



**THE COMBINED MEDIATING
EFFECTS OF DECISION-MAKING PARTICIPATION
AND TEACHER EMPOWERMENT ON THE RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN STRATEGIC HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
(HRM) PRACTICES AND ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION**

Ronel C. Homeo¹ⁱ,

Eugenio S. Guhao, Jr.²

¹Cabinuangan Central Elementary School,
Davao de Oro Division, Region XI,
Department of Education,
Philippines

²University of Mindanao,
Davao City,
Philippines

Abstract:

This study determined the combined mediating effects of decision-making participation and teacher empowerment on the relationship between strategic HRM practices and achievement motivation among public elementary school teachers in Region XI, Philippines. A descriptive-correlational quantitative research design was employed using path analysis. Data were collected using an adapted survey questionnaire from 400 teachers selected through stratified random sampling. The statistical tools used for data analysis included the mean, Pearson's product-moment correlation, and linear regression. The results revealed very high levels of strategic HRM practices, achievement motivation, decision-making participation, and teacher empowerment. Further, significant relationships were observed between strategic HRM practices and achievement motivation; strategic HRM practices and decision-making participation; strategic HRM practices and teacher empowerment; decision-making participation and achievement motivation; and teacher empowerment and achievement motivation. Additionally, participation in decision-making and teacher empowerment partially mediated the relationship between strategic HRM practices and achievement motivation. The findings highlighted the pivotal role of strategic HRM practices. Hence, school leaders may implement strategic HRM practices that actively involve teachers in decision-making processes and empower them in their roles, thereby enhancing teachers' achievement motivation and leading to improved educational outcomes.

ⁱ Correspondence: email ronel.homeo001@deped.gov.ph, eugenio_guhao@umindanao.edu.ph

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1. Introduction

The quality of education is significantly influenced by teachers' proficiency (Madjid & Samsudin, 2021; Padalia & Nurocgmah, 2021). Nonetheless, low teachers' achievement motivation presents a significant barrier to educational quality and learner success (Ekmekci & Serrano, 2022). When teachers lack the internal drive to excel, it results in diminished instructional planning, reduced engagement in professional development, and a weakened commitment to student-centered teaching (Padalia & Nurocgmah, 2021). It was found that low achievement motivation negatively affects teachers' quality, particularly their competence and performance (Centina & Guhao, 2022; Madjid & Samsudin, 2021; Mardhani, Dewi, & Purba, 2022; Padalia & Nurocgmah, 2021; Wardiah & Kristiawan, 2018). Several studies revealed that teachers who lack achievement motivation cause students' poor academic performance and low motivation to learn (Afriani, 2020; Mauliya, Relianisa, & Rokhyati, 2020; Nghambi, 2014).

Achievement motivation plays an important role in education as it positively influences teaching-learning process (Wardiah & Kristiawan, 2018), organizational commitment (Madjid & Samsudin, 2021), achievement of educational goals (Padalia & Nurocgmah, 2021), teaching competence (Centina & Guhao, 2022), teacher performance (Madjid & Samsudin, 2021; Mardhani, *et al.*, 2022), and achievement of personal and professional goals (Lim, 2023). Motivation, which positively influences one's thoughts, beliefs, and perceptions (Bency, 2019); changes teachers' mindset to become happier (Lim, 2023), competent and actively involved in carrying out their duties with diligence, perseverance, integrity, responsibility, and discipline (Samaco, 2022). More so, highly motivated teachers have a strong drive to succeed and pursue further education and training in the professional field (Centina & Guhao, 2022), and feel that their jobs are meaningful and they belong to a team (Al-Kazlah & Badkook, 2022), and become happy when they uplift and motivate others, and see them happy (Cañoso, 2025).

Several studies concluded that achievement motivation is correlated with strategic Human Resource Management (HRM) practices (Al-Kazlah & Badkook, 2022; Khuong, Mai, & Phuong, 2020; Milhem, 2024). Strategic HRM practices significantly improve teachers' achievement motivation (Chisanga, 2023; Hoque & Atheef, 2024), at the same time indirectly influencing it through decision-making participation and teacher empowerment (Nurjaman, 2023). Aligning and implementing effective strategic HRM approaches, such as performance evaluations, training, and fair compensation, results in high level of achievement motivation (Mwikila & Indoshi, 2023). Kiplimo and Odiyo (2024) emphasized that this alignment fosters a motivated and committed workforce.

Teachers are encouraged to participate in school decision-making and shared leadership through strategic human resource management practices such as training, recruitment, and performance evaluations, which fosters a sense of value and trust (Lukitasari *et al.*, 2024; Berhanu, 2024). When human resource management strategies are aligned with educational objectives, the quality of instruction is enhanced (Chisanga, 2023). Furthermore, it promotes a culture in which teachers feel empowered to contribute meaningfully (Chisanga, 2023; Quimpan & Bauyot, 2024). In the selection process, structured interviews serve as an effective human resource management tool (Llego, 2024), and professional development programs are instrumental in enhancing teachers' skills and competencies (Prudente *et al.*, 2024). The Performance Management and Evaluation System (PMES) provide a fair evaluation of teachers' performance (DepEd, 2025).

Research further indicates that strategic HRM promotes teacher empowerment by supporting professional development, fostering collaboration, and enhancing well-being through transparent processes and supportive training (Permatasari & Tandiyayuk, 2023; Tran & Kelley, 2024). These HRM strategies have been found to significantly impact teacher satisfaction and effectiveness, with appraisal systems playing a crucial role in motivating teachers toward educational excellence (Joshuva & Shine, 2025). Moreover, implementing strategic HRM methods is closely linked to empowering teachers, as seen through professional growth, trust, recognition, and collaboration (Liang *et al.*, 2024).

Furthermore, teacher achievement motivation is linked to participation in decision-making (DepEd, 2024; Irawanto, 2015). When teachers are involved in decision-making, their motivation and commitment to school goals tend to grow, as this fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility (DepEd, 2024; Facinabao *et al.*, 2025). Teachers are more willing to accept their roles and responsibilities in the classroom when supported by school heads (Isa *et al.*, 2024) and when they are actively engaged in decision processes (Chopra, 2020). This engagement helps create a more inclusive, cooperative, and equitable learning environment (Isa *et al.*, 2024). Participation in decision-making not only boosts teachers' motivation and dedication to school objectives but also contributes to better overall school performance (Akkaraputtapong *et al.*, 2025; Valdmann, Holbrook, & Rannikmae, 2020).

Ingersoll, Sirinides, and Dougherty (2020) assert that schools with higher teacher involvement in decision-making tend to see improved educational results, including increased achievement for both teachers and students. This is because teachers can provide valuable insights into curriculum development and effective teaching strategies, motivated by their active engagement in the educational process (Sarwar *et al.*, 2025). Their participation ensures that decisions are made with a comprehensive understanding of students' needs and classroom dynamics (Ingersoll *et al.*, 2020; Prananto *et al.*, 2025).

