

# Understanding the Challenges in the Civil Service Review Program at CBSUA: A Case Study Approach

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## ABSTRACT

This case study investigates the challenges encountered in the implementation of the Civil Service Review Program at the College of Arts and Sciences, CBSUA. Its purpose is to provide an in-depth understanding of the obstacles faced by both organizers and participants during the program. Data were collected using a researcher-developed questionnaire and analysis of program records, with participants purposively selected from students who had taken the Civil Service Examination and participated in the review program. Ethical protocols, including informed consent and confidentiality, were observed.

The findings indicate that the program's effectiveness is hindered by several challenges, including inflexible scheduling, outdated review materials, unclear communication, inconsistent participant engagement, and technical limitations. These issues disrupt the delivery of a structured and supportive review experience, limiting the program's capacity to fully prepare examinees.

The study highlights the importance of addressing these challenges to enhance the program's implementation and ensure more effective preparation for Civil Service candidates. The insights gained provide practical recommendations for organizers to improve program delivery and support examinee success.

**Keywords:** Civil Service Review Program, Examinee Preparation, Implementation Challenges, Program Evaluation

## INTRODUCTION

The Civil Service Review Program at the College of Arts and Sciences, CBSUA, is designed to support students in preparing for the Civil Service Examination, a key requirement for government employment in the Philippines. The effectiveness of such programs depends not only on curriculum content but also on implementation factors, including scheduling, instructional strategies, participant engagement, and technological support. While the program aims to equip examinees with the knowledge and skills necessary for success, various challenges may hinder its ability to deliver optimal learning experiences. Examining these implementation challenges is crucial to improving program delivery and supporting adult learners in achieving their goals. This study is anchored in Adult Learning Theory (Andragogy), which emphasizes that adult learners are self-directed, goal-oriented, and bring prior experiences into the learning process (Knowles, 1980). Adult learners participating in the Civil Service Review Program often face multiple responsibilities, such as work and family commitments, which can exacerbate challenges related to scheduling, engagement, and accessibility of materials. Thus, understanding how these challenges affect adult learners is critical for tailoring the program to their needs.

Additionally, Social Cognitive Theory highlights the role of social interaction, observational learning, and self-efficacy in shaping learning outcomes (Bandura, 1986). Learners' confidence in their ability to succeed directly influences their engagement and persistence. In the Philippine context, participants may encounter social, economic, and personal barriers that impede their preparation, making supportive learning environments essential for overcoming these obstacles.

Finally, this study employs a Utilization-Focused Evaluation approach, emphasizing that evaluation findings should inform practical program improvements (Patton, 2008). By focusing on the challenges faced during program implementation, this case study aims to provide actionable insights for enhancing the Civil Service Review Program at CBSUA. The findings are intended to guide program organizers in addressing key obstacles, thereby improving the effectiveness of the review program and better supporting Filipino adult learners preparing for the Civil Service Examination.

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

This study employed a quantitative descriptive research design to examine the challenges encountered in the implementation of the Civil Service Review Program at the College of Arts and Sciences, CBSUA. This design allowed for the measurement and analysis of participants' experiences with specific program challenges, enabling the identification of patterns and the relative prevalence of obstacles affecting program effectiveness. Purposive sampling was used to select students who had enrolled in the Civil Service Review Program and taken the Civil Service Examination. This ensured that participants had direct experience with both the program and the examination process. A total of 33 participants were included in the study, representing a range of experiences regarding program participation and engagement. Data were collected using a researcher-developed questionnaire that focused on identifying and quantifying challenges encountered during program implementation. The instrument included structured items measured using a Likert scale to assess the extent and frequency of challenges such as scheduling conflicts, outdated materials, unclear communication, inconsistent engagement, and technical limitations. The questionnaire was validated by a panel of subject-matter experts to ensure content relevance and clarity. Collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, to summarize the prevalence and severity of reported challenges. This approach provided a clear quantitative picture of the obstacles affecting both participants and program organizers, highlighting areas requiring improvement.

The study was limited to students from the College of Arts and Sciences at CBSUA, which may restrict generalizability. Purposive sampling and self-reported data may also introduce potential bias. Additionally, inconsistent access to program records and internet connectivity variations may have affected data completeness. Ethical standards were strictly observed. Participants were informed about the study's purpose, their voluntary participation, and their right to withdraw at any time without penalty. Informed consent was obtained via Google Form. Participant confidentiality and anonymity were ensured, with all data stored securely and used exclusively for research purposes. The study adhered to institutional and ethical guidelines, safeguarding participants' rights and welfare.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings of the case study on the challenges encountered in the implementation of the Civil Service Review Program at the College of Arts and Sciences, CBSUA. The results are organized into four major domains: (1) program content and structure, (2) communication, (3) participant engagement, and (4) technical and logistical concerns. Frequencies were used to determine the most prevalent challenges experienced by participants (n = 33).

