

Expanded Career Progression as a Framework for Teacher Professional Growth

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the implementation of the Expanded Career Progression (ECP) system and its relationship to teacher professional growth among school leaders and teachers. Specifically, the study described the respondents' profile in terms of age, gender, civil status, highest educational attainment, years in service, and highest position or rank. It also assessed the level of implementation of Expanded Career Progression in terms of career progression awareness and orientation, access to PPST-aligned professional development, leadership and mentoring opportunities, and institutional support and recognition mechanisms. Furthermore, the study assessed the level of teacher professional growth in instructional competence, professional collaboration, mentoring and coaching engagement, and instructional leadership practices. A quantitative descriptive-correlational research design was employed using survey questionnaires administered to school leaders and teachers. Data were analyzed using weighted mean, standard deviation, and Pearson product-moment correlation. The findings revealed that the implementation of Expanded Career Progression was evident across all indicators, while teacher professional growth was very high across all domains. Institutional support and recognition mechanisms received the highest rating among the components of career progression, while mentoring and coaching engagement received the lowest rating among the professional growth domains, though it was still interpreted as very high. The results further indicated a significant relationship between the implementation of Expanded Career Progression and teacher professional growth, suggesting that effective career progression initiatives contribute to improvements in instructional competence, collaboration, mentoring engagement, and instructional leadership practices. However, respondents identified challenges, including time constraints, heavy workloads, and complex documentation requirements, that may hinder participation in career advancement activities. The study concludes that strengthening career progression programs and addressing implementation challenges may further enhance teachers' professional development and support continuous improvement in educational practices.

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KEYWORDS: Doctor of Education, descriptive study, Expanded Career Progression, teacher professional growth, instructional competence, professional collaboration, instructional leadership, mentoring and coaching, Mandaue City.

1. Rationale of the Study

Teacher career progression systems have become central to improving teacher quality worldwide. Expanded frameworks allow for professional growth, leadership, and competency development beyond traditional promotions (OECD, 2022). These systems recognize advancement through instructional, mentoring, and leadership roles. Well-defined pathways enhance motivation, retention, and

instructional effectiveness, positively influencing student learning (Darling-Hammond et al., 2021).

Expanded career progression models introduce differentiated roles, such as master teachers, instructional coaches, and teacher leaders. These roles let experienced teachers share expertise, mentor peers, and lead innovation while teaching (UNESCO,

2023). When teachers see clear advancement aligned with standards, they engage more in professional development and collaboration (Schleicher, 2022). Structured career ladders are thus vital for strengthening instructional leadership in schools.

In the Philippine context, teacher career progression has been strengthened through policy reforms aligned with the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) and the Expanded Career Progression System for Public School Teachers. The Department of Education institutionalized career stages-Beginning, Proficient, Highly Proficient, and Distinguished-to provide a competency-based progression pathway (DepEd, 2022). This system aims to recognize teachers' expertise, leadership capacity, and instructional excellence while providing opportunities for advancement without requiring them to leave classroom teaching. Such reforms reflect national efforts to professionalize teaching and improve instructional quality across basic education.

Recent Philippine studies affirm that expanded career progression positively influences teachers' professional growth and instructional practices. For instance, Ramos and Castillo (2023) found that competency-based promotion systems aligned with PPST standards enhance teachers' motivation for continuous learning and participation in leadership. Similarly, Villanueva et al. (2022) reported that teachers occupying advanced career stages demonstrate stronger mentoring practices and collaborative engagement within schools. However, these studies largely focus on general teacher development and rarely examine localized implementation across specific districts or divisions.

In Region VII (Central Visayas), the Department of Education promotes career progression through capacity-building, mentoring, and leadership development aligned with PPST. Regional efforts strengthen instructional leadership and develop highly proficient teachers for professional learning communities (DepEd Region VII, 2023). Despite these efforts, little empirical research explores how career progression is experienced at the district level, especially in elementary schools.

Mandaue City Division, a highly urbanized area, has launched professional development and promotion initiatives for teachers. The division deploys master teachers, runs mentoring programs, and provides leadership opportunities through Learning Action Cells (LACs). Nevertheless, informal disparities in promotion access, support, and recognition exist across districts. This highlights the need to examine implementation and perceptions of career progression

in specific contexts like North District elementary schools.

In North District elementary schools, teachers serve diverse students in urban and semi-urban settings. Many show competencies for higher PPST stages, but progression is shaped by plantilla availability, leadership, and access to development and mentoring. Teachers often take on grade leadership, LAC facilitation, and mentoring without formal recognition. This can affect motivation, identity, and career advancement.

Moreover, expanded career progression is expected to strengthen instructional leadership and collaborative professional culture within schools. However, limited empirical evidence exists on how elementary teachers in the North District perceive the fairness, accessibility, and effectiveness of these career pathways. Understanding these perceptions is essential because teachers' engagement in professional growth and leadership roles is strongly linked to improvements in student learning and school effectiveness (Santiago & Morales, 2024).

Despite supportive national and regional policies (DepEd, 2022; DepEd Region VII, 2023), how these frameworks translate into actual teacher career progression in elementary schools remains underexplored. Most notably, the lived realities of career progression and professional recognition within divisions such as Mandaue City remain poorly understood.

This study, titled "Expanded Career Progression for Teachers in North District Elementary Schools, Division of Mandaue City," addresses a research gap by examining how expanded career pathways are implemented, the opportunities provided, and teachers' perceptions of them. Key recommendations include establishing transparent progression criteria, increasing access to professional development, and formally recognizing expanded roles such as grade leadership and mentoring. By focusing on empirical insights within broader contexts, the study aims to guide educational leaders and policymakers in creating equitable, meaningful advancement systems that ultimately support sustainable teacher leadership and improved instruction in Mandaue City.

Theoretical Background

The study considers Expanded Career Progression as a Framework for Teacher Occupational Improvement in North District Elementary Schools. It is anchored in several theories on career development, career advancement, leadership development, and motivation inside educational organizations. These theories explain how structured career progression

systems can improve teacher competence, leadership, and engagement by informing the design and

objectives of the framework.

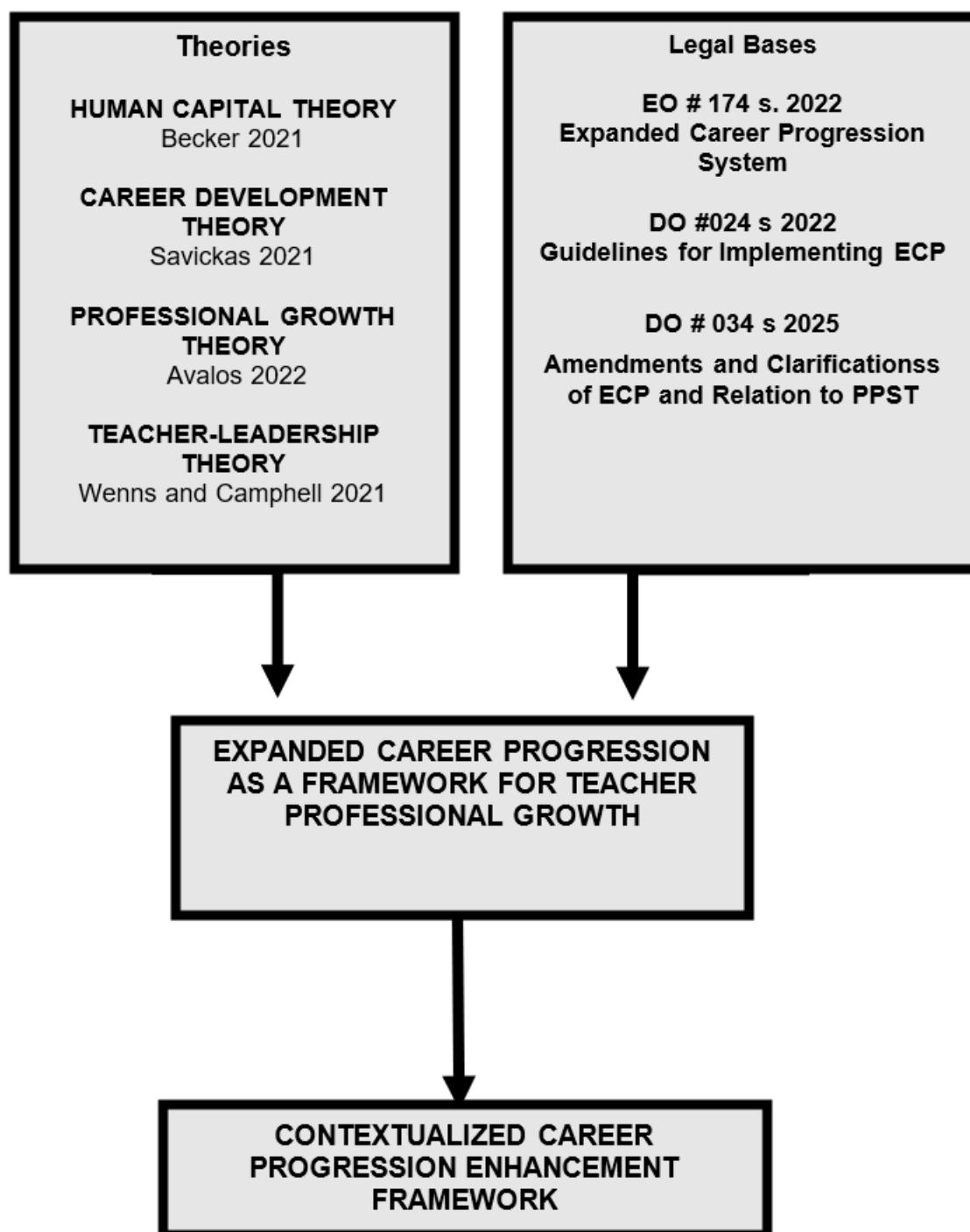


Figure 1 Theoretical Framework

One foundational theory underpinning Expanded Career Progression is Human Capital Theory, which claims that investment in education, training, and professional development increases individuals' productivity and professional growth prospects (Becker, 2021). In the context of teaching, career progression systems such as ECP recognize accumulated competencies and expertise, thereby encouraging teachers to invest in consistent learning and skill development. The Expanded Career Progression System in the Philippines similarly links advancement to professional standards and competencies, strengthening the human capital

perspective that teacher quality improves by structured career development pathways.

Another relevant theory is Career Development Theory, particularly the contemporary perspective that careers evolve through stages influenced by individual goals, organizational structures, and surrounding factors. This theory illustrates how teachers' career paths can be shaped and advanced by structured systems, such as the Expanded Career Progression framework. competencies, experiences, and opportunities (Savickas, 2021). Expanded Career Progression reflects this theory by establishing sequential career stages and role differentiation,

permitting teachers to progress through teaching and leadership pathways without leaving classroom practice. The Philippine ECP framework institutionalizes this staged advancement through additional teaching ranks and career lines.

The study is also supported by Career Development Theory, which emphasizes that professional competence develops via reflective practice, mentoring, and joint learning (Avalos, 2022). Expanded career progression promotes mentoring roles, instructional leadership, and joint engagement among teachers, in line with this theory's assertion that career development is socially mediated and experience-based. Studies on ECP implementation likewise highlight mentoring and leadership engagement as outcomes of career progression structures (Endencia, 2025).

Closely related is Teacher Leadership Theory, which views teachers as leaders who influence instructional improvement and school development beyond classroom teaching (Wenner & Campbell, 2021). Expanded Career Progression institutionalizes teacher leadership roles, such as Master Teachers and instructional mentors, enabling experienced teachers to guide peers while remaining in teaching positions. The Philippine ECP policy explicitly created higher-level teaching positions to strengthen instructional leadership within schools.

The framework is further grounded in Motivation Theory, particularly Self-Determination Theory, which proposes that autonomy, competence, and recognition enhance intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2021). Career progression systems increase teachers' sense of competence and recognition through promotion and role expansion. Philippine policy discussion on ECP likewise highlights that clearer career pathways improve teacher motivation and retention in the profession.

Another theoretical anchor is Organizational Career Path Theory, which explains how structured career ladders within institutions guide employee advancement and performance (Baruch & Sullivan, 2022). Expanded Career Progression functions as an organizational career pathway within the Department of Education, defining teaching and administrative tracks and the criteria for promotion. Such structured pathways have been shown to improve job satisfaction and professional commitment in educators.

The study also draws on Transformational Leadership Theory, which posits that leadership roles authorize individuals to effect organizational change and professional development (Bass & Riggio, 2021).

ECP promotes transformational teacher leadership by enabling highly proficient teachers to mentor colleagues and lead professional learning communities. This is consistent with DepEd's intent to strengthen instructional leadership through career progression structures.

Another relevant perspective is Competency-Focused Professional Development Theory, which states that professional advancement should be based on demonstrated competencies rather than tenure (Mulder, 2021). Expanded Career Progression in the Philippines explicitly links promotion to professional standards, such as PPST and PPSSH, reflecting competency-based advancement principles.

The framework is further supported by Adult Learning Theory (Andragogy), which emphasizes that adults learn best through self-directed, experience-based, and goal-oriented professional learning (Knowles et al., 2022). Career progression encourages teachers to pursue relevant professional learning aligned with career goals and competencies, thereby operationalizing adult learning principles within professional development systems.

The Expanded Career Progression (ECP) system within education is grounded in contemporary understandings of teacher career development as a dynamic, developmental process that evolves across career stages. One relevant theoretical anchor is the Teacher Career Cycle Theory, which explains how teachers move through phases such as induction, competence building, enthusiasm and growth, career frustration, stability, and leadership renewal. Recent scholarship emphasizes that career progression systems must recognize those evolving professional needs and provide differentiated pathways for advancement, mentoring, and leadership roles (Day & Gu, 2022). Within the Philippine ECP framework, this perspective supports structured advancement from Teacher I to Master Teacher and School Head positions, acknowledging that teachers' competencies, motivations, and contributions change over time and therefore require stage-appropriate professional development and recognition mechanisms.

Contemporary extensions of Teacher Career Cycle Theory also point out the importance of career-long professional identity formation. According to Avalos and Flores (2021), teacher career progression should integrate continuous learning, reflective practice, and opportunities for instructional leadership to sustain motivation and productivity throughout career stages. This is consistent with DepEd's Expanded Career Progression policy direction, which promotes vertical and horizontal career pathways (teaching, leadership,

and specialist tracks). The theory suggests that when teachers perceive clear, attainable career stages supported by competency standards and professional learning opportunities, they are more likely to continue committed to the profession and pursue excellence. Thus, ECP operationalizes the career cycle concept by institutionalizing structured promotion routes aligned with professional standards, such as the PPST.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, revisited in modern organizational and educational research, further explains teacher motivation within career progression systems. Recent examinations affirm that employees, including teachers, seek fulfillment of physiological, safety, belongingness, esteem, and self-actualization needs in the workplace (Taormina & Gao, 2021). In the context of ECP, early-career teachers primarily pursue security needs such as stable employment, fair compensation, and caring supervision. As they advance, social belonging as well as professional recognition become salient, while higher-level positions such as Master Teacher or School Head address esteem and self-actualization needs through leadership, influence, and professional autonomy. Hence, the Expanded Career Progression structure corresponds with Maslow's layered motivational framework by providing progressively meaningful roles and rewards.

Recent educational leadership literature also integrates Maslow's theory with career development models, noting that career advancement opportunities enhance teachers' intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction. Collie (2022) explains that when teachers experience competence, autonomy, and recognition-needs closely aligned with Maslow's esteem and self-actualization levels-they demonstrate stronger engagement, instructional innovation, and devotion to school improvement. The ECP system expresses this idea by offering recognition through rank promotion, differentiated roles, and leadership opportunities without requiring teachers to leave classroom practice. This conceptual linkage suggests that career progression is not simply administrative promotion but a motivational mechanism that sustains professional fulfillment and instructional quality.

Overall, the conceptual basis of the Expanded Career Progression system integrates Teacher Career Cycle Theory and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs to explain how structured career pathways support teacher development and motivation across professional stages. Contemporary studies affirm that career-stage-responsive professional development and recognition systems improve teacher retention, effectiveness, and leadership capacity (Day & Gu, 2022; Collie, 2022).

In the Philippine education context, ECP operationalizes these theories by aligning promotion with competency standards, professional learning, and leadership roles, thereby facilitating teachers' progression from novice practitioners to expert educators and instructional leaders while meeting evolving psychological and professional needs.

Finally, Systems Theory in Education offers a holistic lens for understanding career progression within an interconnected educational system encompassing policy, leadership, professional development, and organizational support (Banathy, 2021). Expanded Career Progression is a systemic reform that links teacher standards, promotion structures, and institutional support to improve overall instructional quality. The Philippine ECP policy integrates multiple agencies, such as DepEd, DBM, CSC, and PRC, in implementing career advancement pathways, showing a systems-based approach.

Collectively, these theories explain how structured career progression systems improve teacher career development through competency development, leadership opportunities, motivation, and institutional support. They provide the theoretical basis for examining Expanded Career Progression as a framework for teacher progression in North District Elementary Schools.

The Expanded Career Progression System for teachers in the Philippines is grounded in several recent national policies and legal mandates that institutionalize teacher professional advancement and career development.

The principal legal basis of ECP is Executive Order No. 174, s. 2022, which formally established the Expanded Career Progression System for public school teachers. The order created additional teaching positions, defined dual career pathways (teaching and administration), and linked promotion to professional standards. Its objective is to promote teachers' career growth and skill enhancement within the public education system.

Supporting the implementation of EO 174 is DepEd Order No. 024, s. 2025, which provides the official guidelines for implementing the Expanded Career Progression System for teachers and school heads. The policy outlines qualification standards, assessment procedures, and mechanisms to align career stages and operationalize career progression across schools.

Further strengthening ECP implementation is DepEd Order No. 034, s. 2025, which introduced amendments and clarifications to ensure uniform and responsive implementation of the career progression

system across divisions and regions. This directive addresses transition processes, record requirements, and promotion procedures for teachers.

The ECP policy is also anchored in the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST), which have been institutionalized through national teacher development reforms. PPST defines career stages and competencies guiding teacher progression and career development. The ECP system explicitly links advancement to these professional standards.

Additionally, ECP is consistent with the Constitution of the Philippines (Article XIV, Section 5) and the long-standing Magna Carta for Public School Teachers (RA 4670), which mandates that the State promote teachers' professional advancement and improve their career prospects. EO 174 explicitly reiterates these legal foundations in establishing the new career progression system.

Recent national implementation initiatives additionally reinforce the legal framework of ECP. DepEd has accelerated promotions and created new teaching positions under the system to address career stagnation and strengthen teacher development nationwide.

THE PROBLEM

Statement of the Problem

This research focused on Expanded Career Progression as a framework for enhancing teachers' professional growth in North District Elementary Schools in the Division of Mandaue City during School Year 2025–2026, with the aim of developing a Contextualized Career Progression Enhancement Framework.

Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of the respondent groups in terms of:
 - 1.1. school leaders'
 - 1.1.1. age and gender,
 - 1.1.2. highest educational attainment,
 - 1.1.3. length of teaching experience,
 - 1.1.4. current position/rank, and
 - 1.1.5. number of professional development trainings attended,
 - 1.2. teachers'
 - 1.2.1. age and gender,
 - 1.2.2. highest educational attainment,
 - 1.2.3. length of teaching experience,
 - 1.2.4. current position/rank, and
 - 1.2.5. professional development trainings attended?

