

## **Enhancement of Professional Development Program toward Proposed Competency Program**



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**ABSTRACT:** The Philippine Army (PA) follows a structured career path in which Officers must complete prerequisite career courses before assuming a command position. However, the current Professional Development Program (PDP) does not have Staff pre-designation courses that lead to underperformance. This study proposed an enhancement to the PDP toward a competency program parallel to the competency requirements of officers ranking Major and Lieutenant Colonel. The level of affectation of the independent, dependent, and moderating variables on PDP and competency development were examined. The researcher employed mixed method research and utilized thematic and content analysis, Warp Partial Least Square – Structural Equation Model, confirmatory analysis, and moderating analysis. The result suggests that institutional support affects PDP, and competency development is affected by prior schooling, pre-designation program, and experience. Thus, self-development and institutional support influence PDP effectiveness, and PDP plays a significant role in competence development. This study will be a good basis and reference in the revision of the Standard Operating Procedure 19 PA Officer and Enlisted Personnel Career Path and Philippine Army Manual 8 – 00 Education & Training.

**KEYWORDS:** Professional Development, Competency, Military, Officer Professional Military Education.

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

In the Philippine Army, officer training begins at the pre-entry level, aiming to prepare officers for future leadership and command roles. However, there is a notable gap of approximately 8–12 years between completing the Advance Officers Course and the Command and General Staff Course (CGSC), a prerequisite for command postings. According to the SOP 19 Philippine Army Officer and Enlisted Personnel Career Path, dated October 28, 2022, no specific training is required before staff-duty assignments, even though most roles for Majors and Lieutenant Colonels (LTC) involve staff and special duties (e.g., instructor roles). This lack of preparatory training leads to challenges in transitioning from combat-oriented roles to administrative management, resulting in extended adjustment periods, reduced efficiency, and even incompetence.

In response to these issues, the Department of National Defense issued a recent memorandum advising military chiefs to adopt research methodologies to tackle managerial challenges. Ideally, the CGSC—a course intended for “staff” officers and a prerequisite for battalion command—should be completed while officers are still Majors. However, officers tend to take it later, and non-primary staff do not fully benefit from its content. According to SOP 19, CGSC remains the only mandatory training for Majors and Lieutenant Colonels. Other opportunities for further development are rare and accessible to only about 1.3% of the officers' corps. At the same time, military specialization courses are also not compulsory for staff positions.

Lieutenant General Theodore D. Martin, U.S. Army Commander, stated, “The U.S. Army’s asymmetric advantage in this volatile and complex world is our leadership at echelon” (USA Department of the Army Field Manual 6-22, 2022). However, even well-established military organizations face external pressures to adapt, necessitating updated training and education to remain competitive (Holmberg & Alvinus, 2019). Rapid globalization, digitalization, and evolving social norms have redefined workplace skills and tasks, leading to increased emphasis on reskilling, upskilling, and cross-skilling to maintain competence (Skrinjaric, 2022). As Bogdanov (2020) notes, educated human resources are vital to national security, underlining the need for updated and comprehensive Professional Military Education (PME) programs. The U.S. and British armed forces face criticism for outdated PME programs, with calls for reform to address current security needs and align education with professional objectives (Mayberry et al., 2021; Maguire, 2021).

There should be a balanced emphasis on both leadership and management training, with structured PME programs that

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support officers at each career stage, which is necessary to address the evolving needs of today's military environment. An enhancement to the field-grade officers' professional development program is essential in line with global military practices, evolving societal norms, and the current structure of the Philippine Army's education and training. Such adjustments should enable the current training to cultivate the skill sets required for staff duties. This study advocates revising the Philippine Army Officer and Enlisted Personnel Career Path, decoupling rank and position from PME to align competencies with grade-specific expectations better. PME's role in officer development is critical and should be addressed independently to ensure it receives the necessary attention and resources. Additionally, this study proposes that the PA Education and Training Manual be expanded to outline PME requirements for each rank, with curriculum content tailored to the competency needs at operational, coordinative, and strategic levels.

## II. RELATED LITERATURE

### A. Theory of Competence Development

#### 1. Competency-Based and Outcome-Based Education

Competency-based Education is characterized by continuous learning and flexible scheduling, in which students must exhibit expertise and achieve learning objectives before progressing (Rogers, 2021). A contributing element to its popularity is its ability to expedite course completion by leveraging students' past knowledge gained from real-world experiences (Prokes et al., 2021). Over time, more educational policies and curricula emphasize competencies than time spent in school and favor a goal-oriented educational system over one that absorbs information (Skrinjaric, 2022). The Outcome-based education philosophy focuses on output rather than input. Education places less emphasis on curriculum content or time spent studying certain subjects and more on what students must do in their future roles and responsibilities (Mayberry et al., 2021).

#### 2. Professional Development Program (PDP)

Societal transformations, technological advancement, and shifts in vocation are among the issues higher education faces. With the transition to teaching in a new context, more academics are looking into PDP to upskill and overcome the challenges that come with the new system. According to Dall'Alba (2009), "a more holistic view considers professional development as a process of transforming the self and a process of becoming" (p. 2). A study conducted by Gurney (2015), for academic reasons, categorized PD under the broader dimension of person-oriented (for wellbeing), skill-oriented (for teaching), and career-oriented (goal-setting) (Wardak et al., 2023).

