

Relationship of Loan Dependency and Financial Well-being of Public School Teachers: Basis for Financial Literacy Program

Ms. Kathyrine Bulyok Balanay¹, Dr. Garry Leopoldo Bastida²

¹Administrative Assistant, Finance Department, Davao Oriental State University

²Associate Professor 1, Faculty, Davao Oriental State University

Abstract

This study evaluates the financial landscape of permanent public school teachers in a localized economic environment. Specifically, it assesses their level of loan dependency and perceived financial well-being while navigating economic constraints like stagnant wages and a rising cost of living. The primary objective of this study was to determine the relationship between loan dependency and the financial well-being of public school teachers in San Isidro, Davao Oriental. Ultimately, these empirical findings served as the basis for proposing a contextualized financial literacy program to support the financial independence of local educators. Employing a quantitative descriptive-correlational design, the study surveyed 199 randomly selected permanent public school teachers holding Plantilla positions across 27 schools. Data were gathered using expert-validated questionnaires measuring loan dependency and financial well-being through targeted behavioral indicators. Statistical treatments included weighted mean, Pearson r correlation analysis, and ANOVA. Before field collection, formal ethical clearance was secured from the university ethics board alongside administrative permissions from DepEd and school heads. Following a reliability pilot test, data collection was conducted face-to-face using printed questionnaires. The researcher conducted brief orientations highlighting voluntary participation and data privacy anonymity, immediately collecting completed forms on-site to ensure complete collation. Descriptive findings revealed very high loan dependency due to easy credit access, yet teachers paradoxically reported high financial well-being, indicating a psychological normalization of debt. Pearson analysis established a significant, moderate, positive relationship between the two variables ($r = 0.477$, $p < .001$), showing that credit is functionally used to maintain lifestyle stability. ANOVA results showed that civil status significantly affects loan dependency ($p = .012$), while sex ($p = .008$) and years of service ($p = .041$) impact financial well-being, exposing a critical mid-career dip at 11–15 years. Consequently, the study proposes the “Balanced Teacher Initiative,” a career-stage and gender-responsive financial literacy program to reduce systemic debt dependency.

Keywords: Loan dependency, Financial well-being, Public school teachers, San Isidro, Philippines.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Financial well-being (FWB) is essentially defined as an individual’s situation of having financial security

and the freedom of choice in both the present and the future. However, many public school teachers in the Philippines face significant challenges in achieving this state. Their financial conditions are frequently met with limitations, resulting in them being less financially sound and having very small savings for unforeseen circumstances and personal needs (Espesor, 2024). This struggle is fueled by stagnant wages, rising costs for medical bills and family/children's education, and the necessity to purchase their own classroom supplies. Ultimately, the pervasive problem of teachers' loans has become more serious due to the dedication required for fulfilling extensive family, personal, and professional responsibilities (Tagapulot & Macalisang, 2024).

Furthermore, the financial difficulties that teachers face have repercussions that go beyond the personal sphere, and they are a direct cause of decreased job performance and consequently, a lower quality of the education sector. For public school teachers, who are the architects of the future, FWB is of utmost importance as their financial security is a necessity. Studies reveal that those caught in the web of debt tend to have stress-related job satisfaction problems and consequently, their overall wellbeing is affected negatively (Garcia et al., 2023). Staff with poor financial well-being can be more prone to work-related accidents, absenteeism, and a decline in work quality and efficiency, eventually making the problem of teacher turnover in educational institutions even worse (Tagapulot & Macalisang, 2024).

On the other hand, loan dependency is not only a sign of inability to manage finances but also a good thing taken on account driven by necessary responsibilities. Loans are often utilized by teachers for essential development purposes, such as securing health and safety, funding education, or covering emergencies. Research supports the idea that loans, when used for positive investments like home improvement, school fees, or other forms of development, can have a statistically significant positive effect on household financial well-being, enhancing the domestic welfare of educators (Bett & Kirui, 2018). Therefore, while borrowing provides necessary short-term flexibility, it risks becoming a long-term burden if the distinction between beneficial, structured debt and unsustainable, high-interest debt is not clearly established.

Despite the recognized national issues concerning teachers' financial struggles, the situation in the Davao Region, where many educators suffer from a crippling burden of loans, threatens to become a serious local issue. Crucially, there is a gaping research gap, as no existing study has been conducted specifically in Davao Oriental to quantify how loan dependency affects the financial well-being of its public school teachers; existing local studies are limited to other areas like Davao City. The urgency of this study is thus apparent, as it aims to fill this knowledge gap by correlating loan dependency with financial well-being among the teachers in San Isidro. The data gathered served as the essential basis for financial literacy program, policy formulation, and support systems designed to ameliorate the specific financial scenario of the educators in the local area.

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to determine the relationship between loan dependency and the financial well-being of public school teachers in San Isidro, Davao Oriental. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of;
 - 1.1 Age
 - 1.2 Sex
 - 1.3 Civil Status
 - 1.4 Rank/Position
 - 1.5 Years of Service;

- 1.6 Number of loans availed; and
- 1.7 Number of years having loan history?
2. What is the level of loan dependency of public-school teachers in terms of
 - 2.1 Accessibility and Affordability,
 - 2.2 Financial Needs and Responsibilities,
 - 2.3 Specific Purchases and Investments, and
 - 2.4 Personal Goals and Aspirations?
3. What is the level of financial well-being of public-school teachers in terms of;
 - 3.1 Income Sufficiency,
 - 3.2 Debt and Liabilities,
 - 3.3 Financial Knowledge and Skills,
 - 3.4 Financial Stability, and
 - 3.5 Retirement Preparedness?
4. Is there a significant relationship between loan dependency and financial well-being of public school teachers in San Isidro, Davao Oriental?
5. Is there a significant difference on loan dependency and financial well-being of public school teachers when grouped according to its demographic profile?
6. What financial literacy program can be proposed based on the findings regarding the loan dependency and financial well-being of the teachers?

Objectives of the Study

General Objective:

The objective of this study was to investigate the relationship between loan dependency and financial well-being among public school teachers in San Isidro, Davao Oriental.

Specific Objectives:

1. To determine the demographic profile of the public school teachers in San Isidro, Davao Oriental in terms of:
 - a. Age
 - b. Sex
 - c. Civil Status
 - d. Rank/Position
 - e. Years of Service
 - f. Number of loans, and
 - g. Number of years having loan history
2. To determine the level of loan dependency among public school teachers in terms of:
 - a. Accessibility and Affordability
 - b. Financial Needs and Responsibilities
 - c. Specific Purchases and Investments; and
 - d. Personal Goals and Aspirations
3. To determine the level of financial well-being among public school teachers in terms of:
 - a. Income Sufficiency
 - b. Debt and Liabilities
 - c. Financial Knowledge and Skills
 - d. Financial Stability; and

- e. Retirement Preparedness
4. To determine the significant relationship between loan dependency and financial well-being of public school teachers in San Isidro, Davao Oriental.
5. To determine the significant difference on loan dependency and financial well-being of public school teachers when grouped according to its demographic profile.
6. To propose a financial literacy program based on the findings regarding the loan dependency and financial well-being of the teachers.

Hypotheses

HO₁. There is no significant relationship between loan dependency and the financial well-being of public school teachers in San Isidro, Davao Oriental.

HO₂. There is no significant difference in loan dependency and financial well-being among public school teachers when they are grouped according to their demographic profile.

Significance of the Study

This study provides an inclusive understanding about the financial landscape of public-school teachers in San Isidro, Davao Oriental. The findings of this study give valuable insights to the following;

Public School Teachers. This study serves as a self-assessment tool for teachers to examine their loan dependence and financial well-being. Ultimately, by emphasizing the correlation between these two variables, the research will help them to be aware of the impact of their borrowing habits on their overall health in terms of finance. It will probably encourage them to gravitate toward more cognizant financial behavior and, subsequently, to understand what type of financial literacy training they need.

Department of Education (DepEd) and School Administrators. Schools' administrators in the DepEd will obtain real-time statistics about the borrowing situation and financial conditions of public-school teachers through the outcome of this study. This will further be the basis in developing and implementing specific financial literacy programs, counseling services, or wellness initiatives that address the unique financial problems of the educators. Addressing these issues may bring out positive results in job satisfaction, employee stress levels, and retention rates of teachers.

Financial Institutions (Ex. Banks, Cooperatives, Lending Institutions). This study gives better understanding of the financial borrowing pattern and the financial needs of public-school teachers by financial institutions. The institutions can, as a result, develop better self-sustainable loan products and financial services or educational campaigns attuned to the financial realities of teachers and help them avoid falling into a debt trap.

Policymakers and Government Agencies. This study will give insights to policymakers and government agencies that would be the basis to create policies in order to enhance the financial well-being of teachers. These policies may include salary adjustments, benefits or programs sponsored by the government that give assistance to teachers reducing their reliance on loans.

Future Researchers. This study can be a reference for future researchers who would also want to investigate about the financial well-being of public employees in other sectors and in another locality. This can provide frameworks and empirical data that can be used on exploring other related variables and design interventions that would help in improving the financial well-being of educators.

Scope and Limitations

The study was conducted within the Municipality of San Isidro, Davao Oriental. The respondents of the study were permanent public school teachers teaching in elementary, secondary and tertiary levels holding Plantilla positions. The participants meet the criteria of having actively served for a minimum of one year

and held at least one outstanding loan with any financial institution. Participants were currently assigned to and working in a public school located in the municipality of San Isidro, Davao Oriental and participated voluntarily in the study. Teachers excluded from this study were those who were not permanent employees, like substitute teachers, provisional teachers, volunteer teachers, part-time teachers, and contractual or job order teachers. Excluded also were those public school teachers who did not have any existing loans and those who were on a long-term leave, like maternity leave, study leave, etc. Lastly, teachers working in private schools or in other municipalities outside San Isidro, Davao Oriental and those teachers who declined to give their consent to participate were also excluded from the study. The respondents were selected using simple random sampling. The data gathering and collection for this study were conducted from February 2026-March 2026.

Definition of Terms

Loan Dependency

Loan dependency denotes the condition in which a person or a household predominantly and constantly resorts to loans, credits or borrowed money to fulfill necessary needs, control daily expenses or pursue personal aspirations, thus, often revealing a financial setting where the income cannot cover the needs (Mabignay et al., 2022).

In the current research, loan dependency serves as the independent variable which is determined by the self-reported ranking of reliance on borrowing among public school teachers of San Isidro, Davao Oriental. This variable was assessed using a questionnaire designed to evaluate the extent of their agreement on statements divided into four different dimensions (indicators). The first indicator is accessibility and affordability which is related to the easy access to loans and the perceived burden of repayment terms, then financial needs and responsibilities indicating the requirement of loans to meet essential family and personal obligations. The third one, specific purchases and investments that tries to understand the consumer credit in terms of major asset acquisition or goal-oriented expense funding and finally, goals and aspirations that are about borrowing because of the need to pursue personal life goals or improved quality of life.

Financial Well-being

Financial well-being can be regarded as a condition in which a person can completely satisfy the present and future financial needs, is confident about their financial future, and has the power to make life's enjoyable choices. It is the main objective of proper handling of finances (CFPB, 2015).

In this study, financial well-being is the dependent variable, measured by the perceived financial health and stability of the public school teachers. This perception is quantified using a research instrument that assesses the teachers' satisfaction across five key dimensions (indicators); the income sufficiency that pertains to the extent to which their current income meets their needs and wants without undue stress; debt and liabilities that reflects their comfort level and management efficiency regarding outstanding debts; financial knowledge and skills that measures their self-assessed competence in understanding and applying financial concepts like budgeting and investing; financial stability that assesses their capacity to handle unexpected financial shocks or emergencies; and retirement preparedness which relates to their confidence and planning status concerning long-term financial security after retirement.

Financial Literacy Program

Financial literacy programs are structured interventions designed to provide individuals with the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to make effective personal financial decisions. Often delivered through workshops, online courses, or counseling, these programs aim to improve lifetime financial well-

being by teaching participants how to understand financial concepts, set goals, budget, manage debt, and invest. They are generally categorized into three types: general programs for the public, targeted initiatives for vulnerable groups, and workplace programs for employees. By offering practical strategies and tools, these programs serve as an essential resource for improving overall financial planning and decision-making (Yasman, 2024).

The financial literacy program titled “Balanced Teacher Initiative: A Career-Stage and Gender-Responsive Financial Literacy Program” proposed by this study was supported by the gathered data from the significant findings concerning the public school teachers' loan dependency level, their financial well-being level, and the correlation between the two variables. The program consists of a series of seminar-based educational programs designed to meet the needs of teachers at different career stages and socioeconomic levels. This initiative aims on both cognitive and behavioral "Learning Take-aways" by using expert-led discourse to reshape the financial attitudes and intentions of the teachers.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND FRAMEWORK

This chapter presents a comprehensive discussion of relevant literatures and studies gathered from various academic and professional sources to establish a foundational understanding of the research variables. It begins with the Review of Related Literature, which presents the variables. The loan dependency, through its indicators of accessibility and affordability, financial needs and responsibilities, specific purchases and investments, and personal goals and aspirations, alongside with financial well-being, characterized by income sufficiency, debts and liabilities, financial knowledge and skills, financial stability and retirement preparedness. The chapter then establishes the Theoretical Framework, identifying the established academic models that ground the study, followed by the Conceptual Framework, which illustrates the specific relationship between the variables. Finally, it includes a Synthesis that integrates the discussed literature and frameworks to highlight research gaps and provide a unified rationale for the study's objectives

Literature and Studies

This section discusses relevant literatures and studies gathered from various academic and professional sources to provide a foundational understanding of the research variables. The first variable, loan dependency, is presented through indicators that include the accessibility and affordability of credit, which dictates how easily educators can obtain financial assistance. It also encompasses the financial needs and responsibilities, specific purchases and investments, and personal goals and aspirations. The second variable, financial well-being, is examined through the indicators of income sufficiency and the effective management of debts and liabilities. Additionally, it incorporates financial knowledge and skills, financial stability and retirement preparedness, illustrating the capacity to maintain a secure financial status.

Loan Dependency

People all across the world work to make their financial lives better. In an effort to improve their financial situation, well-being, and health, they make financial decisions (spending, saving, borrowing, etc.) to increase their assets and safeguard their resources. Financial decisions, however, can be especially difficult. Because of the expanding global economy, technological advancements, and the proliferation of financial products and services (such as easy access to loans), people are witnessing a rapid change in the financial system in the modern world (Sehrawat et al., 2021). Hence, the goal of government policies in many nations, particularly developing nations, has been to promote greater access to financial services,

bank accounts, and credit products, particularly to the rapidly growing number of consumer loans (Dewi et al., 2020). The internal and external factors that influence loan dependency were shown in the aspects of accessibility and affordability, financial needs and responsibilities, specific purchases and investments, and personal goals and aspirations (Levara et al., 2024).

However, teachers in public schools face numerous financial challenges. Their primary source of income, their monthly salary, is insufficient to pay for their daily needs. They turn to other revenue streams like networking, online sales, tutoring, and their spouse's pay. However, because they have more costs to cover, they take out loans from both public and private lenders. They still struggle financially to pay off their debts because they overborrowed. Their lack of financial literacy is reflected in their financial difficulties and struggles. Teachers play a significant role in both the moral development of young people and the expansion of the economy. A pay raise is still a band-aid fix, even though it might be a short-term fix for their financial difficulties. Generally speaking, spending increases with income. Therefore, it's critical that they improve their financial literacy and knowledge (Fernando & Arrieta, 2023).

Accessibility and Affordability

Lenders have seen people with low incomes as high-risk borrowers. They are not allowed to use formal credit and have to build their own homes with informal credit at very high rates (Jones & Stead, 2020).

