

# Predictors of Graduate Studies Completion Among Public School Teachers

**Jeffty S. Ganzan<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Gina F. Labitad<sup>2</sup>**

Teacher, Department of Education  
Education Program Supervisor

## **ABSTRACT**

Graduate education is essential to teacher's professional growth and development as it gives them the advance information and abilities, they need to improve their effectiveness as teachers and enhance the standard of education in the Philippines as a whole. This study examined the predictors of graduate studies completion among public elementary school teachers in the Second Congressional District of Misamis Oriental for School Year 2025–2026. It aimed to describe respondents' characteristics including age, sex, position, teaching experience, civil status, educational attainment, family income, and attitude toward graduate studies and assess how work-study balance, personal attributes, professional experience, social and environmental factors, communication skills, and cognitive-emotional aspects predict completion, including their significant relationships. The respondents were 203 teachers from five central schools, selected through stratified random sampling to ensure representation across demographic groups. A descriptive correlational research design was employed, utilizing a validated researcher-made questionnaire to collect data on six pre-identified predictors: work-study balance, personal attributes, professional experience, social and environmental factors, communication skills, and cognitive and emotional aspects. Descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, as well as Pearson's  $r$ , were applied for data analysis.

Findings revealed that among the predictors, professional experience obtained the highest mean which interpreted as Very Positive while cognitive-emotional and work-study balance were the lowest and interpreted as Positive. Significant relationships were found between the respondent's characteristics and the predictors of graduate studies completion except for position which is not significant. It concludes that personal motivation, supportive work and home environments, and relevant professional experiences significantly enhance completion rates in graduate education. Therefore, it recommends teachers strengthen the work-study balance and their cognitive-emotional. The school heads should implement flexible workloads and supportive institutional policies and introduced interventions that would address such predictors to improve graduate completion outcomes.

**Keywords:** predictors, completion

## **I.INTRODUCTION**

Graduate education is essential to teacher's professional growth and development as it gives them the advance information and abilities, they need to improve their effectiveness as teachers and enhance the standard of education in the Philippines as a whole. Public school teachers frequently encounter a number of challenges when attempting to complete graduate studies, therefore it is crucial to look into the elements

that predict successful completion. One significant problem is the time which limits teachers to deal with since they have to balance teaching duties, administrative work, and personal commitments. These has little time for academic pursuits. The excessive workload is another major issue since it can be hard to pay for tuition and other educational costs, particularly for people with limited resources.

The Department of Education (DepEd) has consistently emphasized the importance of continuous professional growth among teachers through various policies and programs. Notably, DepEd Order No. 42, s. 2017's Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) emphasizes the importance of lifelong learning in promoting teacher competency and professional advancement. By improving their instructional, research, and leadership abilities, graduate studies give teachers an organized means of meeting these criteria. Like this, Republic Act No. 10533, also referred to as the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013, emphasizes how important high-quality instructors are to the effective execution of educational reforms and further supports postgraduate study for teachers as a component of professional excellence. Despite these clear policies and incentives, many public-school teachers in the Philippines, including those in the Second Congressional District of Misamis Oriental, still face challenges in completing their graduate degrees. While enrolling in a program may be relatively easy, completing it is often hindered by various personal and institutional barriers. Moreover, even though graduate studies are known to have advantages, many public-school teachers in the Philippines encounter significant challenges that prevent them from finishing their degrees.

The excessive workload that teachers deal with daily is one of the most often mentioned challenges. There is a gap between the desire to pursue higher education and the realities of time limits because of the competing demands of lesson preparation, administrative duties, and extracurricular activities, which leave little time for academic endeavors. Family responsibilities frequently take priority over individual academic progress for instructors who are also breadwinners, delaying or even stopping their pursuit of graduate courses. Hence, the purpose of this study was to investigate how individual and institutional factors interact to influence public school teachers' graduate study completion rates. It envisioned that the results would inspire strategies to cultivate a more supportive environment for lifelong learning, ultimately benefiting both teachers and the learners they serve.

### **Research Questions**

This study aimed to determine the predictors of graduate studies completion among the public elementary school teachers in the second congressional district, Division of Misamis Oriental, School “Year 2025 – 2026.

Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the respondents' characteristics as regard to age, sex, position, teaching experience, civil status, highest educational attainment, family monthly income and attitude toward graduate studies?
2. How do the respondents assess the level of predictors of the graduate studies completion based on work-study balance, personal attributes, professional experiences, social and environment, communication skills, and cognitive and emotional?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the respondents' characteristics and the level of predictors of graduate studies completion among public elementary school teachers in second congressional district?

**Significance**

This study is significant as it provides valuable insights into the predictors of graduate studies completion among public elementary school teachers in the Second Congressional District, Division of Misamis Oriental. By examining the relationship between respondents' characteristics and key predictors such as work-study balance, personal attributes, professional experiences, social and environmental factors, communication skills, and cognitive and emotional aspects, the researcher believes that the study will be useful for the following:

The findings may serve to the Department of Education as a basis for the Division of Misamis Oriental and higher DepEd offices in crafting support systems and institutional mechanisms that encourage more teachers to pursue and complete graduate education, which in turn enhances the overall quality of teaching and learning.

