

# Factors Affecting Promotion and Work Culture on Employee Performance in Private Higher Educational Institutions in General Santos City

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**Abstract:** This study examined the factors of promotion and work culture that influence employee performance in private higher educational institutions (HEIs) in General Santos City. Using a descriptive-correlational design, data were gathered from 290 teaching and non-teaching personnel across twelve CHED-accredited private HEIs. A structured survey assessed perceptions of promotion (fairness, clarity of criteria, and impact on job satisfaction), work culture (values, organizational climate, and employee engagement), and employee performance (adaptive, contextual, task, and counterproductive behaviors). Statistical analysis employed descriptive measures and Spearman's rho correlation.

Results showed that most respondents were young, female, and in the early stages of their careers. Promotion systems were generally perceived as fair and transparent, while institutional culture was viewed as positive. High ratings were observed in task and contextual performance, and adaptive performance received slightly lower but favorable scores. Findings indicated a moderate positive correlation between promotion factors and employee performance ( $rs = 0.51, p < 0.05$ ), and a strong positive correlation between work culture and employee performance ( $rs = 0.71, p < 0.05$ ). These results highlight that transparent promotion systems and supportive organizational cultures foster engagement, job satisfaction, and productivity, ultimately contributing to the development and success of private higher education institutions.

**Keywords:** adaptive performance, employee engagement, higher education institutions, promotion criteria, work culture.

## I. Introduction

Employee performance and dedication are irreplaceable to school success, especially in private HEIs, whose success significantly depends on human capital in upholding standards, competitiveness, and operations. The significance of strategic human resource (HR) practices is, therefore, even more important. Lim and Ahmad (2021) held the view that institutional policies, particularly promotion policy and institutional culture, were critical to support the performance of employees and institutional sustainability.

Among these policies, establishing efficient, merit-based, and inspirational promotion systems is important. Promotion is not only a reward for prior performances but also a means of keeping employees' abilities consistent with institutional demands. Ibidunni et al. (2016) pointed out the importance of placing individuals in jobs that enable them to utilize their skills optimally and provide scope for growth, both for the institution and the employee. Sharma and Sharma (2020) likewise contended that systematic and transparent promotion procedures are an important means of improving employees' morale, motivation, and productivity.

As Ng and Feldman (2021) opined, employee's welcome systems that respect potential, talent, and performance above seniority or tenure. Equitable promotion practices enhance good work ethics, job contentment, and commitment. Conversely, inconsistent or discriminatory promotion rules result in employee disenchantment, resentment, and turnover. Thus, open promotion systems based on fairness are not merely ethical – this is also an effective institutional strategy for success.

Perceptions of fairness are a powerful psychological force that determines how employees respond to promotion systems. According to Ng and Feldman (2021), when promotion criteria are used objectively and on an ongoing basis, employees demonstrate greater performance, commitment, and positive work attitudes. Uncertainty or bias in promotion decision-making, however, amounts to lower trust, absence, and disengagement. Therefore, fairness and justice in promotion processes are not just important for morale but also overall institutional performance.

Besides promotion programs, institutional culture is largely responsible for employee behavior and performance. Work culture entails common values, behavior, communication patterns, and decision-making practices that make day-to-day operations function. Good and inclusive culture ensures cooperation, creativity, and feelings of membership among employees. Nikpour (2017) emphasized that, in the specific context of HEIs – where coordination between administration and academic work is paramount – strong institutional culture enhances productivity and job satisfaction. In addition, a positive work environment enables employee wellbeing and minimizes burnout and turnover.

In contrast, a toxic or dysfunctional workplace culture – where stress, nepotism, or inadequate communication exist – has the capacity to demoralize even the most talented employees. Seppälä and Cameron (2015) noted that such situations are bound to result in disengagement and turnover. Institutions are thus compelled to work towards fostering a culture of respect, openness, and support. Men and Yue (2019) stated that respectful and open communication fosters teamwork as well as trust. Setiyani et al. (2019) also noted that such an environment fosters teamwork and improves employee as well as academic performance.

Private HEIs in General Santos City are increasingly being called to uphold quality of the instruction while hiring and keeping high-caliber employees. While there is extensive documentation that promotion systems and work culture impact employees, the simultaneous effect of the two has barely been examined in localized Philippines studies. Most studies considered them as distinct influences, resulting in a sizeable research gap. This study seeks to close that gap by examining the correlation between these two variables, and the influence on performance among local private HEI personnel.

Previous studies highlighted the importance of local context-specific studies on how institutional culture and promotion practices influence employee motivation and satisfaction. Although international studies, such as Augustine et al. (2019) and Tasman et al. (2021), were extremely insightful, there is still a place for local context. For instance, Chhaing and Phon (2022) reported Cambodian education employee with high levels of satisfaction but ongoing dissatisfaction due to the lack of development support – emphasizing the role of cultural and economic determinants. To address this void, future studies will create models specific to General Santos City using quantitative approaches in examining the interaction between promotion and culture.

This study draws upon Adams' Equity Theory, Blau's Social Exchange Theory, and Schein's Organizational Culture Theory to explore how perceptions of fairness, mutual support, and organizational norms influence employee behavior. By grounding the analysis in these theoretical lenses, the research aims to provide practical insights for human resource strategies that foster employee engagement and enhance institutional performance in private higher education institutions.

### **1.1 Research Hypothesis**

The following null hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance:

**H<sub>01</sub>:** A significant correlation was found between employees' perceptions of promotion-related factors and their level of performance in private higher educational institutions in General Santos City.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is a significant correlation between the level of work culture and the level of employee performance in private higher educational institutions in General Santos City.

## **II. Materials and Methods**

### **2.1 Research Design**

This study utilized a descriptive-correlational method to explore the extent and nature of the relationship among selected variables without manipulating them. This design was appropriate for examining how promotion-related factors and organizational culture were associated with employee performance within private higher education institutions in General Santos City. As this approach allowed for the observation of variables in their natural setting, it was effective in capturing the complexity of real-world institutional behavior and workplace interactions.

This study explored the relationship of worker performance, as reported through adaptive performance, contextual performance, counterproductive work behavior, and job performance, with promotion drivers like perceived fairness, clarity of promotion criteria, and effect on job satisfaction. It also examined the impact of work culture factors like values and attitudes, organizational climate, and employee engagement on these performance measures. With this

design, the study was able to offer suggestions that could inform policy and decision-making aimed at enhancing employees' effectiveness and institutional success.

## **2.2 Sampling Method**

To determine the appropriate sample size for the study, simple random sampling was employed. This sampling technique ensured that every employee in the population had an equal chance of being selected, thereby minimizing selection bias and increasing the likelihood that the sample accurately represented the entire population. This method was particularly effective in studies involving diverse groups, as it promoted fairness and objectivity in the selection process. The total population considered in the study included 1,062 faculty and staff working in private higher educational institutions, based on data from CHEDRO 12 (2018). To identify a suitable sample size from this population, Slovin's formula was applied using a 5% margin of error, which is commonly used in social science research to ensure statistical reliability. Based on this computation, the required sample size was determined to be 290 respondents. This sample size was considered sufficient to provide accurate and meaningful insights into the study variables.

**Table 1. Distribution of Respondent**

No.	Private Higher Educational Institutions in GSC	Number of Faculty
1	AMA Computer College	10
2	Gensan College of Technology	12
3	New Era University	15
4	Joji Ilagan International School of Hotel and Tourism	19
5	Filipino Canadian Community College Foundation	22
6	Brokenshire College	24
7	Villamor College of Business and Arts	26
8	Goldenstate College	31
9	Southpoint College of Arts and Technology	31
10	STI College	35
11	MMG College of Business	47
12	General Santos Doctors Medical School Foundation	53
13	Mindanao Polytechnic College	61
14	Cronasia Foundation College, Inc.	71
15	Stratford International School	78
16	Holy Trinity College,	105
17	Ramon Magsaysay Memorial College	118
18	Gensan Foundation, Inc.,	150
19	Notre Dame of Dadiangas University	154
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1062</b>

## **2.3 Research Instrument**

This study employed a survey questionnaire consisting of four (4) parts to gather the necessary data. SOP 1: It covered the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of age, sex, civil status, educational attainment, number of years in service, and income. SOP 2: It assessed the respondents' level of perception regarding factors affecting promotion, specifically focusing on Perceived Fairness, Clarity of Promotion Criteria, and Impact on Job Satisfaction. The items were adapted, with modifications, from the study of Parvin, M. M., & Kabir, M. M. N. (2011), titled "Factors Affecting Employee Job Satisfaction of the Pharmaceutical Sector." Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale: 5 - Strongly Agree; 4 - Agree; 3 - Moderately Agree; 2 - Disagree; 1 - Strongly Disagree. SOP 3: It measured the level of work culture in terms of Values and Attitudes, Organizational Climate, and Employee Engagement. The instrument was adapted, with

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modifications, from the study of Becaro, J. M. G. (2022), "The Effect of Organizational Climate on Employee Engagement in a Private Educational Institution." A five-point Likert scale was also used. SOP 4: It evaluated the level of employee performance across four dimensions: Adaptive Performance, Contextual Performance, Counterproductive Work Behavior, and Task Performance. This section was adapted, with modifications, from the study of Çalışkan & Körögülu (2022), titled "Job Performance, Task Performance, Contextual Performance: Development and Validation of a New Scale." The same five-point Likert scale was used.