According to Malenya and Kariuki (2017) microfinance banking services helped people get access to financial services. Stated further that accessibility was important because it affected customers' decisions. This was because branches were easy to get to and close to customers. It is recommended that financial institutions should prioritize making services affordable, particularly in relation to the pricing of loans, transaction fees, and ledger fees.

In the aspect of getting loan for housing purposes, Gambo et al. (2021) stated that even though private developers and cooperative societies help low-income people get housing finance, it is still very hard for them to do so. People's ability to get and stay in housing is not just about how much it costs and how much money they make. For low-income earners, especially primary school teachers, this has been impossible because they can't get or afford housing finance. The trouble on finding collateral for bank security makes it hard to get housing finance loans. To help primary school teachers in achieving their dream of owning a home, it was suggested that banks and other financial institutions make housing finance loans available and affordable to people with low incomes.

In addition, Adewusi (2021) stated that income of the applicant, women in government jobs, women with higher education, being a married woman, the length of time the woman has been with the bank, and having collateral assets all make it easier for women to get loans. On the other hand, women who work for themselves or in private companies, have low levels of education, ask for a lot of money, need a long time to pay it back, or have a history of defaulting on loans make it harder for women to get loans.

Brixiova et al. (2020) cited that affordable finance is important for job growth. Weak property rights, gaps in financial auditing, and a lack of financial skills among entrepreneurs make it hard for new businesses to get credit. A number of studies have also shown that small businesses, which always say they have more growth problems than medium-sized or large businesses, are financially less stable than larger businesses and are less likely to get formal loans. Access to loan financing has a positive impact on the increase in the number of permanent employees. Using sample decompositions based on loan characteristics shows that the effects are not the same for all loans. For example, larger loans and loans with smaller collateral and longer maturities have a stronger and more significant effect on employment.

Financial Needs and Responsibilities

Financial needs are defined as the essential, non-discretionary outlays required for an individual to maintain basic living standards. These encompass fundamental subsistence (housing, utilities, and nutrition), health maintenance, and the fulfillment of prior economic commitments, such as debt obligations and transportation costs (Bankrate, 2024). According to the LegalClarity Team (2026), financial responsibility is defined as the active practice of managing monetary resources to ensure that all financial obligations are met, unexpected expenses are absorbed, and wealth is accumulated over time. This management style includes a broad range of behaviors, such as the consistent payment of liabilities, maintaining controlled debt levels, retirement planning, and precise tax compliance. The literature highlights that failure to maintain financial responsibility results in severe institutional and economic consequences, including increased costs of credit, the possibility of wage garnishment, and long-term debt burdens that may persist even through bankruptcy proceedings.

The study of Fernando & Arrieta (2023) argued that during the pandemic, the significant fluctuations in the prices of essential goods and other commodities greatly affected individuals' lives. Many educators often borrow amounts exceeding their earnings from various lending institutions. The individuals participated in various lending or pawning schemes to meet their financial requirements. They indicated that participants face financial challenges and consistently struggle to meet their basic needs.

Moreover, Njuguna et al. (2023) proposed that to promote teacher participation in effective professional development programs, head teachers' job evaluations should incorporate an audit of skill requirements, offer continuous short-term refresher courses in relevant areas, decentralize training, and acknowledge head teachers' academic accomplishments through promotions and salary increases.

Specific Purchases and Investments

Expenditure must be strategically planned in the present to ensure future stability. The rational spender employs a measured strategy; utilizing credit cards for emergencies reflects a clear mindset, while using them to fulfill the demonstration effect or for impulsive purchases signifies irrational spending behavior. Mahendru et al. (2022) emphasized the necessity to distinguish between spendthrift and extravagant, need and greed, as well as impulsive and compulsive purchasing behaviors. The lack of planning results in impulsive expenditure. Consumers demonstrate a propensity to invest in products produced by environmentally conscious and socially responsible suppliers, considering it a factor in their financial well-being. In addition, financial well-being involves a sustained investment strategy related to retirement, health, education, and preparedness for emergencies for oneself and family. The individual's propensity for risk determines their investment choices. Prudent investments foster financial security and safeguard both short- and long-term interests by cultivating a sense of autonomy. Commencing earning and investing at a young age facilitates rational investment practices.

The study of Velmurugan et al. (2015) concluded that investments made in diverse avenues are anticipated to yield capital appreciation and both short-term and long-term returns. The fundamental concept of investment for all government, private, self-employed, and retired individuals in the study is to allocate surplus funds into advantageous schemes that will not only facilitate capital recovery but also yield substantial returns. As individuals navigate contemporary life, they encounter diverse needs and desires that may alter the trajectory of their existence. The teaching profession demands both emotional and financial investment. The demanding role gives educators a different view on costs (Marasigan et al., 2022). The findings of the study conducted by Ngcamu et al. (2023) identified three distinct segments of investors classified based on their drive for investment based on the characteristics, namely, status-driven investors,

strong conscientiousness investors and introverted investors. The role of personality traits and the attitudes towards finance particularly influence the decisions made by consumers about tax-exempt investment products. The relationships of extraversion to finance power/prestige, and the dyads of missing information decision-making styles to tax-free investment purchasing decision, were both found to be negative.

Moreover, loyal customers exhibit a heightened interest in their own banks' services when contemplating investments in the financial market, maintain their savings with their own banks, secure mortgage loans from their own banks, and utilize other banking products and services provided by their own banks. The degree of customer loyalty indicates the probability that customers will acquire supplementary banking products (Chochol'áková et al., 2015).

Personal Goals and Aspirations

Personal Goals, as defined by Team (2025) are the self-set targets in the multiple areas of one's life, such as work, relationships, finances, etc., and personal growth objective. Such goals tend to be self-directed: set and pursued based on individual aspirations. Personalised goals are goals that reflect one's unique values, interests, and ambitions. Growth-oriented goals focus on developing parts of self-skill, experience, or personal quality. Lastly, action-oriented goals drive the necessity of an employed course of actions to reach the target.

Also, aspirations shall provide an avenue for a sense of direction in the flow of life and may drive one to actualize such dreams. These aspirations can either be intrinsic, such as having a loving companion, making friends, or developing some good skills, or extrinsic such as earning monetary benefit or getting recognition among peers. To discover your own aspirations, foremost think of activities that bring the greatest joy to your experience and picture what that future looks like for yourself. In so doing, aspirations may provide direction toward achieving (Mencias-Tabernilla 2023).

Financial Well-Being

The most common definition of financial well-being is having enough money to meet one's needs in a secure and flexible manner. Numerous academic fields, such as economics, developmental psychology, consumer decision-making, financial advising and organizations, and services marketing, have been examined in relation to financial well-being. Financial well-being is defined differently by a number of academics (Rahman et al., 2021).

Financial capability, financial literacy, and psychological factors affecting financial wellbeing (Mahendru et al., 2022). The concept of FWB is still in its infancy (Collins & Urban, 2019), and it is targeted objectively (Sehrawat et al., 2021), restricting the determinants of the complex concept to specific individual predictors, such as financial experience, financial knowledge, financial satisfaction, and financial behavior (Chavali et al., 2021). However, more intricate relationships are examined by Falahati and Sabri (2015) who looked at how behavioral variables affect FWB both individually and in combination, using gender as a moderator. The former claim is made by Greenberg and Hershfield (2019) that previous studies on FWB are limited to determinants that can be categorized into three groups which are the situational factors, psychological factors, and financial behavior.

In addition, the ability to manage personal and family finances, handle financial shocks, accomplish financial objectives, and achieve financial independence are all indicators of financial well-being (CFPB, 2015). A person's perception of their daily financial status, their ability to withstand temporary financial setbacks, their belief that they can achieve their financial objectives, and their freedom to make financial decisions and engage in leisure and recreation-related activities and services are all considered aspects of

financial well-being. Sorgente and Lanz (2017) argued that individual and family background can influence financial well-being, which can also predict other aspects of life, including depression, physical well-being, life satisfaction, and subjective well-being. Because it benefits people, families, organizations, and society in ways that go beyond the financial sphere, financial well-being is a desirable state (Dare et al., 2023).

Furthermore, financial well-being as a vital element of overall well-being and quality of life, is likely to influence other facets of quality of life, including health and medical care (Guo & Huang, 2023). As a distinct component of quality of life, financial well-being can significantly affect general health and well-being. Although not across different ethnic groups, religions, zones, and residential areas, FWB varies significantly across age groups, educational attainment, and employment sectors. Overall, Mahdzan et al. (2020) implied that all Malaysian households across the country, irrespective of their residential areas, religion, or ethnicity, perceive the negative effects of financial well being.

Insufficient long-term financial planning for retirement and record-low savings rates have made financial well-being a crucial issue for households, individuals, societies, and nations. However, there is still a dearth of research on the subject that is dispersed across several disciplines (Brüggen et al., 2017). Similarly, low-income entrepreneurs' financial well-being is strongly and negatively correlated with their use of expensive and risky financial products (Guo & Huang, 2023). A metric like income is commonly used to indicate a family's financial standing; families are classified as well-off if their income is significantly higher than the median and poor if it is significantly lower. However, Collins and Urban (2019) argued that these metrics don't account for people's financial strain or how well they manage their finances.

Mahendru et al. (2022) concluded that since the field of financial well-being research is still in its early stages, there is currently no widely agreed-upon definition or set of metrics for financial well-being. Furthermore, the bulk of the literature that is currently available focuses on developed nations, which share many characteristics in terms of income levels, consumption, and saving habits. As a result, the current definition of financial well-being is incomplete. Future research could conduct demographic studies that differ from those covered by the current literature in terms of income levels, lifestyles, consumption patterns, and investment habits in order to get around this restriction. These new studies would allow us to determine whether the understanding of financial well-being among consumers in developing nations is similar to or different from that of consumers in the developed world. Stated further that individuals' financial well-being has recently attracted the attention of various disciplines. Financial well-being is a tool used by governments and policymakers to gauge the success of economic growth and to organize upcoming policy initiatives. When deciding on new products, market segmentation, and market entry, corporations consider financial well-being. Lending practices at financial institutions are conditioned on the financial health of their customers. To achieve this eligibility, consumers want to improve their financial situation. For theorists and policymakers, consumer financial well-being is extremely relevant due to its diverse application.

The study of Balatif et al. (2024) found that the majority of people are currently facing a serious threat to their economy and financial security. The Internet makes shopping easy, the consumer economy encourages them to spend money, and the credit card system provides them with an accessible and transparent way to borrow money. One of the key determinants of the substantial diversity in financial well-being, financial behavior, and financial literacy was the type of employment. Specifically, government employees and self-employed people exert a higher level of Financial well being, Financial

Behavior, and Financial Literacy. Furthermore, a higher level of FWB and FB was significantly correlated with monthly household income, whereas FB was significantly correlated with monthly individual income alone (Rahman et al., 2021).

Consequently, numerous nations are implementing national strategies to enhance their citizens' financial well-being (FWB). With only a few models created in the context of developed nations, FWB as a term is still in its infancy. Therefore, in order to develop and execute effective strategies, particularly in the context of developing nations like India, it is necessary to comprehend FWB from a multidisciplinary and multidimensional perspective (Sehrawat et al., 2021).

Income Sufficiency

A good standard of living and a sufficient income are no longer guaranteed by employment. Even among the poor, employment is linked to a higher standard of living, even after adjusting for income and savings, which may indicate the non-financial advantages of work. At the macro level, Wolf et al. (2022) demonstrated how different institutional settings and economic conditions affect how employment affects the poor's standard of living. Lifetime employment used to be commonplace, but during the past century, things have drastically changed. The size of the precariat has grown along with the number of precarious workers. Research on the needs of precarious workers is lacking, despite a wealth of studies on how precarious workers view the impact of their precarity on their social, psychological, and financial well-being. The precariat has a wide range of needs, from the need for a shift in the conversation about self-reliance to the need for a higher income. The majority of the needs, which are not limited to labor, are directed at the government. However, this runs counter to the philosophy of welfare state reduction, which emphasizes the creation of more temporary or steppingstone jobs. The requirements demonstrate that labor market-oriented policies are inadequate since they only partially address the precariat needs (Ballafkih et al., 2017).

In addition, while 7% of older adults had income but felt it was insufficient to meet their basic needs, 43% of them had no income at all. Approximately 9% of older adults were no longer employed. Nearly 18% of older adults did not own any assets, and nearly 70% had not received a pension. Compared to older adults whose income was sufficient to meet their basic needs, those whose income was only partially sufficient are more likely to experience psychological distress and low subjective well-being (Muhammad et al., 2021).

Debt and Liabilities

In recent decades, research on consumer debt and well-being has been emerging. Nonetheless, there is a lack of research regarding the potential impact of debt portfolios on familial financial well-being. Different kinds of debts come with different kinds of financial problems. In particular, having three types of debts (mortgage, vehicle, and other debts) tends to put more pressure on people to pay their debts; having two types of debts (education and other debts) tends to make people more likely to miss payments; and having four types of debts (mortgage, credit card, education, and other debts) tends to make people more likely to go bankrupt. These results are used to make warning debt portfolios that show a higher risk of bad financial outcomes. The most important warning portfolio for debt pressure is the combination of mortgage, vehicle, and other debts; for debt delinquency, it is the combination of education and other debts; and for insolvency, it is the combination of mortgage, credit card, education, and other debts (Xiao & Yao, 2022).

The study by Chavali et al. (2021) indicated that, apart from credit commitment, all other behavioral factors such as future security, savings and investments, credit indiscipline, and financial consciousness

exert a significant influence on an individual's financial well-being. Credit indiscipline adversely affects financial well-being. Additionally, Mahendru et al. (2022) argued that because living without debt is good for your finances, smart people tend to stay away from high-interest credit. The amount of credit needed affects how people manage their credit. Making debt for useful things is good for your finances, but making debt for useless things is bad for your finances. The openness of financial products (like EMI, repayments, timelines, etc.) affects how people manage their credit.

Furthermore, Kurowski (2021) stated that individuals possessing greater financial and debt literacy are less susceptible to over-indebtedness. People who know more about debt are better able to handle credit obligations during a crisis; in this case, knowing about money is less important. The kind of credit experience also turned out to be important. Individuals with experience in consumer loans, which may be high-margin products, are more likely to have trouble paying off their debts than those with experience in mortgage loans.

Financial Knowledge and Skills

Financial knowledge is how well a person understands money matters. It is measured by looking at different parts of their basic financial knowledge, such as: compound interest, inflation, deposits, the time value of money, diversification, interest rates, debt, and assets. Financial literacy is based on financial knowledge, which helps people make decisions and develop good money habits. Financial knowledge is essential in an era characterized by the growing complexity of financial product selection, with products readily available to diverse depositors and investors (Dewi et al., 2020).

Also, Guo and Huang (2023) explained that financial knowledge as a determinant of financial well-being relies on external opportunities to access suitable and advantageous financial services and policies. At the same time, how people act with money also has an effect on their financial health. This means that students who know how to use digital money will be more careful with their money. Students will feel more secure about their money if they are careful about how they spend it (Respati et al., 2023).

Moreover, Mahendru et al. (2022) cited that people could learn about money through financial literacy programs, which teach them how to make the most of their capital by learning about investment principles. People can make smart economic and financial decisions, avoid making mistakes with their money, and make sure their financial health is good if they know a lot about money. A lack of financial knowledge may prevent some people from using digital financial services and products, which would take away their access to the technology they need (Yang et al., 2023).

Furthermore, on the study of Falahati & Sabri (2015), the authors found that the most important thing that affects the financial well-being of female students is their financial knowledge. Financial stress also has a big effect. Consequently, female students must develop enhanced financial management, problem-solving, and stress management skills. Because students will be the future workforce, it is important to help them get better at planning for the future, like planning their careers and their finances. Also, women teaching faculty have received favorable evaluations in financial skills, financial capability, financial objectives, and financial decision-making (Priyadharshini, 2017).

