

A Qualitative Exploration of the Professional Development Pursuit of Physical Education Graduate Students

Alberto S. Rosario Jr.¹ and Roque N. Langcoy II²

¹Graduate Student / St. Mary's College of Tagum, Inc.

²Visiting Professor / Davao Oriental State University

Abstract— This phenomenological study aimed to explore and discover the experiences of PE Graduate Students in their professional development pursuit. This study was anchored on the Self Determination Theory and the System Theory. The study was limited to the personal responses of the fifteen PE Graduate Students in different SUCs and LUCs in Davao de Oro. Data were collected using IDI and FGD and were analyzed using thematic analysis. Major themes were extracted. On the lived experiences of PE Graduate Students, the results unfold four major themes such as: assistance from others for professional development, struggles relative to financial and learning resources, clash between academic schedules and work responsibilities; and personal issues with classmates. Furthermore, on the means of coping with the challenges encountered; there were six major themes emerged: seeking guidance and motivation from support systems, scheduling and task prioritization, engaging in recreational activities, being optimistic and resilient, upgrading technological skills, and having faith in God. Moreover, from the insights gained by the PE Graduate Students four themes emerged: collaborating with others and motivation to complete the master's program, being optimistic in dealing with challenges, attending to professional development, and using AI tools responsibly. With all of these, appropriate actions and supports should be given for the benefit and improvement of the professional development pursuit among PE Graduate Students.

Keywords— PE Graduate Students, professional development pursuit, lived experiences, phenomenology, Physical Education, Davao de Oro.

I. INTRODUCTION

Graduate students faced significant challenges, especially when required to teach college courses without adequate guidance. Balancing research, coursework, and teaching led to severe time management issues and heightened stress. Financial difficulties added strain, particularly for underrepresented students lacking financial support. Imposter syndrome was intensified for minoritized students, including women, LGBTQ+ individuals, and people of color, who often faced discrimination. The solitary nature of research fostered isolation, especially for those without a supportive community. Managing personal life and relationships, especially for caregivers, further complicated their experience. These challenges underscored the urgent need for comprehensive support systems, particularly for marginalized groups [Cervantes & Inlow, 2022].

In Canada, the majority of graduate students experienced severe financial hardship due to insufficient funding from universities and governmental grant bodies. Moreover, graduate students worldwide faced major challenges that affected both their academic progress and personal well-being. This financial strain

was particularly pronounced for international students who faced restrictions on part-time work due to visa regulations, limiting access to financial aid and scholarships and potentially impacting their research productivity (Laframboise et al., 2023). In Tanzania, graduate student instructors encountered dissatisfaction stemming from inadequate support and training in teaching methods, impacting their effectiveness in the classroom (Sutherland et al., 2022). Similarly, in Korea, graduate students in physical education confronted various obstacles such as financial pressures, time constraints, and career uncertainties exacerbated by a competitive educational environment that undervalued their discipline (Cho & Kim, 2019).

In the context of Samar, Philippines, the inadequacy of training and seminars, lack of technical assistance, and difficulty in identifying researchable issues and constructing research titles were some of the problems encountered by graduate students in their research endeavors. Too many teaching loads or assignments and lack of enough time to carry out research in the school were also identified as challenges faced by graduate students (Magnaye & Malabarbas, 2022). Another study conducted in Mindoro highlighted that graduate students

faced problems such as not having enough money, struggling to stay interested, and having trouble picking research topics or finding relevant information. These challenges could impact how well they did in their research. Other students also had difficulties, such as improving research skills, developing a passion for research, and making their work more impactful (Casanova, 2021).

In the State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) and Local Universities and Colleges (LUCs) in Davao de Oro, Physical Education graduate students have faced significant challenges that hinder their ability to complete their studies on time. Common problems include heavy teaching loads, inadequate research support, and a lack of access to essential resources and training. These issues contribute to delays in research progress, which in turn impacts their eligibility for academic positions such as Plantilla items. Financial constraints and a lack of institutional support further exacerbate these difficulties, making it harder for students to manage their academic responsibilities effectively.

Currently, there are no local studies specifically examining the challenges and opportunities faced by Physical Education graduate students in Davao de Oro, creating a significant research gap. This gap means that the unique difficulties encountered by this group are not well understood. Although global research on graduate student issues is expanding, there is a lack of localized studies that address regional and discipline-specific factors affecting academic and research outcomes. Most existing research focuses on broader or different issues, which may overlook the specific needs of the Physical Education field. To address the persistent issues identified in past studies, such as financial strain and inadequate support, it is essential to fill this research gap and develop a deeper understanding, thereby improving support systems and creating more effective strategies tailored to these students' needs.

The urgency of conducting this study lies in the potential to address existing gaps and contribute to the holistic development of both students and the institutions supporting them. The outcomes of this study were anticipated to be invaluable, serving as a guide for these students to enhance their performance during their graduate studies. Additionally, the findings would provide valuable insights for institutions, enabling them to offer tailored assistance and support to their graduate

students. The social relevance of this exploration of the graduate study of physical education among graduate students lay in its potential to contribute valuable insights and improvements to the field of physical education, education systems, and the overall well-being of individuals and communities. After the conduct of this study, the researcher had a plan to disseminate the research findings to different groups. It started by organizing a public forum to inform not just the participants but also school administrators and college instructors in Davao de Oro interested in education about the results. The researcher also intended to join research meetings to discuss the study with other researchers and professionals in education. This way, the findings could reach schools and contribute to collective knowledge about education. Additionally, the researcher planned to publish the study in an international journal, making it available to researchers, teachers, and schools worldwide. This was aimed at ensuring the research had a significant impact and was useful across various contexts. In summary, the researcher's plan included a public forum for PE graduate students in SUCs and LUCs in Davao de Oro, participation in research meetings with professionals, and publication in an international journal for a global audience. This plan aimed to widely disseminate the research findings and make them beneficial to diverse individuals and educational institutions.

II. METHODS

A. Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research design, utilizing a phenomenological approach. According to Creswell (2013), qualitative research was esteemed for its emphasis on depth and context, making it well-suited for investigating real-world issues. One of the strengths of qualitative research lies in its capacity to elucidate processes and patterns of human behavior that defy precise measurement. Experiences, attitudes, and actions often resisted quantification, but qualitative methods allowed participants to articulate the intricacies of their thoughts, emotions, and experiences at specific moments. To gain a deeper understanding of ideas or experiences, qualitative research gathered and analyzed non-numerical data such as text, audio, or video. Additionally, qualitative research facilitated researchers' exploration of an individual's perspectives and opinions.

The qualitative research design was deemed appropriate in this study since the aim of this research was to capture an in-depth understanding of individuals' experiences,

perceptions, and behaviors, recognizing the nature of human phenomena that quantitative methods may not adequately capture. Various qualitative data collection techniques, such as interviews and observations, were utilized in this approach to uncover rich information, providing a more holistic perspective on the subject matter. As a researcher, I employed a phenomenological research approach, chosen specifically to unravel the challenges encountered by Physical Education Graduate students during their professional development.

In this study, a phenomenological approach was the most accurate way of understanding the experiences from the perceptions of PE graduate students in their professional development pursuit. This research approach explored participants' perceptions and interpretations to uncover the shared essence of their encounters with the chosen phenomenon. It sought to provide a detailed description and exploration of a phenomenon collectively experienced by the participants, such as the challenges faced by Physical Education Graduate students. By capturing the essence of these challenges, this research provided a detailed understanding of the challenges faced by the participants, offering valuable insights into their perspectives.

Additionally, the study focused on obtaining in-depth insights into participants' challenges, the strategies they used to overcome these difficulties, and their overall perspectives on the subject under investigation. Utilizing a phenomenological lens, the research aimed to uncover the subtle aspects of the participants' experiences, elucidating the complexities inherent in their professional development within the sphere of Physical Education. Furthermore, to provide concise descriptions of the experiences encountered by Physical Education graduate students, the study concentrated on three research questions. Subsequently, interview guide questions were developed to explore the challenges experienced by PE graduate students in their professional development pursuit.

B. Role of the Researcher

Qualitative research demands a significant investment of time and effort from the researcher in collecting data and conducting data analysis (Corbin, 2015). Denzin and Lincoln (2013) asserted that in qualitative research, the researcher serves as the primary instrument of data collection. In this study, I undertook various roles,

including interviewer or discussion facilitator, transcriber, coder, and primary data analyst.

Throughout this research, my primary responsibility as a researcher was to uphold ethical conduct. This involves identifying suitable participants for in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, strictly following predefined inclusion criteria. I was fully committed to maintaining the ethical standards set forth by SMC throughout the entire process of participant selection and data collection.

As the sole researcher conducting this study, I acted as the interviewer during the virtual individual in-depth interviews (IDI) and focus group discussions (FGD), adhering to interview protocols. I posed questions and employed probing techniques to gather additional essential data for the study.

My role as moderator was important to maintain focus and relevance. I served as the facilitator, guiding the conversation skillfully to extract detailed insights aligned with the research objectives. This involved not only framing questions effectively but also adapting your approach to the unique dynamics of the interview, encouraging participants to delve into their experiences and perspectives.

As a researcher, I also ensured comprehensive documentation and recording of the entire virtual interview using screen recording technology within the meeting application. This measure was taken to ensure that all participants' responses were duly accounted for during the transcription of the data.

Another responsibility I assumed was that of a transcriber. In this capacity, I converted the recorded data into written text by meticulously listening to the digital interview recordings multiple times to ensure content accuracy and prevent data misinterpretation. Additionally, the interviews were conducted in the local language to enable participants to fully articulate their thoughts, emotions, and experiences. Furthermore, I ensured that the transcripts faithfully represented the participants' intended messages conveyed during the face-to-face interviews. This enabled participant to review the transcripts of their responses, particularly during member-checking.

My role as a translator involved converting content from one language into English, ensuring accuracy, clarity,

and cultural appropriateness. This included interpreting the literal meaning of words and the nuances, idioms, and cultural context embedded in the original text. My responsibility was to bridge the linguistic gap, facilitating effective communication and comprehension for English-speaking audiences.