Teacher achievement motivation is positively linked to teacher empowerment (Ghafoor, Gillani, Cheema, & Azeem, 2013; Prudente *et al.*, 2024; Tutar, Altinoz, & Cakiroglu, 2011). As noted by Songcog and Guhao (2020), empowering teachers boosts

their self-efficacy and job satisfaction, which subsequently enhances their motivation to achieve (Prudente *et al.*, 2024). Teachers feel valued and driven when school leaders (Samiano & Baluyos, 2023) and colleagues (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2021) grant them autonomy and opportunities for professional growth. Such support is vital for effective teaching and learning (OECD, 2023; UNESCO, 2023).

Furthermore, empowered teachers have greater levels of motivation, self-efficacy, and job satisfaction, all of which have a direct impact on student performance and overall school success (Prasetia & Akrim, 2024). According to Mokhlis and Abdullah (2025), schools may maximize the ability of their teachers to improve educational outcomes by creating an atmosphere where they feel appreciated and encouraged. Schools establish a sustainable and productive learning atmosphere that helps both teachers and students by placing a high priority on teacher empowerment (Mokhlis & Abdullah, 2025).

This study was anchored in David McClelland's Achievement Motivation Theory. Kurt (2022) cited McClelland's theory, which explains that a person's performance and behavior are based on their need for connection (decision-making participation), need for power (decision-making participation and empowerment), and need for achievement (teacher empowerment and strategic HRM practices). Kurt (2022) elucidated that if an organization wishes to motivate employees, it should empower their personnel by delegating authority to assigned tasks, rewarding and giving them specific feedback on their performance, and providing them with continuous job training and professional development programs. He also pointed out that people who have a high need for power desire to lead and influence others and make an impact and difference in the lives of others. More so, this theory emphasized that employees will be highly motivated to achieve more and perform better if they participate in making decisions and feel a sense of belongingness.

This research was also supported by the Human Relations Management Theory of Elton Mayo, as cited by Peek (2024), which posits that positive social relationships at work and acknowledging each person as an individual can boost employee motivation. An improved working environment, which includes strong leadership, employee empowerment, active involvement, positive treatment, and efficient HRM processes, leads to increased employee motivation. HRM theory asserts that to enhance employees' achievement motivation, an organization should empower them and provide a certain level of autonomy and control. Additionally, they must ensure that school leaders and supervisors have adequate leadership abilities and confirm that staff salaries and benefits are suitable. Moreover, HRM theory suggests that organizations should create safe and conducive physical and social working conditions that promote acceptance, belongingness, and participation of all employees to increase motivation.

Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework displaying the relationships among the four variables in the study: strategic HRM practices, achievement motivation, decision-making participation, and teacher empowerment. In this study, the independent variable is strategic HRM practices, which refers to the systematic and planned approaches to

managing a school organization's human resources to align with its long-term goals and improve overall performance, which has three indicators, namely, recruitment and selection, training and development, and performance appraisal process (Imran *et al.*, 2012). The dependent variable is achievement motivation, which pertains to the motivation and commitment of teachers to achieve high levels of performance, which has four indicators: the need for vocational achievement, the need for academic success, the need for social achievement, and the need for skill achievement (Shah, 1986).

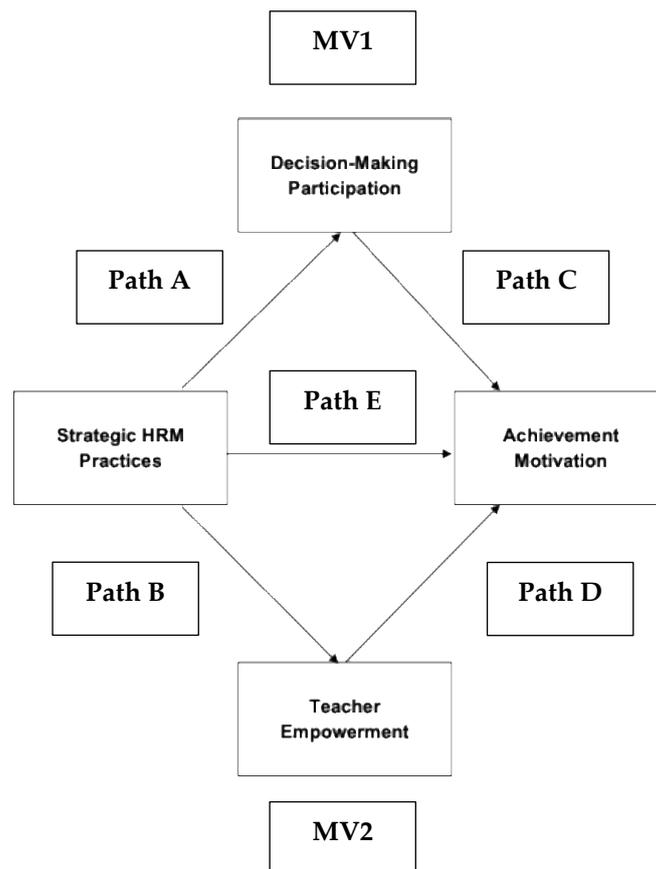


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Study

In this study, the mediating variables are decision-making participation and teacher empowerment. Decision-making participation pertains to teachers' involvement in the processes of making decisions that affect their work and the educational environment, with two indicators: the individual attitude dimension and the organizational environment dimension (Yildirim, Akanb, & Yalcin, 2019). With four indicators, professional development, trust, status, and cooperation, teacher empowerment pertains to the process of providing teachers the power, resources, and assistance they need to make choices and take actions that improve their professional practice and student outcomes (Hidiroglu & Tanriogen, 2020).

While numerous studies have explored the individual effects of strategic HRM practices on teacher achievement motivation, limited research has examined the combined mediating roles of decision-making participation and teacher empowerment in this dynamic, particularly within the Philippine public-school context (Negt & Haunschild, 2024). There is a lack of localized, integrative models that represent the realities of Filipino teachers because existing literature frequently isolates these mediators (Negt & Haunschild, 2024; Al-Hamad *et al.*, 2023). Furthermore, there are few schools that genuinely empower teachers or include them in decision-making, and HRM theory is used inconsistently in educational settings (Negt & Haunschild, 2024). The current study is urgently needed to address this research gap and fulfill DepEd's need for inclusive, participative, and powerful school leadership to achieve Sustainable Development Goal No. 4 and No. 8. By investigating this combined mediation model, this research provides actionable insights for school heads and DepEd officials to strategically align HRM practices with teacher motivation, thereby fostering a more committed and high-performing teaching workforce.

Additionally, this study sought to ascertain the combined mediating effects of decision-making participation and teacher empowerment on the relationship between strategic HRM practices and achievement motivation among DepEd Region XI public school teachers. Particularly, this study intended to determine the level of strategic HRM practices in schools in terms of recruitment and selection, training and development, and performance appraisal process; to evaluate the level of teachers' decision-making participation in terms of individual attitude dimension and organizational environment dimension; to assess the level of teacher empowerment in terms of professional development, trust, status, and cooperation; and to ascertain the level of achievement motivation of teachers in terms of need for academic success, need for vocational achievement, need for social achievement, and need for skill achievement; to establish the significant influence of strategic HRM practices on teacher achievement motivation; to determine the significant impact of strategic HRM practices on decision-making participation; to identify the significant impact of strategic HRM practices on teacher empowerment; to assess the significant impact of decision-making participation on achievement motivation; and to evaluate the significant influence of teacher empowerment on achievement motivation.