**Five-point Likert Scale**

**Table 2. Level of Perception Regarding Factors Affecting Promotion**

Scale	Range	Description	Interpretation
1	1.00-1.49	Very Low	Regular employees demonstrated a notably low or strongly unfavorable perception of the factors influencing promotion.
2	1.50-2.49	Low	Regular employees exhibited a low or unfavorable perception towards factors affecting promotion.
3	2.50-3.49	Moderate	Regular employees have a moderate level of perception or ambivalence on factors affecting promotion.
4	3.50-4.49	High	Regular employees have a high level of perception regarding factors affecting promotion.
5	4.50-5.00	Very High	Regular employees have a very high level of perception regarding factors affecting promotion.

**Table 3. Level of Work Culture**

Scale	Range	Description	Interpretation
1	1.00-1.49	Very Low	Regular employees have a poor level of work culture among employees.
2	1.50-2.49	Low	Regular employees have a minimal level of work culture among employees.
3	2.50-3.49	Moderate	Regular employees have an average level of work culture among employees.
4	3.50-4.49	High	Regular employees demonstrate a strong work culture among employees.
5	4.50-5.00	Very High	Regular employees have an exceptional work culture among employees.

**Table 4. Level of Employee Performance**

Scale	Range	Description	Interpretation
1	1.00-1.49	Very Low	Regular employees consistently underperform, demonstrating a significant need for improvement and intervention.

2	1.50-2.49	Low	Regular employees often fall short of expectations, requiring improvement and additional support.
3	2.50-3.49	Moderate	Regular employees occasionally meet expectations, with satisfactory performance but leave room for improvement.
4	3.50-4.49	High	Regular employees generally meet expectations, showcasing solid and reliable performance.
5	4.50-5.00	Very High	Regular employees consistently exceed expectations, demonstrating exceptional performance and commitment.

#### **2.4 Data Gathering Procedure**

The data collection process began after the researcher secured official approval from the MBM Coordinator and the Dean of the Graduate School at Mindanao State University (MSU). This approval ensured that the study was officially recognized and granted the necessary authorization to approach private higher education institutions (HEIs) in General Santos City. Ethical clearance was secured from the Institutional Ethics Review Committee (IERC) under approval number 058-2025-MSUGSC-IERC.

Upon securing the required permissions, formal letters were distributed to the school directors of the identified HEIs. Out of the twenty-three (23) institutions contacted, only twelve (12) granted approval and agreed to participate in the study. These included AMA Computer College - General Santos City, Brokenshire College SOCSKSARGEN, Cronasia Foundation College, Filipino Canadian Community College Foundation, Gensan College of Technology, GenSanos Foundation College, King Solomon Institute, Mindanao Polytechnic College, New Brighton School of the Philippines, New Era University - General Santos City, Pacific Southbay College, and Villamor College of Business and Arts.

With the consent of the school directors, the researcher coordinated closely with the Human Resource Managers of the participating institutions to ensure a smooth and organized data collection process. Adapted and modified survey questionnaires were then distributed to the identified respondents, with a one-week period allotted for their completion. After the designated period, the accomplished questionnaires were collected, tallied, and systematically tabulated. The compiled data were then submitted to a professional statistician for thorough analysis and interpretation, ultimately providing valuable insights to support the objectives of the research.

#### **2.5 Data Analysis**

To assess the level of perception regarding factors influencing promotion, as well as the prevailing work culture and employee performance in private higher educational institutions in General Santos City, the study employed descriptive statistical tools such as frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. Frequency and percentage were used to describe the number and proportion of respondents who selected specific responses, providing a clear overview of how commonly certain perceptions were held. Meanwhile, the mean was computed to determine the average level of agreement or rating on the various survey items, offering a general sense of respondents' tendencies. Standard deviation was used to assess the spread or variability of responses, indicating how closely individual responses clustered around the mean. These descriptive measures allowed for a detailed summary and interpretation of the overall data.

Before conducting inferential analysis, a test of normality using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was performed to determine whether the data followed a normal distribution. Since results revealed that the datasets were not normally distributed, the study employed nonparametric statistical tests for the inferential portion of the analysis.

The Spearman rank-order correlation (Spearman's rho) was utilized to determine whether a significant relationship existed between respondents' perceptions of factors affecting promotion and their level of employee performance. Similarly, to determine the relationship between the level of work culture and employee performance, the same statistical test was applied. All inferential tests were conducted at a 0.05 level of significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), ensuring that the findings were statistically meaningful and reliable.

### III. Results and Discussion

This chapter discusses the results of the data gathering in this study. The results are presented in the following tables, along with relevant discussions and explanations.

#### 3.1 Demographic Profile of Respondent

This study aimed to determine the demographic profile of respondents from private higher educational institutions in General Santos City, focusing on variables such as age, sex, civil status, highest educational attainment, years of service, and monthly income. The corresponding results are presented in the following tables.

**Table 5. Demographic Profile in terms of Age**

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
18-24	45	15.52
25-34	150	51.72
35-44	63	21.72
45-54	20	6.90
55-64	9	3.10
65 and above	3	1.03
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>100.00</b>

As shown in Table 5 on Demographic Profile in terms of Age, the respondents are mostly employees in private higher educational institutions in General Santos City fall within the 25-34 age group (150 respondents or 51.72%), followed by those aged 35-44 (63 respondents or 21.72%), and 18-24 years old (45 respondents or 15.52%). These findings suggest that a large portion of the workforce in private higher educational institutions in General Santos City consists of individuals in their early to mid-career stages. In contrast, only a small segment of the respondents – specifically those aged 65 and above (3 respondents or 1.03%) – indicates the limited presence of older adults or senior employees in these institutions.

The age distribution findings correspond with Whitechurch's (2019) research, which indicated that private Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) frequently employ a significant proportion of individuals in their early to mid-career phases. This results from multiple aspects, including recruitment dynamics, professional growth possibilities, and the intrinsic characteristics of academic jobs.

Furthermore, the collaborative Tracer Study conducted by CHED, FAPE, and ECC (2012) indicates that over 80 percent of graduates from private institutions entered employment. The results of extensive academic preparation for students can be encapsulated through tracer studies conducted by higher education institutions. Private higher education institutions frequently function within a more market-driven context, resulting in a perception of instability for long-term employment prospects. This may subsequently motivate mid-career professionals to choose more stable alternatives.

**Table 6. Demographic Profile in terms of Sex**

Sex	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	94	32.41
Female	196	67.59
<b>Total</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Table 6 shows the sex distribution of the respondents and majority of the respondents are female (196 respondents or 67.59%) compared to that of the males (94 respondents or 32.41%). This information suggests a significant female representation within the employee demographic of the study.

The outcome corresponds with findings from a recent study conducted by the Eos Foundation's Women's Power Gap Initiative, the American Association of University Women, and the WAGE initiative. The report indicates that women constitute 60 percent of all professionals in higher education and have predominantly obtained most of the master's and doctoral degrees for decades. Women constitute only 24 percent of the highest-compensated faculty and administrators at 130 prominent research universities (Flaherty, 2021).

