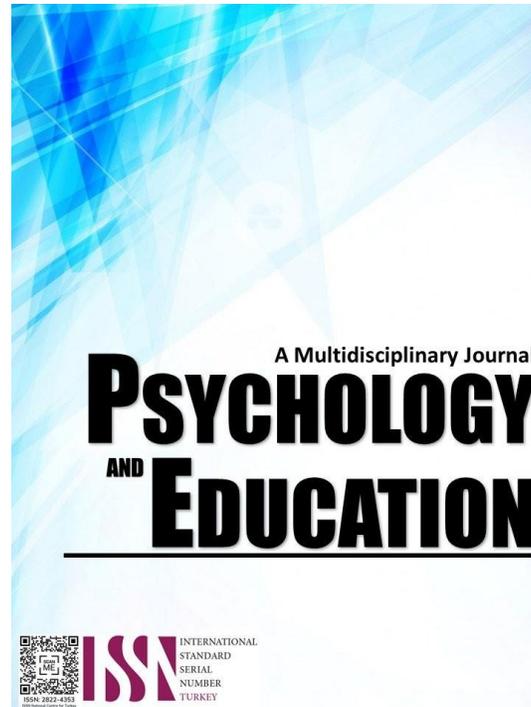


# READING PROFICIENCY IN THE DIGITAL ERA: TEACHERS' CHALLENGES



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## Reading Proficiency in the Digital Era: Teachers' Challenges

Evangeline A. Galito,\* Carlito A. Abarquez

For affiliations and correspondence, see the last page.

### Abstract

This research sought to uncover the interconnected dynamics, barriers, and opportunities that existed within this context to inform strategies that would support teachers in their pivotal role in shaping the future of society. The elementary school teachers of the Naawan District participated in this survey as respondents. The survey questionnaire employed in this study underwent a comprehensive validation process. Notably, the largest age group falls within the range of 36 to 45 years. The overwhelming majority of teachers were females and a substantial portion was married. The dominance of Teacher I positions underscored the prevalence of entry-level roles, with the majority having earned Masteral Units. The survey findings shed light on the challenges teachers faced in adopting digital tools and integrating them into reading practices. These findings underscored the nuanced influence of socio-demographic factors on teachers' challenges in digital integration, suggesting the need for tailored support programs. The significant correlation underscored the impact of external factors, such as technological challenges, on teachers' ability to deliver effective instruction. The multiple regression analysis found that socio-economic factors did not significantly predict teachers' classroom teaching performance. However, facing challenges in adopting digital tools and integrating them into reading practices significantly impacted teaching performance. The action plan aimed to address the study's findings on the significant impact of challenges in digital integration on teaching performance.

**Keywords:** *reading practices, teachers' challenges, multiple regression, and digital integration*

### Introduction

In today's digital era, educators face a new set of challenges in addition to the already demanding nature of their profession. The rapid integration of technology into the classroom has transformed the way students learn and the tools educators use to facilitate that learning. Nowadays students are not only required to read and comprehend traditional print materials but also navigate a vast digital landscape filled with information, often delivered through various media, platforms, and devices. This paradigm shift has given rise to the need for educators to adapt and navigate the digital landscape, a task that carries both prospects and hurdles. Teachers must adapt to these changes not only to maintain their own well-being but also to ensure that they are effectively equipping their students with the skills needed to thrive in the digital age. The transition to the digital era has opened exciting opportunities for educators.

Digital tools and platforms can provide personalized learning experiences that cater to individual student needs. Educators can access a wealth of digital resources, enabling them to create engaging and interactive lessons that captivate students' attention and foster a deeper understanding of the material. Furthermore, the potential for real-time assessment and feedback in the digital environment has the capacity to revolutionize the way reading proficiency is measured and improved.

The increased screen time in and out of the classroom has raised concerns about the potential negative impacts on students' attention spans and overall well-being. Educators must grapple with the task of balancing the benefits of digital tools with the need for traditional, off-screen learning experiences. Additionally, the digital age has brought about new challenges related to information literacy and critical thinking, as students must learn to discern credible sources from the vast sea of information available online.

Teacher burnout, often exacerbated by the pressures of adapting to the digital era, is a significant hurdle that can impede educators' ability to impart crucial reading skills effectively. As educators strive to keep pace with technological advancements and adjust their teaching methods to engage digitally native students, the demands on their time and emotional resources have grown exponentially. This research aims to explore how these challenges in the digital era impact teachers' abilities to foster reading proficiency and, consequently, the broader implications this has for students' academic success and the overall health of the education system.

The phenomenon of teacher burnout is a pervasive and concerning issue in the field of education. As educators play a pivotal role in shaping the future of society, their well-being and effectiveness are paramount. Teacher burnout, characterized by physical, emotional, and psychological exhaustion, not only affects educators' quality of life but also has far-reaching implications for students and the overall education system. The connection between teacher burnout and our research is evident. As educators embrace the digital era's innovations, they are confronted with new challenges that can exacerbate burnout, such as adapting to technology, managing digital distractions, and keeping pace with constantly evolving teaching methods. Simultaneously, these digital tools offer educators the potential for improved pedagogy, personalized learning experiences, and expanded resources that could enhance reading proficiency outcomes. This research endeavors to shed light on the intersection of these factors, providing insights into how educators are navigating the digital landscape, its effect on their well-being, and its implications for students' reading proficiency. The dynamic intersection of reading proficiency, education in the digital age, and the well-being of teachers forms the crux of our investigation. The researcher sought to understand how educators are coping with the digitalization of education and how this transformation is impacting their ability to foster reading proficiency among their students.

## Research Questions

The digital era's influence on education has brought about a complex set of challenges, wherein teachers are expected to foster and maintain students' reading proficiency while also adapting to the digital landscape. These challenges, coupled with the persistent issue of teacher burnout, necessitate a comprehensive exploration of how they navigated the digital era, the impact on their well-being, and the implications for students' reading proficiency outcomes.