Furthermore, I assumed the role of the primary data analyst, analyzing the text to comprehend the context and extract the themes from participants' responses. Finally, while fulfilling the aforementioned roles, it was the researcher's responsibility to ensure the observance of ethical standards.

C. Data Sources

Data sources were attained in various ways. Common methods of gathering qualitative data served as the sources of data: conducting interviews, observations, and documenting audio and visual materials (Creswell, 2014). This study employed a variety of qualitative approaches for gathering data, including observations, interviews, and recording audio and video content. Both primary and secondary data sources were used in the investigation.

Primary sources involved direct interactions with participants through interviews and observations, allowing for firsthand exploration of their experiences and perspectives. The participants in the focus groups and in-depth interviews, where both groups were asked preset open-ended questions laid out in the interview guide, provided the data for this study. The In-depth Interview method encouraged participants to delve deeply into the subject matter, providing detailed insights based on open-ended questions derived from their personal experiences. On the other hand, the Focus Group Discussion involved a group of seven participants sharing their feelings, attitudes, beliefs, and experiences, offering diverse perspectives and emotions within the group. This method allowed the researcher to gather comprehensive information from multiple participants in a condensed timeframe. The participants' responses were documented through recorded data, which was subsequently transcribed.

In this study, the secondary sources involved the examination and analysis of existing materials such as articles, journals, books, documents, and audio-visual content, offering additional insights and context to complement the primary data. This methodological diversity was designed to ensure a comprehensive

approach to capturing the challenges faced by Physical Education Graduate students during their professional development pursuit. Throughout the implementation of this study, a systematic methodology was utilized to gather data from participants. Creswell (2007) emphasized the significance of qualitative researchers undertaking a sequence of tasks during the data collection phase until the research study reached its conclusion.

Initially, I sent an official request letter to the Dean of the Graduate School to seek permission to conduct the study. Once I received an endorsement letter from the Dean, indicating approval to proceed, I began the process of obtaining clearance from the Research Ethics Committee (REC). The REC was a collegiate body primarily responsible for evaluating and deciding whether to approve research protocols for all research proceedings. To establish a mechanism for submitting research data to the Research

Ethics Committee (REC) and regulatory bodies, researchers compiled relevant data and documentation according to the study's data management plan. They prepared a comprehensive submission package, including a cover letter detailing the purpose and specifics of the project. Following the REC's and regulatory bodies' submission procedures, researchers submitted data electronically or through designated channels, documenting all communications and outcomes. Data security and confidentiality were prioritized during transmission to comply with regulations. This systematic approach ensured transparency and integrity in the verification process by the REC and regulatory bodies.

III. RESULT

The results that highlight the PE Graduate Student's experience in their professional development. Through our discussions, we encouraged the PE Graduate Students to express their perspectives on this phenomenon. The collected data in this study addressed the research inquiries and allowed the participants to share their diverse experiences, coping strategies, and insights regarding their professional development pursuit. The participants' responses provided valuable input for identifying key themes.

This section delves into the experiences of Physical Education graduate students, focusing on their challenges, coping strategies, and insights related to

their professional development journeys. The study is guided by three primary research questions:

1. What are the lived experiences of Physical Education graduate students regarding their professional development pursuit?
2. How do Physical Education graduate students cope with the challenges related to their professional development pursuit?
3. What insights can be drawn from the lived experiences of Physical Education graduate students regarding their professional development pursuits?

To ensure a thorough understanding of these aspects, the study utilized in-depth interviews (IDI) and Focus Group Discussions (FGD), allowing participants ample time to articulate their experiences. Each interview was structured around the three primary questions, each accompanied by three sub-questions, facilitating a comprehensive exploration of the participants' views.

Participants' responses were meticulously recorded, with stringent measures implemented to maintain anonymity and confidentiality. This study focused on a limited sample of fifteen (15) graduate students affiliated with State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) and Local Universities and Colleges (LUCs) in Davao de Oro. Their insights not only illuminate their individual pursuits but also provide valuable recommendations for peers facing similar challenges, as well as guidance for physical education instructors and school administrators.

Research Question No. 1: What are the lived experiences of Physical Education graduate students regarding their professional development pursuit?

This question has four sub-questions to generate a broad discussion for the above problem. What are your experiences in your professional development pursuit? Please elaborate. Among the experiences that you have mentioned, which do you consider a positive

experience? Why do you say so? Among the experiences that you have mentioned, which do you consider as negative experiences? Why do you say so? What are the challenges that you faced in your professional development pursuit? As to the data collected from the experiences of the seven participants, four themes emerge. Here are the themes provided by the participants involved: a.) assistance from others for professional development; b.) struggles relative to financial and learning resources; c.) clash between academic schedules and work responsibilities; and d.) personal issues with classmates.

Assistance from Others for Professional Development

The participants emphasized their need for assistance from others in professional development. This theme explores how graduate students in physical education receive vital support from mentors, professors, and peers to foster their professional growth.

Struggles Relative to Financial and Learning Resources

Despite having teaching jobs, the participants still struggled with relative problems with finances and resources to sustain their professional development pursuits which also limited them to perform their tasks in their graduate studies.

Clash Between Academic Schedules and Work Responsibilities

The participants expressed that they found it difficult to perform their dual roles as graduate students and PE instructors because they could not manage their time properly, especially in accomplishing their tasks in their graduate studies and conducting physical education instruction.

Personal Issues with Classmates

The participants also experience intimidation and fear of judgment in their graduate studies. Addressing these fears is essential for creating a more inclusive and supportive academic environment.

Table 1: Major Themes and Core Ideas on the Lived Experiences of PE Graduate Students in their Professional Development Pursuit

Themes	Core Ideas
Assistance from Others for Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cascaded the experiences of blended learning from a master's degree class to a personal class • gained experiences that ponder teaching skills and growing as a professional.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • motivated oneself to find ways to fully understand the lesson and deliver it effectively • learned more about research and the field of specialization through personal experiences • experienced holistic professional development • found support from classmates who are professional pe teachers from other places in the province • discovered professionals who provide encouragement to grow professionally • found peers whose skills and talent are worthy of emulation and application to our classes
<p>Struggles Relative to Financial and Learning Resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • experienced low internet connectivity, and having students with no gadget which resulted in absences during online classes • experienced difficulty in adapting to the abrupt change of teaching to a virtual modality • had an unreliable source of internet connection and frequent power interruptions while taking master’s classes • had difficulty understanding the lesson and adopting a virtual class • lacked financial assistance in taking a master’s degree program • needed budget to continue master’s degree schooling and support for family needs • experienced difficulty during the payment of tuition • experienced a lack of updated teaching materials and resources
<p>Clash Between Academic Schedules and Work Responsibilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • struggled to attend simultaneous activities for the master’s program and the tasks in school • faced difficulty in performing multiple roles like teaching, mothering, and student in masters’ program. • felt confused between teaching tasks and the master’s program assignment which leads to dissatisfaction. • experienced problematic situations every Saturday for master’s program class and backlogs on school assignments • experienced problems in performing school designation tasks and answering assignments in the master’s program. • had difficulty in focusing on schooling and work • had negative experience in time management.
<p>Personal Issues with Classmates</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • experienced anxiousness with the presence of classmates holding administrative positions in their schools • had difficulty in getting along with younger classmates in master’s class • felt pressured by classmates who were advancing so quickly in their studies

2. How do Physical Education graduate students cope with the challenges related to their professional development pursuit?

The coping strategies employed by PE graduate students in their challenges in professional development pursuit are depicted in Table 2. Six important themes were derived from the participants' statements during the interview, as outlined below: a.) seeking guidance and motivation from support systems; b.) scheduling and

task prioritization; c.) engaging in recreational activities; d.) being optimistic and resilient; e.) upgrading technological skills; and f.) having faith in God. The subsequent narratives present the perspectives articulated by the participants on their challenges in Professional Development Pursuit.

Seeking Guidance and Motivation from Support Systems

The participants highlighted that seeking guidance and motivation is crucial to continue pursuing professional development. They emphasized the importance of mentorship and supportive networks in providing direction and encouragement along their career paths. Building these relationships fosters growth, resilience, and sustained commitment to personal and professional advancement.

Scheduling and Task Prioritization

The participants highlighted the importance of creating a schedule matrix to identify and prioritize tasks. A well-structured schedule helps manage time effectively and ensures critical responsibilities are addressed first. Implementing such a tool is essential for maintaining productivity and achieving goals.

Engaging in Recreational Activities

Participation in hobbies and leisure pursuits helps maintain a healthy work-life balance and reduces stress. Incorporating such activities into daily routines promotes well-being and enhances overall productivity.

Being Optimistic and Resilient

The participants show a positive outlook despite the struggles they have encountered in their professional development pursuits. The challenges are opportunities for growth and learning. Maintaining this optimistic perspective is crucial for overcoming obstacles and achieving success.

Upgrading Technological Skills

The participants also expressed the need to become resourceful and innovative. Adapting to challenges with creative solutions enhances problem-solving abilities and opens new opportunities for professional growth. Embracing innovation fosters resilience and adaptability in navigating complex environments and achieving career objectives.

Having Faith in God

The participants expressed a strong belief in God, drawing on their faith to navigate and overcome the various challenges they encountered. This deep sense of spirituality provided them with comfort, strength, and resilience during difficult times. Their reliance on faith not only helped them persevere but also gave them a sense of hope and purpose amid their struggles.

