FEATURE

Required Competencies for Academic Deans: Basis for a Competency-Based Performance Appraisal

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Abstract: *This study determined the competencies and level of competencies required of the academic deans along the technical, personal and managerial areas as perceived by school heads, superior of deans, and deans themselves in order to construct a model of competencies for the academic deans and design of a competency-based performance appraisal for the academic deans of the University of Perpetual Help System. The descriptive research method and the modified Delphi technique consisting of three rounds including a focused group discussion was used. Two types of instruments were utilized in gathering data from 70 respondents. Frequency and percentages were employed in describing the profiles of respondents. Pearson's r was used in establishing reliability of instrument, weighted mean in determining the type, the levels of competencies and the degree of agreement among the respondents. The One-way ANOVA test was used in computing the differences in the perception of the respondents. The majority of the respondents were middle-aged, female, educationally qualified and have stayed in their present position for five years or less. Fifty one competencies along the technical, personal, and managerial areas were found.*

The 21st century educational leaders are expected to be high performing and committed in their role as shapers of the future (Lumapas, 2000). In this highly complex era, with its rapid rate of change, there is a need for significant levels of both management and leadership in striving to develop and maintain world class organizations (Sawatzki, 1997).

In order to be successful as shapers of the future, educational leaders should demonstrate certain competencies in performing their jobs. They need to possess specific personality traits and characteristics. This is imperative in carrying out

their duties and responsibilities effectively. Their personality, attitudes, behaviors, character, and values have associations with their abilities that can be developed and should be manifested in their performance. Likewise, the competencies of administrators in schools are abilities that can be developed. They are not static. Instead, they are potentials that can be used to aid in accomplishing the goals of their departments. Thus, administrators in schools should be equipped with the necessary competencies to translate action into results (Ubando, 2001).

In a teaching and learning institution, one of the significant administrators is the dean. Deans are the prime movers and initiators in a college. They are considered to be the unrelenting champions of the academic spectrum (Valdez, 2000). Moreover, the College dean or the school administrator is the senior officer responsible for the operation of an academic program, the enforcement of rules and regulations, and the supervision of faculty and student services, (Sarmiento, 2002).

Wolvester et.al. (2001) have elaborated on the changing nature of the academic deanship. For them, academic deanship is the leadership linchpin that holds an organization together. Ironically, deans come to the position, for the most part, under-prepared to deal with strained fiscal resources, externally imposed accountability pressures, demands for relevant curricula and programs, technology advancement and educational delivery, ill-equipped faculty to meet student and system demands, diversity, and professional and personal imbalances. They receive the challenge to lead change in the face of shifting demographics of students, changing political and economic attitudes, demands placed on them by the corporate sector, and rapid advancement in technology. Furthermore, universities expect deans to lead their colleges. To do so, deans must ensure that their colleges realize the university mission in terms of instruction and research.

These realities and trends in the roles and function of academic deans inspired this researcher to conduct a study on the desirable competencies of an academic dean to be an effective and efficient school administrator. The basic question was: do our academic deans possess the identified qualities? The researcher, who is the Corporate HR Director of the University System under study, thought it best to commence the project on the development of the academic deans by first designing a competency model for deans which would be the basis for the construction of a competency-based performance appraisal instrument based on a systematic inquiry.

Method

This study utilized the descriptive method in gathering qualitative and quantitative data supported by a modified Delphi technique in identifying and

validating the competencies done in two (two) rounds. The two sets of respondents that participated in this study were the education experts who served as panel members in the Delphi Rounds and the selected school heads/ superiors of the Deans, and the Deans themselves, who were the actual respondents of this study.

Table 1 shows the distribution of the education experts who served as resource persons on the first and second Delphi Rounds. These 10 experts represented the highest school officials, and were both knowledgeable and had accumulated long years of experience of working with deans.

Table 2 shows the distribution of the respondents. The majority (70 percent) of the respondents were the deans themselves, followed by their superiors, which were only 8.57 percent. Such a distribution of respondents is normal, since the superiors of deans are relatively a smaller population in a tertiary institution than the deans. Since the competencies of deans is the subject of this study, the inclusion of a majority of deans as respondents is justified.

Table 1
Distribution of Education Experts

Educational Experts	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
VP for Academic Affairs	2	20
Graduate School Deans	4	40
HRD Directors	2	20
Management Consultants	2	20
Total	**10**	**100**

Table 2
Distribution of the Respondents

Respondents	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Deans	49	70.00
Superior of Deans	6	8.57
Selected School Heads	15	21.43
Total	**70**	**100**

Purposive sampling was utilized for choosing the ten (10) education experts, fish bowl technique was used in the selection of fifteen (15) school

heads, and the census type or complete enumeration was used for choosing the forty nine (49) Deans and six (6) Superiors of Deans.

