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Innovative human resource management practices of school heads and teacher career advancement opportunities in public secondary schools

Grace D. Bravo, EdD
Batangas State University, Pablo Borbon
Corresponding Author e-mail: grace.bravo@g.batstate-u.edu.ph

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Abstract

Aim: This study aimed to assess the innovative Human Resource Management (HRM) practices implemented by public secondary school heads and determine how these practices influence teachers' career advancement opportunities. Specifically, it examined how innovative HRM practices contribute to teacher professional development, educational leadership, and overall school effectiveness.

Methodology: This study employed a convergent parallel mixed methods research design, wherein quantitative and qualitative data were collected concurrently, analyzed separately, and integrated during the interpretation of the findings to provide a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. Quantitative data were gathered through a researcher-made survey questionnaire administered to 321 teachers and 39 public secondary school heads, while qualitative data were collected through focus group discussions (FGDs) to enrich and validate the quantitative findings. Quantitative data were analyzed using percentage, weighted mean, chi-square test, and Mann-Whitney U test, whereas qualitative data were analyzed thematically.

Results: The findings revealed that school heads implemented innovative HRM practices at a high level, positively contributing to teachers' professional growth, performance, and career advancement opportunities. No significant relationship was found between most profile variables and innovative HRM practices, and the assessments of teachers and school heads generally showed no significant differences across most HRM dimensions. The study further identified key challenges affecting teacher career advancement, including limited professional development opportunities, unclear career pathways, excessive non-teaching responsibilities, work-life balance concerns, and teacher retention and recruitment issues. The integration of the quantitative and qualitative findings further informed the development of a responsive program designed to strengthen school heads' innovative HRM practices and support teacher career advancement.

Conclusion: Innovative HRM practices play a significant role in enhancing teachers' professional development, strengthening instructional leadership, and improving overall school effectiveness. The proposed development program provides school heads with a practical framework for strengthening human resource management practices, promoting equitable career advancement opportunities, and fostering continuous professional growth among teachers, thereby contributing to improved educational leadership, organizational effectiveness, and sustainable school improvement.

Keywords: *innovative human resource management, convergent parallel mixed methods, school leadership, teacher career advancement, professional development*

INTRODUCTION

Education was a critical driver of economic development, social progress, and human capital formation. Globally, educational systems increasingly recognized that teacher quality and continuous professional development were essential to improving student outcomes and school performance. Recent international research demonstrated that innovative human resource management (HRM) practices—including instructional coaching, mentoring, collaborative professional learning, and school-based professional development—enhanced teachers' instructional competence, professional learning, and organizational effectiveness. Dorukbaşı and Cansoy (2024) found that teacher professional learning significantly mediated the relationship between instructional leadership and teachers' instructional



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practices, emphasizing the importance of continuous professional development. Likewise, Liu et al. (2024) reported that participation in professional learning communities strengthened the effectiveness of digital professional development and significantly improved instructional integration among more than 16,000 STEM teachers. Furthermore, Renn et al. (2024) demonstrated that instructional coaching promoted meaningful changes in teachers' instructional beliefs and classroom practices, supporting long-term professional growth across diverse educational settings. International organizations such as United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2024) and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2023) emphasized the importance of innovative human resource management (HRM) practices, including mentoring, coaching, differentiated professional development, and performance-based support, in strengthening teacher effectiveness and career growth. These international findings underscored the global relevance of innovative HRM practices in developing a high-quality teaching workforce.

The Department of Education (DepEd), the Philippine government agency responsible for developing, implementing, and managing the country's basic education system, promoted teacher development through several national policies. These included the Executive Order No. 174, series of 2022, which established the Expanded Career Progression System to provide multiple career pathways and merit-based promotion opportunities for teachers; Department of Education (DepEd) Order No. 7, series of 2023, which provided the Guidelines on Recruitment, Selection, and Appointment in the Department of Education to ensure transparent and competency-based hiring and promotion; and DepEd Order No. 24, series of 2025, which prescribed the Guidelines on the Implementation of the Expanded Career Progression System for Teachers and School Heads, providing operational procedures for career advancement within the Philippine basic education system. Collectively, these policies promoted merit-based promotion, continuous professional learning, and career advancement for teachers and school leaders. However, despite these reforms, challenges remained in translating policy into effective practice at the school level. Recent international research indicated that the effectiveness of teacher development policies depended largely on how school leaders implemented innovative human resource management practices that fostered continuous professional learning, professional collaboration, and teacher development. Variations in school-level implementation of these practices could reduce the intended impact of national education reforms (Ye, 2025).

School heads played a crucial role in addressing these challenges through innovative HRM practices that supported teacher growth and career progression. Research indicated that practices such as coaching, professional learning, recognition systems, and developmental support contributed significantly to teacher motivation, retention, and career advancement (Collie, 2023). However, teachers often experienced varying levels of support depending on leadership approaches and available resources.

Recent international literature highlighted that, in the post-pandemic context, school heads were expected to combine instructional leadership with digital transformation, evidence-based HRM, and teacher well-being initiatives to strengthen teacher effectiveness and career advancement (Collie, 2023). Professional learning communities and collaborative professional development became key strategies for improving instructional practice, leadership capacity, and school improvement (Liu & Hallinger, 2022).

While previous studies had examined instructional leadership, teacher development, teacher well-being, professional learning communities, and job satisfaction, limited research had specifically investigated how the innovative human resource management practices of school heads collectively influenced teachers' career advancement opportunities in Philippine public secondary schools. Existing Philippine and international studies generally focused on isolated dimensions of school leadership or individual HRM functions, such as mentoring, professional development, instructional leadership, or teacher well-being, without examining how these practices interacted within a comprehensive HRM framework to support teachers' professional growth and career progression (Chen et al., 2024; Hua et al., 2024). Consequently, evidence remained limited regarding the combined influence of multiple innovative HRM practices on teachers' career advancement within the Philippine public secondary school context.

The present study addressed this gap by integrating multiple innovative HRM dimensions—including mentoring, instructional coaching, professional development, research engagement, recognition systems, instructional leadership, digital leadership, teacher well-being, and professional learning communities—within a single analytical framework rather than examining these variables independently. Unlike previous Philippine studies that primarily investigated instructional leadership or teacher development as separate constructs, this study simultaneously examined the interrelationships among these innovative HRM practices and their influence on teachers' career advancement opportunities. Furthermore, the study employed a convergent parallel mixed methods research design, enabling quantitative findings to be validated and enriched through qualitative evidence, thereby providing a more comprehensive understanding of how school heads' HRM practices influenced teachers' professional growth and career progression.



Beyond its methodological contribution, the study generated an evidence-based school leadership development program grounded in empirical findings from both quantitative and qualitative data. This program translated research evidence into practical strategies that school heads could implement to strengthen innovative HRM practices, support equitable teacher career advancement, and enhance professional development within Philippine public secondary schools. Accordingly, the study contributed not only to the theoretical literature on educational leadership and human resource management but also to educational policy and leadership practice by offering an integrated, context-specific framework for strengthening teacher career advancement through innovative HRM.

Previous studies had shown that school heads' HRM practices positively influenced teachers' professional growth, motivation, and organizational commitment (Huliganga, 2025). However, limited research had directly examined how innovative of public secondary school heads influenced teachers' career advancement opportunities. Existing studies had primarily investigated instructional leadership, teacher well-being, professional learning communities, or HRM practices separately rather than as an integrated framework, particularly in Philippine public secondary schools (Hua et al., 2024). By examining this relationship through an integrated HRM perspective and a convergent parallel mixed methods approach, the present study extended existing knowledge, addressed an important gap in Philippine educational leadership research, and provided empirical evidence to strengthen school-based HRM practices that fostered equitable professional growth and career progression.

Review of Related Literature and Studies

Characteristics of School Heads

School heads played a crucial role in implementing innovative human resource management (HRM) practices that supported teachers' professional growth and career advancement. Guided by the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH), a national framework that defines the professional competencies and leadership standards for school administrators, Republic Act No. 9155 (the Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001), which decentralizes the management of basic education and strengthens school-based leadership, and Republic Act No. 10533 (the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013), which institutionalized the K-12 Basic Education Program in the Philippines, school leaders were expected to manage recruitment, training, performance evaluation, mentoring, and career development effectively. This study examined four key characteristics of school heads such as age, position, length of service, and highest educational attainment as factors that may have influenced the implementation of innovative HRM practices.

Age was associated with leadership maturity, experience, and the ability to mentor teachers while remaining adaptable to innovation and technology. Position reflected the level of authority and responsibility, enabling higher-ranking school heads to implement programs and policies that promoted teacher development. Length of service contributed to experiential knowledge and organizational understanding, which supported effective decision-making and sustainable professional development initiatives. Meanwhile, higher educational attainment enhanced leadership competence, research skills, and data-driven decision-making, encouraging the adoption of innovative practices.

Across the literature, these characteristics consistently emerged as complementary rather than independent factors influencing school leadership effectiveness. Studies generally agreed that experienced and highly educated school heads were more capable of implementing strategic HRM initiatives, fostering professional learning communities, and promoting teacher career development. However, researchers also emphasized that demographic characteristics alone did not guarantee effective leadership. Rather, their influence depended on how school heads translated their experience, educational preparation, and positional authority into instructional leadership, mentoring, and evidence-based decision-making. This suggests that leadership competence is shaped by the interaction between personal characteristics and organizational context rather than by demographic variables alone (OECD, 2024).

Despite this consensus, previous studies have largely examined school head characteristics either as predictors of leadership effectiveness or teacher performance, with limited attention to how these characteristics collectively influence the implementation of innovative HRM practices that support teacher career advancement in Philippine public secondary schools. This gap underscores the need for the present study, which integrates demographic characteristics with HRM implementation to better explain variations in teacher career advancement opportunities.

Together, these characteristics shaped the capacity of school heads to implement effective HRM strategies that fostered teacher development, improved professional opportunities, and supported career advancement in public secondary schools.



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Human Resource Management Practices

Human Resource Management (HRM) in education has evolved into a strategic leadership function that promotes teacher performance, professional growth, engagement, research productivity, and instructional innovation. In the Department of Education (DepEd), the government agency responsible for basic education in the Philippines, human resource management (HRM) is implemented through several institutional systems. These include the Results-Based Performance Management System (RPMS), a framework for assessing employee performance; the Individual Performance Commitment and Review Form (IPCRF), the official tool used to document and evaluate teachers' performance against agreed targets; School-Based Management (SBM), a decentralized approach that empowers schools to make decisions to improve educational outcomes; the School Learning Action Cell (SLAC), a collaborative professional learning community where teachers regularly engage in peer learning and instructional improvement; and In-Service Training (INSET), structured professional development programs designed to enhance teachers' knowledge, skills, and competencies. Collectively, these systems integrate teacher evaluation, capacity building, and continuous professional development within the Philippine basic education system. Guided by Transformational Leadership Theory, Human Capital Theory, and Human Resource Theory, these practices positioned school heads as instructional leaders who fostered teacher competence and organizational improvement. Empirical evidence indicated that effective performance management, instructional leadership, coaching, and professional development enhanced teacher effectiveness and instructional quality when supported by constructive feedback, collaboration, and leadership engagement. Furthermore, higher educational attainment and continuous professional learning opportunities contributed to teachers' pedagogical knowledge, self-efficacy, and instructional capacity; however, their impact was maximized when schools provided organizational support, mentoring mechanisms, and opportunities for teachers to apply newly acquired knowledge within authentic workplace contexts (Liu et al., 2024).

