

A teacher's plight to career progression: A narrative inquiry

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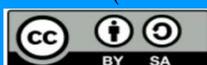
Abstract: This research is driven to capture the story of a high school teacher on the account of career progression. Specifically, this study uncovers the challenges related to promotion; give support for career advancement; and to illuminate insights or life lessons for other teachers or teachers to be on the account of promotion or career progression. Purposive sampling technic is employed. Data collection methods are through Semi-structured Interview, Writing Prompt through Timeline Completion and an Archival Record. Audio recorded face-to-face interviews with transcriptions provide in-depth participant insights. Data analysis procedure made using Braun & Clarke's six-phase framework: examining raw data; making initial codes; having repeated coding process; categorizing codes; developing themes and/or sub themes representing data in tables, figures; and lastly creating the final narrative. There are four (4) major themes that came to light namely: Priority, Determination, Complacency and, Support System, which give way to the sub-themes Stagnation, Disappointment / Regrets, and Encouraging others to pursue educational goals. Additionally, there are seven (7) epiphanies marking significant life realizations and turning points in the particular teacher respondent's career journey. These are the following: (1) Gratitude and Aspiration; (2) Unexpected Love for Filipino Subjects; (3) Sacrificing Career for Family; (4) Reawakening Professional Goals; (5) Realization of Career Stagnation; (6) Hope and Motivation from New Policy; (7) Lessons and Realizations. Lastly, this research emphasizes the value of lifelong learning, mentoring programs and training opportunities about career progression processes. Updated promotion policies must be announced properly to give equal and timely opportunities to all the teachers. There is a necessity of actualizing a career progression self-paced action plan for every teacher.

Keywords: Career progression, Complacency, Determination, Priority, Stagnation, Support system

Introduction

Domain number 7 of the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) significantly highlights "Personal Growth and Professional Development" of teachers and intensely magnifies the importance of personal professional reflection and learning to improve practice. The set of guidelines for teachers, which are based on the idea of lifelong learning, acknowledges the importance of PPST standards framework that

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describes the development of teachers as they develop, enhance their methods, and adapt to the complexity of educational reforms. Thus, the value and importance of teachers' responsibility for personal growth and professional development through continuous education or lifelong learning is a must. The career ladder or career progression emphasized the ascending standards and competencies expected from the teachers from Beginner Teacher, Proficient Teacher, Highly Proficient and Distinguished Teacher. However, it has never been easy for every teacher to continuously climb up the professional development ladder. Cahilog et al. (2023) mentioned several challenges that affected teachers' latency in career progression these involved (1) Uncontrollable Choices, (2) Contentment, and (3) Called to Serve. These are just a few expedients in highlighting and uncovering the realities of the teachers' world in the environment they are in.

According to Morales and Matriano (2023), teachers also experienced professional development challenges in terms of teacher-related factors to a great extent. These are the following: (a.) Having a busy schedule; (b.) Limited time to involve themselves in professional development; (c.) Lack of financial resources for their engagement in professional development; (d.) The perception that professional development activities may not effectively contribute to career advancement and professional growth; (d.) Sense of self-sufficiency, thereby eliminating any desire to participate in professional development activities; (e.) Instructional supervision and assistance, when teachers do not receive regular or timely constructive feedback about professional development practices. In addition to that, these were supported by Guira and Doctolero (2023) in a study which revealed that teachers who were never promoted, indeed encountered several obstacles and that served as frequently disregarded stories which needs to be heard and given a chance of attention and this emphasized the need for more inclusive and supportive teacher career advancement strategies.

In addition to instructional supervision and assistance, according to a survey on the Role of Principals in Teacher Promotion in the Philippines (Simbre et al., 2023), both teacher and principal participants agree that principals serve as effective models for teachers, with a positive attitude about work, providing technical assistance and opportunities for teachers to assume relevant tasks, according to recognition, developing soft skills of teachers, pursuing further study, and self-initiative as promotion requirements. These findings suggest that a career advancement system should include three key competencies: functional, core behavioral, and professionalism and ethics. These should continuously and systematically address concerns of teachers about promotion and better meet organizational needs.

There is not much of qualitative studies in the Philippines on teachers' stories of career progression. Thus, this research is driven to add and to contribute literature for in-depth exploration of behaviors, attitudes, and experiences within their real-life context in order to have a more comprehensive understanding of perspectives. This study aims to highlight recollection of events and circumstances behind a teacher's long delayed career progression. Specifically, this study uncovers the challenges related to promotion; give support for career advancement; and to illuminate insights or life lessons for other teachers or teachers to be on the account of promotion or career progression.

Rita Chen (A Pseudonym) was a previous adviser in high school and now a co-teacher of the researcher. Rita was known to be very passionate in delivering meaningful lessons to the students at the same time a loyal, caring and an epitome of camaraderie. This particular teacher had been awarded by the Local Government Unit for being one of the "Outstanding Employees" in the entire Jimalalud District 2 of the Division of Negros Oriental. In addition, this particular teacher had been in service for 21 years, with 16 years as T-1 in Junior High and now on her 7th year in Senior High School but still stuck as Teacher-II. In other words, Rita has very notable attributes and characteristics yet somehow failed to ascend in the professional ladder of development. Thus, this research seeks to answer the overarching essential question: How does the teacher describe her plight to career progression? Specifically, this research seeks to answer the following questions: (1) What challenges did the teacher encounter in connection to career growth or promotion during Junior and Senior High school as Technical Vocational Teacher? (2) What are the impacts to teacher's morale (sense of common purpose; the mental, emotional condition or enthusiasm and confidence) of not getting promoted? (3) What insights can be deduced from the teacher's experiences in connection to career growth? (4) What recommendations can be extended to the teacher to finally uphold the long-delayed promotion?

Literature review

Will (2024) in his study reiterated that when teachers first begin with employment, they are often upbeat and enthusiastic. However, after a few years, many begin to lose hope due to the difficulties of teaching and the stagnating pay or promotion in comparison to their colleagues in other fields. Maintaining teachers' morale after the initial excitement and hope wearing off is must be seriously countered by school administrators, so that teachers will be assisted and may move on to a more solid stage of their employment.

According to Macapagal and Ricafort (2023), it was found that teachers' aspirations for career advancement, along with their planned efforts, persistence, and professional development, were very important. There should be a balance of sound policies to be instituted in every school where teachers juggle providing quality education to the learners while helping them thrive in their careers. Tantawy (2020) reiterated that teachers who were highly engaged in professional development initiatives were found to have observed a positive impact on their career progression, promotion chances, retention, and commitment. However, due to some circumstances and the major life events of teachers, allocating time for professional development is almost impossible to achieve.

On the lighter part, teachers' development programs of the Department of Education are available to teachers with a support system, lifelong learning opportunities, awards and recognition, establishing linkages, and engaging them in challenging and fulfilling tasks. A teacher's capacity to manage their career routes is influenced by the availability of a faculty development program. The teachers' varied experiences with career management and faculty development are marked by their desire to pursue graduate studies, share knowledge, receive support from colleagues, and realizing their own potential. However, they encounter obstacles such as a lack of hope for advancement, pessimism, and unfair treatment at work due to certain authorities' selective preference for advancement. An extra component of the faculty development program is prepared for the first round of testing and approval (Labrada, 2020). In addition, some teachers use the idea of aiming for a higher leadership position as a motivation for career progression (Kalberg & Bezzina 2018). However, according to Harper (2018), many teachers find having a business venture more productive than receiving their fixed monthly salary. Bottomline is that teachers are always looking for ways to progress not only professionally but financially and promotion is not the only option.

According to Albert Bandura's social cognitive theory, behavioral patterns, contextual forces, and individual characteristics combine to produce human behavior. He suggested that people are both impacted by and actively shape their surroundings, emphasizing the roles of social experience, observational learning, and reciprocal determinism in human behavior. Also, people try to gain a sense of agency and exercise control over the significant events in their lives (Simply Psychology, 2024).

Teachers' professional advancement is not solely the product of individual efforts, but rather of a complex interplay between personal beliefs, social influences, observational learning, and the environment, as may be seen when seen through Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory. Teachers are more likely to advance if they cultivate a high sense of self-efficacy, participate in ongoing professional development, and make use of encouraging professional networks. Teachers can be further empowered to take control of their careers, adjust to new obstacles, and eventually advance in their professions by creating an environment that values agency and feedback. This implies the significant roles of the school heads and the Department of Education heads in scaffolding teachers' career progression.

Methodology

Narrative inquiry

This study employed a qualitative narrative research inquiry design to collect or recount detailed stories or life experiences of an individual. It involved making meaning through collaboration between the researcher and the particular teacher respondent by chronologically ordering the meaning of experiences called life course stages in an individual's life or key events that become the focus for the biographer (Reissman 2008). In this particular research design, stories emerge from a story told to the researcher, a story that is co-constructed or co-created between the researcher and the participant. This is a story intended as a performance to convey some message or point (Reissman, 2008). It is said that there may be a strong collaborative feature of narrative research as the story emerges through the interaction or dialogue of the researcher and the participant.

Narrative stories tell of individual experiences, and they may shed light on the identities of individuals and how they see themselves. Narrative stories often are heard and shaped by the researchers into a chronology although they may not be told that way by the participant(s). (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Narrative stories are analyzed in varied ways. An analysis can be made about what was said, which is called "Thematic Analysis." Analysis can be based on the nature of the telling of the story which is called "Structural Analysis." Lastly, analysis can be laden on who the story is directed toward which is known as "Dialogic/ Performance" (Reissman, 2008). As to this research study, thematic analysis was employed.

Narrative researchers situate individual stories within participants' personal experiences within the job, home, culture, and historical contexts such as time and place, etc. It involves "Restorying" or the process of reorganizing the stories to a general type of framework. This framework may consist of gathering stories, analyzing them for key elements of the story like time, place, plot, and scene. Which is then followed by rewriting the stories within a chronological sequence (Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2002).

Narrative researchers collect stories, negotiate relationships, smooth transitions, and provide ways to be useful to the participants. In narrative research, a key theme has been the turn toward the relationship between the researcher and the researched in which both parties will learn and change in the encounter (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007). In this process, the parties negotiate the meaning of the stories, adding a validation check to the analysis (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Within the participant's story may also be an interwoven story of the researcher gaining insight into her or his own life (Huber & Whelan, 1999). Also, within the story may be epiphanies, turning points, or disruptions in which the storyline changes direction dramatically. In the end, the narrative study tells the story of individuals unfolding in a chronology of their experiences, set within their personal, social, and historical context, and including the important themes in those lived experiences. "Narrative inquiry is stories lived and told," (Clandinin & Connolly, 2000: 20).

Data gathering procedure

The researcher made use of the purposive sampling technique for the sole participant who was particularly chosen to answer the set of questions in the study. This means that the researcher selected the respondent for the study purposively to have an informed understanding of the research problem and the phenomenon in the study (Creswell, 2000). Within 7-8 weeks the data collection methods used were Semi-structured Interviews, Writing Prompts through Timeline Completion, and an Archival Record. Audio recorded data from face-to-face interviews lasted almost 2 hours with (14) fourteen pages of printed transcriptions. This was made manually using Microsoft Word with the aid of the Google Translator tool to provide an in-depth exploration of the participant's story.

Gaining informed consent was not quite complicated for the researcher since both the researcher and the respondent were teaching in the same school. In other words, "co-teachers". The permission letters were signed and approved by the school head and the particular teacher respondent. The researcher sought professional advice and technical assistance from more knowledgeable others of previous college instructors a research director in a university, a co-teacher, and a colleague who specializes in qualitative research studies. These experts provided aid in validating the tool for data collection. Lastly, from a university professor who specializes in Linguistics and Qualitative Research studies.

