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TEACHERS' GRIT AND SELF-EFFICACY TOWARDS LEARNERS' ABSORPTIVE CAPACITY IN LEARNING

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ABSTRACT

This quantitative study examined the level of teachers' grit and self-efficacy and their relationship to and influence on learners' absorptive capacity in learning within selected district schools in Arakan East, Arakan West, and Arakan North, Division of North Cotabato, for School Year 2025–2026. Using a descriptive-correlational design, 270 teachers and 270 learners were surveyed through validated researcher-made questionnaires (Cronbach's alpha: .961, .980, .977). Data were analyzed using weighted mean, Spearman's rank-order correlation, and multiple linear regression. Findings revealed very high levels of teachers' grit (WM=4.42), with passion and commitment highest (WM=4.45) and consistency of interest lowest (WM=4.36). Teachers' self-efficacy was also very high (WM=4.46), with efficacy growth highest (WM=4.53) and self-confidence lowest (WM=4.35). Learners demonstrated very high absorptive capacity (WM=4.53), with knowledge acquisition and comprehension highest (WM=4.57). Despite these high individual scores, Spearman's rho analysis revealed no statistically significant relationship between any dimension of teachers' grit or self-efficacy and any dimension of learners' absorptive capacity (all $p>.05$). Multiple regression analysis confirmed that teachers' self-efficacy did not significantly predict learners' absorptive capacity across all three dimensions (R^2 range: 0.002–0.011, all F values non-significant). These findings reject the assumption that internal teacher traits automatically translate into measurable student outcomes and underscore the mediating role of systemic factors and active instructional scaffolding.

KEYWORDS: *Teachers' Grit, Self-Efficacy, Absorptive Capacity, Systemic Friction, Descriptive-Correlational, Knowledge Acquisition, North Cotabato.*

INTRODUCTION

Teachers' grit and self-efficacy are widely recognized as central psychological resources in effective teaching. When educators stay persistent and believe in their ability to teach, learners become more engaged and adaptive in their learning processes (Zhang & Liu, 2024). Yet, the relationship between teachers' internal motivational resources and students' actual cognitive learning outcomes remains complex and context-dependent.

In the Philippines, educators often work under demanding conditions—large class sizes, insufficient learning materials, and changing curricular expectations—that test both their endurance and sense of competence (Villanueva & Manalo, 2025). Local studies in North Cotabato reveal that limited professional development programs leave teachers with few tools to build resilience, affecting how effectively they can nurture students' learning absorption (Nagdaparan & Lumapenet, 2025). Despite growing interest in teacher grit and self-efficacy, their combined influence on students' absorptive capacity—encompassing knowledge acquisition, transformation, and retention—remains largely underexplored in the Philippine context. This study addressed that gap by quantitatively examining the relationships and influence between these constructs.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

A descriptive-correlational design (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) was employed to examine the relationship and influence between teachers' grit, teachers' self-efficacy, and learners' absorptive capacity in learning without experimental manipulation.

Participants

Using the Raosoft sample size calculator (5% margin of error, 95% confidence level), 270 teachers and 270 matched learners were selected from three district schools in Arakan Municipality: Arakan East (teachers=88, learners=88), Arakan North (teachers=59, learners=59), and Arakan West (teachers=123, learners=123). Teacher inclusion required five or more years of public school service.

Research Instrument

Three validated researcher-made questionnaires assessed: (1) Teachers' Grit Scale (α=.961) across three dimensions—consistency of interest, passion and commitment, and goal orientation; (2) Teachers' Self-Efficacy Scale (α=.980) across three dimensions—self-confidence, social persuasion, and efficacy growth; and (3) Learners' Absorptive Capacity Scale (α=.977) across three dimensions—knowledge acquisition and comprehension, knowledge transformation and application, and knowledge retention and reflection. All items used a 5-point Likert scale (1=Very Low to 5=Very High).

Statistical Analysis

Weighted means described the levels of all variables. Spearman's rank-order correlation (Spearman, 2001) examined the significance and direction of relationships between teacher variables and learner outcomes. Multiple linear regression (Galo, 2015) determined the predictive influence of teachers' self-efficacy dimensions on each learner absorptive capacity dimension.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Level of Teachers' Grit

All three grit dimensions were rated very high. Passion and commitment registered the highest mean (WM=4.45), driven by teachers' love for teaching and commitment to igniting student enthusiasm. Goal orientation followed closely (WM=4.44), reflecting purposeful professional development pursuit. Consistency of interest scored the lowest (WM=4.36), though still very high—suggesting that while teachers' sustain their core dedication, the most observable form of grit is their emotional investment in the learning journey.

Table 1. Level of Teachers' Grit.

Teachers' Grit Dimension	Weighted Mean	Description
Consistency of Interest	4.36	Very High
Passion and Commitment	4.45	Very High
Goal Orientation	4.44	Very High
Overall	4.42	Very High

Level of Teachers' Self-Efficacy

All three self-efficacy dimensions were very high. Efficacy growth was highest (WM=4.53), driven by stress management (M=4.60 for remaining confident by managing stress while

teaching) and verbal support from peers and mentors. Social persuasion (WM=4.49) reflected teachers' deep reliance on encouragement from students, colleagues, and administrators. Self-confidence (WM=4.35) was lowest but remained very high, built primarily on mastery of previous challenges.