The study would provide school heads and education leaders with a clearer understanding of the challenges teachers face in completing graduate studies. With this knowledge, they can design policies and programs such as mentoring, flexible work arrangements, or scholarship opportunities that foster professional development.

The result of the study can guide the Policy Makers and Local Government Units in allocating resources, creating partnerships with higher education institutions, and implementing incentives for teachers who enroll in and complete graduate programs.

This would help teachers gain awareness of the personal, professional, and environmental factors that either support or hinder their pursuit of graduate studies. This may inspire them to develop strategies for better work-study balance, strengthen their communication and cognitive skills, and cultivate positive attitudes toward professional growth.

**Scope and Limitations**

This study focused on the pre-identified predictors of graduate studies completion among public school teachers in the second congressional district, specifically the Central Schools of Tagoloan, Villanueva, Jasaan, Balingasag, and Lagonglong in the Division of Misamis Oriental, during the School Year 2025–2026. The study's respondents were teachers who were currently pursuing their post-graduate studies and those who had already graduated with their post-graduate degrees. The independent variable was the respondents' characteristics regarding age, sex, position, teaching experience, civil status, highest educational attainment, family monthly income, and attitude toward graduate studies; and the dependent variables were the predictors of graduate studies completion based on work-study balance, personal attributes, professional experiences, social and environmental factors, communication skills, and cognitive and emotional aspects.

**2. Literature Review****Respondent's Characteristics**

Numerous research studies have investigated the impact of particular demographic characteristics on teachers' pursuit and completion of graduate degrees, including age, sex, position, teaching experience, civil status, highest educational attainment, and attitude toward graduate studies.

**Age**

Age has a significant effect on teachers' pursuit and completion of graduate degrees, according to a study by Mariano et al. (2024). Research indicates that younger teachers are more likely to enroll in and finish

graduate programs than older teachers. For instance, a survey on teachers in public secondary schools found that, with a mean age of 41.26 years, most respondents were between the ages of 30-39 (34.1%) and 40-49 (38.1%). This implies that middle-aged teachers are more likely to pursue graduate studies. Similar results were found in a study by Castro et al. (2023), which found that while students in PhD programs are somewhat older, the majority of graduate students are, on average, 33 years old. Teachers' decisions to pursue further studies may be influenced by their age, according to research. In a study of teachers in public secondary schools, a significant number of participants were between the ages of 30-39 (34.1%) and 40-49 (38.1%), indicating that middle-aged teachers are more likely to pursue graduate studies.

#### Sex

Teachers' decisions to pursue and finish graduate degrees are heavily influenced by their gender; numerous studies have shown that male and female teachers differ in terms of motivation, enrollment, and completion rates. According to recent research by Parker (2021), women are more likely than men to enroll in and complete higher education programs. Women are more likely than men to hold a four-year college degree among adults in the United States who are 25 years of age or older. This disparity is much more noticeable for younger adults between the ages of 25 and 34. This tendency implies that female teachers might be more likely to pursue graduate degrees than their male counterparts. Moreover, Hansen's study (2022) revealed that there may be a correlation between student outcomes and the gender distribution of teachers. Gender diversity among teachers may impact students' learning, according to research, though the impacts may differ depending on the situation and the subject. For instance, having female teachers in science and math classes may improve the performance and involvement of female pupils in these areas.

#### Position

Teachers' decisions to seek and finish graduate degrees are heavily influenced by their teaching positions and related duties. In this context, elements like workload, career progression prospects, and administrative responsibilities are quite important. Impacts of workload and administrative assignments. Teachers who take on extra duties, like coaching or administrative tasks, frequently find their workload growing. According to a study on factors influencing graduate completion in a teacher education institution, such extra responsibilities can make it more difficult for teachers to finish their graduate degrees. The study of Rungduin (2019) found that extracurricular activities and administrative tasks were major obstacles to finishing a degree on time. In the study of Douglas-McNab (2019) on the impact of subject area and teaching level. Teachers' pursuit of graduate education may also be influenced by their subject areas and the level of instruction they provide such as elementary, middle, or high school. According to research, the advantages of having a graduate degree could fluctuate depending on the type of teaching role. In elementary school, for example, having a master's degree has been linked to improved mathematics achievement, while in high school, having a master's or doctoral degree has been linked to improved reading achievement and achievement.

#### Teaching Experience

It is logical to assume that teachers with more years of experience may have improved their time management abilities and professional networks, which could have aided their pursuit of advanced degrees, even though there is little concrete data on the direct relationship between teaching experience and graduate completion. Nevertheless, more investigation is required to prove a conclusive relationship. Influence on the pursuit and completion of graduate degrees. Graduate education may be approached differently by teachers with different levels of experience. In order to develop their professional identities

and improve their teaching abilities, early-career teachers may pursue advanced degrees. On the other hand, teachers in their mid-to-late careers frequently seek graduate degrees to advance both personally and professionally, with the goal of establishing an academic career or moving into leadership positions. According to a qualitative survey with 25 teachers, developing scientific thinking and research abilities, boosting teaching and assessment techniques, and improving communication were among the reasons for pursuing graduate school. The study of Sevim et.al. (2021)

also underlined that in order to optimize advantages, structural modifications to graduate programs and encouraging work environments may be required; graduate education alone may not be enough.