2. As perceived by the respondent groups, what is the level of implementation of Expanded Career Progression (ECP) in terms of:
 - 2.1. career progression awareness and orientation,
 - 2.2. access to PPST-aligned professional development,
 - 2.3. leadership and mentoring opportunities, and
 - 2.4. institutional support and recognition mechanisms?
3. As perceived by the respondent groups, what is the level of teacher professional growth in terms of:
 - 3.1. instructional competence,
 - 3.2. professional collaboration,
 - 3.3. mentoring and coaching engagement, and
 - 3.4. instructional leadership practices?
4. Is there a significant relationship between Expanded Career Progression implementation and teacher professional growth?
5. What challenges do the respondent groups encounter in relation to Expanded Career Progression implementation?
6. Based on the findings, what Contextualized Career Progression Enhancement Framework can be developed?

Null Hypotheses

H01: There is no significant relationship between Expanded Career Progression implementation and teacher professional growth.

Significance of the Study

The objective of this study is to examine Expanded Career Progression (ECP) as a framework for enhancing teacher professional growth in North District Elementary Schools in the Division of Mandaue City and to develop a Contextualized Career Progression Enhancement Framework. The findings of this study are beneficial to the following groups:

Department of Education (DepEd). The results of this study support DepEd's implementation of the Expanded Career Progression System by providing empirical evidence on its effectiveness in promoting teacher professional growth at the elementary level. The proposed Contextualized Career Progression Enhancement Framework may served as a reference for strengthening PPST-aligned career advancement, mentoring structures, and leadership development programs across schools. The study further supports DepEd's initiatives under EO 174 s. 2022 and related policies by identifying strategies to improved teacher progression pathways, instructional leadership, and

professional competence, aligned with the MATATAG agenda.

Education Policymakers. The findings provided policymakers with localized evidence on how career progression policies operate within district school contexts. The study highlights the importance of equitable access to promotion opportunities, professional development, and leadership roles in strengthening teacher motivation and retention. Policymakers may use the results to refine guidelines, resource allocation, and implementation mechanisms for the Expanded Career Progression System across divisions and regions, ensuring the consistency and effectiveness of teacher advancement structures.

Curriculum and Professional Development Planners. This study was significant for planners of teacher development programs because it identifies the professional growth needs, competencies, and leadership capacities required at different career stages. The findings provided guidance in designing PPST-aligned training pathways, mentoring programs, and leadership development initiatives that support teachers' progression from proficient to highly proficient levels. The proposed framework offered a structured approach to integrating career progression with school-based professional learning systems such as Learning Action Cells, coaching, and mentoring programs.

School Administrators. School heads and instructional leaders may benefit from the study by gaining a clearer understanding of how Expanded Career Progression can be operationalized within school contexts. The findings provided administrators with strategies to strengthen mentoring structures, distribute leadership roles, and support teachers' professional advancement. The framework may also serve as a guide in monitoring teacher growth, recognizing leadership contributions, and creating supportive environments that foster career development and instructional excellence in schools.

Teachers. Teachers were direct beneficiaries of the study, as it clarified career progression pathways, expectations, and advancement opportunities within the profession. The findings increased teachers' awareness of PPST career stages, leadership roles, and professional development requirements needed for promotion. The proposed framework supported teachers in planning their career growth, engaging in mentoring and leadership activities, and enhancing instructional competence. Ultimately, it encouraged teachers to actively pursue professional advancement and leadership participation within their schools.

Learners. Although the study focuses on teachers, learners benefit indirectly through improved instructional quality and stronger teacher leadership. Teachers who advance professionally and engage in mentoring and collaboration are better equipped to deliver effective instruction and support diverse learners. Enhanced teacher competence and leadership contribute to improved learning environments and academic outcomes for elementary pupils in North District schools.

Parents and Guardians. Parents and guardians benefit from the study through improved teaching and learning for their children. Strengthened teacher competence and leadership ensured more effective instruction, classroom management, and learner support. As teachers advance professionally, parents gain confidence that schools are staffed with competent, continuously developing educators committed to learners' success.

Educational Stakeholders and Community. The broader educational community, including local education stakeholders and the Division of Mandaue City, benefits from a strengthened teacher career progression system that promotes professional excellence and leadership development. The study supports sustainable teacher development and retention within the division, thereby improving school performance and community trust in public education. A strong teaching workforce ultimately supports the educational development of the locality.

Future Researchers. This study provided empirical data and a localized framework for implementing Expanded Career Progression in elementary education. It serves as a reference for future researchers interested in teacher career pathways, professional growth, instructional leadership, and the implementation of education policy. The proposed Contextualized Career Progression Enhancement Framework may be tested, validated, or expanded in other districts, divisions, or educational settings.

THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section discusses the research methodology employed in the study. It encompassed the employed methodology, the study's progression, the research setting, the participants, the research instruments, the data collection procedures, the statistical analysis, the scoring methods, and the operational definitions of terms.

Design

This study utilized a quantitative descriptive–correlational research design to examine Expanded Career Progression (ECP) as a framework for teacher professional growth in North District Elementary

Schools in the Division of Mandaue City and to develop a Contextualized Career Progression Enhancement Framework. Creswell and Creswell (2021) state that descriptive–correlational designs are appropriate in educational research when the purpose was to describe current conditions and determine relationships among variables without manipulating them. This design enabled the researcher to determine the extent of implementation of Expanded Career Progression, assess teachers' professional growth, and systematically and objectively examine the relationships among these variables.

The respondents in the study comprised elementary school teachers and school leaders from North District public schools in the Division of Mandaue City. Teachers at different career stages and plantilla positions participate in the study to ensure representation of diverse professional experiences and career progression levels. Their participation provides data on awareness, implementation, and experiences related to Expanded Career Progression and professional growth within the district context.

For data collection, the study employed a structured, validated survey questionnaire. The instrument collects data on teachers' demographic profiles, the extent of Expanded Career Progression implementation, and indicators of professional growth, including instructional competence, mentoring engagement, collaboration, and leadership practices. Ary et al. (2020) explain that survey questionnaires are effective tools in descriptive research for obtaining standardized data on perceptions, practices, and existing conditions across respondent groups. The structured instrument allowed the researcher to quantify teacher experiences related to career progression and professional development.

The instrument undergoes content validation by experts in educational leadership, teacher development, and the implementation of Expanded Career Progression to ensure clarity, relevance, and alignment with PPST career stages and DepEd policies. Reliability testing is conducted prior to full administration to establish the scale's internal consistency. This process ensures that the collected data accurately reflects teachers' experiences and perceptions regarding career progression and professional growth.

Data were collected by administering questionnaires to teachers across elementary schools in the North District. The responses were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, to assess the extent of implementation of Expanded Career Progression and teacher professional growth. Inferential statistics, particularly Pearson product–moment correlation, are used to examine the relationship between Expanded Career Progression and teacher professional growth variables.

This research design was appropriate for the North District context because it generates empirical evidence on how Expanded Career Progression is implemented and experienced by teachers within actual school environments. The findings served as the basis for developing a Contextualized Career Progression Enhancement Framework that is responsive to the professional growth needs, leadership structures, and realities of career advancement for elementary teachers in the Division of Mandaue City.

Flow of the Study

This study began by identifying the primary research issue: the need to strengthen teachers' professional growth through the effective implementation the Expanded Career Progression (ECP) system in North District Elementary Schools in the Division of Mandaue City. It proceeds by establishing a theoretical and conceptual framework grounded in Human Capital Theory, Career Development Theory, Professional Growth Theory, Teacher Leadership Theory, and Self-Determination Theory, as well as the Department of Education (DepEd) policies on Expanded Career Progression and the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST). This framework emphasized the significance of structured career progression pathways, leadership opportunities, and professional development mechanisms as drivers of sustained teacher competence and advancement. Guided by this foundation, a systematic set of research questions was formulated to examine the level of ECP implementation, teacher professional growth, their relationship, and the development of a Contextualized Career Progression Enhancement Framework.

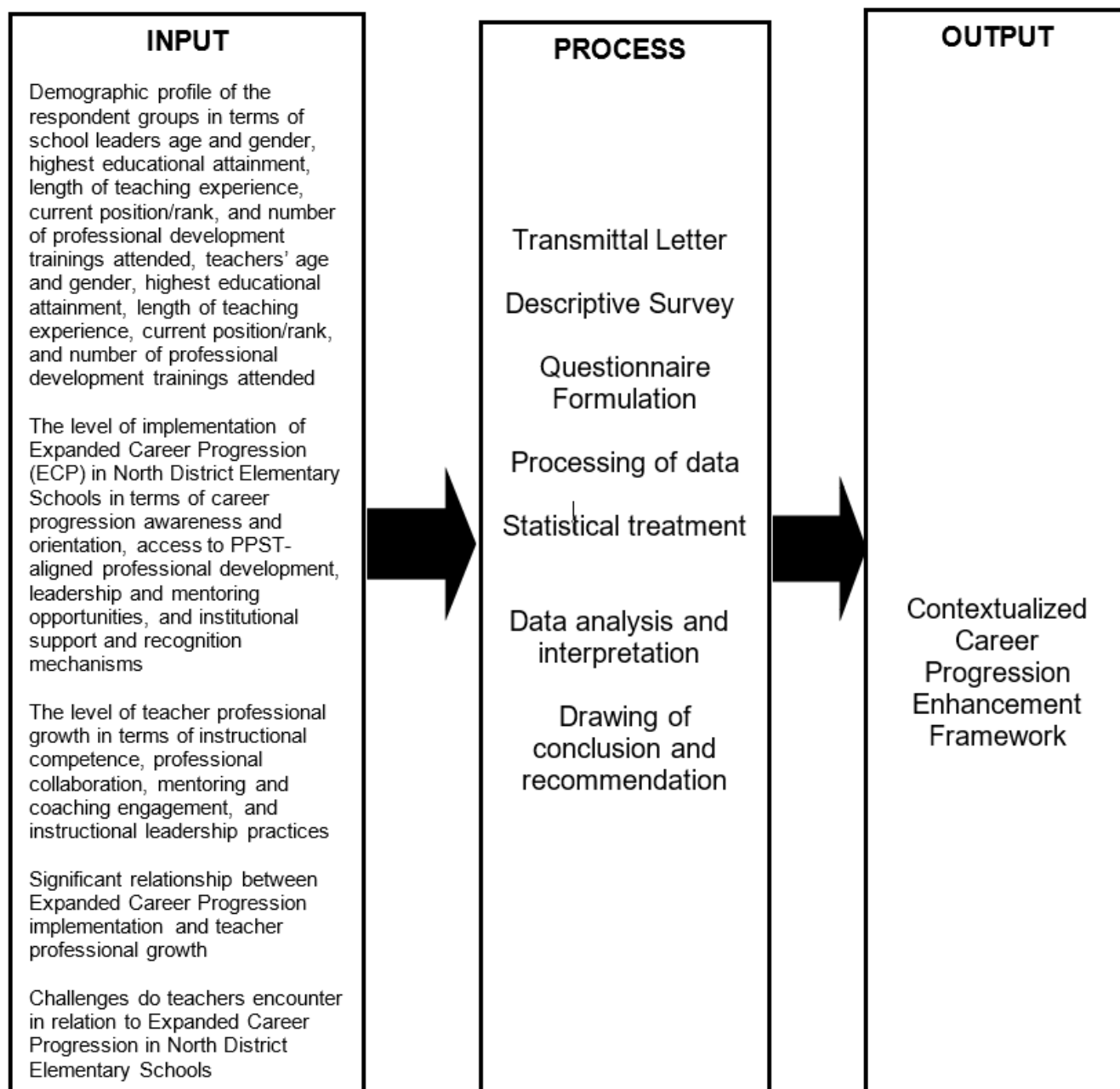


Figure 2 Flow of the Study

The preliminary phase of the study involves profiling participants, who were elementary school teachers from North District public schools in the Division of Mandaue City. Demographic information on teachers-such as age, gender, highest educational attainment, years of teaching experience, current rank or position, and number of professional development training sessions attended-was collected. This profiling provided contextual grounding and illustrates the diversity of professional experiences and career progression levels among respondents.

The next phase focused on determining the level of implementation of Expanded Career Progression in schools. Teachers assess the extent of career progression awareness and orientation, access to PPST-aligned professional development, leadership and mentoring opportunities, and institutional support and recognition mechanisms. Their responses provided an empirical picture of how ECP was operationalized within the district context.

Following this, the study examined the extent of teachers' professional growth in instructional competence, professional collaboration, mentoring engagement, and instructional leadership practices. These dimensions reflect teachers' professional advancement aligned with PPST career stages and expanded leadership roles promoted under the ECP system.

Subsequently, statistical analyses were conducted to determine whether there is a significant relationship between the implementation of Expanded Career Progression and teachers' professional growth. This quantitative treatment ensured objectivity in evaluating how career progression structures contribute to teachers' professional development within schools.

Another vital phase of the study involved identifying the challenges teachers face regarding Expanded Career Progression. Difficulties related to limited promotion opportunities, insufficient access to professional development, unclear career pathways, workload demands, and constraints on institutional support were documented to provide a realistic account of implementation issues within the district.

The final phase integrated the findings from demographic profiling, ECP implementation assessment, professional growth evaluation, relational analysis, and identified challenges. These findings provide the basis for developing a Contextualized Career Progression Enhancement Framework to strengthen teacher advancement pathways, leadership engagement, and professional development support in North District Elementary Schools. The study further presented a framework that may be adapted for use in other districts and divisions implementing the Expanded Career Progression System.

Questionnaires were distributed to teachers, and the returned responses were tallied and tabulated. Appropriate statistical treatments were applied to derive the intended results. The data were carefully analyzed to formulate interpretations, conclusions, and recommendations. The schematic diagram in Figure 2 served as a visual representation to facilitate understanding of the research process.

Environment

The research was conducted at Basak Elementary School, Labogon Elementary School, Paknaan Elementary, and Leonard Wood Elementary School.

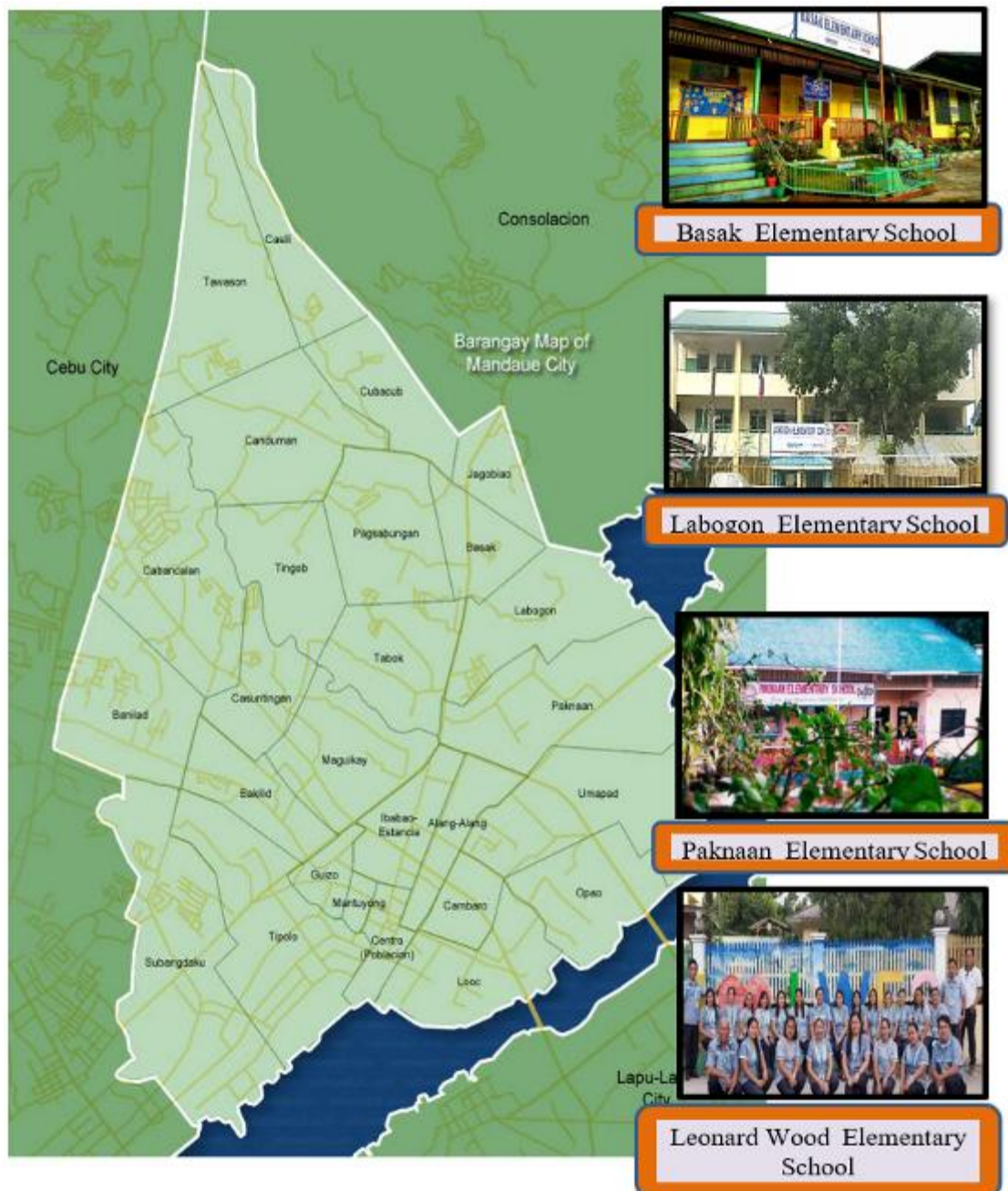


Figure 3 Research Environment

Basak Elementary School. Basak Elementary School was established in 1921. They acquired a school site of 11,191.5 square meters, more than sufficient to build a primary school, thanks to the efforts of Mr. Anastacio Perez, Julio and Domingo Alinsug, and Clemente Paran.

The first teacher at the school, later Basak Primary School, was Eriberto Dimpas, the 6th Municipal Mayor of Mandaue. He allegedly taught a combined class of 60 students in grades I and II. The school then offered intermediate grades completed only his second year of high school at Cebu Provincial High School; however, he produced the brightest students at the time.

It is a school in the town of Basak, Mandaue City. In the North District, it is a mega school and a center school. With increased enrollment, more teachers were assigned to serve students from the community and neighboring barangays. Basak Elementary School has grown over the years to become one of the Division's larger schools, and, owing to its proximity to public transportation, it has been designated as the North District's central school.

Basak Elementary School currently has a total population of over 3,000 students and offers a curriculum for SPED, Kindergarten to Grade VI, with over 100 teaching and non-teaching staff, managed by a school head. It comprises 102 teachers and 1 school head. It has a complete basic education from Kinder to Grade six and has Special Education. It also has a special science class for every grade level. It has facilities such as a canteen, computer laboratory, library, home economics room, and clinic. It received an award as one of the best schools in Mandaue City last school year 2019-2020.