Finally, this study examined how decision-making participation and teacher empowerment jointly mediate the link between strategic HRM practices and teacher achievement motivation. In general, this study provided invaluable insights into how participation in decision-making and teacher empowerment mediate the relationship between strategic HRM practices and teacher achievement motivation in elementary schools.

In relation, the null hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance. First, there are no significant correlations among strategic HRM practices and teacher achievement motivation, strategic HRM practices and decision-making participation,

strategic HRM practices and teacher empowerment, decision-making participation and achievement motivation, and teacher empowerment and achievement motivation. Second, decision-making participation and teacher empowerment do not mediate the relationship between strategic HRM practices and achievement motivation in public elementary schools.

This study produced new ideas in education that can help develop strategies to improve understanding of achievement motivation in public elementary schools. Such strategies could lead to better institutional systems, enhanced performance, and improved student results. Additionally, the research provided useful guidance for school leaders on implementing strategic HRM practices, promoting teacher involvement in decision-making, and empowering teachers to boost their motivation and achievement.

Furthermore, this study holds international educational importance as it laid the foundation for implementing and improving the system. It offered crucial insights into the conditions, factors, and impacts of strategic HRM strategies on teacher achievement motivation, decision-making involvement, and empowerment. Significantly, examining achievement motivation is essential because teachers with low motivation can deteriorate educational quality and negatively influence teachers' competence and performance.

In addition, this study serves as a catalyst for positive social transformation at educational institutions, where teachers will receive motivation and support from their school heads, thus contributing to the realization of one of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly quality education (SDG 4). Dedicated teachers and visionary school leaders provide equitable, inclusive, and quality education while promoting opportunities for lifelong learning for everyone. Additionally, the results of the study align with UN SDG 8, which promotes productive employment, economic growth, and fair work opportunities for everyone.

2. Methodology

This section outlined the research respondents, materials, instruments, as well as the research design and procedure used in the study.

2.1 Research Respondents

This research targeted public elementary school teachers in Region XI, employed by DepEd-Region XI, responsible for teaching elementary students. The respondents were drawn from a population of 25,969 teachers across eleven Davao Region divisions. A sample size of 400 teachers was used, based on previous research suggesting this number is adequate for such studies (Raosoft, Inc., 2004). Some scholars also note that sample size often does not depend heavily on population size. The 400 teachers were selected through stratified random sampling using the Raosoft Software Calculator.

Meanwhile, the inclusion criteria for the teacher-respondents were as follows: teachers in Region XI, elementary-level teachers, and teachers willing to participate in the study. They were the ones who met the study's criteria and provided useful information to test the study's hypothesis. Their daily encounter with school heads, co-teachers, students and personal experiences served as their ground in determining their answers to the survey questionnaires given to them. This study excluded parents, students, school administrators, and DepEd officials, concentrating instead on assessing organizational commitment from the teachers' perspective. If a respondent engages in fabrication, plagiarism, or other ethical transgressions, or has special requirements or health problems, they may be removed from the study. If respondents feel uncomfortable or distressed, they may leave the study at any time. The respondents may or may not disclose the reasons for their departure from the study to the researcher. The respondents of the study were provided with informed consent to participate in the study. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were free to withdraw at any time without penalty.

2.2 Research Instruments

The first section of the questionnaire focused on strategic HRM practices, covering three indicators: recruitment and selection, training and development, and performance appraisal (Imran *et al.*, 2012). The second section evaluated teachers' achievement motivation through indicators like the need for academic success, vocational achievement, social achievement, and skill achievement (Shah, 1986). The third section addressed participation in decision-making, including indicators such as individual attitude and organizational environment (Yildirim, Akanb, & Yalcin, 2019). The final section measured teacher empowerment, with indicators like professional development, trust, status, and cooperation (Hidiroglu & Tanriogen, 2020).

Further, the instruments used in this study were adapted from various sources and validated by experts. The questionnaire was revised to include items relevant to the study. After validation, the reliability of the questionnaire was tested through a pilot with 50 teachers. The four adapted research tools achieved Cronbach's alpha coefficients of .978 (TE), .980 (DMP), .964 (SHRMP), and .970 (AM). Cronbach's alpha, which ranges from 0 to 1, indicates internal consistency, with higher values signifying better reliability (Gliem & Gliem, 2003). Values above .9 are considered excellent, above .8 good, above .7 acceptable, above .6 questionable, above .5 poor, and below .5 unacceptable. An alpha of .8 is a reasonable benchmark. When using Likert-type scales, calculating and reporting Cronbach's alpha is vital for assessing internal consistency.

2.3 Design and Procedure

This study utilized a quantitative descriptive-correlational research design. As Creswell (2014) explains, this approach involves gathering numerical data and analyzing it with mathematical methods. Sahin and Mete (2021) describe a descriptive design as a process

that collects information to answer questions about the current state of the subject, aiming to gain detailed insights. A correlational method was chosen to examine the relationships and dependencies between variables. The study focused on exploring how strategic HRM practices, decision-making participation, teacher empowerment, and achievement motivation are interconnected. Specifically, it sought to identify the mediating roles of decision-making participation and teacher empowerment in the link between strategic HRM and teachers' achievement motivation.

Mediation analysis and path analysis were used to evaluate how decision-making participation and teacher empowerment jointly mediate the relationship between strategic HRM practices and achievement motivation. Assessing and contrasting the magnitudes of the effects, direct or indirect, between variables is the main goal of path analysis. By evaluating how well a proposed set of causal linkages fits the observed correlation matrix, typically shown by diagrams with arrows to indicate causal directions, it expands upon the regression model.

The researcher personally distributed survey questionnaires to Region XI public elementary school teachers. The research goal was fully explained to the respondents, who were also given comprehensive information to review and encouraged to ask any questions they had. All participants provided informed consent to participate in the study. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were free to withdraw at any time without penalty. Before being asked to sign the informed consent form, they were also given enough time to think about participating. Throughout the procedure, the respondents' rights and their significant contribution to knowledge advancement were honored and maintained. Furthermore, because the study only solicited opinions and suggestions based on teachers' experiences in their work, there were no high-risk circumstances the respondents reported regarding their physical, mental, or socioeconomic well-being.

As soon as the data was available, the researcher arranged, coded, and tabulated the responses in an Excel file for analysis. The study used various statistical methods to examine the levels and relationships among variables, including path analysis, Pearson correlation, standard deviation, and descriptive statistics. Path analysis was specifically applied to explore the link between decision-making participation and teacher empowerment, with strategic HRM practices and teacher achievement motivation serving as mediators. To ensure methodological rigor, mediation analysis followed the approach outlined by MacKinnon *et al.* (2002).