This research sought to uncover the interconnected dynamics, barriers, and opportunities that existed within this context to inform strategies that would support teachers in their pivotal role in shaping the future of society. This study aimed to address the following key problem areas:

1. What is the profile of the teachers in terms of:
  - 1.1. age;
  - 1.2. sex;
  - 1.3. civil status;
  - 1.4. length in service;
  - 1.5. plantilla position;
  - 1.6. monthly income; and
  - 1.7. educational attainment?
2. What are the challenges of teachers in adopting digital tools and digital integration of reading practices?
3. What is the classroom observation teaching performance of teachers?
4. Is there a significant relationship between the challenges of teachers and the socio-demographic profile of the respondents?
5. Is there a significant relationship between the socio-demographic profile of teachers and teachers' classroom observation teaching performance?
6. Is there a significant relationship between the challenges of teachers and teachers' classroom observation teaching performance?
7. Which challenges faced by the teachers and socio-demographic profile significantly predict the teachers' classroom observation teaching performance?
8. What action plan can be designed based on the result of the study?

## Methodology

### Research Design

To comprehensively investigate the challenges and opportunities associated with reading literacy in the digital age and the role of teachers. The researcher employed a descriptive correlational research design. This approach utilized triangulated data from different sources and perspectives, providing a more nuanced understanding of the subject matter (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

### Respondents

The elementary school teachers of the Naawan District participated in this survey as responders. Using the stratified random selection technique, the respondents were chosen. For the samples, they were split up by school. The researcher used the Raosoft formula to calculate the sample size. With a margin of error of 5% and a confidence level of 95%, the Raosoft Sample Size Calculator was utilized to ascertain the representative sample size. 75% of the 131 teachers in the population, or 104 teachers were included in the sample size calculated using the Raosoft algorithm. The selection of teachers as respondents is essential as they play a vital role in the educational ecosystem and are directly affected by policy changes. Their experiences, feelings, and perspectives are valuable in understanding the implications and outcomes of such a study. By examining the impact of reading proficiency in the digital era of these educators, the researcher aimed to provide valuable data on the teachers' challenges in the teaching community in Naawan, Misamis Oriental.

Table 1. Respondents Distribution of the Study

Schools	Total Population	Sample Size
Naawan Central School	48	37
Maputi Elementary School	15	11
Linangkayan Elementary School	13	10
Tuboran Elementary School	7	5
Don Pedro Elementary School	7	5
Patag Elementary School	7	5
Mapulog Elementary School	7	5
Tagbalogo Elementary School	11	9
Mat-I Elementary school	10	8
Macabagla Elementary School	3	2
Pagdihon Elementary School	3	2
Lubilan Integrated School	7	5
Total	131	104

## Instrument

The survey questionnaire that employed in this study underwent a comprehensive validation process to guarantee the precision and dependability of the data collected. This process is integral in ensuring the integrity of the research findings. It consisted of several key steps designed to enhance the questionnaire's effectiveness and suitability for our study.

In the initial phase of validation, the questionnaire underwent an expert review. This involved subjecting the instrument to the scrutiny of a panel of experts who possess substantial knowledge in the fields of education, digital technology, and research methodology. Their invaluable insights, feedback, and recommendations were diligently incorporated into the questionnaire. This expert review is pivotal in refining the instrument, addressing ambiguities, and ensuring that the questions are relevant and aligned with the research objectives.

Following the expert review, a pilot test was conducted at Manticao Central Elementary School with 25 teachers as participants. This test involved a select group of teachers who were distinct from the primary study sample. The aim was to identify any potential issues related to the questionnaire's structure, language, or clarity. The feedback gathered from the pilot test provided essential insights, as it unveiled ambiguities, confusing items, or any elements that might hinder participants' understanding of the questions. Based on the feedback received, the researcher would make necessary revisions and clarifications to enhance the questionnaire's comprehensibility.

The questionnaire was also subjected to a rigorous content validity assessment. This step is crucial in ensuring that the questions precisely measure the intended constructs and accurately cover the dimensions of teachers' adaptation to digital tools and challenges in integrating technology into teaching. The researcher and the thesis adviser meticulously reviewed the questionnaire to confirm that it adequately represented the multifaceted aspects under investigation.

Furthermore, the construct validity of the survey questionnaire was scrutinized through exploratory factor analysis (EFA). This statistical method played a significant role in confirming that the questions aligned effectively with the intended constructs of the study. It helped identify any underlying factors or dimensions within the data, further bolstering the questionnaire's construct validity.

In addition to content and construct validity, the questionnaire's reliability was assessed. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was utilized to evaluate the internal consistency and reliability of the questions measuring the same constructs. This analysis was crucial in ensuring that the instrument provided dependable and consistent measurements.

The validation process culminated in a survey questionnaire that demonstrated high content and construct validity. The resulting instrument was a robust and reliable tool for data collection, providing a strong foundation for the analysis and findings of this study. The meticulous validation procedures undertaken reinforce the credibility and accuracy of the data, contributing to the quality of the research within the context of exploring reading proficiency in the digital era. Meanwhile, below are the reliability statistics results of the pilot testing.

## Procedure

The data collection process for the study included the following steps. Initially, the researcher sought approval from the Schools Division Superintendent of the Division of Misamis Oriental to conduct the study, which included outlining the study's purpose and how it was carried out. Subsequently, the researcher acquired a permit to conduct the research from the school principals for the participation of the desired respondents. The next phase included selecting participants for the study, which required identifying a suitable sample of teachers in the district who were willing to take part in the study.

Once the participants had been identified, the researcher provided them with informed consent documents that detailed the study's objectives, procedures, and the participants' rights. After obtaining the informed consent, the researcher distributed the questionnaires to the participants to gather data on the impact of poverty on student engagement and motivation.

The researcher collected the completed questionnaires from the respondents and tallied the data for statistical analysis. The data were analyzed using correlation analysis and descriptive statistics. Finally, the researcher sent the tabulated data to the school's statistician for further analysis to determine any significant associations between the reading challenges and hurdles of educators. The study's findings were presented and interpreted, followed by recommendations based on the results.

## Data Analysis

These statistical tools provided insights and interpretations of the data gathered from the study and could help answer the research questions and objectives.

For problem 1, Frequency and Percentage Distribution were used to describe the profile of the respondents.

For problems 2 and 3, Mean and Standard Deviation were used to calculate and describe the challenges of teachers.

For problems 4, 5, 6, and 7, Pearson r correlation. was used to determine the significant relationship between the independent and dependent variables of the study.

Regression analysis was used to describe the reading proficiency in the digital era's challenges and their classroom observation teaching performance.