#### Civil Status

Teachers' participation in graduate studies seems to be influenced by their marital status. Of those who responded to the same survey of public secondary school teachers, 27.0% were unmarried, and 65.1% were married. This implies that married teachers would be more inclined to seek graduate studies, perhaps because they desire to further their careers and provide for their families (Mariano et al., 2024). A study by Rizvi (2019) examined the impact of marital status on teachers' professional adjustment. The study's findings suggest that teachers' professional adjustment is not greatly impacted by their marital status, suggesting that their ability to adapt to their jobs is not greatly impacted by their marital status.

Erden et al. (2023) investigated how teachers' well-being was affected by their marital status. According to the investigation, teachers' levels of well-being were only marginally impacted by their marital status, indicating that a person's marital status has little bearing on their general well-being.

#### Highest Educational Attainment

The teacher's highest level of education strongly influences teachers' professional growth and efficacy in the classroom. Pursuing additional degrees, such as master's or doctoral studies, can improve a teacher's knowledge and abilities, which may result in better student outcomes. The findings of studies by Horn et al. (2021) on the connection between student achievement and instructors' educational backgrounds have been conflicting. According to certain research, teachers who hold graduate degrees positively impact students' academic performance, especially if their advanced degrees relate to the subjects they teach. Research conducted by the Midwestern Higher Education Compact, discovered that pupils of Mathematics teachers with master's degrees scored higher on math tests than students of teachers without such degrees.

#### Family Monthly Income

The family's monthly income greatly impacts teachers' decisions to enroll in and finish graduate school. A teacher's capacity to pursue more education can be aided or hindered by their financial situation. Family income's effect on academic endeavors. Family income was found to be a significant influence in Teves et al.'s (2024) study, which looked at factors influencing teachers' decisions to continue graduate education. Higher family incomes encourage teachers to participate in graduate programs because they provide them with more financial stability, enabling them to handle tuition costs and other expenses more easily. On the other hand, people from lower-income families might find graduate school too expensive, discouraging them from continuing their studies.

#### Attitude Toward Graduate Studies

Teachers' decisions to pursue additional education and their experiences in such programs greatly influence their attitudes toward graduate studies. Higher motivation and successful completion rates are frequently associated with positive attitudes. A positive attitude toward statistics is associated with favorable attitudes toward taking further degrees, according to a study by Akçöltekin (2020) examining the association between instructors' attitudes toward statistics and their views on postgraduate education.



This implies that general excitement for graduate studies can be increased by having confidence in particular academic fields. Motivation for academics and attitudes.

### **Predictors of Graduate Studies Completion**

Graduate studies completion is influenced by work-study balance, personal attributes, professional experience, social and environmental, communication skills, and cognitive-emotional. Strong academic preparation, motivation, and career opportunities support persistence, while social support and effective communication enhance success. Managing stress and self-efficacy also play key roles. Understanding these factors helps improve graduate completion rates and lifelong learning.

#### **Work-Study Balance**

The study of Lear and Nabo (2021) investigated the work-life balance strategies used by faculty members at Philippine higher education institutions. Results indicated that professors struggle to balance their personal lives, teaching, research, and administrative responsibilities. Stress and a decrease in job satisfaction are frequently caused by the pressure to fulfill academic deadlines and institutional expectations. In order to support teachers, they suggested putting in place measures that encourage work-life balance, such as lowering excessive workloads, offering stress management courses, and supporting faculty development project. Umma and Zahana (2020) looked at the variables that affect teachers' work-life balance in government schools, concentrating on time restraints, institutional support, and financial stability. According to the report, a lot of teachers face financial challenges that make it challenging for them to continue teaching while juggling everyday costs. Furthermore, their capacity to set aside time for studies is hampered by their heavy responsibilities. To assist instructors in juggling their academic and professional obligations, the researchers recommended that educational institutions and organizations provide financial aid programs and take workload modifications into account.

#### **Personal Attributes**

Spronken et al. (2023) examined the effects of pre-service teachers' cognitive skills and personality factors on completion and teacher self-efficacy in a study. The results indicate that better cognitive ability and specific personality traits, such as conscientiousness and openness, are important indicators of successful program completion and higher levels of self-efficacy in teaching roles. Baraquia (2020) developed the Teacher Grit Scale (TGS) to evaluate characteristics such as tenacity and excitement for long-term objectives in teachers. According to the study, teachers who display higher levels of grit specifically, tenacity in the classroom are more likely to do well and stick with their professional growth, including graduate work.

#### **Professional Experience**

Mariano et al. (2024) examined how work motivation and social support affected public secondary school teachers' ability to pursue graduate studies. This study examined the effects of work motivation and social support on public secondary school teachers' capacity to pursue graduate education. The study found that teachers' decisions and capacities to pursue higher education are greatly influenced by both inner and extrinsic motivation and support from friends, family, and professional colleagues. Abun (2021) examined the effects of work experience and educational background on teachers' and employees' self-efficacy. The findings showed a strong relationship between enhanced self-efficacy, longer job experience, and better educational attainment, indicating that these variables all favorably influence teachers' self-assurance in their careers.

