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Professional Profile, Policy Awareness, and Perceived Benefits of Expanded Career Progression among Rural Teachers

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Abstract:

This study examined teachers' professional profile, policy awareness, perceived benefits, and implementation hurdles of the Expanded Career Progression (ECP) system in Corella District, Bohol, during School Year 2025–2026, as a basis for an action plan. A quantitative descriptive-correlational design was used, and survey data were analyzed using frequencies, percentages, weighted means, standard deviations, and correlation analyses. The results tables described 36 teachers, most of whom had master's degree units, were in the middle stages of their teaching careers, held Teacher III positions, and received Very Satisfactory performance ratings. Overall policy awareness was rated Highly Aware (weighted mean = 4.30). Respondents strongly agreed with the perceived benefits of ECP (weighted mean = 4.31), particularly economic and financial security, career longevity in rural schools, and professional motivation. Implementation hurdles were Often Encountered (weighted mean = 3.45), including additional workload, balancing qualification requirements with teaching responsibilities, and administrative processing difficulties. The reported correlations between professional profile and policy awareness, and between awareness dimensions and implementation hurdles, were not statistically significant at the .05 level. The study proposed the BRIDGE Program—Building Resilient, Innovative, and Digital Guidance for ECP Transition—to provide targeted orientation, digital portfolio support, peer mentorship, and internal document audits. The findings identify areas for institutional support during ECP implementation.

Keywords: expanded career progression, quantitative, Pearson r, Bohol, BRIDGE program

Introduction

To achieve Sustainable Development Goal (Quality Education), high-performing educational systems, such as those in Singapore and various European nations, have successfully adopted "multi-track" or "teacher leadership" frameworks that allow talented educators to rise in prestige and pay while remaining in the classroom. These innovative models recognize that the caliber of an educational system is inextricably linked to the motivation of its teachers, ensuring that pedagogical mastery stays where it is most crucial: with the students. However, this global shift serves as a response to the persistent teaching challenge of high turnover rates and stagnant career paths. International education bodies and UNESCO have acknowledged that traditional "flat" or "one-size-fits-all" structures, where the primary route to advancement is leaving for administration, often result in a "brain drain" of the most effective practitioners and create a significant knowledge gap in the classroom.

A career "ceiling" for classroom teachers has long been a problem for the Department of Education (DepEd) in the Philippines. For many years, the only ways for a Teacher III to advance to a higher pay grade were to become a Master Teacher, which has a small pool, or to become a Principal or Supervisor at a school. As a result, Executive Order (EO) No. 174, s. The Expanded Career Progression (ECP) System was created in 2022. By establishing new ranks, such as Teacher IV through VII and Master Teacher V, and matching teacher salary to that of administrative counterparts, this historic program successfully redefines the teaching profession.

The ECP is intended to be a revolutionary instrument for raising teacher motivation and professionalizing the ranks. The Philippine government seeks to encourage innovation and performance in the classroom by offering a clear, merit-based approach. However, as the strategy shifts from the central The "implementation gap" becomes a crucial subject of research from the office to the field. Under the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST), educators must now fulfill strict requirements that include research, creativity, and community involvement, tasks that call for substantial institutional support and resources.

An interesting example for the application of the ECP is the Province of Bohol. Even though the province has made great progress in education, a large number of its schools are located in rural, mountainous, or island environments. The obstacles to professional advancement for teachers in these districts are logistical as well as academic. Rural teachers may unintentionally be at a disadvantage when compared to their urban counterparts due to implementation challenges such unreliable internet availability for digital portfolio submissions, the high cost of traveling to urban areas for training, and the lack of local mentors in remote locations.

Moreover, the "impact" of ECP extends beyond individual promotion in a rural setting such as Bohol. It discusses the sustainability of rural education as well as school culture. The ECP may not succeed in keeping the greatest teachers in rural areas if these obstacles are seen as unachievable. It is critical to assess how these educators view the system, whether as a chance for well-earned advancement or as a bureaucratic burden that exacerbates the divide between the "center" and the "periphery."

These weak points are further demonstrated by the administrative reality in localized districts. For example, observations in Bohol's rural schools show an alarmingly low application rate, with only an estimated 20 elementary and 10 secondary instructors pursuing the ECP programs. This pattern draws attention to a major implementation challenge: teachers are not given enough time to complete the demanding documentation requirements. The enormous burden of creating large "folders" or digital portfolios in addition to their full-time teaching responsibilities causes many educators to drop their applications. This implies that the ECP may continue to be an elusive goal for the same teachers it aims to encourage in the absence of a more realistic schedule and faster preparation procedure.

Therefore, this proposed research intends to examine the perceived effects of the new promotion system on teachers' career progression. This study will be conducted in an identified elementary school in Bohol. The research will aim to enhance understanding of how promotion policies affect teachers' professional development by examining their perceptions on awareness, impacts, and challenges associated with the promotion process. The results of this study could provide a foundation for enhancing promotional systems and bolstering career advancement prospects for educators in the field of education.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

The Philippine laws and well-established psychological theories form the basis of this research's theoretical background, which offers a thorough lens through which to view teacher career advancement. The study provides a rational foundation for why the Expanded Career Progression (ECP) system is crucial for professional development and what structural obstacles might impede its effective implementation in rural school settings by fusing theories of motivation and self-efficacy with national executive and legislative acts. These are Hezberg's Two-Factory Theory and Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory. Legal bases include EO No. 174, s. 2022 and Republic Act No. 4670, known as The Magna Carta for Public School Teachers.

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory. By differentiating between "Hygiene Factors" and "Motivators," Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory[1] offers a crucial foundation for comprehending how the ECP system affects teacher satisfaction and retention. By meeting the financial demands of educators, the pay increases linked to the new ranks of Teacher IV to VII serve as crucial hygiene elements that avoid job unhappiness in the context of this study. Concurrently, the chance to progress to more senior positions without ever leaving the classroom is a strong incentive, providing the accomplishment and acknowledgment that propel sustained professional success. However, this theory also implies that these hygiene aspects may be compromised if implementation obstacles become too great, resulting in a condition of discontent that is difficult to overcome even with the prospect of promotion.

Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory

Albert Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory. The Self-Efficacy Theory of Albert Bandura[2] which looks at the connection between an educator's confidence in their own talents and their following professional activities, is equally important to this study. According to the ECP system framework, a teacher's perceived self-efficacy is directly influenced by their level of awareness about the new policy; instructors are more likely to believe they can successfully navigate the promotion ladder when they have a thorough understanding of the standards and the procedure. On the other hand, rural educators' self-efficacy is likely to decline when they face major implementation challenges, such as the difficult process of creating intricate portfolios with little time and technical assistance. The low application rates seen in local districts are frequently caused by this psychological barrier since teachers may believe that the requirements are unachievable despite their true pedagogical competency.

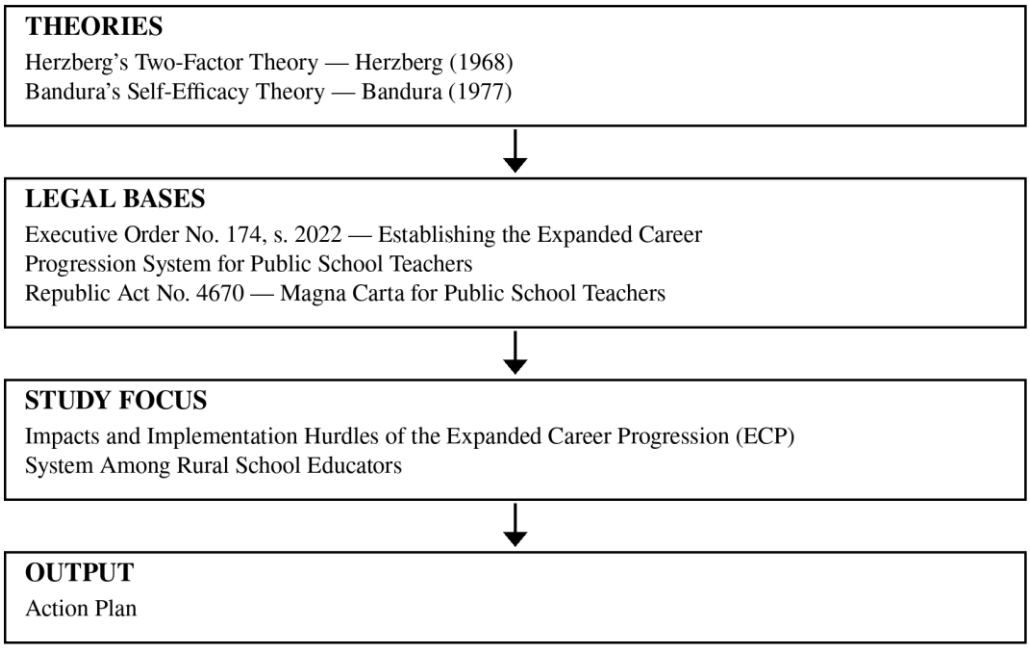


Figure 1 Theoretical Background of the Study

Legal Bases

Executive Order No. 174[3] acts as the main legal pillar of this research, formally requiring public school instructors to implement the ECP System. In order to ensure that the Department of Education can retain its best skilled practitioners in the classroom, this executive act was particularly created to establish a dual-track system that permits professional progression in either classroom teaching or school administration. By examining whether instructors in remote and rural stations are equally benefiting from the policy's anticipated benefits, merit-based promotion and greater compensation, this study assesses the efficacy of this legal mandate. The research offers a critical evaluation of how successfully this EO is serving its target demographic in remote locations by pointing out the discrepancy between policy goal and actual field implementation.