## Results and Discussion

This section provides the presentation and discussion of the data gathered by the researcher. The data were carefully analyzed using various statistical tools to provide meaningful insights into the research questions. The study results are presented clearly and concisely, with tables used to enhance the readability and understanding of the findings.

**Problem 1: What is the profile of the teachers in terms of age, sex, civil status, length of service, plantilla position, monthly income, and educational attainment?**

Table 2. *Age of the Teachers*

<i>Age (in years)</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
20-25	3	2.9
26-35	22	21.2
36-45	29	27.9
46-55	35	33.7
56+	15	14.4
Total	104	100.0

The distribution of teachers' ages in the given dataset provides valuable insights into the demographics of the teaching staff. Among the 104 teachers surveyed, the largest age group falls within the range of 36 to 45 years, comprising 27.9% of the total sample. Following closely behind, the age group of 46 to 55 years represents 33.7% of the teachers. Together, these two age brackets constitute a significant majority, indicating that a considerable portion of the teaching workforce falls within the mid-career to later stages of their professional journey.

Meanwhile, younger teachers between the ages of 26 to 35 make up 21.2% of the total, highlighting a substantial presence of mid-career educators. Notably, teachers aged 20 to 25 years form the smallest group, constituting only 2.9% of the total. Similarly, teachers aged 56 and above account for 14.4% of the sample, indicating a smaller but still notable representation of experienced educators. This distribution underscores the diverse age range within the teaching profession, with significant portions of both mid-career and experienced educators contributing to the educational landscape.

It was a common observation that age influenced teaching because it was associated with no experiences (Bodhe et al., 2019). Accordingly, as the age advanced, teachers became experienced, and they knew where to tap the potential of the students and how to make them understand their worth.

Table 3. *Sex of the Teachers*

<i>Sex</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
Male	8	7.7
Female	96	92.3
Total	104	100.0

The sex distribution within the teaching staff, as depicted in Table 3, showcases a pronounced gender imbalance. Among the 104 teachers surveyed, a significant majority, constituting 92.3% of the total sample, are female. This dominance of female teachers highlights a prevailing trend within the education sector, where women often outnumber men in teaching roles. Conversely, male teachers account for only 7.7% of the total sample, representing a minority within the profession. This sex disproportion underscores broader societal dynamics and historical trends that have contributed to the predominance of women in teaching positions. Despite efforts to promote sex diversity and inclusivity in various professions, including education, the disparity between male and female teachers persists.

The sex composition of the sample can have various implications for the study's findings and interpretations. It may reflect the broader demographic distribution of teachers in the particular educational context or region under study. Additionally, it is important to recognize that sex may influence teaching styles and perspectives in education. Students' bias against female teachers was found to be minimal in a recent study by Shah et al. (2018). This finding could be attributed to a number of variables, including the teachers' compassionate listening style, superior understanding, and caring demeanor.

Table 4. *Civil Status of the Teachers*

<i>Civil Status</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
Single	21	20.2
Married	75	72.1
Widowed	6	5.8
Separated	2	1.9
Total	104	100.0

The civil status distribution among the teaching staff, as illustrated in Table 4, provides insights into the personal lives of educators within the surveyed population. Among the 104 teachers included in the analysis, the majority, comprising 72.1% of the total sample, are married. This indicates that a significant proportion of teachers have made commitments to a marital partnership, balancing their

professional and personal lives.

In contrast, single teachers represent a notable portion, constituting 20.2% of the sample, indicating a sizeable cohort of individuals who are yet to enter into marriage. Additionally, a smaller proportion of widowed teachers, accounting for 5.8% of the total, suggests the presence of educators who have experienced the loss of a spouse. Meanwhile, separated teachers represent a minor fraction, comprising only 1.9% of the sample, indicating a smaller subset of individuals who are no longer in a marital relationship.

Therefore, a teacher's civil status could affect how they interact with pupils and other teachers. Insights into interpersonal dynamics and family dynamics may be brought into the classroom by married educators, which may have an impact on their teaching and classroom management approaches. The study conducted by Abella (2018) discovered that married male and female teachers had high levels of self-efficacy, which in turn led to high work performance, and that marital status had an impact on teachers' ability to instruct.

*Table 5. Length in Service of the Teachers*

<i>Length in Service</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
1-10	52	50.0
11-20	28	26.9
21-30	19	18.3
31-40	5	4.8
Total	104	100.0

The distribution of teachers' length in service, as presented in Table 5, sheds light on the tenure and experience levels within the teaching workforce. Among the 104 teachers surveyed, the largest segment, comprising 50.0% of the total sample, has served for a duration ranging from 1 to 10 years. This indicates a significant presence of relatively early-career educators within the profession, potentially reflecting recent entrants into the field or individuals who have transitioned to teaching from other careers.

Meanwhile, teachers with a service length of 11 to 20 years constitute 26.9% of the sample, representing a substantial cohort of mid-career educators who have garnered considerable experience in their roles. Furthermore, teachers with service lengths ranging from 21 to 30 years account for 18.3% of the total, highlighting a notable presence of seasoned professionals who have dedicated several decades to teaching. A smaller proportion of teachers, comprising 4.8% of the sample, have served for 31 to 40 years, indicating a select group of long-tenured educators who have amassed extensive experience and expertise in their field. This distribution underscores the diverse career trajectories and experience levels within the teaching profession, emphasizing the importance of recognizing and valuing the contributions of educators at various stages of their careers.

According to Kim's (2019) study, a key factor in the effectiveness of educational innovations is the knowledge and skills of instructors. Moreover, he found that teachers' ignorance and ineptitude constituted the second biggest obstacle to teaching. The argument put forth by Knezek and Christensen (2019) states that teachers who are more proficient and knowledgeable will be able to support instruction in the classroom and exhibit higher levels. Berner (2020) also concluded that teachers should develop their competence in accordance with the learning goals they intend to accomplish.

*Table 6. Plantilla Position of the Teachers*

<i>Plantilla Position</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
Teacher I	69	66.3
Teacher II	18	17.3
Teacher III	10	9.6
Master Teacher I	6	5.8
Master Teacher II	1	1.0
Total	104	100.0

The breakdown of teachers' plantilla positions, as displayed in Table 6, provides valuable insights into the hierarchical structure and roles within the teaching profession. Among the 104 teachers surveyed, the majority, accounting for 66.3% of the total sample, hold the position of Teacher I. This indicates that a significant portion of the teaching workforce occupies entry-level teaching positions, typically characterized by responsibilities focused on classroom instruction and student engagement.