Data analysis procedure

The researcher used Braun & Clarke's six-phase framework for qualitative data analysis. This involved the following steps: (1) Become familiar with the data by reading, and re-reading the transcripts; (2) Generate initial codes by organizing the data in a meaningful and systematic way; (3) Search for themes by examining the codes to clearly see which fit together into a theme; (4) Review themes as themes should be coherent at the same time distinct from each other; (5) Define themes to identify the essence of what each theme is about. (6) Write-up the research report or narrative (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The data analysis procedure included examining the gathered data, making initial codes, categorizing the codes or looking for patterns, and reducing codes to themes (Creswell, 2000). The study employed an Inductive coding approach to make sense of the data. It highlights creating a set of codes based on the data itself as the codes emerge from the data (Jansen, 2024). Specifically, the study used descriptive, in-vivo, and values coding. Descriptive coding aims to summarize extracts by using a single word or noun that encapsulates the general idea of the data. In-vivo Coding typically describes the data in a highly condensed manner, which allows the researcher to quickly refer to the content. It makes use of direct quotes from participants as codes. This is to avoid trying to infer meaning, rather staying as close to the original phrases and words as possible (Jansen, 2024). In vivo, coding is particularly useful when data are derived from participants who speak different languages or come from different cultures. In these cases, it's often difficult to accurately infer meaning due to linguistic or cultural differences. Values coding involves coding that relates to the participant's worldviews. Typically, this type of coding focuses on excerpts that reflect the values, attitudes, and beliefs of the participants. Values coding is therefore very useful for research exploring cultural values and intrapersonal and experiences and actions (Jansen, 2024).

After repeated coding processes, thematic analysis was employed. The thematic analysis focuses on themes and patterns. It looks at patterns and meanings in a data set. it takes bodies of data which are quite large and groups these data into according to similarities. It makes sense of context and derive meaning from it. Useful for finding out about people's experiences, views, opinions and perspectives. It is used for understanding people's experiences through an exploratory process (Creswell, 2000).

In analyzing narrative data, interpretation of faith was used. This is also known as the Hermeneutic of Faith where the stories told by the participants are true and meaningful based on their sense of personal experience. Researchers take the story at face value. It aims to explore or understand the subjective world of the

participants or the social and historical world they are living in (Josselson, 2004). The data analysis procedure specifically was composed of: examining raw data; making initial codes; having repeated coding process; categorizing codes; developing themes and/or sub-themes; representing data in tables, and figures; and lastly creating the final narrative.

Result and discussion

Table 1: Interview excerpt utilizing descriptive in-vivo coding for Question Number 1.

Question no. 1: Since when have you been teaching and connected with Department of Education?	
Significant Response	Descriptive Coding
2003, (January) nahimo ko sinulog dancer dayun tigpa snack my students were Greta and Mico...kahinumdum ko nila mo ingon sa kitchen, ayuha na niyu luto kay gigutom nko.	2003 Entered/Started w/DepEd

Rita recalled that her first year of actual service in school as Teacher-I was January, 2003. But her date of appointment was originally December 2002 which was still during Christmas vacation.

Table 2: Interview excerpt utilizing descriptive and n-vivo coding for Question Number 2

Question no. 2: How many years of teaching experience did you have in Junior High School? Please describe those years in at least 3-5 adjectives.		
Significant Response	N-Vivo Coding	Descriptive Coding
Since 2003-2016, 14 years kuan ¹ I feel excited, inspired, motivated, kusog kaayu akong feeling gabaha jud. ² Dream nko nga dili ko kutob ug T-III. Mo hilak nalang ko ani day wala naman ko mahimo ani (joking and laughs)...	14 years. ¹ I FEEL EXCITED, INSPIRED, MOTIVATED, KUSOG KAAYU AKONG FEELING GABAHA JUD. ² DREAM NKO NGA DILI KO KUTOB UG T-III.	¹ HIGH-SPIRITED ² HOPEFUL

Rita had 14 years of teaching experience in Junior High School. Which she feels excited, inspired, motivated, and really high-spirited. She’s full of hope and drive that she will not only be Teacher-I or Teacher-III but more. According to Will (2024) When teachers first begin with employment, teachers are often upbeat and enthusiastic.

Table3. Interview excerpt utilizing descriptive and n-vivo coding for Question Number 3.

Question no. 3: Did you apply for promotion or reclassification in Junior High School? How was it?		
Significant Response	N-Vivo Coding	Descriptive Coding
YES. katung naa koy 9 units. 2009-2010. Katung naa tu memo day nga teachers having the experience pwedi maka apply ug T-II dayun gi ing nan ko ni sir hary unya ni apply ko pero ang nka sulod taga JNHS. 9 me kabuuk diri ang nakasulod taga JNHS si mam P. ¹ Nalugi kaayu ko. Asa asa man sila, regional, national ako kutob ra division.	YES. WITH THE 9 UNITS. 2009-2010. ¹ NALUGI KAAYU KO. (BEHIND IN RANK)	¹ LAST IN RANK

The teacher respondent applied for promotion for Teacher-2 position once in junior high but failed to get promoted because promotion was given to teachers who are more qualified and more accomplished. DepEd Order No. 42, s. 2007, DepEd Order No. 66, s. 2007, and MEC Order No. 10, s. 1979, served as bases in identifying criteria and indicators for professional development practices. All these highlighted the specific points for scoring from performance rating, experience, outstanding accomplishments, education emphasizing on further education, trainings, authorship, etc. the teacher would really have to keep abreast with all these, especially continuing professional education to be competitive in the ranking for promotion and in order not to be left behind.

Table 4: Interview excerpt utilizing descriptive and n-vivo coding for Question Number 4.

Question no. 4: How long have you been serving in Senior High School? Please describe these years in at least 3-5 adjectives.		
Significant Response	N-Vivo Coding	Descriptive Coding
<p>Since 2017 till present turning 8 years. Finally promoted to T-II.</p> <p>¹Happy na kay teacher 2 ahw ug mo ingon nga sa trabaho sa mga bata,</p> <p>²kontento ko, ok ra, nalipay ko. sa environment... wala koy problema sa senior high.</p> <p>³Ma-stress rako ana ing-non ko “T-II paka ron mam?” Mura ka’g ma down sa kaugalingon dayun of course mura kag ma-stress kay imung mga junior high students na T-III na.</p> <p>Kuan day ⁴Nagmahay (SHS) ...</p>	<p>¹HAPPY WITH WORK & STUDENTS.</p> <p>²CONTENTED WITH ENVIRONMENT.</p> <p>³STRESSED WHEN ASKED OF RANK: “T-II PA KA RON MAM?”</p> <p>⁴NAGMAHAY</p>	<p>¹HAPPY</p> <p>²CONTENTED</p> <p>³STRESSED</p> <p>⁴REGRETFUL</p>

In 7 years of teaching in Senior High, Rita said she’s happy with work, environment and students but stressed when asked about her position or rank, “*Teacher-II pa ka ron ma’am?*” in addition, Rita expresses regret “*Nagmahay*” for not being able to ascend in the professional career ladder in a long period of time.

Table 5: Interview excerpt utilizing descriptive and n-vivo coding for Question Number 5.

Question no. 5: Do you see yourself finishing your Master’s degree in the future or proceeding with your TM-2 in Dressmaking? Why or why not?		
Significant Response	N-Vivo Coding	Descriptive Coding
<p>Wala na. Akong gihuna huna ron day wala na na inline sa profession. ¹Negosyo akong ganahan. Mao jud na siya day wala nako ga huna huna nga mo school pa ko day. Negosyo na.</p> <p>Not dali ang kwarta. Sa akong ²pangidaron ba, kuan na kaayu (too late).</p> <p>kung mo proceed ko ug master’s degree.. dayun unsa ma promote kog T-III?</p> <p>professional ³growth ra na. dili gyud ko gihapon ma master teacher day kay ngano naa si mam J. Blurred kaayu na jud. Di na pwedi. dili nko day. Dili nko mag kuan ug instructor kay wala na jud sa akong huna huna ng instructor. Ang ako nga ma ⁴promote nalang kog T-III malipay nako ana dayun ⁵focus kog Negosyo. labina naa nakoy ⁶college, need kog laing extra income.</p> <p>Assessor pwedi, pwedi. Pero daghan n apud assessor naas guihulngan. Wala na jud mao ra na akona, promoted to T-III. Dayun mag Negosyo lamang na.</p>	<p>NO</p> <p>¹ I WANT TO DO BUSINESS</p> <p>² CONSIDERING MY AGE NOW IT SEEMS TOO LATE.</p> <p>³IT’S JUST PROFESSIONAL GROWTH, I WON’T BECOME MASTER TEACHER.</p> <p>⁴ I JUST WANT TO GET PROMOTED TO T-III. I WILL BE HAPPY.</p> <p>⁵I’LL FOCUS ON BUSINESS.</p> <p>⁶ ESPECIALLY NOW I HAVE COLLEGE, I NEED EXTRA INCOME.</p>	<p>NO</p> <p>¹ BUSINESS</p> <p>² AGE</p> <p>³ JUST PROFESSIONAL GROWTH</p> <p>⁴ GET PROMOTED</p> <p>⁵FOCUS BUSINESS</p> <p>⁶ COLLEGE</p>

Rita’s responses in question number eight presented disinterest in continuing her further study for master’s degree. She expresses her interest in doing business for extra income for her soon to be college son. Thus, she wants to get promoted to Teacher-III. As she says “*It’s just professional growth, I won’t become master teacher. I just want to get promoted to T-III.*”

According to Harper (2018), many teachers find having business venture more productive than receiving their fixed monthly salary. This is certainly true with Rita as well when she said “*I’ll focus on business.*”

Especially now I have college, I need extra income”. For Rita, having more source of income is more necessary than pursuing further study or professional development.

Table 6: Interview excerpt utilizing descriptive and n-vivo coding for Question Number 6.

Question no. 6: If the road to becoming a Master Teacher is blurry, how about being a school head or a teacher-in-charged as a stepping stone to P1, would you consider it? Why or why not?	N-Vivo Coding	Descriptive Coding
<p>¹kalima ko gi-approach ma-TIC sa school but said NO. sa time ni mam R, dayun paghawa ni mam N. dayun ka sir C, dayun sunod ka sir H. Dayun ka sir R. Mailhan najud ko day ug unsa jud ko day..ahahah. Tapulan ko ana nalang day.</p> <p>Aning time pagawas ni mam R²buntis ko ana. Ingon c mam “day mu hawa nako day. Ikaw akong ibilin kay ikaw taga diri. Ikaw najud aning eskwelahana day” nya daghang ³bugoy. Magdad-anay man ug sundang. Dayun gidad-an kog sundang day. Gidad-an kog sundang.</p> <p>Si A diha katung langlang..ang iyang manghud, nutrition month man, unya akoy adviser. Naay cooking cooking, Nawala man day (knife) nasuko siya. Nya akong mga estudyante atu kay 122 inside the classroom. Unsaon nako pag-monitor. Ug wala ⁴giing-nan ko ani day (TIC is road to P1), murag utongon nako. Wala ko kabalo gud nga ing ana. Kay ni ingon man pud sila day kay ug ma TIC ka ⁵same ra japon kag sweldo.</p> <p>OO, naligsan lagi ko anang kuana. Pero ng eskwela ko ana(2003-2004) dayun kaning sa time ni sir C. MO ana gyud na siya na lami jud na siya kay motivated kaayu na siya “Teach, lamia nimo sa, 29 pa imong edad nya kuan naka TIC.” Dayun ana pud c mam R, kay ug dili jud ka day ako ning ihatag ni sir cabag. Nya ako atu murag ahead man ko ni sir C ug duha ka tuig, nya laki man si sir naay motor..mao akong ihatag niya. Ganahan pud siya ma TIC.</p> <p>OO, laki man gud siya day nya buntis ko ani nga time ni mam R. Nya pagka human nkog panganak ni sakay bayag barko si husband.</p> <p>oo, ang paghawa ni sir C, ako napud iyang gi-ingon. Nya ⁶nursing mother baya ko day. Si second child. nya lisud nag ⁷dalan (18-19 km). Basta lisud kaayung dalan day. Dayun walay suga (walay korente) wala computer type writer ra. Mao sir H na.</p> <p>akoy gi-ingon ani ni sir H unya wala na sa akong ⁸huna-huna, kuan, si e (buntis/3rd child) ang pagka check-up, ang ⁹risk, kanag sig-ag padala ug seminar ng mga school head, sa district nya katu man tung tyma nga bisag sabado padulhugon. Kabantay ka sauna nga daghan bagul-bol?</p> <p>¹⁰Negosyo na akong ganahan (magbaboyan, maninda)</p> <p>no.</p>	<p>¹FIVE TIMES APPROACHED TO BE TIC BUT DECLINED.</p> <p>²PREGNANT WITH FIRST CHILD</p> <p>³VIOLENT INDECENT PEOPLE BRING BOLO TO SCHOOL. I WAS A VICTIM.</p> <p>IF I WAS ⁴TOLD (TIC IS ROAD TO P1), I MIGHT ACCEPT IT. I REALLY DON'T KNOW THAT. THEY TOLD ME THAT IF I BECOME TIC, I WILL STILL HAVE THE ⁵SAME SALARY. WHY BOTHER?</p> <p>⁶I WAS A NURSING MOTHER. THIS TIME WITH (2ND CHILD).</p> <p>⁷TRANSPORTATION FROM WAS REALLY DIFFICULT.</p> <p>⁸OUT OF MY MIND, I HAD MY 3RD CHILD THEN.</p> <p>⁹RISK WHEN YOU'RE SENT TO SEMINARS, DISTRICT, ETC.</p> <p>¹⁰I PREFER BUSINESS/MERCHANDIZING OR PIGGERY.</p>	<p>¹ NOT INTERESTED</p> <p>²PRIORITIZED MOTHERHOOD/ PARENTHOOD</p> <p>³VIOLENT PARENTS/PEOPLE</p> <p>⁴ UNAWARE OF BENEFITS</p> <p>⁵SAME SALARY.</p> <p>⁶ 2ND CHILD NURSING MOM</p> <p>⁷DIFFICULT TRANSPORTATION</p> <p>⁸ 3RD CHILD NURSING MOM</p> <p>⁹RISK</p> <p>¹⁰DO BUSINESS</p>