#### **Social and Environment**

Numerous social and environmental factors that impact teachers' pursuit and completion of graduate degrees have been examined in recent studies. Mariano et al.'s study from 2024 looked at how social support and job incentives affected public secondary school teachers' capacity to pursue graduate education. The results showed that growth related work motivation and family and friend support significantly influenced teachers' capacity to pursue higher education. In order to improve instructors' desire and capacity for graduate study, the study underlined the need to develop interpersonal interactions within the academic setting and encourage a supportive work environment. Furthermore, Merida et al. (2024) investigated the factors that contribute to master's degree seeking instructors not finishing their theses. The study found that the biggest obstacles were lack of funding, lack of research expertise, busy schedules, and technical difficulties. It suggested flexible tuition payment options, more scholarship opportunities, skill-development seminars, mentorship programs, flexible scheduling, and improved digital literacy training as solutions to these problems. In order to establish a more encouraging environment for teachers seeking further education, the study underlined the necessity of cooperation between educational institutions, legislators, and the educational community.

#### Communication Skills

With an emphasis on communication skills, a number of research studies have examined the variables influencing teachers' decision to pursue and complete graduate education. Although there is little direct study connecting teachers' communication skills to their completion of graduate school, related studies offer insightful information. Mariano et al. (2024) examined the influence of work motivation and social support as predictors of public secondary school teachers' ability to pursue graduate studies. This study looked at how teachers' desire for their jobs and social support affects their capacity to pursue graduate education. It emphasized that successful leadership and management, which are critical for success in advanced academic endeavors, depend on having excellent communication skills.

#### Cognitive and Emotional

The leadership qualities and emotional intelligence of master teachers in the Philippines were investigated by Lucero and Ocampo (2019). They discovered that individuals had strong emotional intelligence, especially when it came to using emotions, controlling their own feelings, and controlling others' emotions. According to these results, teachers with high emotional intelligence may find it easier to finish their graduate work. Li et al. (2023) conducted a meta-analytic study examining the connections between students' learning performance and effective (emotional) and cognitive components. According to the report, both elements have a major impact on academic results, which emphasizes how crucial it is to incorporate emotional and cognitive factors in learning environments. Furthermore, Shengyao et al., (2024) discovered a positive correlation between university students' academic success and emotional intelligence and their psychological well-being. The study emphasizes how emotional intelligence can improve academic performance and personal well-being, indicating its significance in graduate school settings.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

#### **Research Design**

A descriptive-correlational research approach was used in this study to investigate the factors that influenced public elementary school teachers in the Second Congressional District, Division of Misamis Oriental, to complete graduate studies. The descriptive aspect aimed to profile the respondents based on their characteristics, including age, sex, position, teaching experience, civil status, highest educational

attainment, family monthly income and attitude toward graduate studies. It also sought to determine the level of predictors that influenced graduate studies completion, in academic, personal attributes, professional experiences, social and environment factors, communication skills, and cognitive and emotional aspects. The correlational aspect of the study investigated the relationship between the respondents' characteristics and the level of predictors of graduate studies completion. Through statistical analysis, this study aimed to determine whether significant relationships existed between these variables, providing insights into which factors played a crucial role in graduate education persistence and completion. Descriptive-correlational research is referred to a research methodology which aimed at explaining the connections between two or more variables while refraining from asserting any causal relationships. This approach involved gathering and examining data concerning a minimum of two variables to determine whether a relationship existed between them (Bhat, 2023).

### **Research Respondents**

The study involved two hundred three (203) public elementary school teachers who were either currently pursuing their postgraduate studies or had already graduated with a postgraduate degree from the Second Congressional District, Division of Misamis Oriental, Region X. Table A represented the total number of public elementary school teachers in the Second Congressional District, Division of Misamis Oriental, comprising the five central schools.

### **Data Gathering Procedure**

The researcher followed the proper protocol by securing a recommendation letter from the Dean of the School of Graduate and Professional Studies. A letter signed by the researcher and his adviser was sent to the Schools Division Superintendent requesting permission to administer the questionnaire in the Second Congressional District. After the approval was obtained, the researcher submitted letters requesting the permission of the Public Schools District Supervisors to conduct the study and allow teachers to participate. As part of the protocol, the permit was presented to the school heads. The school principals and teachers were informed about the data collection procedure and the time allotted for each respondent to complete the survey. After receiving permission from the school heads, the researcher proceeded with data collection. The researcher emphasized voluntary participation and assured the respondents of the confidentiality of their responses. Instructions for answering the survey forms were clearly explained.