Furthermore, 17.3% of the sample consists of teachers in the position of Teacher II, reflecting a cohort of educators who may have accrued additional experience or qualifications beyond the entry level. Additionally, Teacher III positions account for 9.6% of the total, indicating a further progression in the hierarchy, potentially involving increased responsibilities in curriculum development or teacher mentoring. A smaller proportion of teachers, comprising 5.8% of the sample, hold the position of Master Teacher I, suggesting an advanced level of expertise and leadership within the profession.

Notably, only 1.0% of teachers occupy the highest tier, Master Teacher II, underscoring the rarity of this esteemed position within the teaching hierarchy. This distribution highlights the structured career progression available to educators, emphasizing opportunities for professional growth and advancement within the teaching profession's organizational framework.

The diversity of teaching jobs among the population examined can enhance our understanding of the teaching environment generally

and facilitate a more thorough examination of the ways in which various roles and responsibilities influence teaching practices and pedagogies. Kim (2019) posits that the job status or appointment status has an impact on teachers' self-teaching efficacy and motivation. They discovered that educators work more to obtain a permanent position, which required them to consistently enhance both their performance as teachers and their delivery of instruction.

Table 7. *Monthly Income of the Teachers*

<i>Monthly Income</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
5,000-10,000	1	1.0
10,001-20,000	5	4.8
20,001-30,000	72	69.2
30,001-40,000	19	18.3
40,001-50,000	7	6.7
Total	104	100.0

The distribution of teachers' monthly income, as depicted in Table 7, provides a comprehensive overview of the financial landscape within the teaching profession. Among the 104 teachers surveyed, the majority, comprising 69.2% of the total sample, fall within the income range of 20,001 to 30,000 pesos per month. This suggests that a significant portion of educators receive a moderate monthly income, which likely corresponds to their respective positions and experience levels within the profession. Furthermore, 18.3% of the sample earns between 30,001 to 40,000 pesos monthly, indicating a sizeable segment of teachers who receive relatively higher compensation, potentially reflecting increased responsibilities or tenure.

Meanwhile, 4.8% of teachers earn between 10,001 to 20,000 pesos monthly, representing a smaller subset of educators with more modest income levels. Additionally, 6.7% of the sample falls within the income bracket of 40,001 to 50,000 pesos per month, indicating a minority of teachers who receive higher-than-average compensation within the profession. Notably, only 1.0% of teachers earn between 5,000 to 10,000 pesos monthly, underscoring the rarity of lower-income levels within the surveyed population. This distribution highlights the varied income levels among educators, reflecting the diverse economic circumstances and financial considerations within the teaching profession.

These results suggested that family income—whether high or low—may affect their performance throughout their whole educational journey. They inquired about the family's financial situation and how they covered their kids' tuition, particularly when they started college, even though public colleges offered scholarships and free tuition (Humlum, 2019).

Table 8. *Educational Attainment of the Teachers*

<i>Educational Attainment</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
College Degree	29	27.9
Masteral Units Earned	72	69.2
Master's Graduate	2	1.9
PhD Units Earned	1	1.0
Total	104	100.0

Table 8 provides a breakdown of the educational attainment levels of the teachers surveyed, offering insights into the academic qualifications within the teaching profession. Among the 104 teachers included in the analysis, the majority, comprising 69.2% of the total sample, have earned Masteral Units, indicating a significant emphasis on postgraduate education among educators. This suggests a dedication to professional development and advanced learning within the teaching profession, with many teachers pursuing further education beyond their initial college degree. Additionally, 27.9% of the sample holds a college degree, representing a substantial cohort of educators with undergraduate qualifications.

Meanwhile, a smaller proportion of teachers, accounting for 1.9% of the total, have completed a Master's degree, demonstrating an advanced level of academic achievement and specialization within the profession. Furthermore, only 1.0% of teachers have earned PhD Units, indicating a rare but notable presence of educators with the highest level of academic attainment. This distribution underscores the importance of continuous learning and academic advancement within the teaching profession, highlighting the diverse educational backgrounds and qualifications among educators.

Differently accomplished teachers may use different teaching philosophies and instructional techniques. Ph.D. holders, for instance, might be more focused on critical analysis and research, whereas college grads might use more practical or hands-on teaching methods.

Not all teachers receive adequate professional development in reading instruction. Without ongoing training and support in literacy pedagogy, teachers may struggle to implement evidence-based reading strategies effectively in their classrooms, leading to lower student achievement in reading.

Some teachers may lack foundational knowledge of literacy development and instruction. Without a deep understanding of phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and other essential components of reading, teachers may struggle to identify and address students' reading difficulties effectively, leading to gaps in their teaching performance (Llego, 2022).

This outcome supported Kim's (2019) assertion that becoming a teacher entail being a student first and that learning is a necessity for teaching. Being receptive to new ideas is a crucial trait for educators. A teacher must always be acquiring new knowledge. Executive Order No. 292 states that training, education, and a similar degree of competence and qualification are considered to be prerequisites for promotions for public employees. These must be relevant to the employee's available role.

### Problem 2: What are the challenges of teachers in adopting digital tools and digital integration of reading practices?

Table 9. *Challenges of Teachers in Adopting Digital Tools and Digital Integration of Reading Practices*

Indicators		Mean	SD	Description
1.	I use available online reading selections.	3.21	.76	Often
2.	I do assess reading learners' reading proficiency using digital tools.	2.97	.74	Often
3.	I use digital reading that impacts learners' reading engagement and motivation.	3.10	.70	Often
4.	I provide examples of innovative ways of using technology to enhance learners' engagement during reading activities.	3.23	.70	Often
5.	I balance the reading benefits and potential drawbacks of technology use in teaching.	3.16	.73	Often
6.	I ensure my well-being and prevent burnout in this digital era.	3.21	.71	Often
7.	I share any specific instances where I have faced challenges or unexpected difficulties with digital tools.	3.12	.71	Often
8.	I am open to opportunities that I believe digital tools offer for enhancing learners' reading proficiency.	3.55	.61	Always
9.	I incorporate digital tools and technology in my reading instruction.	3.31	.71	Often
10.	I describe any specific digital resources or platforms I use for teaching reading.	3.15	.68	Often
11.	I utilize interactive teaching methods.	3.39	.73	Often
12.	I encourage student participation and discussion.	3.67	.60	
13.	I demonstrate effective questioning techniques.	3.44	.62	Often
14.	I identify specific digital tools, platforms, or resources used.	3.20	.69	Often
15.	I demonstrate proficient use of technology during the lesson.	3.32	.71	Often
16.	I integrate technology seamlessly into the reading activity.	3.21	.71	Often
17.	I observe the active participation and engagement of students.	3.58	.52	Always
18.	I note attentiveness and enthusiasm in the classroom.	3.61	.51	Always
19.	I identify instances of disengagement or distraction due to technology use.	3.19	.65	Often
20.	I promote reading digital proficiency in my students.	3.28	.70	Often
Total Measure		3.30	.48	Often