Lastly, to handle tasks like daily spending and changing assets or debts, whether they are small or large, individuals need to have enough financial knowledge. But the level of financial knowledge can differ from person to person. People who don't know enough about money can easily get into trouble and not know how to get out of it. To handle both assets and debts, they need to know a lot about money, but some people may not have enough of it. People can easily get into financial trouble when they don't know enough about money or how to fix their problems (Liu & Lin, 2021).

Financial Stability

Financial stability can be defined as having sufficient income to pay one's bills, with further allocations of money for savings and emergencies. It means you are constantly saving money, your high-interest debts are in the past, and you do not worry about emergencies due to reasonable financial foresight. It stands for the power to pay the bills uncover boards, without recourse to credit or loans. Generally, their presence is associated with financial stability-well-earned savings that can either cushion or even cover unplanned expenses or emergencies. Stability comes by different means and often encompasses a dual strategy of managing debt and consciously managing income, expenditures, and savings-information relating to stable finances. The other facet of financial stability references one's sense of security and ability to manage current and future financial circumstances (Reese, 2024).

While a singular definition of financial stability is lacking, it generally pertains to the financial system's capacity to endure and enhance economic processes, manage risks, and absorb shocks (Fabris & Luburić, 2023). Oesterreichische Nationalbank (2021) defined financial stability as the capacity of the financial system, including financial intermediaries, markets, and infrastructures, to efficiently allocate financial resources and perform essential macroeconomic functions, even in the presence of financial imbalances and shocks. On the basis of financial stability, agents are confident in the system of banking and the availability of financial services such as payments, lending, deposits, and hedging. Household financial stability refers to the capacity to maintain a suitable standard of living based on the available income while considering influencing factors (Kyrylenko et al., 2024).

Retirement Preparedness

Retirement preparedness involves achieving a state of readiness and possessing the essential resources for a seamless transition into retirement. This involves integrating financial planning, lifestyle considerations, and personal preparation to enable a smooth transition from a career to retirement. Recently, there has been a growing emphasis on the examination of retirement readiness (Das & Mallick, 2024). Retirement preparedness constitutes an essential initial phase in the transition to life post-employment. Retirement confidence refers to the preparedness and ability to approach retirement life without apprehension. Higher satisfaction with retirement savings correlates with increased retirement confidence (Ramli & Shariff, 2023).

In addition, Retirement planning generally encompasses the comprehension of pension benefits and eligibility requirements, as well as the determination of the timing and management of retirement income. Additionally, it is difficult for planning confidently for retirement due to changes of pension schemes and uncertain economic climate (Ugwu & Idemudia, 2023). This includes formulating saving strategies, investments, and budgeting to ensure financial stability upon retirement. Individuals can enhance their retirement preparedness and establish a strategy to achieve their financial objectives through a proactive approach.

Also, Qi et al. (2022) stated that retirement planning is essential for nearly all employed individuals. Upon retirement, individuals cease to receive income from employment; nonetheless, they continue to incur various expenses, such as housing, groceries, medical costs, and other routine expenditures associated with daily living. Thus it is necessary that individual must proactively prepare for retirement. Individuals must enhance their financial management practices and prioritize retirement planning in advance. This capability and intention may facilitate improved financial decisions that will directly impact their retirement financial future (She et al., 2024).

Moreover, previous research on retirement preparedness has shown that individuals globally are often either inadequately prepared or entirely unprepared for retirement. Numerous studies stated that many individuals globally are unprepared for retirement. Though retirement planning is not easy, lack of retirement preparedness can lead to dissatisfaction (Ramli & Shariff, 2023). Besides, Jaafar et al. (2022) argued that increased level of financial stress among millennials correlates with a heightened preparedness for retirement. Some people might say that people who are very stressed about money are more likely to take care of their money problems. Likewise, saving behavior significantly and positively influences the degree of retirement preparedness, indicating that awareness of saving fosters sound financial practices, thereby enhancing retirement readiness.

Kim and Hanna (2015) found that households exhibiting higher cognitive capacity, indicated by educational attainment, and greater financial experience, represented by racial or ethnic affiliation, are more inclined to possess an accurate evaluation of their retirement readiness. It can be inferred that retirement savings are not affected by an employee's financial literacy rate, but rather by their income level, as retirement contributions are typically a percentage of their salary (Aluodi et al., 2017). Clear goals for retirement workers be better prepared to retire, being more confident in their retirement and managing better their finances. The intention behind this behavior does not make employees prepared to leave work when they are ready. Those who have planned for retirement, according to studies, are found to have higher subjective well-being (Guptan et al., 2021).

Furthermore, it is becoming more and more important to stay healthy and happy as you get older because the population is getting older quickly and people are spending longer in retirement. Planning for retirement may improve readiness and confidence for retirement and lead to better outcomes after retirement (Liu et al., 2022). Since saving for retirement is a long-term habit, teachers need to keep their students interested in pension literacy materials. This is because training usually only changes behavior in the short term. This is where financial literacy, that is lifting of behavioral obstacles to this crucial skill in financial decision making, strengthens retirement preparedness. Proper knowledge about pension plans, such as contribution rates, what investment strategy used by the plan, who can withdraw, and other benefits from the plan, are essential to improving preparedness to retire (Rodrigo & Kim, 2023).

Lastly, She et al. (2024) argued that employers are very important when it comes to keeping their workers up to date on their finances. They might work with outside financial counselors or planners to give advice to help employees understand how important it is to plan for retirement and how to build good financial habits that will help them have a safe financial future. Employers should put in place good HR practices to create an environment that makes it possible for employees to plan for separation and retirement. The study suggested that the government, through its agencies and/or Commissions, should create frameworks that enforce, monitor, and evaluate a variety of human resource practices. This would help employer organizations make policies and guidelines that encourage employees to take part in programs that make sure they are always planning for their retirement (Gathiira et al., 2020).

Correlation Between Measures

Public school teachers have significant financial struggles that are related with their dependence on loan. The study focused on the financially challenging situation that public school teachers face and how loan dependency helps them manage their finances. Such loan dependency worsens their financial strain, in turn acting as a curator of instability in the long run (Fernando et al., 2023). A loan is said to raise credit scores and allow more short-term flexibility, but it in fact weighs borrowers down in the long run since

repaying loans while continuing to borrow further jeopardizes their overall assessment of health (Flamiano, 2024).

There also seem to be teachers simultaneously managing personal loans and loans to further smother household fees during emergency situations (Garcia et al., 2023). The study of Casingal and Ancho (2022) was centered on the troubling disparity between the perceived financial literacy of the teachers and their concrete financial behaviors wherein high levels of dependence on loans, low wages, and cultural impositions hinder effective money management. Teachers, as revealed by the study of Vidal- Sarahina (2025) tend to be overconfident in their financial literacy but fall victim to irrational decision-making due to behavioral bias. Doroy (2025) stated that it is common for teachers to pay off debts but express uncertainty about their will to do so. It dictates the mental burden of loan dependency, which further aggravates their financial distress and complicates any effort to achieve permanent stability.

Further, research demonstrates the complexities surrounding borrowing and job performance with public elementary school teachers (Zaragoza & Arceño, 2017). Usually, when a teacher needed some funds to save a situation in times of emergencies at school or home, borrowing was always the answer. But later, there was reduced take-home pay in terms of amounts, accumulated debts, and finally, all these ended in financial instability, affecting the performance of a teacher's job. Similarly, Garcia et al. (2023) noted that having high debt resulting to high levels of stress that would have negative impact to job satisfaction and overall well-being. The study found that debtors are also found to be less productive and more absent, underscoring here that financial woe affects work performance.

Hence, Grace et al. (2022) laid down all these issues by proposing that the holistic behavior of finance training away from financial management support may bring about efficient financial decisions among educators and thus evolve to a more sustainable and secured future of finances. The evidences gathered from these studies which involves various investigations into the dependence on loans, the salary issues, and financial management; it can be inferred that a comprehensive approach is needed for teachers to improve their financial decision-making and job performance.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this study integrated two complementary psychological models to explain the internal and external drivers of loan dependency among public school teachers. First, the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) by Ajzen (1991), provided a lens to understand the psychological and social determinants behind an educator's intention to borrow. It posits that financial behavior is shaped by three key factors: the individual's attitude toward borrowing as either a growth tool or a necessary supplement to income, the subjective norms created by social or familial pressures to provide for others, and the level of perceived behavioral control regarding their ability to manage finances effectively. For many teachers, low financial literacy may result in a diminished sense of control, leading to a perceived obligation to maintain high loan dependency as their only viable option during financial stress. By understanding these determinants, the study can better predict the behavioral intentions that bridge an educator's psychological state with their actual level of financial well-being.

Complementing this, Goal Setting Theory (GST) by Locke and Latham (1990) focused on the practical mechanisms required to achieve financial stability. While TPB explained the intention behind borrowing, GST suggested that financial behavior is most effective when directed by specific, challenging, and attainable goals. For educators, financial well-being is a high-level goal that requires specific sub-goals, such as debt reduction, emergency fund building, or long-term asset acquisition. Within this framework, high loan dependency is identified as a significant "goal difficulty" factor that acts as a barrier, diverting

both financial resources and mental focus away from these long-term objectives and toward immediate debt servicing. The theory emphasizes the need for effective "task strategies" to provide the necessary feedback loop and bridge the gap between a teacher's current financial state and their ultimate goal of retirement security.

Together, these theories suggest that the persistence of loan dependency is a result of both a teacher's psychological environment and the absence of clear, achievable financial strategies. The Theory of Planned Behavior identified the cognitive reasons why teachers rely on loans and how social norms reinforce this behavior, while Goal Setting Theory provided the structural framework for how they can redirect their actions toward sustainable financial freedom. Through these theories, the study provides a comprehensive perspective on the cognitive and behavioral elements which shape public school teachers' financial lives. This integration creates a strong theoretical base which enabled the creation of interventions that will treat both the psychological mindset and the essential financial management skills needed for personal financial success.

Conceptual Framework

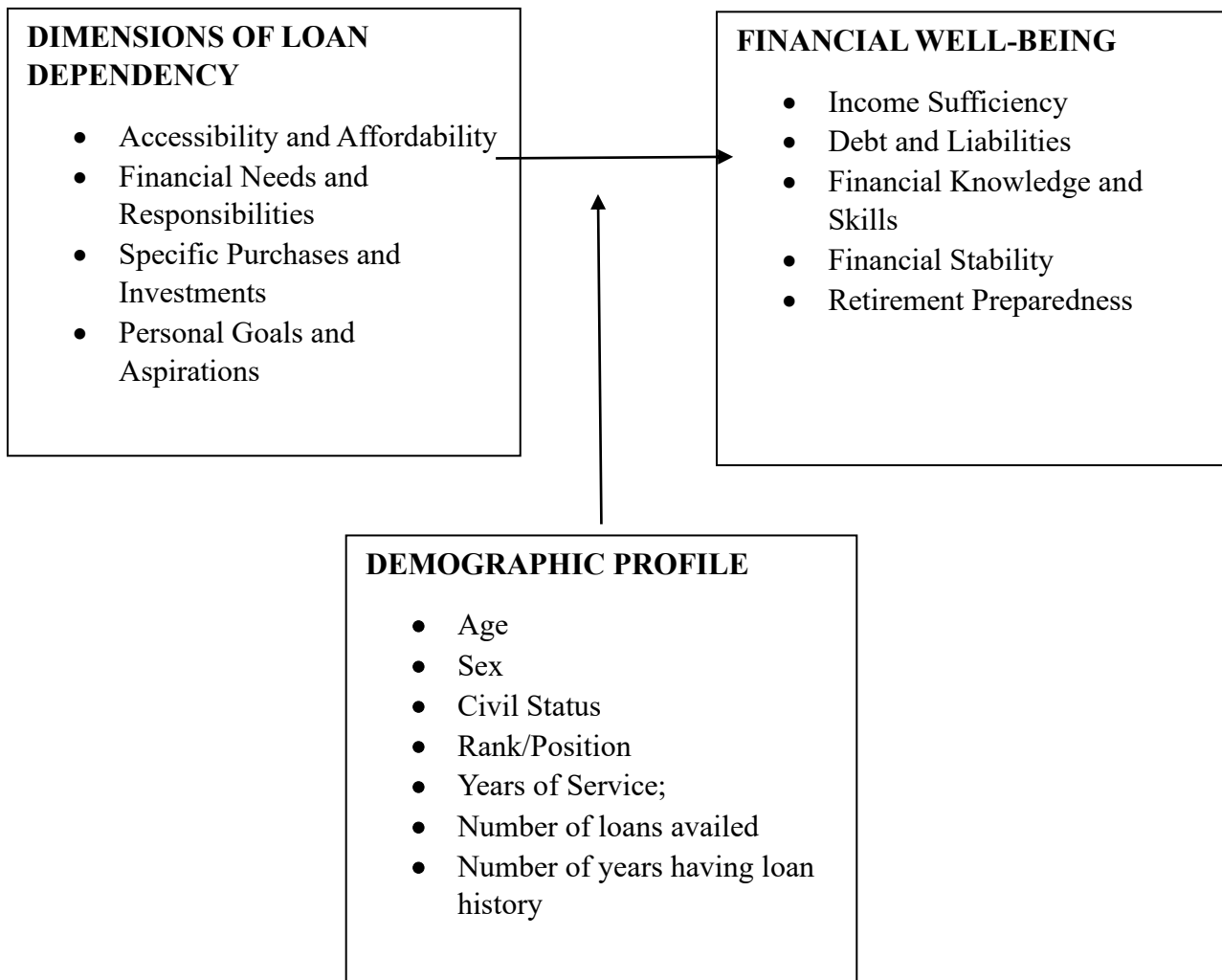
The study is designed conceptually around the framework drawn in Figure 1, which gives the relationship between the independent variable, Loan Dependency, and the dependent variable, Financial Well-being, amongst the public school teachers in San Isidro, Davao Oriental. The framework asserts that loan dependence for financial needs adversely affects the financial set-up of the teacher in a greater sense.

Loan dependency is defined as a multidimensional construct, investigated according to the three basic dimensions: (1) Accessibility and Affordability, referring to how easy it is for teachers to gain loans and whether the terms and interest rates are bearable; (2) Financial Needs and Responsibilities, which pertains to the various needs or reasons for borrowing, such as family support, emergencies, or daily expenditures; and (3) Specific Purchases and Investments, which refers to loans taken to acquire assets, such as vehicles and homes, or investments into commercial businesses. These incidences of loan dependency, if left untreated, can impact a teacher's financial profile significantly.

The Financial Well-Being is the dependent variable, implying an outcome variable measured through five core indicators: Income Sufficiency determines whether the teachers' salaries are sufficient to allow for teachers' expenditures; Debt and Liabilities measures the burden of obligation and ability to manage it; Financial Knowledge and Skills measure the understanding of personal finance concerning the ability to make intuitive decisions; Financial Stability means a teacher's ability to handle unforeseen financial problems; and finally, Retirement Preparedness determines the overall preparedness for long-term financial security.

The demographic profile was integrated in the conceptual framework to show how the variables interact with both professional and personal aspects.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study



Synthesis

The literature reviewed provides an overview of how loan dependency as accessibility before affordability, financial needs and responsibilities, and specific purchases and investments affect public school teachers' financial well-being. Easy access to loans and pressing needs to settle daily bills push teachers into frequent borrowing, mostly lacking adequate financial literacy to guide them in assessing the consequences of their actions in the future. Inability to manage a growing list of financial obligations with often impulsive or unplanned purchases or investments leads many teachers into deepening cycles of debt and financial distress.

