Development of a Faculty Empowerment Model

Nilde Sotto – Alderete

Iloilo Science and Technology University - Barotac Nuevo Campus, Jalaud, Barotac Nuevo, Iloilo, Philippines

Abstract: **This study was conducted to develop a Faculty Empowerment Model for the Western Visayas College of Science and Technology (WVCST) system. This study employed the descriptive-developmental designs of research. The data needed were gathered from a total of 188 respondents from WVCST system, 158 were faculty members and 30 were supervisors composed of deans, campus administrators and department heads. The data were gathered through a researcher-made questionnaire and analyzed using the mean and rank. The study revealed that the faculty members of WVCST system were highly empowered. Out of the gathered data, the faculty empowerment model was developed consisted of four dimensions: psychological, instructional, cultural and social. Each dimension has a number of practices necessary for an empowered faculty member. Moreover, a continuous interaction among the four dimensions is required for an effective empowerment process. In addition, it was found out that an empowered faculty is responsible, self-motivated, knowledgeable, proficient and has interpersonal skills. However, there are also barriers that may interject the development of a model which can be the factors that may hinder empowerment. These consist of the following: lack of opportunity to be involved in planning, lack of resources or funds, lack of support from the administrator, and hesitation to spearhead any task or activity. Based on the findings, the researcher recommended the observance of the practices stipulated in the model of WVCST system. It was also recommended that further studies may be conducted by future researchers about empowerment to further enrich and develop similar models that can be utilized by teachers and administrators in their institution.**

Keywords: **development, faculty, empowerment model, practices, barriers.**

1. INTRODUCTION

Empowerment is any process that provides greater autonomy to employees through sharing of relevant information and provision of control over factors affecting job performance. It authorizes employees to cope with situations and enables them to take control of problems as they arise (Newstrom & Davis, 2002).

Ideally, empowerment gives opportunity to faculty to implement their knowledge into practice. Empowering teachers increase task motivation, enhance feelings of meaning and strong organizational commitment. Marks and Louis (1997) stressed that teacher empowerment affects pedagogical quality and student academic performance.

This is supported by Kanter's theory (Larkin et al., 2008) of structural empowerment. According to this theory, empowerment is promoted in work environments when it provides employees with access to information, resources, support and the opportunity to learn and develop. Employees who are empowered are more committed to the organization, more accountable for their work and better able to fulfill job demands in an effective manner. Kanter's theory showed how structures within the workplace which facilitate access to resources can empower employees to accomplish their work in more meaningful ways.

Presently, the usual practice in an educational setting is where administrators facilitate the total function of an organization. They are always on top manipulating and controlling all the activities of the organization. They perform the planning, decision-making and implementation of policies. Teachers on the other hand just perform teaching and facilitate learning. They are accountable to the realization of school's goals but their participation in planning and decision making is very minimal.

According to Al Sada (2003) with this situation, there is a need to change the traditional management practices into democratic structures that offer employees greater autonomy, confidence and freedom to make decisions. Such democratic structures will not be effective unless employees have a sense of empowerment.

Specifically, studies conducted in the Philippines by Catedral (2008), Sorolla (2000), Paniza (2004), Serag (2012) and Cervero (2006) are about school heads' empowerment and none has been conducted with regards to teachers and the development of empowerment model. Likewise, in the WVCST system there are no programs or designs that guide both the administrators and teachers with regards empowerment practices.

It is in this context that the researcher is motivated to determine the extent of faculty members empowerment as evaluated by the faculty and supervisors and develop a faculty empowerment model for the WVCST system.

Statement of the Problem:

This study attempted to develop a Faculty Empowerment Model for the Western Visayas College of Science and Technology system.

Specifically, this model was based on the following sub-problems:

1. To what extent are faculty members empowered in terms of psychological dimension, instructional dimension, cultural dimension, and social dimension as evaluated by the faculty and supervisor?

2. What is a faculty empowerment model for the WVCST system?

2. METHODOLOGY

This study used the descriptive – developmental designs of research. The participants of this study were 188 randomly selected faculty members and supervisors composed of deans and department heads of the WVCST system in Iloilo. This study was conducted during the period of July 2013 to March 2014.