Note: 1.00-1.49 Never; 2.50-3.49 Often; 1.50-2.49 Sometimes; 3.50-4.00 Always

The results from Table 9 shed light on the challenges faced by teachers in adopting digital tools and integrating them into reading practices, with emphasis on indicators measured by mean and standard deviation (SD). The mean score for the total measure is 3.30 with a relatively low SD of 0.48, indicating a generally consistent perception among teachers of the frequency with which they encounter these challenges. Notably, teachers express a relatively high level of openness to the opportunities digital tools offer for enhancing learners' reading proficiency, with a mean score of 3.55 and a low SD of 0.61, suggesting a strong consensus in this regard.

Additionally, indicators such as encouraging student participation and discussion (mean=3.67, SD=0.60) and observing active participation and engagement of students (mean=3.58, SD=0.52) receive notably high mean scores, indicating teachers' prioritization of student engagement and interaction, facilitated by digital tools. However, they also frequently encounter challenges such as balancing the benefits and drawbacks of technology use (mean=3.16, SD=0.73) and noting instances of disengagement or distraction due to technology (mean=3.19, SD=0.65), highlighting areas where further support and training may be needed.

These results imply the need for targeted professional development programs aimed at enhancing teachers' digital literacy skills and providing strategies for effectively integrating digital tools into reading instruction. Moreover, fostering a supportive environment that encourages experimentation and innovation with digital tools while addressing their concerns about potential drawbacks is crucial for promoting successful digital integration in reading practices. By addressing these challenges and harnessing the opportunities presented by digital tools, teachers can enhance students' reading engagement and proficiency in the digital era.

In the digital age, teachers have a multitude of prospects for enhancing reading proficiency. Firstly, the use of digital tools and resources can significantly augment the reading experience for students. Digital books, websites, and online libraries offer access to a vast array of reading materials, enabling students to explore diverse genres and topics (Hargittai et al., 2019). These digital resources can be particularly advantageous for engaging reluctant readers, as they often provide interactive elements that make reading more dynamic and appealing.

### Problem 3: What is the classroom teaching observation performance of teachers?

Table 10 provides insights into the classroom teaching observation performance of teachers, focusing on indicators measured by mean and standard deviation (SD). The mean score for the total measure is 3.56, indicating that, on average, teachers consistently demonstrate the observed behaviors in their teaching practices. Notably, indicators such as using content knowledge and its application within and across curriculum areas (mean: 3.54, SD: 0.50), manifesting strategies for promoting literacy and numeracy (mean: 3.56, SD: 0.52),

and using strategies for developing critical and creative thinking skills (mean: 3.54, SD: 0.50) receive high mean scores, suggesting that educators effectively incorporate these elements into their teaching methodologies.

Table 10. *Classroom Teaching Performance Observation of Teachers*

	<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Description</i>
1.	I use content knowledge and its application within and across curriculum areas.	3.54	.50	Always
2.	I observe the positive use of ICT.	3.50	.62	Always
3.	I manifest strategies for promoting literacy and numeracy.	3.56	.52	Always
4.	I use strategies for developing critical and creative thinking and other higher-order thinking skills.	3.54	.50	Always
5.	I use my mother tongue, Filipino, and English in teaching and learning.	3.74	.44	Always
6.	I design, select, organize, and utilize reading assessment strategies.	3.52	.52	Always
7.	I give feedback to improve my learning.	3.60	.49	Always
8.	I utilize teaching and learning resources including ICT	3.45	.65	Often
	Total Measure	3.56	.41	Always

Note: 1.00-1.49 Never; 2.50-3.49 Often; 1.50-2.49 Sometimes; 3.50-4.00 Always

Moreover, the consistent use of the mother tongue, Filipino, and English in teaching and learning (mean: 3.74, SD: 0.44) reflects the diverse linguistic approach employed by teachers to cater to the needs of their students. Additionally, providing feedback to improve learning (mean: 3.60, SD: 0.49) highlights teachers' commitment to fostering continuous improvement among their students. However, the utilization of teaching and learning resources, including ICT, receives a slightly lower mean score (mean: 3.45, SD: 0.65), suggesting variability in the frequency of its implementation. This indicates a potential area for further support and training to enhance educators' proficiency in leveraging technology for instructional purposes.

Overall, the results underscore the effectiveness of teachers in delivering quality instruction, incorporating various strategies to promote student learning and engagement across different subject areas. Continued support and professional development opportunities can further empower them to maximize their teaching performance and positively impact student outcomes.

Hence, observing teachers in the classroom can be a valuable tool for evaluating their teaching performance and providing feedback for improvement. When conducting classroom teaching observations, it's important to consider various aspects of the teaching process. When conducting classroom teaching observations, it's essential to use a structured observation tool or rubric to guide the evaluation process. This helps ensure consistency and fairness in assessing teaching performance. Additionally, it's important to provide constructive feedback to the teacher following the observation, focusing on strengths and areas for growth. Collaborative discussions between the observer and the teacher can help identify specific strategies for improvement and support ongoing professional development.

Gregory (2019) supported the above observation in a related article which pointed out that the teacher's personality was an important factor in the failure or success of the learner. He mentioned that the teacher's poor competence was most often the cause of poor performance. Article 7, Section 1, Instructional Standards Policies and Standards for Arts and Sciences Education (2014) stated that education should at all times maintain a high standard of instruction and a system of evaluation of teaching competence. A system of supervision shall be adopted for compliance with rules and regulations governing academic standards.