Ethical standards were maintained accordingly. Ethics approval was obtained from the University of Mindanao Ethics Research Committee (UMERC) and DepEd Region XI, which reviewed and approved the study protocols. Also, this study was conducted in accordance with the ethical principles of the University of Mindanao, Department of Education, and the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173, Philippines). Respondents were clearly informed of their rights, including anonymity and voluntary participation. The researcher ensured the security and confidentiality of

respondents' personal data in accordance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012. The data was used solely for public benefit, stored securely, and handled with confidentiality throughout the study. More so, all sources of information that were used in the study were appropriately credited and recognized through in-text citations using the APA 7th edition referencing, and plagiarism detectors like Turnitin were employed to maintain integrity.

3. Results and Discussion

This section presents the data and analysis of respondents' responses on strategic HRM practices, achievement motivation, decision-making participation, and teacher empowerment.

3.1 Strategic HRM Practices

Presented in Table 1 is the level of Strategic HRM Practices in public elementary schools. The result illustrated a very high level of strategic HRM practices with a 4.56 overall mean and a 0.378 standard deviation. This means that strategic HRM practices are always observed. Specifically, the mean scores of the indicators of strategic HRM practices are disclosed as follows: recruitment and selection registered a mean of 4.63 or very high; training and development attained a mean of 4.53 or very high; and performance appraisal also garnered a mean of 4.53 or very high.

Table 1: Level of Strategic HRM Practices

Indicators	SD	Mean	D.E.
Recruitment and Selection	0.428	4.63	Very High
Training and Development	0.422	4.53	Very High
Performance Appraisal	0.462	4.53	Very High
Overall	0.378	4.56	Very High

The very high overall responses from teachers indicated that all indicators of strategic HRM practices were rated highly. This signifies that teachers underwent structured interviews before being hired and were provided with training opportunities to learn and grow. Aside from that, teachers believed that the performance appraisal system is fair. This finding is consistent with Llego's (2024) statement that structured interviews have been widely recognized as an effective method for ensuring a standardized selection process for public-school teachers. Also, professional development programs have been implemented to enhance teachers' skills and competencies that foster continuous learning and growth (Prudente *et al.*, 2024). More so, the introduction of the Performance Management and Evaluation System (PMES) has contributed to teachers' perception of fairness in performance appraisals (DepEd, 2025).

3.2 Decision-Making Participation

Shown in Table 2 is the level of decision-making participation in public elementary schools. The result demonstrated a very high level of decision-making participation, with a 4.53 overall mean and a 0.459 standard deviation. This denotes that decision-making participation is always observed or manifested.

Table 2: Level of Decision-Making Participation

Items	SD	Mean	D.E.
Are allowed by the school management to participate in decisions about education and teaching.	0.518	4.55	Very High
Decide together with other teachers on what work to be done in the school.	0.516	4.57	Very High
Think that the school management prepares an environment for teachers to share their views and suggestions.	0.520	4.49	Very High
Think that school management takes teachers' concerns and suggestions about procedures related to the school into account.	0.525	4.49	Very High
Are consulted by the school principal before making a decision.	0.520	4.51	Very High
Participate in school decisions.	0.520	4.51	Very High
Have the right to speak in our school decisions.	0.517	4.56	Very High
Think that their decision to participate in the decision process of the school makes them feel more valuable.	0.520	4.49	Very High
Think that teachers' participation in the decision will increase the quality of the decision.	0.514	4.58	Very High
Overall	0.459	4.53	Very High

The overall results indicate that teachers actively participated in school decision-making. This shows that the school management allows teachers to participate in decisions about education and teaching. In the same manner, teachers are consulted by the school head consults teachers before making a decision because they believe that their participation in decision-making will improve the quality of the decision.

This finding is consistent with DepEd's (2024) directive to include teachers in decisions about teaching and school administration. Involving teachers in decisions about instruction and learning promotes a sense of responsibility and teamwork (Akkaraputtapong *et al.*, 2025; Valdmann *et al.*, 2020), which improves the quality of educational results (Ingersoll, Sirinides, & Dougherty, 2020). Additionally, since collaborative leadership has been demonstrated to enhance decision quality and fortify school culture, school administrators are urged to consult teachers in important decisions (Isa *et al.*, 2024).

3.3 Teacher Empowerment

The data in Table 3 illustrate the level of teacher empowerment, revealing a consistently very high rating with 4.53 overall mean score and 0.416 standard deviation. The results show that teacher empowerment is not only prevalent but also consistently displayed in a variety of settings. This implies that teachers are regularly given the authority to make decisions, exercise professional autonomy, and actively participate in school operations.

Table 3: Level of Teacher Empowerment

Items	SD	Mean	D.E.
Are not prevented by the school administration to participate in any kind of training.	0.570	4.53	Very High
Are supported by the school administration to receive training on educational technology.	0.520	4.51	Very High
Have the chance to receive training on new teaching methods and techniques by the school administration.	0.495	4.58	Very High
Are supported by the school administration to receive training on classroom management.	0.494	4.58	Very High
Are provided by the school administration with an environment to attend the courses and trainings they need	0.500	4.48	Very High
Feel that the school principal values them as a teacher.	0.492	4.59	Very High
Have a healthy dialogue with the school principal.	0.592	4.51	Very High
Are respected by the school principal.	0.589	4.56	Very High
Feel free while carrying out their duties.	0.497	4.56	Very High
Are treated emphatically by the school principal.	0.494	4.58	Very High
Think they have a profession with high social status.	0.548	4.47	Very High
Think that the teaching profession provides them with the social status they desire in their environment.	0.525	4.51	Very High
Think that the teaching profession gives them confidence.	0.592	4.49	Very High
Think that the teaching profession gives them dignity.	0.492	4.59	Very High
Think that people around them respect the teaching profession.	0.520	4.60	Very High
Cooperate with each other in line with their professional goals.	0.500	4.48	Very High
Think that the cooperation of the teachers in our school makes them feel safe.	0.500	4.48	Very High
Think that other teachers at our school appreciate their work.	0.501	4.50	Very High
Think that the teachers they work with have professional ethics	0.501	4.50	Very High
Have a chance to cooperate with other teachers at the school.	0.500	4.53	Very High
Overall	0.416	4.53	Very High

The overall high-level result indicates that in public schools, teachers are empowered and supported by school administration. This displays that teachers are provided by the school administration with opportunities to attend professional development programs. Teachers felt that their school heads valued them as teachers, and thought that people around them respected the teaching profession. Teachers also believed that their effort was valued by other teachers.

The findings of the study are consistent with Prudente *et al.* (2024), who confirmed that programs for professional development play an important role in improving teachers' capacity, which greatly enhances their development and instructional competence. Teachers feel truly appreciated by their school heads when they receive this support (Samiano & Baluyos, 2023). These sentiments are further strengthened by a shared professional culture where teachers perceive their work to be appreciated by peers and where the teaching profession enjoys community-wide respect (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2021).

