CHALLENGES FACED BY TEACHERS IN PURSUIT OF MASTER TEACHER PROMOTION AND ADVANCEMENT

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Abstract

This study examined the challenges, perceptions, and experiences of teachers in their pursuit of Master Teacher promotion and advancement, with a focus on personal motivations, support systems, job satisfaction, and recognition. It also examined the relationship between the challenges encountered during application and the respondents' Individual Performance Commitment and Review Form (IPCRF) ratings. Utilizing a descriptive-correlational research design, the study involved 120 teacher-respondents from the South II District of Iligan City. Data were collected through a validated questionnaire and analyzed using frequency counts, percentages, and thematic analysis. Findings revealed that stringent qualification requirements, limited access to training opportunities, unclear promotion guidelines, and inadequate mentoring emerged as major barriers to career progression. These challenges were found to be significantly linked to demographic factors, individual motivation, and overall job satisfaction. Furthermore, a statistically significant relationship was established between the challenges faced during the application process and the respondents' performance ratings, underscoring the tangible impact of these obstacles on professional evaluation.

Keywords: *master teacher promotion, professional development, teacher challenges, career advancement, mentorship, public school teachers*

Introduction

The promotion and upgrading of teachers after years of service or further studies have been, until recently, a considerable concern in every teacher's professional journey, similar to what obtains in many formal employment sectors. These processes act as primary motivators for better performance and productivity. However, the road to promotion presents some challenges along the way, many of which remain untouched by scholarly engagement.

Career advancement has become increasingly vital for teachers, not just in a monetary sense, but also for their personal fulfillment, recognition, and professional growth. The promotion of teachers to Master Teacher by DepEd is a significant milestone in a teacher's life, confirming their excellence in teaching, leadership, mentoring, and commitment to the quality of education.

Aspiring teachers must undergo a rigorous process that involves meeting specific application requirements, preparing relevant documents, and fulfilling certain conditions. All these requirements do eat into the teacher's already heavy workload. Aside from providing evidence of teaching competence, they must demonstrate innovative teaching methods, improvement programs, and leadership skills. Lack of some form of structured mentorship programs and additional costs for training and certification make matters even more complicated.

In addition, inconsistencies in the administration of promotion procedures — especially in the evaluation criteria—bring in more stress. The process's highly competitive nature also has a psychological strain on applicants. This research aims to identify real-world challenges faced by teachers transitioning into Master Teacher positions. It aims to provide significant findings for DepEd officials, school administrators, human resource personnel, and teachers themselves, offering evidence-based insights and interventions available. These issues need to be addressed to make the current promotion truly effective and ensure that deserving educators are recognized and provided with equitable support in pursuing professional development.

This research study had public elementary and secondary school teachers from the South II District under the Division of Iligan City, who had applied or are currently applying for the Master Teacher positions under DepEd Order No. 020, s. 2024. This study particularly excluded those that pertain to promotions for non-teaching or administrative positions.

Research Objectives

The study aimed to investigate the challenges faced by teachers in the Master Teacher promotion process and to contribute to policy improvement and support. In particular, it sought to attain the following objectives:

1. To determine the demographic profiles of respondents based on:
    1.1. age;
    1.2. sex;
    1.3. highest educational attainment; and
    1.4. length of service.
2. To identify the challenges faced by the respondents in applying for Master Teacher position in terms of:
    2.1. personal challenges;
    2.2. motivational;

2.3. support system;
2.4. job satisfaction; and
2.5. recognition.
3. To determine the performance rating of the respondents for School Year 2023-2024.
4. To examine the relationship between respondents' challenges faced when applying for Master Teacher Promotions and their performance rating.
5. To explore the lived experiences and personal perceptions of teachers regarding the Master Teacher promotion process using thematic analysis; and
6. To craft an action plan based on the results of the study.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design to investigate both the prevailing challenges faced by teachers and the potential impact of these factors on their performance ratings. Descriptive methods enable the comprehensive profiling of respondents, while correlational analysis examines potential relationships between challenges and outcomes. This combination enables not only the identification of what is happening, but also an understanding of how various elements may be related. For example, a teacher who has received low administrative support during their promotion application may also report a lower performance rating, suggesting that a lack of support could affect overall job effectiveness.

Respondents

These schools were targeted for the study, specifically 120 Teacher III teachers of the aforementioned schools who were pursuing Master Teacher status. A purposive sampling technique was employed to ensure that only individuals who had either attempted or were currently pursuing such a promotion were included in the sample.

For instance, if Teacher A had applied twice for promotion but failed due to document issues, and Teacher B was preparing her MOVs (Means of Verification), both individuals were considered ideal participants for the study. Their experiences offered rich insights into real-world barriers faced by promotion aspirants.

Instrument

For the study, the researcher developed a structured questionnaire, which underwent pilot testing to ensure its reliability and validity. The pilot test was conducted among a representative group of non-respondent Teacher III aspirants. It yielded a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.89, indicating high internal consistency. Expert validation further affirmed the instrument's content relevance, clarity, and alignment with the study objectives—thereby confirming its appropriateness for full-scale data collection.

The instrument consists of six (6) sections:

Part I: Demographics Status of the respondents. This section includes the basic demographic profile information of the survey respondents. The Age: This defines the age groups of the respondents. Sex: This captures the respondents' gender identity, as experiences and motivations vary based on gender. Highest Educational attainment: this identifies the respondents' highest level of education completed, which can give an idea of the relationship between an educational background and seeking Master Teacher status; Length of Teaching Experience: this helped define years of teaching among the respondents; Plantilla Position that records titles and positions currently held by the subjects in their educational institutions and the Performance Rating for the School Year 2023-2024 that served as a critical indicator in examining whether the challenges encountered by teachers bear a significant relationship with their IPCRF ratings, potentially influencing their opportunities for advancement.

Part II: Respondents are provided with specific instructions for answering the pertinent statements in the following sections. Respondents are required to register their degree of agreement or disagreement with each statement using a 4-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree." The scale employed allows the respondents to record their level of agreement or disagreement with each statement.

Section A: Personal Challenges Faced by Teachers in Pursuit of Master Teacher Promotions and Advancement. This section sought to understand the challenges educators face in pursuing Master Teacher status. In so doing, the statements address a range of subjects, including the clarity of the criteria, the fairness of the promotion process, and personal impediments.

Section B: Motivation Related to Pursuing Master Teacher Promotion and Advancement. This section is concerned with motivation, which prompted a teacher to seek Master Teacher status. The statements outline the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation available, such as professional development, prestige, and financial compensation.

Section C of the instrument focused on Support Systems, aiming to assess the extent of support received by teachers from various stakeholders throughout the promotion process. This section consisted of five items, each measured using a Likert scale to determine the respondent's level of agreement with the given statements. Specifically, the items gauged the presence of administrative support

(Item 11), access to mentorship or coaching (Item 12), peer encouragement (Item 13), availability of professional development and training provided by the Department of Education (Item 14), and overall guidance and motivation during the application process (Item 15). These indicators were carefully selected to reflect the institutional and interpersonal support systems that may influence a teacher's journey toward career advancement.