The school strongly supports the EFA goals, including providing every child with a basic quality of education. The school administration, teaching, and non-teaching staff recognize each child's potential and commit to identifying each child's multiple intelligences.

Labogon Elementary School. Labogon Elementary School is an academic public school in a big barrio category in the North District. It began full operations in 1970, with 5 teachers serving 126 pupils. The school is located in Centro, Labogon, Mandaue, and is accessible by habal-habal or private vehicles via a well-paved concrete road. The school has a 2,774 sq. meter lot with various school buildings, including 30 Classrooms, catering to 1,696 pupils. The school has three campuses, comprising 56 teachers and 4 non-teaching personnel, and is supervised and managed by a school principal, Dr. Gemma H. Tanguan. The teachers are classified by position: 2 Teacher II, 3 Master Teachers II, 3 Master Teachers I, 20 Teacher III, 3 Teacher II, and 29 Teacher I.

Labogon Elementary School is recognized for numerous awards and achievements. First place winner of the Regional Kindergarten Teacher Demonstrator, Gold medal in Gymnastics during the CVRAA 2019. Third place in Brigada Eskwela Implementation. 2018 and recognition for various academic competitions, to name a few. In terms of external linkages, the school became the training hub of the Jollibee Feeding Program in the Visayas Region, having been selected as the recipient of Jollibee's modern kitchen facility and equipment.

Paknaan Elementary School. The name Paknaan has military origins, as oral tradition suggests it derives from a weapon used during the Spanish era. The area was plagued by a weapon called. Later, the neighborhood adopted its name from it, first as Pana-an and then as Paknaan. Its 168.72 hectares of land are broken up into 22 zones. Twenty-two thousand five hundred people make up the entire population as of the 2012 census. There are 7,000 families, according to estimates. The largest population in Mandaue City is in Barangay Paknaan, but the village still needs to rise to the top. They were the most populous of the twenty-seven (27) barangays that make up Mandaue City, Paknaan 2015. In 2015, Barangay Paknaan accounted for approximately 7.43% of Mandaue City's population. During Mandaue's 48th Charter Day celebrations, Paknaan was named the best barangay, besting 26 other villages.

Elementary school in Paknaan. Urban public kindergarten and elementary school Paknaan Elementary School is operated by the Department of Education in Barangay Paknaan, Mandaue City. Next to Mandaue City Central School, it was regarded as the second-most prestigious Elementary school in the Mandaue Division. It was once thought about.

Leonard Wood Elementary School. Leonard Wood Elementary School was built during the American period in the 1920's. It was then that Governor General Leonard Wood, a physician, built a health facility, which was funded by Eversley Childs, a benevolent industrialist from New York City. The Eversley Child Sanitarium and Hospital was named in his honor, and the school was named after the Governor General Leonard Wood.

Hansenites in the Philippines during that time were rampant and unabated. The patients were ostracized and neglected by their families. The Americans demonstrated genuine service in patient care. They established a

well-planned community of lepers, health workers, doctors, and nurses in well-arranged cottages and houses. They also built churches and schools.

Formerly, Leonard Wood Elementary School only enrolled Hansenite patients and the children of people affected with leprosy and people afflicted by it. In the 1960s, the school became part of the Department of Education and was allocated textbooks, additional classrooms, desks, armchairs, and teachers.

The school is classified as disadvantaged because it serves Hansenite patients, former patients, and their children. Thanks to the benevolent heart of the Rotarians who had always helped LWES through thick and thin, providing a feeding program for below normal pupils, providing school supplies and materials for impoverished families since most heads of the families or mothers can no longer be employed due to the stigma of the disease. The Rotarians, Coalition for Better Education (CBE), Jollibee Foundation Inc., and the Visayan Electric Company (VECO) have shown their willingness to join and support the teachers and parents as partners in nation-building and as active stakeholders of education as one country and people of the Republic of the Philippines.

Respondents

The sample was selected through stratified random sampling to ensure representation of school heads/master teachers and teachers across the North District elementary schools in the Division of Mandaue City. A total of 135 respondents participated in the study, consisting of 35 school heads/master teachers and 100 teachers from Basak Elementary School, Labogon Elementary School, Paknaan Elementary School, and Leonard Wood Elementary School. Basak Elementary School, Labogon Elementary School, and Paknaan Elementary

Table 1 Distribution of Respondents

Respondents	SH/ MTs	Teachers	Total	Percentage (%)
Basak Elem	10	25	35	26
Labogon Elem	10	25	35	26
Paknaan Elem	10	25	35	26
Leonard Wood Elem	5	25	30	22
TOTAL	35	100	135	100.00

School each contribute 35 respondents (26%), while Leonard Wood Elementary School contributes 30 respondents (22%). This sampling method enables the researcher to obtain diverse perspectives across different school contexts and leadership levels while maintaining the study's representativeness. Table 1 presents the distribution of respondents in this study.

Instrument

The principal instrument for data collection in this study was a structured questionnaire designed to assess the implementation of Expanded Career Progression (ECP) and the level of teacher professional growth in North District Elementary Schools in the Division of Mandaue City. The questionnaire was adapted and contextualized from established instruments on teacher professional development, career progression systems, and the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) indicators. The instrument comprises four major sections, each addressing essential dimensions of Expanded Career Progression and teacher professional growth.

The first section of the instrument determines the demographic profile of the teacher respondents. It collected information on age, gender, highest educational attainment, years of teaching experience, current position or rank, and number of professional development training sessions attended. These profiling variables were based on standard demographic survey practices widely used in educational research (Creswell & Creswell, 2021; Ary et al., 2020). The demographic data provide contextual grounding and enable analysis of differences in career progression experiences across teacher characteristics.

The second section measured the level of Expanded Career Progression implementation in schools. A five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree is used to assess indicators such as career progression awareness and orientation, access to PPST-aligned professional development opportunities, leadership and mentoring roles, and institutional support and recognition mechanisms. These indicators were derived from the Expanded Career Progression policy provisions and the PPST career stage descriptors, thereby ensuring alignment with national teacher development frameworks.

The third section evaluates the level of teacher professional growth. This section also used a five-point Likert scale to measure dimensions including instructional competence, professional collaboration, mentoring and

coaching engagement, and instructional leadership practices. The indicators were aligned with PPST strands and teacher leadership frameworks to reflect professional advancement across career stages.

The fourth section identified the challenges teachers face regarding Expanded Career Progression. It consists of Likert-scale items addressing issues such as limited promotion opportunities, insufficient access to professional development, unclear career progression pathways, workload demands, documentation requirements, and constraints on institutional support. These items are based on the literature on teacher career progression and barriers to professional growth in educational systems.

The complete questionnaire undergoes expert validation and pilot testing. Experts in educational leadership, teacher development, and Expanded Career Progression review the instrument to ensure content validity, clarity, and alignment with PPST and DepEd career progression policies. The instrument was pilot-tested among teachers outside the final sample to assess reliability and usability. Reliability analysis using Cronbach's alpha yields coefficients above 0.80, indicating strong internal consistency of the scales. This validation process ensures that the instrument accurately measures the implementation of Expanded Career Progression and teacher professional growth.

Data Gathering Procedure

To obtain relevant and accurate data, the researcher first secured formal authorization from the Schools Division Superintendent of Mandaue City and the principals of the identified North District elementary schools. Upon approval, the researcher coordinates with school heads to identify qualified respondents, consisting of school heads, master teachers, and teachers.

Prior to the administration of the questionnaire, respondents were informed of the study's purpose and asked to provide informed consent. Participation is voluntary, and confidentiality and data privacy are assured in accordance with ethical research standards.

The structured questionnaires were then distributed to respondents either in print or via a secure online platform, such as Google Forms, to maximize participation. The researcher provided clear instructions to ensure proper understanding of the items. Respondents are given sufficient time, typically three to five working days, to complete the instrument. Follow-up reminders were provided to ensure a high retrieval rate. For schools with limited internet access, printed questionnaires are distributed and collected personally.

After retrieval, responses were reviewed, coded, and organized according to the study variables: demographic profile, level of Expanded Career Progression implementation, level of teacher professional growth, and challenges encountered. The data were then prepared for statistical analysis. Throughout the data collection process, accuracy, confidentiality, and honesty of responses are maintained. This stage established the foundation for subsequent data analysis, interpretation, and the development of the Contextualized Career Progression Enhancement Framework.

Statistical Treatment of Data

The data gathered from the respondents are organized and analyzed using appropriate descriptive and inferential statistical tools to address the research questions.

For the demographic profile of respondents, frequency counts, and percentages are computed for categorical variables such as gender, educational attainment, and position. Means and standard deviations are calculated for continuous variables such as age, teaching experience, and the number of training sessions attended.

To determine the extent of Expanded Career Progression implementation and teacher professional growth, weighted means and standard deviations were computed for each indicator using a five-point Likert scale. The mean scores were interpreted using descriptive rating scales to determine the extent of implementation and level of professional growth.

To examine the relationship between the implementation of Expanded Career Progression and teachers' professional growth, Pearson product-moment correlation is used. This inferential statistical test determines whether a significant relationship exists between the two variables.

For the challenges encountered by teachers, weighted means and standard deviations are also computed to assess the extent to which each challenge affects the implementation of career progression.

All statistical computations are processed using Microsoft Excel. The combination of descriptive and inferential statistics enables objective analysis of the implementation of Expanded Career Progression and its relationship with teacher professional growth.

Scoring Procedure

The questionnaire items were rated on a five-point Likert scale to measure implementation of Expanded Career Progression, teacher professional growth, and challenges encountered. Each response was assigned a corresponding weight, range, category, and verbal interpretation as shown below:

Weight	Range	Category	Verbal Description
5	4.21 – 5.00	Strongly Agree	The indicator is highly evident and consistently observed.
4	3.41 – 4.20	Agree	The indicator is generally evident and often observed.
3	2.61 – 3.40	Neutral	The indicator is moderately evident.
2	1.81 – 2.60	Disagree	The indicator is slightly evident.
1	1.00 – 1.80	Strongly Disagree	The indicator is not evident.

For interpretation of levels:

Mean Range	Interpretation
4.21 – 5.00	Very High
3.41 – 4.20	High
2.61 – 3.40	Moderate
1.81 – 2.60	Low
1.00 – 1.80	Very Low

These scales were used to interpret the extent of Expanded Career Progression implementation, teachers' professional growth, and the challenges encountered in North District Elementary Schools.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following terms were operationally defined as used in this study to ensure clarity and consistency of interpretation.

Challenges in Expanded Career Progression – Refer to difficulties encountered by teachers in relation to career advancement, such as limited promotion opportunities, insufficient professional development access, workload demands, unclear guidelines, and institutional constraints.

Contextualized Career Progression Enhancement Framework – Refers to the structured model developed in this study intended to strengthen Expanded Career Progression implementation in North District Elementary Schools by integrating career awareness, professional development pathways, leadership opportunities, and institutional support mechanisms.

Demographic Profile – Refers to the personal and professional characteristics of teacher respondents, including age, gender, highest educational attainment, length of teaching experience, current position or rank, and number of professional development trainings attended.

Expanded Career Progression (ECP) – Refers to the Department of Education's structured system of teacher career advancement based on competency-based stages, leadership roles, and professional standards that allow teachers to progress within teaching or administrative tracks.

Framework for Enhancing Teachers' Professional Growth – Refers to the conceptual structure that links Expanded Career Progression components-such as professional development, leadership roles, mentoring, and institutional support-to the improvement of teachers' competencies and career advancement.

Level of Implementation of Expanded Career Progression – Refers to the extent to which Expanded Career Progression components-awareness, professional development access, leadership opportunities, and institutional support-are practiced in North District Elementary Schools.

Access to PPST-Aligned Professional Development – Refers to teachers' opportunities to participate in training, seminars, mentoring, and professional learning activities that are aligned with the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) competencies and career stages.

Career Progression Awareness and Orientation – Refers to the extent to which teachers are informed about Expanded Career Progression policies, career stages, qualification requirements, promotion pathways, and advancement opportunities within the teaching profession.

Institutional Support and Recognition Mechanisms – Refer to school and division-level provisions that facilitate career progression, including administrative support, recognition of teacher leadership roles, promotion processes, incentives, and professional growth monitoring systems.

Leadership and Mentoring Opportunities – Refer to roles and activities provided to teachers that involve guiding colleagues, facilitating Learning Action Cells (LAC), coaching beginning teachers, or leading instructional initiatives within the school.

Level of Teacher Professional Growth – Refers to the degree of teachers' development in competencies, collaboration, mentoring engagement, and instructional leadership as influenced by Expanded Career Progression.

Instructional Competence – Refers to teachers' ability to plan, implement, and evaluate effective teaching strategies aligned with curriculum standards and learner needs.

Instructional Leadership Practices – Refer to teachers' engagement in leading instructional improvement activities such as mentoring peers, facilitating professional learning, demonstrating effective teaching, and contributing to school academic programs.

Mentoring and Coaching Engagement – Refers to teachers' participation in mentoring or coaching activities, either as mentors or mentees, aimed at improving instructional practices and professional competencies.

Professional Collaboration – Refers to teachers' involvement in cooperative professional activities such as team teaching, Learning Action Cells, lesson planning, and shared instructional improvement initiatives.

School Leaders – Refer to school heads, principals, and master teachers who provide leadership, supervision, and professional support related to Expanded Career Progression implementation in schools.

Significant Relationship between Expanded Career Progression and Teacher Professional Growth – Refers to the statistically measurable association between the level of ECP implementation and the level of teacher professional growth as determined through correlation analysis in this study.

Teachers – Refer to public elementary school teachers in North District Elementary Schools, Division of Mandaue City, who serve as respondents of this study and are involved in Expanded Career Progression processes.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND STUDIES

This section presents relevant literature and empirical studies related to Expanded Career Progression and teacher professional growth. It includes international, national, and local sources that provide theoretical and research-based perspectives on career progression systems, professional development, leadership opportunities, and institutional support mechanisms in education. The reviewed literature establishes the conceptual foundations of Expanded Career Progression as a framework for enhancing teacher competence and advancement, while the related studies provide empirical evidence on its implementation, outcomes, and challenges in various educational contexts. Collectively, these sources support the present study by identifying key variables, research gaps, and contextual factors necessary for developing a Contextualized Career Progression Enhancement Framework for North District Elementary Schools in the Division of Mandaue City.

Related Literature

Research on teacher professional development and career progression has grown recently as educational systems aim to improve teaching quality and retention. Studies show structured career advancement increases teacher motivation, job satisfaction, and professional skill. For example, Smith and O'Donnell (2021) found that teachers on clear career paths report stronger professional commitment and teaching performance. Similarly, Nguyen et al. (2022) highlight that career systems that incorporate leadership and learning roles foster teacher initiative and leadership in schools.

Human Capital Theory helps explain how investing in teacher growth improves academic results. Becker and Czarnecki (2023) show that teachers on structured growth paths improve their instruction and adapt more effectively to curriculum changes. Similarly, Al-Shammari and Rashid (2021) suggest that teacher career progression should support continuous learning and reflection, rather than simply offer pay raises.

At the regional scale, studies in Asia demonstrate that regional career progression frameworks, while consistent with national standards, differ in structure and impact across countries. For instance, in Singapore, Tan and Lee (2021) show that competency-based career structures aligned with professional standards strongly influence teacher self-efficacy and joint practice. By contrast, in Malaysia, Ahmad and Ismail (2022) found that access to ongoing training within career stages strongly predicts teacher leadership engagement and classroom innovation, emphasizing differences in emphasis and implementation between these adjacent systems.

In the Philippines, the Department of Education has begun reforms to institutionalize teacher career pathways. Rodriguez and Santos (2021) found that teachers view career advancement as helpful but point to gaps in training and mentoring. Lim and Cruz (2022) report that teachers in urban public schools who take on mentoring and leadership roles show stronger skills in planning and assessment, as reflected in PPST stages.

A consistent theme across the literature is the role of career progression structures in encouraging teacher leadership. International and regional research suggests that frameworks promoting leadership roles-such as instructional coaching and mentorship-improve both collaborative learning and schoolwide career development. Such distributed leadership, embedded within advancement systems, is associated with resilient and adjustable teaching practices.

Professional collaboration consistently acts as a central factor in teacher growth. Comparative studies reveal that career progression systems that encourage co-planning, peer observation, and reflective dialogue are directly linked to improvements in instructional quality and student outcomes, underscoring collaboration as a key outcome across diverse contexts.

Mentoring and coaching are often positioned within career frameworks as key supports for teacher development. Multiple studies agree that sustained mentoring improves teaching performance, retention, and self-reported career development, suggesting these supports function as critical mechanisms for developing teacher competence and confidence.

Global research also reinforces the role of access to professional development in career progression. According to UNESCO (2023), access to continual professional learning is essential for reducing disparities in teacher competence and promoting inclusive education. UNESCO's policy review indicates that teacher career systems that integrate continuous development opportunities yield better and fairer teaching outcomes.

The concept of institutional support as part of career progression is reinforced by empirical studies. Xu and Clarke (2022) show that strong school leadership practices-such as recognizing teachers' achievements and allocating professional development resources-greatly increase teachers' participation in career pathways. Likewise, Ibrahim and El-Shamy (2023) highlight that schools with strong administrative systems for career progression show greater teacher morale and instructional effectiveness.

Local research on professional development in the Philippines further stresses the importance of career pathways aligned with PPST. De la Cruz and Reyes (2021) conclude that PPST-aligned professional development activities significantly improve teachers' instructional planning, assessment strategies, and classroom management. Their study also notes that teachers who perceive strong support for career growth demonstrate higher engagement in professional learning communities.

Motivation is a common theme in career progression literature. Garcia and Villanueva (2022) found that Filipino teachers with clear career paths are more motivated to develop advanced skills and chase leadership roles. Their research illustrates the impact of career paths on professional identity and satisfaction.

Torres and Mendoza (2023) report that teachers promoted to higher PPST stages are more likely to lead learning initiatives and support colleagues' professional development, thus building a strong culture of sustained learning and collaboration.

Several studies address the difficulties inherent in executing structured career systems. In Australia, Lee and Robinson (2022) describe obstacles comprising limited access to relevant training, insufficient mentoring resources, and an unfair distribution of advancement opportunities across schools. This corresponds with findings in the Philippine context by Delos Santos and Bacani (2023), who identify workload pressures and lack of institutional support as major barriers to effective career progression.

Professional cooperation and education networks are vital in career systems. Hernandez and Torres (2021) show that joint networks support teacher growth through resource sharing and peer help. European evidence from Schmidt and Becker (2023) indicates that joint cultures amplify the effects of career frameworks.

Another body of literature focuses on the equity implications of career systems. In a cross-national study, Kim and Park (2022) observe that teacher progression pathways must be accessible throughout diverse school contexts to prevent gaps in career development between urban and rural settings. This underscores the need for localized career development strategies tailored to specific contexts.

Data support links between professional development and career growth. Patel and Singh (2023) show that teachers with more structured learning in career paths gain in self-reported teaching skills and teamwork.

Research on self-efficacy in career frameworks backs this study's theory. Lee et al. (2021) contend that self-determination and confidence mediate the effects of career systems on teaching. Their results echo earlier research about motivation in career growth.