The data gathering instrument used was the researcher-made questionnaire with reference and information from the literature reviewed. On the extent of empowerment, the following response options was used by the researcher: Greatest Extent (GrT) – 5; Great Extent (GT) - 4; Moderate Extent (ME) - 3; Less Extent (LE) - 2; and No Extent (NE) – 1. In interpreting the scores on the extent of empowerment, the following scales were employed: 4.21 – 5.00 - Greatest Extent; 3.41 – 4.20 - Great Extent; 2.61 – 3.40 - Moderate Extent; 1.81 – 2.60 - Less Extent; and 1.00 – 1.80 - No Extent.

On the level of consensus on the concepts that constituted the development of a model, the response options were based on the five-point Likert Scale with corresponding numerical weight as follows: Strongly Agree (SA) – 5; Agree (A) – 4; Undecided (U) – 3; Disagree (DA) – 2; and Strongly Disagree (SD) – 1. In interpreting the scores the following scales were employed: 4.21 – 5.00 - Very Highly Necessary; 3.41 – 4.20 - Very Necessary; 2.61 – 3.40 – Necessary; 1.81 – 2.60 - Less Necessary; and 1.00 – 1.80 - Not Necessary.

The gathered data were subjected to the descriptive statistics using mean and rank. For qualitative data analysis, responses from interview were used to identify the most common reoccurring practices and attributes in order to develop a faculty empowerment model.

3. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Extent of Faculty Members' Empowerment:

Table 1. Extent of Faculty Members' Empowerment

	Rater	N	Mean	Description
Extent of Empowerment	Faculty	158	4.29	Greatest Extent
	Supervisor	30	4.31	Greatest Extent
Total		188	4.30	Greatest Extent

Legend: 4.21 – 5.00 - Greatest Extent 2.61 – 3.40 - Moderate Extent 1.00 – 1.80 - No Extent
3.41 – 4.20- Great Extent 1.81 – 2.60 - Less Extent

As shown in Table 1, the overall extent of faculty members' empowerment as perceived by the faculty and supervisors was "greatest extent" (M = 4.30). This means that faculty and supervisors evaluated the faculty members' empowerment with greatest extent which showed that all practices are performed by the faculty.

The following are the practices performed by the faculty members: work comfortably with co-teachers; appreciate colleagues who work with me; perform my assignment even without supervision; do the job with confidence and ease; feel free to do the job; punctual in reporting to school; provide varied learning experiences to students; take time counseling students with problems; administer test effectively; impose class discipline; faculty members understood the vision and mission of the institution; informed about the school plans, mission and goals; informed about the changes in policies and rules within the school; disseminate information through regular meetings, office letters and office advisory or memorandum; involve faculty members in the planning process and decision making; socialize together in small groups; show respect to their colleagues; show willingness to help each other; create harmonious relationship with each other; and support each other.

This implies that the faculty members of WVCST system are highly empowered and that they are provided with greater autonomy or independence in performing their jobs for the successful accomplishment of the goals of the College.

The Faculty Empowerment Model:

As shown in Figure 1, the faculty empowerment model consisted of four yellow blocks which indicates the four dimensions: psychological, instructional, cultural and social dimensions. Each dimension has a number of practices necessary for an empowered faculty member. There is a continuous interaction among the four dimensions for an effective empowerment process as represented by the arrows between the dimensions and towards the figure of an empowered faculty. Based on the findings of the study, the faculty should dutifully perform all the practices identified in each dimension to become empowered. The absence of one dimension can make the other dimensions ineffective for the empowerment process or the non performance of the identified practices cannot develop an empowered faculty.
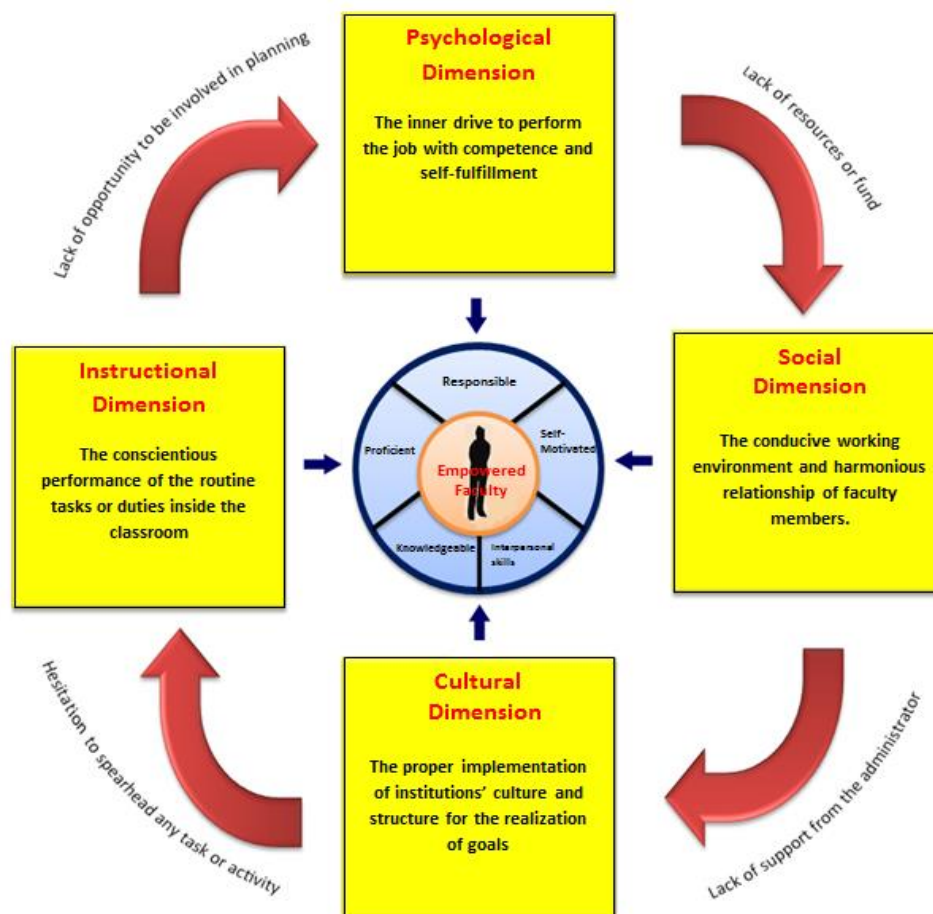