Two types of researcher-constructed instruments were used in this study. Questionnaire A which contained the preliminary inventory of 46 competencies was utilized in the first and second Delphi rounds by the educational experts in identifying the competencies needed for the successful performance of a dean. Questionnaire B asked about the personal characteristics of the respondents in terms of age, gender, years of experience in their present position, and educational attainment. It also contained the final list of 51 required competencies for Deans described in five levels using the Likert Scale for determining the level of performance required for each type (see Table 3).

Table 3
Levels and Description of Competency Levels

Levels of Competency	Description
5	Advanced or Far Above the Standards (FAS)
4	Intermediate or Above the Standards (AS)
3	Basic and Within the Standards (WS)
2	Minimum Standards (MS)
1	Below the Standards (BS)

Level 5, which is interpreted as Advanced or Far Above the Standards, means that the Dean being evaluated has attained the highest level of proficiency or is most knowledgeable and capable of doing all the required skills or has met 90 to 100% of the required skills. Level 4 interpreted as Intermediate or Above the Standards means that the ratee has attained 70 to 80% of the required knowledge and skills. Level 3 interpreted as Basic and within the Standards means that the ratee has attained 55 to 65% of the required knowledge and skills. Level 2 interpreted as Minimum Standards means that the ratee has met 40 to 50% of the required knowledge and skills. Level 1 interpreted as Below the Standards means that the ratee has attained below 40% of the required knowledge and skills.

Percentages and frequency distribution were used to describe the profile of respondents, weighted mean was utilized to measure the perception of the respondents as to the level of competencies required of academic deans, simple analysis of variance or one-way ANOVA was used to determine the differences in the perception of the three groups of respondents and Pearson Product Moment Correlation or Pearson's r was utilized to determine the reliability of the instrument.

The preliminary procedure consisted of gathering the different competencies of academic deans from literature and interviews with management and education experts. Two Delphi Rounds were conducted with education experts to identify the preliminary inventory of competencies which was the basis for the Focused Group Discussion. From the Focused Group Discussion, the final inventory of Competencies consisting of 51 items were formulated and formed part of Questionnaire B, the main instrument of this study. Questionnaire B was constructed , validated , distributed and collected personally from the respondents.

Results/ Discussion

The majority of the respondents were middle-aged, ranging from 48 to 57 years old, female, educationally qualified and have stayed in their present position as academic dean for five years or less. Being middle aged, they are considered mature and in their "prime" of life. As such they may well be physically, financially, mentally, and psychologically in shape to carry on their challenging and multifarious activities in the university. Although the respondents are relatively new in their present position, they are educationally qualified to discharge their functions. However, some may need further training to hone their skills as deans.

Desired Competencies and Required Levels of Competencies of Deans
The specific types and levels of competencies as perceived by the three groups of respondents were divided into technical, personal, and managerial competencies. These are described below.

Technical Competencies. The study revealed (see Table 4) that the most desired technical competency of an academic dean was in the area of Skills in Teaching and Learning Processes at an advanced level. This is followed by Knowledge of Instructional Trends and Practices in Private Tertiary Education and Skills in Curriculum Processes. It should be noted that the technical competencies with the lowest scores are in Ability in Conducting and Managing Research and in Business and Entrepreneurial Knowledge and Skills.

Table 4
Desired and Required Levels of Technical Competencies of Academic Deans

	Technical Competencies	**Weighted Mean**	**Levels of Competency**
a.	Skills in Teaching and Learning Processes	4.50	Advanced or Far Above the Standards
b.	Knowledge of Instructional Trends and Practices in Private Tertiary Education	4.41	Intermediate or Above the Standards
c.	Skills in Curriculum Processes	4.35	Intermediate or Above the Standards
d.	Company Knowledge	4.27	Intermediate or Above the Standards
e.	Organizational Awareness	4.20	Intermediate or Above the Standards
f.	Skills along Management of Information	4.05	Intermediate or Above the Standards
g.	Ability in Conducting and Managing Research	3.97	Intermediate or Above the Standards
h.	Business and Entrepreneurial Knowledge and Skills	3.66	Intermediate or Above the Standards

Personal Competencies

It is shown (see Table 5) that of the 21 Personal Competencies identified, the respondents chose High Ethical Standards and Initiative to be the highest, and this was required to exist at an advanced level. All the rest of the Personal Competencies gained an above average score, and required an intermediate level of competency. Skills in Negotiation gained the lowest score, although still with an above average weighted mean.

