WJSAM | World Journal of Sustainable Advances in Multidisciplinarity
RESEARCH | INNOVATION | INTERDISCIPLINARITY | SUSTAINABILITY
Volume 1, Issue 2 | ISSN: 3155-783X
DOI: https://doi.org/10.65339/wjsam.V1.I2.35

Project PUSH TAYO: Technical Assistance for Your Onward Promotion

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the promotion-related challenges of teachers at Aldea Elementary School and evaluated Project PUSH TAYO (Professional Upgrading and Support for Holistic-Growth: Technical Assistance for Your Onward Promotion), a four-week school-based technical assistance initiative. A mixed-methods action research approach involved all 47 active teachers during School Year 2025–2026 through institutional census sampling. Data were drawn from a baseline needs assessment, a five-point post-intervention evaluation survey, weekly feedback, key informant interviews, observational logs, and a school Promotion Tracking Register; frequencies, percentages, weighted means, rankings, and thematic coding were used. Initially, 21 teachers (44.7%) were eligible but uninterested in applying, while seven (14.9%) were both eligible and interested. Portfolio preparation was the highest-rated barrier (weighted mean = 4.57). Following Learning Action Cell sessions, mentoring, workshops, and peer review, 28 teachers (59.6%) completed portfolios and filed formal reclassification applications, and eight (17.0% of all teachers) received confirmed promotional appointments. Participants rated documentation-gap assistance highly (weighted mean = 4.66), although confidence in open ranking remained comparatively lower (3.57). The findings suggest that structured school-based guidance can support application readiness and participation. Continued mock rankings, a shared documentation hub, and sustained mentoring are recommended. Because the study was conducted in one school without a comparison group, outcomes cannot be attributed solely to the intervention. The project offers a practical model for supporting teacher career progression within the Expanded Career Progression framework.

Keywords: *Career Advancement, Expanded Career Progression, Portfolio Preparation, Professional Development, Teacher Promotion, Technical Assistance*

1. INTRODUCTION

Teacher career progression is an important dimension of professional development and institutional capacity in Philippine basic education. Promotion recognizes demonstrated competencies and creates opportunities for educators to assume more advanced professional responsibilities. The Department of Education (DepEd) has formalized professional standards through DepEd Order No. 42, s. 2017, adopting the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST), and expanded promotion pathways through DepEd Order No. 024, s. 2025, which provides guidelines for the Expanded Career Progression (ECP) System. These policies connect career advancement to qualifications, documented accomplishments, professional competence, and performance evidence (Department of Education, 2017, 2025). International evidence places teacher career structures within broader professional learning and retention strategies. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2024) describes both vertical promotion and horizontal specialization as pathways for recognizing teacher expertise, while its later review emphasizes transparent competency expectations and fair evaluation for career progression (OECD, 2025b). Findings from TALIS further associate supportive working conditions and professional learning opportunities with teachers' career intentions (OECD, 2025a). These international perspectives provide context for, but do not substitute for, Philippine promotion requirements.

1.1. Background of the Study

Within the Schools Division of Rizal and Tanay District, orientation, mentoring, open ranking, and capacity-building initiatives have been used to support teachers pursuing higher positions. Nevertheless, school-level readiness can depend on teachers' understanding of eligibility requirements, available time to compile Means of Verification (MOVs), and confidence in documentary evaluation. Recent discussions of ECP implementation identify documentation, scoring, and time-related difficulties as recurring barriers (Revelo, 2026; Revelo & Baluyos, 2026). Sison (2026) likewise emphasizes targeted orientation, ongoing mentoring, and organized resources as elements of technical assistance. At Aldea Elementary School, these concerns motivated a structured, four-week intervention intended to translate policy requirements into manageable portfolio-building activities and guided peer learning. Research on school-based professional learning supports collaborative approaches to capacity building. El Islami et al. (2022) identified collegial learning as a recurring feature of teacher professional development, and Nguyen et al. (2024) reviewed evidence on professional learning communities in the Global South, highlighting leadership support, trust, and infrastructure. Grimm (2024) examined teacher leadership within professional learning communities, while Zhang et al. (2024) reported positive associations between workplace mentorship and teachers' professional development. These findings support examining mentoring and peer review as practical assistance mechanisms without presuming that they guarantee promotion.