Wardak et al. (2023) conceptualized four categories of PD: continual growth mindset (what), student-centric mindset (why), knowledge-sharing mindset (how), and purpose-oriented mindset (why). They argue that PD should be underpinned by what, how, and why as mutually and jointly intertwined rather than separate and independent domains. The integration of the three leads to the findings that they participate in PD only if it has relevance, aligned with the findings of Stein et al. (2011) "in that relevance about tailoring professional development to suit individual needs" (Wardak et al., 2023, p.12).

#### 3. Professional Military Education (PME)

The Office of the U.S. Secretary of Defense defined PME "as a broadening opportunity and, as such, is designed to help prepare officers for an array of potential assignments within and outside their occupational expertise" (Hanser et al., 2021, p. 1). PME programs are designed to support the development of knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for leadership positions and to equip military personnel to handle challenges they may encounter throughout their career.

Czarnecki (2018) offered a starting point for establishing a theoretical map through which researchers of PME might explore. The central base of his argument is that "the military is a profession and requires a professional education curriculum that informs and empowers the profession" (p.36). The proposed improvements consist of an approach to education that starts at the bottom and works its way up, a graduate curriculum that focuses more on how to think than what to consider (a mix of learning and knowledge), and a progression in PME that uses job positions and operational environments to determine educational requirements of individuals (Czarnecki, 2018).

A study conducted for the Joint Chiefs of Staff, U.S. Defense Force, introduced the Outcome-Based Military Education Approach. It suggests that education focuses on what students must do in their future roles and responsibilities rather than on curriculum content or time spent learning a specific topic. This suggests that "education should serve students after they graduate, support the services in their development and management of talent" (Mayberry et al., 2021, p.7).

### B. Leadership Theories Applicable to the Military

Officers' changing roles, situations, and environments affect their leadership traits (Surace, 2019). One of the prevalent theories in managerial leadership is *Hersey Blanchard's situational leadership theory*. The theory suggests that leaders must be able to evaluate the environment in which they work before choosing the approach that will work best and recognizing the role

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in the leader-follower dynamic (Benmira & Agboola, 2021). The leader must modify behavior under the team's maturity, and the efficacy of this leadership style depends on the team members' willingness (Sivaruban, 2021). It argues that leadership characteristics and behaviors should change depending on the situation to get results (Demirtas & Karaca, 2020).

According to the definition of *transactional leadership*, leader-follower relationships are based on a succession of agreements between followers and leaders. The theory was based on the contractual agreement between the leader and the subordinate (Nanjundeswaraswamy et al., 2024). To inspire workers, a leader utilizes their position of power and a system of rewards and punishments (Benmira & Agboola, 2021).

*Traditional leadership* focuses on leader-follower exchange relationships, such as setting goals, giving direction and support, and reinforcing behaviors. On the other hand, new leadership studies focus on transformational or charismatic leadership based on symbolic leader behavior, vision, motivation, feelings, ideological and moral values, individualized attention, and intellectual stimulation. The shift in strategy was prompted by the belief that transactional leadership could only yield modest improvements, which fueled the desire to develop more effective leadership interventions (Meiser, 2020).

In *Transformational leadership*, leaders encourage, inspire, and motivate followers" (Benmira & Agboola, 2021, p. 4). In a study on leaders' attitudes on subordinate attitudes and implementation success, changing employees' attitudes toward the practice being implemented is a key that transformational leaders can use to influence the outcome of an implementation effort (Farahnak et al., 2019). Using these leadership principles in military strategy, a battlefield commander who demonstrates charismatic- transformational leadership may significantly improve soldier performance by raising their drive to fight. An army leader may boost military efficiency by instilling principles and an identity matching the commander's vision of organizational success (Meiser, 2020).

### C. The Military Officers, Organization, and Organizational Change

Officers at various levels of command lead military organizations (USA Department of the Army, 2022). Organizations require a leader with the necessary characteristics and skills to ensure their survivability, growth, and achievement of their objectives (Demirtas & Karaca, 2020). Leadership literature reveals that leaders may influence followers' behavior by shaping values and identity. Leaders are very influential; they can instill specific values within an organization, which, once internalized, influence the behavior of followers (Meiser, 2020).

A bureaucratic, hierarchical, meritocratic structure with a strong obedience logic characterizes military organizations worldwide. Organizational values are carried by leaders in bureaucratic organizations (Alvinus et al., 2019). The unique nature of the laws governing the military distinguishes its organizational operations from those of other non- military organizations. The law-dictated characteristics influence the military culture (Atuel & Castro, 2018). However, the military does not cut itself off from the rest of society. More importantly, its core purpose is to protect the people and the country. The military adheres to civilian supremacy. Civilian leaders keep things under control by describing or approving the military competencies that society demands and by setting up the areas of practice where those abilities serve the common defense (Lacquement & Galvin, 2022). The pressure for change challenges military characteristics. The bureaucratic and hierarchical nature of the military was challenged by internationalization that emerged at the end of superpower rivalry in the 1990s. Some challenges to military organizational characteristics are posed by normative pressure for change related to comprehending and relating to the new norms and the public's perception of these (Holmberg & Alvinus, 2019). Organizations nowadays are susceptible to social acceleration, or quick social change, which occurs increasingly (Alvinus et al., 2019). Lastly, the functional pressure for change was due to technological innovation and technology and the theory of modernity (Holmberg & Alvinus, 2019).