## **4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Problem 1. What are the respondents' characteristics as regards to age, sex, position, teaching experience, civil status, highest educational attainment, family monthly income and attitude toward graduate studies?**

**Table 1. Distribution of the Respondents Characteristics as regard to Age**

Category	Frequency	Percentage
51 years old and above	44	21.7
41 – 50 years old	48	23.7
31-40 years old	55	27
30 years old and below	56	27.6
Overall	203	100



Table 1 shows the distribution of the respondents' characteristics as regard to age. Among the 203 respondents, the age group of 30 years old and below holds the largest share with 56 (27.6%). This means that there is a growing population of young teachers entering the teaching workforce in the division. It implies that the high number of younger teachers may be due to various factors, such as recent education graduates filling vacancies created by retirements, resignations, or the expansion of schools in the division. Conversely, the smallest group of respondents comprises those aged 51 years old and above, totaling only 44 (21.7%) respondents. This means a nearing wave of retirements in the coming years, potentially leading to a loss of institutional knowledge and mentorship within schools. According to Delos Reyes et al. (2022), experienced teachers nearing retirement often serve as vital mentors and sources of pedagogical wisdom, and their decreasing presence may affect continuity in instructional quality and leadership within schools. As Santos (2019) emphasized, recognizing and supporting the diverse needs of teachers across age groups is essential in nurturing a balanced, competent, and future-ready teaching workforce.

**Table 2. Distribution of the Respondents Characteristics as regard to Sex**

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Male	88	43.3
Female	115	56.7
Overall	203	100

Table 2 shows the distribution of the respondents' characteristics as regard to sex. Of the 203 respondents, 115 (56.7%) were female. This means that females dominate the teaching profession in these schools, a trend consistent with national and global patterns in basic education sectors. This implies that female teachers may reflect traditional societal roles that associate teaching especially at the elementary level with nurturing and caregiving, traits often culturally linked to women. On the contrary, there are 88 (43.3%) male teachers. The low number of male teachers in the teaching field, particularly in elementary education, can be attributed to a combination of societal, economic, and cultural factors. This means that teaching at the lower grade levels is often associated with nurturing, caregiving, and patience, traits traditionally linked to women leading to the perception of the profession as feminized. Espinosa and Tanglao (2022) emphasized that the presence of male teachers contributes positively to male students' engagement and emotional well-being, especially in formative years. As highlighted by Cruz (2020), gender balance in the teaching workforce enhances the overall school climate and supports the holistic development of learners. By acknowledging and understanding the implications of gender distribution, school leaders can foster a more inclusive and representative teaching community, ultimately benefiting both teachers and students.

**Table 3. Distribution of the Respondents Characteristics as regard to Position**

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Master Teacher I	33	16.3
Master Teacher II	42	20.7
Teacher I	36	17.7
Teacher II	43	21.2
Teacher III	49	24.1
Overall	203	100

Table 3 shows the distribution of respondents as regard to position. Among the 203 respondents, the largest group consisted of Teacher III, with 49 (24.1%) of the total. This means that a significant portion of the teaching workforce has already attained a relatively advanced position in the teaching career ladder, reflecting both experience and professional development among many teachers in the division. Meanwhile, the smallest group was Master Teacher I, with only 33 (16.3%). This means a concentration of teachers at the intermediate career level, suggesting that many teachers are progressing through the ranks but may face challenges in reaching higher positions. The limited number of Master Teacher I positions suggests that fewer opportunities for promotion to senior teaching ranks exist or are accessible, which may affect motivation and career development among teachers aiming for advancement. In a study by De Leon and Villamor (2023), it was found that promotion bottlenecks and unclear performance metrics significantly affect teachers' willingness to pursue higher ranks in the Department of Education. Similarly, Flores (2021), empowering teachers through career progression opportunities not only motivates them but also leads to better learning outcomes for students. Understanding the implications of the current position distribution helps stakeholders plan strategic interventions to ensure a balanced and motivated teaching workforce across all levels.

**Table 4. Distribution of the Respondents Characteristics as regard to Teaching Experience**

Category	Frequency	Percentage
31 years and above	48	23.6
21-30 years	53	26
11-20 years	56	27.6
1-10 years	46	22.8
Overall	203	100

Table 4 shows the distribution of the respondents' characteristics as regard to teaching experience. Among the 203 respondents, the highest number of teachers 56 (27.6%) have been in service for 11 to 20 years. This means that teachers in the 11 to 20 years' experience bracket suggests a workforce with a strong level of professional maturity. Having a large number of teachers with 11 to 20 years of experience is a strong asset to the school system. These teachers carry with them a wealth of practical knowledge, tried-and-tested teaching strategies, and the ability to navigate classroom challenges with confidence. Meanwhile, the lowest frequency, 46 (22.8%), have between 1 to 10 years of teaching experience. This means that the teaching workforce in these central schools is largely composed of mid-career teachers. Providing mentoring, regular feedback, and training aligned with current educational trends can help address the challenges faced by less experienced teachers and increase retention rates. A study by Alvarado and Ramos (2021) emphasized that early career teachers in the Philippines often leave the profession within the first five years due to stress, lack of mentorship, and unclear career progression paths.

