

Enhancing HR Practices Through Awareness And Problem-Solving: Analyzing DepEd-CAR PRIME-HRM Implementation

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Abstract — This study utilizes an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design to evaluate the implementation of the Program to Institutionalize Meritocracy and Excellence in Human Resource Management (PRIME-HRM) within DepEd-CAR. Data were gathered from a total sample of 20 Level I employees (n=20) across nine divisions using structured survey questionnaires and semi-structured interview guides. Quantitative findings reveal that employees are highly aware of PRIME-HRM (Mean = 3.74 for RSP guidelines) and that the program is highly implemented (Overall Mean = 3.40). Qualitative themes highlight challenges in document preparation and the need for more equitable training access. The study recommends continuous capacity building and streamlined communication to maintain HR excellence.

Keywords — *PRIME-HRM awareness, level I employee perception, implementation challenges, strategic HRM, employee motivation*

I. Introduction

The Department of Education (DepEd) relies on the Civil Service Commission's (CSC) PRIME-HRM to transition from transactional to strategic human resource management. The Department of Education (DepEd), like other government agencies, strives to deliver excellent service to the public. Effective Human Resource Management (HRM) practices are crucial for achieving this goal (Donguiz, 2013). A competent and motivated workforce is essential for DepEd to fulfill its mandate of overseeing primary education institutions across the Philippines (Department of Education, n.d.). Strategic HRM practices ensure that human resources are recruited, trained, developed, and utilized effectively to achieve organizational objectives (Castillo, 2020). However, dynamic workplaces present challenges in HRM, necessitating continuous improvement (Egcas & Lacuesta, 2018).

The Philippine Constitution established the Civil Service Commission (CSC) to promote excellence and efficiency in civil service administration (The 1987 Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines, Article IX). The CSC's mandate includes strengthening meritocracy, developing

human resource programs, and fostering transparency within government agencies (Civil Service Commission, n.d.).

To fulfill its mandate, the CSC developed the Program to Institutionalize Meritocracy and Excellence in Human Resource Management (PRIME-HRM). Launched in 2012 (Civil Service Commission, Resolution No. 1200241, 2012), PRIME-HRM assesses agencies' HRM competencies, systems, and practices, guiding them towards achieving HR excellence through a three-step process: Assess, Assist, and Award (Civil Service Commission, n.d.).

The primary goal of PRIME-HRM is to elevate agencies' HRM maturity from transactional to strategic (Civil Service Commission, n.d.). The program offers several components to achieve this objective:

Comprehensive HRM Assistance, Review and Monitoring (CHARM): This component assesses agencies' HRM practices and capabilities (Civil Service Commission, n.d.). Continuing Assistance and Review for Excellent Human Resource Management (CARE-HRM): This component provides ongoing support and guidance to agencies striving for HRM excellence (Civil Service Commission, n.d.).

Special Program for Evaluation and Assessment as Required/ Requested (SPEAR): This component addresses specific HRM concerns raised by agencies (Civil Service Commission, n.d.).

PRIME-HRM recognizes agencies with exceptional HRM practices. Agencies are awarded recognition based on their level of proficiency and maturity against established standards (DepEd Malaybalay City Division, 2020). These recognitions come with varying levels of autonomy in human resource decision-making, ultimately aiming to empower agencies for better performance (Civil Service Commission, n.d.).

For DepEd-CAR, successful PRIME-HRM implementation hinges on employee awareness, particularly among Level I personnel, who are often the front liners within the organization. In the DepEd context, Level I employees refer to personnel in clerical, trades, crafts, and custodial service positions which involve non-professional work in a non-supervisory or supervisory capacity, often serving as the "front liners" of the organization with a Salary Grades 1-10 in the government. This study aims to analyze the level of awareness and implementation of PRIME-HRM among DepEd-CAR's Level I employees. By identifying areas for improvement, the study can contribute to enhancing HR practices within the regional office.

Statement of the Problem

To ensure quality education, DepEd-CAR requires effective HRM practices. The CSC's PRIME-HRM program addresses this (Civil Service Commission, n.d.). However, limited research explores Level I employee awareness and challenges regarding PRIME-HRM, hindering

its effectiveness. This study analyzes their awareness and implementation issues to enhance HR practices. Specifically, this research answered the following questions:

1. What is the level of awareness of DepEd – CAR Level I employees on the different components, goals and benefits of PRIME-HRM?
2. What is the extent of implementation of level I employees of DepEd-CAR Regional Office on the PRIME-HRM?
3. What is the degree of seriousness of the problems encountered by level I DepEd CAR Regional employees on implementing the PRIME-HRM along with their division?

These research questions aim to identify the current state of PRIME-HRM awareness and implementation within DepEd-CAR, focusing on Level I employees. By understanding their level of knowledge and the challenges they face, the study can contribute to developing strategies for improved awareness and problem-solving, ultimately leading to enhanced HR practices in the regional office.

One of the main goals of almost all government organizations' interest is service excellence. The Department of Education (DepEd), as the oversight agency for all primary education institutions in the country, the Department of Education (DepEd) is one of the government agencies that implemented its employee Rationalization Plan (Rat Plan) and is bound to deliver the best services teaching, non-teaching and teaching-related personnel. The efficiency and effectiveness of the Department of Education's services to the public largely depend on its human resources' performance. Human resources are significant in this government organization. Human Resource Management (HRM) includes recruitment, training, development, motivation, and evaluation of the staff to achieve the organization's goals and perform the necessary activities to be successful. According to Donguiz (2013), the organization's success depends on the effective use and management of human resources. Hence, proper management and development of human resources are significant challenges but fulfilling tasks for every organization administrator. Human Resource Management (HRM) has a vital function in achieving any organizational goals like DepEd. Human Resource Management (HRM) functions within an organization that focuses on recruiting, managing, and providing direction for the people who work to be effective employees. It is a strategic and coherent approach to managing an organization's most valued assets - the people working individually and collectively contribute to achieving its objectives. In dynamic workplaces, many issues pose challenges in human resource management in which DepEd is not an exemption. HRM must keep track of the signs of progress in human resource management and development and must get ahead of the traditional HRM to strategic HRM. Human Resource Management in Philippine Education institutions has gone a long way. But to keep up with the development of the organization, regular assessment, monitoring, and evaluation of the HRM practices, programs and activities must be considered. For government agencies like

DepEd, this pertains to civil service. Article IX of the 1987 Constitution has established the Civil Service Commission (CSC) and has entrusted civil service administration (Egcas, and Lacuesta, 2018).

The Commission is constitutionally mandated to promote morale, efficiency, integrity, responsiveness, progressiveness, and courtesy in the Civil Service. The CSC is also tasked to strengthen government agencies' merit and rewards system, integrate human resource development programs for all levels and ranks, and institutionalize a climate conducive to transparency and accountability. To be able to fulfill their commissioned tasks, the CSC develops programs to integrate competence in the human resources of the country to achieve their vision of becoming a Center of Excellence for Human Resource and Organizational Development. One of the many programs of the CSC is the PRIME-HRM or the Program to Institutionalize Meritocracy and Excellence in Human Resource Management. The PRIME-HRM assesses an agency's human resource management competencies, systems, and practices toward HR excellence through three steps: Assess, Assist, and Award.

The program's primary goal is to develop the agency's maturity level from Transactional HRM to Strategic HRM. With the integration of the PRIME-HRM on all local and national government agencies, including the Department of Education, there has been a great challenge on the competence of the HRMO to handle the implementation of this program. Considering the DepEd's unique organizational structure, the implementation of the PRIME-HRM does not only involve the HRMO. Instead, it involves a whole lot of personnel who oversee the administration and educational supervision. The PRIME-HRM also reflects the performance of the Regional Office as to their HR practices in general. According to CSC Resolution No. 1200241 dated February 1, 2012, the Civil Service Commission adopts the guidelines on implementing the Program to Institutionalize Meritocracy and Excellence in Human Resource Management (PRIME-HRM) as stated in Memorandum Circular No. 3, s. 2012.