## III. METHOD

### A. Research Design

This research was conducted within a pragmatic philosophical framework concentrated on the issue and used a pluralistic technique to collect data on the topic. A mixed method convergent design was employed, two datasets were collected and analyzed separately and subsequently integrated to compare the results (Creswell & Creswell, 2023).

For qualitative research, narrative research was used to explore the experiences and perspectives of the senior officers. Their vast wisdom and knowledge accumulated throughout their service, performing different positions, made them credible interview subjects and experts in their respective fields. Their individual growth was studied and compared to the "generic" Professional Development Program stipulated in the officers' career path, identifying events that had contributed to the senior officers' credence and successful careers. Relatively, for the quantitative method, the researcher utilized survey research to present a quantitative representation of a population's trends, attitudes, and opinions by analyzing a population sample (Creswell &

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Creswell, 2023).

### B. Subject And Site

This research study predominantly used primary data from semi-structured interviews and surveys conducted in Central Luzon and Metro Manila. For the qualitative research, the respondents were chosen based on their previous or current positions, so the researcher used a purposive sampling method to determine the participants in the narrative inquiry. The interviewees were selected based on their service reputation, placement in the Seniority Linear List, education and track records, and having completed battalion commander duty or its equivalent.

Total Population Sampling was the research technique used in the quantitative portion of this research. Since the study is about the Professional Development Program for Lieutenant Colonel and Major, all officers who bear the rank Major and Lieutenant Colonel assigned to the units within the 3 locations were the qualitative research subjects.

### C. Data Measure and Analysis

There are two sets of study subjects – the senior officers for the qualitative research, and the field grade officers for the quantitative research. They are of different sizes and use different but comparable research tools. The survey research for the quantitative research design used the researcher adapted and expounded the questionnaire developed by Hanser et al. (2021) in their study on Air Force Professional Military Education, Considerations for Change. At the same time, researcher-developed questions, connected to the survey questions, were used to explore individual involvement and external influence variables. The variables were measured using a five- point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree to agree strongly.

This study used thematic and content analysis to interpret the qualitative data obtained through narrative research design inquiry. In the quantitative portion of this research, Descriptive Statistics was used to summarize and organize data set characteristics. The mean and standard deviation were calculated using the same tool to determine the agreement level. Inferential Statistics was used to test the hypotheses by analyzing the path coefficient and moderation analyses. WARP PLS-SEM was utilized to measure the relationships between variables in the quantitative data. The path coefficient analysis was used to test whether the two independent variables—institutional support and external influence—significantly affect individual involvement (dependent variable). Similarly, the moderation analysis technique will determine the moderating variables (pre- designation program, prior schooling, experience) significantly affecting professional development.

## IV. RESULT

The mean and standard deviation (SD) of the respondents' responses were analyzed using independent variables (institutional support and external influence), dependent variable (individual involvement), and moderating variables (prior schooling, pre-designation training, and experience). The scale value and verbal interpretation are as follows: 1.00 to 1.80 – undeveloped/unsupported, 1.81 to 2.60 – poorly Developed/supported, 2.61 to 3.4 – neither, 3.41 to 4.20 – developed/supported, and 4.21 to 5.00 – strongly developed/supported.

### ***On the effect of institutional support on PDP?***

Table 1 shows the support provided by the Philippine Army to the officers according to the 223 Field Grade Officers who participated in the survey. It reveals the overall average of ( $M = 3.91$ ) ( $SD = 0.67$ ), verbally interpreted as supported on the items listed under the support of the PA to PDP. The 3 items that scored the most were the army promotes an organizational culture that cultivates critical thinking and problem-solving, ( $M = 4.18$ ) ( $SD = 0.86$ ), promotes an organizational culture conducive to learning, ( $M = 4.17$ ) ( $SD = 0.73$ ), and programs position-relevant career courses, ( $M = 4.12$ ) ( $SD = 0.85$ ). Relatively, item 13, allocates reasonable funds for individual education and training, ( $M = 4.06$ ) ( $SD = 0.86$ ). On the other hand, program short/certificate courses in civilian schools, ( $M = 3.62$ ) ( $SD = 1.04$ ), accessible research facilities and materials, ( $M = 3.65$ ) ( $SD = 1.00$ ), and hire civilian subject matter experts as a retainer, ( $M = 3.68$ ) ( $SD = 1.01$ ) scored the least. (see table 1)

The good score on the Philippine Army's support indicates that the officers saw substantial organizational backing for their professional growth. They are convinced that the Army fosters an organizational culture conducive to learning, critical thinking, and problem-solving. The officers also believe that their development program has sufficient support in terms of financing and policy, which are the fundamental requirements for its implementation. Leadership that prioritizes learning in fostering employee development is very important (Wallo et al, 2024).

The evidence about perceptions of self-efficacy and confidence in one's role enables institutions to devise development support plans strategically (Prokes et al., 2021). The organization aligns leadership development with the organizational goals and development (Kjellstrom et al., 2020).