#### **Problem 4: Is there a significant relationship between the challenges of teachers and the socio-demographic profile of the respondents?**

The correlation results presented in Table 11 examine the relationship between the challenges faced by teachers and their socio-demographic profiles, with r-values indicating the strength and direction of the correlation and p-values indicating the significance of the relationship. Among the socio-demographic factors analyzed, age groups between 20-35, 36-45, and 46-55 show no significant correlation with the challenges faced by teachers. However, teachers aged 56 and above exhibit a significant negative correlation ( $r=-0.240$ ,  $p=0.014$ ), suggesting that older teachers encounter fewer challenges when adopting digital tools and integrating them into reading practices.

Similarly, age can often positively correlate with proficiency in various skills, including reading, due to accumulated knowledge and skills over time. Teachers, regardless of their experience, need ongoing professional development to stay updated on best practices in teaching literacy skills.

Regarding civil status, marital status does not significantly correlate with the challenges faced by teachers, although there is a borderline significant negative correlation for widowed or separated individuals ( $r=0.074$ ,  $p=0.455$ ). Length of service shows a significant negative correlation for teachers with 21-40 years of experience ( $r=-0.291$ ,  $p=0.003$ ), indicating that educators with longer tenures encounter fewer hurdles in digital integration.

Monthly income levels between 20,001-30,000 pesos exhibit a significant positive correlation ( $r=0.238$ ,  $p=0.015$ ), while income levels between 30,001-50,000 pesos show a significant negative correlation ( $r=-0.209$ ,  $p=0.034$ ), suggesting that teachers with moderate incomes encounter more challenges compared to those with higher or lower incomes.

Table 11. *Test of Relationship between the Challenges of Teachers and the Socio-Demographic Profile of the Respondents*

Socio-Economic Profiles	Challenges		Remarks
	r-value	p-value	
Age=20-35	.113	.253	Not significant
Age=36-45	.146	.138	Not significant
Age=46-55	-.063	.528	Not significant
Age=56+	-.240*	.014	Significant
Sex=Male	.082	.411	Not significant
Civil Status=Single	.147	.137	Not significant
Civil Status=Married	-.175	.075	Not significant
Civil Status=Widowed/Separated	.074	.455	Not significant
Length of Service=1-10	.138	.163	Not significant
Length of Service=11-20	.121	.222	Not significant
Length of Service=21-40	-.291**	.003	Significant
Plantilla=Teacher I	.170	.084	Not significant
Plantilla=Teacher II	-.138	.163	Not significant
Plantilla=Teacher III	-.105	.289	Not significant
Plantilla=Master Teacher	.011	.915	Not significant
Monthly Income=5,000-20,000	-.083	.402	Not significant
Monthly Income=20,001-30,000	.238*	.015	Significant
Monthly Income=30,001-50,000	-.209*	.034	Significant
Educational Attainment=College Degree	-.127	.198	Not significant
Educational Attainment=Master Unit	.104	.295	Not significant
Educational Attainment=Master Graduate or higher	.055	.577	Not significant

Note: 1Analysis is based on Point-Biserial Correlation \*\*significant at .01 level \*significant at .05 level

The correlation between teachers' monthly income and challenges to their reading proficiency is multifaceted and indirect. Monthly income can influence various factors that may impact a teacher's reading proficiency and their ability to effectively teach reading skills. Higher-income teachers may have more resources to invest in professional development opportunities, such as workshops, courses, or conferences focused on literacy instruction. Conversely, lower-income teachers might face financial constraints that limit their ability to access these opportunities, potentially hindering their professional growth in reading instruction.

Finally, educational attainment levels do not significantly correlate with the challenges faced by teachers. These findings imply that age, civil status, length of service, income, and educational attainment do not uniformly influence the challenges encountered by teachers in digital integration. However, older age, longer service tenure, and certain income levels may be associated with fewer hurdles in adopting digital tools. These insights can inform targeted support and training programs tailored to address the specific needs of educators based on their socio-demographic profiles, ultimately enhancing their ability to effectively integrate technology into teaching practices.

Collaborative learning networks and communities of practice can also provide valuable support and knowledge-sharing opportunities for educators (Kim, 2019). Incorporating digital literacy and critical thinking skills into the curriculum is essential for helping students navigate the digital information landscape (Livingstone, 2018). Educators can design lessons that explicitly teach students how to evaluate online sources, identify bias, and assess the reliability of information. The digital era offers both opportunities and challenges for educators striving to promote reading proficiency.

### **Problem 5: Is there a significant relationship between the socio-demographic profile of teachers and teachers' classroom observation teaching performance?**

Table 12 presents the results of the test of relationship between teachers' classroom observation teaching performance and their socio-demographic profiles, utilizing r-values to indicate the strength and direction of the correlation and p-values to determine the significance of the relationship. The analysis reveals that, among the socio-demographic factors examined, only length of service exhibits a significant correlation with classroom teaching performance. Specifically, teachers with 1-10 years of service experience have a significant positive correlation ( $r = 0.224$ ,  $p = 0.022$ ), suggesting that individuals in this tenure bracket demonstrate better teaching performance.

Conversely, no other socio-demographic variables, including age, sex, civil status, plantilla position, monthly income, or educational attainment, demonstrate significant correlations with classroom teaching performance. This implies that factors such as age, gender, marital status, income level, and educational background do not necessarily influence teachers' classroom teaching performance.

However, the significant correlation with length of service suggests that experience within the profession plays a role in enhancing teaching effectiveness. These findings underscore the importance of providing support and professional development opportunities, particularly for early-career teachers, to improve teaching performance regardless of other demographic factors. By focusing on enhancing pedagogical skills and instructional strategies, educational institutions can foster continuous improvement among educators,



ultimately contributing to better student outcomes.