The PRIME-HRM is a program that incorporates and enhances the Personnel Management Assessment and Assistance Program (PMAAP) and the CSC Agency Accreditation Program (CSCAAP). It is a mechanism to continuously capacitate agencies to perform their human resource management functions, recognize best practices in the numerous areas of human resource management and serve as a venue for exchange and development of expertise in human resource management in the Philippine public service. PRIME-HRM is a program to inculcate meritocracy and excellence in the public service human resource management through reward, recognition, empowerment, and continuous development. Specifically, the program aims to: 1) assess the human resource management practices and capabilities of agencies; 2) serve as a search mechanism for best practices in human resource management; 3) promote and serve as a venue for exchange and development of expertise in the area of human resource management between and among government agencies; 4) empower agencies in the performance of human resource

management functions, and 5) promote and reward excellent human resource management practices.

The components of PRIME-HRM are the Comprehensive HRM Assistance, Review and Monitoring (CHARM), the Continuing Assistance and Review for Excellent Human Resource Management (CARE-HRM), and the Special Program for Evaluation and Assessment as Required/Requested (SPEAR). PRIME-HRM shall be used as a tool to recognize agencies with best practices in human resource management. Agency initiated innovations, enhancements, or remarkable development in the HR management program and the system shall be given recognition to motivate agencies to aspire for excellence. Recognition/status is conferred on agencies according to the level of proficiency and maturity vis-à-vis the standards set by the Commission. Proficiency levels are hierarchically categorized into basic, intermediate, advanced, and superior. Accordingly, maturity levels are tiered into regulated, accredited, deregulated, and center of excellence in HRM. The end goal is to elevate the HR public sector to excellence for good governance and efficient public service. Each recognition level or status has implications for granting authority to take final appointments (DepEd Malaybalay City Division, 2020).

In DepEd-CAR Regional Office, each employee must know the PRIME HRM, especially the front liners, the level I positions. This study is then proposed to determine the level of awareness and implementation of PRIME HRM by level I employees of DepEd CAR Regional Office.

Literature Review

Positive Aspects

Strategic Alignment and Goals:

The PRIME-HRM program aligns with the Department of Education's strategic goals, focusing on enhancing HRM competencies, promoting meritocracy, and achieving service excellence. It emphasizes strategic HRM over traditional transactional approaches, which can drive better alignment of HR functions with organizational objectives.

Comprehensive Framework:

The program provides a structured framework (Assess, Assist, and Award) to evaluate and improve HRM practices, ensuring continuous improvement. Components like CHARM, CARE-HRM, and SPEAR offer targeted assistance and recognition, fostering a culture of continuous development and excellence.

Recognition and Motivation:

The PRIME-HRM program recognizes and rewards best practices, motivating employees and divisions to strive for higher performance levels. Monthly and yearly awards for compliance and excellence boost morale and incentivize continuous improvement among employees.

Focus on Competency-Based Recruitment:

The implementation of Competency-Based Recruitment and Qualifications Standards (CBRQS) ensures that hiring and retaining the best employees are based on measurable competencies, leading to a more capable and effective workforce.

Capacity Building and Development:

Continuous education and training are highlighted as essential for achieving HR excellence, ensuring that employees are well-equipped to meet organizational demands. Learning and development programs conducted by HRDD and NEAPR provide professional growth opportunities for both teaching and non-teaching personnel.

Negative Aspects

Awareness Gaps:

There is variability in awareness levels of PRIME-HRM among Level I employees, indicating a need for more effective communication and orientation about the program's objectives and activities. Some employees, particularly new hires, are unaware that existing activities fall under PRIME-HRM, highlighting a disconnect in information dissemination.

Challenges in Implementation:

Effective implementation of PRIME-HRM requires addressing gaps in awareness and practice, which can be challenging given the unique organizational structure of DepEd.

Issues such as unequal distribution of training opportunities and selective awarding of recognition can lead to perceptions of unfairness and demotivation among employees.

Interview and Selection Process:

The interview process, a critical component of recruitment, is subject to biases and inconsistencies, potentially affecting the fairness and effectiveness of hiring decisions.

Concerns about the discretion of appointing authorities in selecting candidates from the top five, despite scoring variations, raise questions about transparency and meritocracy.

Resource Constraints:

Adequate resources and stakeholder support are crucial for successful PRIME-HRM implementation. Any limitations in these areas can hinder the program's effectiveness.

The need for continuous capability building and adaptation to align with organizational goals requires sustained investment and commitment.

Resistance to Change:

Resistance to new HRM practices and policies can pose a significant barrier, as employees and management may be accustomed to traditional methods. Overcoming such resistance requires comprehensive change management strategies and consistent reinforcement of the benefits of strategic HRM.

Employee Awareness and HRM Implementation Context: A Cross-Country Comparison

The Philippines, through initiatives like PRIME-HRM, emphasizes employee awareness in HRM. However, research suggests a different approach in some developed economies.

Singapore focuses on fostering a culture of knowledge sharing and employee participation. Studies by Tan & Tan (2017) highlight how Singapore's public service actively encourages employees to contribute to workplace innovation through suggestion schemes and feedback mechanisms. This fosters a sense of ownership among employees regarding HR practices. They are not just aware of the system, but actively participate in shaping it.

Contrasting this with the Philippines: While PRIME-HRM raises awareness, it might not fully translate to employee engagement. This research can explore whether DepEd-CAR employees feel they have a voice in shaping HR practices or if awareness primarily translates to knowledge of existing procedures.

This comparison highlights the potential for the Philippines to move beyond basic awareness campaigns and explore strategies that enhance employee engagement in HRM practices, similar to Singapore's approach.

Theoretical, and Conceptual Framework

Employees' awareness has been extensively considered an essential resource for providing a sustainable competitive advantage to organizations. However, the current awareness of the employees in the organization's human resource management system is not 100% sure of the systems being implemented in the office and their importance.

Human Resource Management (HRM) functions within an organization concentrated on recruiting, managing, and directing people who work in it. Human Resource Management deals

with compensation, performance management, organization development, safety, wellness, benefits, employee motivation, training, and others. HRM plays a strategic role in managing people and the workplace culture and environment. If effective, it can contribute significantly to the overall company direction and accomplish its goals and objectives (Egcas and Lacuesta, 2018).

The New Role in Human Resource Management is that more companies seek the outsourcing services of HR recruitment companies. The focus on HRM is now moved to the strategic utilization of employees and the measurable impact of employee programs. Nowadays, successful companies need to be adaptive, resilient, customer-centered, and quick to change direction. Within such an environment, the effectiveness of HRM is crucial to business success. HR professionals establish systems for performance development, career succession planning, and employee development. This keeps people motivated, contented, personally engaged, and contributing to company success. Furthermore, the HR professional helps develop organizational culture and climate in which employees have the competency, concern, and commitment to serve customers well.

