

## **Career Progression and Reclassification Guidelines: Aspirants' Voices towards Professional Advancement**

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### **Abstract**

In the teaching profession, career progression plays a vital role in developing teachers' teaching skills, creativity and innovations. Teachers' professional advancement can be assisted through a better understanding of the process and guidelines which contribute to the improvement of the teachers. With this, the Department of Education and its partner agencies strengthened and supported the implementation of the latest career progression and promotion guidelines, which aimed to improve and innovate teachers in their respective careers. This study was anchored to Peter's Principles Theory in which employees tend to ascend to their level of competence in a hierarchy where promotion is exclusively a reward for good performance. Given a largely stable salary structure, teacher promotion remains a more important motivator in most education systems. Generally, it aimed to determine the aspirants' voices on the latest teachers' career progression and promotion guidelines of the Department of Education towards professional advancement. A phenomenological qualitative research design was used by employing an in-depth interview method on twelve (12) teachers as research participants, who were selected through a simple random sampling technique. Length of services and experiences on the previous guidelines served as the basis for setting the inclusion criteria for the participants. Subsequently, the data was gathered, transcribed, analyzed, and interpreted using thematic analysis. Findings revealed interesting themes related to finances, time, school workloads, attitudes, and motivations toward professional advancement. Therefore, the aspirants' voices towards their professional development focused on the administrators' support, especially in initiating more programs and training available and accessible for all, minimizing teachers' workloads and any ancillary obligations to maximize time in dealing with research and engagement in graduate study programs and educational training to boost their potentials in dealing 21<sup>st</sup>-century learners. Finally, a positive attitude, good time management, and financial literacy can help teachers to alleviate pressures and stresses.

*Keywords: Professional Advancement, Aspirants' Voices, In-depth interviews, Philippines*