Some teachers use the idea of aiming for a higher leadership position as a motivation for career progression (Kalberg & Bezzina 2018). But Rita was not one of them. She expressed disinterest several times to be a school leader/TIC due to many reasons like due to prioritizing motherhood, violent parents/people, transportation or travelling, risks, etc. Rita rather prefers to do business or have piggery.

Table 7: Interview excerpt utilizing descriptive and n-vivo coding for Question Number 7.

Question no. 7: What challenges did you encounter in connection to career growth or promotion during junior high school?		
Example: Challenge in terms of finances while finishing Master's Degree for promotion; Challenge in terms of time, I was too busy, etc.		
Significant Response	N-Vivo Coding	Descriptive Coding
<p>kana ¹time.</p> <p>No more time sapag eskwela wala na kay naa naman ²anak.</p> <p>Dayun kuan mga ³dalan. Lisud kaayung dalan dili pa kabalo mo drive. Habal habal lang. talagsa ra habal-habal mu dulhug. Wala paman lain habal habal dinhi sauna. Walay motor kaayu 2003-2006..pila ra kabuok, dili ka kasakay dayun. Need pa nimo ihatud sila, maghulat ka ug byahe. Mga tawo usually maglaw pa, guba kaayu ang karsada day from Jimalalud. Lisud jud ang dalan day. Kuan baya kana pag pauli.</p> <p>Ganahan ko mo eskwela pero ⁴mabira rako ky wla sila pud ng eskwela..ang uban until now.. ang uban ng TIC na principal, ang uban ni balhin ug elementary nagpa transfer. Kuan rajud na ⁵zigzag akong dalan day.</p>	<p>¹TIME</p> <p>NO MORE TIME SAPAG ESKWELA WALA NA KAY NAA NAMAN ²ANAK.</p> <p>LISUD KAAYUNG ³DALAN DILI PA KABALO MO DRIVE.</p> <p>GANAHAN KO MO ESKWELA PERO ⁴MABIRA RAKO KY WLA SILA PUD NG ESKWELA</p> <p>⁵NA ZIGZAG AKONG DALAN DAY.</p> <p>(my path is zigzag)</p>	<p>¹ TIME</p> <p>²MOTHERHOOD/PARENTHOOD</p> <p>³TRANSPORTATION</p> <p>⁴ LACK OF INTEREST</p> <p>⁵ RUNNING IN CIRCLES</p>

Rita named several challenges she encountered in connection to career growth or promotion during junior high school. Namely, time, prioritized mothering or parenthood over taking MA classes, transportation, lost interest, and many more. Certainly, these are unquestionable reasons why the teacher respondent stopped pursuing a Master's Degree and only earned 9 units. Years later it turned out to be an on-and-off plight for further education. MA 9 units from 2003 dissolved. In 2017 re-started MA journey, re-enrolled MAVE & earned CAR. Which later lead to my getting accepted into SHS as Teacher-II. Rita described this as “*Na zigzag akong dalan*” or “*My path is zigzag*” indicating her path to career progression.

According to Morales and Matriano (2023), teachers experienced professional development challenges in terms of teacher-related factors to a great extent. These are the following: (a) Having a busy schedule; (b) Limited time to involve themselves in professional development; (c) Lack of financial resources for their engagement in professional development; (d) The perception that professional development activities may not effectively contribute to career advancement and professional growth; (d) Sense of self-sufficiency, thereby eliminating any desire to participate in professional development activities; (e) Instructional supervision and assistance when teachers do not receive regular or timely constructive feedback about professional development practices.

Table 8: Interview excerpt utilizing descriptive and n-vivo coding for Question Number 8.

Question no. 8: What challenges do you encounter in connection to career growth or promotion as a Technical Vocational Teacher?		
Example: Challenge in terms of finances while finishing Master's Degree for promotion; Challenge in terms of time, I was too busy, etc.		
Significant Response	N-Vivo Coding	Descriptive Coding
<p>¹Wala ko gi-assignan ug TLE subjects(specialization). Wala pud ko nangayo kay dili man sila mo tudlo ug Filipino. Ang Filipino gihatag jud nila nko kay lisud konu na nila. Mao na wala ko nahatagan ug TLE.</p> <p>pagsulod jud nako, ako jud na tanang Filipino. First year-4th year (High school).</p> <p>Ang ako nga ²nalipay na ko nahimo ko'ng teacher, ug unsaon nko pagtudlo ug Filipino nya sila.</p>	<p>I WAS ¹NOT ASSIGNED TO TEACH TLE SUBJECTS. I DIDN'T ASK BECAUSE THEY DON'T WANT TO TEACH FILIPINO.</p> <p>THEY GAVE ME FILIPINO BECAUSE IT WAS DIFFICULT FOR THEM. THAT'S WHY I WASN'T GIVEN TLE (SPECIALIZATION).</p>	<p>¹NOT GIVEN TEACHING LOAD IN TLE (SPECIALIZATION)</p>

<p>Perting toon day, maong c M Nakita na. kita ka aning akong mata kani? Mao na naka ingon day. Naka coach, nagka judge sa district ug cluster even represented division level FILIPINO. Learned to ³love Filipino develop love for Filipino; coaches and judges Filipino related competitions; but grew up apart from specialization. Suga(lamparelya) dayun matulog ko ug 12-1 am. Upat ka subjects baya akong tun-an. Ako man Filipino paghawa ni mam kuan, nya maulaw baya ko day. Wow fresh graduate, dapat dako kaayu expectation ang mga bata nimo. Mao to abot kog ala-una magtoon. Mata ko alas-kwatro. Kay maglakaw pako gikan sa amoa padulong sa school. mu labang suba...</p> <p>I've never been ⁴sent to TLE training...</p> <p>ang akong TLE training kani ra sa senior high teacher. First time na train kog TLE.</p> <p>Nya pag-abot nko senior high ⁵wala gihapon ko naka tudlo ug TLE...</p> <p>wala ko nila giapil day. Actually day si sir H giapil ko. Pero inug pasa didtu sa mga pangalan, wala ko.</p> <p>wala ko kabalo. I am not ⁶known to be a TLE teacher. Wala ko nailhan sa pagka TLE teacher day, nailhan man gud ko sa pagka FILIPINO. Kana gung naay training (district) adtu kog TLE, boring kaayu akong life day kay wala koy mga kaila. Adtu kog FILIPINO daghan kaayu kog kuan katabi.</p> <p>syempre ang senior dili gyud na niya ihatag ng iyang kuan. TLE si mam N.</p> <p>OO. Open minded naman ta gud ron day. Sauna ug unsay dili niya ganahan. Mao tuy iyang ihatag nimo. Nya ug ikaw...OO, aning ng eskwela kog dress making naa nay TMC-I scholarships. Si sir R gani ani. Wla ma na siya naka gastu sa iyang agritural NC-2. OO, wala na siya ka gasto.wala man ko gud nailhan. Kani aning tyma day. ⁷Nasuya gud ko ani nila tinud-anay wala ko na apil sa scholarship.</p> <p>Kaning 2015-2016 scholar...sa Siquijor man gani si sir R ani day. Agriculture NC2</p> <p>Pagka dawat ni sir R sa iyang scholarship nga NC2 in Agriculture, nasuya ko day. ⁸Mao nga gi-enrol nko akong kaugalingon diha sa Guihulngan for NC-2 in Dress-making. Scholar sa Guihulngan kang G. ⁹Pero kaning TMC-1 dress making nako akoang kaugalingon gasto.</p> <p>busdak mana. 18 thousand busdak man. Lahi bayad ang assessment. dayun magbayad pajud ka atung kuan day katung libro.</p> <p>¹⁰Lami ba gud na Day maka ulaw kaayu. Natulog ko, nagtagad kog bata,</p> <p>2022-2023 mka apas pa unta ko atu ninyu January/February? ug pa promote ug naa pay assessment for TMC-I. ending until now ¹¹walay guidelines for promotion for Techvoc. Plus complete papers na na, received na greenfolder sa division march 17, 2023. Ang akong kakuyawan ani day kabalo kag unsa napud, pag abot ani reclass man tu imong gi-ingon day sa?</p> <p>naa silay kuan ron day, karon gani naa silay meeting/conference ron pero si payang moy gipadalang robacs. Wala man gud koy TLE karon 2nd sem. Hatagan ko niya ug TLE second sem kay wala na si pyang. Adtu mana xa immersion magdala mga bata.</p>	<p>SINCE I WAS HIRED, MY SUBJECTS ARE ALL FILIPINO FROM FIRST YEAR-4TH YEAR HIGH SCHOOL.</p> <p>ANG AKO NGA ²NALIPAY NA KO NAHIMO KO'NG TEACHER, UG UNSAON NKO PAGTUDLO UG FILIPINO NYA SILA.</p> <p>MAO NA NAKA INGON DAY. NAGKA COACH, NAKA JUDGE SA DISTRICT UG CLUSTER EVEN REPRESENTED DIVISION LEVEL FILIPINO (LEARNED TO ³LOVE FILIPINO DEVELOP LOVE FOR FILIPINO; COACHES AND JUDGES FILIPINO RELATED COMPETITIONS; BUT GREW UP APART FROM SPECIALIZATION)</p> <p>⁴I'VE NEVER BEEN SENT TO TLE TRAINING...</p> <p>⁵WHEN I GOT TO SENIOR HIGH, I STILL DIDN'T TEACH TLE...</p> <p>⁶I AM NOT KNOWN TO BE A TLE TEACHER.</p> <p>⁷I WAS REALLY JEALOUS OF THEM I WAS NOT INCLUDED IN THE SCHOLARSHIP.</p> <p>⁸ I ENROLLED MYSELF FOR NC-2, GIBO'S SCHOLAR.</p> <p>⁹ SPENT FROM MY OWN POCKET FOR TMC-1 DRESSMAKING.</p> <p>¹⁰I FEEL ASHAMED, IT SEEMED I SLEPT, I TOOK CARE OF THE (MY) BABIES.</p> <p>¹¹ 'TIL NOW NO GUIDELINES FOR PROMOTION.</p>	<p>² ALREADY HAPPY BECOMING A TEACHER/ Complacency</p> <p>³LOVE FILIPINO</p> <p>⁴NOT SENT TO TLE TRAINING</p> <p>⁵STILL DIDN'T TEACH TLE IN SHS</p> <p>⁶ NOT KNOWN AS TLE TEACHER.</p> <p>⁷ NO SCHOLARSHIP</p> <p>⁸DIY/SELF HELP</p> <p>⁹SPENT OWN MONEY</p>
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		¹⁰ SLEPT FOR YEARS ¹¹ NO PROMOTION
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The teacher respondent faced notable challenges in connection to career growth or promotion as a Technical Vocational Teacher. Namely, (a) Not given teaching loads based on specialization; (b) Developed deeper love for Filipino subjects; (c) Not sent to Technical Vocational trainings; (d) Did not receive scholarship for NC-2 & TMC-I from DepEd; (e) Spent for TMC-I in dressmaking since the name was not enlisted to receive scholarship grants as this particular teacher has been known more as Filipino teacher than being a Technical Vocational Teacher in years; (f) Slept for years(stagnant career) (g) No guidelines for promotion. Amidst all these, the teacher expresses sort of restlessness waiting for the new guidelines in promotion for SHS.

