



PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL PRACTICES AND CAREER PROGRESSION MECHANISMS FOR NON-TEACHING PERSONNEL IN DEPED-SCHOOLS DIVISION OFFICE OF LAGUNA

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the performance appraisal practices and career progression mechanisms for non-teaching personnel in the Department of Education–Schools Division Office (DepEd-SDO) of Laguna. It investigated whether awareness of career progression mechanisms significantly predicted the level of performance appraisal implementation. A descriptive-evaluative research design was employed, and data were collected from 200 non-teaching personnel from school-based and division-based offices through a validated researcher-made questionnaire. Findings revealed that respondents exhibited a high to very high level of awareness regarding career progression mechanisms and high to a very high level of implementation of performance appraisal practices. Regression analysis indicated that career progression mechanisms significantly predicted the implementation of performance appraisal practices, $F(5,194) = 201.52, p < .001$, explaining 83.9% of the variance ($R^2 = .839$). Transparency and accessibility of promotion processes ($\beta = .222, p < .001$), performance appraisal and merit-based advancement ($\beta = .448, p < .001$), and mobility and opportunities for role expansion ($\beta = .407, p < .001$) were significant predictors, while clarity of qualification standards and career pathways ($\beta = -.002, p = .958$) and training opportunities and professional development opportunities ($\beta = -.090, p = .100$) were not significant. The study concluded that employees' perceptions of transparency, accessibility, merit-based advancement, and career mobility and role expansion are critical factors in strengthening performance appraisal practices. It recommended strengthening transparent promotion processes, reinforcing merit-based advancement, and integrating appraisal results with structured career development programs.

KEYWORDS: Career Progression, Performance Appraisal, Non-Teaching Personnel, Merit-Based Advancement, DepEd–SDO Laguna

INTRODUCTION

Non-teaching personnel (NTPs) including clerks, administrative staff, financial personnel, technical and support staff who carry out crucial administrative, operational, and support responsibilities are just as important to the effective and long-term administration of educational institutions as teachers. In terms of career advancement and performance appraisal, these employees are understudied in many public-school systems. In the context of the Philippine Department of Education (DepEd), where reforms increasingly focus on human resource capacity building, this disparity becomes crucial.

Policy and Institutional Context

The Philippine government has focused more on organizing career development in public education in recent years. For public school teachers, Executive Order 174 (2022) creates the Expanded Career Progression (ECP) System that provides them more promotion tracks (e.g., Teacher IV–VII, Master Teacher) and more precise standards. The Department of Budget and Management (DBM) and Department of Education (DepEd) signed a Joint Circular No. 1 (2025), that changed the employment categorization and remuneration plan for teachers and school administrators as provided under EO No. 174. The government's larger commitment to organizational and human resource development in education has recognized the importance of career advancement through this policy initiative.

Local frameworks for human resource development also stress the value of learning that helps employees grow in their careers. The National Educators Academy of the Philippines (NEAP) implements a professional development framework that is closely linked to career progression, two good examples of which are induction programs and specialized training development initiatives designed for educators (DepEd, 2019). However, while clear career pathways have already been established for teaching personnel, similar formal competency frameworks for non-teaching personnel are still unclear or nonexistent (Libria, 2025). This gap indicates a possible mismatch between policy and reality.

Empirical Evidence of Gaps and Challenges

There are empirical studies in the Philippines, particularly in the public basic education sector, which demonstrate considerable challenges in career progression and performance appraisal of non-teaching personnel (NTP). While the DepEd has developed performance evaluation systems in its field offices, studies show that these systems are not necessarily used as instruments for professional development and promotion.

**a. Non-Teaching Personnel Job Satisfaction and Development**

A study conducted in the DepEd district of Bokod, Benguet, found that job satisfaction was correlated with organizational culture factors such as job security, communication, and professional growth. However, non-teaching personnel rated a moderate level in terms of Job satisfaction, which revealed that development opportunities were not being fully met (Pa-ay, 2025). The results supported the findings of Toreno (2023) on different levels of job satisfaction of NTPs in a DepEd district in Pangasinan based on promotion, clarity on performance expectations, and availability to development and training programs. These findings indicate that the growth opportunities within the organization have a considerable influence on non-teaching personnel's opinion of their career pathways.

Performance appraisal, while prominent in policy frameworks, has been found to have weak linkage to actual career growth. Mercado (2023) evaluated the work performance of non-teaching personnel in selected DepEd sub-offices in Laguna. The study revealed that task performance, adaptive performance, and contextual performance of non-teaching personnel were rated very high, while counterproductive work habits were rated very low. The study recommended the need for an institutional training program suggesting that appraisal outcomes may not be sufficient to support planned professional growth and development, and career advancement. This reveals a structural gap: progress or systematic professional growth are not always correlated to excellent performance ratings.