Table 2: Major Themes and Core Ideas of the Coping Mechanisms of PE Graduate Students in their Challenges on Professional Development Pursuit

Themes	Core Ideas
Seeking Guidance and Motivation from Support Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • seeking help from partners, friends, and colleagues to lighten the academic task • establishing networks and establishing rapport with colleagues • seeking guidance from colleagues and help for the academic task of the master’s class • gaining help from co-teachers who are enrolled in master’s programs but have already done the course/subject • seeking help from friends, relatives, and colleagues, also asking about their coping • having help from friends who are master’s degree holders, and some are already doctorate • establishing a support system from peers, family, and friends • having support from buddies and friends • seeking help and support from colleagues and friends, especially on difficult tasks. • asking for help from colleagues on academic assignments and teaching tasks • asking someone for help to distress oneself

Scheduling and Task Prioritization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • creating a schedule for master’s class assignments and requirements, and for teaching tasks • making a priority list and doing the most important thing in the list every day • having a checklist of what to do, to have an organized target and performance • organizing time and setting alarms to be reminded of deadlines. • establishing a weekly and daily plan for what to do • focusing on the most urgent tasks • sacrificing extra time to finish assignments for the week before going home
Engaging in Recreational Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • spending time with friends, family, and partners in visiting places • finding ways to cope, such as reading and visiting a friend. • going to places where one can release pressures by shouting and even crying • allocating free time for the self or going out with friends, or simply enjoying personal space.
Being Optimistic and Resilient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • having a positive mindset in facing challenges in life • having a positive mindset and resilient • having faith to finish with the support of the people in our circle • taking it slowly surely facing
Upgrading Technological Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • asking for help and guidance from friends who have advanced skills in technology • attending industrial conferences to upgrade skills • using artificial intelligence tools in working smart with academic assignments and teaching tasks
Having Faith in God	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • putting God in the center of the professional journey and praying for success • seeking guidance from the Almighty One • praying and surrendering to God

3. What insights can be drawn from the lived experiences of Physical Education graduate students regarding their professional development pursuits?

Table 3 displays the four emergent themes and their corresponding core ideas derived from the participants' responses, as presented below a.) collaborating with others and motivation to complete the master’s program; b.) being optimistic in dealing with challenges; c.) attending to professional developments; and d.) using AI tools responsibly. The essential themes discussed below are supported by the testimonies provided by the participants during the in-depth interview and focus group discussion.

Collaborating with Others and Motivation to Complete the Master’s Program

The participants also shared about collaborating with others and motivation to complete the master’s program. They highlighted the importance of prioritizing tasks,

setting clear goals, and minimizing distractions to optimize productivity. Implementing these strategies helps them balance professional responsibilities and personal commitments more effectively.

Being Optimistic in Dealing with Challenges

The participants emphasized the importance of being optimistic when dealing with challenges and pursuing their professional development. The theme that emerged regarding the participants' insights is being optimistic in dealing with challenges.

Attending to Professional Development

The participants shared about the importance of attending to professional development and enjoying career opportunities. They emphasized the value of continuous learning and skill development to stay competitive in their fields. Investing in professional

growth enhances job prospects and enables individuals to pursue fulfilling career paths.

Utilizing AI Tools Responsibly

The participants emphasize that using internet resources to expand knowledge would be advantageous to aid them in their graduate studies. They see these

technologies as crucial for enhancing research efficiency, accessing up-to-date information, and automating repetitive tasks. Embracing internet resources to expand knowledge can significantly streamline their academic pursuits and contribute to academic success.

Table 3: Major Themes and Core Ideas of the Insights that Physical Education Graduate Students Drawn from Their Experiences in Professional Development

Themes	Core Ideas
Collaborating with Others and Motivation to Complete the Master’s Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • being open-minded to accept comments and criticism • seeking collaboration and asking for help from classmates • seeking help from peers, adviser, and professors • establish a good rapport with a more experienced and knowledgeable person • taking opportunity in asking help to other • taking time to look back on the reason of finishing the journey of the master’s program rather than quitting
Being Optimistic in Dealing with Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • having positive outlook amidst challenges • having a sound decision in crucial time concerning master’s degree program and teaching assignments • going out from comfort zone to try new things • learning to accept and handle pressure • knowing oneself and building of positive traits
Attending to Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • earning master’s degree in order not to be left behind • pursuing master’s education to attain professional development • balancing theory and practical experience to improve teaching • attending seminars and seminars to embrace change
Using AI Tools Responsibly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using Artificial Intelligent tools to aid in accomplishing academic tasks • exploring Artificial Intelligent tools to effectively help in having ideas in research • discovering online resources like eBooks for reading • incorporating technology in teaching will make your job light and easy while learning new trends

In conclusion, the study on the professional development experiences of Physical Education graduate students reveals several key themes. Participants identified the conflict between academic schedules and work responsibilities, the necessity of assistance from others, financial and resource-related struggles, and interpersonal issues with classmates as major challenges. The coping strategies utilized by these students include maintaining optimism and resilience, having faith, effective scheduling and task prioritization, engaging in recreational activities, seeking support and motivation, and being resourceful and innovative.

Insights from their experiences highlight the importance of a positive outlook in overcoming obstacles, actively engaging in professional development, seeking help, and utilizing internet resources for knowledge expansion.

These findings highlight the intricate relationship between personal and professional development pursuit, the crucial role of support systems, and the significance of effective coping strategies in achieving both academic and career success.

IV. DISCUSSIONS

This chapter provides an overview of the discussions and conclusions drawn from the study's findings, which are supported by relevant literature. Additionally, this study has implications for instructional approaches and recommendations for future research.

The primary objective of this phenomenological study was to investigate the experiences, coping strategies, and insights of PE graduate students regarding their professional development pursuits. To gather significant data, we conducted in-depth interviews (IDIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs) using questions approved by expert validators. The selected participants addressed all research questions and shared valuable information, which underwent rigorous analysis with the assistance of experts.

Lived Experiences of Physical Education Graduate Students in Their Professional Development Pursuit

This section elucidates the overall findings of this study concerning the experiences of PE graduate students in their professional development pursuits. From my perspective, PE graduate students have used a variety of strategies to acquire new skills and develop resilience in the current situation. Meanwhile, PE graduate students described their experiences in their professional development pursuits, which answered Research Question One in this study. Based on the gathered data regarding the participants' experiences, four primary themes surfaced, namely: a.) assistance from others for professional development; b.) struggles relative to financial and learning resources; c.) clash between academic schedules and work responsibilities; and d.) personal issues with classmates.

Assistance from Others for Professional Development

The first theme that emerged in the first research question was the essence of assistance from others for professional development. Although participants faced difficulties, they gave them all and did their best to accomplish the tasks at hand in their graduate studies and other responsibilities. They were eager to gain new learning, acquire new skills, and apply them in their teaching. They also expect to grow personally and professionally after taking on all tasks and effectively and efficiently accomplishing them. They also stressed the importance of support from peers, colleagues, classmates, friends, and family.

This concept is supported by the findings, that graduate studies played a pivotal role in enhancing personal and professional lives by fostering advanced knowledge and critical thinking skills, as evidenced by various research papers. Pursuing graduate education not only opens doors to career advancement opportunities and higher earning potential but also contributes to personal growth, resilience, and a deeper understanding of one's field of study, ultimately leading to increased life satisfaction (Onishi & Nagaoka, 2020).

As indicated by the previous study, graduate students believe that pursuing advanced studies brings personal satisfaction, a deeper understanding of their field, and career advancement through promotions and higher salaries. Factors such as the perceived quality of the program, financial accessibility, and a supportive learning environment encourage students to complete their graduate studies at a Predominantly Black Institution. These students value the fulfillment and career progress gained from their PBI education and appreciate how program quality, financial accessibility, and a supportive learning environment positively impact their overall experience (Elhage et al., 2022).

This result also aligns with the findings that graduate education can significantly enhance inventive performance and the scope of exploited knowledge, showing its positive impact on inventive capability and performance. Despite challenges such as uncertainty and varying outcomes, advanced degrees remain valuable in the labor market. Research in master's, doctoral, and other professional degree recipients experience lower unemployment rates and higher average earnings. (Baum & Steele, 2019).

This result is also consistent with the findings that continuous professional development is essential and that graduates stand out for their reflection and continuous improvement. Integrative learning, active participation, and experiential learning are all components of effective graduate career development. An important ability for 2025 is active learning. Employability strategies must prioritize reflection and individual initiative, empowering learners to personalize their educational journeys and establish their own standards of achievement (Savory, 2022).

Struggles Relative to Financial and Learning Resources

The next theme was the struggles relative to financial and learning resources. Despite holding teaching positions, the participants continued to face financial and resource challenges that hindered their ability to sustain their professional development pursuits. These limitations also affected their capacity to effectively perform their responsibilities within their graduate studies. Financial constraints restrict their access to the necessary educational resources crucial for enhancing their skills and advancing their career. Consequently, they encountered difficulties in balancing their professional commitments with the demands of their graduate studies, underscoring the need for greater support and resources for educators pursuing advanced education.

This is evident in the findings of a previous study that financial hardships were a prevalent issue among students before entering graduate school, although they were considered somewhat normal compared to other emerging challenges. The time required for the program was often cited as a major challenge, overshadowing the relatively manageable demands of the curriculum. Concerns about future career opportunities began before enrollment in graduate school and persisted throughout the academic journey. A notable pre-graduation concern was the perceived lack of opportunities (Cho & Kim, 2019).

As evidenced by earlier studies, teachers who face financial and resource challenges while pursuing graduate studies often struggle to balance their professional commitment with their academic responsibilities. These challenges arise because of factors such as limited access to learning resources, inadequate training opportunities, and financial constraints. These barriers not only impede their ability to enhance their skills through necessary educational resources, but also create significant obstacles in effectively managing their workload and meeting academic expectations. Consequently, educators in this situation may find it challenging to maintain a robust professional development trajectory alongside their teaching duties. (Tope, 2023).

This result is also consistent with the findings that the impact of these limitations on teachers' ability to sustain their professional development pursuits and fulfill their responsibilities within graduate studies highlights the

critical need for enhanced support and resources for educators pursuing advanced education. Addressing these financial and resource constraints is vital to empowering teachers to enhance their skills, progress in their careers, and effectively manage the demands of their professional roles alongside academic commitments. By providing adequate support including access to educational resources, training opportunities, and financial assistance, educational institutions can foster an environment in which teachers can thrive both professionally and academically. This holistic support not only benefits individual educators but also contributes to the overall improvement in educational quality and student outcomes (Habibi-Azar et al., 2021).

The same result highlighted that side hustles among PE graduate students can offer additional income and skill development opportunities to sustain their needs during their studies. The concept of side hustling has gained popularity among educated youth facing uncertainties in formal employment, providing alternative livelihood strategies and avenues for self-improvement. In the context of higher education, where students often juggle multiple demands, including academic requirements and financial pressure, engaging in side hustles can be a way to supplement income and invest in future employability. However, it is essential for universities to provide adequate support and information to graduate students to help them balance these demands effectively (Allen & Finn, 2023).