The support of the Army for its personnel is aligned with the studies conducted by Peng et al. (2023) on the impact of perceived organizational support (POS); they discovered that employees' self-efficacy positively influences knowledge transfer. High self-efficacy workers can identify the explicit and implicit knowledge required to complete tasks in the workplace. These staff

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will share their expertise inside the company and go through several learning activities through knowledge transfer to get such information. Therefore, it suggests that managers should prioritize enhancing the learning mechanisms and organizational setting, developing a harmonious and value-creating work atmosphere, and reducing negativity and rivalry.

**Table 1. Army's Support to the Officer's Professional Development**

		Mean	Std. Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
1	Professional Development centered policies and SOP	4.08	0.88	Supported
2	Active career path advising	3.86	1.01	Supported
3	Mentorship and internship programs	3.71	0.96	Supported
4	Program Informal training for re-skilling and up-skilling	3.85	0.95	Supported
5	Program Short/certificate courses in civilian schools	3.62	1.04	Supported
6	Program position-relevant career courses	4.12	0.85	Supported
7	Accessible research facilities and materials	3.65	1.00	Supported
8	Hire Civilian Subject Matter Experts as retainer	3.68	1.06	Supported
9	Incremental and aligned assignments lead to the development of tacit knowledge	4.02	0.82	Supported
10	Promotes an organizational culture conducive to learning	4.17	0.73	Supported
11	Promotes an organizational culture that cultivates critical thinking and problem-solving	4.18	0.86	Supported
12	Regularly publish informative publications and articles	3.92	0.89	Supported
13	Allocate reasonable funds for individual education and training	4.06	0.86	Supported
	<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>3.91</b>	<b>0.67</b>	Supported

### *On the effects of external influences on the PDP*

The effects of internationalization, globalization, and new societal norms are presented in Table 2. Of the 22 items presented, 5 got a score above ( $M = 4.21$ ) or interpreted as strongly developed, with an SD range from 0.61 to 0.70. The following Technology is beneficial in enhancing the professional development of the officers, the workload was made lighter by technology, the Professional Development Program allows officers to develop more than one skill or specialty, Officers know how to develop their subordinates' and troops' potentials by looking at into their interest and strength, and Professional Development Program allows one's interest/skills to be developed. Item number 6, the current curriculum of the career courses has enough international law and UN-related subjects, got only ( $M = 3.4$ ) ( $SD = 1.04$ ), which is equivalent to "neither". At the same time, the remaining 16 items have a score between ( $M = 3.69$ ) ( $SD = 1.02$ ) and ( $M = 4.17$ ) ( $SD = 0.75$ ) and read as developed. The overall score for external influence is ( $M = 4.05$ ) ( $SD = 0.59$ ) or developed verbal interpretation.

The five items that scored the most in external influence are topics under globalization. The findings suggest that organizational effectiveness, as conveyed through management and systems and IT innovation, is regarded by the officers as necessary to their roles and substantial components of their Professional Development Programs. It aligns with the concept of Schatz et al. (2017) regarding the vision for future military learning. These aim to cultivate intelligent, agile, and operationally proficient individuals, teams, and organizations (Schatz et al., 2017).

Relatively, as field grade officers, their ranks necessitate staff designation, and it is assumed that their work involves resource management, concept and proposal drafting, and policymaking. As Gavin and Hill (2017) emphasized, large, complex organizations, such as the military, succeed through effective leadership and good management. Defense managers are responsible for planning, organizing, leadership, and orchestrating Department of Defense activities swiftly and relentlessly.

The officers were generally receptive toward the Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion aspect, as the organization is already used to matters of Gender and Development. Specific policies are in place to ensure that female members of the organization have equal opportunities as their male counterparts. The organization is committed to ensuring that all personnel are gender sensitive through seminars facilitated by the GAD Offices.



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**Table 2. The Effects of Internationalization, Globalization, and New Societal Norms on Officers' Professional Development Program**

		Mean	Std. Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
1	Knowledge of applicable International Law, International Humanitarian Law, and UN policies.	4.12	0.82	Developed
2	Can easily coordinate or work with allied countries' military counterparts.	4.08	0.82	Developed
3	Competent despite being sent without additional training to other countries to perform security operation-related tasks.	3.90	0.84	Developed
4	Competent despite being sent without additional training to other countries to perform administrative/logistic tasks.	3.90	0.85	Developed
5	Those who were sent on foreign schooling were able to bring back knowledge and skills that helped improve the organization.	4.05	0.88	Developed
6	The curriculum of the career courses has enough International law and UN-related subjects.	3.40	1.04	Neither
7	Became a skilled manager.	4.13	0.71	Developed
8	The organizational management skills are updated.	3.98	0.82	Developed
9	There is no problem interpreting and applying government mandates and laws.	3.89	0.84	Developed
10	Technology is very helpful in enhancing the professional development of the officers.	4.45	0.61	Strongly Developed
11	Able to navigate/make use of IT-related warfare innovations.	4.08	0.78	Developed
12	The workload was made lighter by technology (Information System software/apps)	4.30	0.72	Strongly Developed
13	There are enough management subjects included in the curriculum of the career courses.	3.90	0.82	Developed
14	There are IT innovation subjects included in the curriculum of career courses.	3.69	1.02	Developed
15	Have a great appreciation of Development Equality &Inclusion.	4.01	0.84	Developed
16	Officers know how to develop their subordinates' and troops' potentials by looking into their interests and strengths.	4.24	0.74	Strongly Developed
17	The Professional Development Program is for everybody and does not discriminate.	4.17	0.86	Developed
18	PDP is helpful to those who need "equity".	4.11	0.79	Developed
19	Diversity is being factored in designing PDP.	4.08	0.78	Developed
20	PDP allows one's interests/skills to be developed.	4.23	0.70	Strongly Developed
21	PDP allows officers to develop more than one skill or specialty.	4.26	0.72	Strongly Developed
22	Organizational culture greatly affects PDP.	4.17	0.75	Developed
	<b>AVERAGE</b>	4.05	0.59	Developed