DepEd is not the only organization experiencing this concern. A study conducted in a government higher education institution found that performance appraisal was not significantly associated with job satisfaction among academic staff, especially if the performance appraisal is seen to be ineffective (Dasanayaka et al., 2021). This suggests that when organizational factors like promotion, incentive programs, and training and development are not well implemented, the methods of performance evaluation will lose their significance.

b. Performance Appraisal of DepEd Non-Teaching Personnel

Performance appraisal in the Philippine public sector is governed by the Civil Service Commission's Strategic Performance Management System (SPMS), which relates individual outputs to organizational objectives and results-based assessment of government personnel (CSC, 2018). Government agencies like DepEd adopt SPMS principles to make sure that staff contributions are tied to unit targets and agency performance commitments (DepEd, 2015). Similarly, DepEd align organizational performance incentives, such as the Performance-Based Bonus, which aim to provide a fair and evidence-based policy to recognize strong performance and encourage teamwork and meritocracy (DepEd, 2021). These policy frameworks mean that personnel in SDOs are officially appraised through instruments and cycles that are designed to be objective, measurable, and related to institutional aims.

Consistency is an important factor of performance appraisal that is necessary to the administration of efficient human resource management systems, especially in a large public-sector institution such as DepEd. If performance appraisals are perceived to be fair and transparent in terms of consistency, the employees will be able to show an effective work performance (Hidayati et al., 2025). Similarly, performance appraisal supports employees to analyze their weaknesses, define the skills needed and identify gaps that require further improvement (Adhikari & Chatterjee, 2025). In DepEd-SDO Laguna, where non-teaching personnel are distributed across school-based and various division offices (CID, SGOD, OSDS), maintaining consistency in performance appraisal becomes more challenging. These conditions suggest the need to examine how performance appraisal practices influence employees' perceptions of career advancement opportunities.

c. Broader HRM Processes and Public Sector Dynamics

Human resource management practices strongly influence individual career advancement and enhance work performance among non-teaching personnel. A study conducted in Schools Division Office of South Cotabato assessed the significance of human resource management practices on job satisfaction and revealed that key HRM practices like recruitment and selection, training, compensation and career planning scored high, which means that they were widely implemented but performance appraisal was noted as needing improvement (Solidarios et al., 2024). In public sector basic education, common challenges in the HRM systems, such as concerns about fairness and transparency in ranking procedures and insufficient communication about promotion guidelines may affect the implementation of performance appraisal systems and awareness on career development programs.

Government agencies, including DepEd, continue to use the Strategic Performance Management System (SPMS) of the Civil Service Commission as the official framework for conducting employee assessments and connecting individual outputs to corporate goals (CSC, 2018). DepEd implemented these principles to guide offices in supporting non-teaching personnel in performance target setting, completing IPCR (Individual Performance Commitment and Review), and planning their professional development, subjecting non-teaching personnel to the same results-oriented performance cycle as teaching personnel (DepEd, 2015). Taken together, these policy directives and research findings stress the importance of examining the relationship between performance appraisal practices and career progression mechanisms for non-teaching personnel in DepEd-SDO Laguna.

Risk and Strategic Implications in the Schools Division Office of Laguna

The human resource management system within DepEd-SDO Laguna is increasingly challenged by the weak alignment between career progression mechanisms and performance appraisal practices. When performance ratings do not result in opportunities for professional growth, promotion and skills development, employees may view the assessment process as a merely compliance-driven rather than developmental. This issue is particularly evident among non-teaching personnel, especially those in



administrative and technical roles who frequently act as operational anchors in the provision of educational services. This may result in lower motivation, decreased organizational commitment, increased turnover intentions, and negatively affect the quality of services delivered in both offices and schools.

To strategically strengthen the Schools Division Office of Laguna's human resource management capacity, it is important to understand these dangers. A data-informed analysis of career progression mechanisms and performance appraisal practices can help the division discover competency gaps, streamline job placement, and encourage merit-based methods for development. Enhancing standardization of appraisal tools, strengthening merit-based advancement, and using appraisal results in structured career progression matrices may help promote transparency, fairness, and consistency. It will also increase productivity and retention of non-teaching staff and improve DepEd-SDO Laguna's operational continuity, institutional knowledge, and administrative effectiveness. In the end, the division is positioned to improve governance, maximize investment in human capital, and improve overall administrative effectiveness in the division.