Moreover, Manalo (2024) reported that female employees constitute most of the workforce in private higher education institutions (HEIs). This is especially evident in the Philippines, where the education sector is predominantly comprised of female employees. Furthermore, women constituted 75.9% of the workforce in the education sector.

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Although women comprise most positions in higher education, they remain underrepresented in leadership posts at prestigious research universities.

**Table 7. Demographic Profile in terms of Civil Status**

Civil Status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Single	171	58.97
Married	116	40.00
Widowed	3	1.03
<b>Total</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Table 7 shows the distribution of the respondents according to their civil status. Majority of them are single (171 respondents or 58.97%) followed by married employees (116 respondents or 40.00%) and then by widowed employees (3 respondents or 1.03%). Either this suggests a workforce that is, in its majority, young or not yet married, or perhaps that being single is more common within the HEI's demographic.

The findings of the current study align with previous research. While it is not feasible to assert that most employees in private Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are single without concrete data, evidence indicates that a considerable segment of the workforce in private HEIs consists of single individuals. A research on employee demographics at a private institution revealed that 34.2% of respondents were single, whereas 65.8% were married (Deligero & Laguador, 2014).

**Table 8. Demographic Profile in terms of Highest Educational Attainment**

Highest Educational Attainment	Frequency	Percentage (%)
High School Graduate	5	1.72
College Graduate	220	75.86
Master's Degree	64	22.07
Doctorate Degree	1	0.34
<b>Total</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Table 8 presents the respondents' demographic profile based on their highest educational attainment. The data reveal that a majority are college graduates (220 respondents or 75.86%), while a smaller portion have completed a Master's degree (64 respondents or 22.07%). Meanwhile, high school graduate employees constitute 1.72% of the respondent's population while 0.34% have Doctorate Degree. This suggests a potential emphasis on higher education levels within private institutions, possibly influencing the types of roles and responsibilities held by employees in these settings.

The study's findings are corroborated by Galay (2022), indicating that a significant proportion of employees at private Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) possess advanced educational qualifications. This is frequently a prerequisite for educational positions and leadership responsibilities within these institutions. Numerous private higher education institutions also engage persons possessing professional certificates and specialized experience. In addition, in the study of Prakhov (2023), to teach at a private HEI, individuals typically need a master's or doctoral degree, depending on the subject and level of instruction.

**Table 9. Demographic Profile in terms of Number of Years in Service**

Number of Years in Service	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Less than 1 year	56	19.31
1-5 years	152	52.41
6-10 years	58	20.00
11-25 years	18	6.21
More than 25 years	6	2.07
<b>Total</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>100.00</b>

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Results in table 9 show the distribution of the employees in private HEI in terms of number of years in service. A greater number of employees have worked in private HEI for 1-5 years (152 respondents or 52.41%) while some have worked for 6-10 years (58 respondents or 20.00%) and less than 1 year (56 respondents or 19.31%). Meanwhile, only 6.21% of the employees have been working 6-10 years while 2.07% for more than 25 years. The data indicates a significant concentration of employees in private Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) with shorter tenures.

The result of the study is supported by the study of Ramsamy and Abdullah (2017) where preliminary interviews with human resource personnel of selected private higher institutions revealed a high turnover rate of 18%. This qualitative phenomenological study explored the reason why faculty resign their job. Seven major themes emerged from the analysis including employer image, availability of external job opportunities, social media bullying, unfair performance measurement, unfair compensation, work over load and job Insecurity.

Meanwhile, the rate of faculty turnover in developing countries is 21% (Rahman & Ali, 2022). Given that faculty turnover in private HEIs is significantly higher compared with the rate in public universities (Joarder et al., 2020), the retention of academics is considered one of the most significant challenges faced by these countries' private HEIs.

**Table 10. Demographic Profile in terms of Monthly Income**

Monthly Income	Frequency	Percentage (%)
BELOW 10,000	54	18.62
10,000-19,999	176	60.69
20,000-39,999	55	18.97
40,000-69,999	3	1.03
70,000-119,999	2	0.69
<b>Total</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Table 10 displays the distribution of respondents based on their monthly income. The data indicate that most employees in private higher education institutions earn between ₱10,000 and ₱19,999 (176 respondents or 60.69%). Other employees are earning between 20,000-39,999 (55 respondents or 18.97) and below 10,000 (54 respondents or 18.62%). Smaller group of employees are earning higher salaries between 40,000-69,999 (3 respondents or 1.03) and 70,000-119,999 (2 respondents or 0.69%). This distribution suggests a concentration of lower to mid-range salaries within the institution.

The findings of the current study are corroborated by the Annual Survey of Philippine Business Industry-Education Section (2021), which indicates that private higher education institutions compensate their employees with an average monthly salary of P24,250, significantly lower than the minimum remuneration of P29,000 per month for higher education instructors in the public sector. Furthermore, iScale Solution (2024) elucidated that although incomes in private higher education institutions may fluctuate, they often remain lower or mid-range in comparison to public higher education institutions and the private sector, affected by variables such as funding, job title, and Geographical location.

### 3.2 Level of Perception regarding Factors Affecting Promotion

The study examined the level of perception regarding the factors affecting promotion in private higher educational institutions in General Santos City. Specifically, it focused on three key areas: perceived fairness, clarity of promotion criteria, and the impact on job satisfaction, as shown in the tables below.

**Table 11. Level of Perception regarding Factors affecting Promotion in terms of Perceived Fairness of Promotion**

Perceived Fairness	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1. I believe that promotions in my institution are awarded based on merit.	3.92	.85	High
2. I trust that the promotional process is fair.	3.97	.88	High
3. I believe that promotions are given without bias or favoritism.	3.99	.88	High

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4. I feel my professional education is recognized when promotion decisions are made.	3.99	.90	High
5. I believe that my contributions to the institution are considered in promotion decisions.	4.01	.84	High
<b>MEAN</b>	<b>3.98</b>	<b>.87</b>	<b>High</b>

Table 11 shows the result of the level of perception regarding factors affecting promotion in private higher educational institutions in General Santos City based on the perceived fairness of promotion. In this factor, employees "believed that their contributions to the institution are considered in promotion decisions," which had the highest mean score (4.01, High). This suggests that employees perceived their work experience and performance as significant factors in their career advancement within the institution. This finding underscores the importance of fair and transparent promotion processes that recognize and reward employee contributions. It also highlights the positive impact this perception can have on employee morale and motivation. The findings align with the study by Thwin et al. (2023), which emphasized that employees often viewed their job performance and workplace experiences as significant contributors to their career progression. This perception is based on the belief that consistent performance and favorable work experiences enhance job satisfaction, create more opportunities for professional growth, and eventually lead to promotion within the organization.

On the other hand, employees in higher education institutions believed that promotions were primarily granted based on merit, as reflected in the lowest mean score of 3.92, which still indicated a high level of agreement (iGroup, 2015). This implies a generally positive view among employees. The finding highlights the importance of studies on higher education for improving leadership. This suggests a potential gap between the perceived and actual practices of merit-based promotions. The result is supported by the study of McKnight Sr. (2017), stating that there is a strong belief among employees that promotions are awarded based on merit in many organizations, with merit-based promotion systems motivating employees and fostering a more productive work environment. In addition, Rintaka et al. (2024) found that organizations often use merit-based systems to evaluate employees based on performance, achievements, and other relevant factors rather than seniority or other non-merit factors.

Overall, all the indicators under perceived fairness of promotion received an average mean score of 3.98 (High), which suggests that employees generally believed the promotion processes were just and equitable. The positive relationship between compensation systems and extrinsic motivation, as mentioned in the result, implies that fair promotion practices can contribute to increased motivation. The study of Madugu and Ogundeji (2023) shows that effective promotion policies can boost employee morale and satisfaction. In addition, Alriyami et al. (2024) found that when employees perceive promotions as fair, they are more likely to be motivated and perform better.