DepEd Order no. 005, s. 2024 encourages that teachers must be given workloads and teaching loads based on the area of specialization. The first challenge mentioned by Rita was not parallel to this order. Teacher’s flexibility and versatility is encouraged in the actual field of teaching. Such is done by teaching various subject areas but not to the point of completely depriving the teacher from his/her original specialization. According to Macapagal and Ricafort (2023) it was found that teachers' aspirations for career advancement, along with their planned efforts, persistence, and professional development, were very important. There should be a balance of sound policies to be instituted in every school where teachers juggle for providing quality education to the learners while helping them thrive in their career.

Table 9: Interview excerpt utilizing descriptive and n-vivo coding for Question Number 9.

Question no. 9: What impact did it bring you as a person for not getting promoted? (sense of common purpose; the mental, emotional condition or enthusiasm, confidence). You may answer this way: I feel _____ I think _____ I will _____	
Significant Response	Values Coding
I feel... 'naguol ko. Na ² discourage nako. Na discourage nko kay wala na'y guidelines. ³ Nagmahay, dugay na unta kong na T-III ani. ⁴ I think I will...mubalik ko ug Junior..(laughs) I think I will transfer to Junior. Mao jud na siya. Mao na ni akong gibuhat ron(preparing folder for transfer). Himua jud ko ana ug application letter. Ang promotion hanap.	I FEEL 'SAD. ² I AM DISCOURAGED. THERES' NO MORE GUIDELINES. ³ I AM REGRETFUL. I SHOULD HAVE BEEN T-III FOR A LONG TIME NOW. ⁴ I THINK I WILL GO BACK TO JUNIOR HIGH.

The impacts on teacher’s morale (sense of common purpose; the mental, emotional condition or enthusiasm, confidence) of not getting promoted are evident the following: (a.) *I feel sad*; (b.) *I am discouraged there’s no more guidelines*; (c) *I am regretful. I should have been Teacher-III by now*; and (d.) *I think I will go back to Junior High*. According to Will (2024) When teachers first begin with employment, teachers are often upbeat and enthusiastic. However, after a few years, many begin to lose hope due to the difficulties of teaching and the stagnating pay or promotion in comparison to their colleagues in other fields. Maintaining teachers' morale after the initial excitement and hope wearing off is must be seriously countered by school administrators, so that teachers will be assisted and may move on to a more solid stage of their employment.

Table 10: Interview excerpt utilizing descriptive and n-vivo coding for Question Number 10.

<p>Question no.10: What life insights as a teacher do you wish to impart to other teachers and “teachers to be” on the account of promotion based on the following:</p> <p>a. PPST Career Progression</p> <p>b. Lifelong learning/ Further Study</p> <p>c. Mentorship and Collaboration</p> <p>d. Self-Motivation</p>		
Significant Response	N-Vivo Coding	Descriptive Coding
<p>¹Study while they are still young. Kung ma hire sila, padayun ug eskwela. Mao ra gyud n akong ika kuan kana mga batan-on karon. ²Padayun ug eskwela ayaw undang handtod mahuman. Dayun kanang mga ³opportunity nga maabot nila ayaw i-waste..(ahahaha) ⁴walay ni mentor/nitudlo nako karon ra.. akong ika advice padayun jud ug eskwela kay ikaw maoy mo tulod sa mga tawong tapulan sama nako. Kamo mag motivate. Pareha nimo ba..parehas karon, nimo day mahuman ka ug doctorate, ikaw jud mo ⁵tulod sa mga bag o karon nga nahisama ba ko nga sitwasyon.Gamay ra mi higayon nga nag-uban ni sir cabs kay na promote man siya. Daghan baya exit si sir cabag day..bilib kong sir C pud iyang mga teachers sa sibulan, canlaon iya jud gipang push.</p> <p>Wala man gud pud sila day. Kinsa man mo kuan unless siguro ug tua kos ubos. Tan awa gud kaming sir H. Ug si sir H ug wala gi-ari diri..nga “sir, nganong wala ka gapa promote? Ana rapud siya day “ay ok rako ani mam” katung diha’y mga taga division day gibisita na si sir..”How many years nga nag school head naka sir? Nakatawa ra si sir hary “dugay dugay najud mam. Wala rapud sa akong huna huna mam.Kuan jud to day na blessing jud to xa. Walay laing reason unsa gud to nganong ni ari ra sila mao rajud to ang tuyo atu nga time. Mao to akong gi-ingnan si sir..”Naa man diay ra na sir. Sige na sir pag kuan na.” dayun ana raman siya “ay unya ra ko, mag hinay hinay ragud ko”. Atu nga time TIC pa siya dayun karon HT-III na. dayun karon ng push na gyud na si sir hary. That time, nag hesitate pud si sir hary nga mu dawat sa pagka TIC una. Bali namong tulod tulod... maayu man pud kaayu pag exit ni sir cabs, kay kami iyang gipatawag “ _ unsa man himoan tikag endorsement letter.” Ingon ko sir C ayaw jud, malooy ka..si sir H sir kay laki unya habal habal driver pud si sir hary, plus konschal pud na siya sa una, politikanhon, maka penetrate sa LGU, mao tu. Nya unsa may potential nko ug mo sulod. Ug dili ko mo dawat ana day nga dili maka benefit ang tanan kay unsa may mabuhat nko..?</p> <p>Feeling nako murag ana pero maka kaya man ko. Adtu nalang nako sa akong anak day.. dako kaayu ko’g panan-aw niya..<i>Answer Continuation</i>... padayun ug eskwela ayaw ⁶stop hantud mahimong doctor</p>	<p>¹STUDY WHILE THEY ARE STILL YOUNG.</p> <p>²CONTINUE TO STUDY UNTIL FINISH.</p> <p>³ DON’T WASTE ANY OPPORTUNITY. ⁴NO ONE REALLY WAS THERE TO MENTOR ME. CONTINUE TO STUDY THEN YOU WILL ENCOURAGE OTHERS LIKE ME TO STUDY AS WELL.</p> <p>⁵ PUSH OTHERS UP</p> <p>⁶DON’T STOP UNTIL YOU BECOME A DOCTOR.</p>	<p>¹STUDY</p> <p>²CONTINUE</p> <p>³OPPORTUNITY</p> <p>⁴MENTOR</p> <p>⁵HELP</p> <p>⁶DON’T STOP</p>

The teacher respondent wishes to impart to other teachers and “teachers to be” on the account of promotion by saying “*Study while still young; Continue until finish...*” as professional development is at par with career progression. The teacher respondent encourages other teachers to encourage other teachers as well in taking serious steps towards professional development as this will have a lasting effect on their careers in the future. Tantawy (2020) reiterated that teachers who were highly engaged in professional development initiatives were found to have observed a positive impact on their career progression, promotion chances, retention, and commitment.

Teachers’ development programs of the Department of Education are available to teachers support system, lifelong learning opportunities, awards and recognition, establishing linkages, and engaging them in challenging and fulfilling tasks. A teacher's capacity to manage their career routes is influenced by the availability of a faculty development program. The teachers' varied experiences with career management and faculty development are marked by their desire to pursue graduate studies, share knowledge, receive support from colleagues, and realizing their own potential. However, they encounter obstacles such as a lack of hope for advancement, pessimism, and unfair treatment at work due to certain authorities' selective preference for

advancement. An extra component for the faculty development program is prepared for the first round of testing and approval (Labrada, 2020).

Table 11: Outline of categories that support each code.

Challenges to Career Progression or Promotion	Impacts to teacher of not getting promoted
TIME MOTHERHOOD/PARENTHOOD TRANSPORTATION LACK OF INTEREST RUNNING IN CIRCLES NOT GIVEN TEACHING LOAD IN TLE (SPECIALIZATION) LOVE FILIPINO NOT SENT TO TLE TRAINING STILL DIDN'T TEACH TLE IN SHS NOT KNOWN AS TLE TEACHER. NO SCHOLARSHIP SELF HELP SPENT OWN MONEY SLEPT FOR YEARS NO PROMOTION VIOLENT PARENTS/PEOPLE	I FEEL SAD. I AM DISCOURAGED. THERES' NO MORE GUIDELINES. I AM REGRETFUL. I SHOULD HAVE BEEN T-III FOR A LONG TIME NOW. I THINK I WILL GO BACK TO JUNIOR HIGH. I'LL FOCUS ON BUSINESS.
Insights from the teacher's experiences in connection to career growth.	

STUDY WHILE THEY ARE STILL YOUNG.

CONTINUE TO STUDY UNTIL FINISH.

DON'T WASTE ANY OPPORTUNITY. NO ONE REALLY WAS THERE TO MENTOR ME. CONTINUE TO STUDY ENCOURAGE OTHERS LIKE ME TO STUDY AS WELL.

PUSH OTHERS UP

DON'T STOP UNTIL YOU BECOME A DOCTOR

Table 12. Part 1 of Extracted Themes

EXTRACTED THEMES			
PRIORITY	DETERMINATION	COMPLACENCY	STAGNATION
Codes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pregnant with 1st child. • No more time sa pag-eskwela wala na kay naa naman anak. • Was a nursing mother. This time with (2nd child). • Out of my mind, I had my 3rd child then. • I slept, I took care of the (my) babies. • I prefer business/merchandizing or piggery. • I'll focus on business. • Especially now I have college, I need extra income. • Five times approached to be TIC(Teacher-in-charge) but declined. 	Codes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation was really difficult. • Risk when you're sent to seminars, district, etc. • Ganahan ko mo eskwela pero mabira rako ky wla sila pud ng eskwela • Violent indecent parents/people bring bolo to school. I was a victim. • Five times approached to be TIC but declined. 	Codes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's just professional growth, I won't become master teacher. • Already happy becoming a teacher. • I was not assigned to teach TLE subjects. I didn't ask because they don't want to teach Filipino. 	Codes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since I was hired, my subjects are all Filipino from first year-4th year high school. • I've never been sent to TLE training... • When I got to senior high, I still didn't teach TLE... • 'Til now no guidelines for promotion. • <i>Na zigzag akong dalan day. (my path is zigzag)</i>

SUPPORT SYSTEM	DISAPPOINTMENT & REGRETS	ENCOURAGING OTHERS TO PURSUE EDUCATIONAL GOALS	A RAY OF LIGHT
<p>Codes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I was not assigned to teach TLE subjects. I didn't ask because they don't want to teach Filipino. They gave me Filipino because it was difficult for them. That's why I wasn't given TLE (specialization). I've never been sent to TLE training... When I got to senior high, I still didn't teach TLE... I was really jealous of them I WAS NOT INCLUDED IN THE SCHOLARSHIP. If I was told (TIC is road to P1), I might accept it. I really don't know that. They told me that if I become TIC, I will still have the same salary. Why bother? No one really was there to mentor me. 	<p>Codes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stressed when asked of rank: "T-II pa ka ron mam?" Considering my age now it seems too late. I feel ashamed, it seemed I slept, I took care of the (my) babies. I feel sad. I am discouraged. There's no more guidelines. I am regretful. I should have been T-III for a long time now. I think i will go back to junior high. 'Til now no guidelines for promotion. Nagmahay/REGRETFUL 	<p>Codes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to study then you will encourage others like me to study as well. Study while they are still young. Continue to study until finish. Don't waste any opportunity. Push others up Don't stop until you BECOME A DOCTOR. 	<p>Codes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EO 174 Standardization Law Folder is ready and intact.

Themes

The following are the extracted themes from the gathered raw data after the data analysis procedures.

