

# Financial Prudence as Determinant of Employees' Interest in Graduate Study

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**Abstract:-** The study aimed to look into the influence of financial prudence of employees towards employees' interest towards graduate study. In this study, the researcher selected the 100 government employees in Local Government Unit (LGU) in Koronadal City as the respondents of the study. Stratified random sampling technique was utilized in the selection of the respondents. Non-experimental quantitative research design using descriptive-correlational method was employed. The data collected were subjected to the following statistical tools: Mean, Pearson Moment Product Correlation and Regression Analysis. Findings revealed that financial prudence and employees' interest in graduate study were rated as extensive. Further, correlation analysis demonstrated that there is a significant relationship between financial prudence and employees' interest towards graduate study in Koronadal City. Evidently, regression analysis proved that financial prudence in terms of financial resources and financial goals identification significantly influenced the employees' interest towards graduate study in Koronadal City. Local Government Unit (LGU) should introduce initiatives that promote financial literacy and prudence among employees, including workshops, seminars, and educational resources tailored to the specific financial needs and challenges associated with pursuing graduate study.

**Keywords:-** Educational Management, Financial Prudence, Employees' Interest Towards Graduate Study, Regression Analysis, Philippines.

## I. INTRODUCTION

### A. The Problem and its Scope

Working people's decisions for graduate school are heavily influenced by their financial situation. Graduate programs frequently include high tuition, fees, and other expenses that may discourage those who are already handling other financial obligations like house payments, student loans, or supporting dependents. People must assess the possible advantages of earning a graduate degree versus the income and professional growth prospects they would forgo during the study period. This is known as the opportunity cost of pursuing graduate school while working. By removing these financial obstacles, more working people will be encouraged to pursue possibilities for higher education. This can be achieved by providing more funding access, flexible financing alternatives, and financial literacy materials.

Professionals seeking graduate courses may be seriously discouraged by the high cost of living and tuition. According to Allen and Seaman (2019), people are deterred from obtaining further degrees by the expense of school and the possibility of having to take on large student loan debt. Furthermore, Hango and Myles (2009) discovered that family responsibilities and the workforce are frequent obstacles for people thinking about pursuing higher education. Professionals are typically discouraged from seeking higher education because of the demands of courses, assignments, and studying, which frequently clash with their work obligations. This emphasizes how important it is to have adaptable programs that suit working adults.

Prudence with money might lessen the perception of financial obstacles to graduate school, increasing its viability. According to Lown et al. (2018), those who practice sound financial management are more likely to have savings and money set aside for their children's future needs. According to Thongori and Munene (2016), these people typically reduce or stay away from having a large amount of student loan debt, which lessens financial stress both during and after graduate school. Financial prudence guarantees financial stability and is consistent with long-term professional progression goals. It involves making educated financial decisions, budgeting, saving, investing, and avoiding excessive debt.

Those that are financially responsible frequently see their finances long-term and may consider graduate school as an investment in their future earning potential. Lusardi and Mitchell (2014) claim that financially responsible workers feel less stressed and anxious about money, which improves their general wellbeing and productivity at work. According to Akosah-Twumasi et al. (2018), people who practice greater financial prudence are more likely to organize their finances, which includes setting aside money for college costs and encouraging others to pursue higher education. According to Polanin et al. (2018), scholarships and financial aid have a favorable correlation with persistence in college and enrollment, making graduate school more feasible for those with sound financial management.

Although a number of factors impacting employees' interest in graduate school have been studied, little is known about the precise relationship between professional desire in pursuing further education and financial responsibility. Only a small number of empirical research have looked at the direct relationship between employees' interest in graduate school and financial prudence. This study is to investigate financial prudence as a predictor of interest in graduate studies among Koronadal City government employees. It uses a descriptive-

correlational methodology. The study aims to contribute to the small body of knowledge surrounding working adults' interest in graduate education by addressing this research gap.

### B. Theoretical/Conceptual Framework

The study bases itself on Akosah-Twumasi, Sharma, and Doran (2018)'s notion that financial prudence encompasses wise financial planning and management, saving, budgeting, and investing. Financial prudence allows employees afford graduate school tuition, books, and daily living costs. Financial stability makes graduate studies more accessible. Bound et al. (2010) suggest that financially responsible workers apply for scholarships, grants, or employer-sponsored tuition aid programs to cover graduate school expenditures.

According to Allen and Seaman (2019), financial prudence enables employees stay away from debt and financial pressure. Living within their means, saving for emergencies, and controlling debt can lessen financial stress and worry for employees. Focusing on academics without financial worries helps employees pursue graduate education.

