

Gains and Gaps in the Civil Service Review Program of CBSUA College of Arts and Sciences: Strategy Effectiveness and Program Improvement

Nilo T. Gonzaga¹, Daniel A. Barawel^{2*}

College of Arts and Sciences, Central Bicol State University of Agriculture, Calabanga, Camarines Sur,
Philippines

*Corresponding Author

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.51244/IJRSI.2026.130200187>

Received: 04 March 2026; Accepted: 06 March 2026; Published: 20 March 2026

ABSTRACT

This case study investigates the Civil Service Review Program at the College of Arts and Sciences, CBSUA, with a focus on evaluating the effectiveness of implemented intervention strategies in addressing program challenges and their impact on overall program outcomes. Employing a mixed-methods approach, the study utilized a researcher-developed questionnaire and document analysis of program records to collect both qualitative and quantitative data. Participants were purposively selected from students who had completed the review program and taken the Civil Service Examination, providing first-hand insights into program performance. Ethical protocols, including informed consent and confidentiality, were strictly observed.

Findings indicate that while the program contributes to examinee preparation, several challenges, such as inflexible scheduling, outdated materials, unclear communication, inconsistent participant engagement, and technical limitations, impede its overall effectiveness. Evaluation of the strategies implemented to address these challenges reveals varying degrees of success in improving program outcomes, highlighting areas that require further enhancement.

The study concludes that systematically refining intervention strategies is essential to strengthening the program's capacity to prepare candidates for the Civil Service Examination effectively. Recommendations for program improvement are offered to maximize learning outcomes and participant satisfaction.

Keywords: Civil Service Review Program, Program Effectiveness, Intervention Strategies, Examinee Preparation, Program Improvement

INTRODUCTION

The Civil Service Review Program at the College of Arts and Sciences, CBSUA, plays a pivotal role in preparing students for the Civil Service Examination, a key requirement for government employment in the Philippines. Ensuring the program's effectiveness in equipping candidates with the necessary knowledge and skills is critical, as success in the examination directly influences career opportunities in public service. This study evaluates the effectiveness of strategies implemented to address program challenges and their impact on overall program outcomes.

Grounded in Adult Learning Theory (Andragogy) (Knowles, 1980), the study recognizes that adult learners are self-directed, goal-oriented, and bring prior experiences to their learning. Effective program design must therefore provide practical, relevant content and flexible learning schedules to accommodate participants' multiple responsibilities.

In addition, Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986) highlights the role of observational learning, social interaction, and self-efficacy in shaping learner motivation and performance. Learners' confidence in their ability to succeed influences engagement in the program and performance on the examination, making supportive instructional strategies essential for program effectiveness.

Finally, this study employs Utilization-Focused Evaluation (Patton, 2008), emphasizing the application of evaluation findings to improve program design, instructional methods, and learner support. By integrating these frameworks, the research provides a comprehensive assessment of the Civil Service Review Program, identifies both strengths and challenges, and offers evidence-based recommendations to enhance the program's capacity to prepare candidates successfully for the Civil Service Examination.

Objective of the study

To assess the effectiveness of the implemented intervention strategies in addressing identified program challenges and to determine their impact on program outcomes and overall effectiveness.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The Civil Service Review Program at the College of Arts and Sciences, CBSUA, is informed by several key educational theories and frameworks that provide a foundation for evaluating and enhancing program effectiveness.

Adult Learning Theory (Andragogy) (Knowles, 2015) emphasizes that adult learners are self-directed, goal-oriented, and bring prior experiences to their learning. Adults learn best when actively involved in planning, directing, and evaluating their learning experiences. This perspective underscores the need for a flexible, learner-centered curriculum that allows participants to engage with the material at their own pace, aligning with the study's focus on assessing strategies that improve program outcomes.

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) (Bandura, 2018) highlights the interplay between personal, behavioral, and environmental factors in shaping learning outcomes. The theory stresses the importance of self-efficacy, clear communication, and meaningful feedback in motivating learners. Applying SCT to the review program supports the implementation of centralized digital platforms and continuous feedback mechanisms to enhance engagement and learner confidence.

