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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENT: PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHERS ON EXPANDED CAREER PROGRESSION

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ABSTRACT

The recruitment of qualified teachers lacks corresponding policy in order to retain the qualified teachers in public schools. This mix-method approach research was conducted to determine the perceptions on implementing expanded career progression among 146 public elementary school teachers in Monkayo East District, Davao de Oro. Results showed that most of the respondents were 36-40 years old, female, Teacher 1, married, 6-10 years in service, have research related task and non-master's degree. Further, the perception of the expanded career progression among teachers was described as high Moreover, the career advancement undertakings were all described as very high. More so, there is a significant relationship between the extent of perception in the expanded career progression and the extent of career advancement undertakings. Also, there is no significant difference on the extent of respondents' perception in the expanded career progression. Consequently, there is no significant difference on the extent of career advancement undertakings of the respondents. Subsequently, the respondents ensure that their qualification and skills are appropriate to the desired career path through the themes: professional growth and expertise and academic writing and knowledge creation. Finally, the respondents view the achievability of every stage of the chosen career path with the themes: personal and professional growth in teaching and adapting to change and seek support from peers. Lastly, the respondents view the achievability of every stage of the chosen career path with the theme: personal and professional growth in teaching and adapting to change and seek support from peers.

KEYWORDS: *Education, expanded career progression, career advancement, teaching and learning, Davao de Oro*
SDG's: 4 Quality education, 8 decent work and economic growth

INTRODUCTION

To ensure quality education for students in public schools, the recruitment of qualified teachers is imperative. To make the recruitment effective, attractive salaries, benefits, and incentives must become part of the policy. However, the recruitment of qualified teachers should also have a corresponding policy in order to retain the qualified and competent teachers in public schools. A system for promotion with specific career path options should be available to motivate teachers to stay in DepEd. Prior to the approval and implementation of Executive Order 174, or the Expanded Progression System for Public School Teachers, DepEd already had an existing career path program of promotions with certain options. A teacher can opt to continue in teaching and avail the stages of promotion appropriate for him or her. However, a teacher who desires to set another course, like taking administrative responsibilities, may also do so. Despite the presence of a career path program, the opportunity remains limited.

The new system is not only intended to motivate teachers to progress but most significantly, to prevent them from leaving. In fact, a good number of teachers left public school for better-paid overseas jobs. The problem is expected to continue as the teacher's salary, ranging from P 25,000 to P 30,000, is not enough to support the needs of his or her own family. With the salary standard in DepEd, teachers remain underpaid (Philippine Institute for Development Studies [PIDS], 2021). As much as a teacher desires promotion, the slot remains very limited. The issue is not only true in the Philippines but even in the international level as well. The U.S. experienced an alarming rate of public school teachers who left the teaching field. One of the teachers' reasons was low salaries (Choi, 2023). Similar to the case in the Philippines, teachers left for better-paid jobs in other industries. The implementation of the new Expanded Career Progression is presumed to motivate all public school teachers and prevent them from leaving for better-paying jobs.

Hence, the current study is conducted to verify public school teachers' impression of the Expanded Career Progression System. It is designed to gather quantitative data in order to establish the progress of teachers in their effort for professional development and advancement. Specifically, the study is capable of providing concrete data on the perceptions of implementing expanded career progression on teachers' professional development and career paths and converging the quantitative and qualitative results to further understand the views and perceptions of public

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elementary school teachers in Monkayo East District, Davao de Oro, on the need for expanded career progression.

METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative strategies to investigate the perceptions and practices of public elementary teachers regarding the Expanded Career Progression and their Career Advancement Undertakings. The quantitative component employed descriptive, comparative, and correlational designs to analyze the respondents' profiles, their level of agreement with the Expanded Career Progression, and the extent of their career advancement efforts. The qualitative component aimed to explore in-depth insights into how teachers align their professional development with their target career paths.

The research was conducted in the Monkayo East District of Davao de Oro, targeting 146 elementary public school teachers selected through stratified random sampling using Slovin's formula. For the qualitative phase, 10 participants were chosen via convenience sampling for in-depth interviews (IDIs). A validated and pilot-tested survey questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data, while a semi-structured interview guide was utilized for the qualitative data.