Moreover, Figure 1 shows two factors in the study. Financial prudence—confidence in handling resources and reaching goals—is the independent variable. Nguyen (2016) defines financial prudence as saving, investing, financial resource understanding, financial goal identification, and cash flow optimization. Skills in saving and investing, resource management, financial goal setting, cash flow optimization, and credit management are included.

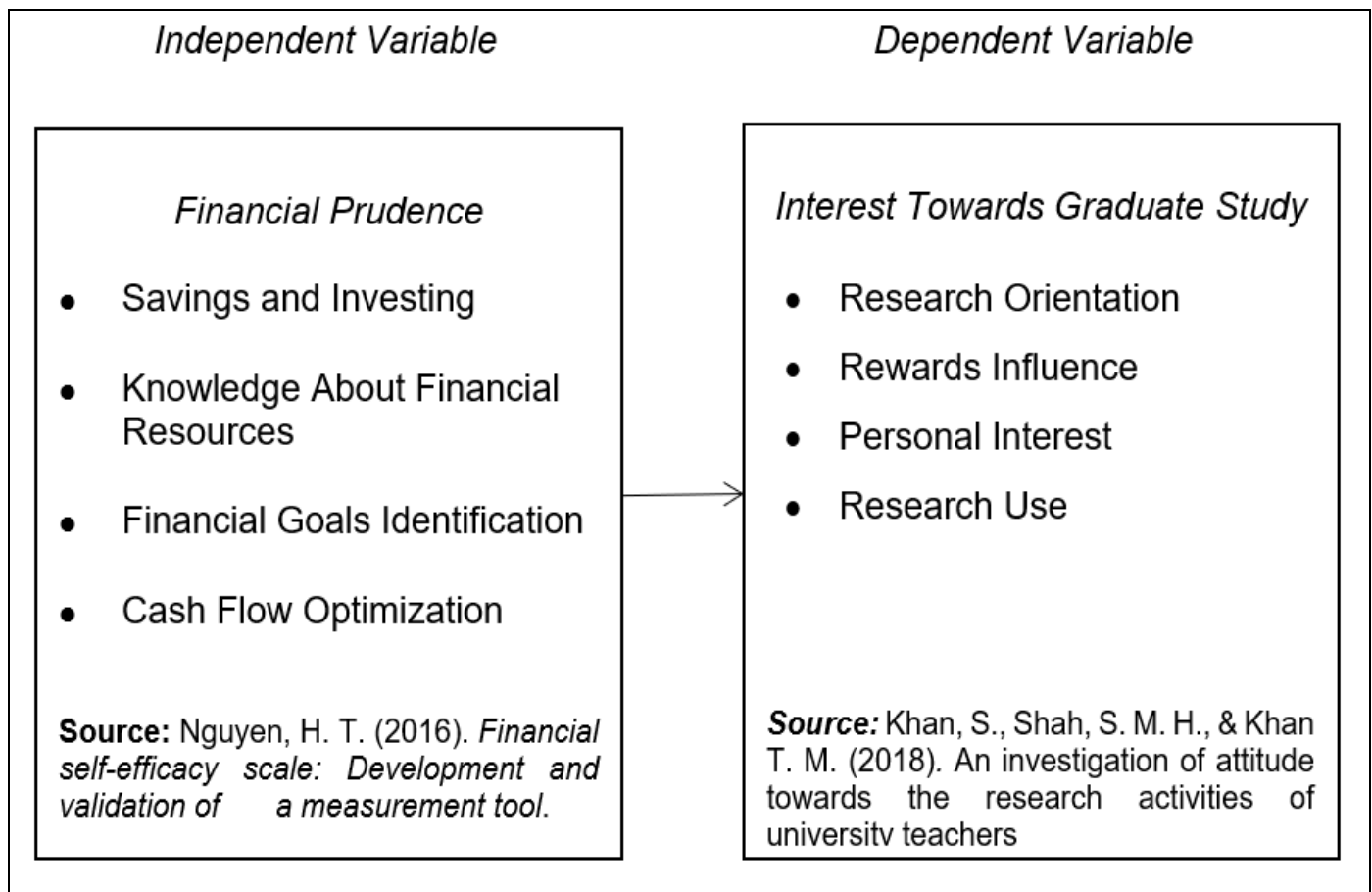


Fig 1 Conceptual Framework of the Study

Interest in graduate study, which is characterized as a person's propensity or desire to continue higher education beyond the undergraduate level, is the study's dependent variable. Measures of this interest include research orientation, rewards influence, personal interest, and research use (Khan et al., 2018). The capacity to advance diverse abilities and acquire specialized information is referred to as research orientation. Influence through rewards is the ability to persuade people by offering rewards. A person's commitment to and objectives for research are influenced by their personal interests. Use of research relates to how graduate education is viewed as being important for academic pursuits.