Clash Between Academic Schedules and Work Responsibilities

The participants also experienced a clash between their academic schedules and work responsibilities. The participants admitted that they struggled significantly to balance their responsibilities at home as mothers, at school as teachers, and in their graduate studies. They often felt confused about performing dual roles, making it challenging to manage their time and give full attention to their graduate study assignments. Despite the stress of completing their tasks, they claimed that they gave them all to accomplish.

This concept aligned with the findings, which indicated that the challenges faced by student parents, particularly mothers, in balancing their roles at home, as students, and in their graduate studies are prevalent. The struggle to manage time and attention between multiple responsibilities often leads to confusion and stress,

impacting students' ability to focus on graduate study assignments (Mulrenan, 2022).

Despite these difficulties, student parents demonstrate resilience and determination in making their best efforts to accomplish their tasks, showcasing their efficacy in overcoming obstacles. The experiences of student parents highlight the need for greater support and flexibility from educational institutions to help them effectively navigate the complexities of juggling multiple roles and responsibilities (Holmes & Nikiforidou, 2023).

This result is also parallel to the findings that highlighted that PE teachers face challenges in balancing their roles at school and in graduate studies, leading to difficulties in time management and attention allocation. The demands of creating inclusive environments for graduate students in PE while dealing with the stress of distance learning can contribute to psychological, emotional, and physical stress among teachers. Additionally, the practical teaching requirements during crises exacerbate the burden on PE teachers, impacting their ability to focus on their graduate study assignments. These challenges highlight the need for further research and support mechanisms to help PE teachers effectively navigate the complexities of their dual roles and responsibilities (Mykola & Ruslana, 2023).

As highlighted in a previous study, graduate students faced significant challenges in balancing their professional expectations with their academic responsibilities and the demands of their roles as teachers. This struggle often affects their ability to manage their time effectively and prioritize their tasks. In response to these difficulties, it is essential for faculty members in graduate teacher education programs to undergo cultural awareness training. This training would enable them to gain a deeper understanding of the diverse challenges and pressures faced by these students, ultimately fostering a more supportive and inclusive learning environment (Sato et al., 2019).

The same result underscored that PE graduate students often struggle with research and statistical tools during comprehensive exams, which negatively affects their results. The ability to clearly express their knowledge and ideas significantly affects exam performance. Students exhibited only moderate preparedness in research, particularly in identifying research problems

and writing literature reviews. These challenges have led some students to abandon their research projects or fail to complete them on time. Furthermore, the lack of research skills and the burden of multiple workloads hinders their ability to complete their research (Pangket, 2023).

Personal Issues with Classmates

The next theme was having personal issues with their classmates. Graduate students often face intimidation from their classmates and feel overshadowed by those who appear more confident or advanced. This can lead to a pervasive fear of failure, as the high expectations and rigorous demands of their programmes weigh heavily on them. Additionally, pressure to keep pace with the rapid progress of peers can exacerbate stress, creating a constant sense of urgency and competition. These combined fears can significantly impact academic performance and mental well-being. Therefore, addressing these concerns is essential to foster an inclusive and supportive academic environment in which students can thrive without the burden of undue stress and anxiety.

This concept is supported by the findings that graduate students frequently experience intimidation and feelings of being overshadowed by more confident peers, leading to a pervasive fear of failure due to the high expectations and rigorous demands of their programmes. Research has highlighted the various challenges faced by graduate students, including feelings of imposterism and emotional stress. The constant pressure to keep up with peers' rapid progress can exacerbate these feelings, creating a stressful and competitive environment. These combined pressures can significantly affect academic performance and overall well-being. Therefore, addressing these concerns is crucial for fostering an inclusive and supportive academic environment in which students can thrive (Gao et al., 2023).

Similarly, another study highlighted that the pressure to keep up with peers' rapid progress can intensify stress levels, fostering a perpetual atmosphere of urgency and competition, ultimately affecting academic performance and mental well-being. This constant comparison with peers, who may be advancing more quickly, can lead to feelings of inadequacy and increased anxiety. Research highlights how adverse peer experiences, such as low peer preference, can impact stress reactivity and alter stress system activity in children, potentially leading to behavioral and emotional challenges. Similarly, in

academic settings, negative peer interactions and pressure to match peers' achievements can disrupt students' stress responses, making them more susceptible to burnout and mental health issues. Therefore, understanding and addressing these peer-related stressors are crucial for promoting a healthier and more supportive academic environment (Behnsen, 2023).

The same result emphasized that graduate students, who often hold dual roles as both students and employees, face unique challenges owing to the inherent power imbalance in these positions. This imbalance can create environments in which they are more susceptible to experiences of harassment and subordination, as they navigate complex relationships with faculty and supervisors who hold significant authority over their academic and professional futures. Studies have shown that involuntary subordination, characterized by feelings of entrapment and low perceived status, can predict major depression among graduate students. This highlights the detrimental impact that power differentials within academic settings can have on students' mental health and well-being. Addressing these power imbalances is crucial for creating a safer and more supportive environment, ensuring that graduate students can thrive without fear of harassment or the burden of subordination (Sturman & Mongrain, 2019).

Coping Mechanisms of PE Graduate Students in their Challenges on Professional Development Pursuit

PE Graduate Students must devise methods and approaches to cope with the challenges they face, allowing them to accomplish tasks effectively and efficiently. The following are the participants' perspectives on their pursuits of professional development. Through the interviews, six key themes emerged from their statements, which can be summarized as follows: a.) seeking guidance and motivation from support systems; b.) scheduling and task prioritization; c.) engaging in recreational activities; d.) being optimistic and resilient; e.) upgrading technological skills; and having faith in God.

Seeking Guidance and Motivation from Support Systems

The first theme that emerged about the coping mechanisms of participants was seeking guidance and motivation from the support systems. Participants shared that they sought help from partners, friends, and

colleagues to ease their academic workloads. Seeking guidance and motivation is essential for ongoing professional development, as it helps individuals stay focused and inspired on their career journeys. Mentorship and supportive networks offer valuable direction, providing insights and advice that can be crucial in making informed career decisions. These relationships not only guide individuals through their professional paths but also offer encouragement and support during challenging times. By fostering connections with mentors and peers, individuals can experience significant personal and professional growth, building resilience and adaptability. Ultimately, these supportive relationships help sustain a long-term commitment to continually improving skills and expanding knowledge.

This result fits with the findings that building networks and establishing good relationships with colleagues was crucial aspects of the respondents' academic journeys. Scholars have highlighted the importance of enhancing graduate students' abilities to tackle societal issues by engaging with diverse social identities, values, and beliefs. This engagement fosters a broader perspective and a deeper understanding of complex problems. Additionally, peer academic support plays a significant role in improving academic proficiency, as it allows students to share knowledge, resources, and encouragement. Together, these elements create a collaborative and enriching academic environment that supports both personal and professional development (Worley et al., 2023).

More so, there has been a growing emphasis on the need for graduate students to engage across differences in social identities, values, and beliefs. This engagement is seen as crucial for enhancing their capabilities and preparing them to address complex societal issues. By interacting with diverse perspectives, students can develop a more comprehensive understanding of the world and improve critical thinking skills. This inclusive approach promotes empathy, collaboration, and innovation, which are essential for tackling the multifaceted challenges in today's society. Ultimately, fostering such interactions enriches the academic experience and equips students with the tools needed for effective and impactful professional contributions (Perez et al., 2020).

In addition, participants often received assistance from co-teachers who were currently enrolled in a master's

program and had previously completed a particular course or subject. Because they have already completed the course, these co-teachers possess firsthand knowledge of the specific challenges that the participants might encounter. Consequently, they can anticipate difficulties and offer personalized support. Peer mentoring in graduate school has been shown to enhance students' sense of belonging, academic success, and social support (Liu et al. 2022).

The same result highlighted that some participants mentioned that they relied on colleagues and friends for help and support, particularly when faced with challenging tasks. This reliance on fellowship plays a crucial role in providing both support and companionship to graduate students, creating a network of assistance that is essential for their success. When students face difficult assignments or stressful situations, they often turn to their peers for guidance and encouragement. These peer relationships help students manage stress more effectively by offering emotional support and practical advice. Additionally, peers can assist each other in comprehending academic requirements and grasping course content, leading to a more collaborative and enriched learning experience (Lorenzetti et al., 2023).

This idea also corresponded with the results that some participants mentioned that they typically sought help from others to relieve stress. Graduate students have indicated that their relationships with peers play a significant role in alleviating their anxieties and easing their transition into graduate school. These peer connections help them feel more connected to their department, fostering a sense of belonging and community. Additionally, the support from peers helps students stay committed to their academic programs by providing encouragement and understanding. Overall, these relationships contribute to a more positive and manageable graduate school experience, helping students navigate the challenges they face (Mauldin et al., 2022).

Scheduling and Task Prioritization

The next theme that emerged was the participants emphasized the value of developing a scheduling matrix to prioritize and organize tasks. A well-designed schedule enhances time management and ensures that essential responsibilities are tackled first. Using this tool is crucial for sustaining productivity and reaching objectives.

This idea corresponds with the results that when creating a comprehensive time schedule for master's class assignments, requirements, and teaching tasks is vital for graduate PE students. With a robust schedule, students can effectively allocate time, ensuring that both academic and teaching responsibilities are met without conflict. Developing a schedule that clearly delineates study periods, class times, teaching commitments, and personal time helps students visualize their weeks and manage their workload more efficiently. The act of scheduling also aids in reducing stress by providing a structured plan to follow, thus minimizing the likelihood of last-minute rush to meet deadlines. This approach aligns with experiential learning emphasis, which is crucial for the professional growth of postgraduate students (Savory, 2022).

The same result pointed out that establishing a priority list is another essential strategy, in which the most critical tasks are identified and addressed daily. This method ensures that vital assignments and responsibilities are not overlooked amidst the myriad of activities faced by PE graduate students. By consistently focusing on the most important tasks, students can make meaningful progress and avoid the pitfall of procrastination. A prioritized list acts as a guide, helping students maintain a focus on their academic goals while balancing teaching duties and other obligations. This approach is supported by findings that highlight that effective prioritization contributes to personal satisfaction and career advancement among graduate students (Elhage et al., 2022).