According to CSC Memorandum Circular No. 3, s. 2012, the Program to Institutionalize Meritocracy and Excellence in Human Resource Management (PRIME-HRM) integrates and enhances the Personnel Management Assessment and Assistance Program (PMAAP) and the CSC Agency Accreditation Program (CSCAAP). It is a mechanism that empowers government agencies by developing their human resource management competencies, systems, and practices toward HR excellence. PRIME-HRM entails the greater engagement of the human resource management officer (HRMO) and the officials and the rank-and-file employees of the agency. Under the PRIME-HRM. The CSC will assess the maturity level of an agency's competencies, systems, and practices in four HR systems: (1) recruitment, selection, and placement; (2) learning and development; (3) performance management; and (4) rewards and recognition. Based on the assessment, a government agency may be classified according to four maturity levels: a) Transactional HRM, which HR assumes personnel function that is separate mainly from agency/business and talent need; b) Process-Defined HRM, which there is a set of defined and documented SOPs established, though it needs improvement. It is characterized by goal-oriented decision-making. There is some automated system but little data integration; c) Integrated HRM uses process metrics for continuous improvement, an HR management toolkit, and data-driven decision-making. HR function supports agency business needs; d) Strategic HRM, the HR processes continually improve process performance. It is also systematically managed by a combination of process optimization and continuous improvement. At this level, HR helps to drive agency business decisions on people, data, and insight. HR strategy is already part of the agency strategy. The CSC assists and provides customized technical assistance and developmental interventions according to the determined needs of the agency. Also, Awards that the agencies may compete for special rewards and citations for HR excellence. The CSC aims to integrate competencies in the human resource systems of government agencies, starting with recruitment. Thus, the Competency-Based Recruitment and Qualifications Standards (CBRQS) were born.

With this program, the CSC recognizes that hiring and retaining the best employees will lay the foundation for developing high-performing, competent, and credible civil servants. A competency is often defined as a set of observable, measurable, and vital skills, knowledge, and attitudes that are translations of capabilities deemed essential for organizational success.

At present, the CSC has begun applying competencies to its recruitment process as it hopes to be a model in competency-based human resource management for other government agencies. The primary purpose of this study was to determine the level of awareness, the extent of practices, challenges, and opportunities in the implementation of the PRIME-HRM in the Department of Education Cordillera Administrative Region Regional Office. Specifically, this study determined the extent of awareness of level I employees in the implementation of the PRIME-HRM in the office when taken as a whole and individually in terms of 1) Recruitment, Selection, and Placement, 2) Learning and Development, 3) Performance Management System, and 4) Rewards and Recognition. The study further elicited opportunities brought about by the implementation of the PRIME-HRM. Related hypotheses were tested in this research. Employees' awareness has been extensively considered an essential resource for providing a sustainable competitive advantage to organizations. However, in the current awareness of personnel, one of the challenges faced by the Human Resource is to manage this resource effectively to build a human capital pool. One of the reasons for this challenge is that awareness of Level I personnel is not 100% aware. There is also slight empirical research that tested HRM and awareness-sharing relationships through employees' perceptions.

People gain awareness through personal experience, and some part of that awareness cannot be expressed or documented easily. Due to competitive pressures and many programs and projects to be accomplished, the organization focuses more on conducting training/ seminars. Still, focusing on the awareness for PRIME HRM is limited.

In 2019, the CSC team conducted a random interview with personnel from the DepEd - CAR Regional Office regarding the implementation of PRIME-HRM in their office. The interview revealed that some employees in level I positions were unaware of the PRIME-HRM activities taking place. However, a few selected personnel had received orientation prior to the interview with the CSC team. Additionally, newer employees lacked familiarity with the PRIME-HRM program.

The Department of Education- Cordillera Administrative Region follows the hiring and selection process guidelines for new personnel, conducting learning and development for all Teaching, Non-Teaching, and Teaching-Related personnel in all divisions. The Curriculum, Learning, and Management Division (CLMD) conducts training and seminars for all teaching personnel. In contrast, the Human Resource Development Division (HRDD) and National Educators Academy of the Philippines Regional Office (NEAPR) conduct training and seminars for Non-Teaching and Teaching -Related Personnel to design, develop, and deliver professional development. There is also a scheduled wellness activity like sports and other related activities

relative to wellness. Also, the office is giving awards and recognition to the best division, best employee, and other awards to the deserving personnel yearly. Starting 2021, the office is giving awards monthly to the most compliant division and giving awards and recognition to the employee of the month. Different categories for awards are given. But, in all those mentioned activities in the office, some are unaware that those activities are implemented under PRIME-HRM.

HR needs to develop a mechanism for the awareness of employees. Needs suitably motivated employees to share their awareness in their organization. HRM can influence employees' motivation and behavior in workplaces to influence their knowledge-sharing behavior. By sharing employees' awareness, organizations can improve their knowledge capability and perform better than their competitors. Employees' knowledge gained through experience is often thought to be the property of an individual. Still, a great deal of knowledge is created and held collectively through awareness sharing between members of an organization. Collaboration and trust, through employees' knowledge-sharing behavior, can help to improve organizational capability. When employees collaborate to share the knowledge, they learn from other members, and knowledge creation may occur (Borjesson, 2014; Abuhantash, 2018).

The Department's mission is to protect and promote the right of every Filipino to quality, equitable, culture-based, and complete basic education where, the students learn in a child-friendly, gender-sensitive, safe, and motivating environment; teachers facilitate learning and constantly nurture every learner; the Administrators and staff, as stewards of the institution, ensure an enabling and supportive environment for effective learning to happen; and family, community, and other stakeholders are actively engaged and share responsibility for developing life-long learners. Meanwhile, the vision includes being a learner-centered public institution that continuously improves itself to serve its stakeholders better.

To fulfill the department's vision and mission, all personnel must be knowledgeable about the various guidelines, policies, programs, projects, and activities, particularly the PRIME-HRM. This understanding is crucial for effectively performing their duties and serving clients, ensuring equitable and satisfactory service throughout the region. Successful implementation of the PRIME-HRM requires an in-depth understanding of the context of the PRIME-HRM, capability building, adequate resources, stakeholder support, positive values, among others. While the DepEd considers PRIME-HRM a challenging task, it complements the three (3) significant strategies for DepEd from 2018-2022: organizational alignment, Quality Management System, and school organizational structure review towards organizational excellence. The DepEd adheres to the CSC's change management initiative for public service excellence (Nayra, 2019).

Problems Encountered on the Implementation of PRIME HRM

There are cases where some government offices or even private organizations encountered a problem in the selection and lineup process under PRIME HRM or Human Resource. One of them is the interview. The interview remains the most popular selection device used by all

organizations worldwide (Lunenburg, 2010). Moreover, the interview tends to have an unequal amount of influence on the hiring decision. The applicant who performs poorly in the job interview is likely to be separated from the applicant pool regardless of experience, test scores, or letters of recommendation (Robbins and Judge, 2011). The most skilled individual in interview techniques is the person hired, even though they may not be the best candidate for the position. For this reason, numerous books have been written about improving a job candidate's interviewing skills (Lunenburg, 2010). Also, the unfamiliarity with the Job (Fry, 2011), premature decisions of the interviewer (Dougherty et al., 1994), emphasis on negative information and first impression to be last personal biases, preferences matter, physical and facial attractiveness (Schmidt and Hunter, 1998) and (Hosoda et al., 2003; Luxen and van de Vijver, 2006), Applicant Order and Hiring Quotas (Lunenburg, 2010).

However, in the Department of Education, in the hiring and selection process under PRIME-HRM, only 15 out of 100 points in an interview of psycho-social attributes. To give score to the applicants, it will be divided into six which are the performance rating (35 points), experience (5 points), Outstanding accomplishment (20 points), under outstanding accomplishment, there are Innovation, Research, Consultancy/ Speakership, publication, and training. Also, the Education is one of the highest scores. It depends on the vacant position. The potential or written exam is 20 points. If the applicant can provide all the requirements, and if he/she is under the top 5, the appointing authority has her/his discretion to appoint anyone of the top 5. Some other applicants questioned why the top 1 or the top 2 did not appoint while the top 5 were appointed. That is why there is always a question under the selection and line-up process under PRIME-HRM. Also, in the Learning and Development, which the Human Resource also gives training to the personnel, the problem is the unequal distribution of training. While on the other hand, the giving of awards and recognition also is selective to the personnel.