### C. Statement of the Problem

The primary aim of the study was to determine which domain of financial prudence significantly influenced the employees' interest towards graduate study in Koronadal City. Specifically, the study has the following objectives:

➤ *What is the Extent of Employees' Financial Prudence in Terms of:*

- Saving and investing;
- Knowledge about financial resources;
- Financial goals identification; and
- Cash flow optimization?

➤ *What is the Extent of Employees' Interest Towards Graduate Study in Terms of:*

- Research orientation;
- Rewards influence; and
- Personal interest; and
- Research use?

➤ *Is there a significant relationship between financial prudence and employees' interest towards graduate study in Koronadal City?*

➤ *Which domain of financial prudence significantly influences the employees' interest towards graduate study in Koronadal City?*

#### D. Hypothesis

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

- H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant relationship between financial prudence and employees' interest towards graduate study in Koronadal City.
- H<sub>02</sub>: None of the domains of financial prudence significantly influence the employees' interest towards graduate study in Koronadal City.

## II. METHOD

### A. Research Design

The present investigation employed a quantitative descriptive-correlational research design to collect and examine the associations between employees' enthusiasm in pursuing graduate studies and financial prudence. Bhandari (2020) defines quantitative research as a deductive technique that emphasizes hypothesis testing and focuses on quantifying data collecting and analysis. Without altering the variables, this non-experimental study measures them as they naturally occur. Descriptive correlational research, according to Creswell (2013), examines associations between variables without looking for causal relationships. Without conducting controlled trials, this method was appropriate for examining the behavioral elements of respondents and emphasizing the importance of links between financial prudence and interest in graduate education.

### B. Research Respondents

100 Koronadal City government employees were chosen by stratified random sampling to be the study's respondents. The population is divided using this strategy into strata or subgroups. Employees who already work for the local government unit or a particular office/department, those who have a bachelor's degree or its equivalent, those who are interested in continuing graduate studies, and those who willingly completed the informed permission form were the inclusion criteria. The employees' socioeconomic condition was not taken into account as the study concentrated on answering the specific research objectives.

### C. Research Instrument

Two sets of instruments were used in this study. These questionnaires were subjected to content validity by a panel of experts and underwent pilot testing to ensure their validity and reliability. Comments, corrections, and suggestions from the experts were incorporated into the final revisions of the questionnaires.

The first part of the instrument addresses financial efficacy, adapted from Nguyen (2016), with indicators including saving and investing, knowledge about financial resources, financial goal achievement, and cash flow optimization. A reliability coefficient of 0.960 was obtained. The researcher used the following range of means, descriptions, and interpretations to determine the extent of financial efficacy: 4.20 - 5.00 (Very Extensive: financial efficacy is always observed), 3.40 - 4.19 (Extensive: financial efficacy is oftentimes observed), 2.60 - 3.39 (Moderately Extensive: financial efficacy is sometimes observed), 1.80 - 2.59 (Less Extensive: financial efficacy is rarely observed), and 1.00 - 1.79 (Not Extensive: financial efficacy is never observed).

The second tool measures employees' interest in graduate study, adapted from Khan et al. (2018). It includes indicators such as research orientation, rewards influence, personal interest, and research use, with a reliability coefficient (Chronbach's alpha) of 0.927. Respondents answered using a 5-point Likert scale. The researcher used the following range of means, descriptions, and interpretations to determine the extent of interest: 4.20 - 5.00 (Very Extensive: interest is always manifested), 3.40 - 4.19 (Extensive: interest is oftentimes manifested), 2.60 - 3.39 (Moderately Extensive: interest is sometimes manifested), 1.80 - 2.59 (Less Extensive: interest is rarely manifested), and 1.00 - 1.79 (Not Extensive: interest is never manifested).

### D. Data Analysis

Three statistical tools were used to process the collected data: linear regression, Pearson Product Moment Correlation, and mean. The employees' interest in graduate studies and financial prudence in Koronadal City were assessed using the mean. Additionally, the strength of a linear relationship between paired data, indicated by *r* in a sample, was measured using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation, which was utilized to evaluate the significant relationship between the independent variable (financial prudence) and the dependent variable (interest in graduate study). The significance of the influence of the independent variable (financial prudence) on the dependent variable (interest in graduate studies) was assessed using linear regression.