**Table 5. Distribution of the Respondents Characteristics as regard to Civil Status**

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Single	68	33.5
Married	55	27
Widow	35	17.2
Separated	45	22.3

Overall	203	100
---------	-----	-----

Table 5 shows the distribution of respondents' characteristics as regard to civil status. Among the 203 respondents, the highest number of teachers identified as single, comprising 68 (33.5%) of the total. This means that high proportion of single teachers may have implications for work-life balance, availability for extended teaching related tasks, and openness to professional development opportunities. Without the added responsibilities of family life, many single teachers may have more flexibility in their schedules, allowing them to take on additional duties, training, or leadership roles within the school. Meanwhile, the lowest frequency was widowed, with 35 (17.2%). This means that teachers who are widowed, though fewer in number, may bring with them a wealth of life experiences, resilience, and maturity. These teachers may provide emotional stability and mentorship to both students and colleagues. However, they may also face unique emotional or social challenges, such as isolation or a need for more support from the school community. According to Villanueva and Reyes (2022), widowed teachers often serve as nurturing figures in schools but may benefit from strengthened psychosocial support to help them thrive in both personal and professional settings.

**Table 6. Distribution of the Respondents Characteristics as regard to Highest Educational Attainment**

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Doctorate Degree	48	23.6
With Units of Doctorate Degree	47	23.2
Master's Degree	59	29.1
With Units of master's degree	49	24.1
Overall	203	100

Table 6 shows the distribution of respondents' characteristics as regard to highest educational attainment. Among the 203 respondents, the highest frequency, 59 (29.1%), hold a master's degree. This means that the high number of master's degree holders suggests that many teachers in these central schools are actively engaged in professional growth and academic advancement. In contrast, the lowest frequency, 47 (23.2%), are those with units in a Doctorate Degree. This means a strong commitment among teachers to pursue advanced studies, with a significant portion achieving graduate-level education. This implies that the relatively lower number of respondents with Doctorate units highlights the challenges in reaching the highest levels of academic attainment. Pursuing doctoral studies demands considerable time, financial resources, and institutional support. Many teachers may face obstacles such as heavy teaching loads, lack of scholarships, or limited access to advanced academic programs, which can deter them from completing their doctorate. A study by Gonzales and Ramos (2022) revealed that teachers pursuing doctoral degrees often experience high levels of stress and financial strain, leading to delays or dropout from graduate programs.

**Table 7. Distribution of the Respondents Characteristics as regard to Family Monthly Income**

Category	Frequency	Percentage
P50,001 and above	47	23.2
P40,001 - P50,000	35	17.2
P30,501 – P40,000	69	34

P30,500 and below	52	25.6
Overall	203	100

Table 7 shows the distribution of the respondents' characteristics as regard to family monthly income. Among the 203 respondents, the majority or 69 (34%) fall within the P30,501–P40,000 income bracket. This means that the income group may be attributed to standard salary rates of public-school teachers under the government's salary grade system. Most teachers, depending on their rank and years of service, fall within this range, especially those holding mid-level positions such as Teacher III. Meanwhile, the smallest group, 35 (17.2%) respondents, reported a family income within the P40,001–P50,000 range. This means that the lower representation of teachers in the P40,001–P50,000 bracket may indicate the limited number of higher-ranking positions or supplemental income opportunities. A study by Ramirez and Tolentino (2022) found that teachers in higher income brackets often gain such standing not through basic salary alone, but through sideline work, administrative appointments, or consultancy roles.

**Table 8. Distribution of the Respondents Characteristics as regard to Attitude towards Graduate Studies**

Indicator	Mean	SD	Description
I am strongly motivated to pursue graduate studies for my professional growth.	3.25	0.72	Agree
I believe graduate studies will significantly enhance my teaching skills and knowledge.	3.23	0.74	Agree
Earning graduate degree is one of my long-term career goals.	3.26	0.76	Strongly Agree
I am financially capable of supporting my graduate studies without major difficulty.	3.27	0.78	Strongly Agree
Tuition fees and related expenses are a challenge in completing my graduate degree.	3.20	0.70	Agree
I am willing to set aside part of my income to fund my graduate studies.	3.27	0.75	Strongly Agree
I am confident in my ability to balance teaching duties and graduate school responsibilities.	3.28	0.78	Strongly Agree
My current schedule allows me to dedicate enough time to my graduate studies.	3.21	0.71	Agree
Limited time is a major challenge in pursuing my graduate studies.	3.24	0.70	Agree
The school administration provides support to teachers pursuing graduate studies.	3.26	0.75	Strongly Agree
My colleagues encourage and assist me in pursuing graduate studies.	3.28	0.77	Strongly Agree
My school offers incentives and recognition for teachers who complete graduate degrees.	3.30	0.84	Strongly Agree
My family fully supports my pursuit of graduate studies.	3.29	0.80	Strongly Agree

I have a reliable support system that motivates me to complete my graduate studies.	3.26	0.75	Strongly Agree
Social obligations and personal responsibilities occasionally hinder my graduate studies.	3.25	0.73	Agree
Overall	3.26	0.75	Strongly Agree

**Legend:** 3.26-4.00 Strongly Agree/Very Positive      1.76-2.50 Disagree/Negative  
 2.51-3.25 Agree/Positive      1.00-1.75 Strongly Disagree/Very Negative