Table 5
Desired and Required Levels of Personal Competencies
of Academic Deans

	Personal Competencies	**Weighted Mean**	**Levels of Competency**
a.	High Ethical Standards	4.63	Advanced or Far Above the Standards
b.	Initiative	4.55	Advanced or Far Above the Standards
c.	Achievement Orientation	4.47	Intermediate or Above the Standards
d.	Self-Confidence	4.43	Intermediate or Above the Standards
e.	Personal Awareness, Clarity and Proactivity	4.40	Intermediate or Above the Standards
f.	Analysis and Judgment	4.39	Intermediate or Above the Standards
g.	Skills in Building Relationships	4.38	Intermediate or Above the Standards
h.	Time Management	4.36	Intermediate or Above the Standards
i.	Organizational Commitment	4.32	Intermediate or Above the Standards
j.	Intellectual Versatility	4.30	Intermediate or Above the Standards
k.	Concern for Accuracy and Details	4.29	Intermediate or Above the Standards
l.	Information-Seeking Ability	4.29	Intermediate or Above the Standards
m.	Conceptual Skills	4.28	Intermediate or Above the Standards
n.	Effective Interpersonal Communication	4.23	Intermediate or Above the Standards
o.	Service Orientation	4.20	Intermediate or Above the Standards
p.	Impact and Influence	4.20	Intermediate or Above the Standards
q.	Presentation Skills	4.18	Intermediate or Above the Standards
r.	Writing Skills	4.15	Intermediate or Above the Standards
s.	Stamina and Adaptability	4.15	Intermediate or Above the Standards
t.	Flexibility/Adjustability	4.14	Intermediate or Above the Standards
u.	Skills in Negotiation	4.10	Intermediate or Above the Standards

Managerial Competencies

In terms of Managerial Competencies, the respondents selected Teamwork/ Cooperation as the most preferred, with an advanced level of Competency. This was followed by Team Leadership and Monitoring and Evaluating Performance of Teachers, Staff and Students at an intermediate level. The least preferred competencies were Project Termination, Managing Financial/Fiscal Resources and Managing Physical Facilities.

Table 6
Desired and Required Levels
of Managerial Competencies of Academic Deans

	Managerial Competencies	**Weighted Mean**	**Levels of Competency**
a.	Teamwork/Cooperation	4.59	Advanced or Far Above the Standards
b.	Team Leadership	4.47	Intermediate or Above the Standards
c.	Monitoring and Evaluating Performance of Teachers, Staff and Students	4.45	Intermediate or Above the Standards
d.	Leading in Curriculum and Instructional Processes	4.36	Intermediate or Above the Standards
e.	Disciplining Teachers and Staff	4.33	Intermediate or Above the Standards
f.	Managing Change	4.32	Intermediate or Above the Standards
g.	Supporting Teachers and Staff	4.30	Intermediate or Above the Standards
h.	Directiveness/ Assertiveness	4.29	Intermediate or Above the Standards
i.	Developing Teachers and Staff	4.28	Intermediate or Above the Standards
j.	Organizing School-Based Programs and Projects	4.27	Intermediate or Above the Standards
k.	Supporting Students	4.26	Intermediate or Above the Standards
l.	Planning School-Based Programs and Projects	4.26	Intermediate or Above the Standards
m.	Empowering Teachers and Staff	4.20	Intermediate or Above the Standards
n.	Disciplining Students	4.20	Intermediate or Above the Standards
o.	Advising Students	4.19	Intermediate or Above the Standards
p.	Developing School and Community Relations	4.19	Intermediate or Above the Standards
q.	Recruiting Teachers and Staff	4.13	Intermediate or Above the Standards
r.	Directing Students	4.09	Intermediate or Above the Standards
s.	Recruiting Students	4.01	Intermediate or Above the Standards
t.	Project Termination	3.97	Intermediate or Above the Standards
u.	Managing Financial/ Fiscal Resources	3.83	Intermediate or Above the Standards
v.	Managing Physical Facilities	3.74	Intermediate or Above the Standards

Comparison of Responses

The respondents had very high agreement on the different technical, personal and managerial competencies. In the Technical Competencies, for instance, they had very high agreement on the competency of Skills in Teaching and Learning with a weighted mean of 4.50.

With regards to Personal Competencies, the respondents agreed to a very high extent with a weighted mean of 4.63 that a dean should exhibit an advanced level of competency in the High Ethical Standards. Likewise, in the managerial Competencies, they agreed that deans should possess an advanced level of competency in Teamwork and Cooperation with a weighted mean of 4.59.

There were no significant differences in the perceptions of the respondents on the types and levels of Competencies in the Technical, Personal and Managerial areas as shown by the acceptance of the null hypotheses at the .05 level of significance. This means that the three groups of respondents have similar perceptions on the desirable characteristics of academic deans and the proficiency level required of them.

Competency Model for Academic Deans. A model of Competencies for academic deans was designed based on the findings of this study. Following the model in the book of Dubois (1998), the competencies were configured in a heptagonal structure (see Figure 1).

The Personal Competencies are placed at the center of the figure because they are considered important motivational forces in the dean's behavior. They represent the traits, motives, attitudes, values and self-concept of Spencer and Spencer (1993).