This idea was also consistent with the results of having a checklist for daily, weekly, and monthly tasks can significantly enhance organization and performance. A checklist serves as a tangible reminder of tasks that need to be completed, providing a sense of accomplishment as items are checked. This tool is particularly useful in managing the multiple demands of PE graduate students, ensuring that nothing is forgotten and that progress is systematically tracked. Organizing time effectively and setting alarms for deadlines can further support this process, helping students stay on track and meet their commitments promptly. The importance of time-management skills in navigating academic and professional responsibilities underscores the need for structured planning and timely reminders to effectively manage the dual roles of students and teachers (Sato et al., 2019).

Engaging in Recreational Activities

This theme revealed that engaging in hobbies and leisure activities is vital for maintaining a healthy work-life balance and reducing stress. By incorporating these activities into daily routines, individuals can promote their overall well-being, allowing for mental and physical relaxation. This not only improves their mood and health but also enhances overall productivity, as a balanced and relaxed mind is more focused and efficient in tackling work-related tasks.

This is aligned with the study which emphasizes that engaging in recreational activities is vital for Physical Education (PE) graduate students, as it offers an essential response to their rigorous academic and professional commitments. Spending time with friends, family, and partners while visiting new places can provide a significant mental and emotional boost. This social interaction helps to build strong support networks, which are crucial for navigating the challenges of graduate schools. PE graduate students, who often face intense pressure from both their academic responsibilities and their roles as educators, can greatly benefit from these recreational activities. These experiences not only offer relaxation and enjoyment, but also foster stronger relationships that can provide emotional support and encouragement throughout their academic journey. Social support plays a pivotal role in coping with academic stress and maintaining mental health (Sáez et al., 2021).

This result also matches up with the findings that reading and visiting friends are simple yet effective ways for PE graduate students to manage the stress associated with their pursuit of professional development. Reading offers a peaceful escape and an opportunity to gain new perspectives, whereas visiting friends provides social interaction that can lead to emotional relief and support. These activities help balance the intense demands of academic life with personal well-being, ensuring that students do not become overwhelmed by their responsibilities. Emotion-focused coping strategies, such as engaging in enjoyable and relaxing activities, can significantly mitigate stress (Laframboise et al., 2023).

As indicated by the previous study, for some PE graduate students, the physical release of emotions through shouting or crying in a safe space could be an effective way to cope with stress. Visiting places that allow this type of emotional expression can be

particularly beneficial. Finding a secluded natural environment, such as a forest or beach, where one can freely express pent-up emotions, can lead to significant emotional relief. These practices help to relieve the physical and psychological tension accumulated from academic pressures, thereby improving overall mental health and resilience. Such activities align with the coping strategies discussed, in which physical activities and emotional release are emphasized as important methods for managing stress (Sato et al., 2019).

The same result emphasized that allocating free time or going out with friends is another crucial aspect of engaging in recreational activities. This practice allows PE graduate students to gain a fresh perspective on their studies and professional development. Personal time can be spent engaging in hobbies, meditating, or simply relaxing, which helps maintain a healthy work-life balance. Additionally, spending time with friends provides a sense of community and belonging, which are essential for mental well-being. By prioritizing recreational activities, PE graduate students can mitigate the adverse effects of stress and enhance their overall productivity and satisfaction. Effective time management and the ability to balance academic and personal lives are critical for the success and well-being of graduate students (Cho & Kim, 2019).

Being Optimistic and Resilient

The next theme that emerged was participants' unwavering optimism and resilience. Despite the struggles faced in their professional development pursuits, they consistently maintain a positive outlook. They perceive challenges as valuable opportunities for growth and learning rather than insurmountable obstacles. This optimistic perspective helps them stay motivated and enhances their ability to navigate difficulties effectively. Consequently, maintaining this outlook is crucial for overcoming obstacles and achieving long-term success.

This result aligns with the findings that PE graduate students face various challenges in their professional development; however, maintaining a positive mindset can significantly benefit them. By staying optimistic, these students can effectively handle issues, such as academic stress, financial limitations, and juggling multiple responsibilities. Self-awareness and reflection are key factors for success in postgraduate studies, as they allow students to actively participate in learning and adapt to changing demands. Emphasizing the

positive aspects of their experiences and potential outcomes helps them cope with stress and remain motivated throughout their academic journeys. Additionally, viewing challenges as opportunities for growth fosters resilience, which is crucial for overcoming setbacks and progressing toward career objectives (Savory, 2022).

In addition to a positive mindset, resilience also plays a vital role in the professional development of PE graduate students. Resilience allows students to persist despite difficulties in using setbacks as learning experiences rather than insurmountable barriers. It was found that a supportive learning environment and financial accessibility were key factors in helping graduate students succeed. Resilient students are more likely to seek and utilize these resources effectively, ensuring that they have the support needed to navigate their educational paths. Moreover, engaging in practices that promote mental well-being, such as mindfulness and stress management techniques, helps students maintain resilience. By conditioning themselves to remain calm and composing under pressure, PE graduate students can tackle challenges more effectively, leading to better academic and professional outcomes (Elhage et al., 2022).

The same result pointed out that the support of a strong social network is indispensable for PE graduate students striving to achieve their professional developmental goals. Thus, the importance of a supportive circle of friends, family, and academic mentors cannot be overstated. These relationships provide emotional support, practical assistance, and encouragement, all of which are crucial for maintaining a positive mindset and resilience. Students who feel supported are more likely to have faith in their ability to overcome challenges and successfully complete their studies. By adopting a measured and steady approach to their goals, PE graduate students can rely on their support networks to provide guidance and motivation, ensuring that they remain on track. This combination of optimism, resilience, and support creates a robust framework for professional development, enabling students to thrive in their academic and future professional endeavors (Cho and Kim, 2019).

Upgrading Technological Skills

The next theme highlighted the necessity of upgrading technological skills in their approaches. Adapting to challenges with creative solutions not only strengthens

problem-solving skills but also unlocks new opportunities for professional advancement. By thinking outside the box and devising novel ways to overcome obstacles, individuals can set themselves apart in their fields and explore new career trajectories. Embracing innovation cultivates resilience and adaptability, which are crucial for navigating complex environments. This mindset empowers individuals to achieve their career goals more effectively, as they become better equipped to handle unexpected challenges and seize emerging opportunities.

This result aligned with the findings that they use artificial intelligence (AI) tools to work on their academic assignments and teaching tasks. Graduate students often receive academic assignments and tasks. With the increasing availability of technology, challenges in academic assignments and teaching tasks can be overcome using AI tools. This demonstrates that AI tools are effective digital aids for assisting graduate students in their academic research assignments (Kurniati & Fithriani, 2022).

The same result emphasized that AI tools was often closely linked with computing, some participants mentioned seeking assistance and advice from friends with advanced technological expertise. This aligns with research indicating that students who may not have strong computer technology skills recognize the importance of receiving support and guidance from their peers. By leveraging the knowledge and experience of friends who are proficient in technology, individuals can bridge their own knowledge gaps and navigate AI-related challenges more effectively. This collaborative approach not only enhances their understanding of AI concepts but also underscores the value of peer support in educational and professional settings (Rodrigues et al., 2021).

This idea was also consistent with the results that some participants actively attend industrial conferences as part of their professional development strategy. Engaging in these meetings and events organized by professional organizations not only helps them upgrade their skills but also facilitates networking opportunities and collaboration with peers and experts in their field. Conferences serve as crucial platforms for knowledge sharing and dissemination, where attendees gain insights into the latest trends, advancements, and best practices. These gatherings also play a pivotal role in fostering innovation by providing a forum for exchanging ideas

and exploring new technologies or methodologies. Overall, participating in conferences enhances participants' expertise, expands their professional network, and keeps them informed about industry developments (Haus, 2020).

Having Faith in God

The participants expressed a strong belief in God, drawing on their faith to navigate and overcome their challenges. In pursuing professional development, PE graduate students encounter numerous challenges requiring resilience and steadfastness. Amid these obstacles, faith in God can serve as a profound source of strength and guidance. Central to this faith is the practice of placing God at the center of one's professional journey and praying for success. For many students, integrating spirituality with their academic endeavors means acknowledging that their abilities and achievements are gifts from God, and thus they continuously seek His favor through prayer. This spiritual approach allows students to find peace and clarity, particularly when navigating complex academic challenges and professional uncertainties. This aligns with the finding that continuous professional development is crucial for success as it ensures that individuals remain competitive and proficient in their fields. For some students, faith in God played an integral role in their academic journey. They often engage in prayer, not merely as a ritual, but as a heartfelt means of seeking divine assistance in their scholarly activities. This practice helped them find the courage and wisdom needed to face academic challenges and excel in their studies. By combining continuous learning with spiritual practices, these students cultivate a balanced approach to achieving personal and professional success (Savory, 2022).

This result also fits with the findings that seeking guidance from the Almighty One is another core element of faith in God during professional development. PE graduate students often face difficult decisions related to research topics, career paths, and balancing of multiple responsibilities. During these times, prayer becomes a vital tool for seeking divine guidance. Supportive environments and personal satisfaction derived from advanced studies can be significantly enhanced when students feel spiritually aligned with their goals. Praying for guidance helps students trust God's plan, making them more open to divine inspiration and less anxious about their future. This trust can lead to a more reflective and purpose-

driven approach to their studies, where decisions are made not only based on personal ambition but also on perceived divine direction (Elhage et al., 2022).

The same result emphasized that by surrendering their worries to God, students can experience a sense of relief, knowing that their ultimate success is divine. This surrender is not about abandoning personal effort, but about recognizing the limits of human control and finding solace in divine providence. Financial difficulties and time management were significant stressors for students. Through prayer, students can find the inner strength to persevere, believing that God will provide for their needs and guide them through their academic journeys. Spiritual resilience often translates into better stress management, improved focus, and a more balanced approach to professional development (Cho & Kim, 2019).