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### A. Financial Prudence of Employees

#### ➤ *Indicator 1: Saving and Investing*

According to Table 1's results, employees' financial prudence in terms of saving and investing has a category mean of 3.52, which is considered substantial. This suggests that Koronadal City regularly witnesses this conduct. This

means that as part of a comprehensive financial management plan, employees should regularly set aside a portion of their pay for investing and saving. This result validates Shetty's (2016) assertion that professionals can develop financial reserves and a safety net to withstand unforeseen financial

obstacles like job loss, economic downturns, or health emergencies by saving and investing. Professionals can concentrate on their personal development and growth without undue financial burden thanks to this financial security, which also brings peace of mind.

Table 1 Financial Prudence of Employees in Terms of Saving and Investing

Statement	Mean	Descriptive Rating
1. Putting money into a savings account regularly for future goals.	3.19	Moderately Extensive
2. Putting aside some money for future unexpected expenses.	3.86	Extensive
3. Investing my savings appropriately to achieve my financial goals.	3.31	Moderately Extensive
4. Being prepared to handle unexpected financial problems.	3.24	Moderately Extensive
5. Being able to stick to my financial plan.	4.02	Extensive
<b>Mean</b>	<b>3.52</b>	<b>Extensive</b>

The items' mean ratings, as indicated by the table, range from 3.19 to 4.02. A mean rating of 3.19 for "Putting money into a savings account regularly for future goals" specifically indicates that this activity is occasionally noticed and is classified as moderately substantial. On the other hand, the mean rating for "Being able to stick to my financial plan" is 4.02, which is considered extensive and indicates that this behavior is frequently observed. Yih (2020) asserts that high-level professionals can build wealth through investing and saving because these strategies produce returns on their capital. Prosperity and financial progress can be fostered over time by professionals who consistently save money and invest in a variety of assets, including stocks, bonds, and real estate.

➤ *Indicator 2: Knowledge About Financial Resources*

With a mean score of 3.49, Table 2 shows that employees' financial prudence in terms of knowledge of financial resources was given a high grade, indicating that it is frequently observed. This indicates how well-versed staff members are in risk management procedures, retirement planning, savings plans, budgeting methods, and investment possibilities. This result bolsters the findings of Aliyu's (2018) study, which emphasizes how professionals may manage their spending sensibly and create efficient budgeting skills by learning about financial resources. Professionals may make realistic budgets, find areas for savings, and match spending to financial objectives by having a thorough understanding of income levels, fixed and variable expenses, and spending patterns.

Table 2 Financial Prudence of Employees in Terms of Knowledge About Financial Resources

Statement	Mean	Descriptive Rating
1. Finding resources to help me completing my tax forms if I need it.	3.23	Moderately Extensive
2. Finding resources to help me solve an identity theft problem if it happens to me.	3.76	Extensive
3. Recognizing and avoiding financial fraud.	3.34	Moderately Extensive
4. Arranging for health insurance coverage if I need.	3.12	Moderately Extensive
5. Finding resources to help me solve a difficult financial problem.	4.01	Extensive
<b>Mean</b>	<b>3.49</b>	<b>Extensive</b>



Table 2 demonstrates that the items' mean ratings range from 3.12 to 4.01. The mean grade for "arranging for health insurance coverage if I need" is 3.12, which is considered pretty extensive and suggests that this activity is occasionally noticed. On the other hand, "Finding resources to help me solve a difficult financial problem" received a mean grade of 4.01, indicating that it is a behavior that is frequently noticed. Mahdzan and Tabiani (2013) point out that tax planning tactics can be used by professionals who have knowledge of financial resources to reduce tax liabilities and increase efficiency. Professionals can optimize their tax outcomes and save income for savings, investments, and financial goals by being aware of tax rules, deductions, credits, and deferral options. This improves their overall financial well-being.

#### ➤ Indicator 3: Financial Goals Identification

The financial goal identification category in Table 3 has a relatively extensive category mean rating of 3.58, suggesting that employees in Koronadal City frequently observe this component of financial restraint. This demonstrates their ability to create and implement programs to meet financial objectives. This result supports the claim made by Sokunbi (2020) that having financial objectives is essential to achieving one's life vision because goals are usually only attainable if one has the financial means to achieve them, which necessitates developing a thorough plan to get there.