Republic Act No. 4670, known as The Magna Carta for Public School Teachers, gives the ECP more legislative backing by upholding educators' rights to fair compensation and professional development. This rule has required teachers' pay to be commensurate with their skills and that merit should continue to be the major criterion for any professional development for decades. The ECP system, which offers the structural paths required to realize the Magna Carta's vision, is essentially the contemporary operationalization of these long-standing legal commitments. This study investigates whether systemic obstacles, such as a lack of ICT infrastructure or insufficient time for document preparation, are impeding rural teachers in Bohol from exercising their legal rights to career advancement and financial security.

Furthermore, the Magna Carta mandates that the government provide adequate compensation and study leaves to teachers in order to foster their professional development. This regulation requirement directly affects the preparation variable in the study. In Bohol, where geographical constraints may make attending seminars or graduate school difficult, RA 4670 serves as a reminder that the State, not just individual instructors, is responsible for educating teachers for higher ECP ranks.

Related Studies

Improving the quality of education and keeping good teachers is a worldwide concern. OECD highlights some of the best-performing education systems such as those in Singapore and Estonia, each of which has different "multi-track" career paths, thus allowing them to retain highly skilled teachers in their positions as teachers. Recent global advances show that teachers' career satisfaction is directly related to their ability to progress.

Carter[4] documented in his study that the global teaching shortage is characterized by high rates of turnover and relatively stagnant career options for teachers. He also found that when teachers feel that their careers will end without any prospect for future advancement, their motivation to work drops significantly, thus providing further support for the need for teachers to have access to a structure that offers progression. UNESCO[5] also confirms that it is necessary for countries to look beyond "one-size-fits-all" employment strategies. Those strategies generally result in highly gifted teachers being assigned to non-teaching (administrative) activities, thus resulting in existing knowledge being lost.

Studies conducted by some regions in Southeast Asia, specifically Vietnam, have indicated that these challenges impact education systems. For example, Bonilla-Mejía and Londoño-Ortega[6] conducted research regarding teacher promotion systems for rural teachers, and their findings indicate that educational access is restricted by geographic factors like isolation. Geographic isolation also impacts teachers working in a rural setting in the Philippines. In a study conducted by Kimber and Ehrich[7] regarding the effects of implementation of merit-based pay, the authors assert that there were generally positive impacts on teacher morale due to the newly introduced compensation system, however, the "administrative burden" associated with documenting one's merit was a major barrier preventing teachers from applying for positions with merit-based pay.

The switch to the ECP system is a significant change in the Philippine setting. A crucial study on the perceived effects and difficulties of the career progression system among public school teachers under EO 174 S 2022 was carried out by Salvilla[8]. According to the survey, teachers are greatly hampered by implementation obstacles and technological requirements even though they are aware of the prospects for professional progress.

Simbre, Aquino, and Palad[9] further examined the unique challenges of rural teaching, pointing out that "folder preparation" for promotions frequently results in "burnout before advancement" in the Philippines. Lastly, the digital divide in rural schools continues to be a significant obstacle for the online submission components of the professional advancement tracks, despite the fact that EO 174 S 2022 is a policy breakthrough[10].

Any institutional reform must start with raising awareness, according to Navalta[11]. If educators do not understand the specifics of EO No. 174, they will not be able to align their career goals with the new courses. This is supported by Osman and Adanza[12] who argue that the quality of Career Path Orientation Programs teachers get influences their opinions. According to their findings, instructors may be aware that the policy exists, but they frequently lack a thorough conceptual understanding of the differences between the teaching and administration tracks.

Perceived opportunity, attitude, and awareness are linked by Toradio. The study found a direct correlation between a teacher's attitude toward the ECP and their assessment of opportunities for vertical advancement. When awareness is high, teachers regard the system as an attainable ladder; but, when the policy is not well understood, they often see it with skepticism or as a difficult-to-achieve changing target.

Santidad[13] suggest the PRIMA program, a teacher development initiative designed specifically to enhance ECP readiness. Their research indicates that "Capacitation Plans" that provide teachers with the technical expertise needed to meet the new standards are essential to preparedness. This

bolsters Navalta's assertion that a methodical process is necessary to move instructors from a state of mere awareness to one of portfolio readiness.

According to Santidad preparation involves a multimodal approach that incorporates educational skills, documentary evidence (MOVs) organization, and psychological readiness. Without programs like PRIMA, there is a significant preparedness gap that prevents teachers from successfully progressing through the PPST career stages, according to the report.

Raquim[14] categorize the difficulties as "Challenges and Pitfalls," highlighting the possibility that the complexity of the reclassification procedure could be a barrier. Their research indicates that while the advantages, better pay and status, are evident, educators are concerned about the risks, such as the high stakes of portfolio evaluation and the potential for an increase in administrative burden.

In conclusion, psychological motivation and legal requirements work in concert to successfully operationalize the ECP System. The strategy seeks to change the teaching profession from a "flat" career structure into a dynamic pathway where remuneration and prestige work as both key motivators and hygiene elements by addressing Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory. Fostering high self-efficacy among educators is crucial to achieving these goals, though, as Bandura's theory emphasizes that if implementation barriers in rural areas continue to be too great, teachers may not have the confidence to take advantage of these new opportunities despite their pedagogical competence.

In the end, the ECP serves as the contemporary implementation of EO No. 174, s. 2022 and Republic Act No. 4670 (The Magna Carta for Public School Teachers), guaranteeing that career progression is not a geographical luxury but rather a legal entitlement. To ensure that no teacher is left behind in the pursuit of professional excellence, it is crucial for rural educators in Bohol to bridge the gap between these lofty notions and the practical realities of "folder preparation" and digital limits.

THE PROBLEM

Statement of the Problem

This study aims to determine the teachers' perspectives on the impact and implementation hurdles of the expanded career progression policy in identified public school in Bohol based on their observations during the school year 2025-2026 as basis for an action plan.

Specifically, it sought answers to the following questions:

1) What is the professional profile of the respondents in terms of:

1.1 years of teaching experience;

1.2 Plantilla position; and

1.3 IPCRF rating in the previous school year?

2) What is the respondent's level of awareness on the ECP policy provisions relative to:

2.1 Teaching career line;

2.2 Mode of promotion; and

2.3 Qualification standards?

3) To what extent do the respondents perceive the benefits from the ECP system in terms of :

3.1 Professional motivation;

3.2 Economic / financial security; and

3.3 Career longevity in rural schools?

4) Is there a significant relationship between the respondents' profile and their: level of awareness of the ECP system?

4.1 level of awareness of the ECP policy provisions; and

4.2 perceived benefits of the ECP system?

5) Based on the findings of the study, what action plan may be proposed?

Statement of the Null Hypotheses

The study tested the following null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance:

H_0: There is no significant relationship between the respondents' profile and their level of awareness of the ECP system.

H02: There is no significant relationship between the level of awareness and perceived implementation hurdles.

Methodology

Research Design

A descriptive-correlational research design will be used in this study to ascertain the perceived effects and implementation challenges of the ECP policy. Since the study aims to characterize the present state of the aforementioned variables and ascertain their relationship without altering them, this design is suitable[15]. The researcher was able to gather important data using this methodology, which aided in developing conclusions and suggestions based on the study's findings.

To provide the maximum level of data accuracy and inclusivity, this study used complete enumeration. Unlike typical sampling procedures, which select a subset of a group, complete enumeration involves inviting all permanently appointed public school teachers in the selected districts of the Division of Bohol. By including all teachers, the method eliminates bias and ensures that the findings reflect an accurate evaluation of the division's readiness.

Input–Process–Output Model

The study followed the Input–Process–Output (IPO) model to present the flow of the research process. This model illustrates the sequence of steps undertaken in conducting the study and shows the relationship between the variables involved.

Input. The key information and variables needed to assess the current state of the ECP policy among educators are included in the input phase of the study's conceptual framework. In order to comprehend the respondents' baseline characteristics, it first focuses on the Profile of Teachers, collecting professional and demographic information such as age, gender, years of teaching experience, and highest level of education. This also provides their IPCRF rating from the prior academic year, which is a crucial measure of their performance preparedness for promotion, and their current plantilla position.