Research Gap

Performance appraisal and career progression are important human resource functions for non-teaching personnel. However, most studies in the Philippine education sector focus on teachers. Non-teaching personnel, who play a key role in delivering educational services and organizational operations, have received much less attention.

Even though the SPMS provides a standard framework to evaluate performance, there is still little evidence on how these appraisal practices affect career progression for non-teaching personnel in the Schools Division Office of Laguna.

This gap highlights the need to examine how non-teaching personnel perceive and experience career progression mechanisms, particularly in terms of clarity of qualification standards, training opportunities, merit-based advancement and mobility of role expansion, and determining how these dimensions influence the implementation of performance appraisal practices.

The Need for the Study

There is a clear necessity to undertake the present investigation on career progression and performance appraisal of non-teaching personnel in the Department of Education-Schools Division Office of Laguna. Despite the existence of SPMS and various HRM policies in DepEd, there remains limited empirical evidence on how consistency in performance appraisal practices influences career progression opportunities among non-teaching personnel in SDO Laguna. This circumstance indicates a systemic disjunction between evaluative performance mechanisms and real career advancement, hence warranting systematic research.

This study supports United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 8, which states that human resource management systems, like career progression and performance evaluation, have a significant impact on employee well-being and organizational success (Labadan & Benitez, 2025). It also supports United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4 by recognizing the importance of developing a stable and motivated support staff, which is vital in delivering a quality education (Saclanas & Ricaforte, 2026).

Ultimately, the present study seeks to determine whether career progression mechanisms significantly influence the level of implementation of performance appraisal practices for non-teaching personnel in DepEd-SDO Laguna. The results will help guide organizational improvements that match public sector standards, DepEd's strategic goals, and the quality of education governance.

Conceptual Framework

This study was anchored on three main theories which are Human Capital Theory, Equity Theory and Goal Setting Theory. These theories provided a comprehensive foundation on how career progression mechanisms and performance appraisal practices influence employee motivation, professional growth, and organizational effectiveness.

According to Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1994, as cited in Jaffu, 2023, p. 130), investments in employees' knowledge, skills, and competencies improve individual career outcomes, organizational performance, and productivity. In this study, training opportunities, skill development, role expansion and organized career advancement pathways serve as organizational investment in the human capital of non-teaching personnel. The idea indicates that individuals who gain new skills and receive targeted development interventions are better positioned for promotions, additional responsibilities, and higher performance results.

According to Equity Theory (Adams, 1965, as cited in Shinde, 2025), employees assess workplace fairness by comparing their input-output ratios with those of their peers. Salary, promotions, recognition, and professional growth opportunities are outputs, while effort, abilities, and experience are inputs. Fair distribution of these outcomes will help employees become more motivated and committed to the organization. Using this theory, non-teaching personnel at DepEd-SDO Laguna may evaluate whether the career progression mechanisms are fairly linked to performance appraisal practices. Therefore, maintaining motivation, job satisfaction, and staff retention requires clear promotion plans and fair rating methods.

According to Goal-Setting Theory (Locke & Latham, 1990, as cited in Vidya & Kothai, 2020), the significance of specific and attainable goals enhances individual performance. Goals promote persistence effectively when employees receive regular feedback, social support and training opportunities. Performance appraisal methods at DepEd-SDO Laguna that successfully assess task performance, adaptability, and contextual contributions offer crucial feedback for career advancement, point out skill gaps, and determine training needs. When performance management is used correctly, it guarantees that high-performing non-teaching personnel are acknowledged, developed, and promoted in line with their proven abilities.