Figure 1. The developed faculty empowerment model for the WVCST system

In addition, the circular blue shape that surrounds the figure of an empowered faculty includes the attributes necessary to facilitate faculty members' empowerment. Attributes are characteristics essential for a faculty to be empowered. As revealed from the results of this study, the five attributes identified necessary for an empowered faculty are responsible, self-motivated, has interpersonal skills, knowledgeable and proficient. This means that an empowered faculty should possess these five attributes to become empowered.

However, as the red arrows continuously interact between the dimensions, there are also barriers that interject the figure which shows that these are the factors that may hinder empowerment. Based on the findings of the study, the barriers that may hinder empowerment are lack of opportunity to be involved in planning, lack of resources or funds, lack of support from the administrator, and hesitation to spearhead any task or activity. Each of the four dimensions, attributes and barriers in this model are discussed thoroughly for clearer understanding and implementation of the empowerment model in the future as follows:

A. The Psychological Dimension:

The psychological dimension of an empowered faculty is the inner drive to perform the job with competence and self-fulfillment. The inner drive to perform the job refers to the inner nature, personal characteristics and his perception about himself in performing his job. Competence is the belief of someone in his capacity to perform the job with skill. It is the confidence he has about his ability to do the work well. According to Al Sada (2003) a sense of competence in performing the job increases creativity and innovation. It fosters self-confidence to make decision in the job without hesitation or fear of failure. Self-fulfillment is a pleasant feeling, contentment and satisfaction that arise out of the good accomplishment of the job.

As shown in the results of the study, the practices under the psychological dimension that should be performed by the faculty to become empowered are: (1) work comfortably with co-teachers; (2) appreciate his colleagues who work with him; (3) perform the assignment even without supervision; (4) do the job with confidence and ease; (5) feel free to do the job.

This implies that an empowered faculty has the feeling of appreciation, comfort, ease, composure, joy, and love for work together with colleagues. He has initiative, dedication, diligence, confidence, freedom, self-control, tact in performing the job. He has an eagerness to render the best services for the students and other clients. Teaching job is considered a responsibility with high sense of worth and a fulfilling career; it is valued and skillfully done for the success of the institution.

B. Instructional Dimension:

The instructional dimension of an empowered faculty is the conscientious performance of the routine tasks or duties inside the classroom. It is the increase authority of faculty to make decisions inside the classroom, participation in decision making that involves instruction and the ability to meet the specific needs of students. Conscientious performance of routine tasks means that an empowered faculty is diligent and hardworking in performing his duties as a teacher.

As revealed in the results of the study, the faculty should perform all these instructional practices to become empowered as follows: (1) report to school punctually following the correct class schedule; (2) provide varied learning experiences to students; (3) take time counseling students with problems; (4) administer test effectively; (5) impose class discipline.