Section D of the questionnaire sought to explore the respondents' levels of job satisfaction in relation to their current roles and their aspirations for promotion. Comprising five items, Section D was designed to measure both intrinsic and extrinsic factors that influence job satisfaction among teachers. The items in this section examined satisfaction with the current teaching role (Item 16), the perceived impact of achieving Master Teacher status on job satisfaction (Item 17), feelings of being valued in the school community regardless of promotion (Item 18), motivation for professional growth even in the absence of promotion (Item 19), and the belief that a higher position would enable greater influence in advancing educational practices (Item 20). Responses were recorded using a Likert scale, allowing for nuanced insights into how career progression intersects with professional fulfillment and intrinsic motivation.

The final section of the survey instrument, Section E, focused on the role of recognition as a motivating factor in teachers' pursuit of promotion. It comprised five items designed to capture respondents' perceptions of how recognition—both formal and informal—affects their professional aspirations and experiences. This section included statements assessing the extent to which Master Teachers are acknowledged within the school setting (Item 21), perceptions of personal recognition for contributions as a teacher (Item 22), the motivational impact of affirmation from peers and students (Item 23), the perceived fairness of the promotion process (Item 24), and the degree to which the desire for professional recognition serves as a driving force in seeking promotion (Item 25). Each item utilized a Likert scale to assess levels of agreement, allowing the researcher to quantify the significance of recognition in shaping teachers' promotional goals and workplace satisfaction.

Overall, this questionnaire aimed to gather a detailed account of the experiences, views, and motivations of the educators concerning the promotion and advancement of Master's Teachers. The results of this survey will inform educational policies, improve support systems, and enhance the overall experience for teachers who seek this prestigious designation. If required, it will also be submitted for ethics clearance to the ethics committee, as it targets teachers.

Procedure

The data gathering process for this study was carried out systematically to ensure the accuracy, reliability, and ethical integrity of the information collected. Prior to administering the research instrument, a formal letter of request was sent to the Schools Division Superintendent of Iligan City to seek approval for conducting the study within the South II District. Upon receiving written permission, the researcher coordinated with the respective school heads to facilitate communication with the identified respondents.

To maximize accessibility and convenience, particularly given the time constraints and varied schedules of teacher-respondents, data were collected through an online survey administered via Google Forms. The use of an electronic platform enabled the efficient dissemination of the questionnaire and ensured a wider reach within the target population, while upholding health and safety considerations. A cover letter was attached to the survey, clearly explaining the purpose of the study, assuring participants of confidentiality, and informing them of their voluntary involvement.

Respondents were given sufficient time—approximately one to two weeks—to accomplish the questionnaire. Follow-up reminders were courteously sent to encourage participation and ensure a satisfactory response rate. All completed responses were automatically recorded, secured, and stored in a password-protected Google Drive accessible only to the researcher.

The gathered data were carefully reviewed, encoded, and subjected to appropriate statistical analysis to derive meaningful insights related to the research objectives. Throughout the data-gathering process, the principles of informed consent, anonymity, and ethical research conduct were strictly observed to maintain the integrity of the study.

A major aspect of this session was to guarantee confidentiality. The researcher assured that all collected responses were treated anonymously and in an aggregated format to prevent linking the responses to any participant's identity. Measures were also taken to ensure that the information collected remained inaccessible to others.

This purposive sampling involved the deliberate selection of teachers based on criteria deemed significant to the research objectives in question. Examples included educators who had shown exceptional leadership skills, a commitment to professional development, or simply a unique perspective on career advancement.

Attempts were made to ensure that the selected respondents represented a cross-section of diversity in terms of levels of teaching, subjects taught, and demographics. This approach provided a rich pool of data to explore various experiences and perspectives in depth.

Data Analysis

The given statistical techniques served as methods by which the different objectives, as assigned, were met.

Objective 1, Frequency and Percentage, described the demographic profile of respondents in terms of age, sex, highest educational attainment, and years of service.

Objective 2, Weighted Mean was used to measure the average response from the respondents regarding the problems teachers face in the pursuit of Master Teacher promotion and advancement, motivation towards the pursuit of Master Teacher promotion and advancement, satisfaction with Master Teacher status, support systems for teachers pursuing Master Teacher promotion and advancement, recognition for teachers who have attained Master Teacher status, and recommendations by teachers for improving the Master Teacher promotion and advancement process.

Objective 3 employed Spearman's Rank Order Correlation to establish the association between the different challenges and the respondent profiles, and to quantify the relationship between the challenges faced by respondents seeking promotion and advancement as Master Teachers.

Ethical Considerations

In the interest of respondent safety, participants' identities were assigned confidentiality, based on their consent to participate voluntarily in the study. Ethical approval was obtained from the competent committee by the researcher before the study commenced.

Results and Discussion

The study presents an analysis of the responses of 120 Teacher III and II respondents in the South II District of Iligan City Division. The analysis begins with the demographic profile of the respondents, followed by an examination of the challenges encountered in pursuing Master Teacher promotion, motivations, support systems, job satisfaction, recognition, and recommendations.

Demographic Profiles of Respondents based on Age, Sex, Highest Educational Attainment, and Length of Service

Understanding the demographic composition of the respondents provides valuable context about how to interpret the study results. Additionally, an assessment can be made of factors such as age, gender, education, and work experience that may have influenced the perceptions and experiences of teachers contesting the promotion of Master Teachers.

Table 1 presents the frequency count and percentage of the age range of the respondents in the South II District. It was showcased that most teachers were in the prime of their careers, with the bulk (30.8%) falling within the 34-41 age bracket. This suggests that a considerable proportion of teachers are in mid-career, perhaps with adequate experience and expertise. Teachers aged 26- 33 years, representing 27.5% of the respondents, form the next significant group. This suggested that many were still relative newcomers to the teaching profession but had sufficient experience to have begun looking toward advancement opportunities.

Table 1. *Age*

Age Range	Frequency Count	Percentage %
20 - 25	2	1.7%
26 - 33	33	27.5%
34 - 41	37	30.8%
42 - 49	27	22.5%
50 and above	21	17.5%
Total	120	100.0%

About 22.5% of the survey respondents are teachers aged 42-49, suggesting that a significant portion of teachers are clearly in the later stages of their careers and possibly seeking Master Teacher promotion, long-term professional recognition, and stability. People aged 50 and above (17.5%) and those aged 20-25 (1.7%) represented considerably small portions of the sample, thus indicating a typical career trajectory whereby fewer respondents are in either the early or late stages of their careers.

Such patterns of distribution revealed that the surveyed population, as a majority, consisted of mid-career teachers whose motivations included advancement in their careers, attainment of professional recognition, and personal achievement toward being promoted to Master Teacher. It highlighted an age breakdown to underscore the demographic characteristics that might render the difficulties and opportunities teachers experience concerning advancement within the education system.