Ramos and Dela Cruz (2022) report that Filipino teachers involved in leadership and mentoring score higher in career development, especially in collaboration and teaching. The results show why leadership roles belong in career systems.

Studies examining the role of institutional policies reveal that encouraging policy environments are critical to the success of career progression systems. According to the International Task Force on Teachers (2023), national systems that embed career progression inside broader teacher policies tend to achieve stronger alignment between professional standards and classroom practice.

Solis and Alonzo (2024) find that career frameworks that include feedback, peer support, and recognition improve teacher growth, retention, and school stability.

Related Studies

Recent empirical studies have examined the implementation and impact of Expanded Career Progression and related teacher development systems across educational contexts. In the Philippines, Endencia (2025) investigated the perceived impacts of the Expanded Career Progression System (ECPS) among public school teachers in Lucban District and found that career progression structures considerably influence teachers' career development, leadership engagement, and career motivation. The study concluded that ECPS tackles longstanding issues in teacher advancement and professional opportunities inside the public education system.

A study in Apayao District found that teachers were moderately to highly aware of Expanded Career Progression, but their readiness for promotion requirements varied. This revealed gaps in orientation and implementation support (Awareness of Public School Teachers on ECPS, 2025). In Davao de Oro, another study of 146 elementary teachers found the system improves teacher retention and motivation by offering structured promotion pathways and professional recognition (Perceptions on Expanded Career Progression, 2025).

Research on teachers' preparedness and the difficulties they face in implementing ECPS further supports these outcomes. For example, Navalta (2024) found that teachers' awareness and readiness for career progression depend on their exposure to professional development and institutional support, suggesting the need for structured orientation and mentoring systems. Similarly, Capistrano (2025) reviewed Philippine studies and concluded that competency-based promotion frameworks aligned with PPST can boost career advancement, but must be tailored locally to be effective.

Some Philippine studies connect career growth with professional development. For instance, Dagupan and Baylon (2025) examined continuing education among public school teachers in General Santos City and found a strong link between professional development, career advancement, leadership engagement, and job satisfaction. Similarly, another PPST-based study (2025) reported that following national teaching standards improves teacher competence and career progression at different stages.

International research also shows that structured career and professional development systems make teachers more effective. Ventista (2023) reviewed 125 studies and found that sustained training, coaching, and joint learning improve teaching and student results. In Türkiye, a qualitative study (2023) found that professional development opportunities and institutional support boost teachers' skills and career growth.

Studies focusing on career progression challenges also provide relevant insights. A study on teachers' career advancement challenges (2024) reported that promotion systems affect not only financial rewards but also professional fulfillment, recognition, and motivation, underscoring the importance of supportive institutional structures. Another Philippine study on teacher professional barriers (2023) identified workload, limited access to training, and insufficient mentoring support as key constraints to career progression and occupational development.

Research on teacher leadership within career progression systems supports the study variables. For example, Torres and Mendoza (2023) found that teachers at higher career stages demonstrate stronger mentoring and instructional leadership, which contributes to school improvement initiatives. Similarly, Garcia and Villanueva (2022) reported that clear career pathways enhance teacher motivation and engagement in leadership and joint practices.

Studies on professional collaboration likewise reinforce the framework. For example, Hernandez and Torres (2021) found that participation in professional learning communities significantly improves teachers' instructional competence and collaborative skills. Similarly, Walker and Johnson (2023) demonstrated internationally that teachers involved in career development initiatives engage more frequently in peer collaboration and reflective practice, thereby improving instructional quality.

Mentoring and coaching, which are core components of Expanded Career Progression, have been empirically linked to professional growth. Davis and Martinez (2022) found that structured mentoring programs improve educators' teaching performance and readiness for career advancement. Nkosi and Botha (2021) similarly reported that mentoring is a significant predictor of teacher career development and self-efficacy.

Institutional support has also been examined in empirical studies. Xu and Clarke (2022) revealed that encouraging school leadership and recognition systems increases teacher participation in career progression pathways. Ibrahim and El-Shamy (2023) further confirmed that institutional support mechanisms strengthen teacher motivation and professional engagement.

In addition, research focusing on equity and access within career systems is likewise relevant. Kim and Park (2022) observed that career progression opportunities must be accessible across school contexts to avoid disparities in occupational development. Patel and Singh (2023) similarly found that access to structured professional learning predicts higher instructional competence and joint efforts among teachers.

Finally, Solis and Alonzo (2024) emphasized that career progression frameworks, including mentoring, leadership opportunities, and professional recognition, significantly improve teacher retention and instructional leadership. Their study concluded that regional career progression frameworks are essential to sustain teacher development within school systems.

Across the recent literature, structured teacher career pathways are consistently emphasized for their strong influence on teacher motivation, retention, and professional commitment. Studies on career-stage models explain that teachers experience evolving professional needs across their careers, requiring differentiated support, recognition, and leadership opportunities. When career systems provide clear advancement routes and competency-based promotion, teachers demonstrate stronger commitment and extended engagement in the profession (Will, 2024). Understanding career phases helps education systems design policies such as Expanded Career Progression that respond to teachers' changing developmental needs and sustain career development.

Contemporary research also highlights that teacher career structures directly affect motivation and performance. UNESCO analyses of teacher career models indicate that systems with multiple advancement tracks, such as teaching, leadership, and specialist roles, enhance professional satisfaction and retention. Such career frameworks allow teachers to progress without leaving classroom practice, consequently sustaining instructional expertise within schools. These outcomes support Expanded Career Progression policies that institutionalize horizontal and vertical promotion pathways aligned with professional standards.

Empirical studies additionally confirm that career progression opportunities shape teachers' perception of the value of their profession. A large-scale 2025 study on the value of the teaching career found that professional recognition, continuous training, and performance-based advancement were strong predictors of teachers' optimism and dedication to the profession. Teachers who perceived strong career prospects reported higher motivation and a positive outlook toward long-term teaching careers. This reinforces the theoretical premise that Expanded Career Progression strengthens professional identity and career sustainability.

Research grounded in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs continues to demonstrate its relevance in explaining teacher motivation. A 2025 study showed that teachers' productivity and work engagement depend on the fulfillment of physiological, safety, social, esteem, and self-actualization needs within schools. Insufficient salary, recognition, and professional support were identified as the main factors reducing motivation, while chances for professional growth enhanced self-actualization. The results confirm that career progression systems must address both material and psychological needs to improve teacher performance.

Similarly, studies on teacher motivational needs and performance indicate that teachers with fulfilled professional needs demonstrate higher instructional competence and problem-solving ability. Research among public-school teachers found very high levels of motivational needs and competence, but performance differences emerged by experience and qualifications, suggesting the importance of career advancement opportunities. The study concluded that training and career development programs should be aligned with teachers' evolving motivational needs, consistent with Maslow-based progression frameworks.

Motivation research in education also shows that intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors strongly influence teacher performance along career stages. Teachers with greater work experience exhibited stronger links between motivation and performance, indicating that career maturity shapes professional engagement. These findings correspond with Teacher Career Cycle Theory, which claims that motivation and effectiveness evolve through stages of competence, stability, and leadership. Career progression policies, therefore, serve as mechanisms to sustain motivation along teachers' professional lifespan.

Studies on teacher motivation also reveal that psychological engagement, work enthusiasm, and achievement goals positively predict teaching performance and student outcomes. Teachers with strong professional zest demonstrated higher teaching motivation and an achievement orientation, which in turn mediated instructional success. This evidence supports the argument that career advancement systems that improve recognition, autonomy, and professional goals strengthen teachers' intrinsic motivation and instructional commitment.

Recent motivation–performance models also confirm that self-determined motivation significantly predicts teachers' job performance. Research using structural equation modeling showed that these motivational factors, such as recognition, achievement, and participation, strongly influenced teacher effectiveness. The study recommended that educational administrators develop policies that address motivational needs to improve teacher performance. Expanded Career Progression responds to this recommendation by institutionalizing recognition and advancement aligned with professional competence.

Teacher retention research grounded in Maslow's theory likewise indicates that unmet professional needs contribute to attrition, while supportive career environments enhance retention. Studies note that teachers remain in the profession when their safety, belongingness, and esteem needs are fulfilled through supportive leadership, collaboration, and recognition. Career progression systems that provide promotion, mentoring roles, and leadership opportunities, therefore, function as retention strategies aligned with Maslow's motivational hierarchy.

Overall, contemporary literature converges on the view that teacher career progression and motivational fulfillment are interdependent. Career-stage support, professional recognition, advancement opportunities, and motivational fulfillment jointly influence teacher effectiveness, satisfaction, and retention. Expanded Career Progression frameworks operationalize these conceptual principles through aligning career pathways with teachers' developmental phases and hierarchical needs, thereby promoting sustained career development and instructional excellence in education systems.

Across local and international contexts, empirical studies consistently show that structured career progression systems—such as Expanded Career Progression—enhance teacher career growth through access to professional development, mentoring and leadership opportunities, institutional support, and joint engagement. However, studies also identify implementation gaps in awareness, access to training, and institutional support, underscoring the need for contextualized frameworks. The results directly support the present study's focus on assessing Expanded Career Progression implementation and developing a Contextualized Career Progression Enhancement Framework for North District Elementary Schools in the Division of Mandaue City.

3. PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of the data gathered in this study. The data were organized, analyzed, and interpreted in light of the research questions that guided the investigation. Specifically, the chapter examines the respondents' profiles, the level of implementation of the Expanded Career Progression (ECP) system, and the level of teacher professional growth in instructional competence, professional collaboration, mentoring and coaching engagement, and instructional leadership practices. Statistical tools were used to analyze the collected data to determine patterns, relationships, and significant findings relevant to the study. The results are presented in tables followed by corresponding interpretations to provide a clearer understanding of the data.

RELEVANT INFORMATION

The first part manages the relevant information on the teachers' age and gender, years of service, highest educational attainment, highest position or rank, relevant training, seminars, and workshops attended.

Age

Age is frequently associated with a decline in mental abilities necessary for functional independence, such as learning new skills. It is also a necessary variable to evaluate to determine respondents' maturity and order of comprehension. Table 2 shows the age of the respondent group.

Table 2 Age

	School Leaders		Teacher		Total	Percentage
61 years old up	0	0.00	2	2.00	2	1.48
51-60	20	57.14	24	24.00	44	32.59
41-50	10	28.57	34	34.00	44	32.59
31-40	5	14.29	26	26.00	31	22.96
21-30	0	0.00	14	14.00	14	10.37
Total	35	100.00	100	100.00	135	100.00
Average	48.33		42.80		45.57	
SD	7.59		9.96		8.78	

Table 2 presents the age distribution of the respondents, including school leaders and teachers. The results show that the majority of respondents fall within the 41–50 years old and 51–60 years old age groups, both with 44 respondents (32.59%), followed by 31–40 years old with 31 respondents (22.96%), 21–30 years old with 14 respondents (10.37%), and 61 years old and above with 2 respondents (1.48%). The computed average age of school leaders is 48.33 years, while teachers have an average age of 42.80 years, resulting in an overall average age of 45.57 years. The standard deviation values indicate moderate variability among respondents' ages, suggesting that the participants represent a wide range of professional experiences within the school system.

For school leaders such as master teachers and head teachers, the findings indicate that most leaders are in the middle to late stages of their professional careers, particularly in the 41–60 age range. This age distribution reflects a group of educators with substantial teaching experience, professional maturity, and leadership exposure. Experienced school leaders are often better positioned to guide teachers in understanding and implementing career progression systems such as the Expanded Career Progression (ECP). According to Day and Gu (2022), experienced educators who reach later stages of their careers tend to assume stronger leadership roles in mentoring, instructional supervision, and professional development. The presence of mature leaders within schools may therefore strengthen mentoring systems, improve instructional leadership practices, and support the effective implementation of career progression initiatives.

Moreover, the age profile of school leaders suggests that they possess accumulated expertise that can significantly influence teachers' professional growth and readiness for promotion. Their extensive experience allows them to provide meaningful coaching, facilitate Learning Action Cell (LAC) discussions, and guide teachers in aligning their professional activities with promotion requirements. As noted by Avalos and Flores (2021), experienced teacher-leaders play a critical role in sustaining professional learning communities and fostering collaborative professional development. Consequently, their leadership may positively influence teachers' engagement in mentoring, coaching, and professional collaboration, which are essential components of career progression frameworks.

For teachers, the results indicate that most respondents are in the early to mid-career stage, particularly in the 31–50-year-old age group. This distribution suggests that many teachers are in a developmental stage, actively seeking opportunities for professional growth, promotion, and leadership development. Teachers in this career phase often demonstrate strong motivation to participate in professional development programs and mentoring activities as they prepare for career advancement. Research by Collie (2022) highlights that mid-career teachers are more likely to engage in professional learning initiatives and collaborative activities that enhance instructional competence and career progression.

The presence of younger teachers in the 21–30 age group also reflects the entry of new professionals into the teaching workforce, contributing to the sustainability of the education system. These teachers may benefit from structured mentoring programs and career orientation activities that help them understand the requirements for professional advancement. According to OECD (2023), early-career teachers require strong institutional support, mentoring, and professional learning opportunities to build their instructional competence and professional confidence. Therefore, schools should provide continuous support mechanisms, such as coaching, mentoring, and professional development programs, to ensure that teachers across age groups are adequately prepared for career progression.

Overall, the age distribution of respondents suggests a balanced representation of experienced school leaders and developing teachers. This composition creates an environment conducive to mentoring, knowledge sharing, and professional collaboration within schools. The combination of experienced leadership and motivated mid-career

teachers may strengthen the implementation of career progression initiatives and support continuous professional development across the teaching workforce.

Gender

Gender spaces are cultural and unique. They dictate how men and women should think, speak, dress, and interact in their surroundings. Gender is a significant factor that warrants investigation. It affects human choices, conditions, and experiences. Table 3 revealed the gender distribution of the respondents.

Table 3 Gender

	School Leaders		Teacher		Total	Percentage
Female	30	85.71	96	96.00	126	93.33
Male	5	14.29	4	4.00	9	6.67
Total	35	100.00	100	100.00	135	100.00

Table 3 presents the gender distribution of the respondents, composed of school leaders and teachers. The results reveal that many respondents are female, with 126 respondents (93.33%), while only 9 respondents (6.67%) are male. Among school leaders, 30 or 85.71% are female and 5 or 14.29% are male. Similarly, among teachers, 96 or 96.00% are female, while 4 or 4.00% are male. These results indicate that the teaching workforce and leadership positions in the participating schools are predominantly female.

For school leaders such as master teachers and head teachers, the findings suggest that leadership roles within the school system are largely occupied by female educators. This reflects the broader trend in the education sector where women represent a significant portion of the teaching profession and frequently progress to leadership positions. Female school leaders often play a critical role in fostering collaborative learning environments, mentoring teachers, and supporting professional development initiatives. According to UNESCO (2022), women constitute a large proportion of educators worldwide and frequently demonstrate strong commitment to instructional leadership and school improvement efforts. The strong representation of female leaders in the study may therefore positively influence the implementation of the Expanded Career Progression (ECP) system by promoting supportive mentoring practices, professional collaboration, and continuous teacher development within schools.

Furthermore, female school leaders may foster a nurturing, inclusive professional culture that encourages teachers to actively participate in career advancement initiatives. Research by Schleicher (2021) highlights that gender-diverse and inclusive leadership environments enhance teacher motivation and collaboration. In the context of this study, the predominance of female leaders may strengthen the implementation of mentoring and coaching programs that guide teachers in preparing for promotion and professional growth. Their leadership can significantly impact the effectiveness of career progression systems by encouraging teachers to engage in professional learning opportunities aligned with the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST).

For teachers, the results indicate that the teaching workforce in participating schools is overwhelmingly female. This pattern reflects the longstanding feminization of the teaching profession, particularly at the primary and secondary levels. Female teachers often demonstrate high levels of dedication to teaching, professional collaboration, and student support, which are essential components of effective educational practice. According to OECD (2023), female teachers are more likely to participate in professional development activities and collaborative learning communities that enhance instructional competence. As such, the predominance of female teachers may contribute to stronger engagement in mentoring, coaching, and professional development programs associated with the Expanded Career Progression framework.

The presence of fewer male teachers, however, highlights the need for balanced representation and inclusive participation in professional development initiatives. Gender diversity in schools can contribute to varied teaching perspectives, leadership approaches, and learning experiences for students. Research by Collie (2022) suggests that diverse professional environments encourage innovation, collaboration, and improved teaching outcomes. Therefore, ensuring equal opportunities for professional growth and leadership development, regardless of gender, remains essential to strengthening the implementation of career progression programs.

Overall, the gender distribution in the study reflects the dominant role of female educators in both teaching and leadership positions. This composition may positively influence the implementation of professional development programs, mentoring initiatives, and career progression strategies within schools. The strong presence of female educators may also contribute to a supportive professional culture that promotes collaboration, instructional improvement, and sustained teacher professional growth.

Civil status

Civil Status refers to the legal status of a contracting party with reference to the marriage laws of the country. Table 4 shows the civil status of the respondent groups.

Table 4 Civil Status

	School Leaders		Teacher		Total	Percentage
Married	30	85.71	80	80.00	110	81.48
Single	5	14.29	18	18.00	23	17.04
Widowed	0	0.00	2	2.00	2	1.48
Total	35	100.00	100	100.00	135	100.00

Table 4 presents the distribution of respondents' civil status, including school leaders and teachers. The results reveal that most respondents are married, with 110 respondents or 81.48% of the total population. This is followed by single respondents with 23 or 17.04%, while widowed respondents account for only 2 or 1.48%. Among school leaders, 30 or 85.71% are married, 5 or 14.29% are single, and none are widowed. Similarly, among teachers, 80 or 80.00% are married, 18 or 18.00% are single, and 2 or 2.00% are widowed. These results suggest that most respondents have established family responsibilities while maintaining their professional roles within the education sector.

For school leaders such as master teachers and head teachers, the predominance of married individuals suggests that many leaders are already in stable life stages, having developed both personal and professional commitments. This stability may positively influence their ability to provide consistent leadership, mentorship, and guidance to teachers within their schools. Experienced educators who balance family and professional responsibilities often demonstrate strong organizational and interpersonal skills, which are essential in mentoring teachers and supporting professional development initiatives. According to Day and Gu (2022), teachers and school leaders who reach mature stages in their careers tend to exhibit stronger commitment to leadership responsibilities and school improvement efforts. Their life experiences and professional maturity may therefore strengthen the implementation of programs such as the Expanded Career Progression (ECP) system, particularly in guiding teachers in professional growth and promotion readiness.

Moreover, married school leaders may serve as role models in demonstrating professional dedication, resilience, and work-life balance, which are important qualities in sustaining long-term careers in education. Their experiences may also help them better understand the challenges teachers face in balancing personal responsibilities with professional demands. As emphasized by Collie (2022), supportive leadership and empathetic management practices contribute to improved teacher motivation, job satisfaction, and engagement in professional development activities. Consequently, school leaders who maintain stable personal and professional lives may foster a supportive work environment that encourages teachers to actively participate in mentoring, coaching, and career advancement programs.