The Technical Competencies are situated at the second layer of the figure because they represent the knowledge or information a person has in specific content areas (Spencer & Spencer, 1993). Knowledge predicts what someone can do, not what she will do.

The Managerial Competencies are located at the outer layer of the figure. In Spencer & Spencer's model they are the skill or the ability to perform a certain physical or mental task. They are relatively easy to acquire and to develop. They can be modified or improved through training and other positive developmental experiences.

Based on the different types and levels of competencies unfolded by the study a Competency-Based Performance Appraisal for academic deans was formulated.
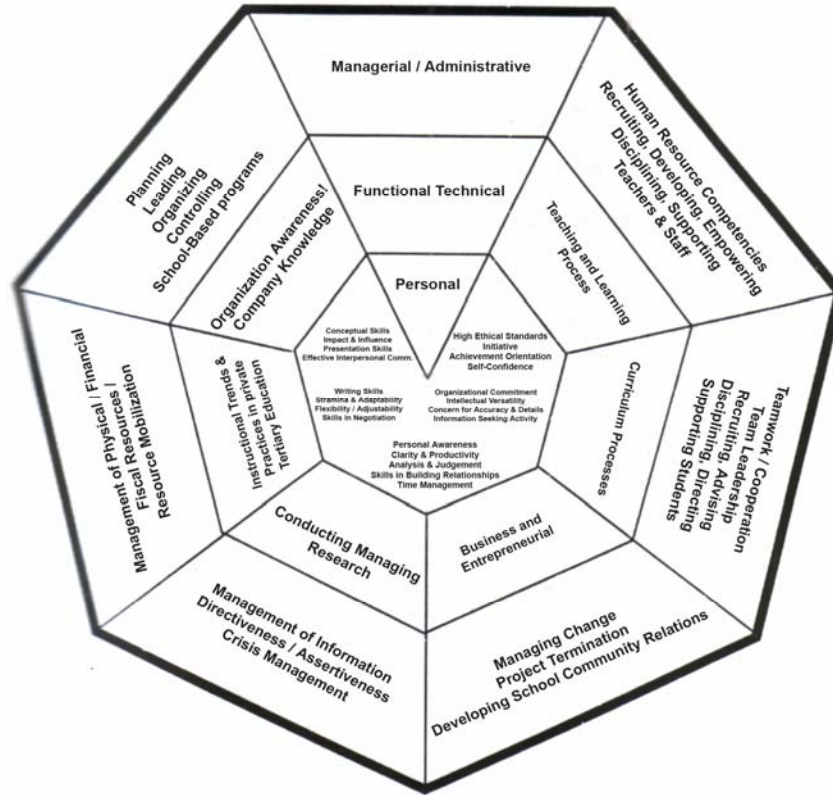
Figure 1. Competency Model for Academic Deans

Conclusions

The greater importance placed by the education leaders on Teaching and Learning Processes, Instructional Trends and Practices in Private Tertiary Education and in Curriculum and less on Business and Entrepreneurial Knowledge and Skills and on Managing and Conducting Research reveal that the exposure of the respondents who are education leaders is centered mostly on instructional and curriculum processes, with little or practically no training in the business management of school operations and research. This has implications for the curriculum offered in the graduate school. As the findings of the study reveal, there is a need to offer and or reinforce subjects on research

management and on the business management of schools and to include these in existing curricula in the master's and doctoral degree programs. The greater weight given by the respondents to High Ethical Standards, Initiative, and Achievement Orientation disclosed that respondents think of a desirable dean as morally upright, full of enthusiasm and energy, and performing successfully in her endeavor. The high degree of agreement of the respondent's perceptions on all the types and levels of competencies for the academic dean points to the similarities in their opinion and background. As such there will be a higher probability of acceptance of the proposed competency-based performance appraisal instrument. The respondents, who are mostly middle-aged women, assigned high value to Teamwork and Team Leadership as important managerial competencies of an academic dean. This shows that these women leaders are relational and personal in their management style.

Recommendations

The findings on the different desirable competencies required of academic deans have implications for the different Human Resource Processes like recruitment, training and development, career management, performance management, compensation of deans, and on curriculum enhancement for the graduate school programs. In recruitment, the identified competencies could be used as a basis for designing tools in interviewing, background checking, testing and other diagnostic instruments for more reliable and valid results. Since the desired competencies and the required levels are known, these can be utilized as a useful guide in training and development needs analysis of Academic Deans in order to design appropriate career management programs for them. Likewise, the competency-based approach can be used in coaching and counseling and in compensation management for Deans. Lastly, the Commission on Higher Education should facilitate the enrichment of the curriculum of the master's and Doctoral degree programs in Education by reinforcing subjects in Management of Research and Business Management of Educational Institutions.

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