Table 2. *Sex*

Sex	Frequency Count	Percentage %
Male	24	20.0 %
Female	96	80.0 %
Total	120	100%

The sex distribution of respondents is presented in Table 2. The findings revealed that the majority of participants were female, accounting for 80.0% of the total sample, while 20.0% were male. This barely equitable distribution suggested that insights from both male and female respondents could have been of about equal weight in all the factors affecting their decision in the pursuit of Master Teacher promotion.

A greater representation of female respondents conformed to national patterns in education, where women do indeed tend to characterize the majority of teachers, especially at the elementary and secondary levels. Based on Department of Education (DepEd)

statistical data (2023), approximately 60% of public-school teachers in the Philippines are female; thus, this could be attributed to their slight predominance in this study.

Where there are balanced gender representations, the picture of career progression dynamics would be more complete. Smith and Johnson (2021) argued that gender diversity enhances the validity of educational research findings, as male teachers and female teachers may face very different challenges and motivations with respect to promotion. For example, the focus of male teachers may be on leadership opportunities and administrative roles, whereas female educators may concentrate on professional development and skill enhancement aimed at advancing their careers.

According to Gonzales (2020), female faculty members are likely to engage in more continuous learning and training than their male counterparts, which is often fueled by their proactive attitude to improve teaching effectiveness or upgrade their qualifications to become eligible for promotion. In the same vein, Lopez and Cruz (2019) noted that female teachers are more likely to participate in professional development programs, as these are viewed as avenues for career stability and growth.

In contrast, male teachers are reportedly more aggressive in pursuing leadership positions. As Garcia (2022) noted, men tend to apply for administrative and management jobs, which they perceive as avenues for career advancement. This illustrated how gender-related career preferences could account for the various paths leading toward a Master Teacher promotion.

In addition, the fairly balanced gender representation in the study ensured that the results reflected a broad spectrum of experiences from both genders. Thus, it provided useful information on how gender influenced teachers' career readiness and promotional behaviors.

Table 3. *Highest Educational Attainment*

Educational Attainment	Frequency Count	Percentage %
Bachelor's Degree	34	28%
With Master's Units	70	58.3%
Master's Degree	14	11.7%
With Doctoral Units	1	0.8%
Doctoral Degree	1	0.8%
Total	120	100%

The educational attainment of the respondents is presented in Table 3. The results showed a majority of 58.3% of respondents had obtained Master's degree units, followed by 28.3% with only a Bachelor's degree. A smaller percentage, 11.7%, had already finished their Master's degree, while only 0.8% had earned Doctoral units or a Doctoral degree.

It has been observed that majority of respondents have Master's units, meaning that such people tend to advance in their professions through further and higher studies. There is a significant dependence on graduate-level qualifications as a prerequisite for promotion to the Master Teacher position. According to DepEd Memo No. 4, s. 2021, availing Master's degree units is usually a qualification requirement for promotion, so many teachers have engaged in activities to complete this requirement.

The essential elements in improving teaching effectiveness include continuous learning and higher education. According to Darling-Hammond et al. (2020), graduate education has been shown to heighten teachers' use of more effective instructional strategies, classroom management, and subject mastery, all of which are positively related to student learning outcomes. On the same note, Hattie (2019) found that teachers with postgraduate education are more likely to employ evidence-based practices and innovative teaching models.

In the teaching profession, terminal qualifications are, as a rule, extremely rare, and this is something that the low representation of the sample in terms of doctoral qualifications will attest to. Indeed, only 1.6% of the sample either has or is pursuing a doctoral degree; this low ratio reflects on educational trends that have long associated doctoral study primarily with leadership or research roles rather than classroom instruction. More importantly, these results suggest that teachers need to recognize the importance of a lifelong learning process. According to Fullan (2021), teachers involved in continuous learning will adapt to changes in educational innovations for the benefit of their students, as they are better prepared with teaching skills and knowledge.

Table 4. *Length of Service*

Length of Service	Frequency Count	Percentage %
1-5 years	31	25.8%
6-10 years	38	31.7%
11-15 years	21	17.5%
16-20 years	8	6.7%
21-25 years	4	3.3%
26 years and up	18	15.%
Total	120	100%

Regarding the respondents' length of service, Table 4 presents the details. The findings showed that the largest group, comprising 31.7% of members, had been in the service for between 6 and 10 years, whereas the smallest group, at 3.3%, had served for between 21 and 25 years. A significant 15.0% of the respondents had been in the profession for 26 years or more, indicating a substantial number

of veteran educators in this sample.

This indicated an average teaching cohort, as most of the respondents have between 6 and 10 years of service, which is generally characterized by better pedagogical competence and higher confidence in instructional delivery. According to Podolsky et al. (2019), teacher effectiveness significantly rises within the first decade of service, as teachers spend years working in the classroom, refining their teaching techniques and strengthening their content knowledge. The teachers in this population are likely to be more receptive and resistant to education reforms and opportunities for continuing professional development.

In contrast, when a school is staffed by teachers with extensive experience (those teaching for 26 years or more), this indicates a long-standing commitment and accumulated expertise. Research by Kini and Podolsky (2019) found that teachers with longer tenure often provide better instructional quality and student performance outcomes due to more polished skills and a greater breadth of experience with the material. Additionally, veteran teachers are often in the position of mentoring, passing along insights to novice teachers as they grow together collaboratively.

In line with Ingersoll's findings (2020), many teachers with more than 20 years of service tend to transition into leadership or supervisory roles, thereby reducing representation in this category. This group, with 21-25 years of experience, could be interpreted as representing a transition during which teachers either retire or transition into administrative positions.

The service length distribution illustrates the wide range of teaching experiences, from rookie educators to veteran teachers. Thus, it provides broad insights from a diverse population regarding their perspectives on promotion readiness and career progression, as expressed by the respondents.

Challenges faced by the Respondents in applying for Master Teacher Position in terms of Personal, Motivational, Support System, Job Satisfaction, and Recognition

Table 5. *Personal Challenges*

Indicator	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
I find the application requirements for Master Teacher promotion too demanding.	3.67	0.95	Strongly Agree
I experience emotional stress related to promotion processes.	3.55	1.01	Strongly Agree
I struggle with preparing documentation and portfolios for promotion.	3.72	3.55	Strongly Agree
Financial constraints hinder my ability to pursue further studies or training.	3.58	3.55	Strongly Agree
I often feel overwhelmed balancing teaching duties and promotion requirements.	3.69	0.97	Strongly Agree
Weighted Mean	3.64	2.01	Strongly Agree

Note: 3.25–4.00 = Strongly Agree; 2.50–3.24 = Agree; 1.75–2.49 = Disagree; 1.00–1.74 = Strongly Disagree

Table 5 highlights the significant personal challenges teachers face when applying for Master Teacher promotion, with all indicators reflecting strong agreement among respondents.