3.4 Achievement Motivation

Shown in Table 4 is the level of achievement motivation of teachers in public elementary schools. The results demonstrated a very high level of achievement motivation 4.55 overall mean rating and 0.396 standard deviation. This means that teachers' achievement motivation is always observed. Specifically, the mean scores of the indicators of achievement motivation are disclosed as follows: need for social achievement obtained a mean of 4.63 or very high; need for skill achievement also garnered a mean of 4.54 or very high; need for academic success registered a mean of 4.52 or very high; and need for vocational achievement attained a mean of 4.52 or very high.

Table 4: Level of Achievement Motivation

Indicators	SD	Mean	D.E.
Need for Academic Success	0.418	4.52	Very High
Need for Vocational Achievement	0.438	4.52	Very High
Need for Social Achievement	0.401	4.63	Very High
Need for Skill Achievement	0.466	4.54	Very High
Overall	0.396	4.55	Very High

The overall very high responses of teachers revealed that all domains of achievement motivation were rated very high. This signifies that teachers felt happy when they succeeded in achieving their goals and believed that the progress of an occupation depends on hard labor. Also, teachers felt happy seeing others happy. Aside from that, teachers felt that the most significant work in life is to motivate others for better work.

These results are consistent with Lim (2023), who emphasized that teachers who are highly motivated report feeling happier when they accomplish their professional and personal objectives, which improves their ability to teach. Samaco (2022) also discovered that teachers significantly link endurance and diligence to career advancement, highlighting the importance of hard work. Moreover, Cañoso (2025) emphasized that teachers become happy when they see their colleagues happy, derive fulfillment from uplifting others and view motivating peers as a meaningful and essential part of teachers' professional identity.

3.5 Significance on the Relationship between Levels of Strategic HRM Practices and Decision-Making Participation

Table 5 displays the results of correlations between strategic HRM Practices and decision-making participation. The null hypothesis of no significant correlation between the variables is rejected because the metrics yielded an r-value of 0.797 and a p-value of < 0.05. Moreover, it was seen that training and development, recruitment and selection, and performance appraisal as indicators of strategic HRM practices, when correlated to decision-making participation, recruitment and selection had 0.563 overall r-value, with $p < 0.05$, hence, significant. When indicator training and development are correlated to decision-making participation, the overall r-value is 0.701 with $p < 0.05$; hence, it is also significant. Also, after indicator performance appraisal is correlated to decision-making participation, it gained 0.796 overall r-value, with $p < 0.05$, hence, significant.

Table 5: Significance on the Relationship between Levels of Strategic HRM Practices and Decision-Making Participation

Strategic HRM Practices	Decision-Making Participation
	Overall
Recruitment and Selection	.563* (0.000)
Training and Development	.701* (0.000)
Performance Appraisal	.796* (0.000)
Overall	.797* (0.000)

*Significant at 0.05 significance level.

The null hypothesis of the study is rejected since the test of correlation between variables shows a strong correlation between strategic HRM practices and decision-making participation. This signifies that strategic HRM practices have something to do with the decision-making participation of teachers. This finding is congruent to Berhanu (2024) and Lukitasari *et al.* (2024), who concluded that all indicators of strategic HRM practices were correlated to decision-making participation. This finding is also supported by Chisanga (2023) and Quimpan and Bauyot (2024), underscoring the association between strategic HRM practices and decision-making participation.

3.6 Significance on the Relationship between Levels of Decision-Making Participation and Achievement Motivation

Shown in Table 6 are the results of the correlation between decision-making participation and achievement motivation. The aforesaid measures yielded an overall r-value of 0.833, with a p-value less than 0.05, indicating a significant relationship and thereby rejecting the null hypothesis. Moreover, it was seen that when decision-making participation was

correlated to the need for academic success, as one of the indicators of achievement motivation, it garnered 0.790 overall r-value, with $p < 0.05$, hence, significant.

Also, after decision-making participation is correlated to the indicator need for vocational achievement, it generated 0.822 overall r-value, with $p < 0.05$, hence, significant. Moreover, after the decision-making participation is correlated to the indicator need for social achievement, it obtained 0.681 overall r-value with $p < 0.05$, hence, significant. Furthermore, after decision-making participation is correlated to the indicator need for skills achievement, it generated 0.762 overall r-value with $p < 0.05$, hence, significant.

Table 6: Significance on the Relationship between Levels of Decision-Making Participation and Achievement Motivation

Decision-Making Participation	Achievement Motivation				Overall
	Need for Academic Success	Need for Vocational Achievement	Need for Social Achievement	Need for Skills Achievement	
Overall	.790* (0.000)	.822* (0.000)	.681* (0.000)	.762* (0.000)	.833* (0.000)

*Significant at 0.05 significance level.

The results of the analysis of the correlation between variables indicate a significant association between decision-making participation and achievement motivation, thereby rejecting the study's null hypothesis. This further indicates that teachers' participation in decision-making impacts their achievement motivation. This aligns with Irawanto (2015), which highlights the important influence of decision-making involvement on teachers' motivation to succeed. An equitable and inclusive learning atmosphere results from teachers being actively involved in making decisions because it increases their motivation to fulfill their tasks and responsibilities in the classroom (Chopra, 2020). In addition to increasing teachers' motivation for success, this engagement makes use of their special knowledge and insights to build curricula and implement efficient teaching methods (Sarwar *et al.*, 2025).

3.7 Significance on the Relationship between Levels of Strategic HRM Practices and Teacher Empowerment

Table 7 displays the results of correlations between strategic HRM practices and teacher empowerment. With an overall r-value of 0.871 and a p-value below 0.05, it demonstrated a significant association and rejected the null hypothesis of no association. Moreover, it was illustrated that training and development, recruitment and selection, and performance appraisal as indicators of strategic HRM practices, when correlated to teacher empowerment, recruitment and selection, showed 0.694 overall r-value, with $p < 0.05$, hence, significant. When indicator training and development is correlated to teacher empowerment, it generated 0.748 overall r-value, with $p < 0.05$, hence, it is also

significant. Also, when indicator performance appraisal is correlated to teacher empowerment, it garnered 0.812 overall r-value with $p < 0.05$, hence, significant.

Table 7: Significance on the Relationship between Levels of Strategic HRM Practices and Teacher Empowerment

Strategic HRM Practices	Teacher Empowerment
	Overall
Recruitment and Selection	.694* (0.000)
Training and Development	.748* (0.000)
Performance Appraisal	.812* (0.000)
Overall	.871* (0.000)

*Significant at 0.05 significance level.

The test of the correlation between variables reveals a significant association between strategic HRM practices and teacher empowerment, thereby rejecting the study's null hypothesis. This suggests that strategic HRM practices are related to teacher empowerment. This finding is congruent with Permatasari and Tandiyuk (2023) and Tran and Kelley (2024), who stated that HRM strategies have a major effect on teacher empowerment in schools. Moreover, Joshuva and Shine (2025) discovered that strategic HRM methods have a direct impact on teacher effectiveness and satisfaction, highlighting performance appraisal systems as a crucial element in motivating teachers. Further, teacher empowerment, as reflected in indicators such as professional development, trust, status, and cooperation, is deeply intertwined with strategic HRM practices (Liang, *et al.*, 2024).