Table 1. Challenges in the Implementation of the Civil Service Review Program: Issues in Content and Structure.

Challenges in Program Content or Structure	Frequency	Description
Issues with Program Timelines/Schedule	18	Participants reported tight schedules, rushed sessions, and inadequate time for review, hindering their ability to absorb material effectively.

Lack of Relevant Resources/Materials	7	Participants expressed frustration with outdated or insufficient study materials, emphasizing the need for updated, diverse, and comprehensive resources.
Inadequate Training or Orientation	6	Several participants felt unprepared at the start of the program due to a lack of proper orientation and guidance.
Insufficient Clarity of Objectives	2	A few participants noted the lack of clear communication regarding the program’s goals and objectives.
Lack of Sufficient Review Time or Sessions	2	Limited review time and the need for more opportunities to revisit and consolidate the material were mentioned as challenges.

Table 1 shows that the most frequently reported challenge in program content and structure was issues with program timelines or schedules (f = 18). Participants described tight schedules, rushed sessions, and insufficient time to absorb review materials. This suggests that time constraints significantly affected learning consolidation.

This finding may be interpreted through Social Cognitive Theory, which emphasizes the role of self-regulation in learning (Bandura, 1986). When review sessions are rushed, learners may struggle to monitor their understanding and regulate their study strategies effectively. In high-stakes preparation such as the Civil Service Examination, limited time for reflection and practice may reduce learners’ confidence and engagement.

The second most reported concern was lack of relevant resources or materials (f = 7), followed by inadequate training or orientation (f = 6). These findings reflect concerns about program preparedness and instructional readiness. According to Adult Learning Theory (Knowles, 1980), adult learners require relevant, practical, and goal-oriented content. When materials are outdated or insufficient, the perceived usefulness of the program may decline, potentially affecting motivation.

Fewer participants reported insufficient clarity of objectives (f = 2) and lack of sufficient review sessions (f = 2). Although less frequent, these issues indicate possible gaps in program structuring and alignment of expectations.

Table 2. Challenges in the Implementation of the Civil Service Review Program: Problem in Communication.

Challenges in Communication	Frequency	Description
Delays in Feedback/Response	10	Participants reported delays in receiving timely feedback from facilitators, causing uncertainty and hindering progress.
Lack of Clear Communication Between Facilitators and Participants	9	Participants expressed confusion due to unclear instructions and expectations from facilitators.
Inadequate Communication Tools	12	Issues with communication platforms were raised, including accessibility problems and poor interface design.
None	3	Some participants did not report any communication-related challenges.

As presented in Table 2, communication challenges were also prominent. The most reported issue was inadequate communication tools (f = 12), followed by delays in feedback or responses (f = 10) and lack of clear communication between facilitators and participants (f = 9).

Timely feedback plays a central role in learner development. In line with Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986), feedback supports self-efficacy and performance monitoring. Delayed responses may prevent learners from correcting misunderstandings promptly, thereby slowing academic progress.

The presence of unclear communication further suggests misalignment between facilitators and participants. From a Utilization-Focused Evaluation perspective (Patton, 2008), effective programs require clear stakeholder communication to ensure that goals, expectations, and processes are understood.

Communication gaps may therefore reduce program coherence and perceived effectiveness.

Only three participants reported no communication challenges, indicating that communication remains a notable concern within this case.

Table 3. Challenges encountered in Participant Engagement

Challenges in Participant Engagement	Frequency	Description
Difficulty in Maintaining Consistent Attendance/Participation	20	Many participants struggled with regular attendance or consistent participation in the review sessions, which impacted their learning.
Low Participant Motivation or Involvement	10	Participants expressed a lack of enthusiasm or interest in the review sessions, affecting their engagement and involvement.
Insufficient Follow-up Support	4	Several participants reported a lack of follow-up support from facilitators, leading to disengagement and feeling of disconnection from the program.
Lack of Trust	1	A few participants mentioned that the lack of trust in the program or facilitators contributed to their disengagement.
Low Participant Motivation or Involvement & Difficulty in Maintaining Consistent Attendance/Participation & Insufficient Follow-up Support	1	Some participants noted a combination of these three issues, impacting their overall engagement.

Results in Table 3 indicate that difficulty in maintaining consistent attendance or participation ( $f = 20$ ) was the most significant engagement-related challenge. This suggests that regular involvement in review sessions was difficult for many participants.

This finding aligns with Adult Learning Theory (Knowles, 1980), which recognizes that adult learners often balance multiple responsibilities such as employment and family obligations. Competing commitments may limit consistent attendance, especially when schedules are inflexible.