**Table 12. Level of Perception regarding Factors affecting Promotion in terms of Clarity of Promotion Criteria**

Clarity of Promotion Criteria	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1. The promotion criteria are clearly explained to employees.	3.93	.96	High
2. I understand the specific requirements needed to qualify for a promotion	4.06	.87	High
3. I believe that the promotion process is transparent.	3.99	.92	High
4. I receive feedback and suggestions on my promotion application that helps me understand the criteria.	3.91	.88	High
5. I believe that the promotion criteria are applied consistently across the institution.	3.92	.91	High
<b>MEAN</b>	<b>3.97</b>	<b>.91</b>	<b>High</b>

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Table 12 shows the result of the level of perception regarding factors affecting promotion in private higher educational institutions in General Santos City based on the clarity of promotion criteria. Based on the result, the employees “understand the specific requirements needed to qualify for a promotion,” with the highest mean of 4.06 (High). This suggests that employees understood the requirements for promotion, with one result emphasizing the importance of clearly defined criteria. In addition, this indicates a strong understanding of these requirements among employees, implying a well-defined and understood promotion process within the organization. The result is supported by the study of Russen et al. (2021), which states that fairness, or perceived organizational justice, not only impacts job satisfaction but also instills a sense of respect and value among employees, thereby fostering a more harmonious and productive workplace. While not exclusively focused on promotions, promotion processes are a key area where fairness perceptions are formed.

Meanwhile, employees “receive feedback and suggestions on their promotion application that helps me understand the criteria,” with the lowest mean of 3.91 (High). This indicates a positive evaluation, suggesting strong performance. This feedback is valuable as employees work on their career development and understanding of the promotion criteria. This is supported by the study of Goller and Späth (2024), who stated that studies consistently demonstrate that positive evaluation and feedback – particularly when highlighting strong performance – have a significant and positive impact on individual and organizational performance. This positive impact stems from various factors, including increased motivation, boosted self-efficacy, and reinforcement of desired behaviors.

Across all indicators in terms of clarity of criteria on promotion, the overall mean score received was 3.97 (High). This suggests that the criteria were well defined and understood. Thus, the high score itself points to effective communication and implementation of promotion guidelines. This is supported by the study of Xin et al. (2020), which found that a transparent promotion process begins with clear and well-communicated criteria. Employees need to understand what is required to be considered for promotion.

**Table 13. Level of Perception regarding Factors affecting Promotion in terms of Impact on Job Satisfaction**

Clarity of Promotion Criteria	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1. My job responsibilities align with my skills.	4.16	.83	High
2. I feel a sense of satisfaction and personal achievement when fulfilling my duties.	4.23	.75	High
3. I am satisfied with the institution’s working environment.	4.13	.78	High
4. I am happy with the rewards I receive for good performance.	4.01	.87	High
5. I feel comfortable and satisfied with my current job description.	4.07	.79	High
6. I believe that my compensation is fair for my job responsibilities.	3.85	.97	High
<b>MEAN</b>	<b>4.08</b>	<b>.83</b>	<b>High</b>

Table 13 shows the result of the level of perception regarding factors affecting promotion in private higher educational institutions in General Santos City based on impact on job satisfaction. Based on the result, most of the employees “feel a sense of satisfaction and personal achievement when fulfilling their duties,” with the highest mean score of 4.23 (High). This finding indicated that, on average, employees experienced a strong sense of fulfillment from their duties. This could positively influence their performance and potentially enhance customer-oriented behavior, as job satisfaction has been shown to correlate with these factors. According to Susanto et al. (2022), a key finding was that a sense of personal achievement and satisfaction with fulfilling duties was a significant motivator and contributed to overall job satisfaction. In addition, Wahab et al. (2024) found that by implementing strategies to improve the work environment, offer appropriate rewards, and foster a culture of recognition and appreciation, organizations could create a more positive and fulfilling work experience for their employees.

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On the other hand, employees "believe that their compensation is fair for their job responsibilities," with the lowest mean score of 3.85 (High). This suggested that employees generally felt their compensation aligned with their job responsibilities. This finding was supported by the study of Sitorus and Hidayat (2023), who reported that both compensation and job satisfaction significantly and positively influenced employee productivity. They recommended that organizations sustain compensation practices by implementing employee welfare programs, such as the provision of incentives.

Overall, the average mean score received was 4.08 (High) across all indicators describing the impact on job satisfaction. The result suggested a positive work environment. This could be influenced by factors like positive relationships with coworkers, effective supervision, fair pay, and the nature of the job itself. High job satisfaction can also lead to improved work quality and quantity. This result was consistent with the findings of Gazi et al. (2024), who emphasized that promotion was positively associated with job satisfaction. Their study highlighted that transparent and equitable promotion systems could boost employee morale and decrease turnover rates. Additionally, elements such as compensation, workplace conditions, and recognition were identified as key contributors to overall job satisfaction.

**Table 14. Summary of the Level of Perception regarding Factors affecting Promotion in Private Higher Educational Institutions in General Santos City**

Factor	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Perceived Fairness	3.98	.87	High
Clarity of Promotion Criteria	3.97	.91	High
Impact on Job Satisfaction	4.08	.83	High
<b>Overall Level</b>	<b>4.01</b>	<b>.87</b>	<b>High</b>

Table 14 presents the respondents' perception levels concerning the factors that influence promotion within private higher education institutions in General Santos City. The result demonstrates a consistently high level of perception on the different factors affecting promotion of employees in private HEIs with a high mean score of 4.01. This suggests that employees believe that these factors significantly contribute to the promotion process, implying effective practices or a supportive environment for career advancement within these institutions.

Perceived Fairness received a high mean score of 3.98 as one of the factors that affects promotion of employees in private HEIs. This suggests that employees' perception of fairness in performance appraisals and other related processes plays a crucial role in their career progression. Fairness promotes employee welfare and positive work attitudes, which may drive them to seek promotions. The findings correspond with the research conducted by Pinho and Colston (2024), which indicates that perceived fairness – defined as an employee's belief in the justness of the promotion process – is a crucial determinant of employee motivation and satisfaction inside private Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). An equitable promotion process fosters increased commitment and job satisfaction, but an inequitable approach may lead to eroded trust, lower motivation, and potential employee attrition.

Clarity of Promotion Criteria received a high mean score of 3.97 as one of the factors that affects promotion of employees in private HEIs. This suggests that employees highly value and perceive the importance of clear and well-defined promotion guidelines. Modern organizations, including private HEIs, often utilize hybrid structures. This corresponds with Mensah's (2025) research, which demonstrated a robust positive correlation between promotions and employee performance, with promotions explaining 68.7% of the variance in performance. Statistical analysis substantiates that promotions markedly enhance employee performance. The research underscores the significance of transparent, meritocratic promotion processes to optimize favorable results. Recommendations entail the establishment of explicit promotion criteria and the provision of organizational assistance to maintain employee motivation and performance.

Impact on Job Satisfaction received a high mean score of 4.08 as one of the factors that affects promotion of employees in private HEIs. This suggests that employees in such institutions highly value the support and protection provided by their superiors, which directly influences their job satisfaction and, consequently, their promotion prospects. This corresponds with the research conducted by Gazi et al. (2024), which demonstrated that job satisfaction is a pivotal job behavior influencing job performance. The research found that job-related characteristics influenced job performance more significantly than personal attributes. Additionally, employees who indicated elevated job happiness also demonstrated enhanced job performance.

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The overall high level of perception, with a mean of 4.01, indicates that factors such as perceived fairness, clarity of promotion criteria, and impact on job satisfaction positively influence employee promotion in private higher educational institutions in General Santos City. This suggests that these institutions are effectively applying practices that support employee growth and satisfaction. Supporting this, Madugu and Ogundeleji (2023) found that well-implemented promotion policies enhance employee morale and performance, ultimately contributing to job satisfaction and improved outcomes in organizational settings.

### 3.3 Level of Work Culture

This study also examined the level of work culture in private higher educational institutions in General Santos City, emphasizing the alignment with institutional values and attitude, organizational climate, and employee engagement. As can be seen in the tables below.

**Table 15. Level of Work Culture in terms of Values and Attitude**

Values and Attitude	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1. My values align with my institution's values.	4.36	3.07	High
2. I actively contribute to achieving the institution's goals.	4.26	.73	High
3. I maintain a positive attitude at work.	4.30	.70	High
4. I believe that ethical behavior is essential in my institution.	4.32	.73	High
5. I am motivated to apply institutional values in my daily work.	4.26	.71	High
<b>MEAN</b>	<b>4.30</b>	<b>1.19</b>	<b>High</b>

Table 15 shows the result on the level of work culture in private higher educational institutions in General Santos City in terms of values and attitudes. The result shows that in HEIs, the employees' "values are align with their institution's values" with the highest mean score of 4.36 (High). This suggests a strong congruence between employee and institutional values. In addition, the result suggests a positive alignment, potentially fostering a more cohesive and effective work environment. This is supported by the study of Fei & Tien (2024) which results demonstrate that a strong alignment between employees' personal values and an institution's values leads to increased job satisfaction, commitment, and engagement. This alignment also contributes to a more positive work environment and reduced turnover.

