

The Spaces in Between: The Human Resource Management Functions as Viewed by Teachers and Administrators from a Catholic Schools System in Laguna

¹Imee Prescilla P. Sanchez, ²Roberto DV. Revilla

¹Laguna State Polytechnic University - Los Banos Campus

¹imeepahutan@gmail.com

Article Details:

Received: 1 September 2026

Revised: 7 September 2026

Accepted: 15 September 2026

Published: 28 September 2026

Corresponding Email:

imeepahutan@gmail.com

Recommended Citation:

Sanchez, I. P. P., & Revilla, R. DV. (2026). The Spaces in Between: The Human Resource Management Functions as Viewed by Teachers and Administrators from a Catholic Schools System in Laguna. *The International Review of Multidisciplinary Research*, 1(11), 63-67.

<https://doi.org/10.67167/vertex.726>

Index Terms:

recruitment and selection, benefits and compensation, training and development, employee and labor relations, catholic school's system, phenomenology

Abstract. This qualitative study aimed to determine the significance and development of the human resources management (HRM) before and after the Human Resources Department (HRD) was created in a catholic schools' system (CSS). It explored the lived experiences of the administrators and teaching employees of CSS based on Lewin's Three-Stage Change Theory. Purposive sampling was used in choosing the participants who were composed of teachers and administrators employed before the human resources functions were formalized. Research results showed differences in the hiring process and staffing of employees since the creation of the HRD. A fair number of salaries and benefits have always been provided but they cannot compete with the salary in the public school. Although training programs are continuously provided, it can only be availed by a limited number of employees. It is also observed that a good family-like working relationship exists among employees in the system. Recommendations were proper alignment of teaching assignments, more training activities and seminars and a more compassionate, approachable school management. An increase of salaries and other benefits was also requested.

Introduction

Human resource management (HRM) in education is a set of practices and methods of integrating and maintaining the teaching staff so that the school can achieve its purpose, as well as meet the goals for which it is established. It is the motivation and coordination of the activities and efforts of the school personnel to obtain maximum output and consequently achieve the goals (Rosell et al., 2021). HRM in education also believes in investing in their people by providing more learning, leading to greater efficiency.

Private schools in the Philippines face difficulties in maintaining the commitment of teachers. Substantial evidence shows that teachers in private schools are having an exodus to public schools. Moreover, this predicament in teachers' commitment is undoubtedly due to the low salary and benefits, poor working conditions, and lack of prestige of the teachers in some catholic schools. The resignation of tenured and qualified faculty members had caused a scarcity of qualified faculty members in the said institutions.

CSS is a private educational institution for 40 years and different clergy superintendents were then assigned to handle the system replaced every six years. The schools under its system function independently. Each school has its organizational structure and the school principal is the highest authority in terms of operations. It was only in 2015 that different departments were created which started with the finance department and one organizational structure was then formed. The researcher believes that to provide an appropriate response to human resource challenges and demands in the educational system, the HR practitioner should take the lead in instilling the desire for quality of living in their employees, and should be role models by participating in policy making or addressing their employment concerns.

Research Questions

The study probed on the human resource management functions in a Catholic Schools System which intends to answer the overarching question: What is the essence or significance and development of human resource management before and after the HRM functions were introduced, from the perspective of CSS employees.

Specifically, the study addressed the following objectives:

1. to look at the conditions of HRM functions of CSS before and after formal HRM functions were introduced;
2. to establish the gaps in the HRM core functions such as Recruitment and Selection, Benefits and Compensation, Training and Development, and Employee and Labor Relations before and after the formal HRM functions were introduced; and
3. to recommend to CSS School Board from the findings of this study, plans and programs that will close the identified gaps and advance its HRM functions.

Assumptions of the Study

The research aimed to determine the significance and development of the HRM functions through the perceptions of the employees in the school system. These insights were based on the actual experiences of the employees before and after the HRM functions are established. A qualitative approach was therefore needed to encourage research participants to describe their employee experience, particularly on HRM practices such as recruitment and selection, benefits and compensation, employee and labor relations and training and development.

Methodology

Research Design

The study adopted a qualitative research design which involves According to Creswell (2007, as cited by Khan, 2014) a distinct method to explore a social or human problem or phenomenon by conducting its studies in a natural setting.

Research Locale

There were 12 participants purposely selected among 20 schools, composed of 7 non-teaching and 5 teaching employees who have rich previous and present experience working or dealing with the CSS' human resource management functions. One participant from a school who shared their involvement in recruitment, training, compensation and labor relations.

Participants and Sampling Design

Purposive sampling, which is a type of nonprobability sampling technique where the characteristics of the subjects lead to their selection (Scott and Morrison, as cited in Taip, 2018). There were 12 participants from different schools, 5 from the group are teaching employees and 7 are administrators or are part of the non-teaching personnel. The participants were employed for more than eight years or who already experienced working for the institution before the HRD was created as a system.