Viewed collectively, the literature demonstrates strong agreement that HRM practices are most effective when implemented as an integrated system rather than as isolated administrative functions. Performance management, professional development, coaching, mentoring, and instructional leadership consistently reinforce one another in improving teacher competence and school effectiveness. Across studies, transformational leadership and collaborative learning environments emerged as recurring themes that strengthened teacher motivation, professional commitment, and instructional quality (Liu et al., 2024).

HRM practices also contributed to teacher engagement, research productivity, innovation, and the transfer of professional learning into classroom practice. Studies showed that school heads strengthened teacher engagement through supportive instructional leadership, collaborative professional learning, and positive school climates that enhanced teachers' motivation, self-efficacy, and organizational commitment (Collie, 2023; Liu & Hallinger, 2022). They also promoted research productivity and instructional innovation by fostering collaborative inquiry, reflective practice, and evidence-informed decision-making, while sustained coaching, mentoring, and instructional feedback enabled teachers to transfer professional learning into classroom practice more effectively (Liu & Hallinger, 2022).

Although these studies consistently reported positive outcomes of HRM implementation, they also suggested that organizational support served as a critical mediating factor. HRM initiatives produced stronger outcomes when accompanied by supportive school cultures, continuous leadership engagement, and adequate institutional resources. Thus, the effectiveness of HRM practices depended not only on the presence of policies but also on the quality and consistency of their implementation across schools.

However, existing literature has focused primarily on the effects of individual HRM practices such as professional development or performance evaluation, rather than examining innovative HRM practices as an integrated framework influencing teacher career advancement. Moreover, limited empirical evidence has explored these relationships within the Philippine public secondary school context, where policy implementation and resource availability vary considerably. The present study addresses this gap by examining how innovative HRM practices collectively contribute to teachers' career advancement.

This synthesis is further supported by UNESCO (2024), which emphasized that sustainable teacher development requires coherent HRM systems integrating recruitment, professional learning, performance management, and leadership development rather than fragmented interventions.

Challenges in Teacher Career Advancement

Teacher career advancement is shaped by interconnected HRM factors, including fairness in promotion, transparency of evaluation systems, access to professional development, workload management, and organizational support. Although frameworks such as the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) and the Expanded Career Progression System (ECPs) promote competency-based advancement, implementation challenges persist. Studies indicate that subjective promotion practices, limited feedback mechanisms, unequal access to training and



specialization opportunities, financial constraints, heavy workloads, family responsibilities, and non-teaching assignments hinder teachers' professional growth and mobility.

The literature consistently identifies equity and organizational support as central themes influencing teacher career advancement. Researchers generally agree that competency-based promotion systems improve professional growth only when implemented transparently and supported by accessible development opportunities. Conversely, inconsistencies in policy implementation, limited institutional support, and excessive administrative responsibilities reduce teachers' capacity to pursue career advancement despite existing policy frameworks.

Although numerous studies have documented barriers to teacher promotion, most have examined these challenges independently rather than investigating how school heads' HRM practices can address multiple barriers simultaneously. Furthermore, empirical evidence linking innovative HRM practices directly with teacher career advancement remains limited in Philippine public secondary schools. This gap provides a strong rationale for the present investigation.

Overall, the literature showed that successful teacher career advancement depends on integrated, equitable, and data-driven HRM practices that align competency development with meaningful career opportunities.

Preparation of Development Program

The preparation of a development program was a strategic HRM function that reflected the leadership performance and innovation capacity of school heads in supporting teacher career advancement. Effective development programs were grounded in needs assessment, stakeholder engagement, strategic planning, mentoring, coaching, performance management, and continuous monitoring. Guided by frameworks such as the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH), the Establishing of the Expanded Career Progression System (ECPS) for Public School Teachers (Executive Order No. 174, s. 2022), and DepEd policies, school leaders were expected to align professional development initiatives with teacher competencies and career stages. Research has shown that strategic HRM practices, including differentiated professional development, instructional leadership, mentoring, collaborative learning, and succession planning, improve teacher effectiveness, motivation, leadership capacity, and career advancement when aligned with organizational goals and supported by continuous feedback (OECD, 2024; UNESCO, 2024).

Collectively, these studies demonstrate that effective development programs are not merely collections of training activities but are components of a comprehensive HRM strategy that aligns organizational goals with teachers' professional needs. Common across the literature is the recognition that continuous mentoring, differentiated professional learning, and systematic monitoring significantly enhance teachers' competencies and readiness for career progression.

At the same time, researchers note that development programs differ considerably in effectiveness because of variations in leadership commitment, resource allocation, and follow-through during implementation. These findings suggest that successful development initiatives require sustained leadership support rather than one-time training interventions.

Despite the growing emphasis on strategic professional development, few studies have examined how findings on innovative HRM practices and teacher career advancement can be translated into a comprehensive development program tailored to the needs of public secondary schools. Consequently, the present study seeks not only to examine these relationships but also to develop an evidence-based intervention program that addresses the identified HRM and career advancement needs of teachers.

Consequently, well-designed development programs served not only as administrative tools but also as mechanisms for sustained teacher growth and improved school performance.

Synthesis and Research Gap

Collectively, the reviewed literature established that school heads' innovative human resource management (HRM) practices, including mentoring, performance appraisal, continuous professional development, talent management, and recognition systems, contributed significantly to enhancing teacher motivation, instructional quality, professional competence, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and overall career development. Previous studies consistently demonstrated that effective HRM practices created supportive work environments that encouraged teachers to improve their performance and pursue professional growth.

Despite these established findings, limited empirical evidence specifically examined the direct influence of innovative HRM practices on measurable teacher career advancement outcomes, particularly within Philippine public schools. Existing studies largely focused on teacher performance, motivation, or organizational effectiveness, while fewer investigations explored career advancement indicators such as promotion, leadership opportunities, professional



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recognition, and career progression. Moreover, most previous studies relied primarily on either quantitative or qualitative approaches, providing only a partial understanding of the complex relationship between innovative human resource management practices and teacher career advancement.

The present study addressed these gaps by investigating how school heads' innovative HRM practices influenced teacher career advancement in Philippine public schools. Specifically, it examined the relationship between innovative HRM practices and measurable career advancement outcomes while also exploring teachers' lived experiences and perceptions regarding the implementation and effectiveness of these practices. By focusing on both measurable outcomes and contextual experiences, the study provided evidence that was directly relevant to educational leaders and policymakers seeking to strengthen teacher development and promotion systems.

Furthermore, the study employed a convergent parallel mixed methods approach, which offered richer and more comprehensive insights than previous single-method studies. The quantitative component generated statistical evidence regarding the relationship between innovative HRM practices and teacher career advancement, while the qualitative component captured participants' experiences, perceptions, and contextual explanations that could not be fully explained through numerical data alone. By integrating both forms of evidence during interpretation, the study enhanced the validity of the findings, enabled triangulation, and provided a more holistic understanding of how innovative HRM practices shaped teacher career advancement in the context of Philippine public schools.

Theoretical Framework

This study was primarily anchored on Human Capital Theory, which explained that continuous investment in teachers' knowledge, skills, and competencies enhanced professional productivity and career advancement. In the context of this study, the theory justified the selection of teacher career advancement as the dependent variable and school heads' innovative human resource management (HRM) practices as the independent variable, as continuous professional development, mentoring, and training are viewed as investments that improve teachers' professional growth. It also guided the development of the research instrument by identifying indicators related to capacity-building, learning opportunities, and competency enhancement. Furthermore, Human Capital Theory served as the basis for interpreting whether innovative HRM practices contributed significantly to teachers' career advancement.

The study was further supported by Human Resource Theory, which emphasized the importance of organizational systems, policies, and HR practices in providing equitable and sustained professional development opportunities. Transformational Leadership Theory also supported the framework by explaining how school heads influenced teacher motivation, engagement, innovation, and commitment through visionary and supportive leadership behaviors.

Human Resource Theory explained how institutional mechanisms such as mentoring, coaching, professional learning communities, and performance management systems facilitated teacher growth and career progression. This theory informed the selection of the HRM dimensions examined in the study, including mentoring, coaching, performance management, professional learning communities, and continuous professional development. It also guided the construction of the questionnaire by ensuring that the instrument measured school heads' implementation of these HRM practices. During data interpretation, Human Resource Theory provided the lens for explaining how effective institutional HR systems facilitated equitable opportunities for teacher growth and career progression.

Meanwhile, Transformational Leadership Theory explained how school heads encouraged professional engagement, innovation, research productivity, and commitment to continuous improvement by fostering supportive and motivating school environments. This theory informed the inclusion of leadership-related HRM practices that promote teacher motivation, engagement, innovation, and research productivity. It also influenced the development of instrument indicators that assessed school heads' supportive leadership behaviors in implementing innovative HRM practices. In interpreting the findings, the theory explained how transformational leadership behaviors strengthened teachers' commitment to continuous professional development and enhanced their opportunities for career advancement.

The integrated framework provided the theoretical foundation for examining how school heads' innovative HRM practices influenced teacher career advancement. Collectively, Human Capital Theory explained the value of investing in teacher competencies, Human Resource Theory emphasized the role of organizational HR systems in supporting professional growth, and Transformational Leadership Theory highlighted the leadership behaviors that foster teacher motivation and engagement. Together, these theories guided the selection of the study variables, the development of the research instrument, and the interpretation of the findings. It also served as the basis for the proposed development program aimed at strengthening HRM practices that supported continuous teacher development and improved school performance.

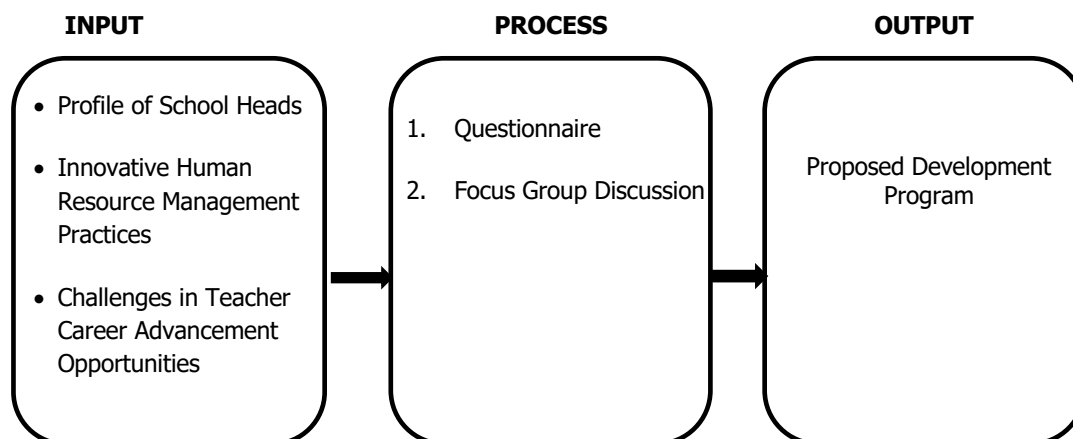
Conceptual Framework

Figure 1
Research Paradigm

This study presented a conceptual framework that illustrated how school heads' innovative human resource management (HRM) practices influenced teacher career advancement through several interconnected dimensions, while also considering the profile of school heads and the resulting proposed development plan. The profile of school heads served as an important factor that shaped how HRM practices were designed and implemented. Variations in these characteristics influenced leadership styles, decision-making, and the prioritization of programs that supported teacher development.