Prioritizing parenthood over professional development

Rita's decision to prioritize parenthood over professional development was influenced by her valuing process to put her family first. The fulfillment of raising her children and being actively involved in their upbringing was heavier for her than some potential career sacrifices. Family responsibilities often win over professional development. This is particularly true for parents like Rita, who prioritizes the needs of their children over career advancement. Stone and Hernandez (2013) discuss the concept of "opting out," where individuals, often women, temporarily or permanently disregard plights for professional and career developments to focus on family care. This decision can be influenced by the desire to provide better care and support for children, but it can also result in slowed career progression and reduced long-term earning. This is what exactly happened to Rita in her statement *"I slept; I took care of the (my) babies."*

Determination

Determination is an attribute that significantly impacts personal and professional success. It involves setting clear goals, maintaining resilience, leveraging social support, and employing adaptive strategies to overcome obstacles. If Rita had developed enough determination as with confidence and perseverance earlier in her career, she might had enhanced her ability to achieve her goals of ascending in the professional ladder from Teacher I to Teacher-III and more. But Rita somehow missed to portray determination in her earlier stage of professional development due to circumstances like difficult transportation, risks, presence of violent people, lack of interest, and many more.

In the context of professional development, determination is crucial for career advancement and skill acquisition. Individuals who demonstrate determination are more likely to seek out opportunities for learning and growth, even in the face of challenges. Greenhaus and Powell (2006) note that work-family enrichment, where fulfilling roles in both work and family life, can positively influence determination by providing a sense of accomplishment and support from multiple areas of life. Determined individuals employ various strategies to overcome obstacles, such as problem-solving, seeking help, and maintaining a positive attitude. Honig (2006) emphasizes that complex challenges require adaptive strategies and a determined mindset to navigate effectively. By remaining flexible and open to new approaches, determined individuals can find innovative solutions to problems and continue progressing toward their goals.

Complacency

Complacency in career progression and professional development is a state where individuals become self-satisfied and fail to pursue further growth or advancement. This was evident when Rita said *“It’s just professional growth, I won’t become master teacher.”* And *“Already happy becoming a teacher.”*

Complacency in career progression often stems from a variety of factors. One significant cause is a sense of contentment with current achievements and positions. When individuals achieve certain milestones, they might feel a sense of fulfillment that discourages further efforts for advancement. According to London (1983), a lack of challenging goals can lead to a state of comfort where individuals no longer strive for improvement. This attitude can lead to stagnation and missed opportunities, negatively impacting both the individual and the organization they work for. Understanding the causes, consequences, and strategies to combat complacency is essential for fostering continuous improvement and career success.

Stagnation

One of the primary causes of career stagnation is the lack of opportunities for advancement within an organization. This can happen when promotional opportunities are limited. When employees perceive that there are no clear paths for progression, they may feel stuck in their current roles (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). Exactly the reason why Rita said *“‘til now no guidelines for promotion.”* And *“Na zigzag akong dalan.”* (*My path is zigzag*).

Support system

It is immensely noteworthy to make sense of the following phrases *“If I was told (TIC is road to PI), I might accept it. I really don't know that. They told me that if I become TIC, I will still have the same salary. Why bother? “No one really was there to mentor me.”* These statements are just few of Rita’s declaration of having a weak or underdeveloped support system. The essence of “Synergy” or “Collaboration” are driving forces of an epic support system. The idea of having a system or pool of people who are imbued with notable and unique attributes to back you up, nurture you to be welcoming to opportunities would have been very substantial in for Rita’s earlier career growth. According Stone and Hernandez (2013), strong support system is crucial for career and professional development, providing emotional, informational, and instrumental assistance that can significantly impact an individual's career trajectory. Such support can come from various sources, including family, friends, mentors, colleagues, and professional networks. Understanding the role of these support systems can help individuals ascend in careers more effectively and achieve professional goals. Providing a supportive environment that fosters continuous learning and growth is can be the key to overcome challenges, make informed career decisions, and achieve professional goals.

Disappointment and regret

“I feel sad, I am discouraged. There’re no more guidelines. I am regretful. I should have been T-III for a long time now.” These set of words are just few of how Rita expressed feelings of sadness, discouragement, and regret over past decisions or situations, coupled with a sense of wanting to change direction or refocus on new goals, such as going back to junior high or focusing on business. These means unfulfilled professional aspirations and challenges in career development. The phrases reflect frustrations and obstacles faced in pursuing a specialization in teaching TLE (Technology and Livelihood Education), including lack of support, recognition, training, and promotion, alongside personal sacrifices and a sense of stagnation.

Encouraging others

“Study while they are still young. Continue to study until finish. Don’t waste any opportunity.”

The words or phrases under this theme emphasize the value of studying, seizing opportunities, continuous learning, and encouraging others to pursue their educational goals persistently until achieving the highest levels of success.

A Ray of Light

On July 26, 2024 with the news on Expanded Career Progression for Teachers, Rita found a “Ray of light” that she will certainly be promoted soon. She decides to eventually wait for the new guidelines and no longer interested to transfer or return to Junior High but stay in Senior High. Executive Order No. 174 represents a significant policy initiative aimed at enhancing career progression and professional development in the Philippines. By promoting continuous learning, equal opportunities, and performance-based advancements, the order seeks to create a more dynamic and competitive workforce. Successful implementation of this order

can lead to increased job satisfaction, productivity, and organizational growth, benefiting both employees and the broader economy.

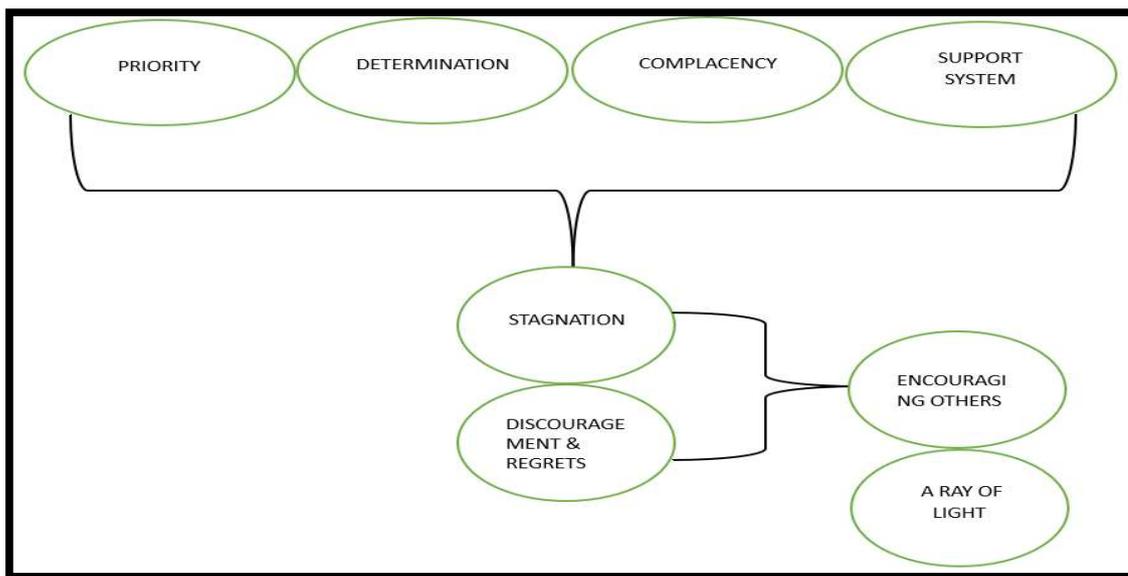


Figure no. 1 Illustration of Major Themes and Sub-themes

The major themes of the study are “Priorities, Determination, Complacency, and Support System.” Rita’s priorities, underdeveloped determination, complacency in her earlier plight for career progression and her weak support system paved the way to career stagnation and discouragements. In the end, Rita realizes the value lifelong learning and professional development, thus encourages other teachers to keep pursuing professional development to uphold positive future career progression. In order not to end up in the same story. “A Ray of Light” signifies Rita’s hope and brighter vision of the future after learning about “Executive Order no. 174” signed by President Ferdinand Marcos last July 26, 2024 which is the Expanded Career Progression System for Public School Teachers.” This is a sophisticated and promising system to promote the professional development and career advancement for public school teachers.

Timeline

Rita, the teacher respondent was asked to fill-in a timeline as a writing prompt of her experiences or life as a teacher aligning with the Department of Education’s guidelines for career progression. This enabled plotting her background, and outlining the experiences that led her present state or situation, having delayed promotion. This was followed by narrative that gave detail of the teacher respondent’s story of life experiences as a teacher in connection to her plights for career growth or promotion.

Rita’s timeline teaching experiences or life as a teacher aligning with DepEd guidelines of career progression. (This served as a writing prompt.)

Guidelines of Promotion	Main Events in Life as a Teacher <i>(State here what notable things or actions did you do that affected or contributed to your plight for career progression.)</i> Example: 2003-2004 Employed as T-1 in DepEd; Started Master’s Degree...
MEC Order no. 10, s. 1979 Implementing Rules and Regulations for the System of Career Progression for Public Schools Teachers. (Established the framework for the career progression of public-school teachers in the country. It outlined the requirements, procedures, and criteria for promotion from Teacher I to Master Teacher, the highest rank for public school teachers at the time). • Promotion	2003-2004 • Got employed as Teacher 1 • Took MAEM at NORSU Guihulngan City (1sem)
	2004-2005 • Got married

<p>Refers to advancement from one position to another with an increase in duties and responsibilities and usually accompanied by an increase in salary; Promotion may only be resorted if there is a vacant item due to retirement, promotion, transfer, etc.; There is a resulting vacancy of an item once a promotion occurred; Needs three (3) rating period from the last appointment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reclassification <p>Refers to the change in the position title requiring the issuance of an appointment with a corresponding increase in rank and salary; Shall apply only to filled regular position in the national government (NBC 2005-5); There is no vacant item once the item is reclassified; Reclassification may only be allowed after three (3) consecutive years of at least VS or two (2) consecutive years of Outstanding Performance from the effectivity of the latest appointment</p> <p>Teacher II / Teacher III BSEE/BSE or Bachelor's Degree w/ 18 Professional Educ. Units</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reclassification <p>Teacher II BSEE/BSE or Bachelor's Degree w/ 18 Professional Educ. Units + 20 MA units</p> <p>Teacher III/HT BSEE/BSE + MA Equivalent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master Teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did not enroll MAEM; stopped schooling/further study • Difficult Transportation from house to school • Late to enroll
	<p>2005-2006</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did not enroll MAEM; stopped schooling/further study <p><i>“Wala na ko ngpa enrol kay feeling nko mo enrol ko, I am encouraging katung mga una nko nga mga maestra... mam mang eskwela ta, mang eskwela ta...Ikaw ra day kay bata pa ka. Nya wala man gyud silay eskwela eskwela jud. oo dayun nag eskwela ko, dayun pagka human mura man ug walay klaro akong pag-eskwela, ngano man ni, nga dili man pud sila ganahan nga gauna na sila nako...”</i></p>
	<p>2006-2007</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Had 1st baby • Did not enroll MAEM; stopped schooling/further study <p><i>“Kay walay ni ingon..wala pud ko kabalo unsay value anang mo eskwela, asa padulong.. ana ba wala ra gyud day. Ambot na lamang. Sala lagi nko kay dili man ko mangutana pud. Murag maka ingon kong sala nko day di ko mag sukut sukut...”</i></p>
	<p>2007-2008</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did not enroll MAEM; stopped schooling/further study
	<p>2008-2009</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did not enroll MAEM; stopped schooling/further study
	<p>2009-2010</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did not enroll MAEM; stopped schooling/further study • Had 2nd baby • Applied for Teacher-II with 9 units MAEM • Did not get promoted; behind in rank
	<p>2010-2011</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did not enroll MAEM; stopped schooling/further study
	<p>2011-2012</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did not enroll MAEM; stopped schooling/further study
	<p>2012-2013</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did not enroll MAEM; stopped schooling/further study
	<p>2013-2014</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did not enroll MAEM; stopped schooling/further study
	<p>2014-2015</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did not get scholarship for TLE teachers from DepEd • Enrolled for NC II Dressmaking at Guihulngan City
	<p>2015-2016</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did not enroll MAEM; stopped schooling/further study
	<p>2016-2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attempted to enroll MAEM at NORSU BAIS only to find out that the 9 units from NORSU Guihulngan had been obsolete and dissolved.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Started/enrolled MAVE at Norsu Bais instead.
<p>2017-2018</p> <p>No guidelines for Promotion for SHS</p>	<p>2017-2018</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applied for SHS; accepted as Teacher II Continue MAVE at NORSU Bais Submitted folder for T-III but lacks years of experience (no guidelines)
	<p>2018-2019</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue MAVE at NORSU Bais
	<p>2019-2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieved Complete Academic Requirements (CAR) for MAVE at NORSU Bais Not given scholarship for TMC-I (not in the list of TLE teachers) for the longtime teaching Filipino not TLE or Technical Vocational Subjects. Decided to spend from own pocket for TMC I in Dress Making. Enrolled at RAMS ART; Decided to spend from own pocket for TMC I in Dress Making
	<p>2020-2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Assessment for TMC-I Dressmaking due to pandemic
	<p>2021-2022</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Assessment for TMC-I Dressmaking
<p>DM No. 235 s. 2022 Acceptance of Application for Reclassification Through Equivalent Record Form (ERF) of Senior High School for SY ,2022</p> <p>Technical Vocational Livelihood (TVL) Track</p> <p>Teacher II</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 years in service+ NCII+ TMC I+ (appropriate to the specialization) + Bachelor’s degree + 20 MA units <p>Teacher III</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 years I service+ NCII+ TMC I (appropriate to the specialization) + MA Graduate or Bachelor’s degree+CAR) 	<p>2022-2023</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attempted to apply for promotion but do not have TMC-I yet since Assessment was delayed.
<p>February 2023</p> <p>No guidelines for Promotion for SHS</p>	<p>February 2023</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Earned TMC-I in Dressmaking Submitted folder for Teacher-III but there were no guidelines for promotion.
<p>July 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Division Memorandum No. 0467 Submission of Rank List for Teacher II, Teacher III and Transferees for Elementary and Secondary Level for the SY 2024-2025 in the Division of Negros Oriental Division Memorandum No. 0468 Acceptance of Applications for Master Teacher Positions for the SY 2024-2025 in the Division of Negros Oriental Based on MEC Order NO. 10, s. 1979 “Establishing the Expanded Career Progression System for Public School Teachers.” <p>President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. on Friday (7/26/24) signed the IRR of EO No. 174 S. 2022 or the “Establishing the Expanded Career Progression System for Public School Teachers.”</p>	<p>July 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attempts to apply for transfer from SHS to JHS Or Apply for Teacher-III in JHS. Turn between the idea whether to stay in Senior High ang wait for new guidelines of promotion or reclassification; or transfer and go back to Junior High in order to apply for T-III after 6 months. Certain about focusing on Business. Rita said (holding the notes of the timeline) <i>“Ikaw, ug wla ka ani nag tulog-tulog ug wala ka nag tinapulan aning dapita. Tagam.”</i> (Addressing to herself.)