For teachers, the results also indicate that the majority are married, suggesting that many educators manage both professional responsibilities and family obligations. This situation may influence their level of engagement in professional development and career progression activities. Married teachers may demonstrate strong commitment to their profession as they seek career stability and advancement to support their families. However, they may also face challenges in balancing teaching responsibilities, family commitments, and professional development. According to OECD (2023), teachers with family responsibilities often require supportive institutional policies and flexible professional development opportunities to sustain their professional growth.

On the other hand, single teachers, who represent 17.04% of the respondents, may have greater flexibility to participate in training, mentoring, and leadership development programs that support career progression. Early-career single teachers often demonstrate strong motivation to develop their professional competencies and pursue advancement opportunities within the education system. As noted by Avalos and Flores (2021), teachers in earlier career stages frequently invest in professional learning and collaborative activities to strengthen their instructional competence and prepare for leadership roles.

Overall, the civil status distribution of respondents reflects a workforce composed largely of married educators who balance personal and professional responsibilities. This demographic characteristic underscores the importance of providing supportive institutional structures that accommodate teachers' diverse personal circumstances and promote continuous professional growth. In this study, strong institutional support, mentoring

programs, and career progression initiatives can help teachers effectively manage their responsibilities while pursuing professional advancement.

Highest Educational Attainment

Table 5 shows the respondents' educational attainment. Educational attainment develops advanced skills, leading to higher employment rates, greater productivity, and higher lifetime earnings for individuals.

Table 5 Highest Educational Attainment

	School Leaders		Teacher		Total	Percentage
Doctorate Degree	5	14.29	4	4.00	9	6.67
With units in Doctorate	5	14.29	2	2.00	7	5.19
Masters Degree	5	14.29	14	14.00	19	14.07
With units in Masters	15	42.86	64	64.00	79	58.52
BSED/ College Graduate	5	14.29	16	16.00	21	15.56
Total	35	100.00	100	100.00	135	100.00

Table 5 presents the distribution of respondents by highest educational attainment. The results reveal that most respondents have a master's degree, with 79 respondents (58.52% of the total population). This is followed by college graduates (21 respondents, 15.56%), those with completed master's degrees (19 respondents, 14.07%), doctoral degree holders (9 respondents, 6.67%), and those with units in doctoral programs (7 respondents, 5.19%). Among school leaders, 15 or 42.86% have units in a master's degree, while 5 or 14.29% each hold a doctorate degree, have units in doctorate, have completed a master's degree, or are college graduates. Among teachers, 64 or 64.00% have units in a master's degree, 16 or 16.00% are college graduates, 14 or 14.00% hold a master's degree, 4 or 4.00% have a doctorate degree, and 2 or 2.00% have units in a doctoral program. These findings indicate that most respondents are actively pursuing higher education to enhance their professional competencies.

For school leaders such as master teachers and head teachers, the results suggest a relatively high level of academic qualification, with several leaders already holding or pursuing graduate and postgraduate degrees. This reflects the importance of advanced education in preparing educators for leadership roles and instructional supervision responsibilities. Higher educational attainment equips school leaders with deeper pedagogical knowledge, research capabilities, and leadership competencies that are necessary in guiding teachers and improving school performance. According to Schleicher (2021), advanced educational qualifications among school leaders contribute significantly to effective instructional leadership and improved teacher professional development. As a result, school leaders with higher academic preparation are better positioned to mentor teachers, facilitate professional learning communities, and support the implementation of career progression initiatives such as the Expanded Career Progression (ECP) system.

Furthermore, the presence of school leaders pursuing doctoral studies or holding doctoral degrees indicates a commitment to lifelong learning and professional excellence. Their academic expertise may strengthen school-based research initiatives, innovation in instructional practices, and mentoring programs that guide teachers in developing their professional portfolios. Research by Day and Gu (2022) emphasizes that highly qualified school leaders play a critical role in fostering a culture of continuous professional learning within schools. In the context of this study, such leaders can significantly influence teachers' engagement in professional development activities aligned with the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) and career advancement requirements.

For teachers, the findings show that a large proportion are pursuing graduate education, particularly those with units in a master's degree. This suggests that many teachers are actively investing in their professional development to improve their teaching competencies and qualify for career advancement opportunities. Graduate education provides teachers with a deeper understanding of pedagogy, curriculum development, assessment strategies, and educational research, which are essential in improving instructional practices. According to Avalos and Flores (2021), participation in graduate studies significantly enhances teachers' professional competence, reflective practice, and readiness for leadership roles within schools.

Moreover, the relatively smaller number of teachers holding doctoral degrees indicates that while advanced academic qualifications are increasing, there remains an opportunity to encourage more teachers to pursue higher studies. Supporting teachers in continuing their education through scholarships, flexible professional development programs, and institutional support may further strengthen their readiness for leadership and career

progression. As highlighted by OECD (2023), teachers who engage in advanced academic learning are more likely to demonstrate improved instructional competence, stronger collaboration with colleagues, and greater participation in mentoring and coaching activities.

Overall, the findings indicate that teachers and school leaders recognize the importance of higher education in professional growth and career advancement. The high percentage of respondents pursuing graduate studies reflects a strong commitment to professional development within the teaching workforce. This trend may positively influence the implementation of career progression programs, as teachers with advanced educational qualifications are better prepared to meet the competency standards required for promotion and leadership roles.

Number of Years in Service

The number of years of service is another important factor to consider in this research. The term "years of service" refers to the number of years a teacher has worked for the department in exchange for compensation. The length of service can be used to determine their commitment to the workplace to which they are currently assigned. Table 6 shows the number of years in service.

Table 6 Number of Years in the Service

	School Leaders		Teacher		Total	Percentage
21 years up	20	57.14	16	16.00	36	26.67
16-20	10	28.57	14	14.00	24	17.78
11-15	5	14.29	26	26.00	31	22.96
6-10	0	0.00	26	26.00	26	19.26
1-5	0	0.00	18	18.00	18	13.33
Total	35.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	135.00	100.00
Average	21.78		13.14		17.46	
SD	6.29		8.43		7.36	

Table 6 presents the distribution of respondents by years of service. The results show that 36 respondents or 26.67% have 21 years or more of service, followed by 31 respondents or 22.96% with 11–15 years, 26 respondents or 19.26% with 6–10 years, 24 respondents or 17.78% with 16–20 years, and 18 respondents or 13.33% with 1–5 years of service. Among school leaders, the majority (20 or 57.14%) have served for 21 years or more, followed by 10 or 28.57% with 16–20 years, and 5 or 14.29% with 11–15 years of service. Among teachers, most respondents fall within the 11–15 years and 6–10 years categories with 26 respondents each (26.00%), followed by 18 or 18.00% with 1–5 years, 16 or 16.00% with 21 years and above, and 14 or 14.00% with 16–20 years of service. The computed average number of years in service is 21.78 years for school leaders and 13.14 years for teachers, resulting in an overall average of 17.46 years, indicating that respondents have considerable professional experience in the education system.

For school leaders such as master teachers and head teachers, the results imply that leadership roles are largely occupied by educators with extensive teaching experience. Many school leaders have served in the profession for more than two decades, indicating that leadership positions are typically attained after many years of teaching practice and professional development. Long years of service provide school leaders with deep knowledge of curriculum implementation, classroom management, and instructional supervision. According to Day and Gu (2022), experienced educators who progress to leadership roles develop stronger professional judgment, mentoring capabilities, and instructional leadership skills that significantly influence teacher development. As such, the presence of experienced school leaders may positively impact the implementation of the Expanded Career Progression (ECP) system by providing teachers with effective mentoring, coaching, and professional guidance.

Moreover, experienced school leaders are well-positioned to support teachers' career advancement by sharing their professional expertise and facilitating professional learning communities within schools. Their long years of service enable them to understand institutional policies, professional standards, and promotion requirements that guide teachers toward career progression. Research by Schleicher (2021) emphasizes that experienced instructional leaders play a crucial role in building collaborative school cultures and supporting continuous teacher professional development. In this study, the significant number of experienced school leaders may strengthen mentoring structures, Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions, and other professional development initiatives that support teachers' readiness for promotion.

For teachers, the results indicate that many respondents are in the mid-career stage, particularly those with 6–15 years of service. Teachers in this career stage are often actively developing their professional competencies and preparing for advancement opportunities within the education system. Mid-career teachers typically demonstrate increased motivation to engage in professional learning activities, leadership opportunities, and mentoring programs that enhance their teaching practices. According to Collie (2022), teachers in the middle stages of their careers are more likely to invest in professional development and collaborative learning to improve instructional competence and career prospects.

At the same time, the presence of teachers with 1–5 years of service suggests the entry of early-career educators into the profession. These teachers may require structured mentoring, coaching, and professional support to develop their instructional skills and adapt to the demands of the teaching profession. Early-career teachers benefit significantly from supportive professional learning environments and mentoring relationships that help them build confidence and competence in their roles. As highlighted by OECD (2023), strong mentoring and professional development programs are essential in supporting early-career teachers and sustaining their long-term engagement in the teaching profession.

Overall, the distribution of years in service among respondents reflects a balanced combination of experienced school leaders and developing teachers. This diversity of experience creates opportunities for mentoring, knowledge sharing, and professional collaboration within schools. The presence of experienced leaders and mid-career teachers may positively contribute to the implementation of career progression initiatives and to the continuous professional growth of educators.

Highest Position / Rank

The highest position or rank of teachers reflects their professional status and level of experience within the educational system. It indicates the stage of their career progression, which may include positions such as Teacher I, Teacher II, Teacher III, or Master Teacher. Teachers with higher ranks are often expected to demonstrate greater instructional expertise, leadership, and mentoring capabilities. Examining teachers' position or rank helps determine how career advancement relates to their professional responsibilities and development.

Table 7 Highest Position / Rank

	School Leaders		Teacher		Total	Percentage
Master Teacher II	5	14.29	0	0.00	5	3.70
Master Teacher I	25	71.43	0	0.00	25	18.52
Head Teacher III	5	14.29	0	0.00	5	3.70
Teacher III	0	0.00	56	56.00	56	41.48
Teacher II	0	0.00	13	13.00	13	9.63
Teacher I	0	0.00	31	31.00	31	22.96
Total	35.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	135.00	100.00

Table 7 presents the distribution of respondents according to their highest position or rank. The results indicate that most respondents are Teacher III, with 56 respondents (41.48%), followed by Teacher I with 31 (22.96%), and Master Teacher I with 25 (18.52%). Other positions include Teacher II (13 respondents, 9.63%), Master Teacher II (5 respondents, 3.70%), and Head Teacher III (5 respondents, 3.70%). Among school leaders, the majority are Master Teacher I (71.43%), with 14.29% Master Teacher II and 14.29% Head Teacher III. Among teachers, the majority hold the rank of Teacher III (56.00%), followed by Teacher I (31.00%), and Teacher II (13.00%). These results suggest that most respondents hold mid-level teaching positions within the Department of Education's career progression ladder.

For school leaders such as master teachers and head teachers, the findings imply that leadership and mentoring responsibilities within schools are largely carried out by Master Teachers I and II. These roles are designed to support instructional supervision, mentoring, and professional development among teachers. Master teachers serve as instructional leaders who guide classroom teachers in improving teaching practices and aligning their instructional strategies with curriculum standards. According to Schleicher (2021), teacher leaders, such as master teachers, play a vital role in strengthening professional learning communities and improving the overall quality of teaching in schools. Their leadership contributes to mentoring, coaching, and the implementation of professional development programs that enhance teachers' instructional competence and readiness for career advancement.

Moreover, school leaders in higher ranks possess greater professional experience and expertise, enabling them to effectively support the implementation of the Expanded Career Progression (ECP) system. Their leadership role allows them to guide teachers in preparing professional portfolios, participating in professional development activities, and meeting the competency requirements of the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST). Research by Day and Gu (2022) highlights that experienced teacher leaders significantly influence teacher motivation, collaboration, and professional growth through mentoring and instructional guidance. Therefore, the presence of master teachers and head teachers in leadership roles strengthens the support system that encourages teachers to pursue career progression opportunities.

For teachers, the results indicate that most respondents are in the Teacher I to Teacher III ranks, particularly with a large proportion of Teacher III positions. This suggests that many teachers are in the middle stage of their teaching careers, having already gained considerable classroom experience and are preparing for higher professional roles. Teachers in these positions are expected to demonstrate strong instructional competence, participate actively in professional development programs, and contribute to collaborative learning initiatives within the school. According to Collie (2022), teachers at mid-career levels often exhibit higher engagement in professional learning and collaboration as they prepare for leadership roles and career advancement.

Furthermore, the distribution of teacher ranks reflects the natural progression of educators within the DepEd career structure. Teachers begin their careers as Teacher I and gradually advance through higher positions based on experience, qualifications, and demonstrated competencies. Participation in training, mentoring, research activities, and professional development programs enables teachers to improve their qualifications for promotion. As noted by OECD (2023), career progression systems that provide clear pathways for advancement encourage teachers to continuously develop their professional competencies and remain committed to the teaching profession.

Overall, the distribution of positions among respondents indicates a balanced structure of leadership and classroom teaching roles within schools. The presence of master teachers and head teachers provides strong instructional leadership, while teachers at various career stages contribute to collaborative professional learning and instructional improvement. This structure supports the effective implementation of career progression initiatives and promotes continuous professional development among educators.

Professional Development Trainings Attended

There are important components that contribute to the respondents' improvement and efficiency. Their participation motivates them to improve their confidence, capacities, and ability to sustain effectiveness. Table 8 showed the related training/ seminars attended by the teachers.

Table 8 Professional Development Training Attended

Rank	Training / Seminar Attended	Frequency	Percentage
1	INSET / In-Service Training (including Midyear INSET, School-Based INSET)	42	31.11%
2	ARAL Program Trainings / Workshops	24	17.78%
3	Learning Action Cell (LAC) Sessions	16	11.85%
4	Division Training Workshops	14	10.37%
5	Revised / Enhanced K-12 Curriculum Training	12	8.89%
6	Academic Recovery and Accessible Learning (ARAL) Tutors Training	10	7.41%
7	Design Thinking in K-3 Mathematics and Science Teaching	6	4.44%
8	ELLN (Early Language Literacy and Numeracy) Training	5	3.70%
9	MATATAG Curriculum Orientation	3	2.22%
10	Other Specialized Seminars (Critical Thinking Strategies, PE Scientific Approach, Capacity Building)	3	2.22%
Total		135	100%

The table shows that the most frequently attended professional development activity among respondents is In-Service Training (INSET), which ranks highest. This indicates that school heads and teachers actively participate in school-based and division-level professional development programs to improve instructional competence and pedagogical practices. The ARAL Program trainings and Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions also ranked highly, highlighting the Department of Education's emphasis on collaborative professional learning and academic recovery initiatives.

The presence of curriculum-related trainings such as Revised/Enhanced K-12 Curriculum, MATATAG Curriculum orientation, and ELLN training suggests that educators are continuously updated with current educational reforms and curriculum standards. Participation in these trainings strengthens teachers' instructional skills, promotes professional collaboration, and supports the implementation of new educational policies. Overall, the ranking reflects the commitment of school leaders and teachers to continuous professional development and their readiness to improve instructional practices aligned with DepEd priorities.

IMPLEMENTATION OF EXPANDED CAREER PROGRESSION (ECP)

The Expanded Career Progression (ECP) system is a policy initiative of the Department of Education that aims to provide clear and structured pathways for teachers' professional advancement. It allows teachers to progress through various career stages while strengthening their competencies, leadership capacity, and instructional effectiveness. Through this system, teachers are given opportunities to pursue promotion while continuing to contribute to classroom instruction and school improvement. Understanding the implementation of ECP helps determine how effective career progression policies are in supporting teachers' professional development.

Career Progression Awareness and Orientation

Career progression awareness and orientation refer to teachers' understanding of the policies, procedures, and opportunities related to career advancement within the education system. Adequate awareness enables teachers to prepare for promotion by aligning their professional activities with the required competencies and standards. Orientation programs and information dissemination initiatives play an important role in guiding teachers on the requirements of the Expanded Career Progression system. Increased awareness helps teachers plan their career development strategically and pursue professional growth opportunities.

Table 9 presents the respondents' perceptions regarding career progression awareness and orientation in relation to the Expanded Career Progression (ECP) system. The results show that both school leaders and teachers strongly agree that career progression awareness and orientation are effectively implemented in their schools, as indicated by the overall weighted mean of 4.61 (SD = 0.49). Among the indicators, the highest mean rating was obtained for "Aware of the Expanded Career Progression (ECP) policy" (WM = 4.78, SD = 0.41), indicating that respondents have strong awareness of the existing career progression policy. On the other hand, the lowest mean rating was recorded for "Orientation on career progression opportunities is provided" (WM = 4.49, SD = 0.54), although it still falls within the strongly agree category. These findings suggest that while awareness of the policy is high, there may still be opportunities to strengthen structured orientation programs that further explain career progression opportunities to teachers.

Table 9 Career Progression Awareness and Orientation

Indicators	School Leaders		Teachers		Average		
	WM	SD	WM	SD	WM	SD	Remarks
Aware of the Expanded Career Progression (ECP) policy.	4.71	0.46	4.84	0.37	4.78	0.41	Strongly Agree
The career stages and promotion pathways are clearly explained in the school.	4.43	0.50	4.66	0.52	4.54	0.51	Strongly Agree
Orientation on career progression opportunities is provided.	4.43	0.50	4.56	0.57	4.49	0.54	Strongly Agree
Teachers understand qualification requirements for promotion.	4.57	0.50	4.66	0.52	4.62	0.51	Strongly Agree
Information on career advancement is regularly disseminated.	4.57	0.50	4.7	0.46	4.64	0.48	Strongly Agree
Over-all Mean	4.54	0.49	4.68	0.49	4.61	0.49	Strongly Agree

Legend:

4.21–5.00 = Strongly Agree

3.41–4.20 = Agree

2.61–3.40 = Neutral

1.81–2.60 = Disagree

1.00–1.80 = Strongly Disagree

For school leaders such as master teachers and head teachers, the results indicate a high level of awareness and understanding of career progression policies, with an overall mean of 4.54 (SD = 0.49). The highest-rated indicator among school leaders is "Aware of the Expanded Career Progression (ECP) policy" (WM = 4.71), demonstrating that school leaders are highly knowledgeable about the policy and its implications for professional advancement. However, the lowest-rated indicators include "The career stages and promotion pathways are clearly explained in the school" and "Orientation on career progression opportunities is provided"

(WM = 4.43). This suggests that although school leaders are aware of the policy, there may be a need to further enhance systematic communication and orientation initiatives. According to Schleicher (2021), effective instructional leadership requires school leaders to ensure that teachers clearly understand professional standards, career pathways, and promotion requirements. Strengthening orientation and dissemination strategies can therefore help school leaders provide clearer guidance and mentoring to teachers, thereby improving teachers' readiness for promotion and engagement in professional development initiatives.

Furthermore, the high level of awareness among school leaders suggests they are well-positioned to guide teachers in understanding the requirements for career progression and aligning their professional activities with the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST). As emphasized by Day and Gu (2022), teacher leaders play a critical role in fostering professional learning environments that support teacher growth and career advancement. Their knowledge of career progression policies enables them to mentor teachers effectively, facilitate professional discussions through Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions, and promote career development initiatives within the school. Consequently, the strong awareness of school leaders contributes to the successful implementation of career progression frameworks and strengthens support systems for teachers' professional growth.