Therefore, these causes would have a profound impact on the indices of financial well-being such as sufficiency of income, debts and liabilities, knowledge and skills on finance, financial stability, and preparedness for retirement. Most teachers have a lower salary with which they manage their living expenses, and most often than not, they will actually go for loans to bridge the gap. Such loans just add on to the debt burden that makes it hard for them to attain financial stability. In tandem with little financial knowledge, ultimately poor financial decisions and planning would inhibit further "present" and "future" financial security and possibly retirement preparedness. Therefore, there is evident efficacy for systemic interventions complemented with some targeted financial education of teachers in order to empower them

in being responsible in managing their finances and less dependent on loans towards the ultimate state of better financial welfare.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter presented the research methodology employed in this study. This lays down the research design, sampling techniques, data collection procedures, statistical treatment, and ethical considerations that governed the investigation set forth in this chapter. It gives a complete account of measures taken for validity and reliability to get a clear and reproducible framework.

Research Design

This study used the Quantitative, Descriptive-Correlational Research Design. The design is mainly Quantitative due to the fact that the systematic gathering and statistical analysis was derived through numerical data from a large, predefined sample of public school teachers in San Isidro, Davao Oriental. It is particularly Descriptive in nature aligning with the methods of Creswell (2014), as it aimed to determine and describe the present conditions and degrees of the variables: the demographic profile of the respondents, their level of Loan Dependency, and their level of Financial Well-being as stated on objectives 1, 2, and 3 of this study. In addition, the design is Correlational since it sought the main goal of revealing the strength and the nature of the significant relationship between the teachers' Loan Dependency (independent variable) and their Financial Well-being (dependent variable), as well as discovering any significant differences in these variables when grouped according to their demographic profile as stated on objectives 4 and 5.

Research Locale

The research locale for this study is centered in the Municipality of San Isidro, a second-class municipality situated in the province of Davao Oriental, Philippines. The research strategically covers 27 public schools operating under the DepEd San Isidro District, spanning the elementary and secondary levels, as well as the Davao Oriental State University (DOrSU) – San Isidro Campus for the tertiary level. The study captures data from both DepEd school heads and permanent faculty members who navigate the unique socioeconomic landscape of the province.

The selection of this locale was driven by a distinct research gap within the Davao region. While financial well-being has been explored in urban centers like Davao City, there was a notable lack of localized data regarding the relationship between loan dependency and financial health among educators in Davao Oriental. This specific setting provides a critical backdrop of local economic pressures, such as stagnant wages and high costs for medical and educational needs, which directly influence the financial behaviors of the participants.

Respondents and Sampling

The respondents of this study were public school teachers at the elementary, secondary, and tertiary levels who are permanent employees holding plantilla positions, serving for at least one year, and also having at least one outstanding loan from any financial institution. Based on data gathered from DepEd District Office of San Isidro and Human Resource Management Office of Davao Oriental State University-San Isidro Campus, the total number of teachers with plantilla positions in the 27 public schools of the Municipality of San Isidro, Davao Oriental, was 411. The 199 total target respondents were determined using the Raosoft calculator with a 95% level of confidence and a 5% margin of error.

The Simple Random Sampling method was applied for selecting the respondents. This method provided each qualified teacher in the population with the same probability of being picked for the sample which in turn reduced the sampling bias as well as made it possible to infer the results to the public school teachers' target population in San Isidro, Davao Oriental. The selection procedure began by obtaining an exhaustive list of all the 411 eligible teachers (the sampling frame) and then randomly picked the 199 target respondents through the use of lots.

Research Instrument

The data were collected through an adapted survey questionnaire in printed form. The questionnaire was subjected for review and validation from experts before it is used as a data collection tool. Prior to actual data collection, a pilot test was conducted. The researcher distributed the validated questionnaire to a small group of public school teachers who were not included in the actual sample of the study. The process tested tool reliability while assessing whether respondents understand the loan dependency questions and financial well-being questions. The results show that the entire questionnaire is highly reliable considering that the Cronbach's alpha is 0.931, which is greater than the threshold which is 0.70. This is also true for each variable and for all the indicators. The final data collection process commenced after the researcher resolves all technical issues and ambiguous points discovered during pilot testing.

The adapted questionnaire was divided into three parts. The first part of the questionnaire was composed of the demographic profile of the respondents, such as age, sex, civil status, plantilla position, monthly salary, years of service, number of loans availed, and number of years having loan history. The second portion of the survey questionnaire contained the study's independent variable, consisting of the dimensions that characterized loan dependency among public school teachers. The third portion will be the study's dependent variable consisting the five core indicators of financial well-being. The data gathered from the actual data collection were then used for the study's final analysis.

Presentation

The information collected was communicated and analyzed through both descriptive and inferential statistics to answer each of the specific research questions. The results were presented in a systematic order through the use of text, tables, and figures to impart a clear and overarching view of the results. The data collection was conducted using an adapted survey questionnaire, which was utilized after some modifications to ensure the suitability of the instrument. A four-point Likert scale was used to analyze respondents' feedback on loan dependency and financial well-being questions. Each numerical range has a corresponding verbal interpretation, illustrated in the table below.

For the second portion of the survey questionnaire pertaining to Loan Dependency, the following points and descriptions comprised the 4-point Likert scale:

Likert Scale Interpretation for the Level of Loan Dependency

Mean Range	Verbal Interpretation	Description
3.25-4.00	Always	The statement being describe as dimension of loan dependency is always manifested.
2.50-3.24	Often	The statement being describe as dimension of loan dependency is often manifested.
1.75-2.49	Seldom	The statement being describe as dimension of loan dependency is seldom manifested.

1.00-1.74	Never	The statement being described as dimension of loan dependency is never manifested.
-----------	-------	--

For the third portion involving questions for financial well-being, the following 4-point Likert scale was utilized to promote decisive responses and reduce central tendency biases.

Likert Scale Interpretation for Financial Well-Being

Mean Range	Verbal Interpretation	Description
3.25-4.00	Strongly Agree	The statement is highly characteristic of the respondent’s experience.
2.50-3.24	Agree	The statement is characteristic of the respondent’s experience.
1.75-2.49	Disagree	The statement is not characteristic of the respondent’s experience.
1.00-1.74	Strongly Disagree	The statement is very uncharacteristic of the respondent’s experience.

Data Collection Procedure

Permission and Ethical Clearance. Prior the conduct of the study, the researcher secured an ethical clearance from the University Research Ethics Board of Davao Oriental State University. The researcher then sought permission from the Department of Education and other Higher Education Institutions where respondents were connected. Informed consent form explaining the purpose of the study, its confidentiality and the respondents right was prepared.

Questionnaire Validation. Prior to the actual data collection, the adapted questionnaire was reviewed and validated first by experts. Following this validation, a pilot test was conducted with a small group of public school teachers who were not part in the actual data collection.

Distribution of Questionnaires. The distribution of questionnaire for the actual data collection was done face-to-face using printed questionnaires. Before distributing the survey questionnaires, the researcher provided a brief orientation to the respondents. The researcher introduced herself and the purpose of the study. Respondents were informed that their participation was completely voluntary and that they had the right to withdraw at any time without any negative consequences. It was assured that all responses will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and used for research purposes only. The respondents' identity remained anonymous. The researcher explained how to fill out the questionnaire and clarify that there were no right or wrong answers, encouraging them to answer honestly. Respondents were invited to ask any questions they may have about the survey before they begin.

Retrieve and Collate data: The researcher was present during face-to-face data collection to clear for any doubt with the respondents and ensure that questionnaires are filled as required. Upon completion, the researcher collected completed questionnaires from respondents immediately. The data collected were kept in a safe place to ensure confidentiality.

Ethical Considerations

The Davao Oriental State University Ethics Board supervised the study, which involved participants with good moral values. To protect their privacy and ensure they are not harmed, the researcher obtained written permission from each participant. The consent form explained that participants could leave the

study at any time and that their opinions would be recorded. This also allowed the researcher to consider whether they want to participate in the study or not. The questionnaire included the purpose and how it would be conducted, and guaranteed that all details would be kept confidential. Both the researcher and participants signed it to confirm that they understood everything.

Voluntary participation. The research was implemented in accordance with Republic Act No. 11055, also known as the Philippine Health Research Ethics Law. The research respected the fact that individuals were allowed to decide whether or not to participate without any form of coercion or pressure being applied to them. By providing information on their rights, the researcher gave them the right to make their own decisions. They were further allowed to leave the study without any form of punishment. The researcher adhered to the principle of voluntary participation, ensuring that participants' well-being was respected, protected, and maintained throughout the study.

Privacy and Confidentiality. The researcher ensured that all undertakings related to Republic Act (RA) No. 10173 or the Data Privacy Act of 2012 were carried out; therefore, protection of privacy and confidentiality, security measures were put in place for any collected personal information for the study. These measures included encryption, password protection, and limited access to sensitive information to keep it safe. Participants gave their consent to the overall purpose of the research, with the understanding that their data would only be used for this purpose. Personal identifiers were anonymized or pseudonymized by changing personal details to unique codes, which were known only to the researcher. There was no instance of information being shared with unauthorized parties without permission. The data retention policy specifies that all collected data will be securely stored for a period of 36 months. Participants have the right to access, review, and request corrections to their records during the study through a formal request. After the study concludes, all personal data will be securely disposed of through methods such as digital deletion and physical shredding of documents.

Informed Consent Procedure. One of the main procedures followed in the study was obtaining informed consent. The researcher was responsible for soliciting consent from participants, ensuring they were informed about the research's purpose, methods, and potential risks. This allowed them to decide whether to participate. The process was conducted step - by-step. Participants received a written document explaining the study and were given time to review it. After reading the form, participants were encouraged to ask questions, with sufficient time provided to consider their participation before giving consent.

Risk. The researcher ensured that no physical or medical procedures were conducted on the participants. All ethical guidelines were strictly followed to protect the participants' well-being. The researcher was careful in assessing and managing any potential risks, particularly health-related ones, and took necessary steps to reduce or remove them. The safety and welfare of the participants remained the researcher's top priority.

Plagiarism. The study was completed without plagiarism since the researcher followed the Republic Act No. 8293, or the Intellectual Property Code of the Philippines, prohibits the act of plagiarism and safeguards the authors' rights. Any work borrowed from another author was properly cited since credit was given to the originators. The study was conducted with honesty and integrity, respecting intellectual property rights.

Fabrication. The study adhered to the Philippine Technology Transfer Act of 2009, which prohibits the manipulation or alteration of data. This may result in a lack of information or misrepresentation. The researcher ensured that the data and results were obtained without any false information or misrepresentation, thereby ensuring the trustworthiness of the study's findings.

Vulnerability. The protocol does not identify any vulnerable populations among the participants.

Falsification. The research was truthful. Therefore, there was no alteration of data to validate an expected outcome. At this stage, the researcher presents data that is original and unaltered. By being truthful, the study remained authentic and credible.

Conflict of Interest. The study complied with Republic Act No. 10173 by ensuring that no personal information would be collected or used without the consent of the individuals involved. Researchers declared that they had no individual or financial interest that could potentially affect the scientific objectivity of the study. Any potential conflicts were disclosed and properly managed to ensure the credibility and ethical compliance of the research.

Deceit. The research adhered strictly to ethical standards, and no data manipulation was involved. The researchers adhered to principles of honesty and transparency throughout the study, and all results and conclusions appeared accurate and verifiable.

Community Consideration. The study respected community engagement. It helped the community identify challenges in language acquisition and developed teaching aids to address these issues.

Authorship. The researcher complied with the Intellectual Property Code of the Philippines (RA No. 8293). Authorship rights were extended to the author of the research paper. In many instances, the advisor of the researcher, who had read the paper and ensured that it was free from any ethical implications, was considered a co-author.

Recruitment. Participants consented to their involvement by signing the informed consent form. Participants signed it in order to participate in the study.

Benefits. The findings of this study benefit the teaching community by providing them with financial literacy program that serves as a strategic intervention to reduce their loan dependency and enhance their overall financial well-being.

Data Analysis

This section discusses the statistical tools and techniques that were used for the analysis of data collected through survey questionnaires. Each tool was utilized to answer the research problems discussed in chapter I.

The Frequency Counts and Percentage were used to summarize and describe the respondents' demographic profile (Problem 1). Frequency counts determined the number of respondents for each demographic category (age, sex, civil status, rank/position, years of service, number of loans, and number of years having loan history), while the percentage presented the proportion of respondents in each category. The Mean was used to determine the average level of loan dependency (Problem 2) and the average level of financial well-being (Problem 3) of the public school teachers.

Pearson Product-Moment Correlation (Pearson-r) was used to examine the relationship between independent and dependent variables. Pearson-r helped establish whether a significant relationship exists between loan dependency and financial well-being (Problem 4). The r-value showed the strength and direction of the relationship. Also, the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was employed to determine whether a significant difference in loan dependency and financial well-being is present when the respondents are grouped according to their demographic profile. This tool addressed Problem 5. The financial literacy or intervention program was developed based on the synthesis and interpretation of the results obtained from the statistical analyses conducted.

Chapter 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the study's actual findings, obtained by the researcher through research on public school teachers' loan dependency and financial well-being. It begins with a detailed assessment of participants' demographic information, including measures of teachers' loan dependency and financial status. Furthermore, this chapter interprets the statistical relationship between the two variables to determine how borrowing habits influence the educators' security and freedom of choice. The analysis used multiple tables and figures to show different categories which help readers understand the complete financial situation that the participants experienced.

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Table 3 presents the demographic profile of 199 public school teachers who participated in this study, illustrating the primary characteristics of the respondent group.

The data reveal that the majority of participants are in the 30–39-year-old age bracket, accounting for 40.70% of the sample. The profile shows results similar to the findings of Jala (2024), who examined 304 public school teachers, mostly married women aged 30-40 with 1-4 years of teaching experience. The results found that teachers in this age group and professional stage face identical life responsibilities, balancing professional growth during their early to middle careers with financial responsibilities as young families. In addition, the study of Rojo-Bastasa (2023) indicates that teachers in the "young adult" to "middle-aged" categories (20–39 years old) often constitute over 50% of the teaching force. This age group is characterized by "peak financial demand," where educators balance professional growth with the high costs of establishing young families, housing, and children's education. Also, Molino et al. (2026) found that while this group often has sufficient financial literacy, they lack the actual savings to withstand economic shocks, leading to higher loan reliance.

In terms of sex, the profile is predominantly female, comprising 81.40% of the total respondents. There were 37 or 18.60% male and 162 or 81.40% female respondents. This indicates that the sample is heavily dominated by female teachers, reflecting a common trend in the teaching workforce that was also reflected in the study of Molino et al. (2026) where women constitute the majority, particularly at the elementary level. This finding is also consistent with the study of Jala (2024), which revealed that a majority of the respondents were female.

With regard to civil status, the majority of respondents (73.40%) are married. According to Ramos and Vital (2025), the near-universal idealization of marriage among highly educated Filipinos is heavily influenced by labor market conditions, where stable employment—such as the permanent positions held by public school teachers—facilitates earlier marital transitions compared to those in precarious jobs. The married status significantly influences "indebtedness" due to shared household responsibilities and larger family sizes (Chikeya & Ntsalaze 2025). While the intent to be financially sound is universal across all statuses, the actual burden of debt is notably heavier for married educators supporting more dependents (Banggat & Amoguis, 2025). Moving on to professional background, Teacher III is the most prevalent position, aligning with documented "decades-long career bottlenecks" in DepEd where teachers wait 10 to 20 years for progression (Esguerra, 2026). This institutional stagnation can lower morale and emotional well-being, even if overall financial stability across positions remains similar (Banggat & Amoguis, 2025; Esguerra, 2026).