The officers did not give high ratings on internationalization, government mandates and laws, and IT innovations, indicating insufficient information on these subjects from available learning opportunities. United Nations and internationalization- related subjects are only programmed for the personnel bound to go on UN deployment in the allied countries. ICT-related training is limited to Signal Corps personnel, and there are rare learning opportunities on government mandates, policies, and laws. The findings contradict the research on "pressure for change challenges military organizational characteristics" (p. 130), which examines how military organizations face challenges brought by structural, normative, and functional pressures (Holmberg and Alvinus, 2019).

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### On the Development Activities Initiated by the Officers

Table 3 presents the officers' initiative in learning and development. Of the 12 items presented, 11 scored equivalent to strongly supported with an overall score of ( $M = 4.46$ ) ( $SD = 0.57$ ), with the request to be programmed with specialization courses ( $M = 4.65$ ) ( $SD = 2.27$ ) on top. It was followed by Reading/watching credible news programs, military journals, and publications ( $M = 4.59$ ) ( $SD = 0.55$ ), reaching out to seniors and peers who are knowledgeable ( $M = 4.58$ ) ( $SD = 0.59$ ), having their own learning and development program ( $M = 4.52$ ) ( $SD = 0.56$ ), and pursuing an interest or developing secondary skills ( $M = 4.5$ ) ( $SD = 0.61$ ). On the other hand, participating in unit journal writing scored the lowest with ( $M = 4.07$ ) ( $SD = 0.84$ ), verbally interpreted as supported.

**Table 3. Self-development Activities Initiated and Undertaken**

		Mean	Std. Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
1	Must have their own Individual Learning and Development Program (aligned with individual scorecard and career path)	4.52	0.56	Strongly Supported
2	Actively read educational materials, directives, and SOPs.	4.57	0.57	Strongly Supported
3	Be informed about security and military events by reading/watching credible news programs, military journals, and publications	4.59	0.55	Strongly Supported
4	Reach out to seniors and peers who are knowledgeable in the matter	4.58	0.59	Strongly Supported
5	Initiate "informal apprenticeship" by observing senior officers do their job	4.36	0.79	Strongly Supported
6	Pursue interest/ develop secondary skills	4.50	0.61	Strongly Supported
7	Volunteer to go on unprogrammed training	4.42	2.78	Strongly Supported
8	Request to be programmed with specialization courses	4.65	2.72	Strongly Supported
9	Initiate attendance to seminars/ short courses offered by civilian learning institutions	4.40	0.68	Strongly Supported
10	Participate in unit journal writing	4.07	0.84	Supported
11	If opportunity permits, personally enroll in a nearby university/college's master's program	4.48	0.69	Strongly Supported
12	Apply for a 22k scholarship program	4.32	0.73	Strongly Supported
	<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>4.46</b>	<b>0.57</b>	<b>Strongly Supported</b>

The officers' high rating on the items on their professional development indicates that they believe it is necessary to personally take responsibility for their professional development to nurture their personal growth. According to Aguinis and Gabriel (2021), if one is serious about their impact, they must create a Personal Impact Development Plan and the requisite skills to accomplish this. Personal development is propelled by individuals gaining a deeper understanding of themselves, and acquiring and honing skills to address their strengths and weaknesses effectively. It is acknowledged as a continuous, ongoing process rather than a singular development (Coopersmith, 2021).

Therefore, officers must know the knowledge and skills they must acquire and enhance. They should also develop a mindset that fosters continual growth (Wardak et al, 2023). The three most often chosen subjects indicate an awareness of the necessary knowledge and abilities to be acquired and the activities that facilitate this process. Leadership development should be understood as personal and someone's development (Kjellstrom et al., 2020).

### On competencies obtained from prior Training and Education

Table 4 discusses the education and training that have influenced the areas of expertise or knowledge obtained that helped the officers in their subsequent jobs. The topic presented 17 possible learning areas that may have developed from prior schooling and got an overall score of ( $M = 4.26$ ) ( $SD = 0.57$ ) or verbally interpreted as strongly developed. The leadership skills ( $M = 4.51$ ) ( $SD = 0.59$ ) was the most developed area. It was followed closely by critical thinking competencies, managerial skills, supervisory skills, and operational warfighting. The least developed areas were knowledge of international military service, knowledge of systems and IT innovation, knowledge of Sustainable Development Goals 17, and knowledge of DE&I, which had the

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lowest score of only ( $M = 3.96$ ) ( $SD = 0.83$ ) interpreted as developed.