For teachers, the results also indicate a very high level of awareness of career progression policies, with an overall mean of 4.68 (SD = 0.49). The highest-rated indicator among teachers is "Aware of the Expanded Career Progression (ECP) policy" (WM = 4.84), suggesting that teachers are well informed about the existence and importance of the career progression system. This indicates that information dissemination regarding career advancement policies has been effectively implemented in schools. However, the lowest-rated indicator among teachers is "Orientation on career progression opportunities is provided" (WM = 4.56). While still interpreted as strongly agree, this suggests that teachers may benefit from additional structured orientation programs that provide detailed guidance on promotion processes and qualification requirements.

The high level of awareness among teachers indicates that they recognize the importance of career progression opportunities and are motivated to pursue professional advancement. Teachers who are well informed about career progression policies are more likely to participate in professional development programs, mentoring activities, and leadership opportunities that enhance their professional competencies. According to Collie (2022), awareness of career development opportunities positively influences teachers' motivation, engagement, and commitment to professional growth. In the context of this study, teachers' strong awareness of the Expanded Career Progression system may encourage them to actively prepare for promotion by improving their instructional competence, engaging in professional collaboration, and participating in mentoring and coaching programs.

Overall, the findings suggest that schools have successfully created awareness regarding career progression policies among both school leaders and teachers. However, strengthening structured orientation activities and continuous information dissemination may further improve teachers' understanding of promotion pathways and qualification requirements. This has important implications for the study, as strong awareness of career progression supports teachers' professional growth, enhances their readiness for advancement, and promotes a culture of continuous professional development within schools.

Access to PPST-Aligned Professional Development

Access to PPST-aligned professional development refers to teachers' opportunities to participate in training programs, workshops, and seminars that enhance their competencies based on the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers. These professional learning opportunities help teachers improve their instructional practices, classroom management skills, and assessment strategies. Continuous professional development ensures that teachers remain up to date on current educational practices and policies. Providing adequate access to such training programs supports teachers' readiness for career advancement.

Table 10 Access to PPST-Aligned Professional Development

Indicators	School Leaders		Teachers		Average		
	WM	SD	WM	SD	WM	SD	Remarks
Teachers have access to trainings aligned with PPST career stages.	4.57	0.50	4.72	0.45	4.65	0.48	Strongly Agree
Professional development supports career advancement.	4.71	0.46	4.78	0.42	4.75	0.44	Strongly Agree

Mentoring and coaching programs are available.	4.57	0.50	4.7	0.46	4.64	0.48	Strongly Agree
Teachers are encouraged to attend relevant seminars/workshops.	4.57	0.50	4.76	0.43	4.67	0.47	Strongly Agree
Professional development needs are assessed regularly.	4.57	0.50	4.72	0.45	4.65	0.48	Strongly Agree
Over-all Mean	4.60	0.49	4.74	0.44	4.67	0.47	Strongly Agree

Table 10 presents the respondents' perceptions regarding their access to professional development opportunities aligned with the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST). The results indicate that both school leaders and teachers strongly agree that professional development opportunities are accessible and supportive of career advancement, as reflected by the overall mean of 4.67 (SD = 0.47). Among the indicators, the highest mean rating is "Professional development supports career advancement" (WM = 4.75, SD = 0.44), indicating that respondents strongly recognize the role of professional development programs in advancing teachers' careers. The lowest mean rating, although still within the strongly agree category, is "Mentoring and coaching programs are available" (WM = 4.64, SD = 0.48). These findings suggest that while professional development opportunities are widely accessible, strengthening mentoring and coaching systems may further enhance teachers' career preparation and professional growth.

For school leaders such as master teachers and head teachers, the results reveal an overall mean of 4.60 (SD = 0.49), interpreted as strongly agree, indicating that school leaders perceive that teachers have strong access to PPST-aligned professional development opportunities. The highest-rated indicator among school leaders is "Professional development supports career advancement" (WM = 4.71), suggesting that school leaders recognize the important role of training programs in preparing teachers for promotion and professional advancement. Meanwhile, the lowest-rated indicators include "Teachers have access to trainings aligned with PPST career stages," "Mentoring and coaching programs are available," "Teachers are encouraged to attend relevant seminars/workshops," and "Professional development needs are assessed regularly" (WM = 4.57). Although these ratings still indicate strong agreement, they suggest opportunities to further strengthen structured mentoring programs and systematic needs assessments to ensure that professional development initiatives effectively address teachers' competency gaps.

The strong perceptions among school leaders highlight their important role in facilitating professional learning opportunities within schools. School leaders are responsible for organizing professional development activities, mentoring programs, and collaborative learning sessions that align with PPST standards. According to Day and Gu (2022), effective school leadership plays a crucial role in promoting continuous professional learning and creating supportive environments that enhance teacher competence and career development. By ensuring that teachers have access to relevant training programs, school leaders can help strengthen instructional quality and prepare teachers for leadership and promotion opportunities within the education system.

For teachers, the findings indicate an even higher level of agreement regarding their access to PPST-aligned professional development, with an overall mean of 4.74 (SD = 0.44). The highest-rated indicator among teachers is "Professional development supports career advancement" (WM = 4.78), indicating that teachers strongly recognize the importance of training and professional learning activities in improving their competencies and preparing them for career progression. This suggests that teachers view professional development programs as essential tools for enhancing their instructional skills, professional knowledge, and readiness for promotion. The lowest-rated indicator among teachers is "Mentoring and coaching programs are available" (WM = 4.70), which still indicates strong agreement but suggests that further strengthening mentoring initiatives may provide additional support for teachers' professional development.

The high level of agreement among teachers reflects their active engagement in professional learning opportunities and their recognition of the value of continuous professional development. Teachers who participate in training programs, seminars, and workshops aligned with PPST standards are better equipped to improve their instructional practices and meet the competency requirements for career progression. According to Collie (2022), teachers who have access to meaningful professional development opportunities demonstrate higher levels of motivation, job satisfaction, and instructional effectiveness. In the context of this study, the strong access to professional development opportunities may contribute positively to teachers' professional growth, instructional competence, and readiness for leadership roles.

Overall, the findings suggest that schools provide strong support for teachers' professional development through PPST-aligned training programs, seminars, and workshops. This support plays a vital role in strengthening teachers' competencies and preparing them for career advancement within the Expanded Career Progression (ECP) framework. However, further strengthening mentoring and coaching programs may enhance the effectiveness of these professional development initiatives. The results highlight the importance of continuous professional learning in promoting teacher professional growth, improving instructional quality, and supporting the successful implementation of career progression systems in schools.

Leadership and Mentoring Opportunities

Leadership and mentoring opportunities enable teachers to develop skills that extend beyond classroom instruction. Through leadership roles, teachers can contribute to school improvement initiatives, curriculum development, and professional learning communities. Mentoring programs also allow experienced teachers to guide and support their colleagues in improving teaching practices. These opportunities strengthen teachers' leadership capacity and prepare them for higher professional roles within the education system.

Table 11 Leadership and Mentoring Opportunities

Indicators	School Leaders		Teachers		Average		
	WM	SD	WM	SD	WM	SD	Remarks
Teachers are given opportunities to lead school initiatives.	4.57	0.50	4.68	0.47	4.63	0.49	Strongly Agree
Mentoring roles are assigned to experienced teachers.	4.71	0.46	4.72	0.45	4.72	0.45	Strongly Agree
Teachers facilitate LAC or professional learning sessions.	4.71	0.46	4.76	0.43	4.74	0.44	Strongly Agree
Leadership roles support career progression.	4.57	0.50	4.68	0.47	4.63	0.49	Strongly Agree
Instructional leadership is encouraged in the school.	4.57	0.50	4.72	0.45	4.65	0.48	Strongly Agree
Over-all Mean	4.63	0.48	4.71	0.45	4.67	0.47	Strongly Agree

Table 11 presents respondents' perceptions of leadership and mentoring opportunities provided within the school to support career progression and professional growth. The results reveal that both school leaders and teachers strongly agree that leadership and mentoring opportunities are available in their schools, as indicated by the overall mean of 4.67 (SD = 0.47). Among the indicators, the highest mean rating is "Teachers facilitate LAC or professional learning sessions" (WM = 4.74, SD = 0.44), suggesting that teachers are actively involved in collaborative learning and professional discussions within the school. On the other hand, the lowest mean rating is "Teachers are given opportunities to lead school initiatives" and "Leadership roles support career progression" (WM = 4.63, SD = 0.49), although these indicators are still interpreted as strongly agree. These findings indicate that leadership and mentoring opportunities are generally well established, particularly through professional learning communities such as Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions.

For school leaders such as master teachers and head teachers, the findings show an overall mean of 4.63 (SD = 0.48), interpreted as strongly agree, indicating that school leaders perceive that leadership and mentoring roles are actively provided to teachers. The highest-rated indicators among school leaders are "Mentoring roles are assigned to experienced teachers" and "Teachers facilitate LAC or professional learning sessions" (WM = 4.71). This suggests that school leaders recognize the importance of empowering experienced teachers to mentor their colleagues and facilitate collaborative professional learning. However, the lowest-rated indicators include "Teachers are given opportunities to lead school initiatives," "Leadership roles support career progression," and "Instructional leadership is encouraged in the school" (WM = 4.57). While still strongly positive, these results imply that school leaders may further strengthen structured leadership opportunities that encourage teachers to actively participate in school improvement initiatives and leadership roles.

The findings highlight the important role of school leaders in promoting leadership and mentoring opportunities within the school community. By assigning mentoring responsibilities and encouraging teachers to facilitate professional learning sessions, school leaders foster a culture of collaboration and professional growth. According to Day and Gu (2022), teacher leadership and mentoring practices are essential in strengthening instructional capacity and sustaining professional learning communities within schools. When school leaders

provide teachers with opportunities to lead initiatives and mentor colleagues, they help develop leadership competencies that support career progression and school improvement.

For teachers, the results show an even higher level of agreement regarding leadership and mentoring opportunities, with an overall mean of 4.71 (SD = 0.45), interpreted as strongly agree. The highest-rated indicator among teachers is “Teachers facilitate LAC or professional learning sessions” (WM = 4.76), indicating that teachers are actively engaged in collaborative professional learning activities. This reflects the importance of Learning Action Cell sessions as platforms for sharing teaching strategies, discussing challenges, and improving instructional practices. The lowest-rated indicators among teachers are “Teachers are given opportunities to lead school initiatives” and “Leadership roles support career progression” (WM = 4.68). Although still strongly positive, this suggests that teachers may benefit from additional opportunities to assume leadership roles that directly contribute to career advancement.

The strong agreement among teachers indicates that they value leadership and mentoring opportunities as essential components of their professional growth. Teachers who engage in mentoring, coaching, and leadership roles can enhance their professional competencies, build confidence in instructional leadership, and contribute to school improvement initiatives. According to Collie (2022), teacher leadership opportunities promote professional engagement, motivation, and collaborative learning among educators. In this study, the availability of leadership and mentoring opportunities supports teachers’ readiness for career advancement and strengthens their ability to contribute to their colleagues’ professional development.

Overall, the findings indicate that schools provide meaningful leadership and mentoring opportunities for teachers, particularly through collaborative platforms such as Learning Action Cell sessions and mentoring programs. These initiatives contribute significantly to teachers’ professional growth and support the implementation of career progression frameworks. However, further expanding opportunities for teachers to lead school initiatives and participate in instructional leadership roles may further strengthen their preparation for higher professional responsibilities. The results highlight the importance of leadership development and mentoring programs in promoting continuous professional learning, improving instructional practices, and supporting teachers’ career progression within the education system.

Institutional Support and Recognition Mechanisms

Institutional support and recognition mechanisms refer to the assistance and acknowledgment provided by schools and educational authorities to encourage teacher development and performance. Support may include mentoring programs, professional development resources, and administrative guidance. Recognition mechanisms such as awards, incentives, and promotion opportunities also motivate teachers to excel in their professional roles. Strong institutional support fosters a positive work environment that encourages teachers to pursue career advancement and continuous improvement.

Table 12 Institutional Support and Recognition Mechanisms

Indicators	School Leaders		Teachers		Average		
	WM	SD	WM	SD	WM	SD	Remarks
The school supports teachers’ career advancement.	4.71	0.46	4.80	0.40	4.76	0.43	Strongly Agree
Promotion processes are transparent and fair.	4.71	0.46	4.76	0.43	4.74	0.44	Strongly Agree
Teacher leadership roles are recognized.	4.86	0.36	4.72	0.45	4.79	0.40	Strongly Agree
Administrative support is provided for career progression.	4.71	0.46	4.66	0.48	4.69	0.47	Strongly Agree
Incentives or recognition are given for professional growth.	4.71	0.46	4.62	0.49	4.67	0.47	Strongly Agree
Over-all Mean	4.74	0.44	4.71	0.45	4.73	0.44	Strongly Agree

Table 12 presents respondents’ perceptions of the school’s institutional support and recognition mechanisms for teachers’ career progression. The results indicate that both school leaders and teachers strongly agree that institutional support and recognition mechanisms are present in their schools, as reflected by the overall mean of 4.73 (SD = 0.44). Among the indicators, the highest mean rating is “Teacher leadership roles are recognized” (WM = 4.79, SD = 0.40), indicating that respondents perceive strong recognition of teachers who assume leadership responsibilities within the school. On the other hand, the lowest mean rating is “Incentives or

recognition are given for professional growth” (WM = 4.67, SD = 0.47), although it still falls within the strongly agree category. These findings suggest that schools generally provide strong institutional support for teachers’ professional development and career advancement.

For school leaders such as master teachers and head teachers, the findings show an overall mean of 4.74 (SD = 0.44), interpreted as strongly agree, indicating that school leaders believe that institutional mechanisms effectively support teachers’ career progression. The highest-rated indicator among school leaders is “Teacher leadership roles are recognized” (WM = 4.86), suggesting that schools actively acknowledge teachers who contribute to instructional leadership and school improvement initiatives. However, the lowest-rated indicators include “The school supports teachers’ career advancement,” “Promotion processes are transparent and fair,” “Administrative support is provided for career progression,” and “Incentives or recognition are given for professional growth” (WM = 4.71). Although these ratings still indicate strong agreement, they imply that schools may further enhance structured recognition systems and administrative support to sustain teacher motivation and professional engagement.

The findings highlight the critical role of school leaders in establishing supportive institutional environments that encourage professional growth and career advancement among teachers. School leaders are responsible for ensuring transparent promotion processes, providing administrative support, and recognizing teachers’ contributions to school development. According to Day and Gu (2022), supportive leadership and recognition mechanisms are essential in motivating teachers to engage in professional development and pursue career advancement opportunities. By strengthening recognition programs and support systems, school leaders can further promote a culture of professional excellence and continuous improvement within schools.

For teachers, the results show an overall mean of 4.71 (SD = 0.45), which is also interpreted as strongly agree, indicating that teachers perceive strong institutional support for their professional growth and career progression. The highest-rated indicator among teachers is “The school supports teachers’ career advancement” (WM = 4.80), suggesting that teachers feel encouraged by their schools to pursue professional development and promotion opportunities. This indicates that teachers recognize the role of school leadership and institutional structures in facilitating their career progression. On the other hand, the lowest-rated indicator among teachers is “Incentives or recognition are given for professional growth” (WM = 4.62). While still strongly positive, this suggests that teachers may desire additional recognition programs or incentives that acknowledge their professional achievements and contributions to the school community.

The high level of agreement among teachers demonstrates that institutional support mechanisms play an important role in fostering motivation and engagement in professional development activities. Teachers who perceive strong institutional support are more likely to participate in training programs, mentoring initiatives, and leadership opportunities that enhance their professional competencies. According to Collie (2022), supportive organizational environments that provide recognition and career development opportunities contribute significantly to teacher motivation, job satisfaction, and instructional effectiveness. In the context of this study, strong institutional support may therefore encourage teachers to actively pursue career advancement and strengthen their instructional competence.

Overall, the findings suggest that schools provide effective institutional support and recognition mechanisms that encourage teachers to pursue professional growth and career progression. The strong recognition of teacher leadership roles and transparent promotion processes contribute to a supportive professional environment that promotes continuous learning and development. However, strengthening incentive systems and recognition programs may further enhance teachers’ motivation and engagement in professional development activities. These results highlight the importance of institutional support in sustaining teacher professional growth and ensuring the successful implementation of career progression initiatives in schools.

Summary of Results

Table 13 shows the summary of results for the level of implementation of Expanded Career Progression (ECP)

Table 13 Summary of Results

Indicators	School Leaders		Teachers		Average		
	WM	SD	WM	SD	WM	SD	Remarks
Career Progression Awareness And Orientation	4.54	0.49	4.68	0.49	4.61	0.49	Strongly Agree
Access To PPST-Aligned Professional Development	4.60	0.49	4.74	0.44	4.67	0.47	Strongly Agree
Leadership And Mentoring Opportunities	4.63	0.48	4.71	0.45	4.67	0.47	Strongly Agree
Institutional Support And Recognition Mechanisms	4.74	0.44	4.71	0.45	4.73	0.44	Strongly Agree
Over-all Mean	4.63	0.48	4.71	0.46	4.67	0.47	Strongly Agree

Table 13 presents the summary of the level of implementation of the Expanded Career Progression (ECP) system as perceived by school leaders and teachers across four key indicators: career progression awareness and orientation, access to PPST-aligned professional development, leadership and mentoring opportunities, and institutional support and recognition mechanisms. The results reveal that both school leaders and teachers strongly agree that the implementation of the Expanded Career Progression system is evident in their schools, as reflected by the overall mean of 4.67 (SD = 0.47). Among the indicators, the highest mean rating is “Institutional Support and Recognition Mechanisms” (WM = 4.73, SD = 0.44), indicating that schools provide strong support systems and recognition programs that encourage teachers to pursue professional growth and career advancement. On the other hand, the lowest mean rating is “Career Progression Awareness and Orientation” (WM = 4.61, SD = 0.49), although it still falls within the strongly agree category. This suggests that while awareness of career progression policies is generally high, there may still be opportunities to further strengthen orientation and information dissemination initiatives.

For school leaders such as master teachers and head teachers, the results show an overall mean of 4.63 (SD = 0.48), interpreted as strongly agree, indicating that school leaders perceive the implementation of the Expanded Career Progression system as highly evident in their schools. The highest-rated indicator among school leaders is “Institutional Support and Recognition Mechanisms” (WM = 4.74), suggesting that school leaders believe that schools provide adequate administrative support, recognition, and fair promotion processes that facilitate teachers’ career advancement. Meanwhile, the lowest-rated indicator is “Career Progression Awareness and Orientation” (WM = 4.54). Although still strongly positive, this result implies that school leaders may need to further strengthen structured orientation programs and communication strategies that clearly explain promotion pathways and qualification requirements to teachers. According to Day and Gu (2022), school leaders play a critical role in establishing supportive professional environments that promote teacher development and career progression. Their leadership ensures that professional development initiatives, mentoring programs, and recognition mechanisms are effectively implemented to support teachers’ professional growth.