The first variable considered was the profile of school heads, which included age, position, length of service, and highest educational attainment. The second variable was the innovative Human Resource Management practices employed by school heads. These practices encompassed performance, attainment and application of education, training and development, employee engagement and accomplishment, research productivity and innovation, and the application of learning and development to support teacher growth and career advancement. The third variable was the challenges in teacher career advancement, which referred to the barriers and difficulties teachers encountered in progressing professionally, such as limited promotion opportunities, insufficient training access, workload constraints, and organizational or policy-related limitations.

The findings informed the proposed development program, which served as the practical output of the study. The program aimed to enhance HRM practices, address the identified challenges, and provide strategic recommendations to improve teacher career advancement.

Statement of the Problem

This study focused on examining the innovative human resource management (HRM) practices implemented by public secondary school heads and their influence on teachers' career advancement opportunities. In many educational institutions, teachers continue to experience limited access to equitable promotion opportunities, professional development programs, research engagement, mentoring, and other career advancement mechanisms that affect their professional growth, motivation, instructional effectiveness, and long-term commitment to the teaching profession. Although the Department of Education has introduced policies supporting career progression, variations remain in how these policies are implemented at the school level.

School heads play a critical role in creating supportive organizational environments through innovative HRM practices that promote teacher development, performance, engagement, and career progression. However, there remains limited empirical evidence regarding how these HRM practices influence teachers' career advancement opportunities, particularly within Philippine public secondary schools. Likewise, little is known about whether school heads and teachers share similar perceptions regarding the implementation of these HRM practices and the challenges affecting career advancement.

This study therefore sought to examine the innovative HRM practices of school heads, determine their relationship with selected profile variables, compare the assessments of school heads and teachers, identify the challenges affecting teacher career advancement opportunities, and develop a responsive program that may strengthen educational leadership, teacher professional development, and school effectiveness.

Objectives

General Objective

To examine the innovative human resource management practices of school heads and their influence on teacher career advancement opportunities in public secondary schools.

Specific Objectives

The study aimed to:

1. Describe the profile of school heads in terms of:
 - 1.1 age;
 - 1.2 position;
 - 1.3 length of service; and
 - 1.4 highest educational attainment.
2. Determine the level of implementation of innovative human resource management practices of school heads, as assessed by teachers and school heads, in terms of:
 - 2.1 performance;
 - 2.2 attainment and application of education;
 - 2.3 training and development;
 - 2.4 employee engagement and accomplishment;
 - 2.5 research productivity and innovation; and
 - 2.6 application of learning and development.
3. Determine whether a significant relationship exists between school heads' profile variables and their innovative human resource management practices.
4. Determine whether a significant difference exists between the assessments of teachers and school heads regarding innovative human resource management practices.
5. Identify the challenges affecting teacher career advancement opportunities.
6. Develop a responsive development program based on the findings of the study.

Research Questions

1. What is the profile of the school heads in terms of:
 - 1.1 age;
 - 1.2 position;
 - 1.3 length of service; and
 - 1.4 highest educational attainment?
2. What is the level of implementation of the innovative human resource management practices of school heads, as assessed by teachers and school heads, in terms of:
 - 2.1 performance;
 - 2.2 attainment and application of education;
 - 2.3 training and development;
 - 2.4 employee engagement and accomplishment;
 - 2.5 research productivity and innovation; and
 - 2.6 application of learning and development?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the profile variables of school heads and their innovative human resource management practices?
4. Is there a significant difference between the assessments of teachers and school heads regarding the implementation of innovative human resource management practices?
5. What challenges affect teacher career advancement opportunities?
6. What responsive development program may be proposed based on the findings of the study?

Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between the profile variables of school heads and the level of implementation of their innovative human resource management practices.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference between the assessments of teachers and school heads regarding the implementation of innovative human resource management practices.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a convergent parallel mixed methods research design, in which quantitative and qualitative data were collected concurrently, analyzed separately, and integrated during the interpretation of the findings to obtain a comprehensive understanding of school heads' innovative human resource management (HRM) practices and their influence on teacher career advancement opportunities. The quantitative component utilized a descriptive-correlational approach to describe school heads' innovative HRM practices, examine their relationship with selected profile variables, and compare the assessments of teachers and school heads. The qualitative component employed Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) to explore participants' experiences, perceptions, and insights regarding HRM practices and the challenges affecting teacher career advancement. Integrating both strands provided a richer and more comprehensive interpretation than either method could achieve independently.

The use of a mixed methods approach was particularly appropriate because quantitative data alone were insufficient to capture the complexity of innovative HRM practices and their influence on teacher career advancement. While the quantitative findings identified patterns, relationships, and differences among variables, they did not fully explain the underlying reasons for participants' perceptions or the contextual factors influencing these outcomes. The qualitative data obtained through the FGDs complemented the statistical results by providing detailed accounts of participants' lived experiences, clarifying unexpected or nuanced quantitative findings, and revealing contextual realities that could not be measured through survey instruments alone. Furthermore, integrating the qualitative and quantitative findings enabled triangulation, thereby enhancing the credibility and validity of the results while providing a more comprehensive understanding of how innovative HRM practices shape teachers' career advancement opportunities within the educational setting.

Population and Sampling

This study involved 360 respondents, consisting of 321 public secondary school teachers and 39 school heads from the Schools Division Offices of Lipa City, Tanauan City, and Santo Tomas. These respondents represented educational personnel directly involved in implementing and experiencing innovative human resource management (HRM) practices.

A non-probability sampling technique was employed. Specifically, total enumeration was used, wherein all teachers and school heads who met the inclusion criteria were invited to participate in the survey. The inclusion criteria were: (1) permanent public secondary school teachers or school heads assigned in the three divisions, (2) with at least one year of service in their current school, and (3) willing to participate in the study. Those on extended leave, with less than one year of service, or who declined participation were excluded.

For the qualitative phase, purposive sampling was used to select Focus Group Discussion (FGD) participants based on their relevant experiences and involvement in innovative HRM practices. Table presents the distribution of respondents across the three participating school divisions.

Table 1

Respondent Distribution

Division Office	Teachers Population	Teachers Sample	School Heads Population	School Heads Sample
A	969	162	17	16
B	400	67	6	5
C	547	92	16	15
Total	1,916	321	39	36

Research Instruments

The study utilized a researcher-made questionnaire consisting of 66 items organized into six dimensions: performance, attainment and application of education, training and development, employee engagement and accomplishment, research productivity and innovation, and application of learning and development (10,10,10,10,12, and 14 items respectively). Responses were measured using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from least evident to highly evident. The indicators were adapted from related literature and previous studies on human resource management and teacher competence and were modified to align with the objectives and context of the study.

Content Validation

The instrument underwent content validation by three subject-matter experts, consisting of:

- a Master Teacher
- a School Head, and
- an Education Program Supervisor.

Each validator possessed at least a doctorate's degree and extensive experience in school management. A 5-point Likert-type scale was used for validation, where 5 indicated *highly evident* and 1 indicated *least evident*.

Reliability Testing

Reliability testing was conducted through a pilot administration involving 14 teachers and 6 school heads who were not part of the actual study sample. Using Cronbach's alpha, the instrument yielded an excellent reliability ($\alpha = .97$), which indicated high internal consistency and suitability for research use.

Data Collection Procedure

After obtaining the necessary permissions and informed consent, the quantitative survey questionnaire and the qualitative Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted during the same phase of data collection. The completed questionnaires were encoded and analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques, while the FGD recordings were transcribed and analyzed thematically. The quantitative and qualitative findings were analyzed separately and integrated during the interpretation of the results in accordance with the Convergent Parallel Mixed Methods Research Design.

Treatment of Data

Appropriate statistical tools were employed to analyze the data in relation to the research objectives. The weighted mean was used to quantify the data regarding the level of implementation of the school heads' innovative human resource management practices and the challenges in teacher career advancement opportunities. The Chi-square test was utilized to examine the relationship between the school heads' profile variables, namely age, position, length of service, and highest educational attainment, and their innovative human resource management practices. The Mann-Whitney U test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference in the assessments of the implementation of HRM practices and career advancement opportunities for teachers between the two groups of respondents. All statistical tests were conducted at the 0.05 level of significance. Qualitative data obtained from the Focus Group Discussions were transcribed verbatim and analyzed using thematic analysis. Responses were coded, categorized into emerging themes, and integrated with the quantitative findings during interpretation to provide a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. The following scale continuum and its corresponding verbal interpretations were used.

Table 2

Verbal Interpretation

Options	Scale Range	Verbal Interpretation
4	3.50 – 4.00	Highly Evident / Strongly Agree
3	2.50 – 3.49	Evident / Agree
2	1.50 – 2.49	Moderately Evident / Disagree
1	1.00 – 1.49	Least Evident / Strongly Disagree

Ethical Considerations

Ethical standards were strictly observed throughout the conduct of the study. Prior to data collection, approval to conduct the research was obtained from the Schools Division Office and the heads of the participating schools.

Informed consent was obtained from all respondents after they were provided with clear information regarding the study's purpose, procedures, and expected benefits. Participation was voluntary, and respondents had the right to withdraw at any time without penalty. Confidentiality, anonymity, and privacy were maintained by ensuring that all personal information and responses from both the survey and the Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were kept secure and used solely for academic purposes. During the FGDs, participants were reminded to respect the confidentiality of shared information. All participants were treated with fairness, respect, and dignity throughout the research process. The study complied with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173), the Philippine law governing the protection of personal information and the privacy rights of individuals, and adhered to established principles of ethical research conduct.

RESULTS and DISCUSSION

Table 3

Profile of School Heads

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
31 to 40 years old	4	12.8
41 to 50 years old	15	41.0
51 years old and above	17	46.2
Position		
School Head	36	100
Length in Service		
5 years old and below	6	20.5
6 to 15 years	19	51.3
16 to 25 years	10	25.6
26 years and above	1	2.6
Highest Educational Attainment		
With Masteral units	1	2.8
Master's Degree	10	27.8
With Doctorate units	11	30.6
Doctorate Degree	14	38.8

Note. Percentages may not total exactly 100.0 due to rounding.

Table 3 showed that the majority of the school heads were 51 years old and above, followed by those aged 41–50 years, indicating that the respondents were predominantly experienced educational leaders. Most had 6–15 years of service, while the majority possessed doctoral qualifications or doctorate units, reflecting a highly qualified group of school administrators.

These findings might have been attributed to the nature of school leadership positions, which typically required years of teaching and administrative experience before appointment. The prevalence of respondents with advanced graduate education also reflected the increasing emphasis on professional preparation and leadership competence in educational administration. This finding was explained by Instructional Leadership Theory, which posited that experienced and academically prepared school heads were better equipped to improve teaching and learning through instructional supervision, teacher development, and evidence-based decision-making.

The OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) 2024 reported that school principals across participating education systems were generally experienced professionals who assumed leadership after years of teaching and administrative service and engaged in continuous professional learning (OECD, 2024). Furthermore, Gümüş et al. (2021) found that principals' leadership experience and participation in professional development were positively associated with school effectiveness, highlighting the importance of continuous leadership development.

The quantitative findings revealed that the respondents were predominantly experienced and highly educated school heads. These statistical results were corroborated and further explained by the qualitative findings, as participants consistently described experienced school heads as knowledgeable mentors who provided instructional guidance, professional coaching, and opportunities for continuous learning. Teachers reported that school heads' extensive leadership experience and advanced educational preparation enabled them to offer relevant feedback, facilitate professional development activities, and support career advancement. These qualitative accounts validated

the quantitative profile by demonstrating how respondents' experience and educational qualifications translated into leadership practices that directly influenced teachers' professional growth.

Moreover, the qualitative findings expanded the quantitative results by revealing differences in the implementation of mentoring practices across schools. Although the quantitative data indicated that the respondents generally possessed substantial leadership experience and advanced academic qualifications, participants explained that the quality, frequency, and consistency of mentoring depended on individual school heads' leadership approaches and school contexts. These narratives clarified that experience and educational attainment alone did not automatically ensure uniform mentoring practices, thereby providing contextual insights that could not be captured through the quantitative data alone.

The integration of both datasets therefore demonstrated that the quantitative findings established the demographic characteristics of the respondents, whereas the qualitative findings explained how these characteristics influenced instructional leadership practices in actual school settings. The qualitative evidence strengthened the interpretation of the statistical results by confirming that experienced and academically prepared school heads fostered teachers' professional development through mentoring, coaching, and instructional support while also identifying areas where more structured mentoring systems were still needed.

The integrated findings implied that teachers benefited most when experienced school leaders consistently translated their professional expertise into systematic mentoring and instructional guidance. Consequently, school heads needed to strengthen structured mentoring programs while preparing future educational leaders through succession planning. Curriculum developers were encouraged to integrate leadership, coaching, and mentoring competencies into professional development initiatives. Likewise, education policymakers were encouraged to continue investing in leadership preparation and continuous professional learning, while teacher education institutions needed to strengthen graduate programs that developed instructional leadership, mentoring, and school management competencies. These recommendations were informed not only by the quantitative profile of the respondents but also by the qualitative evidence that explained how leadership experience and advanced educational preparation influenced teachers' professional growth in practice.

Table 4*Innovative Human Resource Management Practices in terms of Performance*

Items	Teachers		School Heads	
	WM	VI	WM	VI
1. Engage teachers in capacity-building programs focused on technology-aided instruction	3.55	HE	3.69	HE
2. Exemplify on the utilization of evidence-based performance measurements	3.50	HE	3.82	HE
3. Customize training based on teachers' career stages	3.41	E	3.87	HE
4. Collaborate with teachers to design individualized upskilling roadmaps aligned with career goals.	3.51	HE	3.62	HE
5. Partner with universities to offer certified courses on hybrid teaching methodologies	3.06	E	2.95	E
6. Collaborate to continuously improve individual capabilities and team capacity	3.48	E	3.79	HE
7. Manage the implementation of the Program Implementation and Performance Review	3.59	HE	3.79	HE
8. Create a shared online hub for resources and best practices	3.36	E	3.28	E
9. Track teacher achievements using digital portfolio system	3.37	E	3.41	E
10. Align teachers' IPCRF goals with personalized career roadmaps, identifying training and competencies needed for promotion	3.59	HE	3.85	HE
Composite Mean	3.44	E	3.61	HE

Note. WM = Weighted Mean; VI = Verbal Interpretation; HE = Highly Evident; E = Evident.

Table 5*Verbal Interpretation Scale for Innovative Human Resource Management Practices*

Weighted Mean Range	Verbal Interpretation	Abbreviation
3.50–4.00	Highly Evident	HE
2.50–3.49	Evident	E
1.50–2.49	Moderately Evident	ME
1.00–1.49	Least Evident	LE

Note. The verbal interpretation is based on the weighted mean obtained from the respondents' assessments.

Table 4 presented the perceptions of teachers and school heads regarding innovative human resource management practices in terms of performance. The findings indicated that both teachers and school heads perceived innovative human resource management (HRM) practices related to performance as generally highly evident, with school heads reporting slightly more favorable perceptions than teachers. This difference may have reflected the school heads' greater involvement in planning, coordinating, and monitoring HR initiatives, whereas teachers experienced these practices primarily through their day-to-day implementation. Strong ratings for professional development, technology-based training, and performance management suggested that schools placed considerable emphasis on continuous teacher growth. In contrast, relatively lower ratings for university partnerships and digital HR systems indicated areas that required further institutional support and resource investment.

The qualitative findings corroborated these quantitative results by demonstrating that participants consistently described innovative HRM practices as contributing to improved instructional performance, professional growth, and organizational effectiveness. While the survey results showed generally high levels of implementation, the interview data explained why these practices were perceived positively by highlighting teachers' lived experiences with professional development, collaborative planning, mentoring, and technology-supported instructional improvement.

Teachers and school heads rated engaging teachers in capacity-building programs focused on technology-aided instruction highly. This statistical finding was reinforced by interview participants who shared that regular technology-related training enhanced their confidence in delivering instruction and enabled them to adapt more effectively to evolving educational demands. Participants emphasized that continuous capability-building strengthened both instructional competence and classroom performance, thereby explaining the high quantitative ratings.

Similarly, the implementation of evidence-based performance measurements received highly evident ratings from both teachers and school heads. Qualitative responses clarified that participants valued systematic monitoring and performance feedback because these practices provided clear performance expectations, facilitated professional reflection, and guided improvement planning. Thus, the interview findings validated the survey results by illustrating how evidence-based assessment supported teacher development.

The practice of customizing training according to teachers' career stages received an evident rating from teachers but a highly evident rating from school heads. Interview narratives helped explain this difference in perception. While school heads described differentiated professional development initiatives as regularly implemented, several teachers noted that opportunities sometimes depended on school priorities, available resources, and scheduling constraints. These qualitative insights clarified why teachers perceived implementation less strongly despite recognizing its value.

Likewise, collaborative design of individualized upskilling roadmaps received highly evident ratings from both respondent groups. Interview participants explained that collaborative planning enabled them to identify individual competency gaps, establish professional goals, and align development activities with career advancement, thereby expanding the interpretation of the quantitative findings beyond numerical ratings.

The partnership with universities for certified courses on hybrid teaching methodologies obtained the lowest ratings, both interpreted as Evident. The qualitative findings substantiated these lower ratings by revealing that participants experienced limited access to formal university partnerships because of funding limitations, scheduling conflicts, and the limited availability of specialized programs. Rather than contradicting the survey results, the interviews explained the institutional barriers that constrained broader implementation.

Similarly, collaboration to continuously improve individual capabilities and team capacity received favorable ratings. Interview participants emphasized that collaborative learning communities, peer mentoring, and regular professional discussions fostered knowledge sharing and strengthened collective instructional capacity. These

narratives validated the positive quantitative assessments while providing richer explanations regarding the mechanisms through which collaboration enhanced performance.

The implementation of the Program Implementation and Performance Review was also rated highly by both groups. Qualitative evidence further demonstrated that regular monitoring, coaching, and constructive feedback promoted accountability and encouraged continuous improvement among teachers, thereby reinforcing the statistical findings.

The creation of a shared online hub for instructional resources and the use of digital portfolio systems both received Evident ratings from teachers and school heads. Interview participants explained that although these digital initiatives improved access to instructional materials and documentation, inconsistent internet connectivity, varying levels of digital competence, and limited technological infrastructure reduced their full utilization. These qualitative themes clarified why these indicators received comparatively lower ratings.

Finally, aligning teachers' Individual Performance Commitment and Review Form (IPCRF) goals with personalized career roadmaps received among the highest ratings from both respondent groups. Interview participants consistently described this practice as motivating because it linked performance evaluation with professional development opportunities, promotion pathways, and competency enhancement. These qualitative findings therefore corroborated the strong quantitative results by illustrating how strategic performance planning encouraged sustained professional growth.

Overall, the integration of qualitative and quantitative findings demonstrated convergence between the two data sources. The qualitative themes supported, validated, and expanded the statistical results by explaining participants' experiences, contextual factors, and organizational conditions that influenced the implementation of innovative HRM practices. This integration strengthened the interpretation of the mixed-methods findings by providing a more comprehensive understanding of how innovative HRM practices contributed to teacher performance and professional development. These findings were consistent with recent studies emphasizing that effective HRM practices improve employee capability, organizational learning, and educational performance when quantitative outcomes are interpreted alongside participants' lived experiences (OECD, 2023).

Table 6*Innovative Human Resource Management Practices in terms of Attainment and Application of Education*

Items	Teachers		School Heads	
	WM	VI	WM	VI
1. Use educational insights to develop a strategic vision for the school's growth and development	3.53	HE	3.82	HE
2. Develop inclusive support systems to close professional gaps, enabling every teacher to advance in their career through tailored training and fair evaluation processes	3.51	HE	3.82	HE
3. Organize staff development programs and workshops to promote professional growth	3.55	HE	3.77	HE
4. Implement differentiated instruction workshops to equip teachers with adaptive techniques for diverse learners.	3.53	HE	3.67	HE
5. Integrate evidence-based literacy, numeracy, and engagement training into teacher career pathways	3.50	HE	3.79	HE
6. Require quarterly data analysis workshops where teachers demonstrate how assessment insights inform instruction	3.49	E	3.72	HE
7. Apply data insights to adjust teaching strategies, allocate resources effectively, and personalize learning experiences	3.51	HE	3.44	E
8. Involve teachers in educational research and action research projects	3.48	E	3.51	HE
9. Provide career advancement opportunities to consistently high-performing teachers	3.48	E	3.69	HE
10. Develop a tiered recognition system for teachers	3.50	HE	3.62	HE
Composite Mean	3.51	HE	3.68	HE

Note. WM = Weighted Mean; VI = Verbal Interpretation; HE = Highly Evident; E = Evident.

Table 6 indicated that both teachers and school heads perceived innovative human resource management (HRM) practices in the attainment and application of education as highly evident. School heads consistently reported higher ratings than teachers, whereas teachers assigned comparatively lower ratings to data analysis workshops, involvement in action research, and career advancement opportunities, suggesting that these aspects required further enhancement.

The qualitative findings corroborated these quantitative results by demonstrating that participants in the focus group discussions consistently recognized professional development activities, instructional training, and recognition programs as valuable mechanisms for improving teachers' competencies. These qualitative themes validated the statistical evidence that innovative HRM practices were highly evident across schools.

Moreover, the qualitative evidence explained why teachers assigned relatively lower ratings to selected HRM practices. Participants described inconsistencies in mentoring programs, unequal access to research opportunities, limited support for action research, and varying implementation of data-driven instructional practices across schools. These experiences clarified the quantitative differences between teachers' and school heads' perceptions by revealing implementation gaps that were not fully reflected in the numerical ratings. Thus, while the statistical findings indicated a generally high level of HRM practice implementation, the qualitative results demonstrated that the quality and consistency of implementation varied among schools.