Table 2. Level of Teachers' Self-Efficacy.

Self-Efficacy Dimension	Weighted Mean	Description
Self-Confidence	4.35	Very High
Social Persuasion	4.49	Very High
Efficacy Growth	4.53	Very High
Overall	4.46	Very High

Level of Learners' Absorptive Capacity

All three absorptive capacity dimensions were very high. Knowledge acquisition and comprehension led (WM=4.57), with learners rating their ability to show strong overall comprehension of lesson content highest (M=4.54). Knowledge transformation and application (WM=4.51) and knowledge retention and reflection (WM=4.50) followed. The overall mean of 4.53 confirms that learners in the study setting possess excellent capacity to absorb, apply, and sustain knowledge.

Table 3. Level of Learners' Absorptive Capacity in Learning.

Absorptive Capacity Dimension	Weighted Mean	Description
Knowledge Acquisition and Comprehension	4.57	Very High
Knowledge Transformation and Application	4.51	Very High
Knowledge Retention and Reflection	4.50	Very High
Overall	4.53	Very High

Relationship between Teachers' Grit and Learners' Absorptive Capacity

Spearman's rho analysis revealed no statistically significant relationship between any dimension of teachers' grit and any dimension of learners' absorptive capacity (all $p>.05$). Correlation coefficients were negligible, ranging from -0.095 to 0.103. The null hypothesis is accepted. This finding suggests that teachers' internal perseverance does not automatically reach learners as a measurable cognitive outcome—a phenomenon explained by "systemic friction" (administrative overload, failing technology, resource gaps) that diverts grit toward professional survival rather than instructional impact. Santos and Rivera (2024) emphasize

that teacher perseverance only enhances student engagement when paired with active scaffolding and modeled persistence.

Table 4. Spearman's Rho: Teachers' Grit and Learners' Absorptive Capacity.

Grit Dimension	Knowledge Acquisition (r)	Transformation (r)	Retention (r)
Consistency of Interest	-0.006 (p=.923)	0.103 (p=.092)	-0.016 (p=.797)
Passion and Commitment	-0.095 (p=.121)	0.033 (p=.587)	-0.022 (p=.721)
Goal Orientation	0.001 (p=.989)	-0.086 (p=.156)	-0.012 (p=.841)

None significant at p>.05

Relationship and Influence of Teachers' Self-Efficacy on Learners' Absorptive Capacity

Similarly, no statistically significant relationship was found between any self-efficacy dimension and any absorptive capacity dimension (all p>.05). Multiple regression analysis confirmed that teachers' self-efficacy does not significantly predict learners' knowledge acquisition (R^2=0.011, F=0.991, p=.398), knowledge transformation (R^2=0.008, F=0.705, p=.550), or knowledge retention (R^2=0.002, F=0.206, p=.892). The null hypothesis is accepted for both relationships and influence. These results indicate that even very high teacher confidence cannot bridge the gap to student learning outcomes without active instructional scaffolding and institutional support. Ahmad and Zafar (2023) found that while high efficacy correlates with lower teacher stress, it does not guarantee instructional success if the environment is characterized by administrative overload.

Table 5. Regression: Self-Efficacy Predicting Absorptive Capacity.

SRL Outcome	R^2	F-Value	p-value	Decision
Knowledge Acquisition & Comprehension	0.011	0.991	.398	Accept H_0
Knowledge Transformation & Application	0.008	0.705	.550	Accept H_0
Knowledge Retention & Reflection	0.002	0.206	.892	Accept H_0

All non-significant at p>.05

The acceptance of all null hypotheses represents the study's most significant and paradoxical finding: despite exceptional levels of teacher grit and self-efficacy, and equally exceptional levels of student absorptive capacity, there is no direct statistical bridge between them. This disconnect aligns with Shao et al. (2025), who argue that learner absorptive capacity is an autonomous cognitive capability mediated by the student's own psychological readiness—not solely by external teacher attributes.

CONCLUSION

This study confirms that teachers in Arakan districts possess very high levels of grit and self-efficacy, and that learners demonstrate very high absorptive capacity. However, no statistically significant relationship or predictive influence was found between any teacher trait and any student learning outcome. This paradoxical finding does not diminish the value of teacher grit and self-efficacy; rather, it establishes that these internal dispositions are necessary but not sufficient conditions for student learning outcomes. Systemic barriers—administrative overload, resource deficiencies, scheduling pressures—act as friction that prevents teacher grit from reaching learners. For teacher traits to improve absorptive capacity, they must be paired with active instructional scaffolding, institutional support, and the removal of systemic friction. Policymakers and school leaders should prioritize streamlining administrative burdens, ensuring access to reliable instructional resources, and institutionalizing peer support networks that enable teachers to translate their high grit and efficacy into direct instructional impact.

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