The same result stressed that praying and surrendering to God can significantly alleviate the stress and pressure associated with the demanding nature of graduate studies. For many students, this spiritual practice provides a sense of peace and perspective, helping them manage the anxiety and overwhelming feelings that often accompany rigorous academic programs. The literature underscores the heavy burden PE graduate students bear, including managing extensive workloads, balancing coursework, teaching responsibilities, and overcoming research-related challenges. By turning to prayer, students can find solace and strength, which can enhance their resilience and ability to cope with their academic demands. This spiritual approach not only supports their mental and emotional well-being but also contributes to a more balanced and sustainable academic experience (Casanova, 2021).

Insights that Physical Education Graduate Students Drawn from Their Experiences in Professional Development

This phase explains the overall findings of the study in terms of the learnings gleaned from the experiences of PE graduate students. These revelations might improve comprehension of the situation and offer the essential steps to achieve great performance among PE graduate students in their professional development pursuit. Meanwhile, the participants provided diverse perspectives and opinions regarding their experiences, which were categorized into six emerging themes. These themes encapsulate the key ideas derived from the participants' responses, which are outlined as follows:

a.) collaborating with others and motivation to complete the master's program; b.) being optimistic in dealing with challenges, c.) attending to professional development and d.) using AI tools responsibly.

Collaborating with Others and Motivation to Complete the Master's Program

The first theme that emerged from the participants emphasized the importance of collaborating with others and maintaining strong motivation to complete their master's program. They recognized that reaching out for support, whether from peers, mentors, or academic resources, can significantly alleviate the challenges they face. Furthermore, they highlighted the necessity of prioritizing tasks and setting clear, achievable goals to stay focused and organized. By doing so, they can better manage their time and workload, reducing the likelihood of feeling overwhelmed. Additionally, minimizing distractions was seen as crucial for optimizing productivity, allowing them to concentrate fully on their studies and make steady progress toward their academic and professional objectives. This comprehensive approach underscores a lot of strategies needed to successfully navigate the demands of a master's program.

This result aligns with the findings that PE graduate students have emphasized the importance of seeking support and maintaining high motivation to successfully navigate the challenges of their master's programs. This approach is backed by research showing that peer mentoring programs can significantly enhance social support, career readiness, and academic success among first-year graduate students. Such programs provide a network of peers who offer guidance, share experiences and provide emotional support, which can alleviate feelings of isolation and stress. Moreover, sustaining motivation is crucial for academic and personal success. Studies indicate that motivation stimulation positively influences exercise behavior among graduate students, which can be extended to academic pursuits as well. High motivation helps students remain focused, overcome obstacles, and stay committed to their goals. Thus, both peer support and motivation are essential elements in achieving success and well-being in graduate studies (Pang, et al., 2023).

The same result highlighted that by actively engaging with peers, mentors, and academic resources, PE graduate students can significantly alleviate the difficulties they face. Interaction with peers provides a

support network where students can share experiences, exchange ideas, and offer mutual encouragement. Engaging with mentors offers guidance, insights, and professional advice, helping students navigate academic and career challenges more effectively. Utilizing academic resources, such as libraries, online databases, and tutoring services, further enhances their learning experience by providing access to essential information and support. This active engagement not only enriches their academic experience by fostering a collaborative and supportive learning environment but also increases their chances of successfully completing their program. Through these interactions, students can develop a well-rounded skill set, gain confidence, and stay motivated, ultimately leading to higher academic achievement and personal growth (Gaudreault, et al., 2020).

This result also matches up with the findings that the intrinsic motivation that prompts graduate students to enroll in their programs is more than just an initial spark; it shapes their entire educational journey and profoundly influences their satisfaction and success. This internal drive encourages a sustained commitment to learning, prompting students to delve deeply into their studies and seek out opportunities for growth and development. It also instills resilience, empowering students to persevere through academic challenges and setbacks with determination and adaptability. As students experience personal fulfillment and a sense of purpose in their academic pursuits, their overall satisfaction with their program increases, contributing to a positive academic environment. Therefore, fostering and understanding this intrinsic motivation among graduate students is essential for creating a supportive and stimulating atmosphere that promotes long-term achievement, satisfaction, and overall well-being (Arini, 2019).

Being Optimistic on Dealing with Challenges

The next theme focuses on the participants' insights into the importance of maintaining optimism when facing challenges. The findings of this study highlighted that adopting a positive outlook is crucial for effectively navigating the obstacles encountered in their professional development. They believe that optimism helps them stay motivated and resilient, enabling them to overcome setbacks and continue progressing toward their goals. This positive mindset is seen as a key factor in their ability to manage stress and maintain a proactive approach to problem-solving. Ultimately, the emphasis

on optimism underscores its role as a vital coping strategy in their journey toward professional growth.

This is parallel to the findings that adopting a positive outlook among Physical Education (PE) graduate students is crucial for effectively navigating the obstacles encountered in their professional development. Maintaining a positive attitude helps them remain resilient and motivated when facing challenges such as rigorous coursework, demanding research projects, and balancing academic responsibilities with personal life. Research indicates that positivity levels are significantly related to the fear of happiness among PE graduate students, with a moderate negative correlation observed. This means that as positivity increases, the fear of happiness tends to decrease, suggesting that a positive outlook can mitigate anxieties related to achieving and maintaining happiness. By fostering positivity, PE graduate students can enhance their emotional well-being, which is essential for their overall success and satisfaction in both their academic and professional journeys (Togo & Caz, 2019).

The same result emphasized that optimism plays a crucial role in the coping strategies of various student populations, including, undergraduate students, individuals in graduate programs in Physical Education and Sports, and coaching and sports teaching students. Research indicates that optimism is associated with lower burnout levels, improved mood, increased course satisfaction, higher learning motivation, and enhanced psychological well-being. Optimism acts as a buffer against burnout, reduces anxiety and depression, and contributes to better health outcomes, such as fewer exacerbations of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and improved functional capacity. This positive mindset enables students to manage stress effectively, stay motivated, resilient, and proactive in problem-solving, highlighting optimism as a vital coping strategy for professional growth and overall well-being (Anderson, et al., 2023).

Similarly, a previous study revealed that optimism is a crucial coping strategy for PE graduate students, aiding them in their growth and professional development. Research indicates that optimism is positively correlated with problem-focused coping strategies, which enhances stress management and self-development. Optimistic PE graduate students tend to handle challenging situations better, exhibit lower levels of cynicism, and are more likely to experience

posttraumatic growth. This emphasis on optimism highlights its importance as a vital component in overcoming obstacles and fostering success in both academic and professional settings (Nurkahfi, & Supraptiningsih, 2022).

Attending to Professional Development

The next theme is about attending to professional development. The result emphasized the importance of actively pursuing professional development. They discussed how continuous learning and skill development are essential for remaining competitive in their respective fields. By consistently updating their knowledge and capabilities, they can better adapt to industry changes and advancements. Investing in professional growth not only enhances job prospects but also opens doors to more fulfilling and rewarding career paths. This proactive approach to career advancement underscores the value of lifelong learning and the pursuit of excellence in one's professional journey.

This corroborates the study which revealed the significance of ongoing professional development and seizing career prospects among PE graduate students to stay competitive in their fields. They stressed that continuous learning and skill enhancement are essential for excelling in their professions, given the dynamic nature of physical education and sports science. This aligns with the understanding that teaching is a complex activity requiring both artistic creativity and scientific precision. As PE educators, they must continually adapt to the evolving needs of their students, incorporating the latest research findings and innovative practices into their teaching methods. By integrating theory with practical application, they can provide a more comprehensive and effective learning experience. This commitment to professional growth ensures that they remain at the forefront of their field, capable of delivering high-quality education and fostering the development of their students (Brennan, et al., 2023).

Furthermore, continuous updates of knowledge among PE graduate students are crucial for adapting to industry changes and advancements. Staying current with new research, techniques, and trends ensures that they can effectively address the evolving needs of their field. This importance is evident in the development of specialized courses, such as the petroleum engineering master's program, which emphasizes real-world industry challenges. The course includes practical experiences like fluid sampling and data interpretation, providing

students with hands-on skills directly applicable to their careers. Such courses benefit both full-time and part-time students by enhancing their expertise and keeping them competitive in the job market. By continually updating their knowledge, PE graduate students can integrate cutting-edge practices into their teaching and professional activities, thereby improving their effectiveness and success in the field (Braunstein-Minkove, & DeLuca, 2019).

Using AI Tools Responsibly

The participants emphasized that using AI tools responsibly could help to expand their knowledge and it would greatly benefit their graduate studies. They view these technologies as essential tools for enhancing research efficiency, allowing them to quickly and effectively gather relevant information from a vast array of online databases and academic journals. Access to up-to-date information is crucial in their fields, ensuring that their work remains current and informed by the latest developments. Moreover, they pointed out that internet resources can help automate repetitive tasks, such as data collection and analysis, freeing up more time for critical thinking and deeper engagement with their studies. Embracing these digital tools can streamline their academic pursuits, making the research process more efficient and contributing significantly to their overall academic success.

The findings are closely linked to the observation that graduate students place significant value on internet resources as indispensable aids for improving their research efficiency and broadening their knowledge base. These resources, which encompass e-journals, e-books, and online databases, offer rapid and efficient access to a diverse array of reliable and current information. This capability allows students to promptly gather pertinent data and stay abreast of recent developments in their fields of study. Despite encountering obstacles such as slow data transmission speeds or initial difficulties in navigating complex information systems, students acknowledge the critical role of utilizing online resources in achieving academic excellence. This recognition underscores their commitment to overcoming challenges and leveraging technological tools to enhance their scholarly pursuits effectively. As such, embracing and refining skills in utilizing internet resources remain pivotal for graduate students aiming to maximize their academic potential and achieve success in their research endeavors (Yebowaah, 2019).

