 6 or 4.10% of the respondents are unemployed. Only one out of 39 CPALE passers candidates is still unemployed, making up the majority of the group of 38 who are already employed. In summary, the curriculum offers numerous chances that are adaptable; and proficient in task completion that demonstrate positive career paths and efficient job transition.

#### 2. Respondents' Level of Academic Performance

Despite having two curriculums—the old and the new—with which the graduates are familiar, and despite having an extra year for those who graduated from the old curriculum, the analysis of the table shows a pattern of very good performance in major subjects like income taxation, cost accounting, and auditing in a CIS environment over the academic years. However, graduates of both the old and new curricula in their minor topics—such as ethics, Rizal's life and works, and art appreciation—perform better in these areas in the second and third years. The total performance is evaluated as being generally very good. It was considered that the courses are getting harder during their undergraduate years, particularly with the higher year level's increasing number of major units and decreasing number of minor units. As a result, the students developed improved study habits and increased subject and topic adaptability, which improved their academic performance over time.

#### 3. Respondents' Level of Participation in Accounting-Related Academic Competition

There are only 8 out of the 146 takers participated in the academic competitions, and 5 of those individuals

passed the CPALE. Additionally, of the five CPALE pass holders who participated in academic competitions, 2 were successful in winning, while only 1 out of the 3 non-CPALE passers who participated in academic competitions was successful. With a verbal evaluation of "Very Low" and an average of 1 accounting-related academic competition participated in and won by the respondents, it is clear that the respondents' success and involvement in these competitions are noticeably low. The lack of accounting-related academic competitions at Don Honorio Ventura State University, the students' prior commitment to their studies, their low self-confidence and motivation to participate in academic competitions, and the limited connections outside the school competitions, such as the provincial, regional, and national levels, all contribute to these interpretations.

#### 4. Respondents' CPALE Eligibility

##### 4.1. CPALE Eligibility

There are 36.45% or 39 out of 146 respondents who passed the CPA Licensure Examination, while there are 73.29% or 107 out of 146 respondents are non-CPALE passers. The data collected also showed that the Don Honorio Ventura State University had a low pass rate due to the significant increase in the number of takers in 2023. In May 2023, there were 18 passers out of 88 takers; in September 2023 there were 15 passers over 55 takers. Compared to the number of passes on October 2021, May 2022, and October 2022 with 2, 4, and 1 passes in total out of 7, 6, and 5 takers, respectively. The students' 1 to 2 years of preparation before taking the CPALE is the reason for the sudden unexpected increase of takers in 2023. Furthermore, the pandemic-related employment opportunities and CPALE delay may contribute to a rise in applicants in 2023.

##### 4.2. CPALE Passers' Number of Takes

There are 89.74%, or 35 out of 39 research respondents, who passed the exam satisfactorily on their first attempt. They were followed by 7.69% or 3 out of 39 passing on their second attempt, and 2.56%, or 1 out of 39 passing on their third attempt respectively. The study also revealed that, in the year of graduation, 28 out of the 35 first-time takers did not take the CPA Licensure Examination, which means that there are approximately 1 to 2 years between them taking the CPALE. Their achievement on the first try can be accredited to their preparation time and the recentness of their accounting expertise. Although no one passed the CPA licensing exam on their fourth attempt. Those who failed their first attempt were either classified as "conditional" based on their performance or failed to meet the passing average. This means that they are more familiar with the questions and material covered in each section, increasing their chances of passing the exam on their second attempt.

##### 4.3. CPALE Passers' Average

There are 66.67% or 26 out of 39 passers who have an average score of 75%-81.24 (Passing Performance). 28.21% or 11 out of 39 passers who have an average score of 81.25%-87.49% indicates a good performance there are 1, 8, and 2 passers from the year graduated 2020, 2022, and 2023 who passed the CPALE, respectively. There are 5.13% or 2 out of 39 respondents who have an average score of 87.50%-93.74% (Very Good Performance) are graduates who came from the batches 2022 and 2023. Among graduates who implemented the new curriculum of the Bachelor of Science in Accountancy at DHVSU, a majority of passers from the years 2022 and 2023 achieved very good and good performance on their licensure examination. Due to its broad nature and difficulty, the CPALE is generally regarded as one of the most difficult licensing exams. As a result, the majority of passers have achieved a passing score, with none exceeding the BOA's passing requirements.

#### 5. Test of Significant Inter-Relationships among Accounting Graduates' Participation in Accounting-Related Academic Competition, Academic Performance, and CPALE Eligibility

##### 5.1. Academic Performances and their CPALE Eligibility

Results showed that there is a substantial correlation between the respondents' academic performance and their CPALE eligibility, with a Chi-square of 24.674 with a p-value of 0.00 which is less than the .05, whereas, as the chi-square statistic increases, the p-value decreases and higher the significance which suggests to reject the null



hypothesis. This favorable relationship results from their undergraduate study habits being applied to their CPALE review.