Table 1
Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Profiles	Frequency (n=199)	Percentage	
Age	20-29 years old	30	15.10%
	30-39 years old	81	40.70%
	40-49 years old	40	20.10%
	50-59 years old	46	23.10%
	60 years old and above	2	1.00%
Sex	Male	37	18.60%
	Female	162	81.40%
Civil Status	Single	42	21.10%
	Married	146	73.40%
	Widowed	7	3.50%
	Separated	4	2.00%
Rank/Plantilla Position	Master Teacher I	15	7.50%
	Master Teacher II	9	4.50%
	Teacher I	55	27.60%
	Teacher II	38	19.10%
	Teacher III	61	30.70%
	Teacher V	6	3.00%
	SPET	9	4.50%
	Head Teacher	6	3.00%
Years of Service	1-5 years	57	28.60%
	6-10 years	48	24.10%
	11-15 years	34	17.10%
	16-20 years	16	8.00%
	More than 20 years	44	22.10%
Number of Loan/s Availed	1-2 loans	91	45.70%
	3-5 loans	102	51.30%
	6-9 loans	6	3.00%
Number of Years having Loan History	1-5 years	93	46.70%
	6-10 years	44	22.10%
	11-15 years	21	10.60%
	16 years and above	41	20.60%

Furthermore, the majority of respondents are in the early stages of their career with 1–5 years of service (28.60%). This 1–5 years’ service range represents a critical demographic facing the "entry-level debt

cycle." Teachers with fewer years of service are often characterized as "early-career professionals" who are frequently financially constrained by the high initial costs of professional requirements and personal milestones. While these teachers remain resilient, persistent financial strain at this early stage endangers their long-term professional sustainability (Jamal, 2026). Research highlights that many teachers begin viewing financial transactions—such as loan applications—as a "regular part of their work environment" very early in their careers. This psychological distraction, stemming from early accumulated debt, can limit mental capacity and workplace effectiveness, as they are often "mentally present in class but cognitively preoccupied with bills" (Damolo et al., 2026).

Furthermore, regarding loan history, more than half of the participants (51.30%) reported currently holding 3 to 5 loans, indicating that the majority of respondents are managing multiple financial liabilities simultaneously. The result show that most respondents manage multiple active obligations, which is concluded as a "credit-trap" by Sagnit (2026) normalized within the profession. Many educators manage 3 to 6 active salary loans as a "survival mechanism" rather than a choice (Damolo et al., 2026). These findings align with Jala (2024), highlighting that credit is often used to bridge the gap between fixed income and rising household needs.

Finally, the majority of respondents have a 1–5 year loan history (46.70%), confirming that debt begins almost immediately upon entering service (Wei et al., 2025). This phenomenon of rapid indebtedness is facilitated by easy credit access (Sagnit, 2026). Ultimately, such early establishment of debt history significantly shapes an educator’s long-term financial trajectory (Jala, 2024), leading to the onset of systemic "chronic debt" (Damolo et al., 2026).

Level of Loan Dependency

Presented in Table 4 is the summary of findings in Loan Dependency among public school teachers with an overall grand mean of 3.21, representing a Very High level of loan dependency and confirming that borrowing is a deeply normalized financial strategy among the respondents. The high level of dependency is primarily fueled by accessibility and affordability (M = 3.69) and financial needs (M = 3.30) as the strongest drivers. Meanwhile, specific purchases (M = 2.94) and personal aspirations (M = 2.92) are also significant contributors indicating that loan dependency is multifaceted, driven by both essential needs and discretionary purposes.

Table 2
Summary on the Level of Loan Dependency among Public School Teachers

<i>Indicators</i>	Mean	SD	Descriptive Interpretation
<i>Accessibility and Affordability</i>	3.69	0.40	Very High
<i>Financial Needs and Responsibilities</i>	3.30	0.60	Very High
<i>Specific Purchases and Investments</i>	2.94	0.70	High
<i>Personal Goals and Aspirations</i>	2.92	0.72	High
<i>Overall Level of Loan Dependency among Public School Teachers</i>	3.21	0.40	Very High

The highest-rated indicator is Accessibility and Affordability (M = 3.69), which reveals that the ease of obtaining loans and perceived manageable costs are the primary drivers for teacher indebtedness. The existing environment receives assistance from institutional changes which include the provisions of DepEd Order No. 001 s. 2025, which increased loan ceilings for the Provident Fund, providing teachers with immediate access to substantial capital through automated systems. Sagnit (2026) notes that in the digital era, the proliferation of lending institutions and "easy access" credit products has effectively removed obstacles to obtaining credit, leading to a state where borrowing becomes a default financial behavior for educators facing unpredictable costs.

The "Very High" rating for Financial Needs and Responsibilities (M = 3.30) further explains this dependency as a survival mechanism for meeting family and professional obligations. As Espesor (2024) noted, the financial limitations faced by Filipino teachers result in minimal savings for emergencies. This struggle, fueled by stagnant wages and rising costs for health and education, forces a reliance on credit to manage fixed costs. Mabignay et al. (2022) further characterize this state as a necessity that occurs when a household must borrow simply to cover basic needs because income fails to meet essential requirements. Consequently, Tagapulot and Macalisang (2024) observe that teacher loans have developed into a serious systemic issue because educators must simultaneously manage extensive family, personal, and professional commitments with insufficient funds.

Finally, Specific Purchases and Investments (M = 2.94) and Personal Goals and Aspirations (M = 2.92) both yielded "High" results. These indicators demonstrate that while teachers borrow for survival, they also proactively use credit to fund assets and personal growth. According to (Jala 2024) teachers need to develop financial strategies which will help them achieve their longterm objectives of property ownership and retirement planning. However, Vidal-Sarahina (2025) as well as Tornino and Ferdinez (2025) warn that people need guidance to prevent their behavioral biases and overconfidence from creating "irrational decision-making" which leads to long-term credit problems when they spend money on nonessential items. The "Very High" overall dependency underscores the urgent need for the proposed Financial Literacy Program to help educators move beyond "managing the burden" and transition from a cycle of indebtedness toward achieving sustainable financial security and economic autonomy.

Level of Financial Well-being

Table 5 presents the overall findings about the level of financial well-being among public school teachers with a grand mean of 2.99, representing an overall High level of financial well-being. This high rating is supported by strong performance across most indicators, particularly income sufficiency (M=3.16), financial knowledge and skills (M=3.12, financial stability (M=3.13), and retirement preparedness (M=3.07). The only area rated low is debts and liabilities (M=2.47), which, in this context, reflects minimal financial distress rather than poor performance. Collectively, these results suggest that teachers maintain a generally positive financial condition, supported by knowledge, stability, and manageable financial obligations.

Table 3

Summary on the Level of Financial Well-Being among Public School Teachers

<i>Indicators</i>	Mean	SD	Descriptive Interpretation
<i>Income Sufficiency</i>	3.16	0.62	High

<i>Debts and Liabilities</i>	2.47	0.72	Low
<i>Financial Knowledge and Skills</i>	3.12	0.52	High
<i>Financial Stability</i>	3.13	0.55	High
<i>Retirement Preparedness</i>	3.07	0.68	High
<i>Overall Level of Financial Well-Being among Public School Teachers</i>	2.99	0.42	High

This result indicates that, despite the documented challenges of the profession, the teachers perceive a strong sense of financial security and the ability to make choices that allow them to enjoy life. This state of well-being is reinforced by Dare et al. (2023), who assert that individuals achieving this level of sufficiency gain significant psychological protection that bolsters their overall health. The high score suggests that the respondents have developed effective coping mechanisms to maintain a high quality of life.

The strongest drivers contributing to this state are income sufficiency, financial stability, financial knowledge and skills and retirement preparedness, all of which received high ratings. While Espesor (2024) notes that structural limitations and rising costs often result in minimal liquid savings, the high well-being score suggests that teachers utilize their predictable revenue streams to maintain a functional standard of living. This is further explained by Jala (2024), who highlights that strategic financial preparedness—such as planning for property acquisition and future milestones—allows educators to feel secure about their financial trajectory despite daily economic pressures. Furthermore, Wolf et al. (2022) observe that institutional settings, like stable government employment, heavily dictate how individuals perceive their balance between obligations and well-being.

The only area rated low is debts and liabilities ($M = 2.47$); however, in this context, the low score is a positive indicator, as it reflects minimal financial distress and an absence of anxiety rather than poor performance. Filipino educators typically demonstrate high levels of "psychological capital" according to the findings of Vidal-Sarahina (2025). This internal resource enables them to keep a positive perspective about their financial status while they manage various responsibilities. Their financial condition does not become a source of excessive anxiety through their ability to recover from challenges. Sagnit (2026) provides evidence that teachers who practice debt management can safeguard their professional performance from adverse effects which arise during times when credit becomes widely available.

Finally, Dare et al. (2023) emphasize that a high level of financial well-being is a powerful driver of professional morale and "whole-person" health. This suggests that the teachers' ability to maintain this state is a key factor in their continued dedication to the education sector. Tagapulot and Macalisang (2024) state that while teachers handle both family and work obligations, their perceived well-being remains essential impacting their work performance and their ability to maintain their career. To sustain this, the proposed Financial Literacy Program is essential to bridge the gap between high theoretical knowledge and the actual behavioral changes needed to achieve permanent financial freedom.

Correlation Analysis Between Loan Dependency and Financial Well-being of Public School Teachers

Table 6 presents the correlation analysis between loan dependency and financial well-being, which reveals a significant, moderate positive relationship ($r = 0.477, p < .001$). The results suggest that borrowing, particularly when used for purposeful purchases and personal goals, serves as a support mechanism that contributes to the respondents' financial stability. This indicates that when managed effectively, loan dependency can actually lead to improved financial conditions and a higher sense of security among educators. The correlation analysis results are strongly supported by the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and Goal Setting Theory (GST). These theories provide a psychological and behavioral framework for understanding why public school teachers perceive loan dependency as a contributor to their financial well-being. Together, these theories validate the study's overall finding that when credit is used as a planned, goal-directed tool, it effectively supports the financial well-being of teachers.

The correlation analysis reveals that loan dependency is significantly associated with financial well-being, with most relationships showing weak to moderate positive correlations.

Table 4

Correlation Analysis Between Loan Dependency and Financial Well-Being of Public School Teachers

		Income Sufficiency	Debts and Liabilities	Financial Knowledge and Skills	Financial Stability	Retirement Preparedness	Overall Financial Well-Being among Public School Teachers
Accessibility and	Pearson's r	0.225	0.012	0.225	0.272	0.27	0.286
Affordability	p-value	0.001	0.861	0.001	<.001	<.001	<.001
Financial Needs and Responsibilities	Pearson's r	-0.036	0.301	0.064	0.057	0.14	0.17
	p-value	0.616	<.001	0.372	0.425	0.049	0.016
Specific Purchases and Investments	Pearson's r	0.239	0.303	0.294	0.287	0.314	0.427
	p-value	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001
Personal Goals and Aspirations	Pearson's r	0.326	0.156	0.234	0.247	0.248	0.354
	p-value	<.001	0.027	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001
Overall Loan Dependency among Public	Pearson's r	0.291	0.316	0.311	0.322	0.365	0.477
	p-value	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001

School
Teachers

The indicators such Accessibility and Affordability, Specific Purchases and Investments, and Personal Goals show the most consistent positive relationships with financial well-being. This suggests that when teachers use credit purposefully—such as for acquiring assets or meeting long-term milestones—it supports their perceived stability.

For Accessibility and Affordability ($r = 0.286, p < .001$), the TPB supports the findings through its focus on subjective norms and behavioral control. The ease of access to credit in the community creates a social environment where borrowing is a normalized and accepted behavior. While this accessibility provides a safety net and bolsters confidence—supporting the "control" aspect of the theory—it shows a lower correlation than goal-oriented borrowing because the mere availability of funds does not provide the same psychological fulfillment as achieving a specific target. Regarding Specific Purchases and Investments ($r = 0.427, p < .001$), the findings are heavily supported by Goal Setting Theory, which posits that individuals are motivated to perform when they have specific and challenging goals. When a teacher secures a loan to acquire a home or start a business, the debt is viewed as a "task strategy" to achieve a concrete milestone, thereby enhancing their sense of well-being as they see tangible progress. This result also aligns with the TPB's "attitude" component; the teacher develops a positive attitude toward the loan because it is perceived as a direct instrument for asset building.

Additionally, the results for Personal Goals and Aspirations ($r = 0.354, p < .001$) are further supported by the TPB, specifically the concept of perceived behavioral control. The moderate correlation suggests that teachers use credit to fulfill aspirations like advanced education or family celebrations, which gives them a sense of agency over their life trajectory despite their fixed income. This intentional borrowing reflects a high level of "intention" as defined by the TPB, where the teacher believes they have the resources and opportunity to improve their life status through managed debt. Jala (2024) highlights that such strategic financial preparedness is critical for teachers as they navigate long-term goals like property acquisition and retirement readiness. Furthermore, Sagnit (2026) observes that in the digital era, the high accessibility of lending institutions allows teachers to manage unpredictable costs, though the author warns that the psychological burden of these "flexible" arrangements must be balanced to ensure it does not negatively impact professional performance.

However, financial needs and responsibilities show mixed and weaker relationships, highlighting the complexity of borrowing behavior. The weak correlation for Financial Needs and Responsibilities ($r = 0.17, p = 0.016$) is explained by Goal Setting Theory as a response to "goal difficulty". Borrowing for daily survival or emergency needs is often reactive rather than proactive; it addresses a deficit rather than facilitating a goal, which is why it provides the least boost to overall financial well-being. This supports the theory's premise that behavior not directed toward specific, growth-oriented targets results in lower levels of satisfaction and performance.

This complexity suggests that borrowing to cover recurring obligations or immediate daily needs does not provide the same long-term psychological boost as goal-oriented borrowing. This reflects the findings of Wolf et al. (2022), who discovered that institutional settings and employment status heavily dictate how individuals achieve income sufficiency. For Filipino teachers, Espesor (2024) notes that stagnant wages and rising costs for medical bills and education often turn credit into a survival mechanism rather than a growth tool. Similarly, Fernando and Arrieta (2023) observe that because educators' spending tends to

increase alongside their income, pay raises often act as temporary fixes, leading to a "cycle of debt" if not managed with advanced literacy. Ultimately, while the data shows that loans can provide a temporary "boost" to well-being, the proposed Financial Literacy Program is essential.

Analysis on the Difference in the Level of Loan Dependency

The following sections present analyses of significant differences in loan dependency and financial well-being across demographic profiles.

In Table 7, the results show that civil status is the only significant factor influencing loan dependency, with married teachers exhibiting a notably higher reliance on credit due to household demands. The analysis indicates that loan dependency does not significantly differ across most demographic variables, including age, sex, rank, years of service, number of loans and loan history. However, a significant difference is observed in terms of civil status ($p = .012$), with married teachers exhibiting higher loan dependency compared to other groups suggesting that family responsibilities may influence borrowing behavior, while other demographic factors appear to have minimal impact. These findings are theoretically grounded in the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and Goal Setting Theory (GST), which explain how social pressures and specific objectives dictate financial actions.

The significance of civil status underscores the role of subjective norms within the framework of the TBP as married teachers are often subject to intense social and familial expectations to provide for household stability, children's education, and medical needs. As noted by Casingal and Ancho (2022), cultural expectations in the Philippines often mandate that educators prioritize family welfare over personal financial liquidity. Tagapulot and Macalisang (2024) also argue that the widespread reliance on loans among Filipino teachers is often worsened by "extensive family responsibilities." This directly aligns with the findings on civil status in this study; teachers who are married are more likely to direct credit toward household expenses, children's education, and family medical needs.