3.8 Significance on the Relationship between Levels of Teacher Empowerment and Achievement Motivation

Table 8 presents the results of correlations between teacher empowerment and achievement motivation in public elementary schools. With an overall r-value of 0.808 and a p-value less than 0.05, the null hypothesis of no relationship was rejected, indicating a significant relationship between variables. Moreover, it was illustrated that when teacher empowerment was correlated to the need for academic success, as one of the indicators of achievement motivation, it generated 0.696 overall rvalue, with $p < 0.05$, hence, significant. Also, when teacher empowerment is correlated to the indicator need for vocational achievement, it obtained 0.782 overall r-value, with $p < 0.05$, hence, significant. Moreover, after the teacher empowerment is correlated to the indicator need for social achievement, it garnered 0.786 overall r-value with $p < 0.05$, hence, significant. Furthermore, when teacher empowerment is correlated to the indicator need for skills achievement, it generated 0.709 overall r-value, with $p < 0.05$, hence, significant.

Table 8: Significance on the Relationship between Levels of
 Teacher Empowerment and Achievement Motivation

Teacher Empowerment	Achievement Motivation				Overall
	Need for Academic Success	Need for Vocational Achievement	Need for Social Achievement	Need for Skills Achievement	
Overall	.696* (0.000)	.782* (0.000)	.786* (0.000)	.709* (0.000)	.808* (0.000)

*Significant at 0.05 significance level.

The results revealed a significant correlation between teacher empowerment and achievement motivation. This suggests that professional development, status, trust, and cooperation as indicators of teacher empowerment positively influence the achievement motivation of teachers. The results were consistent with Ghafoor *et al.* (2013), Prudente *et al.* (2024), and Tutar *et al.* (2011), who found that teacher empowerment positively impacts teacher achievement motivation. Prasetia and Akrim (2024) also revealed that empowered teachers exhibit higher levels of job satisfaction and achievement motivation.

3.9 Significance on the Relationship between Levels of Strategic HRM Practices and Achievement Motivation

Table 9 shows the correlation between strategic HRM Practices and achievement motivation. The indicators of strategic HRM practices, training and development, recruitment and selection, and performance appraisal, correlated with all the domains of achievement motivation. The overall result demonstrated a positive correlation ($r = 0.825$, $p < 0.05$), thereby rejecting the null hypothesis of the study. Moreover, it was shown that recruitment and selection, when correlated to achievement motivation, garnered 0.657 r-value, with $p < 0.05$, hence, significant. After indicator training and development was correlated to teacher achievement motivation, it obtained a 0.747 r-value, with $p < 0.05$, hence, significant. Also, after domain performance appraisal was correlated to teacher achievement motivation, it generated a 0.734 r-value, with $p < 0.05$, hence, significant.

Table 9: Significance on the Relationship between Levels of
 Strategic HRM Practices and Achievement Motivation

Strategic HRM Practices	Achievement Motivation				Overall
	Need for Academic Success	Need for Vocational Achievement	Need for Social Achievement	Need for Skills Achievement	
Recruitment and Selection	.564* (0.000)	.633* (0.000)	.605* (0.000)	.611* (0.000)	.657* (0.000)
Training and Development	.710* (0.000)	.662* (0.000)	.676* (0.000)	.698* (0.000)	.747* (0.000)
Performance Appraisal	.682* (0.000)	.718* (0.000)	.637* (0.000)	.659* (0.000)	.734* (0.000)
Overall	.756* (0.000)	.778* (0.000)	.740* (0.000)	.759* (0.000)	.825* (0.000)

*Significant at 0.05 significance level.

Based on the results, strategic HRM practices significantly correlated with achievement motivation. This implies that strategic HRM practices are essential for raising teacher achievement motivation, especially in the areas of hiring and selection, training and development, and performance evaluation. Schools can recruit and retain teachers whose values and competencies match their objectives by putting in place efficient recruiting and selection procedures. Furthermore, providing teachers with continuous training and development opportunities enhances their sense of professional growth and value within the organization, while also equipping them with current skills and knowledge. Regular, constructive performance reviews offer valuable feedback and recognition, helping teachers understand their progress and motivating them to achieve greater success.

These results are consistent with studies by Al-Kazlah and Badkook (2022), Khuong *et al.* (2020), and Milhem (2024), which found that achievement motivation is linked to strategic HRM practices. The influence of strategic HRM approaches on teacher achievement motivation has been notably significant (Chisanga, 2023; Hoque & Atheef, 2024). When strategic HRM practices align with organizational goals, teacher performance, motivation, and accomplishments tend to improve (Mwikila & Indoshi, 2023). Kiplimo and Odiyo (2024) emphasize that strategic HRM strategies are vital for cultivating a committed and motivated workforce.

3.10 Mediating Effect: Path Analysis

The study used path analysis to assess how decision-making participation and teacher empowerment jointly mediate the relationship between strategic HRM practices and achievement motivation.

Table 10: Mediating Effect: Path Analysis

Path	Estimates		SE	C.R.	P
	Unstandardized	Standardized			
StratHRMPrac → DecisionMakingPartici	.967	.797	.037	26.378	***
StratHRMPrac → TeachEmpowerment	.958	.871	.027	35.419	***
DecisionMakingPartici → AchievementMotivation	.373	.435	.034	10.814	***
StratHRMPrac → AchievemennMotivation	.386	.371	.061	6.299	***
TeachEmpowerment → AchievementMotivation	.123	.131	.047	2.641	.008

Table 10 presents the Path Analysis on the mediating effects and correlations of the variables. First, the path analysis shows a significant impact of strategic HRM practices on teachers' decision-making participation, with a p-value under 0.001 (***), indicating strong statistical significance. The unstandardized estimate of 0.967 indicates that each 1-unit increase in strategic HRM practices leads to a 0.967-unit rise in decision-making

participation. This suggests that strategic HRM practices positively influence teachers' involvement in decision-making. Similar findings are reported by Lukitasari *et al.* (2024) and Berhanu (2024), who noted that strategic HRM practices significantly boost teachers' decision-making participation in schools. Beyond fostering a participatory school culture rooted in responsibility, trust, and active engagement in organizational matters, these strategies also enhance teacher competencies for collaborative governance (Chisanga, 2023; Quimpan & Bauyot, 2024).

Second, the path analysis reveals a highly significant relationship, with p-values below 0.001 (***) indicating that strategic HRM practices greatly influence teacher empowerment. The unstandardized estimate of 0.958 suggests that each additional unit of strategic HRM practices boosts teacher empowerment by 0.958 units. This demonstrates a strong effect of these practices on empowerment, aligning with findings from Tran and Kelley (2024), Joshuva and Shine (2025), and Liang *et al.* (2024). These studies highlight how strategic HRM enhances teacher empowerment through collaboration, trust, and alignment with institutional goals. When implemented thoughtfully, these practices improve teacher effectiveness and help build a dedicated, capable teaching staff that supports educational success.