1.2. Research Problem

The initial needs assessment of 47 teaching personnel at Aldea Elementary School identified a pronounced difference between eligibility and willingness to seek promotion. Seven teachers (14.9%) were eligible and interested, 18 (38.3%) were interested but not yet eligible, 21 (44.7%) were eligible but not interested, and one (2.1%) was neither eligible nor interested. Thus, although 28 teachers (59.6%) met eligibility requirements, only seven expressed immediate interest in applying. The researcher observed hesitation linked to documentary requirements, portfolio compilation, open ranking procedures, and uncertainty about the promotion process. These barriers were important because they could prevent qualified teachers from participating in available career progression pathways. Studies discussing ECP reclassification similarly identify MOV sourcing, portfolio requirements, and unclear criteria as operational challenges (Revelo & Baluyos, 2026; Sison, 2026). The local assessment indicated a need for accessible,

school-based assistance that addressed both immediate applications and longer-term preparation.

1.3. Research Gap

Existing DepEd policies establish the formal standards and career pathways governing promotion, while recent studies describe implementation barriers and teachers' perceptions of the ECP process (Department of Education, 2025; Revelo, 2026; Revelo & Baluyos, 2026). However, identifying barriers does not establish how a short, integrated intervention may translate guidance into documented application outcomes in a particular school. The present action research addressed this practical gap by combining baseline readiness classification, four weeks of structured Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions and portfolio mentoring, post-intervention perceptions, and independently documented application and appointment milestones. Its school-wide census also allowed the researcher to distinguish eligible applicants from teachers still completing prerequisites. The resulting evidence is context-specific rather than a causal estimate of intervention effectiveness, but it provides a basis for refining school-level promotion support. Recent evidence also clarifies why a structured school-level intervention merits examination. Maras et al. (2025) reviewed external mentoring for early-career teachers, illustrating the importance of organized support arrangements; Visscher et al. (2025) found that the effects of teacher professional development interventions vary across settings and program designs. At the system level, UNESCO (2024) emphasized sustained support for the teaching profession, and the OECD (2026) documented how appraisal systems can inform professional development and career advancement. Accordingly, the present study evaluates locally documented readiness and filing milestones rather than assuming that international findings establish causal effects at Aldea Elementary School.

1.4. Purpose and Objectives of the Study

The study aimed to identify teachers' perceived challenges in pursuing promotion at Aldea Elementary School, assess the perceived effectiveness and observable career progression outcomes of Project PUSH TAYO, and propose an action plan for sustaining the initiative. Specifically, it examined barriers associated with documentation, points allocation, PPST alignment, and time; evaluated the contribution of LAC sessions, mentoring, portfolio workshops, and peer review to readiness; and recorded completed portfolios, formal applications, and confirmed appointments. The final objective was to identify feasible institutional support measures for teachers at different stages of eligibility and career preparation.

1.5. Significance and Practical Contribution of the Study

The project provides a practical school-based approach to interpreting career progression requirements and organizing promotion evidence. Its findings may inform school principals, master teachers, promotion coordinators, and district support personnel seeking to reduce administrative uncertainty and sustain teacher development. Standardized checklists, mentoring, a shared MOV repository, and mock ranking exercises can help make preparation more systematic. The study also distinguishes perceptions of readiness from verified promotion milestones, an important consideration when assessing professional development initiatives. Its proposed continuity plan may guide future school-level implementation and adaptation in comparable settings. The proposed mentoring and document-sharing arrangements are also consistent with evidence that professional learning benefits from sustained collaboration and accessible resources (Nguyen et al., 2024; OECD, 2025b). UNESCO (2023) notes that technology can support teacher collaboration and resource sharing when appropriately governed and supported. A shared digital MOV repository is therefore proposed as an organizational aid, not as an independently evaluated outcome of this four-week project.