The most prominent challenge is the difficulty in preparing documentation and portfolios (M = 3.72), aligning with Philippine studies on teachers' heavy administrative burdens and excessive paperwork (EDCOM 2, n.d.; Inquirer Opinion, 2024). This is closely followed by feeling overwhelmed, balancing teaching duties and promotion requirements (M = 3.69), which reflects the reality of Filipino teachers juggling instructional tasks with numerous ancillary duties, leading to increased workload and stress (International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science, 2025; RSIS International, 2025).

Respondents also strongly agree (M = 3.67) that the application process is too demanding. This finding is consistent with local research, which indicates that complex, lengthy, and unclear promotion procedures can deter teachers from pursuing career advancement (ResearchGate, 2025; Philippine Association of Institutions for Research, 2024).

Furthermore, financial constraints (M = 3.58) are a significant barrier, as teachers strongly agree that these hinder their ability to pursue further studies or training —a common issue for Filipino educators, given economic pressures and the cost of professional development (Philippine E-Journals, 2021; ResearchGate, 2025). Finally, emotional stress related to the promotion process is also strongly agreed upon (M = 3.55), reinforcing existing research on teacher well-being and the added psychological strain from high-stakes career progression (De La Salle University, 2017; UPD Journals Online, 2023).

In essence, these findings underscore that personal challenges— rooted in administrative demands, workload, procedural complexities, financial limitations, and emotional strain—are substantial obstacles to career advancement for teachers aspiring to Master Teacher roles.

Table 6 summarizes the responses of teachers regarding motivational factors that influence their decision to apply for Master Teacher promotion. This highlights a powerful and unified drive among educators, encompassing both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. The strongest motivator is the desire for professional growth (M = 4.32), indicating a profound internal aspiration for continuous learning and development. This is closely followed by the motivation of higher salary and benefits (M = 4.25), underscoring the crucial role of

financial incentives in career progression. This dual emphasis aligns with the reality that while teachers are deeply committed to their profession, competitive compensation remains a vital factor in their career decisions, as supported by various reports on teacher welfare in the Philippines (Banzon, 2023; GMA News Online, 2024).

Table 6. *Motivational Challenges*

Indicator	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
I want to become a Master Teacher for professional growth.	4.32	0.61	Strongly Agree
Higher salary and benefits motivate me to apply for promotion.	4.25	0.65	Strongly Agree
I aim to serve as a role model and leader in my school.	4.18	0.70	Strongly Agree
Recognition of my teaching abilities is a strong motivator.	4.10	0.76	Strongly Agree
Promotion enhances my self-esteem and career satisfaction	4.22	0.68	Strongly Agree
Weighted Mean	4.21	0.68	Strongly Agree

Note: 3.25–4.00 = Strongly Agree; 2.50–3.24 = Agree; 1.75–2.49 = Disagree; 1.00–1.74 = Strongly Disagree

Further reinforcing this multifaceted motivation, respondents also strongly agree that promotion enhances self-esteem and career satisfaction (M = 4.22), that they aim to serve as a role model and leader in their school (M = 4.18), and that recognition of their teaching abilities is a strong motivator (M = 4.10). These findings collectively paint a picture of teachers driven by more than just financial gain; they seek validation, leadership opportunities, and the chance to make a significant impact on their educational communities. This aligns with studies indicating that Filipino teachers are motivated by opportunities for professional development and meaningful contributions to their schools (Arcene & Cabahug, 2018).

The uniformly high agreement and minimal variability in responses across all indicators suggest a shared aspirational mindset among educators. This collective desire to advance beyond routine teaching roles into positions of greater influence and responsibility is well-supported by established motivational theories. Specifically, these findings resonate with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, particularly the pursuit of esteem and self-actualization through achievement, recognition, and purpose (Maslow, 1943). Moreover, they are consistent with Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory, which identifies intrinsic motivators, such as responsibility, recognition, and advancement, as key drivers of job satisfaction and long-term engagement (Herzberg et al., 1959).

In conclusion, the data clearly indicate that teachers are highly motivated to pursue Master Teacher promotion due to a balanced interplay of personal fulfillment and professional advancement. This strong collective aspiration underscores the importance of maintaining transparent, supportive, and merit-based promotion systems to sustain teacher engagement, foster leadership, and ultimately enhance the quality of education.

Table 7. *Support System Challenges*

Indicator	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
I receive support from my school administrators during the promotion process.	3.75	0.80	Strongly Agree
I have access to a mentor or coach to help with my application.	3.48	0.93	Strongly Agree
My peers are supportive of my efforts to get promoted.	3.82	0.76	Strongly Agree
The DepEd provides adequate training opportunities for promotion.	3.31	0.97	Strongly Agree
I feel guided and encouraged throughout the application process.	3.52	0.89	Strongly Agree
Weighted Mean	3.58	0.87	Strongly Agree

Note: 3.25–4.00 = Strongly Agree; 2.50–3.24 = Agree; 1.75–2.49 = Disagree; 1.00–1.74 = Strongly Disagree

Table 7 presents teachers' perceptions regarding the support system available during their application for Master Teacher promotion. The data, comprising five items across administrative, peer, institutional, and mentoring support, consistently reveal strong agreement across all indicators, albeit with some nuances in the level of perceived adequacy, as per the provided scoring guide.

The most highly rated form of support comes from peers, with the item "My peers are supportive of my efforts to get promoted" garnering the highest mean score (M = 3.82, SD = 0.76), indicating strong agreement. This highlights a robust collegial environment where teachers feel encouragement from their colleagues, suggesting that professional advancement is often viewed as a shared endeavor rather than a solitary competition. This finding is consistent with recent literature emphasizing the crucial role of peer support networks in fostering teacher resilience and professional growth (Naranjo et al., 2021; Sison & Obana, 2023). Similarly, strong agreement is observed for the support received from school administrators (M = 3.75, SD = 0.80). This highlights the crucial role of school leadership in supporting and promoting teachers' career advancement aspirations. Effective administrative support, characterized by clear communication, resource provision, and encouragement, is consistently linked to higher teacher motivation and retention, as noted in studies exploring supportive leadership in educational settings (Adu & Assah, 2022; Gevero & Calunod, 2023).

However, while personal and immediate administrative support are strong, the perception of institutional support, particularly from the Department of Education (DepEd), is perceived as less robust. "The DepEd provides adequate training opportunities for promotion" received a mean score of 3.31 (SD = 0.97), still interpreted as strong agreement according to the given scale, but it stands as the lowest among the indicators. This suggests that while some teachers acknowledge DepEd's efforts, others may find current interventions insufficient or inconsistently accessible. This observation aligns with critiques regarding the adequacy and accessibility of professional development programs for teachers in the Philippines, particularly in relation to career progression (Alon et al., 2020; Sumayao et al., 2024). The perception of feeling guided and encouraged throughout the application process (M = 3.52, SD = 0.89) and having access

to a mentor or coach (M = 3.48, SD = 0.93) also received strong agreement. However, the slightly lower means and higher standard deviations for these items, compared to peer and administrative support, hint at potential inconsistencies in the provision of structured guidance and personalized mentorship across different schools or divisions. The absence of formalized or consistently available mentoring programs for aspiring Master Teachers has been identified as a gap in professional support structures within the Philippine educational system (Manalo & Alieto, 2020; Pacleb & Oribello, 2024).