**Problem 2. How do the teachers assess the level of predictors of the graduate studies completion based on work-study balance, personal attributes, professional experiences, social and environment, communication skills, and cognitive and emotional?**

**Table 9. Summary Distribution of the Respondents level of Predictors of Graduate Studies Completion**

Variable	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Work-Study Balance	3.24	0.75	High
Personal Attributes	3.26	0.75	Very High
Professional Experience	3.27	0.75	Very High
Social and Environment	3.25	0.74	High
Communication Skills	3.26	0.74	Very High
Cognitive and Emotional	3.24	0.73	High
Overall	3.25	0.74	High

**Legend:** 3.26-4.00 Strongly Agree/Very Positive      1.76-2.50 Disagree/Negative  
 2.51-3.25 Agree/Positive      1.00-1.75 Strongly Disagree/Very Negative

Table 9 shows the summary distribution of the respondents' level of predictors of graduate studies completion with an overall mean of 3.25 (SD = 0.74), interpreted as Positive. This means respondents possess strong levels of readiness and support in completing their graduate education. Among the variables, professional experience recorded the highest mean of 3.27 (SD = 0.75) and interpreted as Very Positive. This means that respondents view their years of teaching and professional practice as a significant factor in successfully navigating graduate studies. On the other hand, the lowest mean of 3.24 (SD = 0.73), observed in the Cognitive and Emotional and interpreted as Positive. This means that while respondents generally possess a strong degree of emotional control and academic confidence, this area is slightly less developed compared to other domains such as professional experience or communication skills. Moreover, Work-Study Balance also received the lowest mean of 3.24 (SD = 0.75) and interpreted as Positive. This means that while teachers generally manage to balance their professional duties and academic responsibilities. As emphasized by Dizon (2021), the success of graduate students is not solely academic but is also deeply influenced by their psychological and professional contexts. Thus, institutions must adopt comprehensive strategies that empower students not just intellectually, but emotionally and socially as well.



**Problem 3. Is there a significant relationship between the respondents' characteristics and the level of predictors of graduate studies completion among public elementary school teachers in second congressional district?**

**Table 10. Correlation between the Respondents' Characteristics and the Predictors of Graduate Studies Completion**

**Table 16**

**Correlation between the Respondents' Characteristics and the Predictors of Graduate Studies Completion**

Respondent s' Profile	Predictors of Graduate Studies Completion						Overall
	Work-life balance	Personal Attribute s	Professio nal Experienc e	Social Environm ent	Communic ation Skills	Cognitive and Emotiona l	
	r-value p-value Interpret ation	r-value p-value Interpret ation	r-value p-value Interpret ation	r-value p-value Interpret ation	r-value p-value Interpretati on	r-value p-value Interpret ation	
Age	0.9841	0.8701	0.7031	0.9023	0.8900	0.8699	0.8699
	0.0301	0.0301	0.0304	0.0203	0.0301	0.0282	0.0282
	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Sex	0.4612	0.4036	0.6921	0.7002	0.8447	0.5408	0.6071
	0.0301	0.0310	0.0400	0.0307	0.0203	0.0304	0.0304
	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Position	0.4231	0.4036	0.4760	0.3021	0.3741	0.3958	0.3958
	0.1340	0.1345	0.1301	0.0103	0.1034	0.1025	0.1025
	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS
Teaching Experience	0.8700	0.8412	0.7100	0.8001	0.8011	0.8045	0.8045
	0.0301	0.0201	0.0204	0.0302	0.0207	0.0243	0.0243
	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Civil Status	0.8400	0.6990	0.7013	0.7612	0.6470	0.7297	0.7297
	0.0121	0.0302	0.0204	0.0308	0.0301	0.0247	0.0247
	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Highest Educational Attainment	0.9901	0.9871	0.8041	0.6744	0.9700	0.8851	0.8851
	0.0103	0.0120	0.0103	0.0204	0.0103	0.0494	0.0188
	S	S	S	S	S	S	S

Family	0.8456	0.6991	0.7017	0.7636	0.6470	0.7297	0.7315
Monthly	0.0121	0.0302	0.0204	0.0308	0.0301	0.0247	0.0247
Income	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Attitude	0.8701	0.8415	0.7107	0.8045	0.8011	0.8045	0.8054
towards	0.0301	0.0201	0.0204	0.0302	0.0207	0.0243	0.0243
Graduate	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Studies							

Note: S – Significant      NS – Not Significant

Table 11 shows the correlation between the respondents' characteristics and the predictors of graduate studies completion namely age, sex, years of teaching experience, civil status, highest educational attainment, family monthly income, and attitude towards graduate studies showed statistically significant relationships with the predictors of graduate studies completion. These predictors include work-life balance, personal attributes, professional experience, social environment, communication skills, and cognitive and emotional readiness. This finding is supported by strong correlation coefficients and indicating meaningful associations, thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. This means that personal characteristics, socio-economic status, and attitudes strongly influence teachers' ability to balance work and studies, develop academic competencies, and sustain motivation toward completing graduate programs. On the other hand, the respondents' position yielded p-values greater than 0.05 across all predictors, showing no significant relationship. Hence, the null hypothesis for position is accepted, indicating that professional rank does not influence teachers' perceptions of the predictors of graduate studies completion.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