Table 3 Financial Prudence of Employees in Terms of Financial Goals Identification

Statement	Mean	Descriptive Rating
1. Developing a plan to achieve my financial goals.	2.99	Moderately Extensive
2. Finding it challenging to stick to the financial goals I have set.	4.01	Extensive
3. Relying on professional advice to help identify and refine my financial goals.	3.97	Extensive
4. Being fully aware of my financial goals for the next five years.	2.91	Moderately Extensive
5. Having a clear understanding of the steps needed to achieve my financial goals.	4.02	Extensive
<b>Mean</b>	<b>3.58</b>	<b>Extensive</b>

The items have mean ratings ranging from 2.91 to 4.02. A mean score of 2.91, characterized as moderately extensive, indicates that "being fully aware of my financial goals for the next five years" is a behavior that is sometimes observed. As an illustration of how frequently this behavior is seen in students, "Having a clear understanding of the steps needed to achieve my financial goals" received a rating of 4.02, which is considered extensive. Financial professionals can improve their career prospects and overall well-being by allocating resources, making informed decisions, and pursuing opportunities that align with their long-term objectives by prioritizing financial goals based on importance, urgency, and feasibility, as suggested by Mullock and Turcotte (2013).

#### ➤ Indicator 4: Cash Flow Optimization

Table 4 shows that employees' cash flow optimization and financial prudence obtained an extensive category mean of 3.44, suggesting that Koronadal City employees frequently engage in this practice. This means that in order to achieve long-term financial goals, employees need strategically manage their income and expenses to maximize cash flow efficiency. This result supports Gilbert's (2015) assertion that cash flow optimization helps workers to sustain steady and predictable cash flow patterns, guaranteeing they can pay their debts on time and achieve their savings objectives. Proficiency in cash flow management alleviates financial strain and unpredictability, freeing professionals to concentrate on their professional obligations and seek possibilities for growth.

Table 4 Financial Prudence of Employees in Terms of Cash Flow Optimization

Statement	Mean	Descriptive Rating
1. Reducing my use of credit by making good spending decision.	2.89	Moderately Extensive
2. Keeping track of my spending to see where I need to make changes.	4.03	Extensive
3. Using financial tools or apps to monitor and improve my cash flow.	2.76	Moderately Extensive
4. Having a monthly budget that helps me manage my cash flow effectively.	4.05	Extensive
5. Saving a consistent portion of my income every month to ensure financial stability.	3.46	Extensive
<b>Mean</b>	<b>3.44</b>	<b>Extensive</b>

The table reveals mean ratings of 2.76–4.05. A moderately extensive mean rating of 2.76 indicates "Using financial tools or apps to monitor and improve my cash flow" is sometimes observed. In comparison, "Keeping track of my spending to see where I need to make changes" gets a mean score of 4.05, indicating extensive and is often observed. Abioro (2013) states that maximizing cash flow allows professionals to pursue investment possibilities that match their financial objectives for the future and risk tolerance. This ability to access assets allows professionals to take advantage of capital growth and financial advancement prospects, improving their career and financial outlook.

Table 5 shows Koronadal City employees' financial prudence. The mean rating for "Motivating educational environment" was 3.51, indicating it is often observed. This shows that employees often make intelligent and prudent financial decisions, including budgeting, saving, investing, and debt management, for long-term financial stability. Rymer (2017) found that financially responsible workers are more productive because they are less distracted by personal finances. Their ability to pay rent or mortgages boosts their reliability as employees.

Table 5 Summary on Financial Prudence of Employees in Koronadal City

<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Descriptive Equivalent</b>
Saving and investing	3.52	Extensive
Knowledge About Financial Resources	3.49	Extensive
Financial Goals Identification	3.58	Extensive
Cash Flow Optimization	3.44	Extensive
<b>Overall</b>	<b>3.51</b>	<b>Extensive</b>

Adding more, the table shows that employee financial prudence in identifying financial goals had the highest mean score of 3.58, assessed as extensive and often seen. Financial prudence in cash flow optimization had the lowest mean score of 3.44, also extensive and often noticed. Tharp (2018) found that financially prudent employees are more likely to save for retirement and other financial goals, which improves their financial stability. Job insecurity, market changes, and unanticipated expenses might increase financial risks for high-level professionals.

#### B. Employees' Interest Towards Graduate Study

##### ➤ Indicator 1: Research Orientation

Table 6 shows that employees are very interested in graduate school, with a category mean of 3.62 which means extensive. This shows that Koronadal City employees generally pursue the same research, academic, or inquiry topics as working people considering graduate school. This supports Kakupa's (2019) claim that research orientations help graduate students pursue professional ambitions. By picking appropriate research topics and academic disciplines, people can get specialized knowledge and abilities that boost job market competitiveness and advancement.