The strong perception of institutional support among school leaders indicates that schools are actively implementing mechanisms that encourage teachers to pursue professional development and leadership opportunities. Recognition of teacher leadership roles, transparent promotion processes, and administrative support are essential in motivating teachers to engage in professional growth activities. As emphasized by Schleicher (2021), schools that provide strong institutional support systems are more likely to foster collaborative learning environments and sustained teacher professional development. In the context of this study, the presence of these support mechanisms strengthens the implementation of the Expanded Career Progression framework and contributes to a culture of continuous professional learning within schools.

For teachers, the findings indicate a slightly higher level of agreement, with an overall mean of 4.71 (SD = 0.46), also interpreted as strongly agree. The highest-rated indicator among teachers is “Access to PPST-Aligned Professional Development” and “Leadership and Mentoring Opportunities” (WM = 4.71), suggesting that teachers perceive strong opportunities for professional learning and leadership development within their schools. These findings indicate that teachers actively participate in training programs, mentoring activities, and collaborative learning initiatives that enhance their professional competencies and prepare them for career advancement. The lowest-rated indicator among teachers is “Career Progression Awareness and Orientation” (WM = 4.68), although it still reflects strong agreement. This result suggests that while teachers are generally

aware of career progression policies, there may still be opportunities to further improve structured orientation programs that provide detailed guidance on promotion pathways and requirements.

The high ratings across all indicators reflect teachers' positive perception of the support provided by schools in promoting professional growth and career advancement. Teachers who have access to professional development opportunities, mentoring programs, and leadership roles are more likely to improve their instructional competence and actively pursue career progression. According to Collie (2022), supportive professional environments that provide access to training, mentoring, and recognition significantly enhance teacher motivation, job satisfaction, and professional engagement. In this study, the strong implementation of the Expanded Career Progression components may therefore contribute to teachers' readiness for promotion, improved instructional practices, and stronger professional collaboration.

Overall, the findings suggest that the implementation of the Expanded Career Progression system in schools is highly evident across all identified indicators. The strong presence of professional development opportunities, leadership roles, mentoring programs, and institutional support mechanisms demonstrates the schools' commitment to promoting teacher professional growth. However, further strengthening awareness and orientation programs related to career progression policies may enhance teachers' understanding of promotion pathways and qualification requirements. These results highlight the importance of supportive school environments in sustaining teacher development and ensuring the successful implementation of career progression initiatives.

TEACHER PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

Teacher professional growth refers to the continuous process of improving teachers' knowledge, skills, and professional competencies throughout their careers. It involves participation in professional development programs, collaboration with colleagues, and engagement in reflective teaching practices. Professional growth enables teachers to adapt to evolving educational demands and enhance the quality of instruction they provide to learners. Sustained professional development contributes to improved teaching effectiveness and student learning outcomes.

Instructional Competence

Instructional competence refers to teachers' ability to plan, implement, and evaluate teaching and learning activities effectively. It includes mastery of subject matter, the use of appropriate teaching strategies, and the ability to engage learners in meaningful learning experiences. Competent teachers demonstrate strong classroom management, assessment practices, and instructional delivery. Developing instructional competence is essential for ensuring quality education and improved student achievement.

Table 14 Instructional Competence

Indicators	School Leaders		Teachers		Average		
	WM	SD	WM	SD	WM	SD	Remarks
Apply effective teaching strategies in my lessons.	4.71	0.46	4.68	0.47	4.70	0.46	Very High
Align instruction with curriculum standards.	4.71	0.46	4.76	0.43	4.74	0.44	Very High
Use varied assessment strategies.	4.86	0.36	4.68	0.51	4.77	0.43	Very High
Adapt teaching to learner needs.	4.71	0.46	4.7	0.50	4.71	0.48	Very High
Continuously improve the instructional practices.	4.71	0.46	4.74	0.44	4.73	0.45	Very High
Over-all Mean	4.74	0.44	4.71	0.47	4.73	0.45	Very High

Legend:

4.21–5.00 = Very High

3.41–4.20 = High

2.61–3.40 = Satisfactory

1.81–2.60 = Low

1.00–1.80 = Very Low

Table 14 presents respondents' perceptions of their instructional competence. The results reveal that both school leaders and teachers demonstrate a very high level of instructional competence, as reflected by the overall mean of 4.73 (SD = 0.45). Among the indicators, the highest mean rating is "Use varied assessment strategies" (WM = 4.77, SD = 0.43), indicating that respondents highly value diverse assessment methods for monitoring and evaluating student learning effectively. On the other hand, the lowest mean rating is "Apply effective teaching strategies in my lessons" (WM = 4.70, SD = 0.46), although it still falls within the very high category. These findings suggest that respondents consistently demonstrate strong instructional practices, including aligning instruction with curriculum standards, adapting teaching strategies to learners' needs, and continuously improving their teaching methods.

For school leaders such as master teachers and head teachers, the findings show an overall mean of 4.74 (SD = 0.44), interpreted as very high, indicating that school leaders perceive themselves as highly competent in instructional practices. The highest-rated indicator among school leaders is “Use varied assessment strategies” (WM = 4.86), suggesting that they are highly skilled in using a range of assessment tools and techniques to evaluate student learning outcomes effectively. Meanwhile, the lowest-rated indicators include “Apply effective teaching strategies in my lessons,” “Align instruction with curriculum standards,” “Adapt teaching to learner needs,” and “Continuously improve instructional practices” (WM = 4.71). Although these ratings remain very high, they indicate areas where school leaders continue to strengthen their instructional practices while guiding teachers in improving teaching and learning processes.

The strong instructional competence among school leaders highlights their important role in supporting effective teaching practices and professional development among teachers. As instructional leaders, master teachers and head teachers are responsible for guiding teachers in implementing effective teaching strategies, improving assessment practices, and aligning instruction with curriculum standards. According to Day and Gu (2022), instructional leadership plays a crucial role in enhancing teacher effectiveness and promoting continuous professional learning within schools. School leaders who demonstrate high instructional competence can effectively mentor teachers, facilitate professional learning sessions, and encourage innovation in teaching practices to improve student learning outcomes.

For teachers, the results also show a very high level of instructional competence, with an overall mean of 4.71 (SD = 0.47). The highest-rated indicator among teachers is “Align instruction with curriculum standards” (WM = 4.76), indicating that teachers are highly capable of implementing lessons that are consistent with prescribed curriculum frameworks and learning competencies. This suggests that teachers demonstrate a strong understanding of curriculum requirements and can effectively translate these standards into classroom instruction. On the other hand, the lowest-rated indicators among teachers include “Apply effective teaching strategies in my lessons” and “Use varied assessment strategies” (WM = 4.68). While these indicators still fall within the very high category, they suggest that teachers may benefit from additional opportunities to further enhance their instructional strategies and assessment practices through continuous professional development.

The high level of instructional competence among teachers reflects their strong commitment to delivering quality instruction and improving student learning experiences. Teachers who possess strong instructional skills are better able to engage learners, address diverse learning needs, and implement effective teaching methods. According to Collie (2022), teachers who demonstrate high instructional competence are more likely to exhibit higher levels of professional engagement, motivation, and classroom effectiveness. In this study, teachers' strong instructional competence may be attributed to their participation in professional development programs, mentoring activities, and collaborative learning initiatives within the school.

Overall, the findings indicate that both school leaders and teachers demonstrate a very high level of instructional competence, which is essential for achieving quality education outcomes. The strong ability of educators to apply effective teaching strategies, align instruction with curriculum standards, and use varied assessment methods contributes to improved teaching effectiveness and learner performance. However, continued professional development programs and mentoring initiatives may further strengthen teachers' instructional practices and support their career progression. These results highlight the importance of instructional competence as a key component of teacher professional growth and educational excellence.

Professional Collaboration

Professional collaboration involves teachers working together to share knowledge, strategies, and experiences to improve instructional practices. Through collaborative activities such as Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions, peer observations, and team teaching, teachers can learn from one another and enhance their professional skills. Collaboration also promotes a supportive learning environment among educators. This collective effort contributes to continuous improvement in teaching and learning processes.

Table 15 presents the respondents' perceptions regarding their level of professional collaboration within the school. The results reveal that both school leaders and teachers demonstrate a very high level of professional collaboration, as reflected by the overall mean of 4.72 (SD = 0.45). Among the indicators, the highest mean rating is “Participate in Learning Action Cells (LAC)” (WM = 4.83, SD = 0.38), indicating that respondents actively engage in collaborative professional learning activities. On the other hand, the lowest mean ratings are “Collaborate with colleagues in lesson planning” and “Share teaching strategies with peers” (WM = 4.69), although these still fall within the very high category. These findings suggest that respondents consistently

practice collaboration in various professional activities such as lesson planning, professional learning discussions, and school-based initiatives.

Table 15 Professional Collaboration

Indicators	School Leaders		Teachers		Average		
	WM	SD	WM	SD	WM	SD	Remarks
Collaborate with colleagues in lesson planning.	4.71	0.46	4.66	0.52	4.69	0.49	Very High
Participate in Learning Action Cells (LAC).	4.86	0.36	4.8	0.40	4.83	0.38	Very High
Share teaching strategies with peers.	4.71	0.46	4.66	0.48	4.69	0.47	Very High
Engage in team-based school activities.	4.71	0.46	4.68	0.47	4.70	0.46	Very High
Support colleagues' professional development.	4.71	0.46	4.7	0.46	4.71	0.46	Very High
Over-all Mean	4.74	0.44	4.70	0.46	4.72	0.45	Very High

For school leaders such as master teachers and head teachers, the findings indicate an overall mean of 4.74 (SD = 0.44), interpreted as very high, suggesting that school leaders demonstrate strong engagement in collaborative professional practices. The highest-rated indicator among school leaders is “Participate in Learning Action Cells (LAC)” (WM = 4.86), which reflects the active involvement of school leaders in facilitating professional learning communities and collaborative discussions among teachers. LAC sessions serve as important platforms for sharing teaching strategies, addressing instructional challenges, and strengthening professional relationships among educators. However, the lowest-rated indicators among school leaders include “Collaborate with colleagues in lesson planning,” “Share teaching strategies with peers,” “Engage in team-based school activities,” and “Support colleagues’ professional development” (WM = 4.71). Although these ratings remain very high, they suggest that continuous efforts to strengthen collaborative activities can further enhance teachers’ professional growth.

The strong collaboration among school leaders highlights their important role in promoting teamwork and collective professional learning within the school community. School leaders facilitate professional discussions, encourage peer mentoring, and create opportunities for teachers to share best practices in teaching. According to Day and Gu (2022), collaborative professional environments led by supportive school leaders contribute significantly to improving instructional quality and teacher effectiveness. By fostering professional collaboration, school leaders help create a culture of continuous learning that supports teachers’ professional development and career progression.

For teachers, the results also reveal a very high level of professional collaboration, with an overall mean of 4.70 (SD = 0.46). The highest-rated indicator among teachers is “Participate in Learning Action Cells (LAC)” (WM = 4.80), indicating that teachers actively engage in professional learning communities where they discuss instructional strategies, share experiences, and address classroom challenges collaboratively. This reflects the importance of LAC sessions as platforms for strengthening collaboration and promoting professional growth among teachers. The lowest-rated indicators among teachers include “Collaborate with colleagues in lesson planning” and “Share teaching strategies with peers” (WM = 4.66). Although still interpreted as very high, these results suggest that teachers may benefit from additional opportunities to collaborate in instructional planning and knowledge sharing activities.

The high level of collaboration among teachers reflects their willingness to work collectively to improve teaching practices and enhance student learning outcomes. Professional collaboration enables teachers to exchange ideas, learn from each other’s experiences, and develop innovative teaching strategies that address diverse learner needs. According to Collie (2022), collaborative professional environments strengthen teacher motivation, improve instructional practices, and promote shared responsibility for student success. In the context of this study, the strong professional collaboration among teachers may contribute to improved instructional competence, effective mentoring relationships, and stronger engagement in professional development initiatives.

Overall, the findings indicate that both school leaders and teachers maintain a highly collaborative professional culture within the school. Participation in Learning Action Cell sessions, collaborative lesson planning, and team-based school activities contributes to continuous professional learning and improved instructional practices. However, further strengthening collaborative activities related to lesson planning and the sharing of teaching strategies may enhance professional learning and instructional innovation. These results highlight the importance of professional collaboration in promoting teacher professional growth, improving teaching effectiveness, and supporting the implementation of career progression initiatives.

Mentoring and Coaching Engagement

Mentoring and coaching engagement refer to the active participation of teachers in mentoring relationships and coaching activities aimed at improving teaching performance. Experienced teachers and school leaders often provide guidance, feedback, and support to help teachers enhance their instructional practices. These engagements create opportunities for professional reflection and skill development. Effective mentoring and coaching contribute to sustained teacher growth and professional excellence.

Table 16 Mentoring and Coaching Engagement

Indicators	School Leaders		Teachers		Average		
	WM	SD	WM	SD	WM	SD	Remarks
Participate in mentoring or coaching programs.	4.57	0.50	4.64	0.59	4.61	0.55	Very High
Guide or support fellow teachers.	4.86	0.36	4.62	0.49	4.74	0.42	Very High
Receive mentoring support when needed.	4.71	0.46	4.72	0.45	4.72	0.45	Very High
Mentoring improves teaching practice.	4.71	0.46	4.66	0.48	4.69	0.47	Very High
Coaching activities enhance professional growth.	4.71	0.46	4.7	0.46	4.71	0.46	Very High
Over-all Mean	4.71	0.45	4.67	0.49	4.69	0.47	Very High

Table 16 presents the respondents' perceptions regarding their mentoring and coaching engagement within the school. The results reveal that both school leaders and teachers demonstrate a very high level of engagement in mentoring and coaching activities, as reflected by the overall mean of 4.69 (SD = 0.47). Among the indicators, the highest mean rating is "Guide or support fellow teachers" (WM = 4.74, SD = 0.42), indicating that respondents actively aid and support their colleagues in improving instructional practices. On the other hand, the lowest mean rating is "Participate in mentoring or coaching programs" (WM = 4.61, SD = 0.55), although it still falls within the very high category. These findings suggest that mentoring and coaching practices are widely implemented in the school, contributing to teachers' professional development and collaborative learning.

For school leaders such as master teachers and head teachers, the findings indicate an overall mean of 4.71 (SD = 0.45), interpreted as very high, suggesting that school leaders are actively engaged in mentoring and coaching practices. The highest-rated indicator among school leaders is "Guide or support fellow teachers" (WM = 4.86), indicating that school leaders strongly fulfill their roles as mentors and instructional leaders, providing guidance and professional support to teachers. Meanwhile, the lowest-rated indicator among school leaders is "Participate in mentoring or coaching programs" (WM = 4.57). Although still interpreted as very high, this suggests that while school leaders actively mentor others, there may be opportunities to further strengthen structured mentoring programs that encourage more systematic participation in coaching activities. According to Day and Gu (2022), teacher leaders play a crucial role in mentoring and coaching systems that enhance instructional practices and promote continuous professional learning among educators.

The strong mentoring engagement among school leaders highlights their important responsibility in guiding teachers toward improved instructional practices and professional growth. By providing mentorship, coaching, and instructional support, school leaders help teachers develop confidence, improve teaching strategies, and address classroom challenges effectively. Research by Schleicher (2021) emphasizes that mentoring and coaching systems within schools are essential in building teacher capacity and strengthening professional learning communities. In this study, the active involvement of school leaders in mentoring activities supports the implementation of career progression initiatives and strengthens teachers' readiness for leadership roles.

For teachers, the results also reveal a very high level of engagement in mentoring and coaching, with an overall mean of 4.67 (SD = 0.49). The highest-rated indicator among teachers is "Receive mentoring support when needed" (WM = 4.72), indicating that teachers perceive that adequate mentoring support is available to help them improve their teaching practices. This suggests that teachers benefit from the guidance of school leaders and experienced colleagues in addressing instructional challenges and enhancing their professional competence. The lowest-rated indicator among teachers is "Guide or support fellow teachers" (WM = 4.62). Although still very high, this result may indicate that some teachers are still developing their confidence and experience in mentoring others, particularly those in earlier stages of their teaching careers.

The high level of mentoring and coaching engagement among teachers reflects their recognition of the value of professional support systems in improving instructional practices and career development. Teachers who participate in mentoring programs can learn from experienced educators, exchange ideas, and enhance their professional competencies. According to Collie (2022), mentoring and coaching programs significantly improve teachers' instructional effectiveness, motivation, and professional engagement. In this study, the presence of

strong mentoring systems contributes to teachers' professional growth and prepares them for leadership opportunities within the school.

Overall, the findings indicate that mentoring and coaching practices are strongly implemented within the school environment. The active participation of school leaders and teachers in mentoring activities supports collaborative learning, strengthens professional relationships, and promotes continuous improvement in teaching practices. However, further strengthening structured mentoring programs may enhance participation and ensure that mentoring opportunities are accessible to all teachers. These results highlight the importance of engaging in mentoring and coaching to promote teacher professional growth, improve instructional quality, and support the successful implementation of career progression initiatives.

Instructional Leadership Practices

Instructional leadership practices involve teachers' ability to influence and support instructional improvement within their school community. Teachers who demonstrate instructional leadership actively participate in curriculum planning, professional development initiatives, and school improvement programs. They serve as role models in implementing effective teaching strategies and fostering collaborative learning environments. Developing instructional leadership practices prepares teachers for greater responsibilities in guiding instructional quality and school development.

Table 17 Instructional Leadership Practices

Indicators	School Leaders		Teachers		Average		
	WM	SD	WM	SD	WM	SD	Remarks
Lead or facilitate professional learning sessions.	4.57	0.50	4.54	0.54	4.56	0.52	Very High
Demonstrate effective teaching to colleagues.	4.71	0.46	4.52	0.58	4.62	0.52	Very High
Contribute to school instructional programs.	4.57	0.50	4.58	0.57	4.58	0.54	Very High
Support school improvement initiatives.	5.00	0.00	4.66	0.48	4.83	0.24	Very High
Influence positive instructional practices in school.	4.86	0.36	4.7	0.46	4.78	0.41	Very High
Over-all Mean	4.74	0.36	4.60	0.53	4.67	0.44	Very High

Table 17 presents the respondents' perceptions regarding their instructional leadership practices within the school. The results reveal that both school leaders and teachers demonstrate a very high level of instructional leadership, as reflected by the overall mean of 4.67 (SD = 0.44). Among the indicators, the highest mean rating is "Support school improvement initiatives" (WM = 4.83, SD = 0.24), indicating that respondents actively contribute to initiatives that enhance instructional quality and overall school performance. On the other hand, the lowest mean rating is "Lead or facilitate professional learning sessions" (WM = 4.56, SD = 0.52), although it still falls within the very high category. These findings suggest that respondents consistently demonstrate leadership behaviors that influence teaching practices and support the continuous improvement of instructional programs in their schools.