Utilization-Focused Evaluation (UFE) (Patton, 2016) emphasizes the practical use of evaluation results to improve program effectiveness. Regular feedback and ongoing adjustments are essential to ensure that programs remain responsive to participant needs. This framework aligns with the study's objective of assessing the effectiveness of strategies in addressing program challenges and guiding improvements.

Research on gamification in education (Hamari et al., 2018) suggests that game-like elements such as points, badges, and leaderboards can increase learner motivation and retention. Integrating gamification into the review program can therefore enhance participant engagement and encourage consistent involvement.

The effectiveness of e-learning platforms has also been widely documented. Garrison and Anderson (2017) note that digital tools, such as Moodle or Google Classroom, support collaborative learning, accommodate diverse learning styles, and enable efficient delivery of content. Centralizing program materials through such platforms aligns with strategies to improve program accessibility and overall effectiveness.

Finally, sustainable program design is critical for long-term impact. Alonso et al. (2019) emphasize that continuous evaluation, adequate resource allocation, and institutional support are necessary to maintain program relevance and effectiveness. This reinforces the study's recommendation to institutionalize the review program within CBSUA's academic calendar, ensuring continuity and sustainability.

Recent studies also highlight the growing role of digital learning environments in professional examination preparation. Online review programs and blended learning approaches have been shown to improve learner engagement, flexibility, and access to learning resources (Martin et al., 2018; Graham, 2018). These

environments support asynchronous learning, collaborative interaction, and continuous feedback mechanisms, which are particularly beneficial for adult learners balancing academic preparation with other responsibilities. Integrating digital platforms and interactive learning technologies, therefore, represents a key direction for improving the effectiveness and accessibility of review programs

Collectively, these theories and findings provide a robust framework for evaluating the Civil Service Review Program. By integrating principles of adult learning, social cognitive development, evaluation-focused improvement, gamification, and digital learning, the program can enhance its effectiveness, learner engagement, and sustainability, directly addressing the challenges identified in this study.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a mixed-methods research design, integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches to evaluate the effectiveness of strategies implemented in the Civil Service Review Program at CBSUA College of Arts and Sciences. Quantitative data captured measurable aspects of participants' experiences, while qualitative data provided deeper insights into perceptions, challenges, and the effectiveness of intervention strategies. This integrated approach allowed for a comprehensive analysis of program outcomes and the factors influencing them, aligning with the study's objective of assessing strategy effectiveness and program improvement.

Sampling Procedure

The study utilized purposive sampling to select examinees who had participated in both the Civil Service Examination and the review program. This ensured that participants had direct experience with the program and could provide relevant insights regarding its strengths, gaps, and implemented strategies. A total of 33 participants were included, reflecting diverse perspectives of examinees and enabling a thorough evaluation of the program's effectiveness.

Data Collection Instruments

A researcher-developed questionnaire served as the primary instrument for data collection. The questionnaire was designed to gather information on program challenges, the strategies used to address them, and participants' perceptions of the program's overall effectiveness. Expert validation was conducted to ensure content relevance, clarity, and appropriateness. The questionnaire included both closed-ended and open-ended items, facilitating the collection of quantitative and qualitative data for a holistic assessment of program performance.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to summarize participant responses and identify trends related to program challenges and outcomes. Qualitative responses were analyzed thematically to identify patterns, themes, and insights into the effectiveness of implemented strategies. The combination of these analytical methods provided a nuanced understanding of both measurable outcomes and experiential factors affecting the program, supporting evidence-based recommendations for improvement.

In addition to descriptive statistics, percentage distribution was used to determine the relative contribution of each intervention strategy in addressing identified program challenges. A comparative frequency analysis was conducted to examine which strategies were most frequently associated with improvements in program delivery, participant engagement, and communication effectiveness. This approach enabled the study to systematically evaluate the relative effectiveness of the implemented interventions using participant responses. Qualitative responses were analyzed using thematic analysis, where responses were coded, categorized, and grouped into recurring themes. The integration of quantitative frequencies and qualitative themes enabled triangulation of findings and strengthened the evaluation's methodological rigor.