Beyond individual profiles, the input box focuses on Teachers' Perceptions, specifically examining their knowledge of the ECP policy with reference to the new teaching career lines, ways to advance, and strict qualification requirements. Additionally, it looks at how the policy is considered to affect factors like career longevity, economic or financial security, and professional motivation. These factors help decide whether the policy is succeeding in keeping top-notch educators. Lastly, the framework incorporates the implementation challenges faced by these teachers, offering an essential perspective on the geographical and institutional obstacles that could impede their professional development in the rural setting.

Process. The methodological workflow used to convert raw inputs into significant research findings is described in the Process phase of the conceptual framework. The preparation of the research instrument, which entails creating and verifying the instruments used to gauge teacher perceptions and obstacles, is the first step in this sequence. After that, survey questionnaires are distributed to the intended respondents, which immediately leads to the data collection stage, where data is methodically gathered for analysis.

The Statistical Treatment of Data, which applies a variety of quantitative methodologies to guarantee academic rigor, is the major component of this phase. This involves calculating the mean to ascertain awareness and impact levels, using frequency and percentage to characterize the teachers' demographic profile, and using correlation analysis to look into the correlations between various factors. The final step in the process is the Interpretation of Results, where the processed data is converted into insights that specifically meet the study's objectives.

Output. The study's output culminates in the creation of a strategic action plan designed to improve rural school divisions' use of the Expanded Career Progression (ECP) system. By addressing the particular implementation challenges found in the research, such as the administrative load of "folder" preparation and the digital divide, this approach aims to close the gap between policy purpose and field reality. It acts as a formal road map for the Department of Education (DepEd) to expedite promotion procedures, offer focused technical support to educators in remote areas, and guarantee that all educators, regardless of location, successfully take advantage of the professional development opportunities required by EO 174 S 2022.

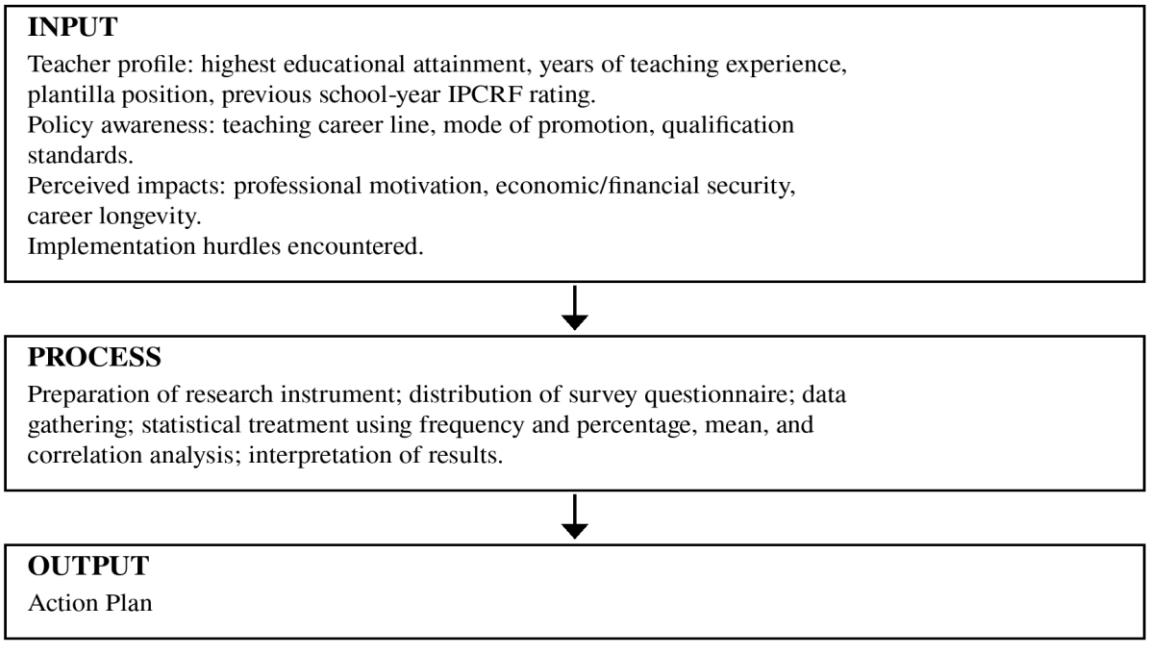


Figure 2 Flow of the Study

Research Environment

The main site for examining the application of the ECP approach in a rural environment is the district of Corella, Bohol. This district is the smallest among all the districts in Bohol. It is also where the smallest primate, tarsier, can be found. Despite being the smallest district in the province of Bohol, this district has been known in producing competent students not only in the province but also in regional and national events. It has produced learner who competed in the National Schools Press Conference (NSPC) which is the highest-level journalism competition for elementary and

secondary student journalists in the Philippines. It has also produced athletes who can also compete in the regional and national level.

Corella has more than 100 competent teachers in the district who produce globally competitive learners. Many teachers in the district are longing for this new promotional system in the DepEd since there are still lots of them who were not promoted until this time, despite the long number of years they've been teaching.

Being a rural school, teachers could encounter particular logistical challenges in contrast to their urban colleagues. The school offers a particular setting for observing the low application rates and administrative demands that local educators have described, such as the little time available for "folder preparation" amid a demanding teaching load.

Additionally, the school's involvement in this study demonstrates how Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory and the Self-Efficacy Theory may be applied practically. The study assesses whether the legal promises of Republic Act No. 4670 are being carried out in practice by evaluating the teachers at the District of Corella's awareness of and perceptions of the effects of EO 174 S 2022. The district serves as a crucial source of information for determining the systemic obstacles, such as problems with the digital divide and technical bottlenecks, that must be addressed in the suggested Action Plan in order to guarantee that all rural teachers can develop in their careers.

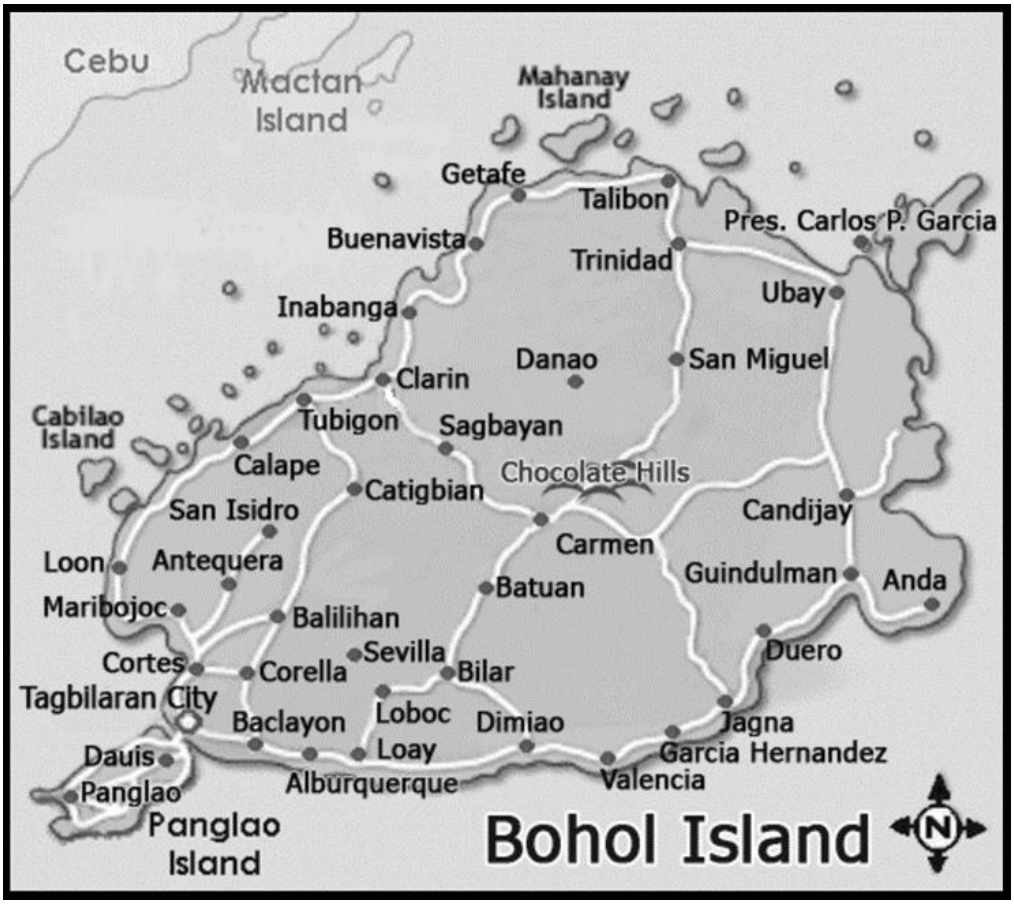


Figure 3 Location Map of the Research Environment



Figure 4 School Photograph Included in the Source Research Environment

Respondents and Sampling

The study included 36 teacher-respondents from Corella District. From recently hired teachers to seasoned veterans of the Department of Education's plantilla, the teachers of Corella District include a varied group of professionals at different phases of their careers. In order to achieve the strict qualifying requirements of the ECP system, these teachers are known for their dedication to academic brilliance. They regularly pursue higher educational attainment and maintain high IPCRF performance ratings. As practitioners in a rural Bohol district, they exemplify the tenacity needed to balance full-time teaching duties with the pursuit of professional recognition and the financial stability guaranteed by national laws such as the Magna Carta for Public School Teachers.