### *5.2. Accounting-Related Academic Competition and their CPALE Eligibility*

Chi-Square results of 5.537 indicate a strong link between the CPALE Eligibility and the Participation in Accounting-Related Academic Competitions. The p-value of 0.019, which is less than 0.05, indicates that the hypothesis is "Rejected." Given that accounting-related competitions include a wide range of topics and are therefore similar to the actual licensing examination, participating in them serves as both a stepping stone and a means of preparation for the exam. Furthermore, by taking the CPALE, they felt more confident in their ability to study and developed better study habits.

### *5.3. Academic Performance and Their Participation in Accounting-Related Academic Competition*

The respondents' participation in academic competitions connected to accounting does not significantly correlate with their analysis of their academic performance, as indicated by their Chi-Square results of 0.513. Since the p-value of 0.346 is higher than 0.05, it is recommended to "accept the null hypothesis" rather than "Reject H<sub>0</sub>." This is due to the university program's and the program chair's criteria, which select the DHVSU representative for academic competitions connected to accounting at the provincial, regional, and national levels without taking into account the representative's academic record.

## 6. Test of Significant Association of Accounting Graduates' Eligibility to their Demographic Profile

### *6.1. Age and their CPALE Eligibility*

There is a significant relationship between the respondent's age and CPALE Eligibility, with a Chi-square of 6.859. If the p-value of 0.009 is less than 0.05, then the hypothesis is Reject H<sub>0</sub>. Based on this relationship, it may be concluded that a particular age group and gender which are females are able to adjust to the intense study habits and resolve required to pass the CPA licensing exam.

### *6.2. Sex and their CPALE Eligibility*

The sex and CPALE Eligibility of the respondents have a significant relationship with Chi-square findings of 9.575. If the p-value of 0.000 is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis should be rejected or "Reject H<sub>0</sub>". Based on this relationship, it may be concluded that a particular age group and gender which are females are able to adjust to the intense study habits and resolve required to pass the CPA licensing exam.

### *6.3. Graduation Year and CPALE Eligibility*

There is no significant relationship between the respondent's year graduated and CPALE Eligibility, with a Chi-square of 3.401. Since the p-value is 0.183 is higher than 0.05, the hypothesis is "Do not Reject H<sub>0</sub>". Since there are no correlations, the year of graduation has no bearing on the takers' chances of passing or failing.

### *6.4. Employment Status and CPALE Eligibility*

There is no huge relationship between the respondent's employment status and CPALE Eligibility with Chi-square results of 1.086. A P-value is 0.581 is higher than 0.05, so the hypothesis is "Do Not Reject H<sub>0</sub>". Not all accounting or business-related occupations accept candidates based only on how well they performed on the CPALE. Every industry is in high demand for this training as well.

## CONCLUSIONS

### 1. Respondents Profile

According to the research's findings, the majority of the respondents are between the ages of 24 and 26 years old. In terms of sex, the majority of the responses came from female respondents. While the year the respondents



graduated, most of the responses came from alumni from the year 2022. Lastly, in terms of their employment status, the majority of the respondents are employed.

## **2. Respondents` Level of Academic Performance**

Based on the result of the study, most of the respondents excelled in their minor subjects as compared to their major subjects during their undergraduate years. Their major subjects during their undergraduate studies are consistent throughout with a verbal interpretation of very good. Minor subjects show a superior verbal interpretation during their 2nd and 3rd years, very good in their 1st, 4th, and 5th year in some of the students. Nonetheless, the student's performance remained consistent since the result shows an overall very good cumulative grade point average in their years in college. Additionally, students' consistent overall performance suggests strong academic abilities and adaptability.

## **3. Respondents` Level of Participation in Accounting-Related Academic Competition**

The research concluded that the Accounting-Related Academic Competition has a very low level of participation among the respondents. Additionally, the average number of wins among those who participated in the competition was also very low.

## **4. Respondents` CPALE Eligibility**

Based on the survey results, the researchers concluded that a majority of the respondents did not pass the Certified Public Accountant Licensure Examination (CPALE), leading to a low passing rate. The findings also show that the majority of the CPALE passers are able to pass during their first take, and most of the passers achieved a Passing Performance rate.

