HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT OPERATIONS IN RELATION TO EMPOWERMENT OF PUBLIC SECONDARY TEACHERS IN PANABO CITY DIVISION

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ABSTRACT

The study explored the relationship between human resource management operations and empowerment of teachers in public secondary schools of Panabo City Division. Also, it investigated the association of the involved variables and the domains of human resource management operations that significantly influenced empowerment of teachers. With the use of probability sampling, 150 secondary teachers in the public schools were selected as the respondents. Utilizing the descriptive-correlational survey method, the data collated were analyzed through the use of Mean, Product-Moment correlation and Regression Analysis. Results revealed that there was extensive human resource management operations and an extensive empowerment of teachers. Furthermore, there was a significant relationship between the two variables. Moreover, all domains of human resource management operations were found to have significantly influenced empowerment of teachers. Based on the findings, it was further suggested that higher officials in the Department of Education may identify means on how to help the school heads in strengthening the human resource management operations to ensure empowerment among teachers.

KEYWORDS: *Human resource management operations, empowerment of teachers, descriptive correlation, Panabo City Division, Philippines*

INTRODUCTION

Teacher empowerment involves investing teachers with the right to participate in the determination of school goals and policies as informed by their professional judgment. By empowering teachers, teachers can discover their potential and limitations for themselves as well as developing competence in their professional development (Balyer et al., 2017). Being an empowered teacher means having enough resources and freedom to provide every student with the education that they deserve. The importance of empowerment is also illustrated by its role in increasing teacher motivation, improving problem-solving skills, and teaching students to become empowered, all of which are vital to improving learning outcomes for every student (O'Sullivan, 2015). However, teachers have been given limited opportunity to feel empowered.

While the shortage of teachers is acknowledged globally, exacerbating the problem is the decline in the status of teachers and their working conditions across the globe (World Development Report, 2018). Teachers struggle with difficult living and working conditions and academicians have noted the decline in terms of pay, respect, and conditions of employment for teachers (2015). In US, over 15% of school teachers annually leave their teaching jobs at schools (Goldring et al., 2014). It was highlighted that inadequate working conditions of a school undermines the status of the profession and recruiting more teachers will not solve the turnover problem as long as large numbers of the new teachers will be leaving schools, discontent with their professional status and working environment (Ingersoll et al., 2017; Sutcher et al., 2016; Geiger and Pivovarova, 2018).

In the Philippines, teachers feel unempowered for several reasons. Findings from the World Bank report revealed that teachers in the Philippines have one of the most ineffective methods in Southeast Asia and teacher training programs targeted at them failed to improve their mastery of content (Chi, 2022). Hernando-Malipot (2020) revealed that the

real factor behind the chronically poor quality of education in the country is not teachers' competencies but their working conditions—public school teachers are overworked, underpaid, and under supported. Teachers take on an enormous amount of non-teaching tasks on top of their full teaching loads with class sizes of up to 50 students which is way beyond the recommended class size for optimal learning. They are overburdened with paper works that do nothing to improve education quality. On top of these, teachers remain to be the "lowest paid professional" in the public sector.

In the same vein, the researcher observed that in the Division of Panabo City, teachers needed more exposure to feel empowered. Several factors contributed to inadequate empowerment among teachers, hindering their ability to take initiative, make decisions, and contribute effectively to educational processes. These included insufficient access to ongoing professional development and training which hindered teachers' growth and confidence in their abilities, resulting in a lack of empowerment. Teachers also experienced insufficient resources, including materials, technology, and classroom support. These impeded their ability to effectively educate students and, in turn, diminished their sense of empowerment. Also, teachers' efforts and achievements were not recognized or appreciated.

However, these were merely observations and were not yet validated by research. Given these situations, the researcher explored the extent of empowerment among teachers considering the schools' human resources management operations in the public secondary schools specifically in Panabo City Division. Furthermore, it investigated the correlation of the two variables. Also, it explored the specific domain of human resource management operations which significantly influenced the empowerment of teachers.

Moreover, this undertaking also hoped to provide insights to the DepEd officials in crafting policies, programs, interventions, projects, activities that would motivate school heads to be proactive in practicing and implementing human resources management operations in order to help teachers feel empowered. Also, the researcher intended to present this study in the international fora and publish the study in a Scopus-Indexed journal.