**Table 4. Competencies Obtained from Prior Training and Education Useful in Previous and Current Jobs**

		Mean	Std. Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
1	Operational warfighting	4.41	0.64	Strongly Developed
2	Strategy for warfighting	4.35	0.68	Strongly Developed
3	Historical knowledge (to include military wars and battles)	4.30	0.69	Strongly Developed
4	Critical thinking competencies	4.48	0.62	Strongly Developed
5	Strategic thinking methodologies	4.38	0.69	Strongly Developed
6	Supervisory skills	4.44	0.64	Strongly Developed
7	Managerial skills	4.47	0.62	Strongly Developed
8	Leadership skills	4.51	0.59	Strongly Developed
9	Networking connections	4.27	0.71	Strongly Developed
10	Knowledge about the joint service	4.20	0.75	Developed
11	Knowledge about international military service	4.02	0.88	Developed
12	Knowledge about the multi-domain operation	4.10	0.86	Developed
13	Knowledge of Systems & IT Innovation	4.03	0.81	Developed
14	Knowledge on Sustainable Development Goals (SGD)17	3.97	0.86	Developed
15	Knowledge on Good Governance	4.29	0.69	Strongly Developed
16	Knowledge of DE&I	3.96	0.83	Developed
17	Knowledge of Laws, regulations, and policy	4.19	0.73	Developed
	<b>AVERAGE</b>	4.26	0.57	Strongly Developed

This indicates that training and education affect the officers' careers, with the competencies obtained being utilized in their later positions. Leadership skills, critical thinking competencies, managerial skills, supervisory skills, and operational warfighting are the skills that continue to retain their relevance. In their following assignments, they could continue using their developed warfighting strategy, implement strategic thinking methodologies, and capitalize on their understanding of military history. Similarly, US Airforce Officers acknowledged to "the development of critical thinking skills", the cultivation of "strategic thinking", and the "preparation to execute the operational and strategic levels of warfighting" following their PME (Hanser et al., 2021, p. 48).

### **On competencies obtained from targeted pre-designation Training and Education**

Table 5 presents the learning and development gained that was immediately applied to the recent and current assignments. It has an overall score of ( $M = 4.25$ ) ( $SD = 0.59$ ) or strongly developed. Individually, 10 items scored above ( $M = 4.21$ ) and were interpreted as strongly developed, with SD range 0.56 – 0.76. Leadership skills, managerial skills, critical thinking competencies, supervisory skills, and strategic thinking methodologies scored the most. On the other hand, knowledge about international military service, Sustainable Development Goals 17, and Diversity Equality and Inclusion were the least used or applied, scoring only ( $M = 3.97$ ) ( $SD = 0.85$ ) to ( $M = 4.00$ ) ( $SD = 0.88$ ) and interpreted as developed.

The rating indicates that the officers acquired leadership, managerial, critical thinking, supervisory, and strategic thinking methodologies from the pre-designation activities they engaged in that were used in their projected posting. Relatable to the Competency-based approach, the design for employee training should be according to the skills applicable to their job (Fejfarova and Fejfar, 2022). To facilitate higher levels of learning, the Army's learning environment must be adaptable to the requirements of learners, engage students at their level, and provide a challenging and relevant curriculum (Kirchner and O'Connor, 2018).

**Table 5. Competencies Obtained from Targeted or Pre-designation Training and Education**

		Mean	Std. Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
1	Operational warfighting	4.29	0.75	Strongly Developed
2	Strategy for warfighting	4.27	0.77	Strongly Developed



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3	Historical knowledge (to include military wars and battles)	4.17	0.82	Developed
4	Critical thinking competencies	4.48	0.62	Strongly Developed
5	Strategic thinking methodologies	4.39	0.70	Strongly Developed
6	Supervisory skills	4.48	0.64	Strongly Developed
7	Managerial skills	4.51	0.59	Strongly Developed
8	Leadership skills	4.54	0.56	Strongly Developed
9	Networking connections	4.30	0.70	Strongly Developed
10	Knowledge about the joint service	4.20	0.81	Developed
11	Knowledge about international military service	4.00	0.88	Developed
12	Knowledge about the multi-domain operation	4.11	0.82	Developed
13	Knowledge of Systems & IT Innovation	4.08	0.81	Developed
14	Knowledge on Sustainable Development Goals (SGD) <sup>17</sup>	3.98	0.83	Developed
15	Knowledge on Good Governance	4.30	0.71	Strongly Developed
16	Knowledge of DE&I	3.97	0.85	Developed
17	Knowledge of Laws, regulations, and policy	4.23	0.76	Strongly Developed
	<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>4.25</b>	<b>0.59</b>	<b>Strongly Developed</b>

### On competencies obtained from previous designations

In Table 6, the Experience or the assignments and designations in the past that helped in performing the current role were presented. Managerial skills, supervisory skills, strategic thinking methodologies, critical thinking competencies, and leadership skills were the skills highly developed from the former assignments that are helpful in the current assignments. Knowledge about the joint service, knowledge of systems and IT innovations, and knowledge of Good Governance scored the least, between ( $M = 3.96$ ) ( $SD = 0.90$ ) and ( $M = 4.01$ ) ( $SD = 0.85$ ), interpreted as developed. Overall, the 17 items under experience scored ( $M = 4.41$ ) ( $SD = 0.68$ ) and above, strongly developed.