Table 6 Employees' Interest Towards Graduate Study in Terms of Research Orientations

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Descriptive Rating</b>
1. Viewing myself primarily as a profession.	3.27	Moderately Extensive
2. Feeling professional satisfaction by conducting research.	3.79	Extensive
3. Believing that offices should retain employees who exhibit research production.	3.38	Moderately Extensive
4. Contributing to my office's rank by publishing research papers.	3.78	Extensive
5. The intellectual challenge of academic research inspires me to work harder.	3.89	Extensive
<b>Mean</b>	<b>3.62</b>	<b>Extensive</b>

The table demonstrates mean ratings of 3.27–3.89. "Viewing myself primarily as a professional" has a moderately extensive mean rating of 3.27, indicating a sometimes manifestation. However, "The intellectual challenge of academic research inspires me to work harder" gets a mean value of 3.89, indicating frequent occurrence.

Jacobson (2020) states that research orientations typically cross academic domains and multidisciplinary fields. Working professionals interested in graduate studies can use interdisciplinary viewpoints to grasp difficult issues, solve real-world problems from several perspectives, and create new solutions that cross academic boundaries.

➤ *Indicator 2: Rewards Influence*

Table 7 shows that incentives, bonuses, and rewards in pushing employees to seek graduate study are ubiquitous, with a category mean of 3.49. This supports Moreno's (2019) view that scholarships, grants, and tuition aid encourage higher education. These incentives reduce college costs, making higher education more affordable and stimulating career growth.

Table 7's mean ratings for products range from 3.04 to 3.88. The mean rating of "Thinking that if tenure/promotions were not binding on educational attainment, most employees would devote less time and effort to increasing educational attainment" is 3.04, suggesting it is rarely exhibited. The mean rating for "Becoming an effective professional if I am able to have an educated critique about myself" is 3.88, moderately extensive, showing it is sometimes displayed.

Table 7 Employees' Interest Towards Graduate Study in Terms of Rewards Influence

Statement	Mean	Descriptive Rating
1. Thinking rewards are effective means of influencing employees' performance.	3.19	Moderately Extensive
2. Thinking reward influences employee for enrolling in graduate school.	3.56	Extensive
3. Thinking employees must be productive researchers or lose their jobs.	3.77	Extensive
4. Thinking that if tenure/promotions were not binding on educational attainment, most employees would devote less time and effort to increasing educational attainment.	3.04	Moderately Extensive
5. Becoming an effective professional if I am able to have an educated critique about myself.	3.88	Extensive
<b>Mean</b>	<b>3.49</b>	<b>Extensive</b>

Graduate degrees are linked to professional credibility, respect, and recognition, according to Roach and Sauermann (2017). An advanced degree shows experience, devotion, and dedication to one's industry, which can boost professional legitimacy and marketability. Graduate studies may be motivated by the desire to gain academic qualifications that boost one's career.

➤ *Indicator 3: Personal Interest*

Table 8 shows that employees' interest in graduate study has a category mean of 3.45, indicating it is extensive and is often manifested. This shows that employees frequently display their research dedication, ambitions, or principles. This underscores Wells et al. (2012)'s claim that graduate studies foster networking and collaboration among classmates, instructors, and professionals. Mentorships, partnerships, and career opportunities can help professionals grow and access industry-specific knowledge and resources.

Table 8 Employees' Interest Towards Graduate Study in Terms of Personal Interest

Statement	Mean	Descriptive Rating
1. Thinking that personal Interests are the most important factor in determining the allocation of time to enroll in graduate study.	3.04	Moderately Extensive
2. Feeling free to pursue my academic interests (within the context of research).	3.65	Extensive
3. Thinking that sharing research results with colleagues is self-satisfying.	2.67	Moderately Extensive
4. Wanting to build up my reputation as an academic scholar through research.	3.91	Extensive
5. Wanting to improve my knowledge through graduate study.	3.98	Extensive
<b>Mean</b>	<b>3.45</b>	<b>Extensive</b>

The mean ratings in the table range from 2.67 to 3.98. In particular, the moderately extensive mean rating of 2.67 for the statement "Thinking that sharing research results with colleagues is self-satisfying" indicates that it is sometimes observed. On the other hand, the extensive mean rating of 3.98 for "Wanting to improve my knowledge through graduate study" indicates that this desire is frequently expressed. Pan and Tang (2014) propose that pursuing higher education can be intellectually interesting and gratifying, providing opportunities for individuals to enhance their grasp of their area and make contributions to the body of knowledge.