1.6. Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Alignment

The study is aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 4, Quality Education, particularly its emphasis on supporting qualified teachers and strengthening educational systems. By facilitating professional development and clearer progression pathways, the project may help sustain teacher capacity and institutional support. It also relates to Sustainable Development Goal 8, Decent Work and Economic Growth, through attention to fair access to professional advancement opportunities within established public-sector criteria. These connections are prospective and institutional: the study documents promotion readiness and application outcomes rather than directly measuring learner achievement, economic growth, or wider sustainable development effects. The relevance of supporting teachers is also reflected in UNESCO's (2024) discussion of a well-supported teaching workforce and the OECD's (2024) analysis of career pathways as part of teacher retention and professional growth. These policy-level links do not imply that the present study measured SDG indicators directly.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Research Design

The study used mixed-methods action research to evaluate a school-based promotion support initiative. Quantitative measures documented baseline eligibility and interest, perceived challenges, post-intervention program ratings, and career progression milestones. Qualitative evidence from interviews, feedback slips, and observations provided contextual explanations of participants' experiences. The two forms of evidence were considered together to assess the intervention's implementation and outcomes, consistent with the mixed-methods approach described by Creswell and Plano Clark (2018). The integration of numerical indicators with teachers' accounts follows established mixed-methods principles that recognize the complementary value of quantitative and qualitative evidence (Johnson et al., 2007; Plano Clark & Ivankova, 2015). These sources inform the study's design and do not imply that an experimental comparison was conducted.

2.2. Research Locale, Population, and Participants or Respondents

The study was conducted at Aldea Elementary School, Tanay District, Schools Division of Rizal, Philippines, during School Year 2025–2026. The population consisted of 47 active teaching personnel across Kindergarten and Grades 1–6. All 47 participated in the institutional needs assessment and quantitative component. Baseline school records and teacher consultations provided information on grade assignment, prior ECP/ERF application experience, eligibility, and interest. Qualitative key informant interviews involved eight selected teachers. The project distinguished all participating teachers from the smaller groups who were eligible, submitted portfolios, or obtained appointments.

2.3. Sampling Technique and Sample Determination

Complete institutional census sampling was used for the quantitative assessment: all 47 active teachers were included rather than selecting a subset or calculating a sample through a formula. This approach provided a school-wide profile of perceived barriers and career readiness. Eight key informants contributed qualitative accounts; the source manuscript does not specify their selection criteria, so no additional sampling method is assumed. Outcomes were tracked separately for teachers who filed applications and those still completing eligibility requirements. The researcher used a baseline diagnostic needs assessment, a post-intervention efficacy survey with five-point Likert responses, weekly feedback slips, key informant interviews, observational logs, and the school Promotion Tracking Register. Likert interpretations ranged from Strongly Disagree (1.00–1.80) to Strongly Agree (4.21–5.00). The manuscript reports that the researcher-developed instruments underwent content validation by three master teachers and the school

head from Tanay District before administration in September 2025. It does not report a reliability coefficient.

2.4. Data Gathering Procedure

Baseline needs assessment and available personnel records were reviewed before implementation. In Week 1, an LAC session identified promotion barriers. Week 2 offered targeted orientation on ECP criteria, PPST alignment, and IPCRF narratives. Week 3 involved portfolio drafting, document checks, and mentor feedback. Week 4 provided presentation simulations and peer review. Post-intervention ratings, weekly feedback, interviews, observations, signed portfolio checklists, stamped application receipts, and official appointment notices were used to document perceptions and institutional milestones.

2.5. Data Analysis and Statistical Treatment

Frequencies and percentages described teacher profiles, eligibility, application activity, and confirmed appointments. Weighted means and rankings summarized baseline challenges, preferred countermeasures, and post-intervention ratings. Thematic coding was applied to interviews, weekly feedback, and observational logs to identify recurring experiences. Quantitative and qualitative findings were triangulated to interpret readiness and implementation outcomes (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). Application and promotion counts were cross-checked against the Promotion Tracking Register and supporting records. No inferential tests or causal comparisons were reported.