## **5. Test of Significant Inter-Relationships among Accounting Graduates` Participation in Accounting-Related Academic Competition, Academic Performance, and CPALE Eligibility**

The research concluded, based on the findings, that there was a highly significant relationship between the respondents' Academic Performances and their CPALE Eligibility. A Chi-Square result of 24.674 and a p-value of 0.000, less than the level of significance of 0.05, which stipulates a strong and positive linkage among the two variables. This shows a heightened awareness and understanding of the accounting principles and subjects that are beneficial to accounting students for their triumph in CPALE. There was also a significant relationship between the respondents' Participation in the Accounting Related Academic Competition and their CPALE Eligibility. The Chi-Square is 5.537, and the p-value is 0.019, which is less than the 0.05 significance level. The engagement of the respondents who participated in accounting-related competitions became a stepping stone and early review of their CPA Licensure Examination. However, according to the findings, there was no significant relationship between the respondents' Academic Performance and their Participation in Accounting-Related Academic Competitions. The Chi-Square result of 0.513 and p-value of 0.346 which is greater than the 0.05 level of significance.

## **6. Test of Significant Association of Accounting Graduates` Eligibility to their Demographic Profile**

Considering the result of the research, it was concluded that there was a significant relationship between Age and Sex, in the respondents' CPALE Eligibility. The Chi-Square is 6.859 and 9.575, respectively, which indicates the strength and direction of the association between the two variables, and the p-value is 0.009 and 0.000, respectively, which is less than the 0.05 significant level. This suggests that both demographic factors may influence examination outcomes.

However, there was no significant relationship between the respondents' Graduation Year and Employment Status, in the respondents' CPALE Eligibility. The Chi-Square result of 3.401 and 1.086, respectively, and a p-value of 0.183 and 0.58, respectively, is greater than the 0.05 significant level.

These results emphasize taking demographic variables into account when figuring out why there are differences in professional licensure exam results.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations that follow are in accordance with the results and findings and instituted conclusions of the study.

### Academic Performances and their CPALE Eligibility

1) To the Accountancy Students. The findings of the study show that there is a significant relationship between academic performance and CPALE eligibility. The researchers suggest to the accountancy students that they should remain focused, and motivated and to study well in their chosen field since there is a direct relationship between how well they performed in their academics and to what will be their performance in the CPALE.

2) To the University's Bachelor of Science in Accountancy Program. The researchers would like to recommend to the university's program to further develop the topics included in the syllabus to improve the performance of the graduates academically which will result in better CPALE performance average rates.

### Accounting-Related Academic Competition and their CPALE Eligibility

1) To the Accountancy Students. The result of the study reveals that there is a very low level of participation of students in academic competitions. The researchers encourage the students to participate and to get exposure in those academic competitions since the study also shows that there is a positive relationship between the participation of accounting students in academic competitions and their probability of passing the CPALE.

2) To the University's Bachelor of Science in Accountancy Program. The researchers would also like to communicate the importance of exposure and engagement of students in academic competitions in view of the fact that the study imparted a positive relationship between the active participation of accounting students in academic competitions and their eligibility in CPALE. For this reason and evidence, the program could consider inserting academic competitions in their set activities at every event and reiterate to the students the benefits they can get through those academic competitions.

### Academic Performance and Their Participation in Accounting-Related Academic Competition

The researchers would like to suggest that accountancy students study well and thus, improve their academic performance. Aside from that, the students could also join competitions since both independent variables can positively affect the probability of passing their CPALE.

### Age and their CPALE Eligibility

The research findings show that there is a significant association between the respondents' age and their CPALE eligibility. The researchers would like to suggest to the university program to develop the study habits of students starting in their first year.

### Sex and their CPALE Eligibility

According to the results of the study, respondents' sex has a significant association with their CPALE eligibility. In addition, the majority of the CPALE passers were female which drives the researchers to encourage the university program to give preference to them. Expose them to university or collegiate academic competitions as well as endeavors.

### Graduation Year and CPALE Eligibility

There is no significant association between the graduation year of the respondents and their CPALE eligibility. The researchers would like to commend the university, particularly the Bachelor of Science in Accountancy Program for their effort in keeping the students competitive and equipped. The researchers also suggest maintaining the high qualification in acquiring instructors or professors and preserving the standards in filtering the student's every qualifying examination to ensure the high quality of education that they offer in the program.

## Employment Status and CPALE Eligibility

Based on the outcome of the research findings, there is no significant association between employment status and CPALE eligibility which entails that whether the DHVSU graduate is a CPALE passer or not, he will still find a job hence, proving that accountancy graduates in the job market are in high demand.

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# DON HONORIO VENTURA STATE UNIVERSITY

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## College of Business Studies

### The Relationship of Active Participation of Accounting Students in Academic Competitions, and Academic Performance on their CPA Licensure Examination's Performance

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