Despite their commitment, these teachers deal with serious systemic issues that characterize their work in a rural environment. They frequently have to strike a difficult balance between the rigorous administrative "folder preparation" needed for professional progression and classroom instruction, which is often made more difficult by time constraints and possible deficiencies in digital infrastructure. The main subjects of this study are the teachers at the District of Corella because their experiences with implementation challenges and their degree of policy awareness clearly illustrate the discrepancy between the goals of EO No. 174 and the realities of career advancement in rural areas.

Table 1 Distribution of Respondents

Grade Level	F	%
Kindergarten	6	17
Grades 1-3	11	30
Grades 4-6	13	36
High School	6	17
Total	36	100

Research Instrument and Validation

The study will adopt the survey instrument taken from the study of Navalta (2024) as the primary instrument for data collection, and consists of four (4) parts, specifically Parts I, II, and IV. Part III is a researcher-made instrument and will undergo pilot testing and validation.

Part I. This section provides the profile of the respondents in terms of age and gender, highest educational attainment, years of teaching experience, Plantilla position, and IPCRF rating in the previous school year.

Part II. This section provides the perceptions of the respondents of the awareness on the ECP policy in terms of teaching career line, mode of promotion, and qualification standards. Data will be collected using a 5-point Likert scale, with responses ranging from “Highly Aware” to “Not Aware."

Part III. This section provides the perceptions of the respondents of the impacts on the ECP policy in terms of professional motivation, economic / financial security, and career longevity in rural schools. Data will be collected using a 5-point Likert scale, with responses ranging from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree."

Part IV. This section provides the implementation hurdles encountered the respondents when transitioning to the ECP. Data will be collected using a 5-point Likert scale, with responses ranging from “Always Encountered” to “Never Encountered."

Part III was identified as researcher-made and intended for pilot testing and validation.

Data Collection and Analysis

Preliminary Stage. The researcher will make the required ethical and administrative preparations before starting the study. At this point, the researcher formally requests permission from the Superintendent of the Schools Division after obtaining the necessary permits from CTU officials.

Data Gathering Stage. After distributing the survey, the researcher will inform the participants of the study's objectives and guarantee that their answers will be kept private and used exclusively for scholarly research. The chosen educators will allow ample time to respond to the inquiries. A link to the digital version of the survey instrument via Google Forms will be sent to anyone who cannot be reached to get a hard copy.

Post-Data Gathering Stage. Following the completion of the questionnaires, the researcher gathered the answers and meticulously reviewed them for accuracy. The collected information will be tallied, arranged, and ready for statistical analysis and interpretation.

Frequency and Percentage. These statistical tools will be used to describe the identified profile of the respondents

Weighted Mean. The weighted mean will be used to assess teachers' impressions of the ECP policy's impact, awareness, and hurdles. This tool will help determine the average response of the participants based on the Likert scale used in the questionnaire. The computed mean values will be interpreted using the descriptive ratings from the scoring process.

Pearson Product–Moment Correlation Coefficient. This statistical tool will be used to determine the identified possible significant relationships. The computed correlation value will be interpreted at the 0.05 level of significance to determine whether the relationship between the variables is statistically significant.

Correlation results were evaluated at the .05 significance level.

Scoring Procedure

The responses of the participants will be interpreted using a five-point Likert scale to determine the level of teachers’ perceptions regarding their awareness and preparedness. Each response will be assigned a corresponding numerical value ranging from 1 to 5. The computed weighted mean will be used to determine the level of agreement of the respondents for each indicator in the questionnaire.

Table S1 Policy Awareness Scoring Rubric

Scale	Range	Interpretation	Verbal Description
5	4.21 – 5.00	Highly Aware	The respondents possess an extensive and comprehensive understanding of the ECP policy, including intricate details regarding the dual career lines, specific qualification standards, and the required evidence for reclassification.
4	3.41 – 4.20	Aware	The respondents demonstrate a clear and functional understanding of the policy's core provisions. They are familiar with the general requirements for promotion and the fundamental differences between teaching and administrative tracks.
3	2.61 – 3.40	Moderately Aware	The respondents have a basic familiarity with the policy but lack depth in specific areas. While they recognize the existence of the ECP, they may require further clarification on the technicalities of the promotion modes.
2	1.81 – 2.60	Slightly Aware	The respondents have heard of the ECP policy but possess very limited knowledge of its actual mechanics. There is a significant need for orientation to understand how the policy affects their current career trajectory.
1	1.00 – 1.80	Not Aware	The respondents have no prior knowledge or understanding of the ECP policy. They are unfamiliar with the career lines and the new promotion standards mandated by EO No. 174.

Table S2 Perceived Impacts Scoring Rubric

Scale	Range	Interpretation	Verbal Description
5	4.21 – 5.00	Strongly Agree	The impact is perceived to be very high and extremely beneficial.
4	3.41 – 4.20	Agree	The impact is perceived to be high and beneficial.
3	2.61 – 3.40	Neutral	The impact is perceived to be moderate or uncertain.
2	1.81 – 2.60	Disagree	The impact is perceived to be low or ineffective.
1	1.00 – 1.80	Strongly Disagree	The impact is perceived to be very low or non-existent.

Table S3 Implementation Hurdles Scoring Rubric

Scale	Range	Interpretation	Verbal Description
5	4.21 – 5.00	Always Encountered	The respondents face these challenges as constant and persistent barriers. These hurdles are deeply embedded in the system, occurring in every attempt to comply with policy requirements, and demand immediate intervention to prevent total career stagnation.
4	3.41 – 4.20	Often Encountered	The respondents frequently experience these difficulties throughout the career progression process. These are recurring issues that significantly hinder the efficiency of gathering evidence or meeting reclassification standards on a regular basis.
3	2.61 – 3.40	Sometimes Encountered	The respondents experience these challenges occasionally or intermittently. While the hurdles are not present in every

			situation, they occur enough to cause moderate delays or confusion during specific stages of the professional development cycle.
2	1.81 – 2.60	Rarely Encountered	The respondents seldom encounter these specific problems. These challenges are viewed as isolated incidents or minor inconveniences that do not significantly impact the overall trajectory of their professional advancement.
1	1.00 – 1.80	Never Encountered	The respondents do not experience these challenges at all. The processes, resources, and systemic supports are functioning optimally, allowing for a seamless transition through the career progression milestones without identified hurdles.

Ethical Considerations

This study's ethical framework is meticulously crafted to maintain the greatest standards of human subject protection, guaranteeing that the research process continues to be a secure and empowering experience for all participating educators. The study ensures that participants experience no psychological or professional harm under the guiding principles of beneficence, anonymity, and voluntariness; this is accomplished by making sure that their contributions are used exclusively for academic advancement and that their refusal to participate or choice to withdraw at any time carries no negative consequences. Anonymity is maintained by eliminating all personally identifying information from the final report, and beneficence in particular is prioritized by concentrating the research on results that will eventually benefit the teaching community through a defined action plan.

Additionally, the researcher acts as a committed information custodian in complete compliance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (RA 10173), putting strong administrative and technical protections in place to preserve the data's integrity. All sensitive data is handled with the highest confidentiality and kept in encrypted digital environments that are only accessible by the lead investigator. This includes demographic profiles and personal opinions about implementation challenges. All physical documents and digital information will be safely disposed of or permanently erased when the study is over in order to uphold a "zero-footprint" policy. This will guarantee that the teachers' privacy at the Corella District is protected long after the research is completed.

Findings

Professional Profile of the Respondents

Table 2 Highest Educational Attainment

Category	f	%
Doctoral Degree holder	1	2.78
With Doctoral Degree units	1	2.78
With Master’s Degree units	25	69.44
Bachelor’s Degree graduate	9	25.00
Overall	36	100.00

As shown in Table 2, out of the 36 teachers who took part in the study, the majority have gone on to do postgraduate education after obtaining their basic degrees. Exactly 25 of the respondents, making up 69.44% of the sample, have earned Master’s Degree units, which is the largest group among the faculty. This is then followed by 9 respondents (25.00%) who hold Bachelor’s Degrees without any graduate units. Advanced postgraduate qualifications, on the other hand, make up a small portion of the total number of respondents, with one person (2.78%) having a completed Doctoral Degree and another (2.78%) having earned Doctoral Degree units. In total, 75.00% of the faculty members at the target school have taken graduate-level courses to some extent.