The integration of both datasets strengthened the interpretation that innovative HRM practices were generally effective but required more systematic implementation to ensure equitable professional learning opportunities. The qualitative findings expanded the quantitative results by illustrating how teachers experienced these practices in their daily professional work, thereby providing contextual evidence that explained the observed statistical patterns. This integrated interpretation supported Human Capital Theory, which posited that sustained investments in teachers' knowledge, professional competencies, mentoring, and research capabilities enhanced organizational effectiveness and educational quality. The qualitative accounts further suggested that the benefits of HRM initiatives were maximized when professional development, coaching, and research support were implemented consistently across schools.

These integrated findings were consistent with previous studies emphasizing the importance of instructional leadership and professional learning in strengthening teacher development. Thien et al. (2024) found that instructional leadership promoted teacher professional learning through enhanced teacher self-efficacy, while Dorukbaşı and Cansoy (2024) reported that teacher professional learning mediated the relationship between instructional leadership and instructional practices. Similarly, He et al. (2024) concluded that principals' instructional leadership significantly predicted teachers' professional development, and Galdames-Calderón (2023) emphasized that distributed leadership strengthened teacher professional growth and school improvement through collaborative practices. Furthermore, Guetterman et al. (2021) argued that integrating quantitative and qualitative evidence in mixed methods research enhanced the completeness, transparency, and rigor of research interpretations by allowing qualitative findings to explain, contextualize, and enrich statistical results through explicit integration strategies such as joint displays.

The integrated findings implied that teachers needed to engage actively in continuous professional development, action research, and data-informed instructional improvement while utilizing available mentoring and coaching opportunities. School heads needed to institutionalize structured mentoring systems, equitable research support, and consistent professional learning programs that addressed the implementation gaps identified in the qualitative findings. Curriculum developers needed to strengthen teacher development initiatives by integrating research competencies, data literacy, differentiated instruction, and collaborative learning opportunities that reflected both the statistical trends and teachers' lived experiences. Likewise, education policymakers needed to reinforce policies supporting sustained professional development, instructional leadership, equitable career advancement, and evidence-based teaching practices. Teacher education institutions also needed to prepare future educators with competencies in instructional leadership, research, collaboration, reflective practice, and data-informed decision-making to sustain innovative HRM practices across educational settings.

Table 7

Innovative Human Resource Management Practices in terms of Training and Development

Items	Teachers		School Heads	
	WM	VI	WM	VI
1. Arrange orientation sessions to introduce the Career Advancement Opportunities program to teachers	3.55	HE	3.77	HE

2. Identify specific areas where teachers need professional development	3.51	HE	3.85	HE
3. Align professional development goals with school improvement plans	3.57	HE	3.95	HE
4. Collaborate with teachers to set clear, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timebound (SMART) goals for professional development	3.50	HE	3.82	HE
5. Create comprehensive professional development plans tailored to the needs of the staff	3.51	HE	3.44	E
6. Choose external training programs after collecting enough information about their quality and suitability	3.49	E	3.33	E
7. Facilitate teacher participation in external seminars and conferences by organizing workshops	3.45	E	3.49	E
8. Encourage teachers to join and participate in professional organizations related to their field	3.48	E	3.44	E
9. Focus training programs on developing the technical and managerial capabilities of teachers	3.49	E	3.74	HE
10. Establish a structured mentorship and leadership development program to guide early-career teachers	3.50	HE	3.85	HE
Composite Mean	3.50	HE	3.67	HE

Note. *WM* = Weighted Mean; *VI* = Verbal Interpretation; *HE* = Highly Evident; *E* = Evident.

Table 7 showed that both teachers and school heads perceived training and development practices as highly evident. School heads consistently gave higher ratings, particularly in identifying professional development needs, aligning training with school improvement plans, and establishing mentoring programs. However, lower ratings for participation in external seminars and the selection of external training programs indicated areas needing improvement.

The qualitative findings directly supported these statistical results by demonstrating that the high quantitative ratings reflected the participants' actual experiences in implementing school-based professional development initiatives. During the Focus Group Discussion (FGD), both teachers and school heads consistently described regular Learning Action Cells (LAC), mentoring sessions, peer coaching, and in-service training as essential mechanisms that enhanced instructional competence, collaboration, and professional confidence. These narratives confirmed that the highly evident quantitative ratings were not merely perceptions but were grounded in the schools' established professional development practices.

The qualitative themes also clarified why school heads assigned consistently higher ratings than teachers in identifying professional development needs, aligning training with school improvement plans, and establishing mentoring programs. School heads explained that they were directly involved in planning, organizing, and monitoring these activities, whereas teachers primarily experienced the implementation phase. This difference in organizational roles explained the variation in perceptions while simultaneously validating the overall positive quantitative findings regarding training and development practices.

Similarly, the qualitative evidence explained the relatively lower quantitative ratings for participation in external seminars and the selection of external training programs. FGD participants consistently reported that insufficient funding, limited training slots, scheduling conflicts, heavy teaching workloads, and competing administrative responsibilities restricted teachers' opportunities to participate in external professional development activities. These experiences provided contextual explanations for the statistical results by identifying organizational and resource-related barriers that were not fully captured through the survey alone. Thus, the qualitative findings expanded the interpretation of the quantitative data by revealing the underlying reasons behind the comparatively lower ratings.

The convergence of the quantitative and qualitative findings strengthened the interpretation of the results through the lens of Human Resource Theory, Human Capital Theory, and Transformational Leadership Theory. The high quantitative ratings for school-based professional development, together with the participants' descriptions of mentoring, peer coaching, and collaborative learning, demonstrated that strategic investments in human resources enhanced teachers' competencies and professional growth. At the same time, the qualitative evidence showed that transformational leadership practices facilitated supportive learning environments, while organizational constraints such as limited funding and workload affected equitable access to external professional development opportunities.

Consequently, the qualitative findings both validated and extended the theoretical explanations derived from the quantitative results.

The integrated findings were consistent with recent international literature. Ambon et al. (2024) reported that continuous professional development became more effective when supported by instructional leadership and collaborative learning structures. Likewise, Ventista and Brown (2023) found that sustained, school-based professional learning communities enhanced teacher effectiveness through mentoring, coaching, and collaborative reflection. Similarly, the OECD (2023) emphasized that high-quality professional development should combine school-based learning with equitable access to external training opportunities supported by adequate institutional resources. These studies reinforced the present findings by demonstrating that collaborative professional development improved teacher competence while organizational support remained essential for ensuring broader participation in external learning opportunities.

Overall, the integration of the quantitative and qualitative findings demonstrated strong convergence between the two datasets. The qualitative evidence corroborated the statistical findings by confirming that effective school-based professional development practices had been consistently implemented across schools. It also explained the differences observed in the quantitative ratings by revealing the influence of leadership roles, resource availability, workload, and funding constraints. Furthermore, the qualitative findings expanded the interpretation of the quantitative results by illustrating how teachers and school heads experienced professional development within their organizational contexts. This convergence enhanced the credibility and validity of the mixed-method findings because both forms of evidence consistently supported the conclusion that effective school-based professional development promoted teacher competence while limited external learning opportunities remained a continuing challenge.

These findings implied that teachers should actively engage in continuous professional learning, school heads should strengthen mentoring and equitable training opportunities, curriculum developers should align professional development with current educational reforms, policymakers should provide sustainable funding and institutional support for external training programs, and teacher education institutions should integrate mentoring, collaborative learning, and lifelong professional development into pre-service teacher preparation.

Table 8*Innovative Human Resource Management Practices in terms of Employee Engagement and Accomplishment*

Items	Teachers		School Heads	
	WM	VI	WM	VI
1.Foster a positive work environment that encourages collaboration, innovation, and professional growth	3.60	HE	3.95	HE
2.Involve teachers, staff, and parent's indecision-making processes, providing them with a sense of ownership and responsibility	3.57	HE	3.90	HE
3.Facilitate career progression through training and promotions	3.55	HE	3.95	HE
4.Empower teachers to make decisions about their classrooms and curriculum	3.59	HE	3.95	HE
5.Create opportunities for teachers to share best practices, participate in research projects, and engage in peer mentoring	3.60	HE	3.95	HE
6.Provide teachers with support and guidance on teaching standards, instructional strategies, and assessment techniques	3.51	HE	3.95	HE
7.Conduct performance evaluations that are constructive and focused on growth and improvement	3.60	HE	3.97	HE
8.Recommend high-potential teachers for scholarships and promotions	3.48	E	3.92	HE
9.Recognize and reward the accomplishments of the employees	3.49	E	3.82	HE
10.Establish a system for recognition and appreciation of teachers' accomplishments	3.48	E	3.74	HE
Composite Mean	3.55	HE	3.91	HE

Note. WM = Weighted Mean; VI = Verbal Interpretation; HE = Highly Evident; E = Evident.

Table 8 showed that both teachers and school heads perceived employee engagement and accomplishment practices as highly evident, with school heads consistently providing higher ratings than teachers. The highest-rated practices included fostering a positive work environment, teacher empowerment, collaboration, and developmental performance evaluation, whereas teachers assigned relatively lower ratings to recognition, scholarships, and promotion opportunities. These findings suggested that although collaborative human resource management (HRM) practices had been well established, formal recognition and career advancement opportunities had required further strengthening. These patterns could have been attributed to participative leadership practices that promoted collaboration, professional growth, and shared decision-making, although limited institutional resources and restricted promotion opportunities may have influenced teachers' perceptions of recognition. The findings were supported by Transformational Leadership Theory, which proposed that leaders who empowered, supported, and recognized teachers enhanced motivation, engagement, and organizational commitment.

A systematic review by Martono et al. (2026) reported that principal leadership, supportive school culture, and professional development were among the strongest predictors of teacher engagement. Likewise, Vargas-Madriz et al. (2024) found that supportive teacher relationships and positive school climates significantly enhanced teacher engagement and organizational commitment.

The qualitative findings from the Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) directly corroborated these quantitative results by explaining how teachers experienced the collaborative HRM practices reflected in the high survey ratings. Participants consistently described their school heads as approachable, supportive, and willing to involve teachers in planning, decision-making, and professional learning activities. These experiences validated the statistically high ratings for teacher empowerment, teamwork, supportive work environments, and developmental performance evaluation, demonstrating that collaborative leadership practices were not only perceived in the survey but were also evident in teachers' daily professional experiences.

The FGDs also clarified the comparatively lower quantitative ratings for recognition, scholarships, and promotion opportunities. Participants explained that while school leaders frequently expressed verbal appreciation and informal acknowledgment of teachers' accomplishments, formal recognition programs, scholarship opportunities, and promotion processes had been implemented inconsistently across schools. Teachers attributed these inconsistencies to limited institutional resources, varying administrative practices, budget constraints, and the limited availability of higher plantilla positions. These qualitative accounts explained why collaborative leadership practices received consistently high ratings while accomplishment-related indicators remained comparatively lower, thereby providing contextual explanations for the observed statistical patterns.