Overall, these findings suggest that while teachers experience meaningful support, particularly from their immediate peers and school leaders, the broader institutional mechanisms related to structured training and individualized mentoring are perceived with slightly less certainty, although they still fall under the "Strongly Agree" category based on the provided scale. This pattern aligns with Social Support Theory, which emphasizes the influence of both interpersonal and institutional networks in mitigating stress and enhancing individual performance (Mati et al., 2022). Furthermore, the positive perception of administrative support aligns with principles of Transformational Leadership Theory, where school heads inspire and guide staff towards professional growth (Adu & Assah, 2022).

In conclusion, while teachers generally acknowledge the presence of support systems as strong, there remains a discernible need for the Department of Education (DepEd) to institutionalize further and strengthen programs that provide individualized mentoring, consistent and accessible training opportunities, and a more structured roadmap for promotion. Doing so would not only empower individual teachers but also cultivate a more dynamic, motivated, and professionally fulfilled teaching force capable of enhancing educational quality across the nation.

Table 8. *Job Satisfaction Challenges*

Indicator	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
I am satisfied with my current teaching role.	3.62	0.85	Strongly Agree
Achieving Master Teacher status would significantly increase my job satisfaction.	4.28	0.66	Strongly Agree
I feel valued in my school even without the promotion.	3.70	0.79	Strongly Agree
I am motivated to improve professionally even without immediate promotion.	4.10	0.72	Strongly Agree
Promotion would provide me with more influence to improve education.	4.20	0.70	Strongly Agree
Weighted Mean	3.98	0.74	Strongly Agree

Note: 3.25–4.00 = Strongly Agree; 2.50–3.24 = Agree; 1.75–2.49 = Disagree; 1.00–1.74 = Strongly Disagree

Table 8 presents the responses of teacher-participants on job satisfaction, specifically in relation to current roles, motivation, recognition, and the perceived value of being promoted to Master Teacher. The computed mean scores ranged from 3.62 to 4.28, with corresponding standard deviations between 0.66 and 0.85, indicating a general consistency in the respondents' views.

The highest mean (M = 4.28) confirms strong agreement that achieving Master Teacher status would significantly increase job satisfaction. This highlights promotion as a definitive pathway to greater fulfillment, aligning with findings that career progression and recognition are key motivators for Filipino teachers (Quindoza et al., 2023; Valenzuela, 2020). Furthermore, respondents strongly agree that promotion would provide more influence to improve education (M = 4.20) and are motivated to improve professionally, even without immediate promotion (M = 4.10). This underscores an intrinsic drive for impact and continuous growth, consistent with studies on teachers' aspirations for leadership and pedagogical excellence (Magsambol, 2022; Adanza & Ompad, 2023). While highly valuing promotion, teachers also report strong agreement with being satisfied with their current teaching role (M = 3.62) and feeling valued in their school even without the promotion (M = 3.70). This suggests a baseline satisfaction, supported by Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, where advancement acts as a "motivator" beyond basic job conditions (Herzberg et al., 1959).

In essence, while teachers are dedicated to their current roles, Master Teacher status is perceived as crucial for a deeper sense of purpose and greater educational influence, emphasizing the need for clear promotion pathways to foster sustained commitment and excellence.

Table 9. *Recognition Challenges*

Indicator	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Teachers who become Master Teachers are properly recognized in our school.	4.05	0.72	Strongly Agree
I believe my contributions as a teacher are acknowledged.	3.85	0.76	Strongly Agree
Recognition from peers and students motivates me to aim higher.	4.18	0.69	Strongly Agree
I feel that the promotion process fairly identifies deserving teachers.	3.60	0.82	Strongly Agree
I aspire for promotion mainly for the professional recognition it brings.	4.12	0.67	Strongly Agree
Weighted Mean	3.96	0.73	Strongly Agree

Note: 3.25–4.00 = Strongly Agree; 2.50–3.24 = Agree; 1.75–2.49 = Disagree; 1.00–1.74 = Strongly Disagree

Table 10 illustrates teacher-respondents' perceptions of recognition in relation to their roles and aspirations for Master Teacher promotion. The mean values for the five statements range from 3.60 to 4.18, with standard deviations from 0.67 to 0.82, signifying a generally positive consensus with some variation in experiences.

The highest agreement is for recognition from peers and students, motivating teachers to aim higher (M = 4.18), indicating a strong external validation component to professional ambition. This is closely followed by aspirations for promotion, primarily due to the professional recognition it brings (M = 4.12) and the belief that teachers who become Master Teachers are properly recognized within our school (M = 4.05). These findings underscore the high value educators place on public affirmation and acknowledgment within

their professional community, consistent with literature on teacher motivation in the Philippine context (Sison & Obana, 2023; Valenzuela, 2020).

Conversely, while still indicating strong agreement according to the scale, the item "I feel that the promotion process fairly identifies deserving teachers" received the lowest mean (M = 3.60). This suggests a nuanced perception, with some degree of skepticism or variability regarding the fairness and transparency of the promotion process. Similarly, "I believe my contributions as a teacher are acknowledged" (M = 3.85) also falls within the "Strongly Agree" range, but its position reflects that, while generally positive, experiences of professional appreciation might not be uniformly distributed. This aligns with concerns raised in various reports regarding the complexities and perceived inequities in the teacher promotion system within the Department of Education (DepEd) (Philippine Association of Institutions for Research, 2024; DepEd Philippines, 2024).

The data imply that while recognition is a critical motivator, institutional mechanisms for acknowledging contributions and ensuring fairness in promotion are perceived with a subtle degree of reservation. This pattern is consistent with Equity Theory, which posits that individuals seek fairness in professional treatment and rewards; perceived inequities can lead to dissatisfaction (Adams, 1965). Furthermore, these findings align with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, specifically the esteem level, where recognition and respect significantly contribute to an individual's sense of worth and professional identity (Maslow, 1943).

In conclusion, while teachers generally perceive recognition positively and view it as a key motivator for promotion, there are clear opportunities for the Department of Education (DepEd) and school leaders to enhance transparency and consistency in acknowledging teacher contributions and ensuring equity in the promotion process. Institutionalizing clear, supportive, and fair recognition practices may not only boost teacher morale but also strengthen professional engagement and trust in the overall promotion system, thereby fostering a more dynamic and professionally fulfilled teaching force.

Performance Rating of the Respondents for School Year 2023-2024.

Table 10 presents the frequency and percentage distribution of the respondents' performance ratings for the 2023–2024 school year. Out of 120 teacher-respondents, 54 (45%) received an Outstanding rating, while 66 (55%) received a Very Satisfactory rating.

Table 10. *Performance Ratings of Respondents for SY 2023–2024*

Performance Rating	Frequency	Percentage (5)
Outstanding	54	45%
Very Satisfactory	66	55%
Total	120	100%

The data showed that the majority of respondents (55%) received a Very Satisfactory rating, while a smaller but significant portion (45%) achieved an Outstanding rating. No respondents were rated below these two levels, indicating a relatively high overall performance among the teachers.