Table 3 Years of Teaching Experience

Category	f	%
31 years and above	2	5.56
26 to 30 years	2	5.56
21 to 25 years	2	5.56
16 to 20 years	6	16.67
11 to 15 years	12	33.33
6 to 10 years	11	30.56
1 to 5 years	1	2.78
Overall	36	100.00

Table 3 shows that the respondents (N = 36) have a wide variety of classroom experience, the majority of them being in the mid-career range. The largest group is made up of 12 teachers (33.33%) who have been teaching for 11 to 15 years, followed by 11 teachers (30.56%) who have 6 to 10 years' experience. Together, these two mid-career groups make up almost two-thirds (63.89%) of the total school faculty. On the other hand, 6 teachers (16.67%) fall within the 16 to 20 years range. The veteran teachers are equally distributed among the higher brackets, with 2 teachers (5.56%) in each of the 21–25 years, 26–30 years, and 31 years and above categories. In contrast, the number of new teachers with 1 to 5 years of experience is the smallest, consisting of only 1 teacher (2.78%).

Table 4 Plantilla Position

Category	f	%
Special Education Teacher I	1	2.78
Master Teacher I	1	2.78
Teacher VI	2	5.56
Teacher V	1	2.78
Teacher III	24	66.67
Teacher I	7	19.44
	36	100.00

As shown in Table 4, of the 36 teachers who responded (N = 36), the majority are in entry-level or intermediate teaching positions. The largest group comprises 24 respondents (66.67%) who have the rank of Teacher III, while 7 (19.44%) hold the position of Teacher I. Taken together, these two groups make up more than four-fifths (86.11%) of the whole school staff. A small number of teachers hold higher ranks: 2 (5.56%) have the rank of Teacher VI, and each of the positions of Teacher V, Master Teacher I, and Special Education Teacher I is held by 1 person (2.78%). It should be noted that no respondents in this particular baseline profile hold the positions of Teacher II, Teacher IV, or Teacher VII.

Table 5 IPCRF Rating in the Previous School Year

	f	%
Outstanding (4.5 to 5.0)	1	2.78
Very Satisfactory (3.5 to 4.49)	35	97.22
Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory/Poor	0	0.00
Overall	36	100.00

Table 5 shows that of the 36 teachers who responded (N = 36), the vast majority obtained a performance rating in the upper adjectival categories in the previous school year. Exactly 35 of the respondents (97.22%) were given a Very Satisfactory rating (with a numerical value between 3.500 and 4.499). The one other respondent (2.78%) received an Outstanding rating (with a numerical

value between 4.500 and 5.000). It is noteworthy that no one (0.00%) was assigned a Satisfactory, Unsatisfactory, or Poor rating. Together, 100.00% of the staff at Corella Division have performance scores that meet or exceed the standard expectations set by DepEd.

Policy Awareness

Table 6 Teaching Career Line

Indicators	WM	SD	VD
I am aware that the Expanded Career Progression System (ECPS) establishes distinct career lines for public school teachers, including Classroom Teaching and Administration.	4.47	0.81	Highly aware
I can identify the specific positions withing the Classroom Teaching Career Line of the ECPS.	4.22	0.90	Highly aware
I can identify the specific positions within the School Administration Career Line of the ECPS.	3.94	0.92	Aware
I understand the progression from once career level to another within the Classroom Teaching Career Line.	4.31	0.86	Highly aware
I understand the progression from one career level to another withing the School Administration Career Line.	4.06	0.79	Aware
Overall	4.20	0.87	Aware

Table 6 shows that the respondents generally gave a verbal interpretation of Aware with respect to the Teaching Career Line, the overall weighted mean (WM) being 4.20 and the standard deviation (SD) 0.87. The most highly rated indicator was Indicator 1 ("I am aware that the Expanded Career Progression System establishes distinct career lines..."), with a WM of 4.47 (SD = 0.81, Highly Aware). This is then followed by Indicator 4 ("I understand the progression from one career level to another within the Classroom Teaching Career Line") which had a WM of 4.31 (SD = 0.86, Highly Aware) and by Indicator 2 ("I can identify the specific positions within the Classroom Teaching Career Line...") with a WM of 4.22 (SD = 0.90, Highly Aware). On the other hand, the indicators relating to administrative pathways obtained considerably lower mean scores: Indicator 5 ("I understand the progression... within the School Administration Career Line") achieved a WM of 4.06 (SD = 0.79, Aware), while Indicator 3 ("I can identify the specific positions within the School Administration Career Line...") had the lowest score at WM = 3.94 (SD = 0.92, Aware).

Note. WM = weighted mean; SD = standard deviation; VD = verbal description. Rating ranges are given in Methodology.

Table 7 Mode of Promotion

Indicators	WM	SD	VD
I am aware that promotion within the ECPS is based on merit and the achievement of qualifications.	4.58	0.77	Highly aware
I understand the role of classroom effectiveness in the promotion process within the ECPS.	4.33	0.83	Highly aware
I know that the mode of promotion may involve assessments aligned with the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers.	4.42	0.77	Highly aware
I am familiar with the existing policies and guidelines related to promotion within the ECPS.	4.14	0.83	Aware
I understand how compensation is linked to the mode of promotion within the ECPS.	4.17	0.97	Aware
Overall	4.33	0.84	Highly aware

Table 7 shows that the respondents as a whole gave a verbal interpretation of Highly Aware concerning the Mode of Promotion, with an overall weighted mean (WM) of 4.33 and a standard deviation (SD) of 0.84. The most highly rated indicator was Indicator 6 ("I am aware that promotion within the ECPS is based on merit and the achievement of qualifications"), which had a WM of 4.58 (SD = 0.77, Highly Aware). Next came Indicator 8 ("I know that the mode of promotion may involve assessments aligned with the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers") with a WM of 4.42 (SD = 0.77, Highly Aware), followed by Indicator 7 ("I understand the role of classroom effectiveness in the promotion process...") with a WM of 4.33 (SD = 0.83, Highly Aware). On the other hand, the mean scores for procedural and administrative details were lower: Indicator 10 ("I understand how compensation is linked to the mode of promotion...") had a WM of 4.17 (SD = 0.97, Aware), and Indicator 9 ("I am familiar with the existing policies and guidelines related to promotion...") obtained a score of WM = 4.14 (SD = 0.83, Aware).

Note. WM = weighted mean; SD = standard deviation; VD = verbal description. Rating ranges are given in Methodology.

Table 8 Qualification Standards

Indicators	WM	SD	VD
I am aware of the specific educational qualifications required for Teacher IV – Master Teacher I within the ECPS.	4.28	0.91	Highly aware
I am aware of the required training related to Curriculum, Pedagogy, and Subject Specialization within the ECPS.	4.22	0.99	Highly aware
I understand the importance of continuous professional development through training within the ECPS.	4.44	0.77	Highly aware
I understand the significance of full-time teaching experience for career advancement within the ECPS.	4.44	0.69	Highly aware
I am aware of the required number of years of full-time teaching experience for Teacher IV-Teacher VII within the ECPS.	4.28	0.88	Highly aware
I am aware that RA 1080, such as the LET or PBET, is a required eligibility for career advancement within the ECPS.	4.61	0.73	Highly aware
Overall	4.38	0.84	Highly aware

As shown in the findings, the respondents as a whole gave a verbal interpretation of Highly Aware with respect to the Qualification Standards, the result being an overall weighted mean (WM) of 4.38 and a standard deviation (SD) of 0.84. The most highly rated indicator was Indicator 16 ("I am aware that RA 1080, such as the LET or PBET, is a required eligibility..."), which obtained a WM of 4.61 (SD = 0.73, Highly Aware). This is very close to Indicator 13 ("I understand the importance of continuous professional development through training...") and Indicator 14 ("I understand the significance of full-time teaching experience..."), both of which had the same score of WM = 4.44 (SD = 0.77 and 0.69, respectively, Highly Aware).

Indicators 11 and 15 both had a WM of 4.28 (SD = 0.91 and 0.88, respectively, Highly Aware), the figures relating to specific educational qualifications and the required number of years of experience for Teacher IV through Teacher VII. On the other hand, Indicator 12 ("I am aware of the required training related to Curriculum, Pedagogy, and Subject Specialization...") received the lowest score in this section, although it still fell within the WM = 4.22 (SD = 0.99, Highly Aware) range.

Note. WM = weighted mean; SD = standard deviation; VD = verbal description. Rating ranges are given in Methodology.

Table 9 Summary of Policy Awareness

Indicators	WM	SD	VD
Teaching Career Line	4.20	0.87	Highly aware
Mode of Promotion	4.33	0.84	Highly aware
Qualification Standards	4.38	0.84	Highly aware
Overall	4.30	1.69	Highly aware

The source summary reports an overall weighted mean of 4.30 and SD of 1.69, described as Highly Aware. Qualification Standards had the highest mean (4.38), followed by Mode of Promotion (4.33) and Teaching Career Line (4.20).