METHODOLOGY
Research Design
This study was a quantitative research approach utilizing the descriptive correlational approach. Quantitative research is a way to learn about a particular group of people, known as a sample population. Using scientific inquiry, quantitative research relies on data that are observed or measured to examine questions about the sample population. It is used by social scientists, including communication researchers, to observe phenomena or occurrences affecting individuals. The purpose of quantitative research is to generate knowledge and create understanding about the social world (Allen, 2017). Moreover, a descriptive correlation study is a study in which the researcher is primarily interested in describing the relationships between variables (Noah, 2021).
Meanwhile, in descriptive research, the researcher does not manipulate the variables in the study. It simply intends to describe the nature of the involved variables (Korrapati, 2016). On the other hand, correlational research design explores and measures the relationship between the variables of the study with no attempt of manipulating them. Also, correlation investigates the strength and direction of the variables. This can be a positive direction or a negative direction, and a strong and a weak relationship.
This study was considered as quantitative since it depended on the numerical data when analyzing and interpreting the data. It was descriptive since its purpose was to determine the extent of human resource management operations and empowerment of teachers. In addition, this academic pursuit was correlational since its purpose was to measure the connection between human resource management operations and empowerment of public secondary teachers in Panabo City Division.

Respondents and Sampling
This study catered the 150 public secondary teachers in the Division of Panabo City. It was claimed that for simple regression analysis, it needed at least 50 samples and generally 100 samples for most research situations (Hair et al., 2018). Hence, the 150 respondents were enough to address the purpose of this study.

Probability sampling specifically two-staged cluster sampling was used to identify the sample of the study. It is a kind of sampling technique in which the likelihood or probability of each piece being included may be defined. In other

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words, every member of the population must have an equal and independent probability of being included in the sample (Ragab & Arisha, 2018). Cluster sampling is a popular method in conducting researches wherein the population is being divided into different clusters. A cluster is a group of elements that are made up of individual units that represent mutually exclusive and exhaustive subsets (Thomas, 2020). It is two-staged cluster sampling since the sample of elements from each selected cluster or division is chosen randomly. In the context of the study, all secondary teachers from the public secondary schools in Panabo City Division were considered.

In the inclusion and exclusion criteria, secondary teachers with 2 years teaching experience were chosen in this endeavor since their 2 years stay in the public school would help them to assess the school's human resource management practices and empowerment of teachers. Respondents who felt awkward and uncomfortable in answering the survey questionnaire were free to withdraw from their participation. They were not forced to be part of the study. Their decision to withdraw was respected. Apparently, the respondents' welfare was given utmost importance in the conduct of the study.

Research Instruments
As to the form of gathering data, this study utilized an adapted survey questionnaire. The questionnaire that was employed in this undertaking was divided into two sets. The first set was focusing on human resource management operations while the second set was about the empowerment of teachers.

Human Resource Management Operations. The human resource management operations questionnaire was adapted from Wean (2011). The instrument consisted of 11 items. It had the following indicators, namely: incentive compensation (1-4), training (1-2), selective hiring (1-3), and performance evaluation (1-2). The questionnaire was subjected to a pilot testing having a result of .74 suggesting that the items have relatively high internal consistency.

Empowerment of Teacher. The empowerment of teachers questionnaire was adapted from Hidiroglu and Tanriogen (2020). The instrument consisted of 20 items. It had the following indicators, namely: professional development (1-5), trust (1-5), status (1-5), and cooperation (1-5). The questionnaire was subjected to a pilot testing having a result of .75 suggesting that the items have relatively high internal consistency.

The instrument in this study was contextualized to achieve the purpose of this study. The researcher integrated all the comments and suggestions of the adviser, panel members and expert validators for the refinement of the tools and to achieve construct validity.

Data Analysis
For more comprehensive interpretation and analysis of the data, the following statistical tools were utilized.

Weighted Mean. This was used to measure the extent of human resource management operations and empowerment of teachers.

Pearson r. This was utilized to determine the relationships between human resource management operations and empowerment of teachers.

Regression Analysis. This was used to asses the significant influence of human resource management operations on empowerment of teachers.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Presented in this chapter are the findings based on the results of data gathered, the conclusions drawn from the findings and the recommendations for consideration.

Findings
The main focus of the study was to determine the significance of the relationship between human resource management operations and empowerment of teachers in public secondary schools. The study was conducted in the selected secondary schools in Panabo City Division. There were one hundred fifty (150) secondary teachers who

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participated in this study. Descriptive correlational method of research was used in this study utilizing adopted research instruments. The said instruments were validated by the panel of experts and subjected to pilot testing before it was made ready for administration. Mean, Pearson Product Correlation of Coefficient, and Regression Analysis were the statistical tools used in analyzing the data. The hypotheses raised in this study were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

The extent of human resource management operations is extensive which means that human resource management operations are oftentimes evident. This extensive level indicates that initiatives related to HR management, such as incentive compensation, training, selective hiring, and performance evaluation, are consistently implemented, contributing to the overall effectiveness of HR processes.

Meanwhile, the extent of empowerment of teachers is extensive which means that it is oftentimes evident. This extensive level suggests that efforts to empower teachers, such as providing professional development opportunities, fostering trust and cooperation, and enhancing their status, are consistently implemented, contributing to a supportive and collaborative work environment.