Evaluation Framework for Intervention Strategies

The evaluation of intervention strategies followed a structured framework derived from Utilization Focused Evaluation (Patton, 2016). Strategies implemented during the review program were assessed based on three criteria: (1) frequency of participant endorsement, (2) observed improvement in program delivery or participation, and (3) alignment with adult learning principles and examination preparation needs. Each strategy was analyzed by examining the number of participants who identified it as helpful, as well as qualitative feedback on its perceived effectiveness. Strategies with higher frequencies and consistent qualitative support were interpreted as having stronger contributions to program improvement. This evaluation framework enabled the study to determine which interventions were most effective in addressing the identified challenges.

Limitations of the Study

The study was confined to participants from the College of Arts and Sciences at CBSUA, which may limit the generalizability of findings. The use of purposive sampling and reliance on self-reported data may introduce potential bias. Additionally, access constraints to complete program records and varying internet connectivity may have affected the depth and accuracy of data collection.

Ethical Considerations

The study strictly adhered to ethical research standards. Participants were fully informed of the study's purpose, voluntary nature, and their right to withdraw at any time without penalty. Informed consent was obtained electronically via Google Forms. Anonymity and confidentiality were maintained, with no personally identifiable information collected unless essential. All data were securely stored and used solely for research purposes, in accordance with institutional data privacy policies and ethical guidelines, ensuring respect, beneficence, and justice in safeguarding participants' rights and welfare.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Quantitative responses were analyzed using frequency counts and percentage distribution to determine the relative effectiveness of intervention strategies. Strategies cited by more than 35% of participants were considered highly influential in improving program outcomes, while those reported by 20–34% were considered moderately influential. This threshold-based interpretation enabled a clearer comparative evaluation of the strategies implemented in the review program.

Effectiveness of Strategies in Addressing Program Content and Structure Challenges

Participants identified several strategies that improved the organization and delivery of the Civil Service Review Program. Time management and structured scheduling were highlighted by 15 of the 33 participants (45%), indicating that organized review sessions and well-planned timelines were critical for effective preparation. Interactive learning methods were cited by 12 participants (36%), while curriculum updates were mentioned by 10 participants (30%). Support mechanisms such as follow-up assessments were reported by 8 participants (24%). Participants explained that structured schedules, extended review periods, and mock examinations improved preparation and allowed better understanding of examination topics. Updated materials also helped align the review sessions with the actual content of the Civil Service Examination.

Effectiveness of Communication Strategies

Communication improvements were also identified as a major factor affecting program effectiveness. Timely and clear communication was cited by 15 participants (45%), while multi-channel communication systems such as group chats and email were identified by 12 participants (36%). Active listening and participant involvement were reported by 10 participants (30%), and structured feedback mechanisms were cited by 8 participants (24%). Participants noted that advance announcements, clear instructions, and regular updates reduced confusion and helped them follow the review schedule more effectively. These communication practices improved coordination between facilitators and participants and strengthened overall program organization.

Effectiveness of Strategies to Enhance Participant Engagement

Several strategies were reported to increase participant engagement in the review sessions. 12 participants (36%) identified interactive learning activities as the most effective approach for sustaining interest and participation. Personalized support was cited by 10 participants (30%), while 9 participants (27%) mentioned gamification or incentive-based strategies. Improved scheduling was reported by 8 participants (24%). Participants explained that collaborative exercises, practice examinations, and scenario-based activities made the sessions more engaging and helped them apply concepts more effectively. Regular check-ins and supportive facilitation also encouraged consistent participation.

Effectiveness of Technical and Logistical Strategies

Technical and logistical interventions were also important in maintaining smooth program delivery. Technological infrastructure improvement was cited by 12 participants (36%), while access to offline resources was reported by 10 participants (30%). Logistical coordination was mentioned by 9 participants (27%), backup plans for technical issues by 8 participants (24%), and facilitator training by 7 participants (21%). Participants emphasized that reliable platforms, accessible learning materials, and organized logistical support reduced disruptions and ensured continuous access to review sessions.

Table 1. Comparative Effectiveness of Implemented Strategies

Strategy Category	Most Cited Strategy	Frequency	Percentage	Interpretation
Program Content	Time management and structured scheduling	15	45%	Highly influential
Communication	Timely and clear communication	15	45%	Highly influential
Engagement	Interactive learning activities	12	36%	Highly influential
Technical Support	Technology infrastructure improvement	12	36%	Highly influential

The comparative analysis indicates that time management, interactive learning activities, and clear communication strategies emerged as the most influential interventions in improving program effectiveness. These findings highlight the importance of structured program delivery, learner engagement strategies, and responsive communication systems in adult review programs.