Additionally, low participant motivation or involvement ( $f = 10$ ) emerged as a notable concern. According to Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986), motivation is influenced by environmental and personal factors. If learners perceive structural or communication barriers, their engagement levels may decline.

Reports of insufficient follow-up support ( $f = 4$ ) and lack of trust ( $f = 1$ ), although less frequent, indicate areas where sustained engagement mechanisms may be strengthened. Continuous monitoring and participant support are emphasized in Utilization-Focused Evaluation (Patton, 2008) to maintain program responsiveness.

Table 4. Technical or Logistical Challenges in Implementing Civil Service Review Program.

Technical or Logistical Challenges	Frequency	Description
Difficulties with Scheduling or Logistics	22	Participants experienced issues with scheduling, such as timing conflicts with other commitments, leading to missed or inconsistent attendance.
Inadequate Technological Infrastructure	7	Participants reported issues with the technology used for the program, including problems with software, platforms, and system functionality.
Technical Difficulties During Program Delivery	5	Participants mentioned problems such as connectivity issues, audio/video disruptions, and interruptions during live sessions.
Absenteeism and Lateness	1	Some participants struggled with absenteeism or were frequently late to sessions, often linked to scheduling or technical challenges.
Difficulties with Scheduling or Logistics & Inadequate Technological Infrastructure & Technical Difficulties	1	Some participants mentioned a combination of these challenges, further complicating their engagement and participation.

As shown in Table 4, the most frequently reported challenge overall was difficulties with scheduling or logistics ( $f = 22$ ). This confirms that logistical barriers were the most dominant concern in the implementation of the program.

Scheduling conflicts may limit learners' ability to consistently participate, thereby affecting continuity of learning. From a self-regulation standpoint (Bandura, 1986), irregular participation disrupts structured study routines and may hinder preparation outcomes.

Other reported issues included inadequate technological infrastructure ( $f = 7$ ) and technical difficulties during program delivery ( $f = 5$ ), such as connectivity issues and audio/video disruptions. These findings suggest that technological limitations created barriers to smooth program delivery.

In line with Adult Learning Theory (Knowles, 1980), adult learners benefit from accessible and user-friendly learning environments. When technological systems are unreliable, they may become obstacles rather than facilitators of learning.

Although absenteeism and lateness were minimally reported ( $f = 1$ ), the combined data indicate that logistical and technical constraints significantly influenced overall participation.

## SUMMARY OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This quantitative case study examined the challenges encountered in the implementation of the Civil Service Review Program at the College of Arts and Sciences, CBSUA. The study focused on identifying obstacles that affected program delivery and participants' learning experiences.

Using a purposive sample of 33 participants who had taken the Civil Service Examination and enrolled in the review program, data were collected through a researcher-developed questionnaire. The instrument measured challenges related to program content and structure, communication, participant engagement, and

technical/logistical issues. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, and means, were used to quantify the prevalence of these challenges.

The findings revealed that participants frequently reported scheduling conflicts, limited review time, outdated materials, unclear communication, delayed feedback, inconsistent attendance, and technological difficulties. These issues collectively hindered engagement, self-regulation, and motivation, highlighting critical areas for improvement in the program's implementation.

## CONCLUSION

The study demonstrates that while the Civil Service Review Program provides meaningful support for students preparing for the Civil Service Examination, its effectiveness is affected by multiple implementation-related challenges. Scheduling and logistical conflicts, inconsistent attendance, communication gaps, delayed feedback, outdated learning materials, and technical limitations were the most prominent barriers.

These challenges affect learners' motivation, self-regulation, and overall engagement, as explained through Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986), Adult Learning Theory (Knowles, 1980), and Utilization-Focused Evaluation (Patton, 2008). Structural and operational factors, rather than content alone, play a significant role in shaping participants' experiences. Addressing these barriers is therefore essential to improving program effectiveness and ensuring sustainability.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, it is recommended that the program adopt a more flexible and well-structured schedule to accommodate participants' multiple responsibilities. Learning materials should be regularly reviewed and updated to ensure relevance and alignment with examination content. Communication processes may be strengthened by using a centralized platform to provide clear instructions and timely feedback. Additionally, improving technological infrastructure and providing consistent monitoring and evaluation mechanisms can help address logistical and technical concerns. Through these measures, the Civil Service Review Program can enhance its responsiveness, accessibility, and effectiveness in preparing examinees for success.

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### Competing Interests

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

### Authors' Contributions

Author NTG designed the study and supervised the research process. Author RBV conducted data collection, performed statistical analysis, and drafted the manuscript. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.

### Ethical Approval

All authors hereby declare that the study was conducted in accordance with institutional ethical standards. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to data collection.

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