2.6. Ethical Considerations

The study used school personnel and promotion records alongside teacher surveys, feedback, and interviews. Reporting should protect individual teachers' identities and limit access to sensitive career documents. The source manuscript does not specify an ethics review approval, consent documentation, data retention arrangements, or a formal withdrawal procedure; these details should be confirmed by the author before submission rather than presumed. Participant quotations are presented using teacher identifiers as supplied in the source.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Promotion Readiness and Documentation Barriers

The baseline classification showed that 21 of 47 teachers (44.7%) were eligible but not interested in promotion, compared with only seven (14.9%) who were both eligible and interested. Eighteen teachers (38.3%) were interested but not yet eligible. This discrepancy highlighted a need for differentiated support: application assistance for eligible personnel and longer-term career planning for those still meeting prerequisites. The most highly rated challenge was preparing the comparative assessment folder (weighted mean [WM] = 4.57), followed by unclear points allocation (WM = 4.32), time to source MOVs (WM = 4.30), and difficulty aligning accomplishments with PPST (WM = 4.30). Balancing portfolio preparation with teaching duties was also reported (WM = 4.02). These findings are consistent with barriers discussed by Revelo and Baluyos (2026). The baseline challenge ratings identified difficulties in preparing comparative assessment folders as the highest-rated concern (weighted mean [WM] = 4.57). Lack of clarity about points allocation criteria followed (WM = 4.32). Finding dedicated time to source means of verification and aligning accomplishments with the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers were rated equally (WM = 4.30 each). Balancing portfolio preparation with daily teaching duties also posed a challenge (WM = 4.02). Taken together, these ratings identify documentation, interpretation of criteria, and competing work demands as major areas requiring technical assistance. Teachers rated dedicated work hours for portfolio compilation (WM = 4.62) and clear exemplars and checklists (WM = 4.57) as the most useful proposed countermeasures. Expert mentorship and cross-verification received WM = 4.49, intensive merit-system training

WM = 4.47, and peer-review circles WM = 4.02. These preferences informed the project's combination of time for preparation, explicit document guidance, and collaborative feedback. They also support Sison's (2026) recommendation for sustained MOV mentoring and standardized resources, without demonstrating that any one support component independently caused later applications.

3.2. Perceived Program Effectiveness and Application Outcomes

Post-intervention ratings were highest for the Learning Action Cell sessions in identifying and resolving documentation gaps (WM = 4.66). Workshops enhanced understanding of promotion criteria (WM = 4.60), and collaborative peer circles motivated completion of folder requirements (WM = 4.60). Technical guidance during drafting was rated positively for improving folder validation scores (WM = 4.49). Confidence in presenting a promotion portfolio during Division Open Ranking received the lowest of these ratings (WM = 3.57), indicating an area for continued preparation and coaching. The highest post-intervention rating concerned LAC sessions' assistance in identifying and resolving documentation gaps (WM = 4.66). Workshops and collaborative peer circles both received WM = 4.60; technical guidance received WM = 4.49. Confidence in presenting a portfolio during division open ranking, once eligible, was the lowest-rated item (WM = 3.57), suggesting that application readiness and confidence in formal evaluation should be treated as distinct outcomes. During the project cycle, 28 of 47 teachers (59.6%) completed portfolios and filed formal ECP/ERF applications. Eight teachers (17.0% of the total faculty; eight of 28 applicants) received confirmed appointment notices. Nineteen teachers (40.4%) did not file and were reported to be awaiting eligibility prerequisites. Portfolio completion, applications, and appointments were supported by signed checklists, stamped receiving copies, and official notices.

3.3. Changes in Institutional Promotion Milestones

For the current cycle, completed and filed promotion portfolios increased from zero teachers (0.0%) at baseline to 28 teachers (59.6%) at endline. Officially confirmed promotion appointments increased from zero (0.0%) to eight (17.0%). The baseline count of eligible and interested teachers was seven (14.9% of the faculty), whereas 28 teachers applied by endline (reported as 100.0% of eligible teachers and 59.6% of the total faculty). Eligible teachers classified as hesitant or non-filing declined from 21 (44.7%) to zero (0.0%). Overall non-filing faculty declined from 43 (91.5%) to 19 (40.4%). These are descriptive institutional milestones; the absence of a comparison group precludes attributing the changes or appointments solely to the intervention. The source reports an increase from zero current-cycle portfolio filings at baseline to 28 at endline, and from zero to eight confirmed current-cycle appointments. Its historical profile also records four teachers with prior reclassification applications. Accordingly, the current-cycle change should not be confused with an all-time increase from no promotion experience. The manuscript describes a cumulative total of 12 promoted teachers when the eight new appointments are combined with four earlier cases. This count is presented as reported, but the equivalence between prior applications and prior promotions should be verified against personnel records. Because the study lacked a comparison group and involved administrative eligibility processes beyond the intervention, the observed appointments cannot be attributed solely to Project PUSH TAYO.