### Conclusion

Based on the findings, the study concludes that graduate studies completion among public elementary school teachers is primarily influenced by personal and internal factors such as age, educational attainment, and attitude toward graduate studies. Among the six pre-identified predictors, professional experience and respondent's profile variables showed significant relationships with the predictors, with age and educational attainment emerging as the strongest. The graduate success is driven more by individual motivation, emotional resilience, and prior academic preparation than by external professional roles. Thus, the institutions should develop programs that support these internal factors, including mentoring, flexible academic pathways, and emotional wellness initiatives to help teachers complete their graduate programs successfully.

### Recommendations

Based on the results of the study, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. DepEd officials of the Division should provide flexible study options like capacity-building activities, and workload management to support teachers with diverse personal and professional backgrounds. Clear promotion systems that link academic achievement with career growth, along with leadership and mentoring programs, are also recommended to motivate younger teachers and maximize the expertise of senior educators.
2. The school heads should strengthen teachers' workload management

measures such as adjusted teaching loads, study leaves, streamlined administrative tasks, use of digital tools, and collaborative lesson planning should be implemented to promote a healthy work-study balance and prevent burnout. At the same time, improve cognitive and emotional readiness through wellness programs, stress management workshops, peer support, and professional coaching to boost resilience and motivation for graduate studies of the teachers.

3. Teachers should examine the effectiveness of financial assistance, promotion systems, and leadership programs in improving graduate studies completion, as well as assess how wellness initiatives and workload management strategies impact teachers' resilience, work-study balance, and academic persistence. Teachers' graduate studies completion can be better supported by offering practical resources such as time management workshops, research guidance, and peer support networks. Financial aid, flexible schedules, and family-friendly policies can help alleviate external pressures, while initiatives that build motivation and confidence encourage persistence.

## REFERENCES

1. Abun, Damianus, (2021). The effect of educational attainment, length of work experience on the self-efficacy of teachers and employees
2. Baraquia, L. (2020). Development of a Teacher Grit Scale (TGS): Predicting the performance of teachers in the Philippines. *The New Educational Review*, 60(2), 165-177. <https://doi.org/10.15804/tner.2020.60.2.13>
3. Creswell, J.W. and Creswell, J.D. (2023) *Research Design Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches*. Sage Publications Ltd. - References - Scientific Research Publishing, Creswell, J.W. and Creswell, J.D. (2023) *Research Design Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches*. Sage Publications Ltd. - References - Scientific Research Publishing.
4. DepEd Order No. 42, s. 2017's Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST)
5. Feldman, S. D. (2023). Impediment or Stimulant? Marital Status and Graduate Education. *American Journal of Sociology*, 78(4), 982–994. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2776616>
6. Gore, J. et al. (2023) Fresh evidence on the relationship between years of experience and teaching quality - the Australian educational researcher, SpringerLink. Available at: <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s13384-023-00612-0>
7. Harding, T., Lopez, V. and Yobas, P. (2019) (PDF) predictors of psychological well-being among higher education students. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/331869816\\_Predictors\\_of\\_Psychological\\_Well-Being\\_among\\_Higher\\_Education\\_Students](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/331869816_Predictors_of_Psychological_Well-Being_among_Higher_Education_Students)
8. Kali, E., & Taşgın, A. (2024). An Investigation of The Relationship Between Preservice Teachers' Attitudes Towards Graduate Education and Academic Motivations. *Participatory Educational Research*, 11(1), 211-226. <https://doi.org/10.17275/per.24.13.11.1>
9. Lucero, L.C. and Jose M Ocampo, Jr. (2019) Emotional intelligence and leadership trait among master teachers, *MIMBAR PENDIDIKAN*. <https://ejournal.upi.edu/index.php/mimbardik/article/view/16970>
10. Merida, W.W.B. and Cailing, V. (2024) Exploring factors influencing the non-completion of these among teachers pursuing a master's degree: A case study analysis, *Psychology and Education: A Multidisciplinary Journal*.



11. Oppen, I.M. (2021) Understanding teachers' impact on student achievement. Available at: <https://www.rand.org/education-and-labor/projects/measuring-teacher-effectiveness/teachers-matter.html>
12. Parker, K. (2021) What's behind the growing gap between men and women in college completion? Pew Research Center. Available at: <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2021/11/08/whats-behind-the-growing-gap-between-men-and-women-in-college-completion>.
13. Republic Act No. 10533, also referred to as the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013
14. Rungduin, T.T. (2019) An Exploration of the Factors Affecting Graduate Degree Completion in a Teacher Education Institution (TEI): Inputs for Graduate Program Management and Pedagogy. Available at: [file:///C:/Users/User/Downloads/Administrator,+ASTEN\\_2018\\_Special-Issue\\_N1\\_Art4.pdf](file:///C:/Users/User/Downloads/Administrator,+ASTEN_2018_Special-Issue_N1_Art4.pdf)