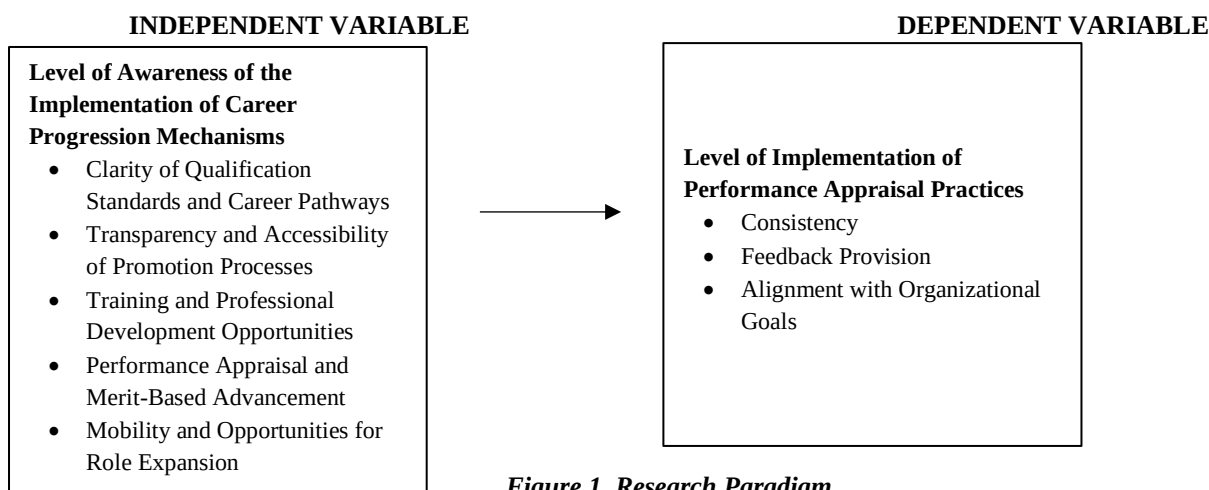


Figure 1. Research Paradigm

The independent variable contains the level of awareness of the implementation of career progression mechanisms in terms of clarity of qualification standards and career pathways, transparency and accessibility of promotion processes, training and professional development opportunities, performance appraisal and merit-based advancement, and mobility and opportunities for role expansion.

While the dependent variable is the level of implementation of performance appraisal practices in terms of consistency, feedback provision, and alignment with organizational goals.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the performance appraisal practices and career progression mechanisms for non-teaching personnel at the Department of Education-Schools Division Office (SDO) of Laguna. Concerns about the efficacy, fairness, accessibility, and clarity of the current human resource systems intended to promote non-teaching personnel's professional development and maintain organizational continuity continue despite the growing administrative and technical demands imposed on them.

Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of awareness of the respondents on the implementation of career progression mechanism in terms of:
 - 1.1 clarity of qualification standards and career pathways
 - 1.2 transparency and accessibility of promotion processes
 - 1.3 training and professional development opportunities
 - 1.4 performance appraisal and merit-based advancement; and
 - 1.5 mobility and opportunities for role expansion?
2. What is the level of implementation of performance appraisal practices in terms of:
 - 2.1 consistency
 - 2.2 feedback provision; and
 - 2.3 alignment with organizational goals?
3. Determine whether the dimensions of career progression mechanisms significantly predict the level of implementation of performance appraisal practices among the respondents.
4. Based on the findings, what evidence-based recommendations may be proposed to enhance the level of awareness of non-teaching personnel on career progression mechanism of DepEd-SDO Laguna?

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive-evaluative research strategy to examine a thorough analysis of the performance appraisal practices and career progression mechanisms for Non-Teaching Personnel in the DepEd-Schools Division Office of Laguna. This method captured the opinions of non-teaching personnel and examined how HR practices promote workforce capability, equity, and organizational continuity. The framework offered evidence-based recommendations for strategic human resource development and policy improvement by merging description with assessment.

The respondents in this study consisted of 200 non-teaching personnel selected from a total population of 693 school-based and division-based non-teaching personnel from DepEd-SDO Laguna through stratified random sampling, ensuring adequate representation from three different functional divisions, namely the Curriculum Implementation Division (CID), the School Governance and Operations Division (SGOD), and the Office of the Schools Division Superintendent (OSDS), and school-based non-teaching personnel.

The data were collected using a researcher-made questionnaire that underwent content validation and pilot testing. Cronbach's alpha testing was done to determine the internal consistency of the data. All items had an acceptable reliability level of



0.70 and above. The researcher distributed the survey forms after obtaining the necessary permits and approvals from the Schools Division Superintendent and informed consent from participants.

Descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, weighted mean, and standard deviation were used to determine and measure the level of awareness of career progression mechanisms and the level of implementation of performance appraisal practices. Inferential statistics were used to test for the significant effect between the level of awareness of career progression mechanisms and the level of implementation of performance appraisal practices. The predictive power of the respondents' awareness of the mechanisms for career progression on their perception of performance appraisal practices was determined using regression analysis at a 0.05 level of significance.

The research followed institutional and government ethical standards, including the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act 10173), particularly regarding the responsible collection, safeguarding, and disposal of personal data. The researcher assured that all data would be used solely for academic purposes and would not be disclosed to anyone outside the boundaries of the research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The results showed that non-teaching personnel in DepEd–SDO Laguna generally demonstrated a high to very high level of awareness regarding the level of implementation of career progression mechanisms. Respondents demonstrated a strong understanding about clarity of qualification standards and career pathways, and performance appraisal and merit-based advancement. Awareness was also high regarding transparency and accessibility of promotion processes, training and professional development opportunities, and mobility and opportunities for role expansion. These findings indicate that while the division has established effective mechanisms regarding career advancement opportunities, improvements in transparency, communication, and accessibility remain necessary.