The convergence of both quantitative and qualitative findings strengthened the credibility of the study through methodological triangulation. Rather than functioning independently, the qualitative evidence validated the statistical findings and expanded their interpretation by revealing contextual factors that influenced teachers' perceptions of employee engagement and accomplishment practices. The statistical data established the overall level of implementation, whereas the qualitative themes explained the organizational conditions that either facilitated or constrained teachers' experiences. This integration demonstrated complementarity between the two datasets and provided a more comprehensive understanding of how HRM practices were implemented within public elementary schools.

The integrated findings also reinforced Transformational Leadership Theory by demonstrating that collaborative leadership practices fostered teacher engagement through empowerment, trust, supportive relationships, and professional collaboration. However, the qualitative evidence further suggested that sustaining teachers' long-term motivation depended not only on supportive leadership behaviors but also on transparent, equitable, and consistently implemented systems for recognizing performance and facilitating professional advancement. Thus, the qualitative findings expanded the theoretical interpretation by showing that transformational leadership became more effective when empowerment was complemented by meaningful recognition and equitable career development opportunities (Martono et al., 2026; Vargas-Madriz et al., 2024).

The integrated findings implied that teachers would have benefited from continued participation in collaborative professional learning communities while receiving equitable access to recognition programs, scholarships, and promotion opportunities. School heads were encouraged to strengthen transparent and consistent recognition and career advancement systems that complemented their existing collaborative leadership practices. Curriculum developers were encouraged to integrate collaborative leadership, teacher recognition, and career development strategies into school improvement initiatives. Likewise, education policymakers were encouraged to expand equitable professional development programs, scholarship opportunities, and transparent promotion mechanisms across schools. Teacher education institutions were likewise encouraged to prepare future teachers for collaborative professional cultures while emphasizing continuous professional learning, leadership development, and career progression.

Table 9*Innovative Human Resource Management Practices in terms of Research Productivity and Innovation*

Items	Teachers		School Heads	
	WM	VI	WM	VI
1. Promote a culture of innovation within the school by providing access to technology	3.48	E	3.62	HE
2. Encourage the use of innovative technological tools in teaching that can lead to new research on their effectiveness and impact	3.45	E	3.56	HE
3. Foster an environment where experimentation and creative problem solving are valued	3.42	E	3.46	E
4. Allocate specific time within teachers' schedules for conducting research	3.41	E	3.64	HE
5. Collaborate with external organizations to provide mentorship, resources, and opportunities for teacher research	3.39	E	3.51	HE
6. Encourage innovative approaches and methodologies in research activities	3.39	E	3.44	E
7. Create a platform for teachers to share their research findings and innovative practices within the school community	3.37	E	3.10	E
8. Collaborate with external organizations and institutions for advanced research and innovation	3.35	E	3.36	E
9. Obtain grants and funding for research projects	3.29	E	3.13	E
10. Conduct research symposia where teacher scan presents their research findings	3.36	E	3.38	E
11. Encourage the use of Open Educational Resources (OER)	3.46	E	3.59	HE
12. Aim to publish research articles in high impact and peer-reviewed journals	3.43	E	3.69	HE
Composite Mean	3.40	E	3.46	E

Note. WM = Weighted Mean; VI = Verbal Interpretation.

Table 9 showed that teachers and school heads had perceived research productivity and innovation practices as evident. School heads generally gave higher ratings than teachers, particularly regarding the provision of research time, promotion of research publication, and encouragement of the use of Open Educational Resources, whereas both groups rated research funding as the least evident practice.

The qualitative findings directly corroborated, validated, and explained these quantitative results by revealing the contextual factors that influenced participants' perceptions of research productivity and innovation practices. Rather than merely confirming that research initiatives were evident, the qualitative evidence clarified why these practices remained only moderately implemented despite existing institutional efforts. During the focus group discussions, teachers consistently acknowledged that school leaders encouraged research participation and innovation; however, they explained that the effectiveness of these initiatives depended largely on the consistency of their implementation across schools. Participants described limited research funding, heavy teaching workloads, insufficient mentoring, lack of protected research time, and inadequate institutional support as persistent barriers that constrained their ability to conduct and complete research activities. These qualitative themes therefore validated the lower quantitative ratings for research funding and clarified why teachers perceived lower levels of research support than school heads.

The integration of both datasets further explained the disparity between the perceptions of school heads and teachers. While school heads generally perceived research-related initiatives as sufficiently implemented because policies, training opportunities, and research activities had been provided, teachers emphasized that the availability of these initiatives did not always translate into meaningful research engagement. Instead, they reported that practical

constraints, including competing instructional responsibilities, limited financial assistance, and insufficient research guidance, reduced the effectiveness of institutional research programs. Consequently, the qualitative findings explained the statistical differences between respondent groups by demonstrating that teachers evaluated research productivity based on their actual experiences in implementing research rather than solely on the existence of institutional initiatives.

The qualitative findings also expanded the quantitative results by illustrating that access to technology, research seminars, publication opportunities, and innovation programs alone did not necessarily increase research productivity. Participants explained that these opportunities became effective only when accompanied by sustained mentoring, collaborative research cultures, administrative encouragement, workload adjustments, protected research time, and adequate financial support. This finding extended the quantitative evidence by demonstrating that the quality, consistency, and accessibility of research support mechanisms were equally important as the availability of research initiatives themselves. Thus, the qualitative evidence enriched the statistical findings by identifying the organizational conditions that enabled or constrained teachers' research engagement.

These integrated findings were further explained through Transformational Leadership Theory, which posited that leaders fostered innovation by inspiring a shared vision, providing intellectual stimulation, and supporting employees' professional growth. The quantitative findings demonstrated that school heads generally perceived themselves as implementing research-supportive leadership practices, whereas the qualitative narratives clarified that teachers became more motivated and confident to conduct research only when these leadership practices were consistently translated into concrete support mechanisms, including continuous mentoring, recognition of research accomplishments, collaborative learning opportunities, administrative assistance, and adequate resource allocation. Conversely, participants explained that inconsistent leadership support, insufficient funding, and the absence of structured mentoring reduced teachers' motivation and capacity to sustain research activities. These qualitative insights therefore explained the lower quantitative ratings assigned to research funding and institutional support while validating the importance of transformational leadership in strengthening teachers' research productivity and innovation practices.

The convergence of the quantitative and qualitative findings indicated that improving research productivity required more than the implementation of research policies and innovation programs. Instead, both datasets consistently demonstrated that sustained organizational support, effective instructional leadership, adequate funding, protected research time, collaborative professional learning, and continuous mentoring collectively influenced teachers' capacity to engage in meaningful research. The qualitative findings therefore strengthened and expanded the quantitative results by explaining the mechanisms through which institutional support translated into higher levels of research productivity and innovation.

These integrated findings implied that educational leaders needed to strengthen structured mentoring programs, provide sustainable research incentives, establish partnerships with higher education institutions, allocate protected research time, reduce workload-related barriers, and ensure that research support mechanisms were implemented consistently across schools. Similarly, teachers needed to actively participate in collaborative research initiatives, curriculum developers needed to strengthen research competencies within professional development programs, policymakers needed to expand research funding and incentive systems, and teacher education institutions needed to prepare future teachers as competent practitioner-researchers capable of sustaining evidence-based educational innovation.

A systematic review by Grierson et al. (2022) likewise concluded that teacher research productivity increased when schools provided structured mentoring, collaborative inquiry, and dedicated research time. Similarly, Nguyen and Dao (2023) reported that high-performance human resource management practices fostered innovation by strengthening employee development, organizational support, and leadership practices. Their findings suggested that organizations achieved better performance when innovation was supported through systematic human resource management practices and a supportive organizational environment. The convergence between the present quantitative and qualitative findings and those of Nguyen and Dao (2023) strengthened the evidence that comprehensive organizational support, rather than isolated research initiatives, played a critical role in enhancing teachers' research productivity and innovation practices.

Table 10*Innovative Human Resource Management Practices in terms of Application of Learning and Development*

Items	Teachers		School Heads	
	WM	VI	WM	VI
1. Equip teachers with the knowledge to design and implement personalized learning plans	3.50	HE	3.87	HE

2.	Align the school's Learning & Development programs with the Department of Education's policies and goals	3.58	HE	3.92	HE
3.	Enhance teaching through interactive tools, online resources, and blended learning methods	3.46	E	3.64	HE
4.	Utilize a rubric-based observation system focusing on specific teaching skills and pedagogical approaches learned during L&D	3.49	E	3.74	HE
5.	Create digital dashboards to track teacher participation in L&D activities and progress towards goals	3.45	E	3.79	HE
6.	Conduct action research projects that can be shared with colleagues, fostering a culture of continuous improvement	3.50	HE	3.54	HE
7.	Invite experts in education or specific L&D areas to share their insights and best practices with teachers	3.42	E	3.87	HE
8.	Lead professional development sessions for colleagues, sharing knowledge and expertise in specific areas	3.40	E	3.87	HE
9.	Encourage teachers to experiment with new teaching methods, technologies, and approaches to learning	3.47	E	3.74	HE
10.	Establish Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)	3.42	E	3.79	HE
11.	Organize webinars and online workshops to provide teachers with access to ongoing professional development opportunities	3.44	E	3.79	HE
12.	Promote a cycle of continuous improvement through reflective practices	3.46	E	3.54	HE
13.	Establish continuous learning initiatives that encourage ongoing professional development	3.39	E	3.56	HE
14.	Share best practices and the development of innovative teaching strategies	3.41	E	3.56	HE
Composite Mean		3.46	E	3.73	HE

Note. *WM* = Weighted Mean; *VI* = Verbal Interpretation.

Table 10 showed that teachers perceived the application of learning and development (L&D) practices as evident, whereas school heads rated them as highly evident. Both groups highly rated the alignment of L&D programs with Department of Education policies, the development of personalized learning plans, and the conduct of action research. However, teachers assigned comparatively lower ratings to professional learning communities, technology integration, peer-led professional development, and digital monitoring.

The quantitative findings were corroborated and further explained by the focus group discussion (FGD), which revealed that although teachers acknowledged the value of professional development initiatives, they consistently reported that mentoring, collaborative learning opportunities, technology-supported learning, and follow-up support after training were implemented inconsistently across schools. These qualitative accounts directly explained the lower ratings assigned by teachers on collaborative and technology-supported L&D practices by demonstrating that professional development activities were generally available but were not uniformly sustained or supported during implementation. Consequently, the qualitative evidence clarified that the statistical differences between teachers and school heads reflected variations in implementation quality rather than disagreement regarding the importance of L&D practices.

The qualitative themes further expanded the quantitative findings by demonstrating that the effectiveness of L&D practices depended not only on the provision of professional development opportunities but also on continuous mentoring, structured professional learning communities, peer collaboration, digital monitoring, and sustained coaching that enabled teachers to transfer newly acquired knowledge into classroom practice. Thus, while the quantitative results established that L&D practices were generally evident across schools, the qualitative findings revealed important contextual factors that influenced teachers' perceptions of implementation effectiveness, thereby providing a deeper explanation of the statistical results.