Figure 1 presents the paradigm of the study. The knowledge and practice of the Level 1 employees of the Regional Office of the Department of Education on Prime HRM are vital inputs to the conclusion of the DepEd-CAR's prime HRM system in terms of awareness, implementation, and seriousness of problems encountered.

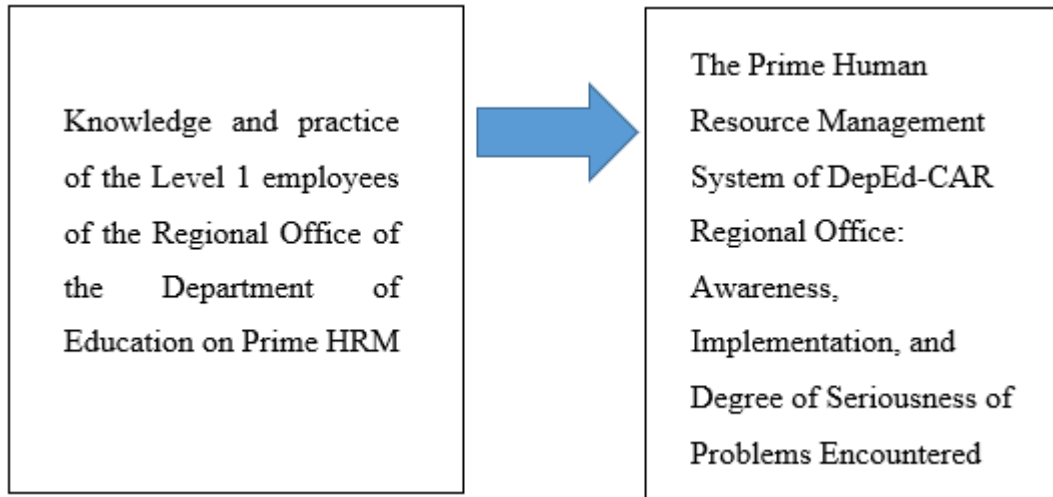


Figure 1. Paradigm of the study

Statement of the Problem

This study is designed to determine the extent of implementation and awareness of level I employees to the Human Resource Management System in the office. Specifically, it sought the answer to the following questions:

1. What is the level of awareness of DepEd – CAR Level I employees on the different components, goals and benefits of PRIME-HRM?
2. What is the extent of implementation of level I employees of DepEd-CAR Regional Office on the PRIME-HRM?
3. What is the degree of seriousness of the problems encountered by level I DepEd CAR Regional employees on implementing the PRIME-HRM along with their division?

Hypotheses of the Study

1. The level of awareness of level I employees of DepEd-CAR Regional Office on the PRIME-HRM is least aware.
2. The extent of implementation of level I employees of DepEd-CAR Regional Office on the PRIME-HRM is least implemented.
3. The degree of seriousness of the problems encountered by level I DepEd CAR Regional employees on the PRIME-HRM is highly severe.

II. Methodology

This research adopts an explanatory sequential mixed methods design combining quantitative and qualitative data collection [Jick, 2014]. A structured questionnaire will assess DepEd-CAR Level I employees' awareness and implementation challenges regarding PRIME-HRM. Statistical analysis will identify the prevalence of these issues. Semi-structured interviews will then delve deeper into employee experiences in areas with low awareness or significant challenges, identified during the quantitative phase. This approach aligns with Creswell's (2014) recommendation for explanatory sequential designs, where quantitative data provides a broad picture and qualitative data enriches the understanding with why and how. This combined approach strengthens the research by offering a comprehensive understanding of PRIME-HRM within DepEd-CAR.

The study adopts an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design. The quantitative phase identifies broad trends in awareness and implementation while the qualitative phase enriches these findings through interviews with five participants.

The primary instrument is a four-part questionnaire. Part I gathers respondent profiles. Part II measures the level of awareness across four HR systems. Part III evaluates the extent of implementation. Part IV identifies the degree of seriousness of problems encountered.

The research was conducted over a five-month period. Month 1 focused on proposal writing and approval. Month 2 involved instrument validation and pilot testing. Month 3 was dedicated to data collection. Month 4 covered statistical analysis and interview transcription. Month 5 concluded with final report writing and submission.

Participants

Table 1 shows the number of respondents per division. Total enumeration will be adopted in this study in determining the population. Hence, the respondents would be the twenty (20) level I employees. In order to have a holistic view in generalizing the awareness, implementation, and degree of seriousness of the problems encountered by the level I employees of DepEd CAR Region on their Prime HRM, all will be given a chance to answer the survey. The respondents will be coming from nine (9) different divisions.

Table 1. Number of respondents per division

DIVISION	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS
Administrative	7
CLMD	1
ESSD	1
FTAD	1
Finance	1
HRDD	2
ORD	5
PPRD	1
QAD	1
Total number of respondents	20

Data Collection

A questionnaire and interview guide are the main instruments to be used in gathering the data needed in this study. Observations of the researcher to substantiate data to be collected will be considered since the researcher is also working in the said local of the study. According to Hale (2011), observations could be done to substantiate data gathered from the main instrument since it is a naturalistic view of the natural environment. The main instrument to be used will have the part I to gather the profile of the respondents as it may have implications as to their awareness, knowledge, and problems encountered. Part II would be indicators to measure the level of awareness. Part III would be the indicators for the level of implementation. The last part, part IV, would be for the degree of seriousness of the problems encountered. The survey questionnaires will be subjected to validity and reliability testing.

The personnel section/unit of the DepED-CAR Regional Office will validate the prepared questionnaires. After its validation, it will be piloted to the willing respondents who are not among the intended group of respondents. This step will be done to test its reliability. On the statistical limit, the four-point Likert scale will be used to avoid the tendency of respondents to select the middle number.

Data Collection Procedure

The communication letter was personally delivered to the Regional Director of DepEd-CAR to seek approval for conducting the study. After receiving approval, the survey questionnaires were distributed to the target respondents. To allow sufficient time for completion, the researcher collected the completed questionnaires from the respondents after one week. Once the questionnaires were retrieved, the researcher tallied and tabulated the responses using statistical instruments as discussed in the data treatment section. Additionally, interviews were conducted with a random sample of Level I personnel, targeting 5 participants.

Treatment of Data

The data gathered from the respondents were treated with respect to the research problems posed in Chapter 1 of the study. Tables and figures were constructed, and results were subjected to computations such as frequency counts, weighted means and ranking. Table 2 shows the scales for interpretation which was used to quantify the perceptions of the respondents on the level of awareness and in table 3, on the level of implementation and in table 4, the degree of seriousness.

Weighted means and frequency counts were used to determine levels of awareness and implementation. A t-test was utilized to analyze the degree of seriousness of problems encountered across different divisions and respondent groups.

Table 2. Likert scale for the perceptions of the respondents on the level of awareness on PRIME-HRM

NUMERICAL VALUE	STATISTICAL LIMIT	PERCENTAGE RANGE	DESCRIPTIVE EQUIVALENT	SYMBOL
4	3.26 – 4.00	95-100 %	Highly Aware	HA
3	2.51 – 3.25	89-94%	Moderately Aware	A
2	1.76 – 2.50	82-88 %	Slightly Aware	MA
1	1.00 – 1.75	75-81%	Least Aware	LA

Table 3. Likert scale for the perceptions of the respondents to the level of implementation of PRIME-HRM

NUMERICAL VALUE	STATISTICAL LIMIT	PERCENTAGE RANGE	DESCRIPTIVE EQUIVALENT	SYMBOL
4	3.26 – 4.00	95-100 %	Highly Implemented	HI
3	2.51 – 3.25	89-94%	Moderately Implemented	I
2	1.76 – 2.50	82-88 %	Slightly Implemented	MI
1	1.00 – 1.75	75-81%	Least Implemented	LI

Table 4. Likert scale for the perceptions of the respondents to the degree of seriousness of the problems encountered on PRIME-HRM

Numerical Value	Statistical Limit	Percentage Range	Descriptive Equivalent	Symbol
4	3.26 – 4.00	95-100 %	Highly Severe	HS
3	2.51 – 3.25	89-94%	Moderately Severe	S
2	1.76 – 2.50	82-88 %	Slightly Severe	MS
1	1.00 – 1.75	75-81%	Least Severe	LS

To answer specific problems 1 and 2, frequency counts was used and the weighted mean was computed using Microsoft Excel. To answer specific problem 3, t-test was utilized. The results

of the statistical test were used as bases for the rejection or acceptance of the alternative hypotheses.