On the other hand, employees are "motivated to apply institutional values in their daily work" as well as "actively contribute to achieving the institution's goals" both with the lowest scores of 4.26 (High). The results suggest a strong sense of engagement and purpose within the organization. This creates a positive workplace environment where employees feel connected to the institution's values and goals, leading to higher productivity and job satisfaction. This finding is further supported by Wagner et al. (2025), who found a strong link between employee motivation—especially when it aligns with institutional values—and overall organizational performance. Employees motivated by intrinsic factors (like personal satisfaction and values) and extrinsic factors (like rewards and recognition) are more engaged and productive. Furthermore, a shared understanding and commitment to organizational values can foster a sense of purpose and belonging, driving employees to apply those values in their daily work.

Overall, resulting in the level of work culture in private higher educational institutions in General Santos City in terms of values and attitudes, the mean score received is 4.30 (High). The result is an indication of a high level of work culture. This suggests a positive environment concerning values and attitudes within these institutions. This is consistent with the findings of Almendras et al. (2025), who concluded that higher education institutions generally maintain a positive and goal-oriented workplace culture that fosters employee engagement. However, they noted that there remains room for improvement in overall employee performance. The study also confirmed a significant relationship between workplace culture and employee productivity.

**Table 16. Level of Work Culture in terms of Organizational Climate**

Organizational Climate	Mean	SD	Interpretation
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1. I have opportunities to learn new skills and develop new talents in my work.	4.14	.84	High
2. I believe that my institution adapts well to changes in the business environment.	4.03	.90	High
3. I have access to the necessary resources to perform my work effectively.	4.01	.82	High
4. I receive recognition when I perform well.	3.92	.90	High
5. I understand how my job contributes to my department's overall direction and goals.	4.18	.75	High
<b>MEAN</b>	<b>4.06</b>	<b>.84</b>	<b>High</b>

Table 16 shows the result on the level of work culture in private higher educational institutions in General Santos City in terms of organizational climate. Based on the result, employees in the HEIs "understand how their job contributes to their department's overall direction and goals," with the highest mean score of 4.18 (High). This suggested a positive perception among employees regarding their role in the overall organizational direction. The findings also revealed that employees in higher education institutions demonstrated a clear awareness of how their specific responsibilities aligned with and supported the broader objectives of their respective departments (Batangas State University, 2025). This understanding was crucial for fostering a sense of purpose and commitment within the workforce. The result aligned with the study of Gazi et al. (2024), which showed that employees who understood how their work contributed to their department's goals and overall direction were more motivated, engaged, and productive. This understanding was essential for aligning individual efforts with organizational objectives and fostering a sense of purpose and belonging. When employees saw the value of their work, they were more likely to be satisfied and committed to their roles and the organization.

Meanwhile, the results indicated that employees in higher education institutions received acknowledgment for their good performance, as reflected in the lowest mean score of 3.92, which still fell within the "High" category. This finding affirmed that recognizing employee achievements contributed positively to institutional outcomes (Universiti Teknologi Rama, 2025). It positively affected employee retention, engagement, and overall performance, leading to a more motivated and productive workforce. This result supported the findings of Yang et al. (2022), who reported that recognizing employees for strong performance significantly enhanced their engagement, boosted productivity, and improved overall job satisfaction. It also reduced negative organizational outcomes like turnover and counterproductive behaviors. Recognition helped employees feel valued and appreciated, leading to a stronger sense of belonging and commitment to the organization.

Overall, the result on the level of work culture in private higher educational institutions in General Santos City in terms of organizational climate was high, with an overall mean score of 4.06. This suggested a positive work environment within these institutions.

**Table 17. Level of Work Culture in terms of Employee Engagement**

Employee Engagement	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1. I feel enthusiastic and energized at work.	4.09	.78	High
2. I find my job meaningful and fulfilling.	4.17	.77	High

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3. I become deeply engaged in my work and sometimes lose track of time.	4.02	.83	High
4. I am resilient and can stay focused for extended periods.	4.08	.82	High
5. I remain committed to my work, even when facing challenges.	4.36	2.46	High
6. I feel a sense of joy when I am deeply involved in my work.	4.20	.78	High
<b>MEAN</b>	<b>4.14</b>	<b>1.07</b>	<b>High</b>

Table 17 shows the result on the level of work culture in private higher educational institutions in General Santos City in terms of employee engagement. Based on the result, employees in HEIs "remain committed to their work, even when facing challenges," with the highest mean score of 4.36 (High). The data suggested a positive perception of the technical support provided by the institutions. Furthermore, the results also highlighted high scores related to the meaning and purpose of work within these institutions, contributing to the overall commitment level. This is supported by the study of Zhenjing et al. (2022), indicating that a positive work environment had the power to improve employee performance. Similarly, a positive work environment also improved employee commitment and achievement-striving ability significantly. Both employee commitment and achievement-striving ability also improved employee performance. In the case of mediation, it was also observed that the workplace environment triggered employee commitment and achievement-striving ability, which further improved employee performance.

On the other hand, employees in HEIs "become deeply engaged in their work and sometimes lose track of time," with the lowest mean score of 4.02 (High). The study revealed that employees in higher education institutions (HEIs) exhibited high levels of work engagement, sometimes leading to a phenomenon where they lost track of time and became deeply absorbed in their tasks. This suggested a strong connection between their work and overall well-being. In addition, the study suggested a relationship between high levels of engagement, vigor, and dedication, which in turn led to higher levels of employee satisfaction. This is supported by the study of Sypniewska et al. (2023), who found that there is a strong connection between deep involvement in work and experiencing a "flow" state, where employees become so absorbed that they lose track of time. This phenomenon, often called absorption, is a key characteristic of highly engaged employees.

Overall, the assessment of work culture in private higher education institutions in General Santos City, specifically in terms of employee engagement, yielded a high overall mean score of 4.14. This reflected a strong level of employee involvement and suggested favorable work performance outcomes. These findings are consistent with Fajardo (2024), who reported that personnel in higher education institutions exhibit high levels of task and contextual performance, along with minimal counterproductive work behaviors. Factors contributing to employee engagement include a sense of belonging, respect, and recognition within the organization.

**Table 18. Summary of the Level of Work Culture in Private Higher Educational Institutions in General Santos City**

Factor	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Values and attitude	4.30	1.19	High
Organizational Climate	4.06	.84	High
Employee engagement	4.14	1.07	High
<b>Overall Level</b>	<b>4.17</b>	<b>1.03</b>	<b>High</b>

Table 18 shows the Level of work culture in private higher educational institutions in General Santos City. The result demonstrates a consistently high level of work culture in private HEIs as perceived by the employees. This suggests that, on average, employees tend to have a positive and consistent experience within these HEIs, indicating a generally healthy and favorable work environment.

Values and attitude received a high mean score of 4.30. This suggests a strong emphasis on values and attitude within the institutions, which are important in shaping professional attitudes. This aligns with the findings of Batugal (2019), who emphasized that in private higher education institutions, the combination of employees' values, attitudes,

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and the existing work culture plays a crucial role in shaping organizational success, enhancing employee performance, and fostering job satisfaction. Common values and affirmative attitudes provide a conducive environment that enhances productivity and engagement, but negative attitudes may result in diminished morale and productivity.

Organizational climate the high mean score of 4.06 for organizational climate indicates a generally favorable work environment in higher education institutions. This suggests that factors such as effective communication, leadership, teamwork, and employee recognition are likely present, contributing to a positive organizational experience. Moreover, the data highlights a strong link between organizational climate and both employee commitment and perceived performance (Kaur, Malhotra, & Sharma, 2025). These findings are consistent with the study by Paâ and Omar (2018), which found a significant positive correlation between a creative and supportive organizational atmosphere and organizational commitment. Their research suggested that an innovative and encouraging work climate can strengthen academics' emotional attachment to their institutions, thereby increasing their commitment to institutional and personal growth.