This distribution suggested that while a good number of teachers exhibit high performance, more than half fall short of the highest rating, which could impact their eligibility or competitiveness for Master Teacher promotion. Performance rating is a crucial factor in the promotion process, and any challenges teachers face may impact their ability to consistently meet the criteria for Outstanding ratings.

The performance rating distribution highlighted a potential performance ceiling that many teachers are unable to surpass, possibly due to institutional or procedural challenges. These results aligned with earlier findings that barriers in mentorship, administrative support, and documentation may hinder teachers from achieving the highest performance level. The need to support teachers in overcoming these challenges is underscored, especially for those aspiring to be promoted to Master Teacher status.

Relationship Between Respondents' Challenges faced when Applying for Master Teacher Promotions and their Performance Rating

Table 11 presents the correlation between the challenges faced by respondents in applying for Master Teacher promotion and their most recent performance rating. The challenges were measured using a 5-point Likert scale survey instrument, while performance ratings were categorized into "Outstanding" and "Very Satisfactory," coded ordinally in SPSS. The data was analyzed using Spearman's Rank Order Correlation (ρ) due to the ordinal nature of the dependent variable.

Table 11. *Correlation Between Challenges Faced in Applying for Master Teacher Promotion and Performance Rating*

Variables	Mean	SD	Correlation (r) Coefficient	Sig. (2-tailed)	Interpretation
Challenges Faced vs. Performance Rating	3.92	0.61	-0.378	<0.001	Significant, Moderate Negative Correlation

Results indicated that the mean level of challenges faced by respondents was 3.92 (SD = 0.61), suggesting that most teachers experience moderate to high levels of difficulty in the promotion process. Performance ratings, as provided in the frequency table below, reveal that 54 out of 120 respondents (45%) were rated Outstanding, while the majority—66 respondents (55%)—were rated Very

Satisfactory.

The computed Spearman's rho (ρ) is -0.378 with a p-value of 0.000, indicating a moderate negative correlation between the two variables that is statistically significant at the 0.01 level.

The analysis indicated a statistically significant inverse relationship between the challenges faced by teachers during their Master Teacher promotion applications and their performance ratings. In other words, teachers who reported encountering higher levels of challenges—such as insufficient mentoring, excessive documentary requirements, lack of administrative support, or unclear guidelines—tended to receive lower performance ratings (i.e., more likely to be rated Very Satisfactory than Outstanding).

From a statistician's standpoint, this negative correlation (ρ = -0.378) provides empirical evidence that systemic challenges within the promotion process may demotivate or hinder the professional output of educators. When bureaucratic obstacles burden teachers and they feel unsupported in their pursuit of career advancement, their motivation to perform at peak levels may decline, impacting their overall productivity and effectiveness in teaching and other assigned duties. This finding highlights the critical need for institutional interventions that can streamline the promotion process, offer structured support, and create an environment conducive to professional growth without compromising performance.

There is a moderate and statistically significant negative correlation between the challenges faced in applying for Master Teacher promotions and teachers' performance ratings. As challenges increase, performance ratings tend to decline. This underscores the importance of creating a transparent, supportive, and enabling promotion system that not only recognizes teacher merit but also safeguards performance excellence in the public education sector.

The observed correlation coefficient (Spearman's ρ = -0.378) warrants a deeper interpretation within the broader context of teacher performance and institutional support mechanisms. The negative sign of the coefficient denotes an inverse relationship between the challenges encountered in applying for Master Teacher promotion and the performance ratings of teachers. Specifically, as the level of challenges increases, there is a corresponding decrease in performance ratings. This inverse association, although moderate in strength, is statistically significant at the 0.01 level (p < 0.001), thereby affirming the reliability of the observed pattern within the sample.

From a theoretical perspective, this negative correlation suggests that systemic and procedural barriers in the promotion process may adversely affect the professional motivation and overall effectiveness of educators. Teachers who perceive the application process as burdensome— characterized by ambiguous guidelines, extensive documentation, limited mentoring, and insufficient administrative support—may experience diminished job satisfaction and engagement. These psychosocial stressors can manifest in reduced instructional quality, lower levels of initiative, or decreased participation in school-wide activities, ultimately influencing their performance evaluations.

Moreover, the presence of a moderate negative correlation implies that the challenges are not merely administrative inconveniences but are potentially significant enough to impact core professional outputs. This aligns with Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of motivation, which posits that dissatisfaction arising from organizational policies and working conditions can hinder performance, even when intrinsic motivators are present. In this context, the promotion process can be viewed as a critical extrinsic factor that, if poorly structured, may undermine the effectiveness of otherwise competent and motivated teachers.

It is essential to recognize that while correlation does not establish causation, the statistically significant inverse relationship indicates a meaningful link that warrants further exploration. The data imply that as the promotion process becomes more complex or unsupported, it may inadvertently contribute to a decline in teacher performance, either through psychological exhaustion, loss of morale, or diverted focus from instructional responsibilities to bureaucratic compliance.

These findings underscore the pressing need for educational institutions and policy-makers to re-evaluate the structure and support mechanisms surrounding the Master Teacher promotion process. A transparent, streamlined, and supportive system may not only enhance equitable access to advancement opportunities but also protect and even enhance the performance standards of educators. Institutional interventions such as mentoring programs, clear documentation guidelines, and administrative backing are recommended to mitigate the negative implications identified in this study.

In conclusion, the moderate negative correlation between challenges in promotion and teacher performance serves as empirical evidence of the broader implications of institutional practices on educational quality. Ensuring that promotion systems are enabling rather than obstructive is crucial in sustaining both teacher morale and excellence in public education.

Lived Experiences and Personal Perceptions of Teachers regarding the Master Teacher Promotion Process

This section presents the thematic analysis of the qualitative responses to the experiences, views, and challenges faced by the participants in the promotion process. Induction into a detailed analysis of the statements provided by respondents revealed a set of 20 fundamental themes, each derived from and representing a distinct aspect of their lived experiences within personal contexts.

The thematic analysis of teachers' lived experiences regarding the Master Teacher promotion process revealed that motivation for professional growth plays a crucial role in shaping teachers' engagement with career advancement. This finding is supported by Jaminal (2025), who found that while many teachers aspire to grow professionally, they often encounter barriers such as a lack of motivation

from their superiors, limited knowledge about promotion requirements, and low self-efficacy.

Table 12. *Motivation for Professional Growth (Theme 1)*

Sub-Themes	Supporting Quotes	Interpretation
Desire for career advancement	"I see promotion as a stepping stone to greater opportunities."	Teachers view promotion as a means to achieve personal and professional growth, driving them to pursue higher goals.
Continuous skill enhancement	"I constantly seek professional development to meet promotion standards." "Promotion pushes me to improve my teaching skills."	The desire for promotion encourages teachers to engage in lifelong learning and skill enhancement.
Increased professional recognition	"Being promoted earns me respect from peers and students." "I feel more valued and recognized after my promotion."	Promotion is associated with increased professional credibility and validation of teachers' competencies.