Perceived Benefits of the ECP System

Table 10 Professional Motivation

Indicators	WM	SD	VD
The ECP system increases my enthusiasm for achieving excellence in my daily teaching practices.	4.44	0.61	Strongly agree
The availability of higher ranks (Teacher IV-VII) provides me with a clearer sense of professional accomplishment.	4.25	0.73	Strongly agree
I feel more valued by the Department because I can be promoted without leaving teaching.	4.14	0.66	Agree
Overall	4.28	0.66	Strongly agree

As displayed in Table 10, the respondents overall demonstrated a verbal descriptive interpretation of Strongly Agree regarding the positive impact of ECP on professional motivation, as indicated by an overall weighted mean (WM) of 4.28 and a standard deviation (SD) of 0.66. The highest-rated indicator is Indicator 1 ("The ECP system increases my enthusiasm for achieving excellence in my daily teaching practices"), which achieved a WM of 4.44 (SD=0.61, Strongly Agree). This is followed by Indicator 2 ("The availability of higher ranks (Teacher IV-VII) provides me with a clearer sense of professional accomplishment") with a WM of 4.25 (SD=0.73, Strongly Agree). Conversely, Indicator 3 ("I feel more valued by the Department because I can be promoted without leaving teaching") registered a slightly lower mean score of WM=4.14 (SD=0.66, Agree).

Table 11 Economic/Financial Security

Indicators	WM	SD	VD
The salary upgrades integrated into the ECP provide a necessary buffer against my monthly cost of living.	4.33	0.68	Strongly agree
The higher salary grades in the new career tracks improve my long-term financial outlook for retirement.	4.36	0.59	Strongly agree
Overall	4.35	0.63	Strongly agree

As displayed in Table 11, the respondents overall demonstrated a verbal descriptive interpretation of Strongly Agree regarding the positive financial impacts of the ECP policy, as indicated by an overall weighted mean (WM) of 4.35 and a standard deviation (SD) of 0.63. Indicator 5 ("The higher salary grades in the new career tracks improve my long-term financial outlook for retirement") registered the higher mean score at WM=4.36 (SD=0.59, Strongly Agree). Meanwhile, Indicator 4 ("The salary upgrades integrated into the ECP provide a necessary buffer against my monthly cost of living") received a closely comparable score of WM=4.33 (SD=0.68, Strongly Agree).

Table 12 Career Longevity in Rural Schools

Indicators	WM	SD	VD
The opportunity to advance professionally without leaving the classroom encourages me to stay in the teaching service.	4.31	0.67	Strongly agree
The ECP tracks make a lifelong career in the Department of Education more viable and attractive.	4.31	0.71	Strongly agree
Overall	4.31	0.68	Strongly agree

Table 12 shows that the respondents as a group gave a uniform verbal description of Strongly Agree when stating that the ECP has a positive effect on career longevity, with an overall weighted mean (WM) of 4.31 and a standard deviation (SD) of 0.68. Both of the indicators had the same mean score of WM = 4.31. Specifically, Indicator 6 ("The opportunity to advance professionally without leaving the classroom encourages me to stay in the teaching service") obtained a WM of 4.31 (SD = 0.67, Strongly Agree), while Indicator 7 ("The ECP tracks make a lifelong career in the Department of Education more viable and attractive") likewise showed a WM of 4.31 (SD = 0.71, Strongly Agree).

Table 13 Summary of Perceived Impacts

Indicators	WM	SD	VD
Professional Motivation	4.28	0.66	Strongly Agree
Economic/Financial Security	4.35	0.63	Strongly Agree
Career Longevity in Rural Schools	4.31	0.68	Strongly Agree
Overall	4.31	0.65	Strongly Agree

As displayed in Table 13, the respondents overall demonstrated a verbal descriptive interpretation of Strongly Agree regarding the overall positive impact of the ECP policy, as evidenced by a composite weighted mean (WM) of 4.31 and a standard deviation (SD) of 0.65. Among the three evaluated dimensions, Economic/Financial Security registered the highest weighted mean score at WM=4.35 (SD=0.63, Strongly Agree). This is followed closely by Career Longevity in Rural Schools, which achieved a weighted mean of WM=4.31 (SD=0.68, Strongly Agree). Meanwhile, Professional Motivation received a slightly lower, though still highly decisive, rating of WM=4.28 (SD=0.66, Strongly Agree).

Perceived Implementation Hurdles

Table 14 Implementation Hurdles Encountered in Transitioning to the ECP

Indicators	WM	SD	VD
I find difficulties in acquiring the required additional training or educational qualifications specified in the ECPS.	3.31	0.88	Sometimes encountered
The potential increase in workload due to additional requirements under the ECPS poses challenges for me.	3.56	0.79	Often encountered
There are limited opportunities for professional development or training relevant to the qualification standards outlined in the ECPS.	3.17	0.89	Sometimes encountered
Concerns about the equitable implementation of the ECPS across different schools or regions exist.	3.53	0.72	Often encountered
I face challenges in balancing the demands of meeting the qualification standards with other teaching responsibilities	3.56	0.94	Often encountered

The availability of resources, such as finding or access to training programs, hinders my ability to fulfill the requirements of the ECPS.	3.53	0.97	Often encountered
The lack of clarity or communication regarding the specific criteria for career advancement under the ECPS is problematic.	3.44	0.98	Often encountered
Potential bureaucratic hurdles or delays in the processing of documents or certifications required by the ECPS exist.	3.53	0.94	Often encountered
The ECPS has led to increased competition among teachers for limited opportunities for career advancement.	3.44	0.91	Often encountered
Concerns about the adequacy of support systems or mechanisms for teachers transitioning to the requirements of the ECPS are prevalent.	3.42	0.85	Often encountered
Overall	3.45	0.89	Often encountered

Table 14 shows that the respondents generally gave a verbal descriptive answer of 'Often Encountered' when describing the implementation difficulties they experienced during their transition to ECP, with a composite weighted mean (WM) of 3.45 and a standard deviation (SD) of 0.89.

The most highly rated difficulties were tied at a WM of 3.56 ('Often Encountered'): Indicator 2 ("The potential increase in workload due to additional requirements under the ECPS poses challenges for me", SD = 0.79) and Indicator 5 ("I face challenges in balancing the demands of meeting the qualification standards with other teaching responsibilities", SD = 0.94). These were then followed by a group of structural issues also rated at a WM of 3.53 (Often Encountered), comprising Indicator 4 (equitable implementation across schools/regions, SD = 0.72), Indicator 6 (resource availability/access to training, SD = 0.97), and Indicator 8 (bureaucratic delays in document processing, SD = 0.94). Indicator 7 (lack of clarity or communication regarding criteria, SD = 0.98) and Indicator 9 (increased competition among teachers, SD = 0.91) both had a WM of 3.44 ('Often Encountered'), while Indicator 10 (adequacy of support systems) had a WM of 3.42 (SD = 0.85, Often Encountered). The lowest-rated items were Indicator 1 (difficulties acquiring required qualifications) with a WM of 3.31 (SD = 0.88, Sometimes Encountered) and Indicator 3 (limited professional development opportunities) with a WM of 3.17 (SD = 0.89, Sometimes Encountered).

Result and Discussion

Relationships Among Study Variables

Table 15 Respondents' Profile and Level of Awareness of the ECP System

Variables under comparative inference	Comp. rho	Strength of Correlation	p-value	Decision	Results	Results
Highest educational attainment and Level of Awareness of the ECP System	-0.063	Very weak	0.703	Accept Ho	Accept Ho	No significant correlation
Years of teaching and Level of Awareness of the ECP System	0.166	Very weak	0.312	Accept Ho	Accept Ho	No significant correlation
Plantilla position and Level of Awareness of the ECP System	0.076	Very weak	0.645	Accept Ho	Accept Ho	No significant correlation
IPCRF rating and Level of Awareness of the ECP System	-0.198	Very weak	0.227	Accept Ho	Accept Ho	No significant correlation

Note. Significance threshold: $p < .05$ (two-tailed). Reported coefficients, p-values, and decisions are reproduced from the source.

Table 16 Level of Awareness and Implementation Hurdles of the ECP System

Variables under comparative inference	Comp. rho	Strength of Correlation	p-value	Decision	Results	Results
Teaching career line and Implementation Hurdles of the ECP System	0.118	Very weak	0.474	Accept Ho	Accept Ho	No significant correlation
Mode of promotion and Implementation Hurdles of the ECP System	0.021	Very weak	0.897	Accept Ho	Accept Ho	No significant correlation
Qualification standards and Implementation Hurdles of the ECP System	0.101	Very weak	0.540	Accept Ho	Accept Ho	No significant correlation

Note. Significance threshold: $p < .05$ (two-tailed). Reported coefficients, p-values, and decisions are reproduced from the source.

None of the reported correlations was statistically significant at the .05 level. Profile–awareness coefficients ranged from −0.198 to 0.166, with p-values from .227 to .703. Awareness–hurdles coefficients ranged from 0.021 to 0.118, with p-values from .474 to .897.