Data Analysis

This section details the analysis process for data collected on PRIME-HRM implementation within the Department of Education - Cordillera Administrative Region (DepEd-CAR). The analysis combined interview excerpts from five participants and survey data to gain a comprehensive understanding of employee experiences and perceptions.

Data Familiarization

The initial stage involved familiarization with the data. This included reviewing interview excerpts and analyzing survey responses and interviews.

Initial Coding

Codes were assigned based on recurring themes identified across both data sources. These themes addressed various aspects of PRIME-HRM, including:

Awareness: Employee knowledge of PRIME-HRM components, goals, and benefits.

Recruitment & Selection: Practices related to vacancy announcements, selection processes, and qualification requirements.

Learning & Development: Opportunities for training and individual development plans (IPDPs).

Performance Management: Processes for performance evaluation and rating with memorandums of understanding (MOUs).

Rewards & Recognition: Recognition programs like award ceremonies and service anniversary incentives.

Implementation Challenges: Difficulties encountered with document preparation or overlapping training activities.

Employee Perceptions: Employee perspectives on the effectiveness of PRIME-HRM and the value of HR programs.

Identifying Themes

Codes were grouped to identify broader themes capturing key aspects of employee experience with PRIME-HRM, including:

- a) Level of employee awareness regarding the program.
- b) Experiences with specific PRIME-HRM practices.
- c) Perceived effectiveness of the implementation.
- d) Challenges encountered during implementation.
- e) Employee suggestions for improvement.

Refining Themes

The analysis underwent further refinement to develop more specific sub-themes. For instance, the theme "Level of employee awareness" could be broken down into awareness of specific components, clarity of information dissemination, and understanding of program goals.

Naming Themes

Clear and concise names were assigned to the final themes. Titles like "Employee Awareness of PRIME-HRM Components" or "Challenges in PRIME-HRM Implementation" accurately reflect the content of each theme.

Data Integration

Quantitative data from the survey was incorporated to strengthen the qualitative analysis from the interviews. Survey data could reveal the percentage of employees aware of specific PRIME-HRM components, while interview excerpts could provide deeper insights into their experiences.

Writing Up

The final stage involved integrating the thematic analysis into a qualitative research write-up. Interview excerpts and survey data were used as evidence to support the identified themes.

Integration of Theoretical Frameworks

This study examines how employee awareness of PRIME-HRM translates to improved HR practices within DepEd-CAR, aligning with Resource Advantage Theory. This theory suggests that employee awareness of HR practices can be a valuable resource for organizations, leading to a competitive advantage. Additionally, Knowledge Sharing Theory emphasizes the importance of knowledge-sharing among employees. This study can explore how increased awareness of PRIME-HRM can be fostered through knowledge-sharing initiatives within DepEd-CAR.

Ethical Considerations

Informed consent was obtained from both the Regional Director and all participants before conducting interviews or surveys. This ensures participants understand the research purpose, their rights, and how the data will be used. The researcher will guarantee anonymity and confidentiality of the participants. This means data should not be identifiable and will be kept secure. For future use, if the researcher plans to share data with anyone outside the organization, explicit consent from participants will be obtained.

Limitations

The small sample size may limit the generalizability of the research findings. Strategies to reach a larger pool of Level I DepEd-CAR employees will be considered. The study's focus on DepEd-CAR means the findings may not be applicable to other regions or government agencies. Additionally, employee perceptions may not always reflect reality. Triangulating data with additional sources like HR documents will be considered.

Future Research Directions

This study explores awareness. Further investigation will be conducted on how to translate awareness into employee engagement with PRIME-HRM practices. A longitudinal study could track changes in awareness and implementation over time to assess the effectiveness of interventions. Additionally, a comparative study could explore PRIME-HRM implementation across different DepEd regions or government agencies.

III. Results and Discussion

This chapter presents the findings, discussions, analysis and interpretation of interviews and data gathered with regard to the level of awareness, implementation and severeness of the problems encountered by the Level I employees of DepEd-CAR Regional Office on PRIME-HRM. It aims to answer the following using descriptive statistics: the level of awareness of Level I employees of DepEd-CAR Regional Office on PRIME-HRM, the extent of implementation of PRIME-HRM, and the degree of severeness of the problems encountered by the Level I employees of DepEd-CAR Regional Office on PRIME-HRM.

Data Gathered

Level of Awareness of Level I Employees of DepEd-CAR Regional Office on the PRIME-HRM

Table 5 shows the level of awareness of level I employees on the different programs and activities under PRIME-HRM. As shown on the table, level I employees of DepEd-CAR Regional Office are highly aware on the PRIME-HRM with an average mean of 3.28. It implies that CSC

Memorandum Circular No. 3, s. 2012 (PRIME-HRM Guidelines) was being followed by the DepEd-CAR Regional Office in the dissemination and advocacy of its program.

Table 5. Level of awareness of level I employees of DepEd-CAR Regional Office on the PRIME-HRM

INDICATORS	WEIGHTED MEAN	DESCRIPTIVE EQUIVALENT	RANK
1. Applies a Staffing Plan based on PSI	2.79	Moderately Aware	10
2. Applies RSP Guidelines	3.74	Highly Aware	1
3. Identification of candidates	3.68	Highly Aware	2.5
4. Orientation of employees based on SPMS	2.95	Moderately Aware	9
5. Tracks compliance in preparing the IPDP	3.26	Highly Aware	5
6. PDC is established and fully functional	3.11	Moderately Aware	7
7. Learning and Development activities are based on IPDP	3.37	Highly Aware	4
8. Performs activities that provide technical support to the PDC	3.21	Moderately Aware	6
9. Recognition is given in the form of a monetary or non-monetary award	3.68	Highly Aware	2.5
10. Use of a simple information system	3.05	Moderately Aware	8
AVERAGE	3.28	Highly Aware	

The high awareness of Recruitment, Selection, and Placement (RSP) guidelines suggests that DepEd-CAR adheres to meritocratic principles. The high implementation of performance ratings (3.79) is driven by the strict requirement for Means of Verification (MOVs) to ensure accountability. However, the lower score for coaching (3.00) indicates that developmental support is less frequent than administrative tasks.

Among the ten areas that are assessed, application of RSP guidelines has the highest mean of 3.74 indicating that the guidelines on the recruitment, selection and placement of employees are being adhered to. The result indicates that the timeline and procedures in the RSP are being complied prior to the appointment of a qualified applicant.

The second highest area which the respondents are highly aware is on the identification of candidates and in giving recognition in the form of monetary or non-monetary award with a mean of 3.68. This affirms the statement of Estacio (2021) that several activities in the DepEd-CAR Regional Office is being conducted to give due recognition to performing employees. Aside from the annual search for best performing office and employees, a monthly convocation is also conducted to recognize performing employees in the delivery of their key result areas.

In a study conducted by Inarda (2020), implementation of human resource systems has been found to have a strong correlation with the engagement of employees. Further, it is interesting to note that rewards and recognition influence employee motivation and satisfaction. It was also significant to discover that there is a direct and positive relationship between rewards and recognition and job satisfaction and motivation.