➤ *Indicator 4: Research Use*

A category mean of 3.51, classified as extensive, is shown in Table 9, suggesting that employees' interest in graduate education is regularly noted. This is a reflection of the intellectual curiosity, academic pursuits, professional ambitions, and individual objectives that propel people in Koronadal City to continue their education past the

undergraduate level. This study's results are consistent with those of Bolin et al. (2017), who showed that graduate education is highly motivated by personal interest, which encourages students to stay involved and committed to their studies throughout the duration of their academic careers.

Moreover, the average ratings for the various commodities vary from 2.89 to 3.91. In particular, "In my opinion, research should be mandatory for professional training" has a mean grade of 2.89, which is rather less than average and suggests that it is not often demonstrated. In comparison, the statement "Research is important in order to succeed in graduate study" has a mean value of 3.91, which indicates that it is frequently expressed. This bolsters Yoon and Lee's (2012) argument that people's personal interests frequently coincide with their career ambitions, directing them toward graduate programs and research subjects that are relevant to their desired careers. Selecting academic subjects that align with one's interests fosters job fulfillment and professional development.

Table 9. Employees' Interest Towards Graduate Study in Terms of Research Use

Statement	Mean	Descriptive Rating
1. In my opinion research should be mandatory for professional training.	2.89	Moderately Extensive
2. Thinking research is useful to every professional.	3.65	Extensive
3. In my opinion research-oriented thinking plays an important role in everyday life.	3.66	Moderately Extensive
4. Research is important in order to succeed in graduate study.	3.91	Moderately Extensive
5. Conducting research is the basic requirement for graduate study.	3.46	Extensive
<b>Mean</b>	<b>3.51</b>	<b>Extensive</b>

Table 10 demonstrates that Koronadal City employees are highly interested in graduate studies, with a mean score of 3.52. This suggests that working people want to seek master's, doctorate, or professional degrees. This confirms Saini et al. (2020), who argue that graduate degrees help people learn more, develop specialized abilities, and become experts in their subject, improving employment prospects.

Employees' research-oriented graduate study interest had the highest mean score of 3.62, indicating substantial and frequent manifestation. Employees' personal interest in graduate studies had the lowest mean score of 3.45, somewhat extensive and commonly displayed. Graduate education in business, law, healthcare, or engineering can boost job prospects, earnings, and qualifications for higher-level positions, according to Memarpour et al. (2015).

Table 10 Summary on Employees' Interest Towards Graduate Study in Koronadal City

Indicators	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
Research Orientation	3.62	Extensive
Rewards Influence	3.49	Extensive
Personal Interest	3.45	Extensive
Research Use	3.51	Extensive
<b>Overall</b>	<b>3.52</b>	<b>Extensive</b>



**C. Significant Relationship Between Financial Prudence and Employees' Interest Towards Graduate Study in Koronadal City**

Table 11 shows a substantial positive correlation between financial prudence and employees' interest in graduate studies in Koronadal City ( $r = 0.702$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). This

suggests that financial prudence closely correlates with employee interest in graduate education. According to Akosah-Twumasi et al. (2018), financial prudence, including budgeting, saving, and investing, helps employees prepare for graduate school costs like tuition, books, and living expenses.

Table 11 Significant Relationship Between Financial Prudence and Employees' Interest Towards Graduate Study in Koronadal City

Variables	Interest Towards Graduate Study		
	r-value	p-value	Decision
Saving and Investing	0.402*	0.002	Reject $H_0$
Knowledge About Financial Resources	0.775*	0.000	Reject $H_0$
Financial Goals Identification	0.689*	0.000	Reject $H_0$
Cash Flow Optimization	0.578*	0.001	Reject $H_0$
<b>Overall Financial Prudence</b>	<b>0.702*</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>Reject <math>H_0</math></b>
<b>*Significant @ <math>p &lt; 0.05</math></b>			
<b>Legend: Perfect Correlation for <math>r = 1.00</math>; Strong Correlation for <math>0.7 \leq r &lt; 1.00</math>; Moderate Correlation for <math>0.3 \leq r &lt; 0.7</math>; Weak Correlation for <math>0.3 &gt; r &gt; 0.00</math>; No Correlation for <math>r = 0.00</math></b>			

The data also reveals that employees' financial prudence in saving and investing, understanding of financial resources, financial goals identification, and cash flow optimization all affect their interest in graduate studies in Koronadal City. The relationships are ( $r = 0.402$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), ( $r = 0.775$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), ( $r = 0.689$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), and ( $r = 0.578$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Allen and Seaman (2019) say financial discipline helps employees avoid debt and financial pressure. Living within their means, saving for emergencies, and controlling debt can lessen financial stress and worry for employees. Instead of worrying about money, employees may focus on their studies, making graduate school more appealing.