<p>EO 174 was issued to establish the Expanded Career Progression (ECP) system to promote the professional development and career advancement of public-school teachers.</p> <p>This system will offer two distinct career paths for teachers to pursue: the Classroom Teaching (CT) Career Line or the School Administration (SA) Career Line, without prejudice to a teacher's choice in switching career lines during their professional career.</p> <p>Under the CT track, teachers can advance through multiple stages: Teacher I to Teacher VII, and then Master Teacher I to Master Teacher V.</p> <p>For the SA track, teachers holding Master Teacher I positions can advance from School Principal I to School Principal V. This track will help teachers transition into leadership and management roles.</p> <p>"The expanded career progression ensures that teacher progression to higher position is developmental, merit-based, and in accordance with standards <i>"hindi po credential based na existing system sa ngayon in terms of position. We, the Department of Education, envisions that with this new career progression system, walang teacher na magre-retire na Teacher 1 (no teacher will retire as Teacher 1),"</i> Cabral said. —KBK, GMA Integrated News</p>	<p>Note:</p> <p>From 2003-2017 the teacher was offered or approached to be TIC(Teacher-in-charge) of the school for 5 separate times but declined all these due to: MOTHERHOOD/PARENTHOOD, VIOLENT PEOPLE, UNAWARE OF THE BENEFITS, SAME SALARY, DIFFICULT TRANSPORTATION, & RISK.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the news on Expanded Career Progression for Teachers, the teacher respondent, Rita found a "Ray of light" that she will certainly be promoted soon. She decides to eventually wait for the new guidelines and no longer interested to transfer or return to Junior High but stay in Senior High. • <i>"Dia ra. Oo. Ready na akong folder sa promotion. (shows her last green folder received from division.)"</i> She exclaimed.
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Rita (a pseudonym) is known to be a very passionate teacher. She's always delivering meaningful lessons to the students embodying loyalty, caring attitude and camaraderie. She's also known as a nurturing and hands-on coach who selflessly extends her own resources to students and others whenever necessary. No wonder she was awarded by the Local Government Unit for being one of the "Outstanding Employees" in the entire Jimalalud District 2 of the Division of Negros Oriental. She had been in service for 21 years, with 14 years as T-1 in Junior High and now on her 7th year in Senior High School but still stuck as Teacher-II. Rita clearly has very notable attributes and characteristics yet somehow failed to ascend continuously in the professional ladder of development. Below is the story of Rita's plight for career progression based on the completed timeline and the data gathered from the interview.

**Rita's Plight for Career Progression
Commencing the Journey**

I got connected with the Department of Education as Teacher-I on December 26, 2002, as printed in my appointment. I was really happy back then because the years before that were tough, as I experienced working as a nanny and a housemaid. I also had several jobs as a saleswoman in three different stores. That time I earned PHP 1500-2,000 in a month, and I was okay with it. That's why, when I got hold of my appointment, I was really grateful. Finally, "Maestra na jud ko." I was in my 20s, full of energy, excitement, and enthusiasm to teach. I was really inspired and motivated to dream of being more than just Teacher I or Teacher III. That dream was so powerful and strong that I got myself enrolled in 2003 at Negros Oriental State University (NORSU) Guihulngan for a Master of Arts in Educational Management, despite the rough road, distance, and limited resources.

A Square Peg in a Round Hole

It was in January of 2003 that I first reported on my station. I accepted whatever subjects my co-teacher would give up since they had the privilege to choose what subject to teach since they were way ahead of me. We were called to serve in the first place, and being flexible or versatile is necessary in the actual field of teaching. I never thought this would have a lasting effect on my career, though.

Since the school year 2003–2004, I taught all Filipino subjects from the first year to fourth year. This was not easy for me because Filipino is not my specialization. I finished my Bachelor of Secondary Education with a major in Home Economics. I remembered burning the midnight candle to study the four Filipino I-IV (4) subjects for the next day. I would sleep from 12 to 1 AM already, but I endured because I wanted to effectively teach the lessons to the students, so I learned the subjects by heart every night. As days turned into months and months into years, I became very fond of Filipino subjects. I seemed to master the topics and the competencies over the years. I started coaching students in competitions like Tula, Balagtasan, Panitikan, etc. I experienced being a winning coach several times too. I was sent to more trainings in Filipino and served as a cluster judge for Filipino competitions as well, and I was happy. Little did I know, I was slowly drifting away from my specialization, which is a Bachelor of Secondary Education Major in Home Economics. I was known to be more like a Filipino teacher than a TLE, or Technical Vocational Education teacher.

Got Asleep for a Long Time

It was 2004 when I got married. From then on, I became a homemaker. I make sure that I keep all things in order and that all concerns are well attended to. When I had my first baby in 2005, I was determined to be a hands-on mother since my husband could hardly go home because he was a local marine engineer. I decided not to continue my plight for further study or education to focus on taking care of my baby. My co-teachers were not interested in pursuing a master's degree either. All the while, I became so engrossed with Filipino subjects that I was breathing them in, loving them, and living like a real Filipino teacher. I didn't remember complaining or asking about teaching my own specialization (BSED-Home Economics). I was okay with it. How could I get so careless about it?

Then came my second baby in 2009. I became even more determined to better provide for my babies by having a piggery with my husband, who decided to finally leave work and stay at home with our family. I applied for Teacher II using my 9 units of professional education, but I was left behind in rank. I did not get promoted. This made me really sad and downhearted.

Waking Up from the long Sleep

I never pursued continuing professional education, not until 2017, after I gave birth to my third baby. The same year, I qualified and got accepted to Teacher II as a Technical Vocational Senior High Teacher. It seemed I was asleep for a long time (2003–2016); that's 13 years to be exact. Since my first nine units of professional education (MAEM) were found obsolete and dissolved, I pursued a Master of Arts in Vocational Education instead and finally achieved Complete Academic Requirements (CAR) in 2020 at Negros Oriental State University, Bais City. I thought I was really blessed and privileged at first after 14 years in service. Yet in the long run, I regret being in the senior high school because there's been no promotion guidelines for a long time. I should have qualified for Teacher III if I stayed in junior high, or maybe I would have been a school head now if I had not rejected the opportunity of becoming a Teacher-in-Charge (TIC) years ago. I was asked five (5) separate times, but I also declined five (5) separate times.

Scholarships for Technical and Vocational teachers flourished from the Department of Education. An opportunity to earn TMC-I and a chance to get an edge for promotion in the near future. But I was not on the list for the second time (1st time was a scholarship for NC-2) because I was not known or recognized as a TLE, or technical vocational teacher. Although I was hired as one, I still don't teach TLE or Technical Vocational subjects in senior high, and I am not sent to related trainings either. In this connection, I decided to spend from my own pocket for TMC-I in Dress Making and enroll at RAMS ART, Bais City, to keep going. The after-effect of developing love for Filipino subject was that I grew up apart and away from my true specialization, which is technical vocational education. I admit that I would need to take refresher subjects or courses so that I could effectively teach dressmaking to students if I were to teach.

Got Immobilized

From 2020 to 2022, there was no assessment for TMC-I dressmaking. Then DM No. 235 s. The acceptance of the application for reclassification through the Equivalent Record Form (ERF) of the senior high school for SY 2022 flourished. Just when I was so powered up to climb up the career ladder, things didn't seem to cooperate. My co-teachers in senior high already got promoted to Teacher-III just a few months before I finally earned my TMC-I in dressmaking or after the assessment. As of July 2024, I am still waiting for new guidelines for promotion or reclassification. My folder is intact and ready to be submitted and endorsed. But there's a part of me that somehow tells me to go back or transfer to junior high so that I can get promoted to teacher III after 6 months. I am still torn between the idea of waiting for guidelines or going back to junior high. Nonetheless, I no longer think of finishing my master's degree (MAVE). I think I can get more productive by focusing on business instead.

A Ray of Light

On July 26, 2024, Executive Order No. 174, entitled Expanded Career Progression System for Public School Teachers, was signed by President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. It was a very promising initiative for both the professional and career development of teachers. This system offers two distinct career paths for teachers to pursue: the Classroom Teaching (CT) Career Line or the School Administration (SA) Career Line, without prejudice to a teacher's choice in switching career lines during their professional career.

Under the CT track, teachers can advance through multiple stages: Teacher I to Teacher VII, and then Master Teacher I to Master Teacher V. For the SA track, teachers holding Master Teacher I positions can advance from School Principal I to School Principal V. This track will help teachers transition into leadership and management roles. Surely, I will have my spot in the coming days here. What a good motivation for other

teachers to seriously pursue professional education and lifelong learning! As to my career progression journey, it was not really an easy straight path. It's more like a "Zigzag path" due to my previous decisions, collective circumstances, etc. Nonetheless, I'd like to impart to other teachers and teachers to be my significant realizations regarding career progression: (a) Study while still young; (b) Continue to study until you finish; (c) Don't waste any given opportunity along the way; (d) No one was really there to mentor me. Continue to study and encourage others to study as well. After all, we teachers are the epitome of lifelong learning.

Discussion of Epiphanies

Rita's "Plight for Career Progression" have several epiphanies marking significant realizations and turning points in her career journey these are the following:

Gratitude and aspiration: Rita realizes the immense gratitude and pride in becoming a teacher after years of working various low-paying jobs. This realization fuels her enthusiasm and determination to pursue further education and career advancement. But this feeling was just short-lived. It was changed later on when Rita got married and had her first baby.