Output of the Study

The empirical findings presented in the findings reveal that public school teachers at the District of Corella demonstrate a high overall level of policy literacy and strongly recognize the transformative financial and professional benefits of Executive Order No. 174. However, despite this generally positive assessment, several sub-dimensions indicate operational challenges that require targeted administrative intervention. A closer examination of the lowest mean scores identifies four primary areas of concern. First, teachers demonstrate relatively lower familiarity with administrative and executive career lines, as reflected in weighted means of 3.94 and 4.06, respectively, suggesting a need to strengthen their understanding of non-teaching administrative career pathways compared with classroom teaching positions. Second, uncertainty regarding procedural guidelines and salary linkages, with weighted means of 4.14 and 4.17, indicates that frontline personnel require clearer technical guidance on reclassification procedures and the corresponding integration of salary grades. Third, the weighted mean of 3.56 for portfolio workload and teaching balance highlights the burden of compiling documentary evidence, particularly Means of Verification (MOVs), which may compete with teachers' time and attention for their daily instructional responsibilities. Fourth, bureaucratic processing delays and gaps in resource access, reflected in a weighted mean of 3.53, suggest that paper-based verification procedures, limited access to specialized training, and administrative inefficiencies may hinder the timely preparation and submission of required documents.

Furthermore, the statistical findings in the findings indicate that greater awareness of the policy does not necessarily translate into reduced implementation difficulties. This suggests that the identified challenges cannot be adequately addressed through policy information dissemination alone and require improvements in administrative systems, procedural clarity, resource accessibility, and institutional support. In response, the BRIDGE Program is proposed as a structured institutional intervention designed to address these operational concerns through targeted policy orientation, digitized portfolio management, peer-mentorship networks, and expedited internal audits. Through these complementary strategies, the program aims to improve teachers' understanding of career advancement opportunities, simplify documentation and reclassification procedures, reduce administrative workload, and facilitate more efficient processing of applications. Ultimately, the BRIDGE Program seeks to establish a more accessible, transparent, and responsive implementation process for Executive Order No. 174 while enabling teachers to pursue professional advancement without compromising the quality of classroom instruction.

BRIDGE Program Objectives

Broaden faculty literacy regarding executive/administrative career tracks, specific reclassification guidelines, and salary grade integration schemes.

Transition from heavy paper-based verification to standardized digital portfolio workflows, allocating dedicated administrative assistance hours to protect daily instructional time.

Establish a school-based technical support desk led by senior Master Teachers to guide applicant teachers through document compilation and verification.

Streamline internal document audits to guarantee dossier verification and division transmittal within ten working days, eliminating bureaucratic delays.

Scheme of Implementation

The execution of the BRIDGE Program follows a structured, three-phase operational scheme across the school year:

Phase 1: Building Awareness and Capacity (Quarter 1). Focuses on resolving policy literacy gaps. The school leadership establishes the School-Based ECP Technical Support Desk and conducts

targeted Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions detailing non-teaching administrative career lines, reclassification rules, and compensation integration mechanisms.

Phase 2: Resilient and Digital Guidance (Quarters 1–2). Centers on active workload mitigation. The ICT Coordinator deploys standardized cloud repository structures and digital portfolio templates. Senior Master Teachers initiate structured peer-mentorship sessions to assist applicant teachers in building digital dossiers without compromising daily classroom teaching.

Phase 3: Integration and Expedited Submission (Quarters 2–4). Encompasses preliminary auditing, recognition, and transmittal. The Internal Review Committee conducts digital audits of completed dossiers within ten working days to eliminate processing delays before division transmittal. The phase concludes with institutional merit recognition ceremonies celebrating faculty reclassification milestones.

Proposed Action Plan

BRIDGE Program: Building Resilient, Innovative, and Digital Guidance for ECP Transition

Table 17 1. Limited Awareness on Administrative Career Lines & Rules

Planning component	**Source action-plan details**
Objectives	To broaden teacher familiarity with non-teaching administrative pathways, executive qualification standards, and reclassification guidelines.
Strategies	Conduct specialized technical Learning Action Cell (LAC) workshops focusing on non-teaching tracks, administrative career lines, and step-by-step reclassification guidelines.
Persons Involved	School Head, Invited Division Resource Speakers, Master Teachers, Applicant Teachers
Budget	₱4,000.00
Source of Budget	INSET Funds / School MOOE
Time Frame	Quarter 1
Expected Output	100% of teaching staff attended 2 specialized LAC sessions on administrative career lines and reclassification rules.

Table 18 2. Unclear Compensation & Salary Integration Rules

Planning component	Source action-plan details
Objectives	To clarify how salary grade upgrades, step increments, and plantilla reclassifications are financially integrated under ECP.
Strategies	Organize administrative help-desk orientation sessions with the Division Administrative/Finance Officer on salary grade progression and reclassification compensation schemes.
Persons Involved	School Head, Division Administrative Officer, School Bookkeeper, All Faculty
Budget	₱2,500.00
Source of Budget	School MOOE
Time Frame	Quarter 1
Expected Output	Published and distributed a localized ECP Salary Integration Matrix and FAQ Guide to all teachers.

Table 19 3. Portfolio Workload Pressure & Teaching Balance

Planning component	Source action-plan details
Objectives	To reduce administrative burden and prevent folder-preparation burnout while protecting daily instructional time.
Strategies	Establish a School-Based ECP Technical Support Desk; deploy standardized digital portfolio templates on cloud storage; assign dedicated weekly administrative support hours.
Persons Involved	School Head, Master Teachers, ICT Coordinator, Applicant Teachers
Budget	₱5,000.00
Source of Budget	School MOOE / Local Funds
Time Frame	Quarter 1 to Quarter 2
Expected Output	Digitized ECP portfolio templates deployed; 100% of applicants provided cloud repository support and technical assistance.

Table 20 4. Bureaucratic Processing Delays & Resource Access

Planning component	Source action-plan details
Objectives	To eliminate document verification bottlenecks and expedite transmittal of applicant dossiers to the Division Office.
Strategies	Form an internal School ECP Review Committee to perform preliminary digital audits of completed dossiers within ten (10) working days prior to official division submission.
Persons Involved	School Head, Internal ECP Review Committee, Division Personnel
Budget	₱3,500.00
Source of Budget	School MOOE
Time Frame	Quarter 2 to Quarter 3
Expected Output	100% of applicant dossiers audited and digitally transmitted to the Division Office within 10 working days.

Table 21 5. Support System & Morale Validation

Planning component	Source action-plan details
Objectives	To sustain professional motivation and validate teacher efforts throughout the reclassification transition.
Strategies	Establish a school-level ECP Peer-Mentorship Network led by senior Master Teachers and implement a bi-annual Merit Recognition Program for reclassification milestones.
Persons Involved	School Head, Master Teachers, Faculty Association Officers
Budget	₱3,000.00
Source of Budget	Local Funds / Faculty Funds
Time Frame	Quarter 4
Expected Output	Bi-annual recognition ceremony held celebrating faculty reclassification milestones and intermediate rank advancements.
Actual Accomplishment	
Remarks	

Discussion

The distribution of data in Table 2 shows that the faculty are actively looking to improve their academic qualifications, although the majority are still at an intermediate stage of postgraduate education. The fact that 69.44% of the teachers have Master's units indicates a high level of professional ambition and a clear intention to meet higher qualification standards. Nevertheless, the decrease in numbers when moving from partial Master's units to fully completed graduate degrees points to a possible structural obstacle: although rural educators are willing to start postgraduate studies, it is a different matter to complete a full graduate program. In the context of the ECP system, this means that while most teachers at Corella District have the initial motivation and the preliminary credits required to qualify for higher plantilla tracks (such as Teacher IV or the Master Teacher lines), the failure to complete their graduate degrees may delay their official reclassification and promotion. As a result, specific institutional measures, such as graduate scholarship programs that are easily accessible, localized flexible learning arrangements, or assistance with thesis writing, are needed in order to turn these partial credits into full qualifications.

These findings are in line with broader national trends in the Philippine public education sector, where public school teachers regularly pursue continuing education as a main way of advancing their careers. Cabaron and Oco[16] observed that although DepEd teachers in the Philippines show great initiative in enrolling in postgraduate programs to improve their teaching skills and prepare for reclassification, systemic problems such as poor time management, financial difficulties, and the distance from higher education institutions often cause the completion phase to take longer. Likewise, the local profile assessments of DepEd instructional staff carried out by Cabaron and Oco as well as Nicer[17] found that the typical demographic profile of public elementary school teachers is one of individuals who have bachelor's degrees along with Master's units, rather than completed graduate degrees. Moreover, Blando [18] mentioned that although the national career progression systems encourage academic upskilling, rural teachers encounter greater logistical difficulties in completing their graduate theses and capstone projects, highlighting the urgent need for decentralized and flexible professional development frameworks.

The statistical results show that although the teachers at Corella District have a good general understanding of the ECP policy, their knowledge is much stronger in relation to the classroom

teaching tracks than with regard to the administrative pathways. The high mean scores for Indicators 1, 4 and 2 (WM ≥ 4.22) indicate that DepEd's efforts to communicate the establishment of the expanded teaching ranks (such as Teacher IV through VII) have been successful, enabling classroom teachers to clearly see the possibility of vertical promotion while staying in teaching. However, the lower scores for Indicators 3 and 5 (WM = 3.94 and 4.06) point to a small gap in knowledge about the administrative track. Since these educators mainly see themselves as classroom practitioners, they focus more on guidelines that affect their own classroom career line rather than on school management positions. In general, these findings show that although policy orientation has been effective, school-level orientations must place greater emphasis on explaining the specific details, position titles, and rules for moving within the administrative track in order to achieve full policy literacy.