It was found out that there is a significant relationship between human resource management operations and empowerment of teachers. The hypothesis of no significant relationship between human resource management operations and empowerment of teachers was rejected. The significant relationship between human resource management operations and the empowerment of teachers highlights the importance of HR practices in fostering teacher empowerment within the organization. The rejection of the null hypothesis indicates that initiatives such as incentive compensation, training, selective hiring, and performance evaluation play a crucial role in enhancing teacher empowerment, underlining the significance of effective HR strategies in promoting a supportive and empowered teaching environment.

More so, it was revealed that all the domains of human resource management operations significantly influence the empowerment of teachers. The comprehensive influence of all domains of human resource management operations on the empowerment of teachers underscores the holistic nature of HR strategies in shaping teacher empowerment. This finding emphasizes the importance of considering various HR practices, including incentive compensation, training, selective hiring, and performance evaluation, to effectively empower teachers and foster a supportive educational environment.

Conclusions
Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions were offered:
The extent of human resource management operations means that it is oftentimes evident in the school. In fact, all dimensions are oftentimes evident, namely, incentive compensation, training, selective hiring, and performance evaluation.

Meanwhile, the extent of empowerment of teachers is oftentimes evident. Apparently, all indicators are found to be oftentimes evident specifically on professional development, trust, status, and cooperation.

Based on the findings, human resource management operations and empowerment of teachers are related. All domains of human resource management operations are linked to the empowerment of teachers.

Also, human resource management operations significantly influenced empowerment of teachers. In fact, all domains of human resource management operations, namely, incentive compensation, training, selective hiring, and performance evaluation significantly influence empowerment of teachers by registering a p-value of .000 which is less than .05 in the level of significance. This leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis. Further, the result indicates that for every unit increase in the four domains of human resource management operations, the empowerment of teachers will increase.

The significant and moderate positive relationship between human resource management operations and empowerment of teachers corresponds to Northhouse's (2006) Leader Member Exchange (LMX) theory. Nahrgang et

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al. (2009) proposed that at the heart of LMX theory lies a unique, reciprocal relationship that leaders can foster with their team members, shaping their attitudes and behaviors as they navigate their roles within this relationship.

This study focuses on the human resource management practices in schools, particularly under the guidance of school leaders, as delineated in LMX theory. According to this theory, it is clear that empowered employees result from leaders who not only exemplify values but also show a readiness to empower their team members. This aspect is especially crucial in education, where school principals have the capacity to inspire and empower teachers by implementing practices aligned with strategies crafted by human resource management experts.

Recommendations
The following suggestions were offered based on the conclusions of the study:
The higher officials in the Department of Education may invest in initiatives such as incentive compensation, comprehensive training programs, strategic selective hiring processes, and thorough performance evaluations. Additionally, fostering an organizational culture that values and supports teacher empowerment through transparent communication channels, collaborative decision-making processes, and recognition of teacher contributions is vital. By aligning HR practices with the empowerment needs of teachers, DepEd officials may cultivate a more motivated, engaged, and effective teaching workforce, ultimately leading to improved student outcomes and overall educational quality.

Moreover, school heads may prioritize implementing robust human resource management operations to foster the empowerment of teachers within their institutions. This entails ensuring transparent and equitable incentive compensation systems, providing ongoing and relevant professional development opportunities, implementing fair and effective selective hiring processes, and conducting comprehensive performance evaluations. They may actively involve teachers in decision-making processes, encourage open communication, and recognize their contributions. By prioritizing these initiatives, school heads may create a conducive environment that empowers teachers to excel in their roles, ultimately enhancing overall educational outcomes and school performance.

Furthermore, teachers may actively engage with and leverage the human resource management operations implemented by their institutions to enhance their empowerment. This entails participating in professional development programs and training sessions to continually enhance skills and knowledge, providing feedback on the effectiveness of incentive compensation structures and performance evaluation processes, and actively contributing to the recruitment and selection of new staff members. Additionally, fostering a culture of collaboration, trust, and open communication within the school community may further empower teachers to contribute effectively to their professional growth and the overall success of the institution.

Lastly, future researchers may consider investigating the mediating and moderating factors that may influence the relationship between human resource management operations and the empowerment of teachers. Exploring variables such as leadership styles, organizational culture, teacher motivation, and job satisfaction may provide valuable insights into the mechanisms through which HRM practices impact teacher empowerment. Additionally, longitudinal studies may help in understanding the causal relationships between HRM interventions and teacher empowerment over time. Also, qualitative research methods, such as interviews and focus groups, may offer a deeper understanding of teachers' perceptions and experiences regarding HRM practices and their effects on empowerment.

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