Research Instrument

Semi-structured open-ended questions with sub-questions via one-on-one interviews were used in the interviews. The research guide question numbers 1, 3, 4, and 5 pertained to answering research objective number one which is to look at the condition of the HRM functions before and after it was formalized. While research questions number two, sub-questions number three and four helped in answering research objective number two which aimed to know the gaps in the HRM functions after it was introduced. These guide questions also helped in some situations for research objective no.1. Lastly, research guide question number six was used to answer research objective no. 6, which satisfied the recommended plans and programs of CSS.

Data Collection Procedure

A permission letter was given to the superintendent of a CSS for the approval of conducting the study. After securing the approval letter from the superintendent, an individual letter with the guide questions was also given to each participant. The interview date was then arranged through a Zoom video conferencing platform for accessibility and trouble-free recording of the conversations. It was emphasized before the start of the interview that their answers will not be taken against their employer or affect their work status in whatever way to avoid the Hawthorne Effect or the change of behavior due to the attention received despite the experimental manipulation of the research participants (Sedgwick and Greenwood, 2015). If requested, participants will be given the option of receiving an electronic recording of the interview and a hard copy of the transcribed data.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed thematically. Thematic analysis is a divergent, compatible and more flexible research tool as compared to the other qualitative techniques and it, therefore, helps create a rich, comprehensive, as well as complex account of the data set (Majumdar, 2018). The study also took a deductive approach wherein preconceived themes are expected to be reflected from the theory that my paper is anchored on which is Lewin's Three-Step Change Management Theory.

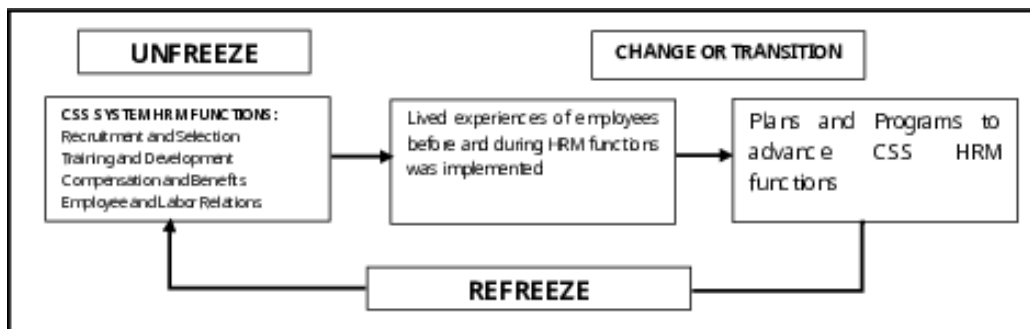


Figure 1. Research Paradigm

The lived experiences of CSS employees' views supported the dependent variables such as recruitment and selection, benefits and compensation, employee and labor relations and training and development of the HRM functions. The sharing of lived experiences of CSS employees is the transition or stage of actual change wherein it implies adopting new ways of doing things. The employees are unfrozen at this point, and the actual reformation is applied. This stage of transition is said to be hard due to uncertainties or people's concerns about the implications of implementing a change process (Hussain et al., 2016). From the processed information, a proposed set of plans and programs will help a CSS in the attainment of their organizational goals and objectives. This is the refreeze stage where CSS is ready to reframe once the changes have taken shape and members have accepted the new ways of operation. A consistent organizational progression, reliable work portrayals, and so on are visible proof of the refreeze.

Results and Discussion

Summary of Findings

The findings for the first guide question proved that the employees hold other positions aside from their present assignment and the participants are also grateful that the hiring process has improved recently. Employees are being hired because of their qualifications and skills.

Second, most of the participants are content with how much they received from the time they are hired until the present. Although it is obvious from their answers that their salaries are comparably low to public schools, they are still grateful because it is competitive compared to other private schools.

Third, when the system created the HRD, training and seminars/webinars can be experienced by most of the employees and it is aligned to the employee's specialization. Aside from the improved training program, other support was also being provided like food and transportation allowances.

Fourth, there is a good working relationship among the members of a CSS, within the school, and in the system. They treat each other like family despite their individual differences, which they eventually learned to set aside for the good of the institution.

Lastly, various recommendations from the participants were also narrated like proper placement and evaluation of new employees, and alignment of teaching assignments, although it improved somehow because not all participants have other assignments. There are also suggestions for increasing the salaries, including other benefits and providing more training, an organized manner of school visitation and a more transparent, compassionate and approachable school management.

Conclusion and Recommendations

It is evident that there are gaps in both the previous and present hiring and employee placement procedures since the creation of the HR Department in a Catholic school system (CSS). Although the CSS has consistently provided its employees with fair salaries and benefits, it remains challenging for the institution to compete with the compensation packages offered by public schools. Since its establishment, the HR Department has placed greater emphasis on employee development, particularly in addressing training and professional growth needs. Despite the absence of a formal HR structure in earlier years, employees have maintained good relationships with one another, largely because of their many years of working together and the Catholic culture fostered by the school's leaders. The creation of the HR Office has further strengthened this relationship by giving employees greater confidence that they have a voice, an ally, and a support system within the institution. Overall, employees recognize the important role of the HR Department in addressing their employment-related needs, which can contribute to increased productivity, engagement, and commitment, ultimately benefiting the entire institution.