This implies that those are the routine tasks and duties inside the classroom that should be devotedly performed by the faculty to become empowered. Their duty is to make the school an effective place for learning because of their insights and experience to make better decisions inside the classroom. They believe that to improve instruction is everyone's responsibility. This instructional dimension should be communicated and required to the faculty for empowerment.

C. Cultural Dimension:

The third dimension in the model is the cultural dimension which is the proper implementation of institutions' culture and structure for the realization of goals. This dimension refers to the top-down relationship in institutions. It focuses on the sharing of power by the top management and bottom management and delegation of authority within the institution.

Based on the findings of the study, the practices that should be implemented by the administrators to make the faculty become empowered are: (1) administrators should ensure that the faculty members understood the vision and mission of

the institution; (2) share information about the school plans, mission and goals with faculty members; (3) inform the faculty members about the changes in policies and rules within the school; (4) disseminate information through regular meetings, office communication, advisory or memorandum; (5) involve faculty members in the planning process and decision making.

This implies that all the practices stated above should be executed by the administrators to help empower the faculty. However, this does not mean that when the faculty is empowered the administrators no longer function. The empowered faculty carry out his job obediently based on his job description with due respect to his supervisor. The information disseminated can help faculty understand what the institution is trying to achieve and how it is progressing.

When faculty members are involved in the planning process and decision making, they need accurate and current information of the situation from the administrators. It can enhance faculty commitment toward their work and develop their sense of responsibility.

Administrators should delegate authority, instill confidence, give support and feedback, recognize performance, provide equal opportunities and listen to faculty concerns. Delegating authority to faculty enables them to make their own decision without waiting for their supervisor to do the job. For delegation to be effective, supervisors should know the abilities of their subordinates, identify who is willing to take responsibility, consider which task is appropriate and know the expected result of delegation.

D. Social Dimension:

The social dimension of an empowered faculty is the conducive working environment and harmonious relationship among faculty members. A conducive environment is supportive, favorable and encouraging that inspires the faculty to take challenges, perform well and be more creative in their tasks.

To become empowered, the findings of the study revealed that the following practices should be observed by a faculty: (1) socialize together in small groups; (2) show respect to their colleagues; (3) show willingness to help or support each other; (4) create harmonious relationship with each other; (5) communicate with each other.

It implies that those practices are essential to be performed by faculty to become socially empowered. Practices such as socialization, respect, trust, willingness to help, support, influence, and open communication are very essential for an empowered faculty. They should cooperate in working with each other because it helps them better understand each other and reach the goals of the College. They should share necessary information to perform their best and knowledge how to use the information and skill on how to do the work. Furthermore, they should participate in the programs and activities that would be beneficial for the success of the College.

E. Attributes:

The model also identified five attributes that facilitate faculty members' empowerment. Based on the findings of the study, an empowered faculty should be responsible, self-motivated, has interpersonal skills, knowledgeable and proficient.

F. Barriers to Empowerment:

However, barriers cannot be avoided. For the success of the empowerment model, there are barriers that need to be overcome so that it cannot hamper empowerment. Other than the four dimensions and attributes, the study likewise shows the four barriers that could hinder faculty empowerment. This consists of the following: lack of opportunity to be involved in planning, lack of resources or funds, lack of support from the administrator, and hesitation to spearhead any task or activity.

The first barrier to empowerment is the lack of opportunity to be involved in planning. It means that the faculty has no opportunity to participate in planning the activities or programs of the college. All the decisions are done by the top management disregarding the contribution of the faculty. To avoid this barrier, administrators should give opportunities to faculty to be involved in the planning process and consider their great contribution in school. They should involve faculty in the planning process and assign their respective assignments.

The second barrier discovered is the lack of resources or funds. It means that there is deficiency or inadequacy of resources or funds for instructional materials like books, teaching aids and classroom facilities. Inadequacy of resources and funds really affects the empowerment process because without these the faculty could not pursue with the programs and

activities as stated in the tactical plan of the College. To avoid this barrier, the school should provide the needed resources and funds to the faculty. The faculty should also be informed of the resources that are available for their use in order to have access to the resources. This will intensify the feeling of empowerment of the faculty.

The third barrier is the lack of support from the administrator. It would mean that administrators are not willing to extend help or assistance in the performance of the duties of the faculty. To avoid of this barrier, the administrators should support the faculty in their plans, activities, programs and projects in school. They should send their faculty to seminars and trainings to update with the current trends in education. They should also allot funds for scholarship in post graduate education for faculty development.