Employee engagement received a high mean score of 4.14. This suggests that employees feel a strong sense of vigor and are likely committed to their work. This corresponds with Deepa's (2024) study, which asserts that employee involvement is a vital element in the success and sustainability of any firm, including higher education institutions. In academia, employee engagement transcends the conventional business environment, impacting both the institution's production and efficiency as well as its core objective of instruction and research.

The overall high level of work culture, mean of 4.17 confirms that this score indicates that employee attitudes are often manifested and suggests a thriving and supportive work environment. However, the finding suggests that these institutions foster environments conducive to employee satisfaction and possibly higher performance. The study by Almendras et al. (2025) indicates that the HEI possesses a pertinent workplace culture conducive to accomplishing collective objectives and fostering employee engagement, however there remains potential for enhancement in employee performance. Similarly, the study indicated that workplace culture is substantially correlated with employee performance regarding productivity.

### 3.4 Level of Employee Performance

The study also examined employee performance levels in private higher education institutions within General Santos City, focusing on four key dimensions: adaptive performance, contextual performance, counterproductive work behavior, and task performance. These aspects are presented in detail in the tables that follow.

**Table 19. Level of Employee Performance in terms of Adaptive Performance**

Adaptive Performance	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1. I can easily adapt to unexpected changes in my institution.	4.05	.69	High
2. I quickly recognize the needs and values of others.	4.11	.72	High
3. I understand how others are feeling at any given moment.	4.10	.77	High
4. I remain flexible and open-minded when dealing with colleagues.	4.23	.75	High
5. I adapt to new processes with ease.	4.10	.76	High
<b>MEAN</b>	<b>4.12</b>	<b>.74</b>	High

Table 19 presents the findings on employee performance in private higher education institutions in General Santos City, specifically focusing on adaptive performance. The results indicate that employees in private higher education institutions demonstrated the highest level of agreement with the statement that they stay adaptable and receptive when interacting with colleagues, reflected by a mean score of 4.23, classified as High.

This indicates that higher education institution (HEI) employees exhibit flexibility and an open-minded approach when dealing with colleagues. These findings are commonly associated with elements such as employee satisfaction, a supportive work environment, and the ability to maintain work-life balance. This aligns with the study by Mc Loughlin and Priyadarshini (2021), which found that workplace flexibility and open-mindedness contribute positively to employee

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engagement, job satisfaction, and organizational effectiveness. They emphasized that when employees are allowed flexibility, they are better able to manage both personal and professional responsibilities, resulting in enhanced performance and greater satisfaction at work. An open-minded culture encourages diverse perspectives, fostering creativity and problem-solving.

Meanwhile, employees in the HEIs "can easily adapt to unexpected changes in their institution" with the lowest mean score of 4.05 (High). This suggests that employees in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) generally perceive themselves as being able to adapt to unexpected institutional changes. The mean score still indicates a good level of perceived adaptability. This is consistent with the findings of Khaw et al. (2023), who emphasized that employees who remain open to new ideas, demonstrate flexibility in their roles, and actively participate in change initiatives are more likely to adapt effectively. The study also highlighted that factors such as personal traits, leadership approaches, and organizational systems significantly influence adaptability.

Overall, the assessment of adaptive performance among employees in private higher education institutions in General Santos City yielded a high mean score of 4.12. It indicates that, on average, employees in private higher educational institutions in General Santos City demonstrate a strong ability to adapt to changes, new situations, and unexpected demands within their work environment. A "High" rating is generally a very desirable outcome for any organization, especially in the ever-evolving landscape of higher education. These findings are further supported by K-weerasinghe (2022), who emphasized that employee resilience and perceived organizational support indirectly influence adaptive performance, particularly in environments marked by constant change. The study also highlighted that psychological distress resulting from such change can negatively impact employees' ability to adapt effectively.

**Table 20. Level of Employee Performance in terms of Contextual Performance**

Contextual Performance	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1. I take extra care and responsibility while performing my duties.	4.31	.65	High
2. I contribute to creating a positive work environment in my institution.	4.29	.65	High
3. If obstacles prevent me from completing a task, I take action to resolve them.	4.25	.69	High
4. I actively support my colleagues at work.	4.28	.68	High
5. I stand by my institution even when it faces internal or external criticism.	4.23	.69	High
6. I take pride in being part of this institution.	4.25	.69	High
<b>MEAN</b>	<b>4.27</b>	<b>.68</b>	<b>High</b>

Table 20 shows the result of the level of employee performance in private higher educational institutions in General Santos City in terms of contextual performance. Based on the result, employees in the HEIs "take extra care and responsibility while performing their duties," with the highest mean score of 4.31 (High). The result suggests a strong sense of conscientiousness and dedication within the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). It suggests that employees are not only capable of adjusting to change but also consistently strive for excellence and accountability in their daily tasks. This is supported by the study of Bukhatir Alshamsi et al. (2023), which shows that employees who demonstrate extra care and responsibility in their duties positively impact student satisfaction and institutional performance. These "extra-role behaviors" (ERBs) go beyond prescribed roles, foster a sense of belonging, and can be nurtured through training, mentorship, and a positive work environment. Furthermore, HEIs are increasingly recognizing the importance of developing work-ready graduates, and this often involves equipping employees with skills beyond their primary duties.

Meanwhile, employees in the HEIs "stand by their institution even when it faces internal or external criticism," with the lowest mean score of 4.23 (High). The result still indicates a strong level of institutional loyalty or commitment among employees in HEIs. This means that, on average, employees strongly agree or highly perceive themselves as

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standing by their institution even when it faces criticism. This reflects a significant level of loyalty and perhaps even a sense of shared ownership or pride in the institution. This aligns with the study of Radu (2023), which shows that employee commitment and engagement are crucial for organizational success, even when facing criticism. A positive workplace culture, strong leadership, and effective communication can foster employee loyalty and willingness to defend the institution, even in difficult times.

Overall, the result of the level of employee performance in private higher educational institutions in General Santos City in terms of contextual performance is high, with a mean score of 4.27. In essence, this finding suggests that employees in private HEIs in General Santos City are not only performing their core duties well but are also excellent organizational citizens. When employees are actively involved and demonstrate support within the organization, they contribute to a positive workplace atmosphere that promotes productivity and well-being. This kind of environment plays a crucial role in ensuring the institution's sustained success and reflects the competence and commitment of its personnel (Nnabuike, 2021).

This is supported by recent studies. For example, Ath Power Consulting (2025) and Abdullahi and Shehu (2023) discussed how engaged employees in HEIs lead to improved staff retention, wherein engaged employees are more likely to stay – reducing turnover costs and preserving institutional knowledge. In addition, enhanced productivity occurs when they are motivated to perform beyond the minimum, as well as better quality of education and student outcomes, where engaged faculty and staff contribute to a more enriching learning environment.

**Table 21. Level of Employee Performance in terms of Counterproductive Work Behavior**

Counterproductive Work Behavior	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1. I continuously work on improving my job-related skills.	4.37	.71	High
2. I make an effort to stay updated with job-related knowledge.	4.34	.71	High
3. I effectively handle difficult situations and setbacks.	4.23	.74	High
4. I willingly take on additional tasks when needed.	4.22	.72	High
5. I go beyond what is expected of me in my role.	4.22	.72	High
<b>MEAN</b>	<b>4.28</b>	<b>.72</b>	<b>High</b>

Table 21 presents the findings on employee performance levels in private higher education institutions within General Santos City, specifically focusing on counterproductive work behavior. Based on the result, employees in the HEIs “continuously work on improving their job-related skills” with the highest mean score of 4.37 (High). The result describes positive, proactive behavior related to professional development and skill enhancement. According to the findings of Mustafa and Lleshi (2024), organizations that invest consistently in employee learning and development experience a significant boost in overall performance. These efforts not only enhance innovation and productivity but also improve job satisfaction among employees. Moreover, companies that focus on training initiatives benefit from greater employee engagement, lower staff turnover, and increased competitiveness in their respective industries.

On the other hand, employees in the HEIs are “willingly take on additional tasks when needed” and “go beyond what is expected of them in their role” both with the lowest mean score of 4.22 (High). These findings reinforce the idea that employees in private HEIs in General Santos City are excellent organizational citizens who are proactive, committed, and willing to invest extra effort for the benefit of their institution. This finding supports the study by Inegbedion et al. (2020), which highlighted a significant relationship between employee motivation and their readiness to assume extra responsibilities. Employees who are highly motivated tend to demonstrate greater engagement, enhanced performance, and a stronger inclination to exceed job expectations, which contributes positively to overall organizational outcomes.