Data collection involved obtaining necessary permissions from the Department of Education and school principals. Surveys were administered with proper orientation, and interviews were conducted until data saturation was reached. Quantitative data were treated using frequency, percentage, mean, t-test, ANOVA, and chi-square, while qualitative data were transcribed, coded, and thematically analyzed to identify key patterns and insights. To ensure ethical rigor, informed consent was obtained from all participants. Confidentiality, voluntary participation, and adherence to the Data Privacy Act of 2012 were strictly observed. Measures such as data triangulation, saturation, and transparency helped ensure the trustworthiness and integrity of the research process.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the outcomes and analysis of the data gathered from the responses of the respondents. The instrument used in the study measured the perceptions of implementing expanded career progression on teachers' professional development and career paths among public elementary school teachers in Monkayo East District, Davao de Oro. Hence, to make the survey instrument valid and reliable, the instruments were subjected to validity by three validators. Upon securing the approval of the validators, the survey instrument was pilot tested to establish its reliability in terms of gathering data.

Table 2. The profile of the respondents in terms of age

AGE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
26-30	7	4.8
31-35	27	18.5
36-40	42	28.8
41-45	35	24.0
46-50	21	14.4
51-55	7	4.8
56-60	7	4.8
Total	**146**	**100.0**
SEX		
Male	33	22.6
Female	113	77.4
Total	**146**	**100.0**
POSITION		
Teacher 1	58	39.7
Teacher 2	35	24.0
Teacher 3	12	8.2
Teacher 4	7	4.8
Teacher 5	4	2.7
Teacher 7	12	8.2
Principal 1	11	7.5
Principal 2	6	4.1
Principal 3	1	0.7
Total	**146**	**100.0**

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CIVIL STATUS		
Married	99	67.8
Single	29	19.9
Widow	14	9.6
Separated	4	2.7
Total	**146**	**100.0**
LENGTH OF SERVICE		
Less than a year	13	8.9
1-5 years	8	5.5
6-10 years	72	49.3
11-15 years	36	24.7
16-20 years	12	8.2
26 years onward years	5	3.4
Total	**146**	**100.0**
EXTRA SOURCE OF INCOME		
Tutorial	30	20.5
Family Business	48	32.9
Research Related Task	49	33.6
Table 2 continued…	19	13.0
Total	**146**	**100.0**
ACADEMIC QUALIFICATION		
Non-Master's Degree	101	69.2
Master's Degree Holder	33	22.6
Doctorate Degree Holder	12	8.2
Total	**146**	**100.0**

The demographic profile of public elementary school teachers in Monkayo East District, Davao de Oro reflects trends observed nationally. Most teachers fall within the 36–45 age range, a stage associated with pedagogical maturity and physical vigor. The profession is predominantly female (77.4%), aligning with cultural perceptions of teaching as a nurturing role. In terms of position, a large proportion are in entry-level ranks, particularly Teacher I (39.7%), indicating limited career advancement opportunities due to factors such as promotion requirements and training access.

Most respondents are married (67.8%), suggesting strong social support systems that can enhance job stability and motivation. A majority have served for 6–10 years (49.3%), representing a stable mid-career workforce. Regarding supplemental income, the most common source is research-related tasks (33.6%), reflecting DepEd's emphasis on action research and professional development.

In terms of academic qualifications, the majority (69.2%) do not hold a master's degree, and only 8.2% possess a doctorate. This gap may hinder career progression under the Expanded Career Progression framework, with constraints such as financial limitations, heavy workloads, and limited institutional support cited as barriers to further studies.

Respondents' Perception in the Expanded Career Progression

The perception of the Expanded Career Progression system in the education sector generally reflects a mixture of optimism, curiosity, and cautious anticipation among educators. Hence, this new framework, introduced to provide a more structured pathway for teachers' professional growth.

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Table 3. Overall level of perception in the expanded career progression

PARTICULARS	MEAN	DESCRIPTION
1. Educational Requirement	4.02	Very High
2. Training Requirement	3.99	Very High
3. Experience Requirement	4.08	Very High
4. Salary Grade	4.21	Very High
Overall Mean	4.07	Very High

Teachers in Monkayo East District reported high to very high perceptions of the Expanded Career Progression system, with an overall mean of 4.07, indicating strong understanding and positive reception. Perceptions were very high for salary grade (4.21) and overall system objectives, highlighting the motivational impact of clear promotion pathways and financial incentives. Educational requirements (4.02), training requirements (3.99), and experience requirements (4.08) were rated high, suggesting that while teachers are generally well-informed, minor clarifications remain necessary for consistent implementation. These findings reflect strong alignment between the framework's goals and teachers' aspirations, fostering professional growth, leadership readiness, and commitment to excellence, in line with literature emphasizing the link between competency-based progression systems and improved teacher motivation, skills, and retention.