Additionally, Ugwu and Idemudia (2023) observe that individuals with greater family responsibilities often experience higher levels of financial anxiety, which can drive more aggressive borrowing patterns. For married teachers, the goal is not merely personal wealth but the attainment of family stability. Borrowing serves as a strategic, directed action to meet high-priority goals such as tuition payments or household maintenance. This aligns to the Goal Setting Theory which posits that specific and challenging goals drive higher levels of performance and directed action. Furthermore, the Alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT) Philippines (2025) emphasizes that because salaries remain inadequate to support a family of average size, married educators are essentially "forced to borrow repeatedly" to cope with daily expenses that their base pay cannot cover. This explains why professional rank may not show a significant difference; a higher-ranking teacher and a lower-ranking teacher may share the same "High" dependency if they face similar family-based financial burdens (Hernando-Malipot, 2026).

The lack of significance in variables such as age or years of service suggests what can be termed a "universalization of credit" within the education sector. This suggests that teachers perceive a low level of behavioral control over their finances due to stagnant wages. When the Alliance of Concerned Teachers (2025) describes educators as being "forced to borrow," it aligns with the TPB premise that when individuals feel they have no other choice to meet their obligations, their intention to engage in the behavior (borrowing) becomes a necessity rather than a choice. Sagnit (2026) adds that in the digital era, the ease of obtaining loans from various lending institutions further normalizes this behavior across all age groups, though the primary trigger remains rooted in the pressures of family life. As noted by Espesor (2024), teachers across all experience levels face stagnant wages and rising costs, creating a situation

where almost all educators—regardless of how long they have been in the service—find it necessary to access loans.

Table 5
Analysis on the Difference in the Level of Loan Dependency among Public School Teachers across their Demographic Profiles

Profiles	Mean	F-value	p-value	Remarks	
Age	20-29 years old	3.30	2.12	.172	Not Significant
	30-39 years old	3.23			
	40-49 years old	3.20			
	50-59 years old	3.14			
	60 years old and above	2.80			
Sex	Male	3.30	1.93	.170	Not Significant
	Female	3.19			
Civil Status	Single	3.19	4.31	.012	Significant
	Married	3.42			
	Widowed	3.31			
	Separated	3.26			
Rank/Plantilla Position	MASTER TEACHER I	3.08	2.16	.064	Not Significant
	MASTER TEACHER II	3.23			
	TEACHER I	3.17			
	TEACHER II	3.29			
	TEACHER III	3.22			
	TEACHER V	3.35			
	SPET	3.33			
Head Teacher	2.99				
Years of Service	1-5 years	3.24	1.86	.127	Not Significant
	6-10 years	3.31			
	11-15 years	3.11			
	16-20 years	3.24			
	More than 20 years	3.13			
Number of Loan/s Availed	1-2 loans	3.21	.0519	.925	Not Significant
	3-5 loans	3.22			
	6-9 loans	3.16			
	1-5 years	3.24	0.83	.482	Not Significant

Number	of 6-10 years	3.22
Years	having 11-15 years	3.07
Loan History	16 years and above	3.20

Finally, in context of the Goal Setting Theory, the lack of significance in professional rank suggests that the commitment to family goals overrides the differences in base pay. Within this theoretical framework, commitment is a critical moderator of the goal-performance relationship; in this study, whether a teacher is entry-level or high-ranking, the goal of maintaining a household remains a constant, high-priority pressure that drives them toward credit as a directed action to ensure goal attainment. These findings highlight that financial strain is not evenly distributed but is heavily concentrated among those with dependents. Consequently, the proposed Financial Literacy Program should also address the unique budgeting and debt management needs of married teachers and heads-of-households, who carry the heaviest financial responsibilities and are at the highest risk of long-term debt-related instability.

In Table 8, the findings show that financial well-being significantly varies by sex and years of service, but not by other demographic factors. Male teachers report significantly higher financial well-being than females ($p = .008$), while differences across years of service ($p = .041$) suggest that financial well-being may fluctuate over career stages. In contrast, age, civil status, rank, and loan-related variables do not significantly influence financial well-being, indicating that these factors have limited effect on overall financial condition. The significant variations in financial well-being across sex and years of service are deeply rooted in the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and Goal Setting Theory (GST).

These results indicate that gender roles and career progression are more influential in determining perceived financial well-being than professional standing or age alone. The significant difference in sex is particularly telling when viewed alongside the respondent profile, where 81.40% are female and 73.40% are married. Recent research by Mencias-Tabernilla (2023) illuminates this gap, noting that many teachers' spouses often lack stable income or suitable work, placing a disproportionate heavy burden on educators. In relation to this gender gap, the TBP suggests that financial well-being is a byproduct of perceived behavioral control. As female teachers often bear a "disproportionate heavy burden" as the primary breadwinners; this role limits their perceived control over their disposable income, as household demands dictate the allocation of their salary, thereby lowering their sense of financial well-being. As household sizes grow and the "number of individuals consuming commodities" increases, the female teacher's financial freedom of choice is curtailed. Vidal-Sarahina (2025) further notes that female educators in the Philippines often manage complex "psychological capital," balancing professional duties with household-level budgeting that must cover the income gaps of other family members.

The significance of Years of Service ($p = .041$) indicates that financial well-being follows a non-linear trajectory. The "mid-career dip" observed at the 11–15 year mark ($M = 2.80$) coincides with the findings of Mencias-Tabernilla (2023) regarding how "cumulative debt" impacts teachers during specific life stages. At this juncture, educators often face their highest level of family obligations, including children's higher education costs and the responsibility of caring for elderly relatives. This period represents a peak in borrowing to cover essential expenses. Furthermore, Goal Setting Theory provides a framework for this non-linear trajectory; during this phase, educators encounter competing and high-difficulty goals, such as funding children's higher education while managing cumulative debt. The dip in well-being reflects the psychological strain of attempting to attain these demanding family-centric goals with stagnant resources. Conversely, the recovery observed in the 16–20 year bracket indicates goal attainment, where the

retirement of earlier life-stage loans allows for improved strategic financial preparedness (Jala, 2024). Jala (2024) observes that as teachers reach higher salary steps and retire earlier life-stage loans, their strategic financial preparedness improves. However, the slight decline after 20 years ($M = 2.99$) may be attributed to "Retirement Anxiety," as noted by Ugwu and Idemudia (2023), where educators nearing the end of their service begin to worry about their post-retirement standard of living.

Interestingly, despite the high percentage of married respondents, Civil Status and Rank were not significant dividers. This suggests a "universalization of financial pressure" within the profession. Espesor (2024) notes that the struggle to balance stagnant wages against rising costs affects educators regardless of marital status. Furthermore, the lack of significance in Rank supports the observation of Mencias-Tabernilla (2023) that as income rises with promotion, expenditures often rise proportionately. This prevents higher-ranking teachers from feeling significantly more "financially well" than lower-ranking colleagues, as additional income is immediately consumed by growing household needs. This non-significance also supports the premise of Goal Setting Theory that as income levels increase, the "goalposts" for household expenditures often shift upward. This prevents higher-ranking teachers from achieving a significantly higher level of well-being, as their increased earnings are immediately absorbed by growing family needs. These theoretical insights justify the need for a Financial Literacy Program that is both gender-responsive and career-stage specific.

Since the 11–15 year group represents the most financially strained segment, the financial literacy program must include modules on debt restructuring specifically for mid-career educators. Furthermore, the dominance of female breadwinners necessitates a gender-responsive approach to budgeting. Through the incorporation of these targeted strategies, the program can help teachers move from merely managing cumulative debt to achieving genuine financial independence and sustainable well-being.

Table 6
Analysis on the Difference in the Level of Financial Well-Being among Public School Teachers across their Demographic Profiles

Profiles	Mean	F-value	p-value	Remarks	
Age	20-29 years old	3.13	1.89	.199	Not Significant
	30-39 years old	2.96			
	40-49 years old	2.88			
	50-59 years old	3.06			
	60 years old and above	2.90			
Sex	Male	3.25	7.46	.008	Significant
	Female	2.85			
Civil Status	Single	3.03	0.344	.749	Not Significant
	Married	2.97			
	Widowed	3.07			
	Separated	3.11			
MASTER TEACHER I	2.96	1.02	.437	Not Significant	

Rank/Plantilla Position	MASTER TEACHER II	3.20				
	TEACHER I	2.97				
	TEACHER II	2.93				
	TEACHER III	3.06				
	TEACHER V	2.82				
	SPET	2.96				
	Head Teacher	2.86				
Years of Service	1-5 years	3.06				
	6-10 years	3.01				
	11-15 years	2.80	2.64	.041		Significant
	16-20 years	3.12				
	More than 20 years	2.99				
Number of Loan/s Availed	1-2 loans	3.03				
	3-5 loans	2.96	0.688	.519		Not Significant
	6-9 loans	3.02				
Number of Years having Loan History	1-5 years	3.04				
	6-10 years	2.94				
	11-15 years	2.84	1.49	.225		Not Significant
	16 years and above	3.01				

Proposed Financial Literacy Program

The "Balanced Teacher Initiative: A Career-Stage and Gender-Responsive Financial Literacy Program" is a comprehensive, three-stage professional development series designed to provide educators with specialized financial strategies that evolve alongside their careers. The program begins with Module 1: The Foundation, which targets early-career educators (1–10 years) by focusing on proactive prevention and shifting the perception of loans from "extra income" to "future constraints". As teachers enter the high-pressure years of service, Module 2: The Bridge (Years 11–15) offers technical guidance on debt consolidation and emphasizes household livelihood opportunities to bridge income gaps. Finally, Module 3: The Mastery (Years 16+) prepares veteran educators for a stable retirement through estate planning and pension analysis, ensuring a legacy of financial peace through peer mentorship. By integrating support from institutional partners, this modular intervention seeks to foster permanent financial stability and long-term professional well-being.

The program implementation requires to work with multiple sectors for their specialized expertise to determine the program's success. Financial analysts and planners will facilitate sessions on "Future-Self" visioning and long-term roadmap development to help participants establish non-debt life goals. The Bangko Sentral ng Philippines (BSP) will provide expert insights into deconstructing loan attitudes which will help educators prepare for the psychological shifts needed for retirement. Technical partners such as Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) and Pag-IBIG Fund (Home Development Mutual Fund) will guide teachers through the mechanics of debt consolidation and the strategic use of government facilities for major asset acquisitions, complemented by the DepEd Finance and Legal Departments, which

will demonstrate protections for Net Take Home Pay (NTHP) and assist in the security of high-value assets. Furthermore, the Gender and Development (GAD) Office and professional counselors will provide communication frameworks to help educators set firm financial boundaries with extended family members. The Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) and Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) will provide vocational training programs to support the spouses of teachers which will help increase their household earnings, while Teachers' Associations establish peer-mentoring groups to help retired members share their methods for building permanent financial security.

Table 7
Module 1. The Foundation

Participants: Teachers with 1–10 years of service					
Goal: Proactive prevention and establishing high Perceived Behavioral Control					
Time	Session Title	Session Objective/s	Key Partner/s	Key Specific Partners' Action Contributions	Learning Take-away (Output)
08:00 - 09:30	The "Future-Self" Vision	To conceptualize long-term, debt-free financial milestones.	Financial Planner/ Financial Analyst	Leads visualization exercises to help participants identify personal non-debt life goals.	Ability to articulate three specific, non-debt life goals for the next decade.
09:30 - 10:30	Deconstructing the Loan Attitude	To re-evaluate salary loans as limitations on future financial resources.	BSP (Bangko Sentral)	Presents comparative case studies illustrating the psychological and financial traps of informal lending.	Recognition of the psychological triggers and long-term costs of predatory lending.
10:30 - 12:00	NTHP Mastery & Protection	To understand the legal protections regarding salary deductions and the Net Take Home Pay floor.	DepEd Admin / Finance Department (Cashier / Disbursing Office)	Demonstrates "Live" payroll scenarios to illustrate the legal minimum take-home pay required by law.	Understanding of the legal "Net Take Home Pay" floor and how to protect it.
12:00 - 01:00	Lunch Break				
01:00 - 02:00	The Interest-to-Goal Impact	To recognize how non-essential debt interest delays	Financial Planner / Financial Analyst	Utilizes calculators to demonstrate how much future wealth	Awareness of how non-essential interest payments

		personal goal achievement.		is diverted toward interest payments.	delay personal milestones.
02:00 - 03:30	Early Career Social Norms	To develop communication strategies for managing external financial expectations.	Counselor / GAD Office	Provides verbal "scripts" and role-playing exercises for setting boundaries with family members.	Mastery of verbal "scripts" to set financial boundaries with extended family.
03:30 - 05:00	The 10-Year Roadmap	To internalize a conceptual framework for long-term financial stability.	Financial Planner/ Financial Analyst	Guides participants in outlining a personal commitment plan that prioritizes stability over immediate borrowing.	A personalized conceptual plan for daily spending and long-term stability.

Module 1: The Foundation is designed for the early-career educators (1-10 years in service). This module focuses on proactive prevention and establishing high perceived behavioral control. The participants develop their financial planning skills through Financial Analysts who help them create non-debt life goals while Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) provides insights on the long-term psychological and financial consequences of predatory lending. The DepEd Finance Department demonstrates legal Net Take Home Pay (NTHP) protections, and the Gender and Development (GAD) Office provides communication "scripts" to help educators set financial boundaries with extended family. This module seeks to shift the educator's attitude from viewing loans as "extra income" to recognizing them as "future constraints". This module seeks to shift the educator's attitude from viewing loans as "extra income" to recognizing them as "future constraints".

Table 8
Module 2. The Bridge

Participants: Teachers with 11–15 years of service					
Goal: Managing Goal Difficulty and navigating Subjective Norms.					
Time	Session Title	Session Objective/s	Key Partner/s	Key Partners' Specific Action Contributions	Learning Take-away (Output)
08:00 - 09:30	The Mid-Career Goal Audit	To develop the ability to self-assess current debt levels against high-priority goals.	DepEd Admin / GSIS	Provides simplified assessment tools for teachers to check their own debt-to-income readiness.	Ability to self-assess debt-to-income ratios against major life goals.

09:30 - 10:30	Debt Consolidation Mechanics	To understand the technical benefits of migrating high-interest debt to government facilities.	GSIS / Pag-IBIG	Explains the step-by-step process of merging private loans into lower-interest GSIS/Pag-IBIG programs.	Understanding the technical steps to move from high-interest to low-interest credit.
10:30 - 12:00	Strategic Debt Restructuring	To identify government loan facilities specifically designed for major asset acquisition.	Pag-IBIG / GSIS	Outlines the pre-qualification requirements for housing and renovation loans	Knowledge of government facilities available for securing a House and Lot
12:00 - 01:00	<i>Lunch Break</i>				
01:00 - 02:30	Household Boundary Blueprint	To learn strategies for aligning financial intentions with a spouse or partner.	Counselor / GAD Office	Provides "Communication Frameworks" for discussing household budgets and shared financial goals.	Strategies for aligning financial goals with a spouse or partner.
02:30 - 03:30	The Household Multiplier	To explore multi-income strategies that reduce reliance on salary loans.	TESDA / DTI	Presents a "Livelihood Menu" of entrepreneurial training programs available for teacher spouses.	Awareness of livelihood and training opportunities for household income growth.
03:30 - 05:00	The Commitment Workshop	To strengthen family-centered intentions toward financial stability.	Financial Planner/ Financial Analyst	Leads a communal discussion on prioritizing long-term household peace over short-term consumerism.	Re-affirmation of family-centered financial priorities over consumerism.