Overall, the assessment of employee performance in private higher education institutions in General Santos City revealed a high level of counterproductive work behavior, as indicated by a mean score of 4.28. The high frequency of counterproductive behaviors suggests a major challenge for these HEIs. It would suggest a need for interventions related to organizational justice, leadership, employee well-being, and clear behavioral expectations, as suggested by research on

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CWB in educational institutions. Meanwhile in the study of Nguyen-Viet and Vo Tri Chau (2025), counterproductive behaviors had direct effects on organizational citizenship behavior (in different ways. Regarding indirect effects, since counterproductive behaviors positively affect emotional exhaustion (EE), EE plays a mediating role in the relationship between counterproductive behaviors and organizational citizenship behavior. Furthermore, the results of the data analysis showed that organizational justice only moderates the relationship between counterproductive behaviors and emotional exhaustion.

**Table 22. Level of Employee Performance in terms of Task Performance**

Task Performance	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1. I possess the necessary competencies to perform my job effectively.	4.26	.66	High
2. I work effectively and produce high-quality results.	4.23	.66	High
3. I understand and follow work-related procedures.	4.32	.66	High
4. I plan and organize my work to complete tasks accurately and on time.	4.27	.72	High
5. I am eager to acquire new skills related to my job.	4.36	.70	High
<b>MEAN</b>	<b>4.29</b>	<b>.68</b>	<b>High</b>

Table 22 presents the findings on employee performance levels in private higher education institutions in General Santos City, specifically in relation to task performance. The data revealed that employees were highly inclined to develop new job-related skills, as indicated by the highest mean score of 4.36, categorized as High. This result highlights a key strength of the workforce in these private HEIs: a robust culture of continuous learning and a strong desire among employees to enhance their job-related competencies. This is a critical asset for any educational institution aiming for sustained success and excellence. The result aligns with the study by Poteralska and Perek-Białas (2024), which emphasizes the challenges of skill gaps due to technological transformation. It underscores the critical need for reskilling and upskilling to ensure employability and notes that organizations where employees acquire new skills can accelerate their adaptation to change, enhancing business value and efficiency.

Meanwhile, employees in the HEIs "work effectively and produce high-quality results" received the lowest mean score of 4.23 (High). Despite being the "lowest" score in its category, the 4.23 rating is a very positive indication that employees in private HEIs in General Santos City are proficient and consistently deliver high-quality outcomes in their core job functions. In a separate study, López-Cabarcos et al. (2022) found that satisfied and engaged employees are more productive and perform better, leading to higher quality work and overall organizational success. Factors such as job satisfaction, work engagement, a positive work environment, and effective leadership styles significantly impact employee performance and the quality of their output.

Overall, employee performance in private higher education institutions in General Santos City, as measured through task performance, was rated High, with an overall mean score of 4.29. The findings indicate that private HEIs in General Santos City are staffed by individuals who are skilled, committed, and adaptable—consistently fulfilling their primary responsibilities and playing a vital role in the institutions' overall effectiveness and success. This high level of employee performance, across multiple dimensions, is a significant asset for these HEIs, enabling them to achieve their strategic goals and maintain a competitive edge. According to Saif et al. (2024), higher education institutions demonstrate a strong link between high-level task performance and various factors, including workplace culture, employee engagement, and leadership styles. These factors play a crucial role in fostering a positive and productive work environment, which ultimately impacts employee performance.

**Table 23. Summary of the Level of Employee Performance in Private Higher Educational Institutions in General Santos City**

Factor	Mean	SD	Interpretation
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Adaptive Performance	4.12	.74	High
Contextual Performance	4.27	.68	High
Counterproductive work behavior	4.28	.72	High
Task Performance	4.29	.68	High
<b>Overall Level</b>	<b>4.25</b>	<b>.71</b>	<b>High</b>

Table 23 presents the data on employee performance levels in private higher education institutions within General Santos City. The results indicate a consistently high level of performance among employees. This suggests that personnel were motivated, actively involved in their work, and demonstrated strong commitment – factors that may contribute to improved quality of output.

Adaptive performance received a high mean score of 4.12, indicating a high level of employee performance in private higher educational institutions in General Santos City. This aligns with the research conducted by Quezon and Esmene (2024), which reported that respondents experienced moderate workload difficulties, occupational stress, communication issues, and suboptimal working conditions. Despite these challenges, they were afforded several opportunities for training, mentorship, and acknowledgment of their learning. The respondents demonstrated exceptional task, contextual, and adaptive performance.

Contextual performance received a high mean score of 4.27. This indicates a strong level of positive behaviors and actions displayed by employees within their workplace, contributing to organizational effectiveness. Such behaviors can include helping colleagues, volunteering for extra tasks, and adhering to organizational rules. These findings are consistent with the study by Abun et al. (2021), which found that faculty and staff in higher education institutions demonstrated strong self-efficacy, positively affecting their task and contextual performance. However, no significant link was found between self-efficacy and counterproductive behaviors. The study further emphasized that the work environment plays a crucial role in shaping both self-efficacy and overall job performance across three key areas: task-related duties, contextual contributions, and negative workplace behaviors.

Counterproductive work behavior received a high mean score of 4.28. This suggests that deviant behaviors within the workplace were present. High scores on such measures often correlate with emotional exhaustion and can have negative consequences for both individuals and the organization. In the study by Also et al. (2019), HEI faculty members asserted that counterproductive actions aimed at colleagues emerged following a series of prior incidents. These acts, sometimes stemming from interpersonal interactions, remained inconspicuous until they escalated, subsequently impacting assigned duties and the organization. The study confirmed that no substantial differences in unproductive work practices existed between genders. However, a notable correlation was evident between employees' years of service and unproductive work conduct directed at the organization. Teaching staff were more likely to exhibit unproductive work habits the longer they remained with the institution.

Task performance received a high mean score of 4.29. This suggests that, on average, employees were effectively executing their job responsibilities. The high score may be influenced by factors such as employee training, supportive work environments, or effective management practices. Perez (2023) found that employees were strongly motivated to engage in collaborative work and contribute actively to organizational goals, all while embodying the mission, vision, and values of their institution. They also received various incentives, including scholarships and additional benefits, which supported their performance. The study highlighted that staff members exhibited strong task performance by effectively organizing their responsibilities and prioritizing urgent matters.

Overall, employees within private higher education institutions (HEIs) demonstrated a high level of performance, as indicated by an overall mean score of 4.25. This high performance was observed across several key areas: adaptive performance, contextual performance, counterproductive work behavior, and task performance. The study by Tashliyev and Tirtoprojo (2023) demonstrated through structural equation modeling that organizational commitment, job engagement, and work discipline positively affect employee performance. Conversely, the work environment and job satisfaction did not significantly impact employee performance. The study also emphasized that the work environment influences discipline, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction, identifying the mediating roles of job satisfaction and work discipline.

In Tables 24 and 25, inferential analysis was employed to analyze variable relationships in the research. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was applied to determine the normality of the data. Since the data were found not to be normally distributed, a non-parametric technique was used. Spearman rank-order correlation (Spearman rho) was employed to identify the direction and strength of the relationship between employee performance and the perceived influence of promotion-related factors. The relationship between employee performance and work culture was also

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examined using the Spearman rho correlation test. This non-parametric method was deemed appropriate because the data did not meet the assumptions of normality. All statistical analyses were conducted using a significance threshold of 0.05 ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) to ensure the validity and reliability of the results obtained.

**Table 24.** The relationship between employees' perceptions of factors influencing promotion and their level of performance in private higher education institutions located in General Santos City.

Variables Correlated	Mean	$r_s$	Degree of Relationship	$p$ -value*	Remark
Factors affecting promotion	4.01		Positive		
Employee performance	4.25	0.5079	Moderate Correlation	0.0000	Significant

\*Tested at 0.05 level of significance

Table 24 presents the correlation between employees' perceptions of factors influencing promotion and their performance levels in private higher education institutions in General Santos City. Given that the  $p$ -value is 0.0000, which is below the 0.05 significance threshold, the analysis reveals a statistically significant relationship between the two variables. Furthermore, the Spearman rho correlation coefficient ( $r_s = 0.5079$ ) indicates a moderately positive association between perceived promotion factors and employee performance.