Career Advancement Undertakings of the Respondents

Table 4. Overall level of perception of career advancement

PARTICULARS	MEAN	DESCRIPTION
1. Planning	4.50	Very High
2. Persistence	4.51	Very High
3. Leadership	4.77	Very High
4. Professional Development	4.77	Very High
Overall Mean	**4.63**	**Very High**

Teachers in Monkayo East District demonstrated a very high level of engagement in career advancement undertakings, with an overall mean of 4.63, indicating strong commitment to professional growth, leadership, and alignment with the Expanded Career Progression System. All dimensions—planning (4.50), persistence (4.51), leadership (4.77), and professional development (4.77)—were rated very high, reflecting proactive goal-setting, resilience in overcoming challenges, active leadership within schools, and sustained participation in capacity-building activities. These results suggest a strong professional culture characterized by continuous improvement, readiness for higher responsibilities, and dedication to enhancing educational quality, consistent with literature linking collegiality, persistence, and professional learning to improved teacher effectiveness and promotion prospects.

Relationship Between Extent of Perception in the Expanded Career Progression and Extent of Career Advancement Undertakings of Respondents

Table 5 Thematic framework on how the respondents ensure that their qualification and skills are appropriate to the desired career path

	Career Advancement			
	R-value	Degree of Relationship	P-value	Interpretation
Extent of Perception Expanded Career Progression	0.163	Very Weak	0.050	Significant

Analysis revealed a very weak positive correlation (r = 0.163) between teachers' perception of the Expanded Career Progression and their career advancement undertakings, though the relationship was statistically significant at p = 0.05. This suggests that while awareness and understanding of the framework influence career advancement efforts, they are not strong determinants. Other factors—such as access to graduate education, workload, administrative support, financial capacity,

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and personal motivation—likely exert greater influence. The findings indicate a possible gap between policy awareness and actionable support, underscoring the need for clearer guidance, accessible resources, and stronger incentives to translate positive perceptions into tangible career growth.

Difference on the Extent of Respondents' Perception in the Expanded Career Progression when Analyzed According to Profile

Table 6. The comparison in the extent of respondents' perception in the expanded career progression when analyzed by object according to profile.

Profile	Test Value	P-value	Interpretation
Age	5.432	0.246	Not Significant
Sex	1632.500	0.277	Not Significant
Position	4.994	0.758	Not significant
Civil Status	6.001	0.112	Not Significant
Length of Service	3.915	0.418	Not Significant
Extra Source of Income	0.476	0.924	Not Significant
Academic Qualification	3.698	0.157	Not Significant

No significant differences were found in teachers' perceptions of the Expanded Career Progression when grouped by age or other profile variables, indicating comparable views across demographic categories. This suggests that the program is well-communicated and uniformly accepted, regardless of teachers' age, sex, experience, or academic background. The findings imply that DepEd and school leadership have likely implemented inclusive and equitable orientation efforts, fostering a shared understanding shaped more by common professional experiences than by personal characteristics.

Difference on the Extent of Career Advancement Undertakings of the Respondents when Analyzed According to Profile

Table 7. The comparison in the extent of the career advancement undertaking of the respondents when analyzed by object according to profile

Profile	Test Value	P-value	Interpretation
Age	3.721	0.714	Not Significant
Sex	1757.000	0.646	Not Significant
Position	2.379	0.498	Not significant
Civil Status	6.001	0.112	Not Significant
Length of Service	5.543	0.236	Not Significant
Extra Source of Income	4.988	0.173	Not Significant
Academic Qualification	4.484	0.106	Not Significant

Mann-Whitney U test for comparison of 2 groups; Kruskal Wallis Test for 3 or more groups

No significant differences were found in teachers' perceptions of career advancement when grouped by age or other profile variables, indicating similar views across demographic and professional backgrounds. This suggests that aspirations and motivation toward career growth are consistent among teachers, reflecting a shared culture of ambition and professional development. The findings support the idea that when educators are well-supported and fairly compensated, their commitment to advancing in their careers remains strong regardless of personal or job-related characteristics.