As educators transition into the high-demand years of their career (Years 11–15), Module 2: The Bridge addresses the management of goal difficulty and the navigation of complex subjective norms. GSIS and Pag-IBIG act as technical partners, guiding teachers through debt consolidation mechanics and identifying government facilities for major assets, specifically for securing a house and lot (M=3.11). To address the root causes of household income gaps, the program emphasizes spousal involvement through partnerships with TESDA or DTI, which provide livelihood training opportunities. This module ultimately aims to re-

affirm family-centered financial priorities over short-term consumerism through structured household communication frameworks provided by the GAD Office.

Table 9
Module 3. The Mastery

Participants: Teachers with 16+ years of service (Pre-Retirement)					
Goal: Achieving final Goal Attainment and maximizing Behavioral Agency.					
Time	Session Title	Session Objective/s	Key Partner/s	Key Partners' Specific Action Contributions	Learning Take-away (Output)
08:00 - 09:30	The Goal Attainment Review	To verify the legal and financial security of major life assets.	DepEd Admin / Legal Consultant	Provides a checklist for reviewing asset titles and ownership status to ensure they are fully secured.	Verification of the status of high-value assets (House/Land) before retirement
09:30 - 11:30	Pension & Benefit Mastery	To understand projected retirement benefits and the "Living Gap" between pension and costs.	GSIS Representative	Explains how to interpret pension reports and perform a "Standard of Living Gap Analysis".	Knowledge of projected retirement benefits and how to manage the "living gap."
11:30 - 12:00	Standard of Living Transition	To prepare for the psychological and lifestyle shift from active service to retirement.	Counselor / GAD Office	Conducts workshops on "Lifestyle Downsizing" and managing emotional changes post-retirement.	Psychological preparedness for the lifestyle shift from active service to retirement.
12:00 - 01:00	<i>Lunch Break</i>				
01:00 - 03:30	The Legacy & Asset Blueprint	To recognize the importance of legal wealth transfer and estate protection.	Legal Office / Attorney	Explains the purpose of wills, trusts, and estate management in protecting family wealth.	Understanding the importance of estate planning and wealth transfer.
03:30 - 05:00	The "Debt-Free" Graduation	To commit to a culture of financial peace	Teachers' Association	Facilitates peer-mentorship circles where successful retirees share	Commitment to serving as a financial peace mentor for

	through peer mentorship.		strategies for financial peace.	younger colleagues
--	-----------------------------	--	------------------------------------	-----------------------

Finally, for those in the pre-retirement stage (Years 16+), Module 3: The Mastery ensures a stable transition through final goal attainment and maximized behavioral agency. Legal Counsel and the DepEd Admin assist in verifying the security of high-value assets and lead sessions on estate planning and wealth transfer. GSIS provides detailed pension and "living gap" analyses, while the BSP and Financial Planners offer psychological preparedness for the lifestyle shift from active service to retirement. The initiative culminates in a commitment to peer mentorship, supported by the Teachers' Association, where successful retirees foster a culture of financial peace for the next generation of educators. Future researches need to implement longitudinal studies that will be able to monitor on how these modular interventions affect teacher retention and their professional development throughout extended periods.

Chapter 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter synthesizes the research results by providing a summary of data and conclusions on how loan dependency affects the teachers' financial well-being. It also provides actionable recommendations centered on the "Balanced Teacher Initiative: A Career-Stage and Gender-Responsive Financial Literacy Program." This program offers flexible career support through its institutional partnerships. The recommendations seek to eliminate financial stress in educators while establishing permanent solutions for their work-related stability.

Summary

The demographic profile of the 199 respondents reveals a workforce that is predominantly middle-aged, with the largest group aged 30–39 years at 40.70%. The participants are overwhelmingly female (81.40%) and the majority are married (73.40%). In terms of professional standing, the respondents mostly hold mid-level positions of Teacher III (30.70%) and Teacher I (27.60%), with 28.60% having 1–5 years of service. Crucially, the profile highlights a widespread culture of borrowing, as 51.30% of respondents have availed of 3–5 loans. Finally, nearly half of the respondents (46.70%) report a loan history spanning 1–5 years, indicating that debt engagement often begins early in their teaching careers.

The level of loan dependency among public school teachers is "Very High" overall ($M = 3.21$). Breaking this down by dimension, Accessibility and Affordability is the highest driver ($M = 3.69$), as teachers find loans extremely easy to obtain through automated systems and permanent job security. Financial Needs and Responsibilities also shows a very high level ($M = 3.30$), with loans serving as a vital supplement for basic daily expenses and family sustenance. Specific Purchases and Investments resulted also to "High" ($M = 2.94$), showing that borrowing is also used for long-term goals like housing and insurance. Lastly, Personal Goals and Aspirations is similarly rated as "High" ($M = 2.92$), where teachers utilize credit for self-directed targets such as advanced studies or emergency funds.

The level of financial well-being among teachers is characterized as "High" ($M = 2.99$). In terms of Income Sufficiency, teachers generally feel their salaries cover their daily needs ($M = 3.16$). Regarding Debt and Liabilities, the score is "Low" ($M = 2.47$), which is a positive finding as it indicates teachers do not feel significantly overwhelmed or anxious about their repayments. Financial Knowledge and Skills and Financial Stability both reflect high levels of confidence having an overall mean of 3.12 and 3.13 respectively, with teachers reporting an optimistic outlook and the capacity to handle unexpected shocks.

Finally, Retirement Preparedness is also high ($M = 3.07$), suggesting that teachers are proactive in planning for their long-term financial security.

The study establishes a significant moderate positive relationship between loan dependency and financial well-being ($r = 0.477$, $p < .001$). This suggests that borrowing, when managed effectively and used for purposeful goals, acts as a support mechanism that contributes to the respondents' sense of financial stability and security. The correlation is strongest when loans are used for specific purchases ($r = 0.427$) and personal goals ($r = 0.354$). Conversely, borrowing for immediate financial needs and responsibilities shows a much weaker relationship ($r = 0.170$), highlighting that survival-based debt does not provide the same long-term psychological or financial boost as investment-oriented borrowing.

Significant differences were found in both loan dependency and financial well-being when teachers were grouped by their demographics. For loan dependency, Civil Status was the only significant factor ($p = .012$), with married teachers exhibiting higher dependency due to extensive family responsibilities and household needs. For financial well-being, sex was significant ($p = .008$), with male teachers reporting higher well-being than females. Additionally, Years of Service showed a significant difference ($p = .041$), revealing a "mid-career dip" for those with 11–15 years of service, a period when family obligations and cumulative debt typically reach their peak.

Conclusions

The demographic profile of the respondents indicates that the public school teaching workforce in San Isidro is predominantly composed of married women in their middle years who are at the mid-level of their professional careers. The high concentration of Teacher III and Teacher I positions, coupled with the fact that over half of the respondents have already availed of three to five loans, leads to the conclusion that borrowing is an established and systemic behavior within the profession. Furthermore, the prevalence of loan histories spanning one to five years suggests that debt engagement often begins early in a teacher's career, establishing a long-term pattern of credit reliance.

In terms of loan dependency, it is concluded that public school teachers operate within a "Very High" level of credit reliance, primarily because institutional systems have made borrowing exceptionally accessible and affordable. The convenience of automatic payroll deductions and the security of a permanent government position create an environment where loans are the primary "bridge" used to close the gap between stagnant professional wages and the escalating costs of family maintenance. While loans are frequently used for survival-based needs, they are also recognized as functional tools for achieving personal goals and making specific investments, such as home renovations or insurance.

The level of financial well-being among teachers leads to the conclusion that while educators are objectively burdened by high debt, they possess a high degree of psychological resilience and perceived stability. Teachers generally feel satisfied with their income sufficiency and their capacity to handle daily expenses, and they do not report excessive levels of debt-related anxiety despite their high loan dependency. This discrepancy concludes that teachers have "normalized" debt as a part of their financial reality, maintaining an optimistic outlook and a sense of retirement preparedness through their knowledge of employer-provided benefits and basic financial management.

There is a significant moderate positive relationship between loan dependency and financial well-being, leading to the conclusion that access to credit is a vital support mechanism for teachers' standard of living. Rather than acting purely as a source of distress, loans are perceived as a means to achieve financial security and reach life milestones that would otherwise be unattainable on a basic salary. This relationship

confirms that when borrowing is used for purposeful investments or personal goals, it significantly enhances a teacher's perceived quality of life and sense of autonomy.

Significant differences in well-being and dependency across demographic groups lead to the conclusion that financial strain is most acute at specific life and career intersections. The "mid-career dip" observed at the 11–15 year mark reveals a period of maximum vulnerability where cumulative debt and family obligations reach their peak. Additionally, the significant gender difference in well-being scores suggests that domestic burdens and potential spousal income gaps place a heavier financial strain on female educators. These factors highlight that the financial experience of teachers is not uniform but is deeply influenced by their career stage and household responsibilities.

Recommendations

In terms of demographic profile, it is recommended that the Department of Education (DepEd) and school administrators maintain an updated, sex-disaggregated database of teachers' financial profiles. This database should track not only basic demographics but also the number of loans and duration of loan history to identify "at-risk" groups, such as married female teachers in their first five years of service. By monitoring these trends, the division and institution can provide early interventions and personalized financial counseling before borrowing becomes a deeply entrenched habit.

In terms of loan dependency, financial institutions and government lending agencies should prioritize the development of more "asset-building" loan products rather than multi-purpose "survival" loans. Since accessibility is a primary driver of debt, lending terms should be strictly aligned with the "Net Take-Home Pay" (NTHP) floor to prevent over-borrowing for non-essential needs. Clearer distinctions must be established between beneficial, structured debt for investments and unsustainable, high-interest debt that drains future resources.

To address the discrepancy where teachers report satisfaction and low anxiety despite high debt, it is recommended that school administrations implement program to transition educators from a psychological "normalization" of debt toward objective financial security. The program should shift the attitudes of teachers by reframing loans as future constraints, provide mid-career educators with technical debt-management and household income support to address underlying financial gaps, and validate the retirement preparedness of senior teachers through rigorous gap and estate analyses. This initiative ensures that the educators' perceived stability and resilience are matched by genuine, long-term financial health.

The significant relationship between variables suggests that since loan access is vital to a teacher's perceived security, the goal should not be the total elimination of loans but rather "Strategic Debt Management". It is recommended that teachers utilize loans primarily for specific investments and personal goals—dimensions that showed a stronger correlation with well-being—rather than for daily financial needs. This shift ensures that credit serves as a tool for asset growth and life-stage development rather than a recurring survival mechanism.

Addressing the significant differences across profiles, the DepEd should implement "Life-Stage Specific" interventions. Special attention must be given to teachers in the 11–15 year "mid-career dip" who face the highest family and debt pressures. Furthermore, gender-responsive financial programs should be designed to support female educators, who report lower financial well-being, by offering training in household budgeting and setting financial boundaries with extended family.

Finally, the proposed financial literacy program, titled the "Balanced Teacher Initiative," should be formally adopted as a mandatory professional development series. This program must be implemented through its three specialized modules: "The Foundation" for early-career prevention, "The Bridge" for

mid-career debt restructuring, and "The Mastery" for pre-retirement asset protection. Collaboration with key partners is essential to provide teachers with the expert-led strategies needed for permanent financial stability.

REFERENCES

1. Adewusi, A. O. (2021). Modelling Loan Accessibility among Women for Economic Development. *International Journal of Innovative Research and Development*, 10(3). <https://doi.org/10.24940/ijird/2021/v10/i3/jan21032>
2. Aluodi, E., Njuguna, A., & Omboi, B. (2017). Effect of Financial Literacy on Retirement Preparedness among Employees in the Insurance Sector in Kenya. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 12(10), 242. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ijbm.v12n10p242>
3. Balatif, M. R., Fachrudin, K. A., Silalahi, A. S., Syahyunan, & Torong, M. Z. B. (2024). The Effect Of Financial Education And Financial Stress On Financial Well-Being With The Use Of Financial Technology. *Quality - Access to Success*, 25(199), 108–118. <https://doi.org/10.47750/QAS/25.199.12>
4. Ballafkih, H., Zinsmeister, J., & Meerman, M. (2017). A Job and a Sufficient Income Is Not Enough: The Needs of the Dutch Precariat. *SAGE Open*, 7(4). <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244017749069>
5. Banggat, G. R., & Amoguis, M. J. B. (2025). ISRG PUBLISHERS THE LOAN DEPENDENCY AMONG PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS IN SAN ISIDRO, DAVAO ORIENTAL: BASIS FOR AN ACTION PLAN. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17731319>
6. Bankrate. (2024, October 16). Financial needs. <https://www.bankrate.com/personal-finance/credit/financial-needs-vs-wants/>
7. Bett, F. J., & Kirui, R. (2018). Analysis of personal loans and household financial health of primary school teachers in Kenya. *International Journal of Economics, Finance and Management Sciences*, 6(1), 6–17. <https://doi.org/10.11648/j.ijefm.20180601.12>
8. Brixiova, Z., Kangoye, T., & Yogo, U. T. (2020). Access to Finance among Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises and Job Creation in Africa *Standard-Nutzungsbedingungen*. <https://hdl.handle.net/10419/227235>
9. Brügggen, E. C., Hogreve, J., Holmlund, M., Kabadayi, S., & Löfgren, M. (2017). Financial well-being: A conceptualization and research agenda. *Journal of Business Research*, 79, 228–237. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.JBUSRES.2017.03.013>
10. Casingal, C., & Ancho, I. (2022). Financial Literacy Status of Public-School Teachers: The Case of the Philippines. *Journal of Management, Economics, and Industrial Organization*. <https://doi.org/10.31039/jomeino.2022.6.1.4>
11. Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. (2015). Financial well-being: The goal of financial education. https://files.consumerfinance.gov/f/201501_cfpb_report_financial-well-being-the-goal-of-financial-education.pdf
12. Chavali, K., Mohan Raj, P., & Ahmed, R. (2021). Does financial behavior influence financial well-being? *Journal of Asian Finance, Economics and Business*, 8(2), 0273–0280. <https://doi.org/10.13106/jafeb.2021.vol8.no2.0273>
13. Chikeya, C. K., & Ntsalaze, L. (2025). Determinants of Household Debt: A Systematic Review of the Literature. In *Economies* (Vol. 13, Number 3). Multidisciplinary Digital Publishing Institute (MDPI). <https://doi.org/10.3390/economies13030076>