Another study underscores the importance of promoting network literacy among graduate students, particularly through orientation programs aimed at enhancing their proficiency in navigating electronic resources effectively. These programs are designed to equip students with the skills needed to leverage internet resources efficiently, including accessing databases, conducting online research, and critically evaluating digital information. Graduate students widely recognize the pivotal role of internet resources in enhancing their research capabilities and overall academic pursuits. By utilizing these digital tools effectively, they can streamline their research processes, stay updated with the latest scholarly developments, and enhance the quality of their academic work. This emphasis on network literacy not only supports students in their current studies but also prepares them to adapt to evolving technological advancements and contribute meaningfully to their respective fields. Thus, fostering competence in network literacy is crucial for empowering graduate students to maximize their academic potential and succeed in their scholarly endeavors (Omondi & Njoroge, 2021).

This result also fits with the findings that integrating internet resources marks a significant advancement in optimizing the academic endeavors graduate students by automating time-consuming tasks like data collection and analysis. Utilizing online tools and technologies enables graduate students to streamline these processes, freeing up valuable time and mental energy for critical thinking and more immersive engagement with their studies. This automation not only boosts efficiency but also facilitates thorough exploration of intricate concepts and research inquiries. Embracing internet resources not only enhances productivity but also enriches the academic journey, empowering students to attain deeper knowledge and contribute meaningfully to their professional domains (Guillén-Gámez, 2020).

V. IMPLICATION FOR TEACHING PRACTICE

To implement the strategies identified by the PE graduate students, they had to balance responsibilities, enhance professional support, mitigate resource limitations, manage personal issues with classmates, and develop coping mechanisms during their professional development pursuit. Addressing these challenges is particularly difficult when PE graduate students are also tasked with balancing their professional development pursuit and responsibilities in their instruction. Therefore, it is crucial to provide them with

comprehensive support and understanding. This will enable them to take the necessary measures to overcome the challenges they encounter in their professional development pursuits. By offering this support, we can ensure that PE graduate students are better equipped to navigate the complexities of their academic and professional growth.

With these experiences, coping mechanisms, and insights, the graduate school, LUCs, and SUCs might act to the needs of the PE Graduate Students to enhance their professional development pursuit. The diverse experiences and adaptive strategies of PE graduate students was found to be beneficial to continuing their professional development pursuit.

For teachers, PE graduate students, and other educational stakeholders to continue their professional development amidst the challenges of balancing work and study, school administrators must develop effective solutions to keep them motivated. These solutions should address the specific needs of PE graduate students and teachers, ensuring they have the resources and support necessary to thrive. By creating an environment that fosters motivation and addresses their concerns, administrators can help these educators and students navigate difficulties and uncertainties more effectively. This support is crucial for their ongoing professional growth and for maintaining a healthy balance between their professional responsibilities and academic pursuits.

In addition, the findings of the study suggested the importance of creating a motivating, supportive, and effective educational environment. Such an environment allows PE graduate students, teachers, and other educational stakeholders, including school administrators, to collaborate effectively. This collaboration is crucial, particularly during challenging moments, as it ensures that PE graduate students receive the necessary support and resources to meet their fundamental needs. By fostering this supportive atmosphere, educational institutions can better aid in the professional development of PE graduate students, helping them overcome obstacles and achieve their career goals. This collective effort enhances the overall quality of education and professional growth for everyone involved.

The implication of self-determination theory in this study highlights effective time management which

requires individuals to feel competent in their ability to plan, organize, and execute tasks within allocated timeframes. SDT also suggests that providing individuals with the necessary skills, strategies, and resources to manage their time effectively enhances their sense of competence. This can include training in productivity techniques, goal-setting workshops, and regular feedback on time management practices. When individuals feel capable of managing their time efficiently, they are more likely to approach tasks with confidence and achieve their objectives.

Additionally, self-determination theory underscores the importance of social connections and support in motivation and well-being. In the context of time management, relatedness involves seeking support from others, such as peers, mentors, or colleagues, to help structure their time effectively. Collaborating with others can provide accountability, encouragement, and shared insights into effective time management strategies. Building strong relationships and fostering a supportive environment where individuals can openly discuss time management challenges and share experiences promotes motivation and enhances overall productivity.

Meanwhile, applying Bertalanffy's System Theory to the professional development of PE graduate students encourages a holistic, interdisciplinary, adaptive, and emergent approach to their educational journey. This framework supports the development of well-rounded professionals who are prepared to navigate complexities in physical education, contribute to advancements in the field, and promote holistic health and wellness through education and sports.

VI. RECOMMENDATION FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This study examined the firsthand experiences, coping strategies, and perspectives of Physical Education (PE) graduate students regarding their professional development pursuits. However, the findings were based solely on the accounts of fifteen (15) PE graduate students from the Local Universities and Colleges (LUCs) and State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) in Davao de Oro.

To gather more comprehensive and substantial information, it is recommended to conduct additional research involving a larger number of participants and a wider range of locations. Increasing the participant pool

can generate diverse insights pertinent to the research questions. A greater number of participants would also facilitate the identification of similarities and differences in their perspectives. Similarly, including a broader range of locations would enable the examination of varied contextual experiences.

Furthermore, it is advisable to consider conducting follow-up interviews with the same participants to explore any consistency or changes in the gathered information over time. Additionally, further research should delve deeper into the experiences of PE graduate students in their professional development pursuits, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon within a broader context.

Moreover, it is important to expand the scope of research beyond the perspective of PE graduate students. Conducting studies from the viewpoints of teachers and other educational stakeholders would offer valuable insights and contribute to a more well-rounded understanding of the challenges and experiences associated with adapting to new methodologies and approaches. This inclusive approach would unveil a wider range of ideas and perspectives, shedding light on the recipients of these new methods.

Additionally, exploring the challenges and experiences of various stakeholders within the context of professional development can help garner increased attention and support from relevant parties. By addressing the perspectives of a diverse group of individuals involved in the educational process, future research can provide a holistic view of the professional development landscape, leading to more effective and targeted interventions.

VII. CONCLUDING REMARKS

This study focused on capturing the lived experiences, coping mechanisms, and insights of PE graduate students regarding their professional development pursuits.

I conducted in-depth interviews and a focus group discussion with selected participants, using their response transcripts as the primary data source. I created supportive environment that encouraged participants to share their stories openly. I am grateful for their cooperation and honesty, which allowed me to gather the necessary data for the subsequent stages of the research.

Throughout this research, I gained invaluable firsthand experience as a researcher. With my advisor's support, I meticulously followed all necessary procedures, dedicating significant time and effort to gather meaningful evidence. Despite the challenges, I gained profound insights into PE graduate students' experiences and coping strategies regarding their professional development. As a public teacher and student, I believe PE graduate students must engage in extensive research, have effective educational experiences, and be resourceful to fulfill their professional development needs despite the challenges they encounter.

The results revealed that participants faced various challenges in their professional development, and despite interventions from the graduate school, these measures were insufficient. It is crucial for school administrators and educational institutions to proactively address these issues with comprehensive strategies to help PE graduate students enhance their pedagogical skills, theoretical knowledge, and practical experiences through their studies.

The analysis of the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions yielded significant themes that directly addressed the three research questions posed in this study. To answer research question number one, are the Challenges of PE Graduate Students in their Professional Development Pursuit, four themes were identified. These are the experiences of the participants, clash between academic schedules and work responsibilities, assistance from others for professional development, struggles relative to financial and learning resources, and personal issues with classmates.

To answer research question number two, which is about the Coping Mechanisms of PE Graduate Students in their challenges in Professional Development Pursuit, six themes emerged. These are emphasis on being optimistic and resilient, having faith in god, scheduling and task prioritization, engaging in recreational activities, seeking guidance and motivation from support systems, and upgrading technological skills. These are all of the themes that contribute to the phenomenological inquiry in this study.

To answer research question number three, which is about the Insights that can be drawn from the lived experiences of Physical Education Graduate Students as regards their professional development, four themes emerged. These are: being optimistic in dealing with

challenges, attending to professional development, collaborating with others and motivation to complete the master's program, and utilizing AI tools responsibly. These described the accounts of the perceptions expressed by the participants in the pursuit of their professional development.

Moreover, this research contributes valuable insights into the challenges PE graduate students face in their professional development and career progression through master's programs focused on learning and training. It informs educational institutions, especially in Davao de Oro's SUCs and LUCs, on formulating policies and systems that prioritize the professional development and well-being of students and educators. The study emphasizes the importance of refining skills, acquiring specialized knowledge, and fostering continuous learning to enhance professional competence among PE graduate students and teachers.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

- I extend my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who supported me throughout this journey, your moral, financial, and spiritual assistance has been invaluable.
- I first thank God for the wisdom and strength to complete this study. To my family, especially my wife Razel and my son James Albert, your love and encouragement were my motivation.
- I appreciate my classmates in the SMCTI-MAED - P.E. program for their camaraderie, and special thanks to Sir Jeric Suguis and Sir Ken Rafon for their research support. My TED Family at DDOSC New Bataan has also been a source of strength for me as well.
- I am deeply grateful to my adviser, Dr. Roque N. Langcoy II, for his guidance, and to the panel members for their invaluable feedback. Thank you to the SMTI Research Ethics Committee for reviewing my manuscript, and to all participants who shared their insights.

Special recognition goes to Dr. Lilybeth M. Matunhay, Dr. Gloryjean C. Altamera, Dr. Mark P. Laurente, and Dr. Princes Luise Dela Tina-Picaza for allowing me to conduct this study, as well as to Dr. Gary P. Lagatiera and Dr. Anthony Pol P. Fulache for their support at Monkayo College and Maco de Oro College.

Finally, I appreciate the SMCTI Graduate School for their guidance and knowledge. Thank you all!