Table 12. *Test of Relationship between the Teachers Classroom Observation Teaching Performance and the Socio-Demographic Profile of the Respondents*

Socio-Economic Profiles	Classroom Teaching Performance		Remarks
	r-value1	p-value	
Age=20-35	.000	.997	Not significant
Age=36-45	.126	.202	Not significant
Age=46-55	-.040	.684	Not significant
Age=56+	-.106	.284	Not significant
Sex=Male	.038	.699	Not significant
Civil Status=Single	.042	.672	Not significant
Civil Status=Married	-.054	.588	Not significant
Civil Status=Widowed/Separated	.027	.784	Not significant
Length of Service=1-10	.224*	.022	Significant
Length of Service=11-20	-.149	.132	Not significant
Length of Service=21-40	-.109	.269	Not significant
Plantilla=Teacher I	.109	.270	Not significant
Plantilla=Teacher II	-.101	.307	Not significant
Plantilla=Teacher III	-.024	.807	Not significant
Plantilla=Master Teacher	-.025	.804	Not significant
Monthly Income=5,000-20,000	.093	.348	Not significant
Monthly Income=20,001-30,000	.046	.645	Not significant
Monthly Income=30,001-50,000	-.099	.319	Not significant
Educational Attainment=College Degree	-.038	.699	Not significant
Educational Attainment=Master Unit	.027	.789	Not significant
Educational Attainment=Master Graduate or higher	.029	.766	Not significant

Note: 1Analysis is based on Point-Biserial Correlation \*significant at .05 level

The Impact of Digital Technology on Teaching and Learning in Schools”. Digital technologies have brought changes to the nature and scope of education. Versatile and disruptive technological innovations, such as smart devices, the Internet of Things (IoT), artificial intelligence (AI), augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR), blockchain, and software applications have opened up new opportunities for advancing teaching and learning (Gaol & Prasolova-Førland, 2021; OECD, 2021). Hence, in recent years, education systems worldwide have increased their investment in the integration of information and communication technology (ICT) (Fernández-Gutiérrez et al., 2020; Lawrence & Tar, 2018) and prioritized their educational agendas to adapt strategies or policies around ICT integration (European Commission, 2019).

**Problem 6: Is there a significant relationship between the challenges of teachers and teachers’ classroom teaching performance?**

Table 13. *Test of Relationship between the Teachers’ Classroom Teaching Performance and the Socio-Demographic Profile of the Respondents*

Variable	Classroom Teaching Performance		Remarks
	r-value1	p-value	
Challenges of Teachers	.553***	<.001	Significant

Note: 2Analysis is based on Pearson Correlation \*\*\*significant at .001 level

Table 13 presents the results of the test of relationship between teachers' classroom teaching performance and the challenges they face, using r-values to indicate the strength and direction of the correlation and p-values to determine the significance of the relationship.

The analysis reveals a highly significant positive correlation (r=0.553, p<0.001) between classroom teaching performance and the challenges encountered by teachers. This finding suggests that teachers who face more challenges in adopting digital tools and integrating them into reading practices tend to have lower classroom teaching performance. The significant correlation underscores the impact of external factors, such as technological challenges, on teachers' ability to effectively deliver instruction in the classroom.

Addressing these challenges through targeted support, professional development, and resource allocation can help mitigate their impact on teaching performance and improve overall educational outcomes. By providing educators with the necessary tools, training, and support, educational institutions can empower teachers to overcome obstacles and enhance their teaching effectiveness, ultimately benefiting students' learning experiences and achievements.

Reading comprehension is a cognitive process that requires myriad skills and strategies. Numerous programs are designed to improve reading comprehension: summer reading, read to succeed, student book clubs, and Battle of the Books. However, according to the U.S. Department of Education, millions of students’ progress each year without the necessary reading skills. According to Hart (2020), reading comprehension requires several interrelated components, including prior knowledge, vocabulary and fluency, active reading abilities, and critical thinking.



Furthermore, it was still important for us to note that home involvement was encouraged to improve the reading comprehension skills of the learner. Mullis et al. (2019) emphasized that home provided the foundation for early literacy and played a prominent role in the development of children's positive attitudes, self-concepts, and reading skills. It was accomplished through access to reading resources, exposure to reading behavior, and participation in early literacy activities that provided them with the skills for formal education.

**Problem 7: Which challenges faced by teachers and socio-demographic profile significantly predict the teachers' classroom observation teaching performance?**

Table 14. *Multiple Regression Analysis of Predicting the Teachers' Classroom Teaching Performance by Challenges and Socio-Economic Profiles*

Predictors	Regression Coeff, B	Std. Error	t-value	p- value	Remarks
Age=20-35	-.220	.159	-1.387	.169	Not significant
Age=36-45	-.059	.143	-.410	.683	Not significant
Age=46-55	-.044	.118	-.371	.711	Not significant
Age=56+ (ref)	--	--	--	--	--
Sex=Male	.163	.144	1.139	.258	Not significant
Civil Status=Single	-.064	.160	-.403	.688	Not significant
Civil Status=Married	-.032	.135	-.239	.812	Not significant
Civil Status=Widowed/Separated (ref)	--	--	--	--	--
Length of Service=1-10	.207	.183	1.127	.263	Not significant
Length of Service=11-20	-.151	.141	-1.070	.287	Not significant
Length of Service=21-40 (ref)	--	--	--	--	--
Plantilla=Teacher I	.029	.222	.129	.898	Not significant
Plantilla=Teacher II	.001	.166	.005	.996	Not significant
Plantilla=Teacher III	-.014	.175	-.079	.937	Not significant
Plantilla=Master Teacher (ref)	--	--	--	--	--
Monthly Income=5,000-20,000	.168	.190	.884	.379	Not significant
Monthly Income=20,001-30,000	-.177	.149	-1.186	.239	Not significant
Monthly Income=30,001-50,000 (ref)	--	--	--	--	--
Educational Attainment=College Degree	.129	.215	.600	.550	Not significant
Educational Attainment=Master Unit	.115	.211	.544	.588	Not significant
Educational Attainment=Master Graduate or higher (ref)	--	--	--	--	--
Challenges	.523	.075	6.930***	.000	Significant

Note: Analysis is based on Regression Analysis \*\*\*significant at .001 level Adjusted R2=.316

Table 14 presents the results of a multiple regression analysis aimed at predicting teachers' classroom observation teaching performance based on challenges faced, as well as various socio-economic profiles. The regression coefficients (B) represent the magnitude and direction of the effect of each predictor variable on teaching performance, with t-values indicating the significance of these effects and p-values determining their statistical significance.

Among the socio-economic factors analyzed, none show a significant impact on classroom teaching performance. Age groups, sex, civil status, length of service, plantilla position, monthly income levels, and educational attainment do not significantly predict teaching performance, as indicated by their non-significant t-values and p-values.