The integrated findings suggested that although schools had invested in professional development initiatives, the consistency and quality of implementation varied across schools. The FGD findings validated the quantitative results by showing that teachers experienced uneven mentoring, collaboration, and follow-up mechanisms after training, which likely contributed to their relatively lower perceptions compared with school heads. These integrated findings supported

Human Capital Theory, which posited that investments in employee learning and development enhanced knowledge, skills, productivity, and organizational performance. The quantitative evidence demonstrated that L&D practices were generally implemented, whereas the qualitative evidence clarified that the full benefits of these investments depended on sustained implementation support, collaborative learning structures, continuous coaching, and systematic opportunities for reflection and practice. Therefore, the integration of both datasets indicated that investments in professional development alone were insufficient unless accompanied by organizational mechanisms that facilitated the transfer of learning into classroom practice.

The integrated findings were consistent with recent empirical evidence. Chiang et al. (2024) concluded that professional learning communities were most effective when schools provided structured collaboration, supportive leadership, and opportunities for collective inquiry rather than relying solely on one-time workshop-based professional development. These findings corroborated the FGD results, in which teachers emphasized inconsistent collaboration and mentoring, thereby explaining the comparatively lower quantitative ratings for professional learning communities. Similarly, Hayes et al. (2024) found that supportive leadership, collaborative school cultures, and protected time for professional learning significantly influenced teachers' ability to implement professional development in classroom practice. These findings validated both the quantitative and qualitative results by confirming that implementation quality depended on organizational conditions beyond merely providing professional development opportunities. Likewise, Zosh et al. (2024) demonstrated across three international contexts that professional development was most effective when it was contextualized, sustained, and accompanied by continuous implementation support rather than isolated training sessions. This finding directly reinforced the qualitative evidence showing teachers' need for continuous mentoring and follow-up after training while simultaneously explaining the lower quantitative ratings for peer-led professional development, technology integration, and digital monitoring. Furthermore, the OECD (2023) emphasized that continuous professional learning, collaborative cultures, and sustained instructional support strengthened teacher effectiveness and promoted long-term school improvement, thereby further validating the integrated findings of the present study.

The convergence of the quantitative and qualitative evidence demonstrated that strengthening learning and development required more than increasing teachers' access to professional development opportunities. Instead, both datasets consistently indicated that effective implementation depended on institutionalized mentoring systems, collaborative professional learning communities, technology-supported learning environments, digital monitoring, and continuous follow-up mechanisms that enabled teachers to sustain professional growth.

Accordingly, teachers were encouraged to apply newly acquired knowledge through collaborative learning, reflective practice, and action research, while school heads were encouraged to institutionalize coaching, mentoring, peer learning, and digital monitoring to sustain professional growth. Curriculum developers were encouraged to design job-embedded professional development that promoted continuous collaboration, reflective inquiry, and practical application of learning. Education policymakers were likewise encouraged to provide sustained funding, implementation support, and systematic monitoring to ensure equitable access to high-quality professional learning opportunities across schools. Furthermore, teacher education programs were encouraged to prepare future teachers for lifelong professional learning, collaborative practice, technology-enabled instruction, and evidence-based teaching, thereby maximizing the long-term benefits of investments in human capital.

Table 11

Relationship of the Level of Evidence of School Heads' Innovative Human Resource Management Practices with Profile Variables

Dimensions	Pearson χ^2	p-values	Decision	VI
Age				
Performance	1.1886	.756	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
Attainment and Application of Education	.922	.820	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
Training and Development	1.464	.691	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
Employee Engagement and Accomplishment	3.287	.349	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
Research Productivity and Innovation	.925	.819	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
Application of Learning and Development	2.125	.547	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
Length of Service				
Performance	7.946	.047	Reject	Significant
Attainment and Application of Education	4.778	.189	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
Training and Development	3.800	.284	Failed to Reject	Not Significant

Employee Engagement and Accomplishment	1.489	.685	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
Research Productivity and Innovation	2.176	.537	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
Application of Learning and Development	5.881	.118	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
Highest Educational Attainment				
Performance	1.686	.640	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
Attainment and Application of Education	1.205	.752	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
Training and Development	1.936	.586	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
Employee Engagement and Accomplishment	3.373	.338	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
Research Productivity and Innovation	1.466	.690	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
Application of Learning and Development	.445	.931	Failed to Reject	Not Significant

Note. χ^2 = Pearson chi-square test statistic. H_0 = null hypothesis. Statistical significance was evaluated at $\alpha = .05$. A p -value less than .05 indicates a statistically significant relationship between the profile variable and the corresponding dimension of innovative human resource management practices.

Table 12. Verbal Interpretation Scale for Test of Relationship

p -Value	Decision	Verbal Interpretation
$p < .05$	Reject H_0	Significant
$p \geq .05$	Fail to reject H_0	Not significant

Note. Statistical decisions were based on a significance level of $\alpha = .05$ following APA 7th Edition reporting standards.

Table 12 showed that age and highest educational attainment had no significant relationship with any dimension of innovative human resource management (HRM) practices among school heads. This suggested that innovative HRM practices were implemented consistently regardless of the school heads' demographic characteristics, likely because of standardized DepEd policies and leadership guidelines.

The qualitative findings corroborated these statistical results, as FGD participants consistently described that HRM decisions and leadership practices were implemented based on established school policies, Department of Education standards, collaborative planning, and shared accountability rather than on the personal characteristics of school heads. Teachers explained that performance expectations, professional development activities, and HRM processes were uniformly implemented across schools, reinforcing the quantitative finding that age and highest educational attainment did not significantly influence the application of innovative HRM practices.

However, length of service was significantly related to performance, indicating that more experienced school heads had developed stronger competencies in performance management through years of practice and leadership experience. This aligned with Mallillin et al. (2024), who emphasized that HRM functions in schools involved performance monitoring, training and development, and the effective utilization of employees' skills and experiences to improve organizational outcomes.

The FGD findings further validated this significant relationship by revealing that participants perceived experienced school heads as more competent in providing instructional supervision, conducting performance coaching, facilitating mentoring, resolving workplace concerns, and implementing evidence-based performance improvement strategies. These qualitative insights explained why length of service, rather than demographic characteristics, demonstrated a significant association with performance management, as sustained leadership experience enabled school heads to refine practical HRM competencies that may not have been acquired through formal educational attainment alone.

The convergence of the quantitative and qualitative findings therefore strengthened the interpretation that while standardized DepEd policies promoted consistency in implementing innovative HRM practices across school heads, accumulated leadership experience enhanced the quality of performance management through continuous application, reflection, and professional practice. Thus, the qualitative evidence not only supported the statistical findings but also clarified the underlying mechanisms through which leadership experience contributed to stronger HRM performance.

This finding was consistent with Aquino et al. (2024), who reported that teachers perceived school heads' HRM practices as involving workload management, listening to teachers' concerns, providing technical assistance, and creating supportive work environments.

The integrated findings were further explained by Human Capital Theory, which proposed that competencies were developed through continuous learning, accumulated professional experience, and sustained workplace practice rather than demographic characteristics alone. The statistical significance of length of service, together with participants' descriptions of effective coaching, mentoring, collaborative decision-making, and performance monitoring, demonstrated how experiential learning strengthened leadership competencies and innovative HRM implementation over time.

The findings implied that teachers needed to actively engage in HRM initiatives and professional learning opportunities to maximize the benefits of supportive leadership practices. School heads needed to strengthen performance coaching, mentoring, and evidence-based feedback mechanisms that capitalized on their accumulated leadership experience while maintaining consistent implementation of standardized HRM policies. Curriculum developers needed to integrate leadership development, coaching, and performance management competencies into educational leadership programs. Likewise, education policymakers needed to sustain competency-based leadership development initiatives and mentoring programs for newly appointed school heads, while teacher education institutions needed to emphasize continuous professional learning and leadership competency development to prepare future school leaders for effective HRM implementation.

Table 13
Comparison of Respondents' Assessments

Item	Teacher Mean Rank	School Heads Mean Rank	U value	Z-value	P-value	Decision on Ho	Verbal Interpretation
Performance	191.44	177.60	5330	.771	.441	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
Attainment and Application of Education	202.45	176.37	4933	1.473	.141	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
Training and Development	184.44	178.39	5582	.343	.731	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
Employee Engagement and Accomplishment	239.93	172.17	3584	3.918	.000	Reject	Significant
Research Productivity and Innovation	172.42	179.74	5541	.410	.682	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
Application of Learning and Development	218.82	174.63	4344	2.482	.013	Reject	Significant

Note. Mann–Whitney *U* test was used to determine whether significant differences existed between teachers' and school heads' assessments. Statistical significance was set at $\alpha = .05$. H_0 = null hypothesis.

Table 14
*Decision Rule and Verbal Interpretation for the Mann–Whitney *U* Test*

Statistical Result	Decision on H_0	Verbal Interpretation
$p \leq .05$	Reject H_0	Significant
$p > .05$	Failed to reject H_0	Not significant

Note. Statistical significance was determined at the .05 level of significance.

Table 13 presented the difference in the assessment of teachers and school heads regarding innovative human resource management (HRM) practices. Results showed no significant differences in performance, attainment and application of education, training and development, and research productivity and innovation. This indicated that both groups had similar perceptions of these HRM practices, which might have been attributed to their shared exposure to school policies, professional development programs, and organizational processes.

However, significant differences were found in employee engagement and accomplishment and application of learning and development, with teachers obtaining higher mean ranks than school heads. This suggested that teachers

perceived stronger evidence of engagement and the practical application of professional learning because they directly experienced the outcomes of HRM practices in their classroom and professional activities. In contrast, school heads assessed these practices from a broader administrative perspective.

The qualitative findings corroborated and further explained these quantitative results by demonstrating how teachers and school heads experienced innovative HRM practices from their respective roles within the school organization. Teachers consistently described mentoring, collaboration, and training activities as opportunities that improved their confidence, enhanced their instructional competence, and encouraged the application of newly acquired teaching strategies in their classrooms. These narratives validated the significantly higher ratings of teachers on employee engagement and the accomplishment and application of learning and development because they reflected the immediate benefits that teachers personally experienced after participating in professional development activities. Conversely, school heads emphasized their responsibilities in planning professional development programs, facilitating mentoring initiatives, allocating resources, and monitoring teacher performance. These accounts clarified why their assessments were comparatively lower, as they evaluated HRM practices from an organizational and administrative perspective rather than from direct classroom implementation. Likewise, the absence of significant differences in performance, education, training and development, and research productivity and innovation was reinforced by the shared perceptions of both groups that institutional policies, professional development opportunities, and organizational support promoted equitable professional growth and innovation across the school.

The convergence of the quantitative and qualitative findings strengthened the explanation provided by Human Capital Theory, which emphasized that investments in knowledge, skills, and professional development enhanced employee capability and organizational performance. The statistical similarities across several HRM dimensions, together with the shared qualitative accounts of structured training and institutional support, demonstrated that these investments were consistently experienced by both respondent groups. Meanwhile, the significant differences in employee engagement and learning application were further explained by teachers' narratives describing the direct utilization of acquired competencies in classroom instruction, illustrating how investments in human capital translated into improved professional practice. The integrated findings also supported Transformational Leadership Theory, which highlighted the role of school leaders in motivating teachers, facilitating professional growth, and creating supportive learning environments. School heads' descriptions of mentoring, monitoring, and developmental leadership, together with teachers' accounts of increased motivation and confidence, validated the statistical evidence that transformational leadership positively influenced employee engagement and the practical application of professional learning.