**Table 6. Competencies Obtained from Previous Designations Useful in Current Roles**

		Mean	Std. Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
1	Operational warfighting	4.41	0.68	Strongly Developed
2	Strategy for warfighting	4.33	0.72	Strongly Developed
3	Historical knowledge (to include military wars and battles)	4.25	0.82	Strongly Developed
4	Critical thinking competencies	4.50	0.58	Strongly Developed
5	Strategic thinking methodologies	4.56	0.57	Strongly Developed
6	Supervisory skills	4.56	0.56	Strongly Developed
7	Managerial skills	4.59	0.52	Strongly Developed
8	Leadership skills	4.44	0.59	Strongly Developed
9	Networking connections	4.22	0.79	Strongly Developed
10	Knowledge about the joint service	3.96	0.90	Developed
11	Knowledge about international military service	4.13	0.85	Developed
12	Knowledge about the multi-domain operation	4.10	0.82	Developed
13	Knowledge on Systems & IT Innovation	3.98	0.87	Developed
14	Knowledge on Sustainable Development Goals (SGD) <sup>17</sup>	4.34	0.72	Strongly Developed
15	Knowledge on Good Governance	4.01	0.85	Developed
16	Knowledge on DE&I	4.29	0.75	Strongly Developed
17	Knowledge of the Laws, regulations, and policy	4.29	0.59	Strongly Developed
	<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>4.41</b>	<b>0.68</b>	<b>Strongly Developed</b>

Based on the officers' strongly agree ratings, their experience significantly influences their job performance. Their substantial knowledge and technical expertise in numerous sectors, acquired through experience, prove beneficial in tasks across all levels. The officers' experience-developed skills in management, supervision, strategic and critical thinking, and leadership are the most helpful to them in their current roles. Experience plays a significant role in developing tacit knowledge. The officers'

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development is not only confined to formal programs but also to passing events (Siew and Koh, 2023).

Officers are expected to achieve limited exposure to systems and information technology (IT) due to the Army's undertaking in that field. However, it is unexpected that they did not acquire significant experience in internationalization, multi-domain operation, and collaborative service since they were in the service for more than 12 years.

### Content Analysis Report

It was observed in the conducted Content Analysis that *Governance Policies* and *Experience* are the most frequently discussed themes, emphasizing the importance of policy frameworks and practical experience. *Leadership* and *Training Programs* are also highly discussed, with respondents linking leadership to governance improvements and training to professional growth. *Consultation*, *Transparency*, and *Evaluation Systems* were mentioned less frequently, indicating areas where improvements may be needed or the respondents may not prioritize them. *Mentorship* appears occasionally, reflecting its role but indicating it may not be a widely institutionalized practice.

This analysis offers a comprehensive view of how the Army's personnel perceive governance, professional development, and career success. The focus on governance policies and leadership reveals an institutional reliance on formal structures, while career success is overwhelmingly tied to experience and knowledge. Enhancing consultation, transparency, and mentorship can further develop leadership and organizational effectiveness.

**Table 7. Key Themes and Frequency**

Theme	Frequency	Percent
Governance Policies	13	56.52
Leadership	7	30.43
Training Programs	11	47.83
Experience	20	86.96
Knowledge	15	65.22
Empowerment	1	4.35
Organizational Structure	7	30.43
Consultation	1	4.35
Transparency	2	8.70
Evaluation Systems	1	4.35
Mentorship	1	4.35
Comparison of Past and Present	1	4.35

### Hypothesis Testing

The relationship between the variables is determined based on the Path Coefficient Analysis.

**Ho1** *External Influence has no significant effect on Individual Involvement*

External influence has no significant effect on individual involvement.

**Ho2** *Institutional Support has no significant effect on Individual Involvement*

Institutional Support has a significant effect on Individual Involvement.

**Ho3** *Moderating Variables (Pre-designation Program, Prior Schooling, and Experience) have no significant impact on Individual Involvement*

Based on the path coefficient analysis, Moderating Variables significantly affect Individual Involvement. This indicates that officers' attitudes toward self-development improve with increased education, training, and experience. An article by Kem and Bassett (2018) about the sequential and continuum of learning emphasizes that the US Army Academy was established to ensure that training and education are conducted sequentially and progressively throughout a career-long learning continuum. This encompasses formal instruction in educational institutions and workplaces, self-directed learning, and fostering "habits of mind" to enhance and optimize intellectual performance.

**Ho4** *External Influence and the moderating variables (Pre-designation Program, Prior Schooling, and Experience) have no significant effect on Individual Involvement*

The moderating variables reduce the impact of External Influence; as officers accumulate more experience and knowledge, their attitude toward self-development is less affected by internationalization, globalization, and new societal norms.

**Ho5** *Institutional Support and the moderating variables (Pre-designation Program, Prior Schooling, and Experience) have no*

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*significant effect on Individual Involvement.* The moderating variables mitigate the impact of Institutional Support; Consequently, the officer's requirement for top-level leadership and staff support in cultivating a self-development mindset decreases as they accumulate more experience and knowledge.