These empirical findings are in line with broader research in the area of policy orientation and teacher understanding in Philippine public schools. In a study on policy literacy among DepEd teachers, Ancho and Arrieta[19] found that public school teachers are more familiar with policies that directly concern their classroom responsibilities and immediate salary advancement than with wider administrative operations. Similarly, Surio[20] observed that although information about the career guidelines under the PPST framework has reached most elementary schools, the detailed aspects of the promotional tracks are often filtered through teachers' primary interests, causing classroom teachers to give priority to instruction-based ranks over managerial roles.

The empirical findings show that although teachers have a strong understanding of the general principles that govern promotion under the ECP policy, their knowledge weakens when it comes to the technical and administrative aspects. The high scores for Indicators 6, 8, and 7 (WM ≥ 4.33) indicate that teachers clearly see meritocracy, classroom effectiveness, and alignment with the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) as the basis for career advancement. However, the drop to Aware for Indicators 10 and 9 (WM = 4.17 and 4.14) shows that specific policy guidelines and details regarding salary integration are still not well known among front-line staff. This suggests that although DepEd's general policy direction has successfully built trust in a merit-based system, more localized administrative guidance is still needed to make the technical reclassification procedures and salary grade adjustments clearer.

These results are in line with recent Philippine educational research on teacher awareness and competency-based advancement. Magsino[21] stressed that promotion frameworks that are transparent and based on merit directly improve teacher engagement and career development. In their study of the ECP policy in Bohol, Tantawy[22] found that public school teachers show a high level of overall awareness about the competency-based nature of the system under the PPST framework. Moreover, recent findings by Navalta confirm that while teachers have a strong familiarity with the general merit requirements, their knowledge of the reclassification guidelines and administrative compensation rules varies from district to district. These studies underline the importance of ongoing school-level orientations in addressing the gaps in procedural knowledge as EO No. 174 is put into practice.

The statistics show a solid and high degree of knowledge concerning the eligibility criteria for career progression within the ECP framework. The high score for Indicator 16 (WM = 4.61) shows that basic professional licensing (LET/PBET) is generally seen by all as a mandatory entry requirement in DepEd. Moreover, the strong level of agreement on Indicators 13 and 14 (WM = 4.44) proves that teachers know that length of service on its own is not enough; promotion instead depends on a balanced mix of actual teaching experience and ongoing professional development. The somewhat lower, yet still high, score for Indicator 12 (WM = 4.22) suggests that while teachers are aware of the general need for training, they are a bit uncertain about which specific training programs count towards curriculum or pedagogical specialization. Taken as a whole, these results

indicate that the teachers at Corella District have a strong understanding of the prerequisites necessary to qualify for higher ranks under EO No. 174.

The empirical results are very similar to the more general observations made in the area of public education research in the Philippines concerning merit-based promotion policies. In their study of career advancement systems in public schools, Navalta found that DepEd teachers have a high level of awareness of the qualification criteria, especially those relating to professional licensure and tenure requirements, since these are the main factors used when verifying documents during reclassification. Likewise, the research carried out by Magsino shows that public school teachers have a good understanding of the need for continuous professional development and formal training as key factors in advancing their careers within the ECP system. Moreover, Tantawy pointed out that although teachers generally agree with the general professional qualification guidelines, there is often a need for continued assistance from the division-level offices when it comes to the specific details regarding pedagogical hours and curriculum training credits in order to prevent misinterpretations when submitting their portfolios.

The statistical results indicate that teachers at the District of Corella view the ECP policy as a critical policy intervention for enhancing both immediate financial resilience and long-term economic stability. The strong agreement on Indicator 5 (WM=4.36) demonstrates that educators anticipate substantial retirement benefits from advancing through higher salary grades (such as Teacher IV through Teacher VII), which raises their lifetime earning potential and pension security within the public sector. Additionally, the high score for Indicator 4 (WM=4.33) underscores that planned salary reclassifications offer a practical buffer against inflation and rising household expenses in rural communities. Overall, the data confirm that the financial restructuring embedded within EO No. 174 addresses major economic concerns, serving as a powerful incentive for continuous service and professional commitment.

These findings are strongly supported by official legislative frameworks and recent studies examining public school compensation in the Philippines. Under Executive Order No. 174 and DBM-DepEd Joint Circular No. 2025-1, the expansion of classroom teaching ranks directly links professional growth to salary grade upgrades without requiring educators to abandon instruction. As highlighted in reports by SEAMEO INNOTECH[23] equitable compensation structures and predictable salary progression are primary determinants of teacher retention and financial well-being in public education systems. Furthermore, research documented by the Research Center for Teacher Quality[24] notes that establishing intermediate salary steps (from Teacher IV to Teacher VII) directly alleviates long-standing economic stagnation among mid-career teachers, creating a sustainable financial trajectory that supports both current living standards and retirement security.

The statistical analysis shows that although teachers clearly value the long-term advantages of ECP, they do encounter significant operational difficulties when carrying out the transition at the District of Corella. The fact that workload-related indicators, particularly Indicators 2 and 5 (WM = 3.56), are so prominent shows that the main source of stress comes from having to manage their heavy daily duties in the classroom together with the extra administrative work involved in preparing portfolios and meeting qualification requirements. Moreover, the high scores for administrative bottlenecks (WM = 3.53 for Indicators 4, 6, and 8) indicate that systemic problems such as delays in processing documents, unequal access to resources, and bureaucratic difficulties cause operational anxiety among teachers who are applying for positions. On the other hand, the lower scores for Indicators 1 (WM = 3.31) and 3 (WM = 3.17) mean that teachers generally do not see academic qualification standards or the availability of training as impossible obstacles; instead, their main problems are related to administrative processing, the clarity of communication, and the way their workload is integrated. Taken as a whole, these findings show that it is essential to deal with procedural delays and to simplify the process of verifying portfolios if teacher burnout is to be reduced during the implementation of the policy.

These empirical observations are in close agreement with recent studies on educational leadership and policy implementation in the Philippines. Osman and Adanza found that teacher advancement policies in public schools in the Philippines often suffer from implementation gaps caused by heavy administrative workloads, complicated paper trail requirements, and conflicting instructional responsibilities. Recent work by Aguja and Cruz[25]points out that even though structured career progression systems offer clear routes for upward mobility, teachers still face systemic obstacles such as excessive documentation, unclear evaluation criteria, and delayed verification of documents. Additionally, the studies by Padohinog[26] on barriers to teacher professional development stress that balancing classroom teaching duties with the demands of professional advancement requires flexible, needs-based institutional support systems and digitized administrative procedures in order to avoid burnout and to ensure fair access to career advancement opportunities.

The correlation tables did not identify statistically significant relationships between the tested profile variables and awareness, or between awareness dimensions and implementation hurdles. These findings describe the associations observed in this study and support examining procedural and institutional assistance through the proposed BRIDGE Program.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Teachers in the study reported high policy awareness and favorable perceived benefits of the ECP system, particularly for economic security, career longevity in rural schools, and professional motivation. They also reported frequently encountered implementation hurdles involving workload, documentation, and administrative processing. The tested correlations were not statistically significant at the .05 level. The proposed BRIDGE Program addresses identified needs through targeted orientation, digital portfolio procedures, technical support, peer mentorship, and internal document audits, In light of the findings of the study, the data analysis, and the operational difficulties identified, it is suggested that school heads and administrative staff formally adopt and carry out the BRIDGE Program (Building Resilient, Innovative, and Digital Guidance for ECP Transition) as the main operational approach for handling ECP reclassifications, incorporating this framework into the school's annual improvement plan in order to systematically remove administrative bottlenecks and simplify document processing for all career lines, In order to overcome the main implementation challenges relating to an increased workload and the great amount of document preparation required, the school should move from paper-based verification to a completely digital portfolio management system, using standard cloud storage spaces and digital templates together with dedicated administrative assistance hours so that teachers can put together the qualification requirements without having to give up their daily teaching duties. Moreover, in order to close the gap in policy knowledge concerning executive and administrative career lines as compared to classroom teaching tracks, school administrators should arrange specific Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions and technical workshops that focus on the qualification frameworks for non-teaching positions, the various career pathways, and the criteria for promotion, To ensure that the operational implementation proceeds smoothly, a school-based ECP technical support desk and a peer-mentorship network should be set up, using senior Master Teachers who have a strong understanding of the policies, to give direct technical advice, carry out initial document audits within ten working days, and speed up the submission of the verified digital dossiers to the division office in order to avoid delays in processing. Finally, in order to improve teachers' sense of value within the institution and to keep their professional motivation high during the transition period, school heads and the local faculty associations should introduce a merit recognition scheme at the school level that formally acknowledges reclassification milestones and intermediate rank advances, thus recognizing teachers' professional efforts and promoting a supportive atmosphere for continuous career development within DepEd.

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