Recommendations

Based on the participants' recommendations reported in the study, the Catholic Schools System may consider proper placement and evaluation of new employees, alignment of teaching assignments, increased salaries and additional benefits, expanded training activities and seminars, a more organized approach to school visitation, and more transparent, compassionate, and approachable school management.

Acknowledgement

The authors would like to thank the colleagues and institutions who provided guidance, feedback, and support throughout the conduct of this research and the preparation of this manuscript. Any remaining errors or omissions are the sole responsibility of the authors.

Funding

This research received no external funding from any public, commercial, or not-for-profit funding agency, and no organization provided financial support for the conduct of the study, authorship, or publication of this article.

Competing Interests Statement

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this article.

Data Availability Statement

Data sharing is not applicable to this article as no new data were created or analyzed in this study; all data used were obtained from previously published sources as cited in the reference list.

References

- Ahammad, T. (2018) Personnel Management to Human Resource Management (HRM): How HRM Functions. *Journal of Modern Accounting and Auditing*, 13, (9), 412-420. Retrieved from <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/883a/2a6365b2e4f7017953960216eef77ff5a4a3.pdf? ga=2.267013837.2121840225.1647436929-513990111.1574461871>
- Akinyode, Babatunde & Khan, Tareef. (2018). Step by step approach for qualitative data analysis. *International Journal of Built Environment and Sustainability*. 5. 10.11113/ijbes.v5.n3.267.
- Alexopoulos, N. (2019) Resolving School Staffing Problems in Greece: A Strategic Management Approach. *Conceptual Analysis. Frontiers in Education*., 4(130). <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2019.00130>
- Arepalli, Bhavani Shree & Shivaramu, Manjunath & Thyagaraja, Bharathi. (2016). Study on Compensation and Benefits its Influence on Employee's Performance in Milk Industry. 6. 7. 10.4010/2016.1738.
- Arimie, C.J. & Oronsaye, A.O. (2020) Assessing Employee Relations and Organizational Performance -A Literature Review Assessing Employee Relations and Organizational Performance: A Literature Review. *International Journal of Applied Research in Business and Management*, 1 (1), 1-17.

- https://www.researchgate.net/publication/346312933_Assessing_Employee_Relations_and_Organizational_Performance_-_A_Literature
- Buriro, A.A., Ednut, N., & Khaton, C. (2020) Philosophical Underpinning and Phenomenology Approach in Social Science Research. The Asia Pacific, 38, 237-254.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/355874197_PHILOSOPHICAL_UNDERPINNING_AND_PHENOMENOLOGY_APPROACH_IN_SOCIAL_SCIENCE_RESEARCH/link/61824b8d3c987366c31d94e8/download
- Duara, Prasenjit. (2018). Nationalism and development in Asia. 10.35188/UNU-WIDER/2018/537-4.
- Gandolfi, Franco and Tran, Tuyet. (2020). Implementing Lewin's Change Theory for Institutional Improvements: A Vietnamese Case Study. Journal of Management Research. 20. 119-210. Retrieved from:
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/352170421_Implementing_Lewin%27s_Change_Theory_for_Institutional_Improvements_A_Vietnamese_Case_Study
- Maalouf, Georges. (2019). Effects of collaborative leadership on organizational performance. International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Development. 6. 138-144. 10.22271/ijmrd.2019.v6.i1.25.
- Majumdar, A. (2018), Chapter 9 Thematic Analysis in Qualitative Research, University of Calcutta, India. Retrieved from:
https://www.academia.edu/42828786/Thematic_Analysis_in_Qualitative_Research
- Orakwue & Igusi, (2020) Conceptualizing entrepreneurship in human resource management. International Journal of Research in Business & Social Science, 9(3), 85-93. Retrieved from:
<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/ea23/42864164f0fd2a2ec562558eb9048316f7b4.pdf?ga=2.31203132.261324337.1649830589-513990111.1574461871>
- Rosell, V.L.D. Labrado, I.P.Q., Labrado, M.G.I., Layasan, A.L.B., Salazar, E.S., Miranda, M.M., & Rosal, E.C. (2021) "Human Resource Management: Best Practices in the Department of Education, City Of Naga - Cebu, Philippines", International Journal of Current Research, 13, (01), 15733-15737. Retrieved from
https://mail.journalcra.com/sites/default/files/issue-pdf/40592_0.pdf
- Sedgwick, Philip & Greenwood, Nan. (2015). Understanding the Hawthorne effect. BMJ (online). 351. h4672. 10.1136/bmj.h4672.
- Internet sources: <http://cbcponline.net/a-pastoral-letter-of-the-cbcp-on-the-occasion-of-the-400-years-of-catholic-education-in-the-philippines/>

Appendices

No appendices are attached to this study.