The integrated findings implied that teachers should maximize professional learning opportunities while school heads should further strengthen recognition, mentoring, and support systems that facilitated the transfer of professional learning into classroom practice. Curriculum developers should design more collaborative and practice-oriented professional development programs that addressed both teachers' instructional needs and administrators' organizational goals. Policymakers should sustain teacher development initiatives that promoted meaningful engagement and effective application of acquired competencies, while teacher education institutions should prepare future educators for continuous professional learning, innovation, and collaborative leadership. These integrated findings were consistent with Ji (2023), who found that teacher engagement strengthened professional development outcomes, and Bao (2024), who reported that transformational leadership enhanced teacher innovation and motivation.

Table 15
Challenges in Teacher Career Advancement Opportunities

Category	Teachers		School Heads	
	WM	VI	WM	VI
1. Fairness and inclusivity in the advancement process	3.46	A	3.56	SA
2. Communication and transparency	3.47	A	3.56	SA
3. Evaluation processes	3.43	A	3.56	SA
4. Career progression pathways	3.45	A	3.67	SA
5. Access to professional development and training	3.41	A	3.67	SA
6. Engagement in professional development opportunities	3.43	A	3.72	SA
7. Opportunities for specialization	3.41	A	3.69	SA
8. Practical experience and hands-on learning opportunities	3.45	A	3.62	SA
9. Financial support for further education	3.46	A	3.64	SA
10. Work and personal life balance	3.45	A	3.67	SA
11. Family responsibilities	3.45	A	3.64	SA

12. Culture of professional growth	3.45	A	3.62	SA
13. Teacher retention and recruitment	3.44	A	3.69	SA
14. Advancements in human resource technology	3.43	A	3.64	SA
15. Non-teaching related tasks	3.45	A	3.67	SA

Note. *WM* = Weighted Mean; *VI* = Verbal Interpretation; *A* = Agree; *SA* = Strongly Agree. Verbal interpretations are based on the five-point Likert scale.

Table 16

Verbal Interpretation Scale for the Five-Point Likert Scale

Scale Range	Verbal Interpretation
3.50–4.00	Strongly Agree
2.50–3.49	Agree
1.50–2.49	Disagree
1.00–1.49	Strongly Disagree

Note. The verbal interpretation scale was used in interpreting the weighted mean scores for teachers and school heads.

Table 15 showed that teachers agreed and school heads strongly agreed that challenges in teacher career advancement opportunities were present, with school heads perceiving these barriers more strongly. The greatest concerns included engagement in professional development, opportunities for specialization, career progression, workload, work-life balance, and access to professional learning. These findings indicated that despite existing career advancement initiatives, teachers continued to experience obstacles related to promotion, professional development, financial support, and administrative responsibilities that hindered their career growth.

These findings were supported by Human Capital Theory, which emphasized that investments in education, training, and professional development enhanced employees' competencies and career advancement. Limited access to these opportunities reduced teachers' ability to develop the knowledge, skills, and professional experiences needed for promotion and long-term career growth.

The qualitative findings corroborated and expanded these quantitative results by providing concrete explanations for why teachers perceived career advancement opportunities as limited. During the focus group discussions (FGDs), participants consistently described unclear promotion guidelines, limited access to specialized training and financial assistance, heavy non-teaching workloads, and difficulties balancing professional development with family responsibilities. These narratives directly corresponded with the quantitative indicators that received high agreement, particularly those related to workload, access to professional learning, opportunities for specialization, and career progression.

Moreover, the qualitative evidence clarified that these challenges were not merely individual concerns but were interconnected organizational issues. Participants explained that administrative responsibilities reduced the time available for professional development, while limited financial support constrained their participation in graduate studies, research activities, seminars, and specialized training. These qualitative insights explained why respondents perceived career advancement opportunities as challenging despite the presence of institutional development programs. Thus, the qualitative findings validated the statistical results by revealing the underlying circumstances that contributed to teachers' assessments and demonstrated how organizational and personal factors jointly constrained career advancement.

The integration of both datasets suggested that improving teacher career advancement required addressing not only the availability of professional development opportunities but also the institutional conditions that influenced teachers' capacity to participate in them. Accordingly, teachers were encouraged to continuously engage in professional development, research, and specialization to strengthen their qualifications for promotion. At the organizational level, school heads were encouraged to enhance transparency in promotion processes, provide mentoring and career guidance, reduce unnecessary administrative tasks, and strengthen support mechanisms that enabled teachers to participate in professional learning. Likewise, curriculum developers were encouraged to incorporate leadership development and career planning into professional learning programs, while education policymakers were encouraged to strengthen financial assistance, equitable promotion policies, and institutional support systems. Teacher education

programs were likewise encouraged to prepare future teachers for lifelong learning, leadership, and career advancement by integrating career planning competencies into pre-service preparation.

The integrated findings were consistent with those of Smith and Wyness (2024), who found that sustained and collaborative professional development enhanced teacher engagement and career progression, and Coppe et al. (2024), who reported that workload and organizational support significantly influenced teachers' professional growth. Similarly, Osman and Adanza (2024) identified transparency, workload, and implementation issues as continuing barriers to teacher promotion in the Philippine context, supporting the present findings. Collectively, these studies reinforced both the quantitative evidence and the qualitative accounts by demonstrating that effective career advancement depended not only on the availability of development opportunities but also on transparent organizational practices, manageable workloads, and sustained institutional support.

6. Proposed Development Program

School heads played a pivotal role in fostering teacher growth within the Philippine public education system, particularly through structured development programs that aligned with DepEd's career progression frameworks. The proposed program equipped school heads with competencies in human resource management, supervisory practices, and program design to address gaps in leadership capacity, instructional supervision, and professional learning support, thereby creating clear pathways for teachers advancing from Teacher I to Master Teacher or administrative roles.

The output of the study, the development program, covered the program description, objectives, strategies, activities, implementation procedures, monitoring mechanisms, and expected outcomes. The program aimed to enhance secondary school heads' human resource management practices, particularly in fostering teacher career advancement opportunities. Drawing from the study's findings, it organized six programs under the acronyms CHART, IMPACT, ENGAGE, PRIME, SPARK-ED, and ADAPT, each providing targeted, responsive, innovative, and achievable solutions to the lowest-assessed HRM practices identified by school heads and teachers.

The proposed development program was designed to be implemented using existing DepEd governance and school management structures, making its adoption feasible without creating additional administrative systems. Schools Division Offices (SDOs) could incorporate the program into their Human Resource Development Plans, while school heads could embed its strategies within the School Improvement Plan (SIP), Annual Implementation Plan (AIP), School Learning and Development (L&D) Plan, Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions, and Results-based Performance Management System (RPMS). Such integration enabled the program to complement ongoing teacher development initiatives while strengthening instructional leadership and career progression support.

Each program component could be operationalized according to the specific responsibilities of education stakeholders. School heads could facilitate mentoring, instructional coaching, classroom observation, succession planning, and career coaching activities. Schools Division Offices could provide technical assistance, monitoring, and capacity-building interventions to ensure implementation fidelity across schools. At the policy level, DepEd regional and central offices could utilize the findings to strengthen leadership development frameworks, competency-based professional learning policies, and human resource management guidelines that promoted equitable teacher career advancement opportunities.

The implementation of CHART, IMPACT, ENGAGE, PRIME, SPARK-ED, and ADAPT was intended to follow a continuous improvement cycle involving needs assessment, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, feedback, and program refinement. School heads could use teacher performance indicators, Individual Performance Commitment and Review Form (IPCRF) results, classroom observation outcomes, and professional development participation records to evaluate program effectiveness and inform subsequent interventions. This operational approach supported evidence-based decision-making and promoted sustainable institutionalization of innovative HRM practices throughout the school system.

Table 17

Proposed Development Program Matrix

Program	Objective	Key Strategies/Activities	Persons Responsible	Success Indicators
CHART	Strengthen teacher career planning and HR development	Career coaching, mentoring, succession planning	School Heads, SDO	Increased career readiness and promotion opportunities



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IMPACT	Enhance instructional leadership and supervision	Classroom observation, instructional coaching, feedback	School Heads, Master Teachers	Improved instructional performance
ENGAGE	Foster collaborative professional learning	LAC sessions, peer mentoring, learning communities	School Heads, Teachers	Increased participation in professional development
PRIME	Improve performance management and recognition	RPMS coaching, performance review, recognition programs	School Heads	Higher teacher performance ratings
SPARK-ED	Promote innovation and skills development	ICT training, innovation workshops, action research	School Heads, SDO	Enhanced innovative teaching practices
ADAPT	Sustain continuous improvement	Monitoring, evaluation, feedback, program refinement	School Heads, SDO	Sustainable HRM practices and teacher career advancement

Conclusions

This study concluded that innovative human resource management (HRM) practices of school heads played a significant role in strengthening the educational environment by promoting teacher effectiveness, professional growth, and organizational excellence in public secondary schools. The consistent implementation of these practices supported high-quality teaching and learning by enhancing teachers' instructional competence, motivation, and commitment to improving student outcomes. Through continuous professional development, mentoring, coaching, and performance management, innovative HRM practices also facilitated effective curriculum implementation and reinforced instructional leadership by fostering collaboration, accountability, and a culture of continuous improvement. These practices promoted sustained teacher development, leadership growth, and pedagogical innovation through reflective practice and evidence-based instruction.

The findings suggested that innovative HRM was not merely an administrative function but a strategic approach to improving educational quality. By investing in teacher development and supportive leadership, schools were better positioned to build a more competent, adaptive, and collaborative workforce that contributed to sustainable school improvement and improved student learning outcomes. Although challenges in teacher career advancement remained, particularly in professional development, specialization, and work-life balance, the proposed development program was developed to provide practical strategies for strengthening teacher growth and organizational effectiveness.

The study further concluded that the proposed development program provided an operational framework that could be adopted by Schools Division Offices, school heads, and education policymakers to institutionalize innovative HRM practices within the Philippine basic education system. Its integration into existing DepEd planning, leadership development, performance management, and professional learning mechanisms enhanced its feasibility and sustainability. Through systematic implementation, continuous monitoring, and periodic evaluation, the program could strengthen instructional leadership, improve teacher career progression, support succession planning, and reinforce organizational effectiveness without requiring major structural reforms. Consequently, the study offered practical policy and administrative directions that could guide evidence-based human resource management initiatives aimed at improving teacher quality, leadership capacity, and long-term educational outcomes in Philippine public secondary schools.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, it was recommended that school heads may continuously strengthen innovative human resource management (HRM) practices by enhancing mentoring, coaching, performance management, and recognition systems to improve teacher effectiveness, instructional quality, and career advancement opportunities. Teachers may actively engage in professional development programs, research activities, leadership roles, and collaborative learning initiatives to continuously enhance their competencies and support effective curriculum implementation. Likewise, the Department of Education (DepEd) may provide sustained support for innovative HRM initiatives by expanding professional development opportunities, establishing clearer career advancement pathways, and addressing challenges related to specialization and work-life balance. Schools may also foster a collaborative and

reflective professional culture that promotes evidence-based instructional practices, continuous learning, and organizational improvement. Finally, future researchers may examine the long-term effectiveness of innovative HRM practices and the proposed development program on teacher career advancement, instructional performance, leadership effectiveness, and student learning outcomes across diverse educational contexts.

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