The level of perception regarding factors affecting promotion received a mean score of 4.01, while the level of employee performance received a mean score of 4.25, indicating a positive moderate correlation. This suggests that as employees' perceptions of factors influencing their chances of promotion (such as fairness, transparency, and recognition) improve, their performance also tends to increase.

This outcome corresponds with the findings of Dumaguina (2022), which indicated that job-related and employee-related factors significantly influence employee performance, but firm environment factors do not have a substantial impact. Moreover, the organizational environment and job-related variables substantially influence employee-related factors, while the organizational environment greatly impacts job-related variables. Gazi et al. (2024) demonstrated that job-related characteristics exert a greater influence on job performance than personal attributes. Additionally, employees who reported higher job satisfaction demonstrated enhanced job performance. Furthermore, Duru et al. (2023) found that higher education institutions (HEIs) treat employees fairly and equitably regarding promotions, offer career development opportunities, and provide promotional prospects, all of which positively influence employee performance.

Implications for employees in private HEIs: A moderate, positive correlation between employee perceptions of promotion factors and performance in private HEIs in General Santos City indicates that employees who believe their promotion chances are fair and based on merit tend to perform better. This suggests a connection between perceived organizational fairness and employee engagement and productivity, which influences organizational outcomes.

**Table 25.** Displays the association between work culture and employee performance levels in private higher education institutions located in General Santos City.

Variables Correlated	Mean	$r_s$	Degree of Relationship	$p$ -value*	Remark
Work culture	4.17		Positive		
Employee	4.25	0.7103	Strong Correlation	0.0000	Significant

performance

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\*Tested at 0.05 level of significance

Table 25 demonstrates a statistically significant link between work culture and employee performance in private higher education institutions in General Santos City. The p-value of 0.0000, being below the 0.05 significance level, confirms the existence of a meaningful association between these variables. Additionally, the Spearman rho correlation coefficient ( $rs = 0.7103$ ) reflects a strong positive correlation, suggesting that improvements in work culture are closely associated with higher levels of employee performance.

The mean score for work culture was 4.17, and employee performance was 4.25, indicating that both variables showed a high level of results. The strong positive correlation indicates that a better work culture generally leads to higher employee performance. A supportive and constructive workplace atmosphere promotes employee motivation, engagement, and a sense of inclusion, which can lead to higher productivity and greater job satisfaction.

The study by Alkhodary (2023) demonstrates that a positive company culture is highly correlated with enhanced employee job satisfaction, loyalty, innovation, and productivity. The study emphasized the significance of cultivating a positive organizational culture, nurturing a sense of community and shared values, offering opportunities for employee development and advancement, and encouraging a friendly and inclusive work environment to attain organizational success.

The research conducted by Ona (2024) revealed a substantial association between organizational culture and work performance, with  $r$  values between 0.26 and 0.50, indicating a moderate positive correlation. A notable association was identified between corporate culture and job satisfaction, with  $r$  values between 0.51 and 0.75, signifying a strong positive relationship.

**Implications for employees in private HEIs:** A strong positive correlation between work culture and employee performance in private HEIs in General Santos City suggests that a healthy and supportive work environment directly leads to higher employee productivity and engagement. This implies that employees in HEIs will perform better if they feel valued, respected, and motivated.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

**After analyzing and interpreting the data, the following conclusions were made.**

Based on the findings, Hypothesis 1 is rejected. The p-value (0.0000) is less than 0.05. Moreover, the Spearman rho rank correlation coefficient of  $rs = 0.5079$  indicates that there is a positive moderate correlation between the two variables. As a result, null hypothesis is rejected. The findings indicate a significant association between employees' perceptions of promotion-related factors and their performance levels in private higher education institutions within General Santos City.

Based on the findings, Hypothesis 2 is rejected. Since the p-value (0.0000) is less than 0.05. Moreover, the Spearman rho rank correlation coefficient of  $rs = 0.7103$  indicates that there is a positive strong correlation between the two variables. Therefore, null hypothesis is rejected as results indicates a statistically significant relationship between the level of work culture and the level of employee performance in private higher educational institutions in General Santos City.

This study provides important implications for theory and practice in private higher educational institutions (HEIs) in General Santos City. Results revealed that promotion factors – particularly perceived fairness, clarity of criteria, and job satisfaction – along with work culture elements like organizational climate, employee engagement, and values, significantly influence employee performance.

The results align with Adams' Equity Theory, Social Exchange Theory, and Schein's Organizational Culture Theory, suggesting that equitable treatment, reciprocal relationships, and a well-established organizational culture contribute to enhanced employee motivation, stronger commitment, and improved work performance.

Practically, the study encourages HEIs to adopt transparent, merit-based promotion systems and nurture a supportive work environment. These strategies can enhance employee morale, reduce turnover, and improve overall performance. The study also addresses a gap in local literature by examining how promotion and culture interact to affect employee behavior in Philippine HEIs.

In alignment with Sustainable Development Goal 8, the study promotes decent work and inclusive growth through fair HR practices. Overall, this research offers practical and theoretical insights that can guide HEIs in creating positive, performance-driven institutions.

## **V. Recommendations**

Based on the study's significant findings, the following recommendations are presented to key stakeholders to enhance employee performance, clarify promotion-related factors, and strengthen work culture in private higher educational institutions (HEIs) in General Santos City.

For employees, it is recommended that they actively engage in professional development programs aimed at fostering flexibility, problem-solving, and adaptability to better manage organizational changes. To address ambiguities in promotion criteria, employees are encouraged to seek clarification from management and provide constructive feedback on existing policies, thereby fostering a culture of open communication. By actively and professionally participating in a positive work culture, employees can not only improve their own performance but also contribute to the institution's overall objectives.

The Staff Association or Union is urged to serve as a proactive advocate for its members. This involves collaborating with management to establish and uphold clear, fair, and transparent promotion policies. To facilitate open dialogue and address concerns regarding the organizational climate, the union should organize regular forums and workshops. Furthermore, they can support adaptive performance by developing training modules focused on equipping employees with the skills to be resilient and adaptable in the face of institutional change.

The Human Resources Department plays a crucial role in operationalizing these changes. To mitigate employee confusion, HR must define, document, and effectively communicate explicit, merit-based criteria for promotions, establishing a transparent process for career advancement. To address the perception of feeling under-recognized, the department should implement robust reward and recognition programs that celebrate employee contributions and achievements. Additionally, HR should provide targeted training programs focused on flexibility, problem-solving, and change management to prepare employees to navigate institutional changes effectively.

For Educational Leadership and Administration, the recommendation is to take the lead in shaping institutional culture. Leadership should initiate a comprehensive review of current promotion structures to ensure their equity, clarity, and consistency. It is essential to actively champion and embed a culture of continuous feedback and appreciation, consistently recognizing employee contributions to build morale and a respectful work environment. Prioritizing the allocation of resources for professional development with an emphasis on adaptability will build a resilient and innovative workforce.

Policymakers should establish and promote equitable standards across all private HEIs. They are encouraged to mandate open and merit-based promotion systems with definite criteria to ensure objective evaluations and increase employee confidence in leadership. By encouraging institutions to invest in initiatives that foster employee participation, communication, and effective reward schemes, policymakers can drive a positive and productive work culture.

For future researchers, this study provides a foundation for further inquiry. More research is needed to qualitatively explore the underlying reasons for employee perceptions of ambiguous promotion criteria and a demotivating work environment, perhaps through interviews or focus groups. Researchers could also evaluate the impact of specific interventions, such as new recognition mechanisms or policy reforms, on employee motivation and satisfaction. The use of longitudinal research designs and multi-institutional case studies is recommended to provide richer, more evidence-based data for guiding future human resource practices in higher education.

Ultimately, the implementation of these collective recommendations directly aligns with Sustainable Development Goal 8, which promotes decent work and economic growth. By establishing fair and transparent promotion systems, improving work culture through recognition and inclusivity, and developing an adaptable workforce through targeted training, HEIs can create a solid foundation for sustainable and equitable progress, benefiting their employees and the wider community.

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