3.4. Teacher Experiences and Remaining Confidence Needs

Thematic coding of eight key informant interviews, weekly feedback slips, and Week 4 observations yielded four reported themes: overcoming portfolio complexity and stagnation; clarifying criteria, PPST alignment, and career tracks; using structured checklists and instructional documentation; and gaining peer support while retaining some open-ranking anxiety. Participants described previously intimidating requirements as more manageable after

mentoring and credited templates with improving document organization. Others described clearer alignment between IPCRF accomplishments and promotion indicators. Peer cross-verification helped teachers review points allocation and sustain motivation, although nervousness about formal panel evaluation persisted. These qualitative accounts complement the relatively lower open-ranking confidence rating (WM = 3.57) and point toward continued simulation and coaching rather than assuming that portfolio submission alone reflects complete preparedness.

3.5. Sustainability and School-Level Action Priorities

The manuscript proposes a permanent promotion support structure, an institutional MOV digital hub, and recurring mock ranking exercises. Its continuity plan for June 2026–April 2027 includes PPST-aligned instructional modules, validated multimedia lessons, advanced portfolio LAC sessions for pipeline and not-yet-eligible teachers, mock demonstration teaching, recognition of milestones, and sharing the approach with nearby Tanay District schools. Proposed indicators include eight validated modules, multimedia evidence across K–6, portfolio validation for 20 pipeline applicants, career plans for 19 teachers, at least 15 mock-ranking participants, and adoption by at least three additional schools. These are prospective targets, not achieved study outcomes. They address the distinction between immediate filing support and sustained readiness for future promotion cycles.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings indicate that the primary obstacle to promotion participation at Aldea Elementary School was not simply a lack of eligibility but a combination of documentary complexity, uncertain scoring criteria, limited preparation time, and hesitation to engage in open ranking. The school-wide assessment showed that many eligible teachers were initially reluctant to apply. Following the four-week Project PUSH TAYO activities, 28 teachers completed and filed promotion portfolios and eight received confirmed appointments. Participants rated LAC documentation assistance and collaborative activities favorably, while confidence in formal ranking remained comparatively weaker. Qualitative accounts further highlighted the value of templates, mentor guidance, and peer review in making the requirements more understandable. Taken together, the evidence supports the practical relevance of structured, school-based technical assistance to career preparation, although the design does not establish that the intervention alone caused promotion appointments.

A continuing school promotion secretariat, supported by the principal, master teachers, and experienced applicants, is recommended to maintain individual guidance and document verification. The school should establish a secure digital MOV repository with approved exemplars, checklists, and guidance for PPST-aligned evidence. Scheduled portfolio-building periods may help teachers balance application preparation with classroom duties. Semestral mock rankings, demonstration teaching simulations, and constructive panel feedback should specifically address the remaining confidence gap. Teachers awaiting eligibility should receive individualized career progression plans rather than being treated as immediate applicants. The proposed June 2026–April 2027 continuity activities should be monitored using verifiable indicators, including validated portfolios, application receipts, participation records, and subsequent official appointments. District-level sharing may be considered after implementation outcomes are reviewed.

The study was confined to 47 teachers in one elementary school and used a short, four-week intervention without a comparison group. Its perception measures were self-reported, and the source does not provide inferential tests or instrument reliability coefficients. Promotion decisions also depended on external administrative processes and eligibility criteria, limiting

causal attribution. Further implementation cycles and multi-school studies could assess longer-term readiness, appointment outcomes, and the consistency of program effects. These limitations do not diminish the value of the school-level documentation and practical support model.

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