REFERENCES

- [1] Allen, K., and Finn K. (2023). Girl Bossing the University Side Hustle: Entrepreneurial Femininities, Post-feminism and the Veneer of 'Female Success' in Times of Crisis. *European Journal of Cultural Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/136754942311771>
- [2] Anderson, B., Bartlett, O., Osborne, R., Downey, D., Farnsworth, J. (2023). Optimism, But Not Locus of Control, Moderates Burnout in Professional Master's Athletic Training Students. *Athletic Training Education Journal* (2022) 17 (1): 28–36. <https://doi.org/10.4085/1947-380X-20-102>
- [3] Arini, G. (2019). The Postgraduate in Biochemistry analyzed by students and teachers. *Institutode Química*. <https://doi.org/10.11606/D.46.2017.tde-20092017-103947>
- [4] Baum, S., and Steele, P., (2019). After Graduate and Professional School: How Students Fare in the Labor Market. *AccessLex Institute Research* 18 (4). <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3132536>
- [5] Behnsen, P. M. (2023). Peers getting under the skin: The impact of childhood social stressors on the stress system. [PhD-Thesis - Research and graduation internal, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam]. *Ruparo*. <https://doi.org/10.5463/thesis.135>
- [6] Braunstein-Minkove, J. and DeLuca J. (2019). Effectively Adapting the Sport Management Curricula: Harnessing Internal and External Resources to Address Industry- Specific Needs. *Journal of Leisure Studies and Recreation Education*, 30, (2). pp 12-30. <https://doi.org/10.18666/schole-2015-v30-i2-6634>
- [7] Brennan, C., Murtagh, E., and Bowles, R. (2023). Turning over a new leaf: PE specialism graduates' understanding of 'quality PE. *Irish Educational Studies*, pp 1-18 doi: 10.1080/03323315.2023.2188240
- [8] Casanova V. (2021). Predictors of Graduate Students' Research Performance in the Philippine State-Run Higher Education Institution. *Journal of Education and Learning (Canadian Center of Science and Education)*-Vol. 10, Iss: 5, pp 170. DOI:10.5539/jel.v10n5p170
- [9] Cho K., and Kim S. (2019). A Study on Students' Difficulties Before and Throughout Physical Education Program at Graduate School of Education. *Journal of Digital Convergence (The Society of Digital Policy and Management)*-Vol.

- 15, Iss: 11, pp 603-610.
<https://doi.org/10.14400/JDC.2017.15.11.603>.
- [10] Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2015). *Basics of Qualitative Research*. SAGE Publications, Inc, ISBN: 9781412997461.
- [11] Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches* (4TH ed.).
- [12] Creswell, J. W., and Abbas T. (2007). Differing perspectives on mixed methods research: 303-308
- [13] Creswell J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd ed.).
- [14] Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2013). *Las estrategias de investigacion cualitativa: Manual de investigacion cualitativa. Vol. III (Vol. 3)*. Editorial GEDISA.
- [15] Elhage, R., Laosebikan, O., and Parker K. (2022). Alumni Perceptions of the Educational Benefits of Their Graduate Degrees from a PBI. *Journal of Effective Teaching in Higher Education*, vol. 5, no. 2 <https://doi.org/10.36021/jethe.v5i2.268>
- [16] Gao, X., Chen, Y., and Campbell, L. (2023). The Development of the Perceptions of Graduate Assistants and Faculty Professional Working Relationships Instrument. *Higher Education Research & Development* <https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2023.2218815>
- [17] Gaudreault, K. L., Richards, A., Simonton, K., and Simonton, A. (2020). The Influence of a Master's Degree on the Socialization of Two Physical Education Professionals. *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education*, 40 (2). <https://doi.org/10.1123/jtpe.2019-0218>
- [18] Guillén-Gámez, F.D., Ruiz-Palmero, J., Sánchez-Rivas, E. (2020). ICT resources for research: an ANOVA analysis on the digital research skills of higher education teachers comparing the areas of knowledge within each gender. *Educ Inf Technol* 25, 4575–4589. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-020-10176-6>
- [19] Habibi-Azar A., Keyhan J., and Talebi, B. (2021). A Phenomenological study of teachers' lived experiences on the challenges of holding in-service training courses by Ministry of Education. *Technology of Education Journal*, 15, (4), pp 743-756. Doi:20.1001.1.20080441.1400.15.4.10.1
- [20] Hauss, K. (2020). What are the social and scientific benefits of participating at academic conferences? Insights from a survey among doctoral students and postdocs in Germany. *Research Evaluation*, 30(1), 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.1093/reseval/rvaa018>
- [21] Holmes S., and Nikiiforidou, Z. (2023). They don't realise how hard it is'. Investigating the lived experiences of higher education students with parental responsibilities during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- [22] Kurniati, E. Y., & Fithriani, R. (2022). Post-Graduate students' perceptions of Quillbot utilization in English Academic Writing class. *JELTL (Journal of English Language Teaching and Linguistics)*, 7(3), 437. <https://doi.org/10.21462/jeltl.v7i3.852>
- [23] Laframboise, SJ, Bailey T., Dang A., Rose, M., Zhou Z. , Berg M., Holland, S., and Abdul S.. (2023). Analysis of financial challenges faced by Graduate Students in Canada. <https://doi.org/10.1139/bcb-2023-0021>
- [24] Liu, T., Chen, Y., Hamilton, M., & Harris, K. (2022). Peer mentoring to enhance graduate students' sense of belonging and academic success. *Kinesiology Review*, 11(4), 285–296. <https://doi.org/10.1123/kr.2022-0019>
- [25] Lorenzetti, D., Lorenzetti L., Nowell L., Jacobsen M., (2023). Exploring International Graduate Students' Experiences, Challenges, and Peer Relationships. *Journal of international Students*-Vol. 14, Iss: 2. <https://doi.org/10.32674/jis.v14i2.5186>
- [26] Magnaye, L., Malabarbas G., (2022). Research Competence of Graduate Students of the College of Education, Northwest Samar State University, Philippines. *Journal ay Asia Pacific Journal of Advanced Education and Technology*-Vol. 1, Iss: 3, pp 29-39. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.54476/apjaet/78006>
- [27] Mauldin, R. L., Barros-Lane, L., Tarbet, Z., Fujimoto, K., & Narendorf, S. C. (2022). Cohort-Based education and other factors related to student peer relationships: A Mixed Methods Social Network analysis. *Education Sciences*, 12(3), 205. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci12030205>
- [28] Mulrenan, P. (2022). My achievement will be their achievement': The Challenges of Role Modelling for Student Parents at UK Universities. *Journal of Further and Higher Education* Vol. 47 (1),

- pp105-117.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/0309877X.2022.2099734>
- [29] Mykola, S., and Ruslana, S. (2023). Distance Learning as a Cause of Professional Burnout of Physical Education Teachers. *Sport Science and Human Health*, 1(9). DOI: 10.28925/2664-2069.2023.114
- [30] Nurkahfi, A., and Supraptiningsih E. (2022). Pengaruh Optimisme terhadap Strategi Coping. *Psychology Science*, 2 (1). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.29313/bcsp.v2i1.1434>
- [31] Omondi, F., and Njoroge O.R., (2021). Among University Students: The Case of Kabarak University, Kenya. *International Journal of Current Aspects*, 5(2), 21-35. <https://doi.org/10.35942/ijcab.v5i2.162>
- [32] Onishi K., and Nagaoka S. (2020). Graduate Education and Long-Term Inventive Performance: Evidence from Undergraduates' Choices during Recessions. *Journal of Economics and Management Strategy*, 29 (3). <https://doi.org/10.1111/jems.12382>
- [33] Pangket, W., (2023). Research Writing Readiness of Graduate Students in a Philippine State College. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research-Vol. 22*, Iss: 4, pp 141-159.
- [34] Pang, L., Guo, Q., Ye, Z., and Yang, J., (2023). Research on Postgraduates' Physical Exercise Behavior and Motivation. *International Journal of Physical Activity and Health*, 2 (1), 23. <https://doi.org/10.18122/ijpah.020123.boisestate>
- [35] Perez, R. J., Robbins, C. K., Harris, L. W., Jr., & Montgomery, C. (2020). Exploring graduate students' socialization to equity, diversity, and inclusion. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*, 13(2), 133–145. <https://doi.org/10.1037/dhe0000115>
- [36] Rodrigues, A. L., Cerdeira, L., De Lourdes Machado-Taylor, M., & Alves, H. (2021). Technological Skills in Higher Education—Different needs and different uses. *Education Sciences*, 11(7), 326. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci11070326>
- [37] Sáez I., Solabarrieta, J., Rubio, I. (2021). Reasons for Sports-Based Physical Activity Dropouts in University Students. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* (Multidisciplinary Digital Publishing Institute)- Vol. 18, Iss: 11, pp 5721. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph18115721>
- [38] Savory, M., (2022). Tailoring professional development to postgraduate students: it's not the chicken, it's the egg. *International Conference on Higher Education Advances (HEAd'23) Universitat Politècnica de València, València, 2023* DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4995/HEAd23.2023.16171>
- [39] Sato T., Kozub, F., and Rivera A.(2019). Students' Academic and Social Transition to New Graduate Programs in Physical Education Teacher Education. *Multicultural Learning and Teaching*, Vol. 12, Iss: 2 <https://doi.org/10.1515/mlt-2015-0018>
- [40] Sturman, E. D., & Mongrain, M. (2019). Entrapment and perceived status in graduate students experiencing a recurrence of major depression. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science / Revue canadienne des sciences du comportement*, 40(3), 185–188. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0008-400X.40.3.185>
- [41] Sutherland, J., Vahedi, Z. and Zannella, L. 2022. Reflections from graduate student instructors on their first-time teaching reveal structural and individual challenges. *Open Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*. 2, 1 (Oct. 2022), 59–75.
- [42] Togo, O., and Caz, C. (2019). The Relationship between Positivity and Fear of Happiness in People Applying to Graduate Programs in Physical Education and Sports Department. *Asian Journal of Education and Training Vol. 5 No. 1*, 93-96. DOI: 10.20448/journal.522.2019.51.93.96
- [43] Tope, M. (2023). Challenges, Coping Mechanism of Non-Specialized Teachers and Organizational Resiliency of Secondary Schools in the Division of Laguna, 126, (1). doi:10.47119/IJRP1001261620224989
- [44] Worley, J. T., Meter, D. J., Hall, A. R., Nishina, A., & Medina, M. A. (2023). Prospective associations between peer support, academic competence, and anxiety in college students. *Social Psychology of Education*, 26(4), 1017–1035. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11218-023-09781-3>
- [45] Yebowaah, F., (2019). Comparative Study of Library and Internet Use as a Source of Information by Graduate Students of the University for Development Studies, Ghana. *Library Philosophy and Practice* (e-journal). 1606. <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/1606>
- [46]