Third, the path analysis shows that participation in decision-making has a significant positive effect on teachers' achievement motivation (p-value <, ***). With an unstandardized estimate of 0.373, each additional unit of decision-making participation raises teachers' achievement motivation by 0.373 units. This suggests that teachers' drive to succeed is strongly influenced by their involvement in decision-making. These findings align with those of Chopra (2020), DepEd (2024), and Irawanto (2015), who all noted that decision-making participation boosts teacher motivation. Besides enhancing motivation, active involvement in decision-making also incorporates teachers' perspectives, leading to more equitable and effective educational strategies and policies (Akkaraputtapong *et al.*, 2025; Valdmann *et al.*, 2020).

Fourth, the path analysis reveals a highly significant impact of strategic HRM practices on teachers' achievement motivation (p < 0.001, ***). With an unstandardized estimate of 0.386, each increase of one unit in strategic HRM practices boosts teachers' achievement motivation by 0.386 units, showing a positive influence. These findings align with those of Khuong *et al.* (2020), Milhem (2024), and Al-Kazlah and Badkook (2022), who also found a significant link between strategic HRM practices and teacher achievement motivation. This relationship ultimately enhances teaching quality, student performance, and overall institutional success. By focusing on strategic hiring, development, and employee engagement, these practices help schools adapt to evolving educational needs, promote long-term sustainability, and foster a motivated, adaptable workforce aligned with organizational goals (Chisanga, 2023; Quimpan & Bauyot, 2024).

Lastly, the path analysis indicates that teacher empowerment has a significant impact on teacher achievement motivation, with a p-value of 0.008. The unstandardized estimate of 0.123 suggests that for each unit increase in teacher empowerment,

achievement motivation rises by 0.123 units. This demonstrates that empowering teachers considerably influences their motivation to succeed. These results align with studies by Ghafoor *et al.* (2013), Prudente *et al.* (2024), and Tutar *et al.* (2011), which also found that teacher empowerment notably boosts achievement motivation. When teachers are supported in a nurturing environment that fully leverages their knowledge and dedication, they become more motivated and productive, significantly enhancing school performance (Prasetia & Akrim, 2024; Mokhlis & Abdullah, 2025).

Table 11: Total, Direct, and Indirect Effects

Effect	95% CI		
	b	Lower	Upper
Total	.8643	.8061	.9226
Direct	.3857	.2802	.4913
Indirect (mediation)	.2422	.0340	.4273

Table 11 shows the Total, Direct, and Indirect effects of the variables. The path analysis shows that strategic HRM practices have a strong overall impact on achievement motivation, with a total estimate of 0.8643. This effect includes both direct and indirect influences, with the direct effect at 0.3857 and the indirect effect, mediated through decision-making participation and teacher empowerment, at 0.2422. This suggests that strategic HRM approaches positively affect teacher achievement motivation through both direct and indirect pathways.

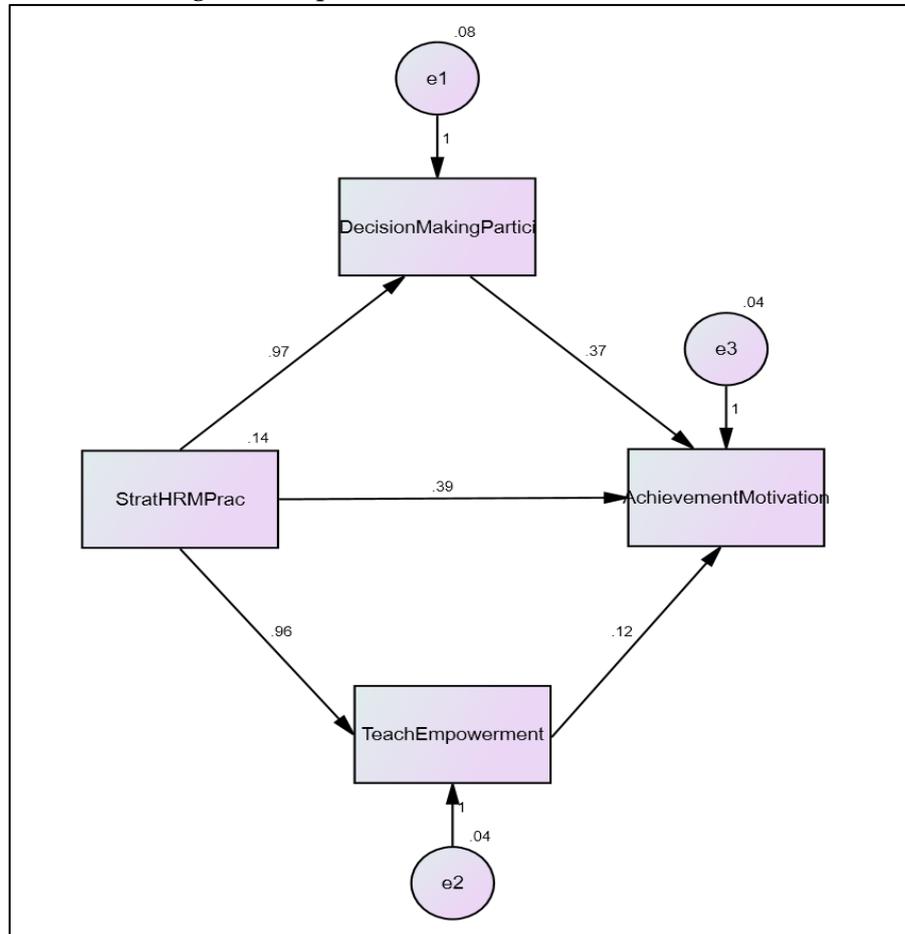
This finding emphasizes the crucial role of HRM practices in enhancing teachers' achievement motivation as it directly impacts their experiences and indirectly affects them via participation in decision-making and teacher empowerment (Nurjaman, 2023).

A closer look at the mediation effects indicates a direct impact of 0.3857, highlighting how strategic HRM practices directly boost achievement motivation, regardless of mediators. Each unit rise in strategic HRM practices results in a 0.3857 increase in achievement motivation. This demonstrates that teachers' achievement motivation benefits positively from strategic HRM.

Recent research confirms that strategic HRM practices enhance teachers' motivation to succeed, leading to better teaching quality and institutional outcomes (Al-Kazlah & Badkook, 2022; Khuong *et al.*, 2020; Milhem, 2024). By focusing on effective hiring, training, and engagement, these strategies foster a committed and motivated workforce and support the long-term sustainability of schools (Lukitasari *et al.*, 2024; Berhanu, 2024).

Furthermore, the mediation analysis uncovers an indirect effect of 0.2422, emphasizing the significant role of decision-making involvement and teacher empowerment. These mediators notably enhance the link between strategic HRM approaches and teachers' motivation to achieve, indicating that when schools adopt effective strategic HRM practices, they not only boost teachers' achievement motivation but also increase their participation in decision-making and empower them.