**Table 8. Path Coefficients**

Independent Variables	Dependent Variables	Std. Coefficient	Std. Error	p-value	Effect Size	Interpretation
External Influence (Internationalization, Globalization, New Norms)	Individual Involvement	0.102	0.066	0.061	0.071	Does Not Support Ha
Institutional Support (Leader & Staff Support)	Individual Involvement	0.38	0.062	<0.001	0.283	Support Ha
Moderating Variables (Pre-designation Prog, Prior Schooling, Experience)	Individual Involvement	0.445	0.062	<0.001	0.344	Support Ha
External Influence and Moderating Variables	Individual Involvement	-0.118	0.066	0.037	0.041	Support Ha
Institutional Support and Moderating Variables	Individual Involvement	-0.126	0.065	0.028	0.054	Support Ha

## VI. CONCLUSION

### ***On the factors that affect the effectiveness of the PDP***

Institutional Support (leader and staff support) and Moderating Variables (prior schooling, pre-designation training, and experience) are the factors that affect the Professional Development Program. The moderating variables facilitate the acquisition of knowledge and skills that improve officers' competence and help them perform their jobs, which is the purpose of the Professional Development Program. The organization's leaders and staff are responsible for supporting, funding, and programming the training and education for the officers, as well as determining their assignments and positions in which their experience will be developed.

As defined in US Army Techniques Publication 6-01.1, tacit knowledge is individuals' knowledge, a distinctive, personal collection of information acquired through life experiences, training, and the networks of friends, acquaintances, and colleagues. Several leadership decisions and military activities depend on the acquisition of tacit knowledge (Babin and Garven, 2019), especially those to be undertaken by Field Grade Officers. According to the interviewed senior officers, training programs are the cornerstone of the Professional Development Program for Majors and LTCs in terms of a successful career, which one can only have if they are competent in their job; experience and knowledge are the most important contributory factors.

### ***On what determines an effective PDP***

The officer's attitude towards self-development is central to the Professional Development Program, and the institution is vital to programming developmental activities. The Army may provide extensive or shabby learning programs, but it will be up to the individual to grasp the opportunity to learn something from the experience. The organization should devise strategies to create learning opportunities that inspire officers to engage and achieve significant training transfer from these experiences. The occurrence of this event is contingent upon the appropriate motivation of the training participants and their recognition of the significance of the development program in their professional roles.

The Professional Development Program is limited to Professional Military Education for Philippine Army Officers, and only career courses are mandatory, programmed, and funded per capita. However, individuals who have self-development goals will find ways to learn and be adept. In that case, they will make an effort to explore opportunities to be programmed in relevant courses, seek mentorship, and participate in informal or short courses. "Professional learning and development is a philosophy or way that you approach your work" (Wardak et al., 2023, p. 7), knowing what needs to be improved. Therefore, the development program's efficacy is primarily determined by the individual's attitude toward self-development and the organization's active participation.

### ***On the degree of affectation of the PDP to the Field Grade Officers' competence***

The initial trajectory of the junior officers indicated that leadership development must focus on what is being developed (Siew and Koh, 2022). At stages of an Army career, a significant portion of a soldier's education surrounds the technical aspects of

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their duties. The balance shifts over time, resulting in education dominating courses in the latter stages of the career. Soldiers strive to enhance their intellectual capacity and become more "agile, adaptive, and innovative" (Kirchner and O'Connor, 2018, p.48). Effective Professional Development Programs must help officers transition from tactical to operational to strategic level functions, preparing them for their next immediate role – staff officers at the higher echelon.

The role changes at the Field Grade level, thus necessitating the acquisition of new competencies. The common themes in previous and recent training and education programs are leadership, managerial, supervisory, and critical thinking skills, suggesting the demands for developing these skills. The Army has programmed learning opportunities but lacks a clear direction for targeting specific skills development; it is a generalized development program.

The capacity to excel in their new positions relies upon the competencies the officers have accumulated through training and experience. The officers' professional development program must be able to accommodate their professional growth and skills requirements. One of the proposals of Czarnecki (2018) for the improvement of American PME is the progression from the current system, which is based on grade and years of experience, to one that considers job positions and operational environment as the determining factors for educational and training requirements.

Therefore, the professional development program plays a significant role in competence development, which is crucial to the officer's duty performance and, thus, vital to advancing the profession for individual and organizational effectiveness in general.

## VII. RECOMMENDATION

Given the above discussions, the researcher recommends the following courses of action for improving the Officer's Professional Development Program.

1. Update the Officer's Career Path (SOP 19) to align the job requirements and description with the corresponding appropriate rank and tenure. Officers' training and education programs must also be aligned with their roles and responsibilities.
2. Develop a proposal, with the intent of publishing a directive, that will require commanders (through Personnel Officers) to prioritize the continuity of the personnel's experience and relatedness of training activities undertaken. The officer's competence is the product of their attended training and experience. They acquire knowledge through both academic and professional experiences. To optimize both opportunities, their career path must acknowledge the synchronicity of the two. Suppose the officers are programmed to undergo specialization courses. In that case, it must be pre-determined based on the projected immediate posting while still being related to the staff positions, they are currently performing to foster experience consistency.
3. The organization must establish a transformational plan that is both intermediate and long-term and integrates the Professional Development Program across disciplines rather than solely with G1 and G8. The senior leadership of a traditional organization such as the Philippine Army significantly influences the cultivation of the organizational learning culture. Other Primary Staff and unit Commanders must take an active role in developing a learned organization.

## DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

The authors declare no potential conflict of interest.

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