**D. Significance on the Influence of Financial Prudence on the Employees' Interest Towards Graduate Study in Koronadal City**

The influence of financial prudence on Koronadal City employees' graduate study interest was examined using linear regression. In Table 12, saving and investing, financial resource awareness, goal identification, and cash flow optimization are significant predictors ( $F$ -value = 18.207,  $p < 0.05$ ). Financial prudence significantly predicts employee graduate study interest. The modified  $R^2$  value of 0.118 indicates that financial prudence explains 11.80% of employee interest in graduate education, while other factors (88.20%) are not covered in this study.

Table 12 Significance on the Influence of Financial Prudence on the Employees' Interest Towards Graduate Study in Koronadal City

Financial Prudence	Interest Towards Graduate Study			
	B	S.E	p-value	Decisions
Saving and Investing	-.101	.046	.091	Accept H <sub>0</sub>
Knowledge About Financial Resources	.109*	.062	.002	Reject H <sub>0</sub>
Financial Goals Identification	.129*	.068	.000	Reject H <sub>0</sub>
Cash Flow Optimization	-.094	.051	.081	Accept H <sub>0</sub>
R <sup>2</sup> = 0.118				
F-value = 18.207*				
p-value = 0.000				
*Significant @ p<0.05				

The table also reveals that financial prudence domains strongly influence employees' graduate study interest. Each unit rise in financial prudence increases employees' interest in graduate studies by 0.109 and 0.129, respectively. This rejects the null hypothesis that no financial prudence areas significantly affect Koronadal City employees' graduate study interest. Polanin et al. (2018) agree that financial prudence gives employees more financial flexibility, allowing them to pursue graduate school without immediate financial concerns. This flexibility lets employees make long-term decisions rather than short-term financial ones.

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

##### A. Conclusions

Several conclusions were drawn from the findings of this inquiry.

First, Koronadal City LGU employees were financially prudent. Saving and investing prudence, financial resource understanding, financial goals identification, and cash flow optimization were also assessed as extensive. To ensure long-term financial security, employees often budget, save, invest, and manage debt wisely.

Second, Koronadal City LGU employees showed strong interest in graduate school. Graduate study interest in research orientation, rewards influence, personal interest, and research utilization was also highly rated. This suggests that working people want to seek master's, doctorate, or professional degrees.

Third, Financial responsibility boosts Koronadal City LGU employees' graduate study desire. Financial prudence improves employee interest in graduate school. Financial prudence may help employees avoid debt and financial stress. Living within their means, saving for emergencies, and controlling debt can lessen financial stress and worry for employees.

Finally, Financial prudence, especially understanding of financial resources and financial goals, strongly influences Koronadal City employees' graduate study interest. This suggests that financial prudence greatly influences employees' graduate study interest. Financial responsibility gives workers more financial independence. Employees can develop a financial cushion for graduate school by prioritizing savings and investments.

##### B. Recommendations

Initiatives to encourage financial awareness and prudence among staff members should be launched by the Local Government Unit (LGU). These could include seminars, workshops, and instructional materials that are specifically designed to address the financial requirements and obstacles of graduate studies. To support employees interested in graduate studies, the LGU could also set up scholarship programs, tuition reimbursement plans, and low-interest loan choices. This would lower financial obstacles and encourage educational attainment.

To assist staff members in creating individualized financial plans that complement their academic objectives and aspirations, heads of offices ought to provide access to financial planning tools, resources, and counseling services. In order to accommodate employees' academic calendars and support their pursuit of graduate school while preserving employment, they could also look into flexible work arrangements, such as part-time employment or telecommuting opportunities.

In order to create a strong financial foundation that supports their desires for education and lessens their dependency on loan financing for graduate studies, employees should develop disciplined financial habits, such as budgeting, saving, and investing. To reduce the financial burden of graduate school, employees should also aggressively look for scholarships, grants, and employer-sponsored tuition aid programs.

Lastly, although financial prudence only accounted for 11.80% of the overall variability, researchers should continue examining the variables that affect employees' interest in graduate education. Researchers should also look into the obstacles and financial difficulties that prevent workers from going to graduate school and consider ways to lower these obstacles through financial education, policy changes, and assistance initiatives.

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