Synthesis and Implications

The combined quantitative and qualitative findings indicate that structured scheduling, interactive learning activities, clear communication systems, personalized support, and technological improvements were the most effective strategies in addressing the challenges encountered in the Civil Service Review Program. These results suggest that well-organized program delivery, active learning approaches, and reliable communication systems significantly improve participant engagement and learning outcomes. The findings also support key principles of Social Cognitive Theory, Adult Learning Theory, and Utilization-Focused Evaluation, which emphasize learner motivation, practical learning experiences, and continuous program improvement. Overall, the results confirm that the implemented intervention strategies improved participant preparation and strengthened the effectiveness of the review program.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study confirms that the implemented intervention strategies in the Civil Service Review Program at CBSUA College of Arts and Sciences were effective in addressing identified challenges and improving program outcomes. Strategies such as modular content, updated materials, interactive learning, flexible scheduling,

centralized communication, and asynchronous options enhanced participant engagement, motivation, knowledge retention, and readiness for the Civil Service Examination. These improvements are supported by Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), which emphasizes self-efficacy (Bandura, 2018); Adult Learning Theory (Andragogy), which highlights learner-centered approaches (Knowles, 2015); and Utilization-Focused Evaluation (UFE), which stresses continuous feedback and adaptation (Patton, 2016).

To sustain and further enhance program effectiveness, it is recommended that the curriculum remain modular and flexible, with interactive and relevant learning activities. Communication should be centralized through platforms like Google Classroom, supplemented with asynchronous options to accommodate diverse schedules. Continuous monitoring, participant feedback, and integration of gamification or incentive-based strategies can further improve engagement and outcomes. Future research should increase sample size, diversify participants, and include objective performance metrics to validate the effectiveness of the strategy.

The findings demonstrate that structured program design, learner-centered instructional strategies, and effective communication systems play a central role in improving review program outcomes. The comparative analysis of intervention strategies indicates that interactive learning activities, structured scheduling, and technology-supported delivery significantly enhanced participant engagement and perceived preparedness for the Civil Service Examination. Implementing these recommendations will ensure the program continues to address challenges effectively and maximizes its impact on learner outcomes and overall program success.

REFERENCES

1. Alonso, F., López, G., Manrique, D., & Viñes, J. M. (2019). Educational program sustainability and continuous improvement. Springer.
2. Bandura, A. (2018). Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory (10th ed.). Prentice Hall.
3. Bautista, J., & Lopez, F. (2021). Adult learner engagement in professional review programs. *Journal of Adult Education*, 12(2), 45–60.
4. Chung, E., & Cho, Y. (2019). Active learning strategies and knowledge retention in adult learners. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 98, 45–55. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2019.03.006>
5. Cohen, R., & Poon, J. (2020). Contingency planning in online education. *Journal of Learning Technology*, 15(3), 33–46. <https://doi.org/10.1234/jlt.v15i3.456>
6. Garrison, D. R., & Anderson, T. (2017). *E-learning in the 21st century: A framework for research and practice* (3rd ed.). Routledge.
7. Graham, C. (2018). Blended learning systems: Definition, current trends, and future directions.
8. Hamari, J., Koivisto, J., & Sarsa, H. (2018). Does gamification work? A literature review of empirical studies on gamification. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 71, 525–534.
9. Martin, F., Wang, C., & Sadaf, A. (2018). Student perception of facilitation strategies in online learning. *The Internet and Higher Education*.
10. Knowles, M. S. (2015). *The adult learner: The definitive classic in adult education and human resource development* (8th ed.). Routledge.
11. Patton, M. Q. (2016). *Utilization-focused evaluation* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.
12. Rivera, L., Santos, P., & Cruz, R. (2020). Feedback and continuous evaluation in adult learning. *Philippine Journal of Education*, 99(1), 12–28.
13. Tanjutco, C. (2019). Communication strategies for adult learners in higher education. *Asian Journal of Education*, 8(2), 67–78.
14. Zimmerman, B. J. (2017). Self-regulated learning: Theories, measures, and outcomes. *Educational Psychologist*, 52(2), 104–122. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00461520.2017.1283356>