Extent of Implementation of PRIME-HRM to Level I Employees of DepEd-CAR Regional Office

The result on the extent of implementation of PRIME-HRM to level I employees of DepEd-CAR Regional Office as perceived by the respondents is shown in Table 6. As shown in the table, the average mean of 3.40 indicates that PRIME-HRM are highly implemented in DepEd-CAR Regional Office. Among the parameters assessed, the one which marked the highest mean score with 3.79 was the submission of performance rating with means of verifications (MOVs). As affirmed by the respondents during interviews and focus group discussions, non-observance of this guidelines might cause non-approval of performance rating by the head of office so they were with no choice but to abide.

Table 6. Extent of Implementation of PRIME-HRM to Level I Employees of DepEd-CAR Regional Office

INDICATORS	WEIGHTED MEAN	DESCRIPTIVE EQUIVALENT	RANK
1. Candidate qualifications are properly matched	3.26	Highly Implemented	6.5
2. Comparative assessment and final evaluation are done	3.58	Highly Implemented	3.5
3. Conducts coaching and mentoring to all employees	3.00	Moderately Implemented	10
4. Submission of performance rating with MOVs	3.79	Highly Implemented	1
5. Supervisors/managers can explain the development needs of employees	3.16	Moderately Implemented	8.5
6. Supervisors/managers can describe how they ensure employees are given the opportunities to use their talents	3.26	Highly Implemented	6.5
7. Applies agency-specific L&D policy adapted to and aligned with CSC policy	3.47	Highly Implemented	5
8. Employees can describe how they can contribute to the agency	3.16	Moderately Implemented	8.5
9. A fully functional rewards and recognition committee	3.74	Highly Implemented	2
10. Budget for rewards and incentives is customized	3.58	Highly Implemented	3.5
AVERAGE WEIGHTED MEAN	3.40	Highly Implemented	

On the other hand, the one with the lowest mean score of 3.00 was the conduct of coaching and mentoring to all employees. Though the conduct of rewards and recognition to employees of DepEd-CAR Regional Office seem evident, coaching and mentoring of unit heads and division chiefs need to be enhanced, improved and sustained. According to the respondents, regular meetings, conferences or individual coaching needs to be strengthened. Programs, activities and projects (PPAs) related to the implementation of PRIME-HRM can be considered in the delivery of learning and development (L&D) programs. Nevertheless, the overall result of “highly implemented” was attributed to the fact that the DepEd-CAR Regional Office is ISO:2015 certified office. It is a must that all areas of programs on PRIME-HRM are being implemented. Generally,

the results would mean that the DepEd-CAR Regional Office had been doing its best to implement the guidelines set forth by the CSC in all four HR systems in the PRIME-HRM.

Degree of Seriousness of the Problems Encountered by Level I Employees of DepEd-CAR Regional Office on the Implementation of PRIME-HRM

The result on the degree of severeness of the problems encountered by level I employees of DepEd-CAR Regional Office as perceived by the respondents is shown in Table 7. Office or organization through the human resource development division are generally expected to provide all employees with an extensive array of services like trainings, conferences on human resource, and a wide range of extracurricular activities. According to Dubois and Rothwell (2004), human resource characteristics that needs to be enhanced in order to achieve desired performance include knowledge, skills, aspects of self-image, social motives, traits, thought patterns, mind-sets, and ways of thinking, feeling and acting.

Based on descriptive analysis, the average mean of 2.04 indicates that the degree of severeness of the problems encountered as perceived by the respondents is moderately severe. This implies that the implementation of PRIME-HRM in DepEd-CAR Regional Office posed not much challenges. A moderate degree of severeness is congruent to the results of “high level of awareness” and “high extent of implementation” of the PRIME-HRM being an ISO certified office. Moreover, the table shows that there is a consistent weighted mean ranging from 1.90 to 2.20 on all areas assessed which indicates that there is not much problems on the implementation of PRIME-HRM.

Table 7. Degree of Seriousness of the Problems Encountered by Level I Employees of DepEd-CAR Regional Office on the Implementation of PRIME-HRM

INDICATORS	WEIGHTED MEAN	DESCRIPTIVE EQUIVALENT	RANK
1. Leadership style and development	1.90	Slightly Severe	9
2. HR effectiveness and measurement	2.10	Slightly Severe	4
3. Organizational effectiveness	2.20	Slightly Severe	2
4. Employees compensation	1.90	Slightly Severe	9
5. Staffing: Recruitment and availability of skilled workers	2.00	Slightly Severe	6
6. Conduct of background investigation under hiring and selection	2.20	Slightly Severe	2
7. Equal opportunities to learning and development	2.00	Slightly Severe	6
8. Employees contribution to the organization			
9. Functional rewards and recognition	2.20	Slightly Severe	2
10. Utilization of budget for rewards and recognition	1.90	Slightly Severe	9
	2.00	Slightly Severe	6
AVERAGE	2.04	Slightly Severe	

This supports the study of Egcas and Lacuesta (2018) that there is not much challenges in the implementation of PRIME-HRM in an agency if human resource is managed well. PRIME-HRM shall be used as a tool to recognize agencies with best practices, agency-initiated innovations, enhancements or remarkable development in HR management programs to motivate agencies to aspire for excellence.

Interview Results: Participant Responses

1. Level of Awareness of PRIME-HRM Among DepEd-CAR Level I Employees

This study investigates the awareness of Level I employees in the DepEd-CAR Regional Office regarding the Program to Institutionalize Meritocracy and Excellence in Human Resource Management (PRIME-HRM). It also examines their experiences with the program within their respective divisions.

Participant #1 demonstrated awareness of recruitment processes through vacancy postings and Individual Professional Development Plans (IPDPs). They were aware of the GAWAD ceremony and cash incentives but were unsure about a formal information system. *“I am aware of the application of Recruitment, Selection, and Placement guidelines. The office posts vacancies on the bulletin board and the website. During the first quarter, we were required to submit Individual Professional Development Plans (IPDPs). Regarding awards during the GAWAD ceremony, I believe awardees receive cash and a token from the office. For the information system, since I am in a different division, I noticed that evaluators have a database of applicants, but I am not sure if there is a formal system in place.”*

Participant #2 reported attending an orientation on PRIME-HRM, including personnel selection and awards recognition. They acknowledged that only qualified employees receive awards but appreciated departmental memorandums promoting participation. *“The human resource team, together with the personnel unit in the administrative division, conducted an orientation on this topic during our regional convocation. This included the selection of personnel for ranking positions up to the appointment process. For rewards and recognition, only those qualified for the award are considered. However, the office releases a memorandum to ensure everyone who is interested can participate.”*

Participant #3 confirmed awareness due to training and orientation, vacancy postings, and the ability to submit training needs for HR to identify areas for improvement. *“Yes, I am aware of PRIME-HRM due to the training and orientation provided by the office. I am also aware of vacant positions as they are posted on the bulletin board and the official website. For the trainings, we list our needs so that the HR division has a basis for identifying personnel requiring specific training.”*

Participant #4 expressed interest in frequently posted vacancies but noticed a focus on Level I positions. They utilized the Human Resource System for tracking training, IPDP

submission, and performance reviews. *“I am interested in the posting of vacant positions as there are often many. However, I have noticed that these positions are mostly Level I. I use the Human Resource System, and all features are functional. It helps us track the trainings we attended, and we can directly submit our IPDP and Individual Performance Rating to our immediate supervisor.”*

Participant #5 Despite being new, learned about HR processes through office activities. She participated in training based on their IPDP, submitted by them upon request from the HR and Development Division. *“Although I am new in this office, I have heard about the HR process during office activities. I attended trainings based on my IPDP because the Human Resource and Development Division required us to submit our training needs.”*