Similarly, the level of implementation of performance appraisal practices was found to be high to very high. Respondents generally perceived a very high level in terms of consistency and alignment with organizational goals. Feedback provision also received a high rating. These findings highlight that while existing performance appraisal processes support organizational effectiveness and employee development, there remains further enhancement on improving communication and encouraging more active employee participation in the appraisal process.

Effect of Career Progression Mechanisms on the Level of Implementation of Performance Appraisal Practices

Table 1

Regression Coefficients on Effect of career progression mechanisms on the level of implementation of performance appraisal practices

Predictors	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Decision	Interpretation
	Beta				
(Constant)		2.087	.038		
Clarity of Qualification Standards and Career Pathways	-.002	-.053	.958	Failed to Reject H0	Not Significant
Transparency and Accessibility of Promotion Processes	.222	4.661	<.001	Reject H0	Significant
Training and Professional Development Opportunities	-.090	-1.655	.100	Failed to Reject H0	Not Significant
Performance Appraisal and Merit-Based Advancement	.448	7.993	<.001	Reject H0	Significant
Mobility and Opportunities for Role Expansion	.407	7.332	<.001	Reject H0	Significant

a. Dependent Variable: Level of Implementation of Performance Appraisal Practices Overall Mean

b. Model summary: $R^2 = .916$, Adjusted $R^2 = .839$; $F(5, 194) = 201.52$, $p < .001$

The regression analysis showed that the level of perceptions on career progression mechanisms had a significant effect on the implementation of performance appraisal practices among non-teaching personnel in the Department of Education–Schools Division Office (SDO) of Laguna. The overall model was statistically significant, $F(5, 194) = 201.52$, $p < .001$, explaining 83.9% of the variance in the implementation of performance appraisal practices ($R^2 = .839$, Adjusted $R^2 = .834$). This indicated that employees' perceptions of career progression mechanisms collectively influenced the effective implementation of performance appraisal practices.

Examining the individual predictors, transparency and accessibility of promotion processes ($\beta = .222$, $t = 4.66$, $p < .001$), performance appraisal and merit-based advancement ($\beta = .448$, $t = 7.99$, $p < .001$), and mobility and opportunities for role expansion ($\beta = .407$, $t = 7.33$, $p < .001$) were significant, leading to the **rejection of the null hypothesis** for these variables. In contrast, clarity of qualification standards and career pathways ($\beta = -.002$, $t = -.053$, $p = .958$) and training and professional development opportunities ($\beta = -.090$, $t = -1.66$, $p = .100$) were not significant, resulting in **failure to reject the null hypothesis**.



Oktaviani & Handayani (2025) found that a transparent, fair, and merit-based appraisal system together with a supportive workplace culture, creates greater promotion opportunities. Similarly, Nasutioin et al. (2024) emphasized that performance appraisal is crucial in assessing employee career development and enabling career mobility opportunities which can improve employee engagement and productivity.

Overall, the findings indicated that while general awareness of qualifications and training alone did not significantly affect performance appraisal implementation, employees' perceptions of fairness, accessibility, merit-based advancement, and role mobility were key drivers of effective performance appraisal practices in the division.

Based on the results, several evidence-based tactics could be suggested to raise non-teaching personnel's understanding of career advancement procedures at DepEd-SDO Laguna. First, conduct regular orientations and develop information guide or tracking system on promotion processes to improve understanding of qualification standards, career pathways, and promotion requirements. Second, the strict standardization of appraisal tools along with regular coaching sessions and feedback mechanisms, should be strengthened to ensure transparency in appraisal outcomes and strengthen concerns related to fairness and trust in HR system. Third, ensure equitable access to professional development programs and clearly communicate opportunities for lateral movement and role expansion to increase awareness of career growth options. Finally, strengthen the connection how appraisal outcomes influence career advancement opportunities through transparency of promotion processes, opportunities for career mobility and merit-based advancement. Taken together, these strategies aim to increase knowledge, involvement, and engagement in career progression initiatives, guaranteeing the division's workforce is skilled, driven, and prepared for the future.

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AI Declaration

The researchers used Grammarly Pro as an AI-assisted language editing tool during the preparation of this manuscript. Its use was limited to correcting grammatical errors, improving sentence structures, and enhancing readability. The conceptualization of the study, data collection, interpretation of findings, and writing of the substantive content were performed by the researchers. All AI-generated suggestions were critically reviewed before incorporation into the final document.