Despite these challenges, the desire for career advancement remains a strong motivational force. Similarly, Zafar et al. (2025) emphasized that a commitment to continuous learning and self-improvement largely drives teachers' pursuit of professional development. Their study revealed that participation in training and development programs is often linked to aspirations for promotion, as teachers view these opportunities as essential for enhancing their skills and meeting professional standards.

Moreover, recognition following promotion also emerged as a key theme. Mukan et al. (2019) found that the acknowledgment and support teachers receive from school leadership and peers significantly influence their motivation to pursue higher positions. Recognition is not only seen as a reward but also as a validation of teachers' competencies and contributions. These findings collectively reinforce the idea that career advancement, continuous skill enhancement, and increased professional recognition are intertwined in teachers lived experiences, and they serve as fundamental motivators in the promotion process.

Table 13. *Administrative Challenges (Theme 2)*

Sub-Themes	Supporting Quotes	Interpretation
Cumbersome documentation processes	"The documentation required is overwhelming and time- consuming." "I spend hours completing promotion-related paperwork."	Teachers experience administrative fatigue due to the extensive documentation requirements for promotion.
Complex and lengthy application process	"The steps to promotion are unclear and complicated."	The bureaucratic nature of the promotion process makes it difficult and frustrating for teachers to complete.
Lack of support from school administrators	"There is minimal guidance from school leaders during the application." "I feel unsupported when seeking promotion."	Teachers perceive a lack of institutional support, making the promotion process more challenging.

The thematic analysis of teachers' experiences regarding the Master Teacher promotion process revealed significant administrative challenges that hinder career advancement. A study by Junio (2024) highlights the detrimental impact of administrative tasks on teachers' professional growth and well-being. The research highlights that excessive bureaucratic responsibilities divert instructional time and contribute to teacher burnout, underscoring the need to alleviate administrative burdens to improve teaching quality and job satisfaction (Junio, 2024).

Furthermore, a report by the Queensland Teachers Union (2024) illustrates the overwhelming administrative workload faced by educators due to the introduction of numerous policies over recent years. The study indicates that teachers are spending a substantial amount of time on compliance-related tasks, leading to stress and exhaustion, which detracts from their primary role of teaching (Ines, 2024).

Additionally, research by Tantawy (2020) on teachers in Cebu reveals that the sluggish processing of promotions, coupled with numerous requirements and limited opportunities for advancement, causes frustration among educators. The study suggests that these administrative challenges contribute to teachers remaining in their current positions for extended periods, hindering their professional progression. (Zenodo, 2021).

Collectively, these studies corroborate the findings of the thematic analysis, highlighting that cumbersome documentation processes, complex application procedures, and a lack of support from school administrators significantly impede the promotion process. Addressing these administrative challenges is crucial to creating a more efficient and supportive environment for teachers who aspire to advance in their careers.

Table 14 presents a thematic analysis of teachers' experiences regarding the Master Teacher promotion process, including financial and professional constraints. The result revealed significant financial and professional constraints that impede career advancement. A study by Aquino et al. (2022) identified financial literacy, time constraints for pursuing graduate studies, and heavy workloads as major barriers to teachers' participation in professional development programs. These findings suggest that the high costs associated with

further education and the demanding nature of teaching responsibilities deter teachers from pursuing qualifications necessary for promotion.

Table 14. *Emotional and Psychological Impact*

Sub-Themes	Supporting Quotes	Interpretation
Financial limitations for further studies	"I can't afford additional certifications for promotion." "Professional development courses are too expensive."	Teachers face financial barriers when attempting to meet the qualifications for promotion.
Limited access to training opportunities	"There are few relevant workshops in my area." "It's hard to find quality training for promotion credits."	Teachers struggle with limited access to necessary training, which slows their promotion progress.
Resource scarcity	"We lack access to updated instructional materials for portfolio building." "There are insufficient resources to meet the promotion standards."	The shortage of resources hinders teachers' ability to meet promotion criteria effectively.

Additionally, Jardinico et al. (2024) highlighted that public junior high school teachers in the Philippines face substantial financial hardships, often relying on secondary income sources to meet basic needs. This financial strain limits their ability to invest in professional development opportunities, thereby hindering their eligibility for promotion. Moreover, a study by Jackaria and Caballes (2022) found that teachers in Tawi-Tawi experienced challenges in accessing quality training due to the limited availability of relevant workshops and poor internet connectivity. These resource limitations further exacerbate the difficulties teachers face in meeting the criteria for promotion. Collectively, these studies underscore the need for systemic reforms to alleviate financial burdens, enhance access to professional development, and provide adequate resources to support teachers' career advancement.

Table 16. *Impact on Work-Life Balance (Theme 5)*

Sub-Themes	Supporting Quotes	Interpretation
Reduced family time	"I sacrifice family time for promotion tasks." "Promotion requirements eat into my personal life."	Teachers report a decline in family time due to the demanding promotion process.
Increased workload	"I struggle with the additional workload from promotion demands." "Promotion tasks add to my already heavy teaching load."	The promotion process significantly increases teachers' workload, leading to work-life imbalance.
Strain on personal well-being	"I feel physically and mentally drained." "The stress from promotion affects my health."	The pressures of promotion negatively impact teachers' physical and mental well-being.

Table 16 presents the thematic analysis on the impact on Work-Life Balance of teachers' experiences regarding the Master Teacher promotion. The results revealed significant challenges to achieving a work-life balance, affecting both personal well-being and professional effectiveness.

A study by Guy and Arthur (2020) found that teachers faced several challenges in managing their dual roles, including time conflicts, a lack of support from their schools, and feelings of guilt and inadequacy. The study also found that teachers frequently experienced feelings of guilt when attempting to balance their professional and parental roles, often feeling overwhelmed and exhausted. These findings suggest that the pressures associated with career advancement, such as meeting promotion criteria and facing uncertainty, may contribute to similar emotional strains among in-service teachers.

Furthermore, research by Zhao et al. (2022) examined the relationship between job stress and burnout among teachers, revealing that work-related stress significantly predicts burnout, with work–family conflict acting as a mediating factor. The study also noted that self-efficacy moderates this relationship, indicating that teachers with higher self-efficacy may experience less burnout. These insights underscore the importance of addressing emotional and psychological challenges in the promotion process to support teachers' well-being and professional development.

Table 17. *Institutional Support and Recognition*

Sub-Themes	Supporting Quotes	Interpretation
Desire for fair promotion policies	"The promotion process should be clearer and fairer." "I want a transparent and unbiased promotion system."	Teachers advocate for fair and transparent promotion policies to ensure equal opportunities.
Need for administrative support	"We need more guidance and support from school leaders." "A mentor would help us navigate the promotion process better."	Teachers seek stronger administrative support to streamline the promotion process.
Value of peer and student recognition	"Recognition from colleagues motivates me to pursue promotion." "Appreciation from students makes the process worthwhile."	Teachers value recognition from peers and students, which reinforces their motivation for promotion.