Unexpected Love for Filipino Subjects: Despite not specializing in Filipino, Rita becomes passionate and proficient in teaching it, leading to various successes. This shift from her original specialization causes a deviation in career trajectory, which has long-term consequences. Rita's situation highlighted the importance of flexibility and adaptability in the teaching profession (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). However, it also led to risk of misalignment between skills and job roles, which in her case caused limitations of advancement opportunities in her original field of specialization (Kane & Orsini, 2005).

Sacrificing Career for Family: Rita decides to prioritize family over continuing education and career progression when the first child is born. This decision results in a significant pause in Rita's professional development and educational pursuits. The struggle to balance work and family life is a common issue, particularly for women (Hochschild & Machung, 2012). This pause can lead to long-term career stagnation and challenges in regaining professional momentum (Stone & Hernandez, 2013). However, prioritizing family can also lead to greater personal fulfillment and well-being (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006).

Regret Over Missed Opportunities: Rita reflects on her past decision declining opportunities to become a Teacher-in-Charge and the impact of not pursuing professional education sooner. These reflections lead to a sense of regret and a recognition of the missed potential for career advancement. Reflecting on missed opportunities can serve as a powerful motivator for future action (Zeelenberg & Pieters, 2007). This awareness can encourage proactive career planning and continuous professional development (Locke & Latham, 2002). It also highlights the importance of mentorship in guiding career decisions (Ragins & Kram, 2007).

Reawakening Professional Goals: After a long pause or break Rita decides to resume professional education and career advancement efforts. This marks a renewed commitment to personal and professional growth, leading to the pursuit of a Master of Arts in Vocational Education and achieving Complete Academic Requirements. Reawakening of professional goals illustrates the concept of career resilience and the potential for growth at any stage of life (London, 1983). Lifelong learning and continuous education are crucial for adapting to changing job markets and advancing in one's career (Field, 2006).

Realization of Career Stagnation: Despite achieving new qualifications, Rita faces career stagnation due to the lack of promotion guidelines in senior high school. This realization prompts contemplation about transferring back to junior high for better promotion possibilities. This highlights the need for clear and transparent career progression policies within educational institutions (Ingersoll, 2001). It may also prompt individuals to seek alternative pathways for advancement, such as lateral moves or additional certifications (DeLong & Vijayaraghavan, 2003).

Hope and Motivation from New Policy: The signing of Executive Order No. 174 brings hope and motivation for career progression through the new Expanded Career Progression System for Public School Teachers provides a renewed sense of optimism and motivation for the author to continue pursuing professional development and career advancement. Systemic changes, such as new policies, can significantly impact individual career trajectories by providing clearer paths for advancement (Honig, 2006). Supportive policies are essential for motivating and retaining skilled educators (Darling-Hammond, 2000).

Lessons and Realizations: Rita realizes the importance of continuous education, seizing opportunities, and mentoring others in their career journey. These insights shape her perspective on career progression and lifelong learning, which she wishes to impart to fellow teachers. Emphasizing continuous education and seizing opportunities are key strategies for career success (Noe, 2010). Mentorship is crucial for fostering professional growth and creating a supportive work environment (Allen, Eby, Poteet, Lentz & Lima, 2004). Promoting a culture of lifelong learning and mutual support can enhance the overall quality of education and professional satisfaction (Knight, 2002).

Implications

The epiphanies collectively highlight Rita's journey of self-discovery, professional growth, and the challenges faced along the path of career progression. Additionally, these epiphanies emphasize the importance of adaptability, lifelong learning, and seizing opportunities in career progression. These highlight the challenges and rewards of balancing personal and professional life, the impact of systemic policies on individual careers, and the value of mentorship and continuous self-improvement. Rita's story serves as both a cautionary tale and an inspirational guide for educators navigating their career paths. Mentoring programs, training opportunities and amplification of

Conclusion

The aim of the study was to capture the story of a high school teacher on the account of career progression. Specifically, this study uncovers the challenges related to promotion; give support for career advancement; and to illuminate insights or life lessons for other teachers or teachers to be on the account of promotion or career progression. This research specifically seeks to answer the following questions: (1) What challenges did the teacher encounter in connection to career growth/promotion during Junior and Senior high school? (2) What are the impacts to teacher's morale (sense of common purpose; the mental, emotional condition or enthusiasm and confidence) of not getting promoted? (3) What insights can be deduced from the teacher's story in connection to career growth? (4) What recommendations can be extended to the teacher to finally uphold the long-delayed promotion or career progression?

This study has shown that Rita Chen, the particular research respondent encountered the following challenges in connection to career growth or promotion in junior and senior high school: (a) Not enough Time; (b) Motherhood/parenthood; (c) Transportation; (d) Lack of interest; (e) Running in circles; (f) Not given teaching load in TLE (specialization); (g) Love Filipino subject; (h) Not sent to TLE training; (i) Still didn't teach TLE in SHS; (j) Not known as TLE teacher; (k) No scholarship; (l) Self-help/Spent own money; (m) Slept for years; (n) No promotion; and (o) Violent parents/people. All these challenges fall under the specific themes: (1) Priority, (2) Determination, (3) Complacency, and (4) Support System. Which further emanated the sub-themes (1) Discouragement / Regrets and (2) Encouraging Others.

These made several impacts to the teacher's morale (sense of common purpose; the mental, emotional condition or enthusiasm and confidence) of not getting promoted are the implied in the following statements: (a) *I feel sad*; (b) *I am discouraged*; (c) *There's no more guidelines*; (d) *I am regretful*. (e) *I should have been t-iii for a long time now*; (f) *I think I will go back to junior high*; (g) *I'll focus on business*.

The insights that can be deduced from the teacher's story in connection to career growth are captured in the following statements: (a) *Study while they are still young*. (b) *Continue to study until finish*. (c) *Don't waste any opportunity* (d) *No one really was there to mentor me* (e) *Continue to study encourage others like me to study as well* (f) *Push others up; and* (g) *Don't stop until you become a doctor*.

In general, the findings of the study suggest and underscore the benefits and challenges of striking a balance between personal and professional life, the influence of systemic policies on individual careers, the significance of mentorship and ongoing self-improvement, and the value of ability to adapt, lifelong learning, and seizing opportunities in career progression.

Additionally, the study contributes to the understanding of the importance of professional development in the context of career progression and the importance of flexibility and adaptability in the teaching profession (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). It is necessary not to forget about our area of specialization. it's typically an edge to be versatile and flexible ready to teach other subjects but not to the point of forgetting and completely disregarding our own area of specialization. This might cause a lasting effect in our career progression in the future that could possibly hinder opportunities or privileges like scholarship grants, skill-based trainings, etc. just like what happened to Rita having misalignment between skills and job roles, caused limitations of advancement opportunities in her original field of specialization (Kane & Orsini, 2005).

A major limitation of this study is time constraints. Narrative research certainly needs comprehensive and extensive amount of information about the participant to have a clear understanding of the context of the individual's life. But due time constraints collection of extensive this research was a short-lived one. It lasted for about 7-8 weeks only. Much as it takes a keen eye to capture the individual's experiences. Uncovering "figure under the carpet" that explains the multilayered context of a life needs ample amount of time (Ede1984).

Active collaboration between the researcher and the participant was evident although very limited. There were (3) three off the record interviews including dry run and (1) one audio recorded and transcribed. Thus, the researcher tried to simultaneously discuss the respondent's stories while being reflective about personal and political background, which shapes the "restorying" the account.

The researcher does not have direct access to the realm of meaning of the respondent. Therefore, researcher is dependent on the storyteller's recollection or introspection. The analysis of narrative data makes use of hermeneutic or interpretative reasoning; thus, the analysis methods are not as precise as quantitative tools (Riessman, 2008).

Narrative inquiry relies heavily on the personal stories and subjective experiences of participants, which can introduce bias. The researcher's interpretations are also subjective, potentially leading to partiality. According to Connelly and Clandinin (1990) the stories told and the retelling of those stories are influenced by the personal biases of both the participant and the researcher, which can affect the credibility of the findings. Due to its focus on individual experiences, the findings of narrative inquiry are often not generalizable to larger populations. Riessman (2008) points out narrative research focuses on particularities and may not produce findings that are widely applicable or generalizable. Ensuring reliability and validity in narrative inquiry can be challenging because the data are not easily replicable, and different researchers may interpret the same narrative differently. Polkinghorne (2007) highlights the interpretive nature of narrative inquiry means that establishing reliability and validity is complex and often subjective. Ethical issues can arise in narrative inquiry, particularly concerning confidentiality and the potential impact on participants when sharing personal and potentially sensitive stories. Chase (2005) states that researchers must navigate ethical dilemmas related to confidentiality and the potential emotional impact on participants when their personal stories are shared.

Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) offers a powerful lens for understanding teachers' career progression, highlighting the dynamic interplay between personal beliefs, social interactions, and environmental factors. At its core, SCT shows that teachers grow not in isolation but through engaging with their environment and the people around them (Simply Psychology, 2024). This perspective emphasizes that development is not just a result of individual effort but a shared, interactive process that shapes how teachers learn, adapt, and advance in their careers. Thus, the following aspects are necessary and must be given attention:

- (1) Mentorship and Collaborative Learning.** Professional growth for teachers often stems from meaningful interactions with more experienced colleagues, participation in teaching communities, and attending workshops or conferences. This kind of learning, which Bandura would call observational learning, allows teachers to pick up new pedagogical strategies, classroom management skills, and methods to engage students effectively. Mentorship programs illustrate this concept perfectly, enabling teachers to both learn from role models and become role models themselves. Such programs create a cycle of learning and growth, where experienced teachers pass on their knowledge while also being inspired to reflect on their own practices, fostering a culture of continuous improvement.
- (2) Reflective Practice and Adaptability.** Teachers who engage in reflective practice—examining their teaching methods and learning from both successes and challenges—are better equipped to identify their strengths and areas for development. This self-assessment process leads to more targeted professional growth as teachers seek out training and resources that align with their career goals. Adaptability, a key quality supported by SCT, allows teachers to stay relevant in a constantly evolving field. It enables them to embrace new challenges, explore different teaching methodologies, and pursue leadership roles when opportunities arise. When teachers are flexible and open to change, they not only grow as educators but also pave the way for more substantial career progression.
- (3) The Role of Environment and Supportive Culture.** Teachers' career growth is significantly shaped by the environment in which they work. SCT teaches that behavior is influenced by personal beliefs, actions, and the surrounding social context. Schools that provide a supportive culture with strong leadership, opportunities for collaboration, and access to professional development resources create an environment where teachers can thrive. When teachers feel valued and supported by their schools, they are more motivated to take initiative, experiment with new ideas, and pursue advanced professional roles. This environment reinforces their belief in their own capabilities and propels them toward career advancement.
- (4) The Influence of Role Models and Peer Networks.** Teachers often look up to colleagues or educational leaders who inspire them and set a high standard for what is possible. These role models play a pivotal role in shaping teachers' career aspirations and influencing their paths. Observing how others handle challenges and succeed in various teaching and leadership roles helps teachers envision their own potential. This social learning creates a ripple effect, motivating teachers to seek out similar growth opportunities and model positive behaviors they've witnessed in others.
- (5) The Power of Feedback and Recognition.** Feedback, from the school heads or Master Teachers whether positive or constructive, plays a crucial role in a teacher's professional development. SCT posits that reinforcement shapes behavior, and in teaching, positive feedback from students, colleagues, and school

leaders strengthens effective practices and encourages teachers to continue refining their skills. Recognition in the form of awards, promotions, or public acknowledgment acts as a motivator, inspiring teachers to push forward and expand their capabilities. Constructive criticism, even if it's difficult to hear, becomes an opportunity for growth, enabling teachers to learn from challenges and improve their approach. Teachers who see challenges as stepping stones rather than obstacles are more likely to rise to leadership roles and make a lasting impact in their field.

(6) Building Professional Communities. Teachers often seek out professional learning communities, peer networks, and educational forums where they can share experiences and ideas. SCT supports this notion by demonstrating how social interaction fosters an environment of collaboration and shared learning. In these spaces, teachers can refine their practices, gain insights from different perspectives, and develop essential leadership skills. Such interactions introduce teachers to new educational trends, methodologies, and technologies, broadening their professional horizons and preparing them for more significant roles in their careers.