14. Chochořáková, A., Gabčová, L., Belás, J., & Sipko, J. (2015). Bank Customers' Satisfaction, Customers' Loyalty and Additional Purchases of Banking Products and Services: A Case Study from the Czech Republic. *Economics & Sociology*, 8(3), 82-94. <https://doi.org/10.14254/2071-789X.2015/8-3/6>
15. Collins, J. M., & Urban, C. (2019). Measuring financial well-being over the lifecycle. *The European Journal of Finance*, 26(4-5), 341–359. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1351847x.2019.1682631>
16. Damolo, E. F., Bagcatin, B., Simbajon, K., Pastera, M.-C., Hinautan, M. J., Olavides, L. J., & Carnice, N. (2026). Stories Behind the Paycheck: A Phenomenological Study of Teachers' Financial Struggles Due to Loan Dependency. *Journal of Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, 4(3), 216–222. <https://doi.org/10.69569/jip.2026.008>
17. Dare, S. E., van Dijk, W. W., van Dijk, E., van Dillen, L. F., Gallucci, M., & Simonse, O. (2023). How Executive Functioning and Financial Self-efficacy Predict Subjective Financial Well-Being via Positive Financial Behaviors. *Journal of Family and Economic Issues*, 44(2), 232–248. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10834-022-09845-0>
18. Das, S., & Mallick, M. (2024, 11). *Retirement Preparedness: Systematic Review*. Retrieved from ResearchGate: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/385562412_Retirement_Preparedness_Systematic_Review
19. Dewi, V., Febrian, E., Effendi, N., & Anwar, M. (2020). Financial literacy among the millennial generation: Relationships between knowledge, skills, attitude, and behavior. *Australasian Accounting, Business and Finance Journal*, 14(4), 24–37. <https://doi.org/10.14453/aabfj.v14i4.3>
20. Doroy, C. S. (2025). Between Financial Freedom and Debt: Insights from Public School Teachers in Philippines. *Open Journal of Accounting*, 14(03), 105–123. <https://doi.org/10.4236/ojacct.2025.143006>
21. Espesor, M. (2024). ASSESSING THE CURRENT STATUS OF PUBLIC-SCHOOL TEACHERS' FINANCIAL WELL-BEING: BASIS FOR AN INTERVENTION PROGRAM. *European Journal of Education Studies*, 11(6). <https://doi.org/10.46827/ejes.v11i6.5336>
22. Esguerra, D. J. (2026, March 16). DepEd promotion system ends teachers' career bottleneck – PBMM. *Philippine News Agency*. <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1271149>
23. Fabris, N., & Luburic, R. (2023, 5). *FINANCIAL STABILITY AND QUALITY OF LIFE*. Retrieved from ResearchGate: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/370928163_FINANCIAL_STABILITY_AND_QUALITY_OF_LIFE
24. Falahati, L., & Sabri, M. F. (2015). An exploratory study of personal financial wellbeing determinants: Examining the moderating effect of gender. *Asian Social Science*, 11(4), 33–42. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v11n4p33>
25. Fernando, G. C., & Arrieta, G. S. (2023). Income, Expenses and Expenditure Patterns of Elementary Public-School Teachers: Inputs to a Proposed Financial Literacy Program. *International Journal of Social Learning (IJSL)*, 4(1), 129–141. <https://doi.org/10.47134/ijsl.v4i1.226>
26. Flamiano, N. G. P. (2024). Reasons, Effects, and Challenges of Loans: Input to Financial Literacy Enhancement. *International Journal of Management and Accounting*, 85–98. <https://doi.org/10.34104/ijma.024.085098>
27. Gambo, M. J., Kunya, S., Ashen, M., & Mohammed, I. Y. (2021). ARTICLE FINANCE ACCESSIBILITY AND AFFORDABILITY TO LOW-INCOME EARNERS' HOUSING

OWNERSHIP IN BAUCHI LOCAL GOVERNMENT, NIGERIA.

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/358983274>

28. García, E., Wei, W., Patrick, S. K., Leung-Gagné, M., & DiNapoli Jr., M. A. (2023). In Debt: Student Loan Burdens Among Teachers. <https://doi.org/10.54300/497.986>
29. Gathiira, G., Muathe, S., & Kilika, J. (2020). Organization's Human Resource Practices: Determinants of Employees Retirement Preparedness in the Context of Kenya. *Journal of Human Resource Management*, 8(3), 152. <https://doi.org/10.11648/j.jhrm.201200803.16>
30. Greenberg, A. E., & Hershfield, H. E. (2019). Financial decision making. *Consumer Psychology Review*, 2(1), 17–29. <https://doi.org/10.1002/arcp.1043>
31. Guo, B., & Huang, J. (2023). Financial Well-Being and Financial Capability among Low-Income Entrepreneurs. *Journal of Risk and Financial Management*, 16(3). <https://doi.org/10.3390/jrfm16030181>
32. Guptan, V., Rasiah, R., Pritam Singh, H. K. A. P., Turner, J. J., Kumar, S., & Sorooshian, S. (2021). Retirement Preparedness and Subjective Well-Being: Evidence from Malaysia. *Quality - Access to Success*, 22(185), 200–211. <https://doi.org/10.47750/QAS/22.185.27>
33. Hernando-Malipot, M. (2026, February 5). Group pushes salary hike as 'real fix' to teachers' debt, warns against longer loan terms. *Manila Bulletin*. <https://mb.com.ph/2026/02/05/group-pushes-salary-hike-as-real-fix-to-teachers-debt-warns-against-longer-loan-terms>
34. Jaafar, H., Halim, H. A., & Ismail, R. (2022). Determinants of Retirement Preparedness: Understanding Malaysian Millennials. *Universal Journal of Accounting and Finance*, 10(4), 871–882. <https://doi.org/10.13189/ujaf.2022.100409>
35. Jamal, J. (2026). Financial Pressures and Teacher Outcomes: Evidence from Female Public School Teachers in Lanao del Sur, Philippines. *Journal of Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, 4(1), 194–202. <https://doi.org/10.69569/jip.2025.697>
36. Jala, C. L. (2024). Financial Literacy and Retirement Preparedness of Public-School Teachers: Basis of Developmental Plan for Retirement. *Psychology and Education: A Multidisciplinary Journal*, 26(10), 1122-1137. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.13968091>
37. Jones, A., & Stead, L. (2020). Can people on low incomes access affordable housing loans in urban Africa and Asia? Examples of innovative housing finance models from Reall's global network. *Environment and Urbanization*, 32(1), 155–174. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0956247819899557>
38. Kim, K. T., & Hanna, S. D. (2015). Do U.S. households perceive their retirement preparedness realistically? *Financial Services Review*, 24(2), 139–155. <https://doi.org/10.61190/fsr.v24i2.3238>
39. Kurowski, Ł. (2021). Household's overindebtedness during the covid-19 crisis: The role of debt and financial literacy. *Risks*, 9(4). <https://doi.org/10.3390/risks9040062>
40. Kyrylenko, O., Koval, S., Sydor, I., & Sydoruk, A. (2024, 04). *The sufficiency of household incomes: Estimation and economic interpretation for their financial stability*. Retrieved from ResearchGate: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/379878907_The_sufficiency_of_household_incomes_Estimation_and_economic_interpretation_for_their_financial_stability
41. LegalClarity Team. (2026, April 7). Financial responsibility. <https://legalclarity.org/what-is-a-financial-responsibility-and-why-is-it-important/>
42. Levara, F. S., Catubig, K. P. P., Embodo, K. J. M., Malajos, M. J., Sardanas, L. A., & Magallon, Jr., S. V. (2024). Dimensions of Loan Dependency among Government Employees of the Municipality of

- Sulop, Davao Del Sur: An Exploratory Factor Analysis. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*, VIII(IV), 92–104. <https://doi.org/10.47772/ijriss.2024.804007>
43. Liu, C., Bai, X., & Knapp, M. (2022). Multidimensional Retirement Planning Behaviors, Retirement Confidence, and Post-Retirement Health and Well-Being Among Chinese Older Adults in Hong Kong. *Applied Research in Quality of Life*, 17(2), 833–849. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11482-020-09901-7>
44. Liu, H. C., & Lin, J. S. (2021). Impact of Internet Integrated Financial Education on Students' Financial Awareness and Financial Behavior. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.751709>
45. Mabignay, E. G. B., Hamja, A. J. E., Valentin, J. R., Fabrigas, E. C., Padul, M. B., & Labaria, J. J. C. (2022). Effects of salary loans to financial wellness of Panacan National High School teachers. *JournalNX- A Multidisciplinary Peer Reviewed Journal*, 8(2), 174–185. <https://repo.journalnx.com/index.php/nx/article/view/3908>
46. Mahdzan, N. S., Zainudin, R., Abd Sukor, M. E., Zainir, F., & Wan Ahmad, W. M. (2020). An exploratory study of financial well-being among Malaysian households. *Journal of Asian Business and Economic Studies*, 27(3), 285–302. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JABES-12-2019-0120>
47. Mahendru, M., Sharma, G. D., & Hawkins, M. (2022). Toward a new conceptualization of financial well-being. *Journal of Public Affairs*, 22(2). <https://doi.org/10.1002/pa.2505>
48. Malenya, W. M., & Kariuki, P. (2017). Characteristics of microfinance banking services and financial inclusion in Kenya. *The Strategic Journal of Business & Change Management*, 4(4), 512–527. <http://www.strategicjournals.com/index.php/journal/article/view/587>
49. Marasigan, F. L. A., Aguilucho, R. L., Austria, A. M. D., Nicolas, M. N. A., Yadao, A. G., & Melo, M. C. F. (2022). Money attitude and teachers' spending behavior. *American International Journal of Business Management (AIJBM)*, 5(11), 54–67. <https://www.aijbm.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/G5115467.pdf>
50. Mencias-Tabernilla, M. C. L. (2023). The story behind “London” (Loan Dito, Loan Doon): Exploring teachers' expenditure patterns and debt profile. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, 2(2), 131–149. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7969074>
51. Molino, S. M. C., Rosios, E. G., Arlaleljo, J. D., De Jesus, R. B., & Ronquillo, G. C. (2026). Financial Status, Emotional Well-Being, and Performance of Public Elementary School Teachers. In *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ADVANCED MULTIDISCIPLINARY STUDIES: VI (Number 1)*.
52. Muhammad, T., Srivastava, S., & Sekher, T. V. (2021). Association of self-perceived income sufficiency with cognitive impairment among older adults: a population-based study in India. *BMC Psychiatry*, 21(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12888-021-03257-4>
53. Ngcamu, L. J., Quaye, E. S., Horvey, S. S., & Jaravaza, D. C. (2023). Personality traits, money attitudes and consumer decision-making styles as predictors of investment products choice in South Africa. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 22(3), 618–631. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cb.2146>
54. Njuguna, B. C., Kisilu, K., & Kipkoech Lydia. (2023). Factors motivating head teachers in Marakwet west Sub County to enroll for the KEMI diploma in educational management course. *World Journal of Advanced Research and Reviews*, 18(1), 124–129. <https://doi.org/10.30574/wjarr.2023.18.1.0416>
55. Oesterreichische Nationalbank. (2021). Financial stability report 41. https://centerforfinancialstability.org/fsr/aut_fsr_202106.pdf

56. Priyadharshini, S. H. (2015). From financial literacy to financial well being; a study of the level of financial literacy of women teaching faculty in educational institutions in Coimbatore region [Doctoral dissertation, Bharathiar University]. Language in India. <https://www.languageinindia.com/march2017/priyafinancialliteracydissertation.pdf>
57. Qi, J., Chatterjee, S., & Liu, Y. (2022). Retirement Preparedness of Generation X Compared to Other Cohorts in the United States. *International Journal of Financial Studies*, 10(2). <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijfs10020045>
58. Rahman, M., Isa, C. R., Masud, M. M., Sarker, M., & Chowdhury, N. T. (2021). The role of financial behaviour, financial literacy, and financial stress in explaining the financial well-being of B40 group in Malaysia. *Future Business Journal*, 7(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s43093-021-00099-0>
59. Ramli, N. I. S., & Shariff, N. S. M. (2023). A study on retirement preparedness and confidence among private sector employees in Malaysia. *Malaysian Journal of Science, Health & Technology*, 9(2), 163–172. <https://doi.org/10.33102/mjosht.v9i2.328>
60. Ramos, V. J., & Vital, M. J. (2025). Research note: Merry now, marry later? Initial labor market conditions and marital intentions in the Philippines. *Journal of Family Research*, 37, 307–317. <https://doi.org/10.20377/jfr-1226>
61. Reese, J. (2024, 01 04). *Financially Stable: What It Means – And How To Get There*. Retrieved from Rocket Money: <https://www.rocketmoney.com/learn/personal-finance/financially-stable>
62. Respati, D. K., Widyastuti, U., Nuryati, T., Musyaffi, A. M., Handayani, B. D., & Ali, N. R. (2023). How do students' digital financial literacy and financial confidence influence their financial behavior and financial well-being? *Nurture*, 17(2), 40–50. <https://doi.org/10.55951/nurture.v17i2.154>
63. Rodrigo, T., & Hyungsoo Kim. (2023). Financial and Pension Literacy and Retirement Preparedness in Sri Lanka: Evidence from Employee Provident Fund Contributors. *Journal of Consumer Sciences*, 8(1), 57–76. <https://doi.org/10.29244/jcs.8.1.57-76>
64. Rojo-Bastasa, K. (2026). Financial stability and teaching performance: Evidence from public secondary school teachers. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science (IJRISS)*, 10(1), 444–454. <https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2026.10100444>
65. Sagnit, F. J. E. (2026). Teacher indebtedness in the digital era: A mixed-methods study of lending institutions and teacher performance in the Philippines. *International Journal of Advanced and Applied Sciences*, 13(1), 174–182. <https://doi.org/10.21833/ijaas.2026.01.018>
66. Sehrawat, K., Vij, M., & Talan, G. (2021). Understanding the Path Toward Financial Well-Being: Evidence From India. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.638408>
67. She, L., Rasiah, R., Weissmann, M. A., & Kaur, H. (2024). Using the Theory of Planned Behaviour to Explore Predictors of Financial Behaviour Among Working Adults in Malaysia. *FIIB Business Review*, 13(1), 118–135. <https://doi.org/10.1177/23197145231169336>
68. Sorgente, A., & Lanz, M. (2017). Emerging adults' financial well-being: A scoping review. *Adolescent Research Review*, 2(4), 255–292. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40894-016-0052-x>
69. Tagapulot, S. D., & Macalisang, D. (2024). Financial Challenges Among Public School Teachers: Basis for Proposed Program. *Journal of Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, 2(7). <https://doi.org/10.69569/jip.2024.0194>
70. Team, I. E. (2025, March 5). *21 Personal Goal Examples to Set For Yourself (With Tips)*. Retrieved from Indeed: <https://sg.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/personal-goal-examples#:~:text=What%20are%20personal%20goals?,and%20actions%20to%20achieve%20them.>

71. Tornino, J., & Ferdinez, E. (2025). Financial literacy, behavior, and challenges in teaching: An insight for a literacy program. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science (IJRISS)*, 9(7), 2933-2963. <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2025.907000242>
72. Ugwu, L. E., & Idemudia, E. S. (2023). Retirement Planning and Financial Anxiety among Nigerian Civil Servants: Insights from Social Comparison Theory. *Behavioral Sciences*, 13(5). <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs13050425>
73. Velmurugan, G., Selvam, V., & Abdul Nazar, N. (2015). An empirical analysis on perception of investors' towards various investment avenues. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 6(4), 427–435. <https://doi.org/10.5901/mjss.2015.v6n4p427>
74. Vidal-Sarahina, M. E. (2025). Financial Literacy of Department of Education Teachers in the Philippines. *Journal of Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, 3(9), 71–78. <https://doi.org/10.69569/jip.2025.483>
75. Wei, W., García, E., DiNapoli, M. A., Jr., Patrick, S. K., & Leung-Gagné, M. (2025). In debt: Student loan burdens among teachers [Brief]. Learning Policy Institute. <https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/student-loans-among-teachers-brief>
76. Wolf, F., Lohmann, H., & Böhnke, P. (2022). The standard of living among the poor across Europe. Does employment make a difference? *European Societies*, 24(5), 548–579. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616696.2022.2076892>
77. Xiao, J. J., & Yao, R. (2022). Good debt, bad debt: family debt portfolios and financial burdens. *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, 40(4). <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJBM-06-2021-0243>
78. Yang, J., Wu, Y., & Huang, B. (2023). Digital finance and financial literacy: Evidence from Chinese households. *Journal of Banking and Finance*, 156. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbankfin.2023.107005>
79. Yasman, N. (2024). Financial Literacy Programs: A Tool for Improved Personal Financial Planning. ResearchGate. <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.34111.11680/1>
80. Zaragoza, M. M., & Arceño, R. A. (2017). Consequences of Borrowing Money from Lending Institutions in Relation to Job Performance. *International Journal of English Literature and Social Sciences*, 2(5), 160–172. <https://doi.org/10.24001/ijels.2.5.20>