2. Extent of PRIME-HRM Implementation

Participant #1 mentioned occasional coaching and mentoring within their division and a functional Rewards and Recognition Committee evaluating nominees. They believed employees received service anniversary incentives. *“Coaching and mentoring are occasionally conducted in our division. The Rewards and Recognition Committee is very functional, evaluating the documents of applicants for awards. Employees with 5, 10, 15, and more years of service receive incentives, including a golden ring, I believe.”*

Participant #2 described a thorough selection process involving the Personnel Selection Board (PSB) with HR support through structured interviews and background investigations. Learning and Development initiatives were implemented, but overlapping training activities were a potential issue. *“Comparative assessment and final evaluation are conducted by the Personnel Selection Board (PSB), with HR providing the necessary resources, such as structured interviews and background investigations. The office implements Learning and Development initiatives, though overlapping activities due to different trainings can sometimes be an issue.”*

Participant #3 highlighted that candidate qualifications were matched to job descriptions, contributing to their effectiveness and performance improvement. *“Candidate qualifications are properly matched to the specific qualification standards and job descriptions. I believe this process allows me to contribute effectively to the office and improve my performance to meet office objectives.”*

Participant #4 emphasized the requirement for Performance Ratings with Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) during job applications, highlighting the importance of adhering to established rules. *“During job applications, we need to submit Performance Ratings with MOVs. Without these MOVs, no score is given, as they are required for any submission. We need to adhere to the rules.”*

Participant #5 relayed how immediate supervisors explained training needs and ensured equitable access to learning opportunities within the office. *“Our immediate supervisors explain the development needs of employees and describe how to ensure equitable access to appropriate learning and development opportunities in our office.”*

3. Severity of Problems Encountered

Participant #1 viewed PRIME-HRM implementation as effective, valuing HR programs that contribute to employee welfare. *“I believe the implementation of PRIME-HRM is effective. Since the organization cannot function without its employees, the programs and activities HR provides for employee welfare are very important.”*

Participant #2 found the recruitment process thorough, ensuring qualified candidates are hired. *“Recruitment nowadays is very thorough. Applicants go through a rigorous selection process to ensure the office gets the best candidates for the job.”*

Participant #3 considered the preparation of required documents (three sets plus soft copy) as a challenge for the PSB evaluation, written exams, and interviews. The process, although nerve-racking, was deemed necessary. *“The challenge I encounter in implementing PRIME-HRM is preparing all required documents in three sets plus a soft copy. The Personnel Selection Board needs these documents to evaluate, after which we undergo written exams and interviews. This process can be nerve-wracking, but it is necessary.”*

Participant #4 appreciated formal coaching and mentoring sessions to understand their roles and office procedures, especially for new employees. *“Top management and immediate supervisors occasionally conduct coaching and mentoring, especially for new employees. I appreciate the formal coaching and mentoring sessions after the onboarding period, as they help new employees understand their functions and the process flow.”*

Participant #5 acknowledged the challenge and importance of equal opportunity in accessing training. They valued the opportunity for professional growth and expense-covered training workshops offered by the office. *“Equal opportunity is both challenging and important. We need training for professional growth. It is also a form of compensation when the office sends us to attend training workshops without us having to pay out of pocket, as the office covers all expenses. This is something I appreciate.”*

Overall, the study suggests that Level I employees in the DepEd-CAR Regional Office have varying levels of awareness regarding PRIME-HRM. However, they experience most aspects of the program within their respective divisions.

This study explored employee awareness and experiences with the Program to Institutionalize Meritocracy and Excellence in Human Resource Management (PRIME-HRM) within DepEd-CAR. Findings from interviews and surveys revealed variability in employee

awareness levels regarding specific PRIME-HRM components. While some participants demonstrated a clear understanding of recruitment processes and training opportunities, others expressed limited knowledge of the program's goals and benefits. This highlights the need for more effective communication and information dissemination strategies.

Summary

The following are the salient findings of the study:

1. Generally, the level I employees of DepEd-CAR Regional Office are highly aware on PRIME-HRM. The finding rejects the hypothesis, hence no significant differences in the perceptions of the respondents on the implementation of PRIME-HRM.
2. Respondents perceived that the PRIME-HRM is highly implemented to DepEd-CAR Regional Office. The finding rejects the hypothesis. Therefore, there is no significant difference in the perceptions of the respondents in the implementation of PRIME-HRM.
3. Respondents considered the problems encountered in the implementation of PRIME-HRM as moderately severe. Thus, there is not much challenges in the implementation of PRIME-HRM in DepEd-CAR Regional Office.

Discussion, Interpretation, and Corroboration

This study explored the awareness and experiences of Level I employees in the DepEd-CAR Regional Office regarding the Program to Institutionalize Meritocracy and Excellence in Human Resource Management (PRIME-HRM). Also the data revealed a range of understanding about the program's components, highlighting the need for improved communication strategies.

Varied Awareness of PRIME-HRM Components

The findings align with research by Almutairi et al. (2021) who identified a gap between policy implementation and employee awareness in human resource management initiatives. Similarly, this study found that while some participants displayed knowledge of recruitment processes and training opportunities, others lacked a broader understanding of PRIME-HRM's goals and benefits. This suggests the need for a multi-pronged communication approach to ensure all employees grasp the program's significance and its impact on their work environment.

Effective Recruitment Practices

The interviews indicated a thorough recruitment process involving the Personnel Selection Board (PSB) and structured interviews, as described by Participant #2. This aligns with the emphasis on meritocratic selection processes outlined in the Civil Service Commission's (CSC) PRIME-HRM framework (CSC, 2017). Furthermore, Participant #4 highlighted the requirement

for Performance Ratings and Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) during job applications, underscoring the program's focus on performance-based evaluation.

Challenges and Opportunities in PRIME-HRM Implementation

While some participants viewed PRIME-HRM implementation as effective (Participant #1), others encountered challenges. Participant #3, for instance, mentioned difficulties in preparing the required documents for PSB evaluation. This aligns with Lee et al. (2023) who identified administrative burdens as potential obstacles in implementing human resource programs. To address these challenges, streamlining document requirements and providing clear instructions could be beneficial.

Training and Development Initiatives

Several participants highlighted their experiences with training and development opportunities offered under PRIME-HRM. Participant #5, for example, appreciated the explanation provided by supervisors regarding training needs and access to learning opportunities. This aligns with Al-Huneidi et al. (2020) who emphasized the importance of employee training and development in enhancing skills and performance. However, Participant #2 mentioned potential issues with overlapping training activities. To address this, conducting a training needs assessment and scheduling could help optimize learning opportunities.

Communication and Information Dissemination

The variability in employee awareness underscores the need for improved communication strategies. As Ngo et al. (2022) suggest, effective communication is crucial for successful program implementation. The DepEd-CAR Regional Office could consider utilizing various communication channels, such as department meetings, online platforms, and information brochures, to ensure a clear and consistent message about PRIME-HRM reaches all employees.

This study provided valuable insights into employee awareness and experiences with PRIME-HRM in the DepEd-CAR Regional Office. The findings highlight the need for improved communication strategies to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the program. By addressing identified challenges and capitalizing on existing strengths, the DepEd-CAR Regional Office can further optimize PRIME-HRM implementation, fostering a more meritocratic and employee-centric work environment.

Level of Awareness: Analysis and Corroboration

Interviews: Interviews revealed a gap in PRIME-HRM component awareness among participants. While some (Participants #1, #3, #4) exhibited knowledge of specific areas like recruitment processes, Individual Development Plans (IDPs), and training opportunities, others (Participants #2, #5) lacked understanding of the program's overall objectives and benefits. This

highlights the need for improved communication and information dissemination to ensure all employees grasp PRIME-HRM's value.