For school leaders such as master teachers and head teachers, the findings show an overall mean of 4.74 (SD = 0.36), interpreted as very high, indicating that school leaders strongly practice instructional leadership within the school. The highest-rated indicator among school leaders is "Support school improvement initiatives" (WM = 5.00), suggesting that they are highly committed to programs that improve teaching quality and learner outcomes. This reflects the significant responsibility of school leaders to plan, implement, and monitor instructional programs that align with school improvement goals. Meanwhile, the lowest-rated indicators among school leaders include "Lead or facilitate professional learning sessions" and "Contribute to school instructional programs" (WM = 4.57). Although still very high, these results indicate opportunities to further strengthen school leaders' active facilitation of professional learning sessions and instructional development programs.

The strong instructional leadership practices among school leaders highlight their important role in guiding teachers, promoting professional learning, and fostering a culture of instructional improvement within schools. School leaders who demonstrate strong instructional leadership can influence teachers' instructional practices, encourage collaboration, and ensure that instructional programs effectively address learners' needs. According to Day and Gu (2022), instructional leadership is a key factor in improving teaching quality and sustaining professional learning communities within schools. In this study, the strong instructional leadership demonstrated by school leaders contributes to the effective implementation of professional development initiatives and career progression programs for teachers.

For teachers, the results also indicate a very high level of instructional leadership practices, with an overall mean of 4.60 (SD = 0.53). The highest-rated indicator among teachers is “Influence positive instructional practices in school” (WM = 4.70), suggesting that teachers actively contribute to improving teaching strategies and instructional practices within their school community. This indicates that teachers recognize their role not only as classroom practitioners but also as contributors to improving instructional programs and to collaborative professional learning. The lowest-rated indicator among teachers is “Demonstrate effective teaching to colleagues” (WM = 4.52). Although still considered very high, this may indicate that some teachers need additional opportunities to share their instructional expertise with colleagues through demonstration teaching or professional learning sessions.

The high level of instructional leadership among teachers reflects their willingness to take active roles in school improvement initiatives and collaborative professional learning activities. Teachers who engage in instructional leadership practices help strengthen the collective capacity of educators to improve teaching strategies and student learning outcomes. According to Collie (2022), teachers who assume leadership roles in instructional improvement contribute significantly to professional collaboration, teaching innovation, and school effectiveness. In the context of this study, the strong instructional leadership practices among teachers support the development of professional learning communities and enhance teachers’ readiness for career advancement.

Overall, the findings indicate that both school leaders and teachers demonstrate strong instructional leadership practices that support school improvement and professional growth. The active involvement of educators in leading professional learning sessions, contributing to instructional programs, and supporting school improvement initiatives reflects a collaborative culture focused on enhancing teaching quality. However, providing more opportunities for teachers to facilitate professional learning sessions and demonstration teaching may further strengthen instructional leadership practices. These results highlight the importance of instructional leadership in promoting teacher professional growth, improving instructional effectiveness, and supporting the successful implementation of career progression initiatives within schools.

Summary of Results

Table 18 shows the summary of results on the level of teacher professional growth.

Table 18 presents the summary of the level of teacher professional growth as perceived by school leaders and teachers across four domains: instructional competence, professional collaboration, mentoring and coaching engagement, and instructional leadership practices. The results reveal that both groups of respondents perceive teacher professional growth as very high, as reflected in the overall mean of 4.71 (SD = 0.45). Among the indicators, instructional competence and professional collaboration both obtained the highest average of 4.73, indicating that respondents strongly demonstrate effective teaching practices and collaborative professional engagement. On the other hand, the lowest mean rating was recorded for mentoring and coaching engagement (WM = 4.69), although it still falls within the very high category. These findings indicate that teachers and school leaders consistently demonstrate strong professional competencies and collaborative practices that contribute to professional growth.

Table 18 Summary of Results

Indicators	School Leaders		Teachers		Average		
	WM	SD	WM	SD	WM	SD	Remarks
instructional competence	4.74	0.44	4.71	0.47	4.73	0.45	Very High
professional collaboration	4.78	0.39	4.67	0.49	4.73	0.44	Very High
mentoring and coaching engagement	4.71	0.45	4.67	0.49	4.69	0.47	Very High
instructional leadership practices	4.74	0.42	4.68	0.48	4.71	0.45	Very High
Over-all Mean	4.74	0.42	4.68	0.48	4.71	0.45	Very High

For school leaders such as master teachers and head teachers, the results show an overall mean of 4.74 (SD = 0.42), interpreted as very high, indicating that school leaders strongly demonstrate teacher professional growth in all identified domains. The highest-rated indicator among school leaders is professional collaboration (WM = 4.78), suggesting that school leaders actively engage in collaborative activities such as Learning Action Cell sessions, mentoring programs, and team-based school initiatives. This highlights the strong role of school leaders in promoting a collaborative professional environment that supports teacher development and instructional improvement. The lowest-rated indicator among school leaders is mentoring and coaching engagement (WM = 4.71). Although still very high, this suggests that school leaders may further strengthen structured mentoring and coaching programs that provide systematic guidance and professional support to teachers.

The strong professional collaboration and instructional leadership practices among school leaders reflect their significant role in guiding teachers toward improved instructional practices and professional growth. School leaders serve as mentors, facilitators, and instructional leaders who influence teachers' professional learning and career development. According to Day and Gu (2022), effective school leadership fosters collaborative professional learning communities that improve teaching quality and support continuous teacher development. In the context of this study, the strong professional growth demonstrated by school leaders contributes to a supportive learning environment that encourages teachers to improve their instructional competence and engage in professional learning activities.

For teachers, the results also indicate a very high level of professional growth, with an overall mean of 4.68 (SD = 0.48). The highest-rated indicator among teachers is instructional competence (WM = 4.71), indicating that teachers demonstrate strong teaching skills, including effective instructional strategies, alignment with curriculum standards, and the ability to adapt instruction to learners' needs. This suggests that teachers can deliver quality instruction and continuously improving their teaching practices. The lowest-rated indicator among teachers is mentoring and coaching engagement (WM = 4.67), although still very high. This result suggests that while teachers benefit from mentoring opportunities, there remains room to strengthen mentoring programs that encourage teachers to actively participate in coaching and peer support activities.

The high level of professional growth among teachers reflects their strong commitment to improving instructional practices and collaborating with colleagues to enhance teaching and learning processes. Teachers who engage in professional collaboration, mentoring, and instructional leadership contribute to the development of a positive professional learning environment within schools. According to Collie (2022), teachers who actively participate in collaborative professional development and leadership activities demonstrate higher levels of professional engagement and instructional effectiveness. In the context of this study, the strong professional growth among teachers may be attributed to their participation in professional development programs, mentoring initiatives, and collaborative learning activities within the school.

Overall, the findings indicate that both school leaders and teachers demonstrate a very high level of professional growth across all identified domains. The strong performance in instructional competence, professional collaboration, mentoring and coaching engagement, and instructional leadership practices reflects the schools' commitment to promoting continuous professional development. However, strengthening mentoring and coaching programs may further enhance teachers' professional growth and support their readiness for leadership and career advancement opportunities. These results highlight the importance of collaborative professional learning, instructional leadership, and continuous professional development in sustaining teacher professional growth and improving the overall quality of education.

SIGNIFICANT RELATIONSHIP

This section examines whether there is a significant relationship between the implementation of the Expanded Career Progression (ECP) system and teacher professional growth. The analysis focuses on determining how career progression initiatives such as awareness and orientation, access to professional development, leadership and mentoring opportunities, and institutional support relate to teachers' instructional competence, professional collaboration, mentoring engagement, and instructional leadership practices. Statistical tests were used to determine whether the implementation of ECP significantly influences teachers' professional growth and development.

Table 19 presents the relationship between the implementation of Expanded Career Progression (ECP) and teacher professional growth. The computed r-value of 0.74 indicates a strong positive relationship between the two variables. The p-value of 0.023, which is lower than the 0.05 level of significance, indicates that the relationship is statistically significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant relationship between Expanded Career Progression implementation and teacher professional growth is rejected.

Table 19 Significant Relationship Between Expanded Career Progression Implementation and Teacher Professional Growth

Variables	r-value	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Expanded Career Progression Implementation & Teacher Professional Growth	0.74	0.023	Reject H_0	Significant

This result implies that stronger implementation of Expanded Career Progression initiatives is associated with higher levels of teacher professional growth. When teachers are provided with clear career progression

pathways, access to professional development opportunities, leadership roles, mentoring support, and institutional recognition, they are more likely to enhance their instructional competence, professional collaboration, mentoring engagement, and instructional leadership practices. The findings suggest that career progression policies play an important role in motivating teachers to continuously improve their professional competencies and actively participate in school improvement initiatives.

According to Collie (2022), professional development systems and supportive workplace conditions significantly contribute to teachers' motivation, engagement, and professional growth. Similarly, Day and Gu (2022) emphasized that structured career progression systems encourage teachers to develop their competencies, strengthen professional collaboration, and assume leadership roles within schools. In the context of this study, the significant relationship between Expanded Career Progression implementation and teacher professional growth highlights the importance of strengthening career development initiatives in schools to sustain teacher effectiveness and improve educational outcomes.

CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED

This section identifies the challenges encountered by school leaders and teachers in implementing the Expanded Career Progression (ECP) system. Understanding these challenges provides insights into the barriers that may affect teachers' career advancement and professional development. The analysis highlights key issues experienced by respondents, including concerns about awareness, access to professional development, mentoring opportunities, and institutional support. Identifying these challenges helps inform recommendations to improve the implementation of the career progression framework within schools.

Table 20 shows the major challenges encountered by school leaders and teachers in implementing the Expanded Career Progression (ECP). The most common challenge identified by respondents is time constraints in pursuing professional growth, which ranked first. This indicates that many educators struggle to balance their teaching responsibilities, administrative tasks, and professional development activities required for career advancement.

Table 20 Challenges Encountered by School Leaders and Teachers in the Implementation of Expanded Career Progression

Rank	Challenges Encountered	Frequency	Percentage
1	Time constraints in pursuing professional growth	48	35.56%
2	Complex documentation requirements	36	26.67%
3	Limited awareness of Expanded Career Progression (ECP) policies	14	10.37%
4	Heavy workload limits participation in career activities	12	8.89%
5	Insufficient professional development access	10	7.41%
6	Limited mentoring or coaching support	7	5.19%
7	Lack of recognition for leadership roles	5	3.70%
8	Lack of clear career progression guidelines	4	2.96%
9	Limited promotion opportunities	3	2.22%
10	Insufficient institutional support from the school	2	1.48%
Total		135	100%

The second most common challenge is complex documentation requirements, suggesting that teachers find preparing documents and evidence for career progression time-consuming and difficult to manage. Other challenges include limited awareness of ECP policies, heavy workloads, and insufficient professional development opportunities, which may hinder teachers' full participation in career advancement initiatives.

These findings imply that while the Expanded Career Progression system provides opportunities for teacher advancement, several structural and workload-related factors may affect its effective implementation. Addressing these challenges through clearer guidelines, simplified documentation processes, increased professional development support, and improved mentoring systems may help strengthen the implementation of career progression initiatives and enhance teachers' professional growth.

4. SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter 4 presents a summary of the study, including the significant findings based on the research questions, the conclusions drawn from the statistical results, and recommendations for further enhancing

and implementing the developed dressmaking modules.

Summary

This study examined the implementation of Expanded Career Progression (ECP) and its relationship to

teacher professional growth among school leaders and teachers. Specifically, the study determined respondents' profiles by age, gender, civil status, highest educational attainment, years of service, and highest position or rank. It also assessed the level of implementation of Expanded Career Progression in terms of career progression awareness and orientation, access to PPST-aligned professional development, leadership and mentoring opportunities, and institutional support and recognition mechanisms. In addition, the study examined the level of teacher professional growth in terms of instructional competence, professional collaboration, mentoring and coaching engagement, and instructional leadership practices. The study also examined whether a significant relationship exists between the implementation of Expanded Career Progression and teacher professional growth and identified the challenges respondents encountered in relation to career progression.

The study utilized a quantitative descriptive-correlational research design, using survey questionnaires distributed to school leaders and teachers. Statistical tools such as weighted mean, standard deviation, and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation were used to analyze the data. The results of the study revealed that the implementation of Expanded Career Progression is highly evident in schools and that teacher professional growth is also very high across all identified domains. Furthermore, the results indicated a significant relationship between the implementation of Expanded Career Progression and teachers' professional growth. However, several challenges were identified, including time constraints, complex documentation requirements, heavy workload, and limited awareness of ECP policies.

Findings

Based on the analysis and interpretation of data, the following findings were obtained. Most of respondents are in the 41–60-year-old age group, indicating that most participants are in the mid to later stages of their teaching careers. Most respondents are female and married, reflecting the demographic composition of the teaching profession. In terms of educational attainment, most respondents have units in a master's degree, indicating that many teachers are actively pursuing graduate studies to enhance their professional competencies and qualify for career advancement. The respondents also have considerable professional experience, with many having more than ten years of teaching service. Most teachers occupy Teacher III positions, while school leaders are primarily Master Teacher I.

The findings further revealed that the implementation of Expanded Career Progression is highly evident in

schools. Among the components of career progression implementation, institutional support and recognition mechanisms obtained the highest rating, indicating that schools provide strong administrative support and recognition programs that encourage teachers to pursue professional advancement. Meanwhile, career progression awareness and orientation received the lowest rating, although it still falls within the strongly agree category, suggesting that further strengthening of orientation programs may improve teachers' understanding of promotion pathways.

In terms of teacher professional growth, the results showed a very high level across all domains, including instructional competence, professional collaboration, mentoring and coaching engagement, and instructional leadership practices. Among these domains, instructional competence and professional collaboration obtained the highest ratings, indicating that teachers demonstrate strong instructional practices and actively collaborate with colleagues through professional learning communities. Meanwhile, mentoring and coaching engagement received the lowest rating, although it still falls within the very high category.

The results of the correlation analysis revealed a significant relationship between the implementation of Expanded Career Progression and teachers' professional growth. This finding suggests that effective implementation of career progression initiatives contributes to improved professional competencies, collaboration, mentoring engagement, and instructional leadership among teachers.

Finally, the study identified several challenges respondents encountered regarding Expanded Career Progression, including time constraints on pursuing professional growth, complex documentation requirements, heavy workloads, limited awareness of career progression policies, and insufficient access to professional development opportunities. These challenges may affect teachers' ability to fully engage in career advancement initiatives.

Conclusions

The study concludes that the implementation of Expanded Career Progression (ECP) significantly contributes to teacher professional growth. Strong institutional support, access to professional development, and leadership and mentoring opportunities help improve teachers' instructional competence, collaboration, engagement in mentoring, and instructional leadership practices. The findings also show that both school leaders and teachers demonstrate a high level of awareness and participation in career progression initiatives,

reflecting schools' commitment to promoting continuous professional development.

Furthermore, the significant relationship between ECP implementation and teacher professional growth indicates that structured career progression systems play an important role in enhancing teachers' competencies and leadership capabilities. However, challenges such as time constraints, heavy workload, and complex documentation requirements remain and should be addressed to further strengthen the career progression initiatives and support sustained teacher professional development.

Recommendations

Based on the study's findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are proposed. School administrators should strengthen career progression orientation programs to ensure that teachers clearly understand the policies, promotion pathways, and qualification requirements associated with the Expanded Career Progression system. Providing regular orientation sessions and information dissemination activities may help improve teachers' awareness and readiness for career advancement.

Schools should also expand professional development opportunities aligned with the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST). Providing access to relevant training programs, workshops, and seminars may help teachers enhance their competencies and prepare for promotion and leadership roles.

Furthermore, school leaders should strengthen mentoring and coaching programs to support teachers' professional development. Experienced teachers, such as master teachers and head teachers, may serve as mentors who guide their colleagues in improving instructional practices and preparing professional portfolios required for career progression.

The Department of Education and school administrators should also simplify documentation requirements and provide administrative support to reduce the challenges associated with career progression processes. Streamlining documentation procedures may help teachers focus more on professional learning and instructional improvement.

Finally, future researchers may conduct further studies on the implementation of Expanded Career Progression and teacher professional growth, particularly focusing on its long-term impact on teaching effectiveness, leadership development, and student learning outcomes.

Output of the Study

The study resulted in the development of the Contextualized Career Progression Enhancement

Framework (CCPEF), a comprehensive professional development framework designed to assist public school teachers in understanding and successfully navigating the Department of Education's Expanded Career Progression (ECP) system. The framework was developed in response to the findings that, although teachers exhibit strong commitment to their profession, many experience challenges in understanding promotion requirements, competency standards, and documentation processes necessary for career advancement. The CCPEF serves as a practical guide that aligns teacher development with career progression policies while promoting continuous professional growth.

The framework is anchored on the principles of the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) and emphasizes competency-based professional development. It aims to help teachers systematically plan their career goals, strengthen instructional competence, develop leadership skills, engage in research, and prepare evidence-based portfolios required for promotion. Through this structured approach, teachers are encouraged to become more intentional in their professional growth while ensuring alignment with national educational standards and institutional goals.

A key feature of the CCPEF is its emphasis on career orientation and awareness, which provides teachers with a clear understanding of the Expanded Career Progression system, promotion pathways, and competency requirements. Orientation seminars, faculty discussions, and information dissemination activities are incorporated to ensure that teachers become familiar with career advancement opportunities and are equipped with the knowledge needed to make informed professional decisions throughout their teaching careers.

The framework also prioritizes professional development alignment by providing teachers with opportunities to participate in PPST-based training programs, instructional improvement workshops, ICT integration activities, and research capability-building initiatives. These professional learning opportunities are designed to strengthen teachers' instructional practices while enabling them to meet the competency indicators required for higher career stages. As a result, teachers become better prepared to demonstrate professional excellence and instructional effectiveness.

Another essential component of the framework is the establishment of a structured mentoring and coaching support system. Master teachers, school heads, and experienced educators play significant roles in providing guidance through Learning Action Cell

(LAC) sessions, classroom observations, peer mentoring, and coaching conferences. These collaborative activities foster a supportive professional environment where teachers receive constructive feedback, share best practices, and continuously improve their teaching competencies while preparing for career advancement.

The framework likewise focuses on portfolio development and systematic documentation of teachers' professional accomplishments. Teachers are guided in compiling evidence of instructional innovations, research outputs, leadership contributions, community engagement, and other professional achievements aligned with PPST indicators. This component ensures that teachers develop comprehensive, competency-based portfolios that effectively demonstrate their readiness for promotion and serve as valuable records of their professional growth.

To ensure effective implementation, the CCPEF incorporates continuous monitoring and evaluation through participation tracking, portfolio assessments, classroom observations, feedback sessions, and periodic evaluation reports. The framework also provides differentiated support mechanisms according to teachers' career stages and years of teaching experience, ensuring that beginning, proficient, and highly proficient teachers receive appropriate mentoring and professional development opportunities based on their individual needs and professional responsibilities.

Overall, the Contextualized Career Progression Enhancement Framework is expected to enhance teachers' awareness of the Expanded Career Progression system, strengthen mentoring and professional collaboration, improve instructional competence, and increase teachers' readiness for promotion. By integrating career planning, professional development, competency alignment, mentoring, and continuous evaluation into a single framework, the CCPEF contributes to teacher empowerment, sustainable professional growth, and improved educational quality, ultimately supporting the Department of Education's vision of developing highly competent and motivated educators.

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