(7) The Importance of Self-Efficacy. Central to SCT is the idea of self-efficacy an individual's belief in their own capacity to achieve their goals. For teachers, strong self-efficacy leads to resilience in the face of challenges and a willingness to take on new teaching strategies or leadership roles. When teachers believe in their ability to learn and grow, they're more likely to engage in continuous professional development, pursue additional certifications, and seek opportunities to lead within their schools or districts. This belief doesn't just motivate teachers; it drives them to take proactive steps that align with their career aspirations.

By viewing teachers' career progression through the lens of Social Constructivist Theory, success is not just about individual skills but about a complex interplay of personal confidence, supportive relationships, feedback, and a nurturing environment. Teachers who actively engage with their colleagues, reflect on their practices, and build strong networks are better positioned to grow and advance in their careers. Schools and educational systems that support these interactions create fertile ground for teachers to thrive, fostering an atmosphere where educators feel empowered to reach new heights and take on roles that shape the future of education. Teachers who are supported through mentorship, constructive feedback, collaborative networks, and leadership will be more confident, adaptable, and motivated to pursue growth. Schools that prioritize these strategies foster an environment where teachers not only survive but thrive, continually shaping the future of education and creating a cycle of learning that benefits students, educators, and the broader educational community.

The findings further suggest several courses of action for creating a self-paced action plan for career progression. This self-paced action plan is anchored on John Wooden's Pyramid of Success (Wooden, 2019). John Wooden defines success as a peace of mind which is a direct result of self-satisfaction in knowing you did your best to become the best that you are capable of becoming. It emphasizes the importance of two cornerstones such as "Industriousness" and "Enthusiasm." In the context of education, teachers must constantly and consistently do their best from the start and maintain or even increase the same enthusiasm as years progress. In addition, it is recommended that the school heads or school leaders must: Develop Comprehensive Mentorship Program; Create a Supportive and Collaborative Environment; Help Teachers Leverage the Influence of Role Models; Implement Systems for Constructive Feedback and Recognition; Promote Professional Learning Communities; Empower Teachers to Build Their Self-Efficacy; and Foster Adaptability Through Innovative Practices.

Especially now that the IRR of EO No. 174 S. 2022 known as "Establishing the Expanded Career Progression System for Public School Teachers" has been signed and approved by President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. on the 26th of July. It was issued to establish the Expanded Career Progression (ECP) system to promote the professional development and career advancement of public-school teachers (GMA, 2024). This system is said to offer two distinct career paths for teachers to pursue: the Classroom Teaching (CT) Career Line or the School Administration (SA) Career Line, without prejudice to a teacher's choice in switching career lines during their professional career. Under the CT track, teachers can advance through multiple stages: Key Features and Innovations of the Expanded Career Progression System introduces several innovative features designed to address the longstanding issues in teacher career advancement: (1.) **Additional Teaching Positions** such as Teacher IV (SG 14), Teacher V (SG 15), Teacher VI (SG 16), Teacher VII (SG 17), and Master Teacher V (SG 22). These additions create a more granular and dynamic career ladder within the teaching track. (2.) **Dual Career Paths.**

The system establishes two distinct career lines such as Classroom Teaching and School Administration. This structure allows teachers to choose between remaining in the classroom or pursuing leadership roles in school management. The Classroom Teaching path includes positions from Teacher I to Master Teacher V.

The School Administration path includes positions such as School Principal I, II, III, and IV. (3.) **Equivalence of Positions.** The system establishes equivalence between positions in the Classroom Teaching and School Administration career lines for example, Master Teacher V is equivalent to School Principal IV, ensuring parity between the two tracks. This equivalence promotes respect for both career paths and allows for potential lateral movements. (4.) **Flexibility in Career Choices:** such as teachers who qualify for Master Teacher, I can choose to continue in classroom teaching or transition to school administration. This flexibility enables educators to align their career paths with their skills, interests, and aspirations. The system allows for potential movement between tracks at various points in a teacher's career. (5.) **Merit-Based Progression.** The new system emphasizes merit and competence in the promotion process, moving away from the previous reliance on available positions. This approach aims to reward high-performing teachers and encourage continuous professional development. (6.) **Streamlined Administrative Positions.** The School Administration career path features streamlined positions: School Principal I, II, III, and IV. This simplification aims to create a clearer pathway for those interested in educational leadership roles. (7.) **Enhanced Reclassification Processes.** (8.) The Department of Education, in collaboration with the Department of Budget and Management, will reinforce reclassification processes. This allows teachers to progress based on merit and competence rather than waiting for teaching positions to become available.

Thus, this research recommends that teachers must consistently value lifelong learning. It certainly has favorable effect in terms of career progression and professional development in the future (Rocero, 2023). In case the teachers lose interest and hope of ascending in the professional ladder of promotion, the school head must right away be available as mentor to provide motivation, guidance or assistance (Will, 2024). As happy and positive teachers have a domino effect on students' academic performances. In addition, the school head must see to it that every teacher must be given loads related to area of specialization (DO no. 005, s. 2024) to support alignment for future career growth. This will not only solidify the teacher's love for teaching in the area of specialization but also open more possibilities, opportunities and privileges to be recognized, trained and granted with scholarships based on the area of specialization. Furthermore, mentoring programs and training opportunities about career progression processes or steps and requirements must be given and discussed to teachers during In-service Trainings or Learning Action Cell sessions in order to provide comprehensive guide for every beginning, proficient, highly proficient and distinguish teachers. Updated policies and memorandum about promotion must be announced properly to give equal timely opportunities to all the teachers.

Most importantly, this research emphasizes the necessity of actualizing a career progression self-paced action plan (Longcob, 2022) aimed at giving hands-on guide or help for teachers' career progression. The self-paced action plan must be based on the professional career development ladder provided by the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) in order to clearly and smoothly enliven professional orientation, development and empowerment of each teacher. Below are the steps and the sample format and template of the self-paced action plan.

Steps for Self-Paced Action Plan for Career Progression

1. Goal Setting. As a proficient teacher identify your SMART goals. Ask yourself, "What do I want to achieve? How will I attain it?"
2. Do constant self-reflection. As a proficient teacher you should continue to check yourself and your actions if you still align with your goals and to what is expected of you. Be ready to flip or re-align and re-adjust to keep attuned.
3. Keep Going for lifelong learning- lifelong learning is proven to have numerous advantages in career advancement. Enrolling for short term courses, Masteral or Doctoral degree will not only give a boost in credentials but also build up skills, knowledge and competencies as educator. Make sure that you always align with your area of specialization or whatever goals you have for the future.
4. Widen professional network- seek for more connections. After owning a degree or finishing a course, its about time you go out and seek for part-time job as a college instructor, fresh graduates review lecturer, motivational speaker, etc.
5. Synergy – collaborate and work with co-teachers who share the same interest and goals with you. Each one is uniquely imbued with skills and inclinations so might as well make and build connections. Be welcoming of the idea that you might need help in some aspects and having a colleague would be nice.
6. Mentorship & Footprints- admit that you do not know everything. Ask for guidance and mentorship from school head, master teachers, etc. they have way more ideas and inputs than you can ever imagine that could help you in your plight for career progression.

7. Be Productive- start writing, polishing and publishing your crafts. Commence your contributions to the pool of knowledge. Share your best practices with others too.
8. Repeat entire process. Avoid stagnation and being complacent. Keep going and growing by doing what you love to do to be constantly productive.

Sample Self-Paced Action Plan for Career Progression						
Name of Teacher: _____			Current Position: _____			
Educational Attainment: _____			Area of Specialization: _____			
Activity	Description	Objectives	Time	Own Means	Needed Persons	Desired End
1. Goal Setting	<i>As a proficient teacher identify your SMART goals. Ask yourself, "What do I want to achieve? How will I attain it?"</i>	To get promoted from T-III to Master Teacher-I; or T-III to P1; or get a part-time job as a College/ Graduate school Instructor; get a spot as Review Lecturer for LPT aspirants, etc.	2-3 years or shorter	Finish doctorate degree. Keep learning. Keep abreast on memos, guidelines from DepEd NegOr.net & documents intact.	Self, colleagues and mentors	MT-1; or P1; or College part-time instructor; or Review Lecturer for LPT aspirants, etc.
2. Self-reflection	<i>As a proficient teacher you should continue to check yourself and your actions if you still align with your goals & to what is expected of you. Be ready to flip or re-align and re-adjust to keep attuned.</i>	To do constant reflection on knowledge, skills, goals and practices.	Quarterly	PRAY; Journal Writing; or Poem Writing; or; Taking a well-deserved 1-2 hrs. of lone quiet time; or gardening, etc.	Self, colleagues and mentors	Reflective, Transparent, Welcoming of change and corrections.
3. Keep going for Lifelong learning	<i>Go for further education as lifelong learning is proven to have numerous advantages in career advancement. Enrolling for short term courses, Master's or Doctorate degree will not only give a boost in credentials but also build up skills, knowledge & competencies as educator. Make sure that you always align with your area of specialization or whatever goals you have for the future. Lookout for seminar workshops and trainings related to your area of specialization. if you get lucky you might receive scholarship grants too.</i>	To enroll on the 1 st semester of S.Y. 2024-2025 at NORSU Graduate school for EDD-EM.	August, 2024	Permission to study; agree with family; seek some funds	Husband; family, colleagues and mentors	Finish 9 units this semester

<p>4. Widen professional network</p>	<p><i>Seek for more connections. After owning a degree or finishing a course, it's about time you go out and seek for more growth ex. part-time job as a college instructor, fresh graduates review lecturer, motivational speaker, writer, researcher etc.</i></p>	<p>To go out and build strong professional network.</p>	<p>Quarterly</p>	<p>Talk to friends/ People that align with your purpose and frequency; follow & join educational channels, groups and FB pages; get involved.</p>	<p>Self, colleagues and mentors; new acquaintances</p>	<p>Built wider & productive professional network.</p>
<p>5. Synergy</p>	<p><i>Collaborate and work with co-teachers who share the same interest and goals with you. Each one is uniquely imbued with skills and inclinations so might as well make and build connections. Be welcoming of the idea that you might need help in some aspects and having a colleague would be nice.</i></p>	<p>To collaborate with co-teachers in seeking means for career progression.</p>	<p>July 8, 2024; or second quarter of 2024</p>	<p>Reach-out to co-teachers who also want to ascend in the professional ladder.</p>	<p>Self, colleagues and mentors; new acquaintances</p>	<p>Easy collaboration with co-teachers</p>
<p>6. Mentorship & Footprints</p>	<p><i>Admit that you do not know everything. Ask for guidance and mentorship from school head, master teachers, etc. They have way more ideas and inputs than you can ever imagine that could help you in your plight for career progression. Lookout for best practices of MOL's, see what suits you.</i></p>	<p>To seek mentorship from more knowledgeable others (School head, MT's, Professors, etc.) for guidance, tips and inputs.</p>	<p>Quarterly or as needed.</p>	<p>Reach-out to more knowledgeable others (School head, MT's, Professors, etc.) for guidance, tips and inputs</p>	<p>Self, colleagues and mentors; new acquaintances</p>	<p>Thankful, Welcoming of change and corrections.</p>

<p>7. Be productive</p>	<p><i>Start writing, polishing and publishing your crafts. Commence your contributions to the pool of knowledge. Share your best practices with others too.</i></p>	<p>To write, polish and publish work as contribution to the pool of knowledge.</p>	<p>Once a year; or before the end of 2024.</p>	<p>Ask MOL for tips; Use AI for polishing grammar, choice of words, etc. Hunt legit publishing organizations; Allocate funds or sponsorship; or Build up FB page and YouTube Channel for publications,</p>	<p>Self, colleagues and mentors; new acquaintances</p>	<p>Published works with ISBN</p>
<p>8. Repeat entire Process</p>	<p><i>Avoid stagnation and being complacent. Keep going and growing by doing what you love to do to be constantly productive.</i></p>	<p>To iterate the steps in the self-paced action plan for career progression.</p>	<p>yearly</p>	<p>Post the self-paced action plan in a VISION BOARD</p>	<p>Self-check, consistency, persistence and hard-work</p>	<p>STAY ATTUNED</p>

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