However, the predictor variable "challenges" demonstrates a highly significant positive effect on teaching performance, with a regression coefficient of 0.523 and a t-value of 6.930 (p < 0.001). This result suggests that teachers who face more challenges in adopting digital tools and integrating them into reading practices tend to have lower classroom teaching performance.

The adjusted R-squared value of 0.316 indicates that the model accounts for approximately 31.6% of the variability in teachers' classroom teaching performance, suggesting that other unaccounted-for factors also contribute to teaching effectiveness.

These findings have important implications for educational policy and practice. While socio-economic factors may not directly influence teaching performance, addressing the challenges faced by teachers in digital integration is crucial for enhancing teaching effectiveness. Educational institutions should prioritize providing support, training, and resources to help teachers overcome these obstacles, ultimately improving the quality of instruction and student learning outcomes. By focusing on mitigating challenges related to technology integration, educational stakeholders can create a more conducive environment for effective teaching and learning.

The challenges that teachers face in their own reading proficiency can significantly impact their teaching performance and, consequently, student outcomes. Addressing these challenges requires a systemic approach that prioritizes ongoing professional development, access to high-quality instructional materials, support for language proficiency development, and efforts to reduce stress and burnout among educators. By investing in teachers' own reading proficiency and supporting their growth as literacy educators, schools and districts can enhance teaching performance and improve student outcomes in reading.

The transition from traditional print materials to digital platforms has prompted a surge of interest in how this shift affects reading

comprehension. A seminal study by Mangen et al. (2019) examined the differences between reading linear texts on paper and computer screens. Their findings underscored the importance of considering the impact of digital platforms on comprehension. As the digitalization of reading materials continues, it becomes crucial to cultivate a nuanced understanding of the evolving practices and their potential consequences on comprehension. The proliferation of online information has presented a fresh set of challenges, particularly regarding students' ability to critically evaluate digital sources. Kim (2019) delved into the effectiveness of online discussion strategies in enhancing reading comprehension and information evaluation skills.

### **Problem 8: What action plan can be designed based on the result of the study?**

#### **Rationale**

The action plan outlined above aims to address the findings of the study, which highlight the significant impact of challenges in digital integration on teaching performance. By providing targeted support, resources, and training, educators can overcome these obstacles and enhance their teaching effectiveness. Professional development workshops and mentorship programs will empower teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge to integrate digital tools seamlessly into their instructional practices. Additionally, investing in technological infrastructure upgrades and curriculum development will provide the necessary framework and resources for successful digital integration. By fostering a culture of innovation and providing support for teachers, educational institutions can ensure that digital integration enhances teaching performance, ultimately leading to improved student outcomes.

#### **Conclusions**

They revealed that teachers face consistent challenges in adopting digital tools and integrating them into reading practices. Despite these obstacles, there is a collective openness among them towards utilizing digital tools to enhance student learning. The prioritization of student engagement facilitated by digital tools indicates a proactive approach towards leveraging technology for pedagogical purposes. However, challenges such as balancing the benefits and drawbacks of technology use and addressing instances of disengagement or distraction highlight areas where additional support and training may be necessary. Additionally, while teachers demonstrate effective teaching practices, there is room for improvement in the consistent utilization of teaching resources, particularly in the integration of ICT. These conclusions emphasize the importance of providing targeted support and training to teachers to navigate digital integration effectively and optimize teaching effectiveness.

The findings suggest that while certain socio-demographic factors, such as age, sex, marital status, and income, exhibit varied correlations with the challenges teachers face in adopting digital tools and integrating them into reading practices, the length of service emerges as a significant predictor of these challenges. Teachers with longer service tenures tend to encounter fewer challenges in digital integration, indicating the potential influence of experience on navigating technological complexities in education. Conversely, moderate income levels are associated with heightened challenges, highlighting the need to address financial constraints in accessing and implementing digital resources effectively. Moreover, the correlation between teaching performance and the encountered challenges underscores the impact of external factors, such as technological barriers, on instructional quality. These insights emphasize the importance of tailored support programs and professional development opportunities to enhance educators' ability to integrate technology seamlessly into teaching practices, ultimately improving educational outcomes.

Moreover, this study underscores the overall effectiveness of teachers' classroom teaching practices, as evidenced by consistently high mean scores across key indicators such as promoting literacy, numeracy, and critical thinking. The findings highlight teachers' success in integrating these elements into their teaching methodologies, alongside their proficiency in utilizing diverse linguistic approaches and providing constructive feedback. However, the study also identifies a need for improvement in the consistent utilization of teaching resources, particularly ICT. This suggests a potential area for further support and training to enhance teachers' proficiency in leveraging technology for instructional purposes. Overall, the findings emphasize the strengths of current teaching practices while indicating areas where targeted interventions can further enhance teaching effectiveness.

Thus, this study concluded that while socio-economic factors such as age, sex, civil status, and income levels may not directly predict teachers' classroom teaching performance, the challenges faced in adopting digital tools significantly impact teaching effectiveness. Teachers experiencing greater obstacles in digital integration tend to exhibit lower performance in the classroom. Despite the model explaining a substantial portion of teaching performance variability, there are likely other influential factors at play. These findings underscore the critical importance of addressing challenges in digital integration to enhance teaching quality, highlighting the need for targeted support and professional development initiatives tailored to improve educators' ability to leverage technology effectively in educational practices.

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations can be made to various stakeholders in the educational system.

School administrators should prioritize ongoing professional development opportunities tailored to digital integration for educators, allocating resources to upgrade technological infrastructure and provide access to digital resources. Establishing support systems and mentorship programs can also assist educators in overcoming challenges related to digital integration.

Guidance counselors can offer counseling and support services to teachers facing digital integration challenges, while also facilitating

workshops and seminars on digital literacy and technology integration.

Teachers themselves should engage in continuous professional development activities, collaborate with colleagues, and advocate for adequate resources and support systems to address digital integration challenges effectively.

For future researchers, opportunities exist to investigate the longitudinal impact of these challenges, explore the effectiveness of support interventions, and examine organizational factors influencing successful technology adoption. By implementing these recommendations, educational institutions can better support educators in navigating digital integration challenges, ultimately enhancing teaching effectiveness and improving student outcomes.

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### **Affiliations and Corresponding Information**

**Evangeline A. Galito**

Department of Education – Philippines

**Carlito A. Abarquez, PhD**

St. Peter's College – Philippines