Figure 2: The combined mediating effects of decision-making participation and teacher empowerment on the relationship between strategic HRM practices and achievement motivation



Legend:

- IV - Strategic HRM Practices (StratHRMPrac)
- DV - Achievement Motivation (AchievementMotivation)
- MV1- Decision Making Participation (DecisionMakingPartici)
- MV2- Teacher Empowerment (TeachEmpowerment)

This confirms recent research indicating that decision-making participation and teacher empowerment serve as mediators that enhance the impact of strategic HRM strategies on teachers' motivation to achieve (Facinabao *et al.*, 2025; Permatasari & Tandiyuk, 2023). Facinabao *et al.* (2025) demonstrated that involving teachers in school-based decision-making increases their motivation and engagement, while Permatasari and Tandiyuk (2023) found that strategic HRM practices positively influence teacher empowerment, performance, and motivation.

Figure 2 illustrates the combined mediating effects of decision-making participation and teacher empowerment on the relationship between strategic HRM practices and achievement motivation. The results indicate that strategic HRM practices significantly boost teacher achievement motivation, both directly and indirectly. When schools implement effective strategic HRM approaches, teachers are more driven to

succeed by encouraging positive decision-making involvement and empowering teachers. This aligns with existing research emphasizing the benefits of strategic HRM, including teacher empowerment, active participation in school decisions, and increased motivation (Permatasari & Tandiyuk, 2023). These findings suggest that aligning HRM strategies with educational goals enhances both teacher performance and institutional effectiveness. Fostering a culture of empowerment and shared decision-making can motivate teachers further, strengthening their professional identity and sense of ownership.

Additionally, the mediating roles of decision-making participation and teacher empowerment offer valuable insights for schools on how to boost teacher achievement motivation. Involving teachers in decision-making has repeatedly shown to increase their sense of accountability and ownership, which subsequently enhances their motivation to succeed and their commitment to school goals and overall performance (Facinabao *et al.*, 2025). Moreover, empowering teachers improves their morale and inspires them to take the initiative in achieving organizational objectives (Padalia & Nurocgmah, 2021). Recognizing these dynamics helps schools develop strategies utilizing strategic HRM approaches to enhance teachers' motivation and foster a positive workplace culture that benefits both teachers and students.

4. Conclusion

This section summarizes the findings and offers recommendations based on the analysis. In Region XI's public elementary schools, this research explored how decision-making involvement and teacher empowerment mediate the connection between strategic HRM practices and teacher motivation. The findings indicated that strategic HRM approaches significantly boost teacher motivation both directly and indirectly via these mediators. Schools that implement effective hiring, training, and performance evaluation systems foster environments where teachers feel empowered and engaged in decision-making, which in turn enhances their motivation for professional growth.

The study's findings support McClelland's Achievement Motivation Theory, which suggests that empowering teachers and involving them in key organizational decisions fulfill their achievement needs. The theory posits that teachers are motivated by a desire for affiliation, influence, and success, all of which are reflected in empowerment and participative decision-making. By aligning HRM practices with these motivational factors, schools can enhance teacher engagement, satisfaction, and performance.

Furthermore, the findings align with HRM Theory, emphasizing the advantages of participative management and recognizing teachers as individuals with specific needs. Beyond enhancing teachers' professional identities and fostering a sense of belonging, empowering teachers and involving them in school governance contribute to a more inclusive and effective learning environment. These theoretical principles underpin the

study's conclusion that strategic HRM practices significantly boost teacher motivation and institutional performance, especially when focused on empowerment and participation.

Overall, this study adds to the expanding research on strategic HRM practices, achievement motivation, and educational leadership by highlighting the dual mediating roles of decision-making participation and teacher empowerment. It stresses the importance for school systems to adopt comprehensive and strategic HRM strategies that do more than just ensure administrative compliance, aiming instead to foster a culture of collaboration, trust, and ongoing professional growth. In doing so, schools can cultivate highly motivated and effective teachers capable of driving transformative educational outcomes.

Considering the strong impact of strategic HRM practices on teacher achievement motivation, both directly and via the mediating roles of decision-making participation and teacher empowerment, it is advisable for school leaders to establish participatory governance structures. Teachers may be given opportunities to engage in decisions related to curriculum, instruction, and school operations through formal channels, professional development, and innovative initiatives. This participatory approach not only fosters accountability and ownership but also enhances teacher motivation and aligns their efforts with institutional goals.

Moreover, the Department of Education may prioritize integrating empowerment-centric HRM practices into school leadership development programs and policies. Examples include transparent hiring processes, continuous professional growth opportunities, and performance assessments with incentives that focus on development and recognition. Embedding empowerment within HRM systems helps schools build a culture of trust, collaboration, and professional independence, thereby enhancing teacher morale and performance.

Regional and division offices might develop monitoring and assessment tools to evaluate how effectively strategic HRM practices promote teacher empowerment and motivation, aiming to sustain these initiatives. To keep HRM interventions responsive and adaptable to teachers' evolving needs, these tools could include feedback mechanisms that gather teachers' experiences and perceptions. Furthermore, capacity-building programs for school leaders may emphasize the importance of fostering inclusive leadership and aligning HRM processes with organizational goals.

Additionally, national policymakers may consider creating a comprehensive framework that links teacher motivation outcomes with strategic HRM practices. Such a framework would highlight the importance of teacher empowerment and involvement in decision-making for both teacher development and school improvement. By formalizing these approaches, the education system can better promote teacher well-being, enhance teaching quality, and support broader goals of educational justice and excellence.

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Authors' Contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration between both authors. Author RH conceptualized the study, designed the methodology, and conducted data collection. Author EG supervised the research process, provided guidance on analysis, and contributed to manuscript refinement. Both authors jointly interpreted the findings and prepared the final manuscript. All authors have read and approved the manuscript.

Consent Statement

No identifying images or personal details of participants are included in this manuscript. Written consent for publication was obtained from all participants where applicable. Proof of consent can be provided upon request.

Ethical Approval

This study was reviewed and approved by the University of Mindanao Ethics Review Committee and DepEd Region XI, which serves as the ethics review body for research involving teachers in the region. Approval Reference No.:UMERC-2025-045. All respondents provided written informed consent prior to data collection. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were free to withdraw at any time without penalty. The study was conducted in accordance with the ethical principles of the University of Mindanao, Department of Education, and the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173, Philippines).

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Competing Interests Statement

The authors declare that they have no financial or non-financial competing interests.

About the Author(s)

Ronel C. Homeo is a School Principal II of Cabinuangan Central Elementary School, Cabinuangan, New Bataan, Davao de Oro, Philippines. He is a candidate for Doctor of Education major in Educational Management.

Eugenio S. Guhao, Jr., DM is currently an Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dean of the Professional Schools, and a Chief Academic Officer of the University of Mindanao, Davao City, Philippines.

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