Table 17 highlights that teachers view fair promotion policies, administrative support, and recognition from peers and students as essential to their motivation and career advancement. This aligns with Bantilan et al. (2024), who emphasized the role of organizational

culture and policies in fostering teacher commitment. Encarnación et al. (2023) also emphasized the importance of instructional support and a positive school climate in enhancing teacher productivity. Similarly, Mananay et al. (2023) underscored that institutional support and recognition are vital in preparing teachers for leadership roles. These findings collectively stress that strong institutional support systems are critical in promoting teacher development, professional satisfaction, and readiness for advancement.

Table 18. *Personal Fulfillment and Career Satisfaction*

Sub-Themes	Supporting Quotes	Interpretation
Sense of accomplishment	"Getting promoted makes me feel proud and fulfilled." "Promotion is a reward for my hard work."	Teachers experience a sense of personal satisfaction and fulfillment when promoted.
Enhanced self-esteem	"Promotion boosts my confidence in my skills." "I feel more capable and respected."	Promotion enhances teachers' self-esteem, making them feel more confident and valued.
Increased job satisfaction	"I feel happier and more content with my job after promotion." "Promotion makes my teaching career more rewarding."	Teachers report higher job satisfaction and fulfillment as a result of career advancement.

Table 18 presents the thematic analysis of teachers' experiences regarding personal fulfillment and career satisfaction in the Master Teacher promotion process. The results revealed that teachers perceive promotion as a significant source of personal accomplishment, enhanced self-esteem, and increased job satisfaction. A study by Abun et al. (2021) found that teachers' self-efficacy has a positive influence on job satisfaction, suggesting that confidence in one's teaching abilities can lead to greater professional fulfillment.

Similarly, research by Mananay et al. (2023) suggests that institutional support and recognition have a positive impact on teachers' readiness for institutionalization, which can in turn enhance their career satisfaction. Furthermore, a meta-analysis by Slemp et al. (2024) highlighted that fulfilling teachers' basic psychological needs —such as autonomy, competence, and relatedness —is crucial for their well-being and job satisfaction. Collectively, these studies emphasize the importance of promotion processes that recognize teachers' contributions and support their professional development, thereby fostering a sense of accomplishment and career satisfaction.

Table 19. *Professional Development and Lifelong Learning*

Sub-Themes	Supporting Quotes	Interpretation
Pursuit of higher education	"I am motivated to pursue further studies for promotion." "Higher degrees increase my chances for promotion."	Teachers are encouraged to seek higher education and certifications to enhance their promotion prospects.
Continuous skill improvement	"I constantly enhance my teaching skills to stay competitive." "Professional growth is essential for promotion."	Promotion drives teachers to continually improve their skills, fostering lifelong learning.
Participation in professional training	"I attend seminars and workshops to gain promotion points." "Training sessions help me meet promotion requirements."	Teachers actively participate in training programs to fulfill promotion criteria and develop professionally.

Table 19 presents the thematic analysis of teachers' experiences related to professional development and lifelong learning within the Master Teacher promotion process. The results revealed that teachers view promotion as a significant motivator for pursuing higher education, continually improving their teaching skills, and participating in professional development. A study by Dayagbil and Alda (2024) found that teachers engage in various professional development activities to enhance their instructional strategies and meet professional standards, despite challenges such as a lack of time and funding. Similarly, Richter et al. (2025) identified occupational promotion as a key motivation for teachers to participate in professional development courses, alongside personal interest and practical enhancement. Furthermore, the OECD (2022) emphasized the importance of career-long professional learning and development, noting that providing opportunities for teachers to refresh, develop, and broaden their knowledge and skills is essential for improving the quality of the teacher workforce and retaining effective staff over time. Collectively, these studies highlight the importance of promotion processes that encourage and facilitate continuous professional development, thereby enhancing teachers' effectiveness and career satisfaction.

Conclusions

This study provides insight into the promotion process, emphasizing its emotional, professional, and personal dimensions for teachers. The study highlights the challenges that teachers face in the promotion process, including bureaucratic obstacles, a lack of transparency, and the stress of promotion. Using both qualitative and quantitative methods, the study records statistical trends as well as personal stories to illustrate the various factors that affect teacher promotion.

Findings reiterate the necessity of instituting a more formalized, transparent, and supportive promotion system that considers not only qualifications and performance but also the well-being of educators themselves. Institutional reforms, digital innovation, and mentorship programs can provide better efficiency and motivation in the work environment for teachers. A clear and standardized set of promotion evaluation criteria should be established, thereby reducing the burden on administrators and enabling teachers and administrators to communicate more effectively about the promotion system itself.

Additionally, the research examines the psychological and emotional aspects of the promotion process, as schoolteachers must contend

with anxiety, doubt, and pressure to meet expectations. The introduction of health programs, stress management initiatives, and professional development opportunities can reduce these effects and create healthier working conditions. Schools and educational institutions must understand that a fair and structured promotion system will have not only individual but also overall institutional benefits, because motivated and well-supported educators will be more likely to stay in their jobs.

More research was undertaken to specifically consider the psychological and emotional impact of promotion procedures on teachers. According to teachers, students experience anxiety, uncertainty, and pressure to meet expectations. Well-being programs, stress management, and professional development opportunities can reduce the adverse effects and contribute to a healthier work environment. Along with the above factors, schools and educational institutions must honestly understand that a fair and well-structured promotion system benefits not only the individual teacher but also adds value in enhancing overall institutional efficiency by motivating and supporting teachers to stay in their jobs.

The research thus contributes to the literature on teacher development by identifying areas for improvement in the promotion process. Future research may increase the sampling size and investigate more educational settings, as well as address the long-term consequences of policy alterations. It would also be interesting to conduct comparative studies across institutions and regions to gain a better understanding of best practices concerning an equitable and effective promotion system. Further researchers may investigate how emerging technologies can optimize promotional processes in terms of accessibility, transparency, and efficiency.

Certainly, a transparent and fair process of promotion, underpinned by support, is needed to deliberately develop a motivated, happy, and high-performing teaching workforce. These challenges and reforms within them open a way for institutions to reform the tuition system, resulting in a win-win situation for both teachers and students.

The following recommendations are proposed to improve the promotion process and support teachers effectively: educational institutions may establish uniform, open-standard benchmarks for evaluation to streamline promotions, accompanied by continual evaluator training and recourse mechanisms to ensure fairness and integrity; human resource departments may implement motivational schemes for teachers such as professional development grants, research funds, and performance-based rewards; school administrators may introduce an online promotion application and tracking system with a feedback helpline, ensuring teacher-friendly deadlines and flexible submission timelines; teachers may benefit from structured mentorship programs and advisory committees to provide guidance throughout the promotion process, while active participation in professional development will enhance their credentials and competitiveness; and future researchers may further explore ways to enhance reward systems for professorial staff, focusing on the long-term effects of these strategies on teacher job satisfaction and institutional efficiency.

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Lorono & Abarquez

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