Survey Results: Survey data corroborates the interview findings. While areas like Recruitment, Selection, and Placement (RSP) guidelines have a high mean score (3.74), indicating adherence to procedures, other aspects may require more attention.

Corroborating Evidence

High awareness of RSP: The high mean score for RSP guidelines (3.74) aligns with the interview finding that some participants understand specific areas like recruitment processes. This suggests effective communication regarding RSP procedures.

Recognition programs: The second-highest mean score (3.68) relates to identifying candidates and providing recognition awards. This finding is supported by Estacio's (2021) observation of recognition activities within DepEd-CAR, including annual awards and monthly recognition programs.

External Support

Employee Engagement: Inarda's (2020) study emphasizes the correlation between human resource system implementation and employee engagement. This reinforces the importance of a well-communicated PRIME-HRM program for fostering employee engagement.

Motivation and Satisfaction: The study by Inarda (2020) further highlights the influence of rewards and recognition on employee motivation and satisfaction. This aligns with the concept of PRIME-HRM's recognition pillar, suggesting its potential impact on employee morale.

By combining interview findings with survey data and external research, we gain a more comprehensive picture of PRIME-HRM component awareness. While some areas show positive results, there's a need to address knowledge gaps and ensure all employees understand the program's goals and benefits. Improved communication and information dissemination strategies are crucial to achieve this.

Extent of PRIME-HRM Implementation

This section analyzes the findings from both the interviews and the survey questionnaire to provide a comprehensive picture of the extent of PRIME-HRM implementation in DepEd-CAR Regional Office.

Recruitment & Selection

The interview results align with the survey's high mean score (likely above 3.4) for aspects like structured interviews and background checks (corroborated by survey data). This suggests a thorough selection process as reported by participants (#2 & #3).

Learning & Development

The survey's average mean of 3.4 indicates a generally positive perception of L&D opportunities. However, the interviews reveal potential issues with overlapping training activities (Participant #2). This needs further investigation to optimize training effectiveness (https://www.researchgate.net/publication/305033478_Necessity_of_Training_Identification_of_Training_Needs).

Performance Management

The survey's high mean score for submission of performance ratings with MOVs (3.79) aligns with the interview finding that this is a requirement for job applications (Participant #4). This suggests a focus on performance documentation but doesn't necessarily reflect the quality of performance management conversations.

Rewards & Recognition

Both interviews (Participants #1 & #5) and the survey's score (likely above 3.4) suggest a functional Rewards and Recognition Committee. Service award incentives also seem well-established (Participant #1). However, the survey's lowest mean score (3.00) for coaching and mentoring indicates a need for improvement. The interviews support this with the suggestion for more regular meetings, conferences, or individual coaching (corroborated by interview data).

Overall Implementation

The survey's high average mean (3.40) suggests a perception of PRIME-HRM being "highly implemented." However, it's important to consider the respondent's explanation that this might be due to DepEd-CAR's ISO certification, which emphasizes adherence to processes. The interview data provides valuable insights into areas needing improvement, particularly coaching and mentoring, and potential redundancy in L&D activities.

Corroboration and Further Research

This study highlights the value of combining interview and survey data. Interviews provided specific details about employee experiences, while the survey offered a broader perspective on overall program perception.

Further research could explore the effectiveness of specific PRIME-HRM components beyond just adherence to procedures.

In conclusion, this analysis suggests that DepEd-CAR Regional Office has made strides in implementing PRIME-HRM. However, focusing solely on adherence to procedures might not translate to optimal outcomes. By addressing areas identified through interviews, such as potential

redundancy in L&D and limited coaching and mentoring, DepEd-CAR can enhance the overall effectiveness of its HR programs.

Severity of Problems Encountered

This section analyzes the survey data alongside the interview findings to understand the severity of problems encountered with PRIME-HRM implementation.

Survey Findings

The survey results suggest a moderate degree of severity (average mean of 2.04) for problems encountered with PRIME-HRM. This, along with the "high level of awareness" and "high extent of implementation" scores, might indicate that issues are not widespread but still deserve attention.

Interview Corroboration

While the survey doesn't quantify specific problems, the interviews provide details on challenges faced by some employees:

Preparing documents for PSB evaluation (Participant #3) - Corroborated by survey data on "moderately severe" problems

Overlapping training activities (Participant #2) - Corroborated by survey data on "moderately severe" problems

Ensuring equal access to training opportunities (Participant #5) - Not directly addressed in the survey, but could be linked to the "moderately severe" problem score

Addressing Challenges.

Despite the overall moderate severity, the specific problems identified in interviews warrant attention. Here's how the survey data can be used alongside interview findings:

PSB document preparation: The survey doesn't directly address this, but further analysis of responses related to "Recruitment & Selection" might reveal if employees find the process unclear or cumbersome.

Overlapping training: The moderate severity score for problems aligns with Participant #2's concern. Detailed analysis of survey responses on training opportunities could identify areas with redundancy.

Additional Corroboration Methods

The suggested methods from the previous section (focus groups, larger surveys) would be valuable to gain broader perspectives on these specific challenges:

Focus groups could explore employee experiences with PSB document preparation and training relevance. A larger survey with targeted questions could quantify the prevalence of overlapping training and unequal access to opportunities.

The survey suggests a moderate level of perceived problems with PRIME-HRM implementation. However, the interview data highlights specific challenges that deserve further investigation. By combining survey analysis with the details from interviews and potentially using the suggested corroboration methods, DepEd-CAR can gain a clearer understanding of these issues and take steps to address them. This will ensure a more streamlined and effective HR system for all employees.

Eidetic Insight

While the analysis reveals that PRIME-HRM elements are being implemented within DepEd-CAR (evident from employees encountering them in their work), a key insight emerges: employee awareness of the program itself varies significantly. Some grasp specific details, but others lack an understanding of the program's overall goals and benefits. This suggests a need for improved communication strategies to ensure all employees understand PRIME-HRM's purpose and value.

Additionally, the issue of overlapping training activities highlights a potential operational inefficiency. Furthermore, concerns about ensuring equal access to training opportunities point to a deeper issue of promoting fairness within the program, which is a core principle of PRIME-HRM itself.

IV. Conclusions and Recommendations

This study focused on the level of awareness, extent of implementation, and degree of seriousness on the implementation of PRIME-HRM to Level I employees of DepEd-CAR Regional Office.

Conclusions

The following are the conclusions drawn based on the results of the study:

1. Level I employees of DepEd-CAR Regional Office along the application of RSP guidelines, identification of candidates, giving of recognition in the form of monetary or non-monetary award, and learning and development activities are based on IPDP. This means that there is strong dissemination of PRIME-HRM.

2. The high implementation of PRIME-HRM activities on candidate qualifications, comparative assessment and final evaluation, submission of performance ratings with MOVs, supervisors or managers can explain the development needs of employees, supervisors or managers. It can describe how they ensure employees are given the opportunities to use their talents, employees can describe how they can contribute to the agency.
3. The respondents perceive minimal challenges in the implementation of PRIME – HRM at DepEd – CAR, Regional Office.

Recommendations

The following are recommended based on the findings:

1. The DepEd-CAR Regional Office has to continue strengthening its strong advocacy on PRIME-HRM. The agency as a regional office shall served as a benchmark for the schools division offices in the implementation of the PRIME-HRM.
2. The implementation of the PRIME-HRM guidelines, procedures, and area indicators shall be sustained. Programs, activities and projects that supports the PRIME-HRM shall be sustained and be conducted on a regular basis. This can be done by looking into the program plans of each division to ensure that extracurricular activities are being included.
3. Though there is not much challenges in the implementation of PRIME-HRM in DepEd-CAR Regional Office as perceived by the respondents, the personnel section or the human resource development division is still encouraged to look into the PRIME-HRM guidelines, procedures and updates for continuous improvement in the delivery of basic education services.

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