How the Respondents Ensure that their Qualification and Skills are Appropriate to the Desired Career Path

Public elementary school teachers in Monkayo East District, Davao de Oro perceived that they ensure their qualification and skills are appropriate to the desired career path with the core themes as professional growth and academic writing and knowledge creation.

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Professional Growth and Expertise

Table 8. Thematic framework on how the respondents ensure that their qualification and skills are appropriate to the desired career path

Core Themes	Sub-Themes	Core Ideas
Professional Growth and Expertise	Continuous Professional Development	Teachers engage in ongoing professional development to enhance their knowledge and skills
	Advanced Qualifications	Teachers attend workshops, seminars, online courses, and training programs
	Specialized Skills Development	Teachers pursue higher degrees or additional certifications related to their subject or pedagogical expertise
Academic Writing and Knowledge Creation	Crafting of Educational Research	Teachers Craft modules, conducting research, and using books and journals help teachers deepen their knowledge in their subject area. Teachers engage in research, reading books, and exploring academic journals is an essential part of a teacher's professional growth.
	Crafting Modules, Journals and Books.	Teachers can create tailored learning materials that suit the specific needs of their students.

The qualitative data reveal that teachers view **professional growth and expertise** as essential to career advancement, particularly under the Philippine Expanded Career Progression framework. Interview responses emphasize the need for continuous professional development, completion of graduate degrees, and acquisition of specialized skills to accumulate points required for promotion. Teachers highlighted participation in trainings, earning a master's degree, and securing qualifications such as the Trainer's Methodology and TESDA NCII as strategic steps toward promotion eligibility.

These statements underscore that the promotion system is merit-based, requiring documented evidence of academic and professional qualifications. This aligns with Teichler (2019) and Collins (2019), who assert that advanced credentials and specialized training provide a competitive edge in securing higher positions. Teachers also recognized that specialized skills not only improve their promotion prospects but also enhance their capacity to address diverse learner needs, fostering innovation and improved classroom outcomes (Carlan, 2024).

Teachers strongly associate career progression with continuous professional development, advanced qualifications, and specialized skills. Completing graduate studies, engaging in targeted trainings, and maintaining updated certifications are seen as critical for meeting promotion criteria and excelling in leadership roles. These efforts not only fulfill the formal requirements of the Expanded Career Progression framework but also enhance teaching effectiveness, innovation, and student learning outcomes.

How the Respondents View the Achievability of Every Stage of the Chosen Career Path

Public elementary school teachers in Monkayo East District, Davao de Oro perceived that they view the achievability of every stage of the chosen career path with the core themes as personal and professional growth in teaching and seek support from peers.

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Table 9. Thematic framework on how the respondents view the achievability of every stage of the chosen career path

Core Themes	Sub-Themes	Core Ideas
Personal and Professional Growth in Teaching	Setting Clear, Achievable Goals	Teachers stay focused by setting specific, measurable, and achievable goals for themselves at each stage of their career.
	Self-Evaluation	Teachers evaluate their teaching methods and progress toward their goals
	Maintaining Passion for Teaching	Teachers enjoy their work by reminding themselves of the impact they have on students' lives
	Adapting Teaching Strategies	Teachers adjust teaching methods to meet the needs of students, when faced with barriers.
Adapting to change and seek support from peers	Seeking Support from Colleagues and Mentors	Teachers don't have to tackle barriers alone. They often reach out to colleagues, mentors, or professional networks for advice and support.
	Being Flexible and Resilient	Teachers maintain flexibility and resilience when encountering barriers.

Personal and Professional Growth in Teaching

The qualitative findings highlight personal and professional growth as a key driver for teacher competence, confidence, and future-readiness. Teachers underscored the value of setting clear and achievable goals**,** emphasizing daily preparation, lesson readiness, and meeting teaching objectives as essential practices for both student success and professional advancement. This aligns with Indeed Career Guide (2022), which states that specific, realistic goals help teachers prioritize effectively and remain focused on what matters most.

Participants also stressed the importance of self-evaluation as a means of critically reflecting on teaching strategies, classroom management, and student outcomes. Such reflective practice enables teachers to identify areas for improvement and tailor their professional development efforts accordingly, a point reinforced by Tringale et al. (2019), who linked self-evaluation to greater responsibility and accountability.

Additionally, maintaining passion for teaching emerged as a strong theme. Teachers expressed that their commitment to the profession is both a calling and a responsibility, fueling resilience amid workload pressures and policy changes. Cruz (2016) supports this view, noting that passionate teachers bring energy, creativity, and positivity to the classroom—qualities that inspire students and foster deeper engagement.

Teachers view personal and professional growth as essential for achieving excellence in the classroom and advancing in their careers. They emphasized setting clear goals, engaging in daily preparation, practicing self-evaluation, and sustaining passion for teaching as cornerstones of success. These elements not only enhance student learning but also contribute to teachers' long-term satisfaction, resilience, and effectiveness in an evolving educational environment.

Adapting to Change and Seek Support from Peers

Teachers emphasized the critical importance of adapting to changes in teaching strategies and seeking support from peers as part of their professional growth. They shared that flexibility in instructional methods enables them to address students' evolving needs, aligning with Kilag and Sasan's (2023) assertion that adaptive strategies foster inclusivity, active participation, and academic success.

Collaboration emerged as another key theme, with teachers acknowledging that seeking help from colleagues and mentors strengthens professional networks, enhances teamwork, and creates a more positive workplace culture. This aligns with Heikka et al. (2021), who note that supportive peers can open opportunities, recommend initiatives, and promote smoother cooperation.

Moreover, participants stressed the value of flexibility and resilience in adjusting lesson plans, teaching approaches, and communication styles to suit diverse learners. This reflects Nguyen et al.'s (2020) findings that flexibility not only maintains teacher effectiveness in dynamic environments but also supports emotional well-being and fosters trust among students, parents, and colleagues.

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Overall, the integration of adaptability, peer support, and resilience contributes to a sustainable teaching practice that is responsive to change, grounded in collaboration, and resilient in the face of challenges.

Data Integration of the Salient Point of the Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

Table 10. Joint display of salient qualitative and quantitative findings

Aspect of Focal Point	Quantitative Findings	Qualitative findings	Nature of Data Integration
Public School Elementary Teachers are willing to follow the guidelines of Expanded Career Progression System to enliven the role as a teacher	The educational requirement among public elementary school teachers generated an average score of 4.02 which was described as high. This implies that teachers have a strong understanding of the system and its major components, though some minor clarifications may still be needed.	Based on Table 14, teachers ensure that their qualification and skills are appropriate to the desired career path with the core themes as professional growth and expertise.	Merging-Converging
Public School Elementary Teachers ensure that they plan for their promotions and are persistent to advance their career progression.	The extent of career advancement of the respondents in terms of planning has an average of 4.50 which was described as very high. This means that teachers are highly proactive in pursuing career advancement and regularly engage in professional development activities, and take on leadership roles aligned with the career progression framework.	Personal and professional growth in teaching helps teachers to become more competent for promotions, confident, and future-ready educators. Hence, it empowers them to achieve promotions, inspire learners, lead innovations, and make a lasting difference in the education system.	Merging-Converging

This mixed-method study, using a convergent parallel design, examined how public elementary school teachers perceive the Expanded Career Progression framework and its influence on their professional development and career paths. Integrated findings from quantitative and qualitative data reveal two key aspects.

First, teachers demonstrated a strong willingness to follow the system's guidelines, supported by high educational attainment and a deliberate effort to align their qualifications with desired career paths. Both data strands emphasize professional growth, expertise, and continuous improvement as central to their teaching role. However, sustaining this readiness requires consistent support, clear communication, and relevant professional development to bridge technical understanding with practical application.

Second, teachers actively plan and persist in pursuing career advancement, viewing promotion not simply as a reward but as a natural outcome of increasing competence, confidence, and leadership capacity. The strong alignment between quantitative and qualitative results reflects a growth-oriented mindset, driven by intrinsic motivation to improve performance and qualifications. For the framework to be fully effective, it should provide transparent promotion pathways, mentoring, and adequate resources, ensuring that teachers' efforts toward advancement are recognized and rewarded.

Overall, the findings point to a motivated teaching workforce ready to embrace the Expanded Career Progression framework, provided the system reinforces its goals with practical support structures.

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