The last barrier to empowerment is being reluctant to spearhead any task or activity. Faculty who are hesitant to spearhead any task or activity seem not willing to take responsibility. They lack confidence in taking the initiative and fear criticism from peers for their actions. To avert this barrier, the faculty should develop a positive attitude, be confident and willing to spearhead the activities of the school. They should think of what they could contribute to the school and disregard the criticisms from peers.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is concluded that the faculty members of WVCST System were highly empowered. The faculty empowerment model developed in this research comprised of the psychological, instructional, cultural and social dimensions. Each dimension has a number of practices continuously interacting which result to an effective empowerment process. Being responsible, self-motivated, with interpersonal skills, knowledgeable, and proficient are the specified attributes necessary to an empowered faculty. On the other hand, four barriers were also identified that may hinder empowerment.

Based on the findings and conclusions made, it is strongly recommended that faculty members should observe the practices stipulated in the four dimensions of the proposed faculty model. They should also develop the attributes agreed by the respondents. Administrators should support the faculty members in their professional development to become empowered. They should be open and accept changes on the role of faculty members in their school as a result of this model. Educational Planners and Policy Makers should formulate and implement policies about faculty empowerment in order to create a new climate for faculty members to help them improve their performance and achieve the school's goals. Higher Education Institutions are encouraged to observe also the practices stipulated in the model in their institutions so that they can achieve the highest performance in their school. If this model be implemented, proper orientation and dissemination should be conducted to implement the findings. An evaluation should be conducted to determine the effectiveness of the model. Similar studies may be conducted by future researchers about empowerment to further enrich and develop similar models to be utilized by teachers and administrators in their institution. A research could be done on the relationship of empowerment to effectiveness and efficiency.

REFERENCES

Internet Source:

[1] Al Sada, A. M. (2003). A literature review of empowerment with suggested empowerment model for Bahrain defense force. http://www. dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/ a420235.pdf. Retrieved: July 12, 2012.

[2] Conger, J. A. and Kanungo, R. N. (1988). The empowerment process: integrating theory and practice. www.jstor.org/ discover/10.2307. Retrieved: July 12, 2012.

[3] Ismail, A. et al., (2011). An empirical study of the relationship between transformational leadership, empowerment and organizational commitment. http://www.berjournal.com. Retrieved: January 4, 2014.

[4] Larkin, M. E. et al. (2008). Empowerment theory in action: the wisdom of collaborative governance. http://www.http://Nursingworld.org/MainMenu

[5] Categories/ANAMarketplace/ANAPeriodicals/OJIN/TableofContents/vol132008/No2May08/ArticlePreviousTopic/EmpowermentTheory.html. Retrieved: September 3, 2012.

[6] Marks, H. M. and Louis, K. S. (1997). Does teacher empowerment affect the classroom? The implications of teacher empowerment for instructional practice and student academic performance. Educational evaluation and policy analysis. http://epa.sagepub.com/content/19/3/245.abstract. Retrieved: July 12, 2012.

[7] Nasiripour, A. A. & Siadati, S. A. (2011). A propose model for nurses empowerment through characteristics of workplace and management strategies; a study in Iranian hospitals. Australian Journal of Basic and   Applied Sciences. 5(6): 906-911. http://www.ajbasweb.com/ajbas/2011/june-2011/906-911.pdf. Retrieved: July 12, 2012.

[8] Shariff, N. R. (2011). An empowerment model for nurse leaders' participation in health policy development.http://uir.unisa.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10500/4898/thesis_shariff_nr.pdf. Retrieved: July 12, 2012.

[9] Sharp, D. (2009). A study of the relationship between teacher empowerment and principal effectiveness. http://www. bakeru.edu/images/pdf/ SOE/EdD_theses/Sharp_David.pdf. Retrieved: June 25, 2013.

Book:

[10] Bloisi, W. (2007). An introduction to human resource management. New York: McGraw Hill Educ. Co. Inc.

[11] McShane, S. L. & Glinow, M. V. (2000). Organizational behavior. New York, America: McGraw Hill Co. Inc.

[12] Newstrom, H.W. & Davis, K. (2002). Organization behavior: human behavior at work. 11th Edition, New York, America: McGraw Hill Co. Inc.

Unpublished Materials:

[13] Catedral, M. A. (2008). Empowerment among the National High School Principals: its extent, problems and prospects.

[14] Unpublished Dissertation: Western Visayas College of Science and Technology, La Paz, Iloilo City.

[15] Cervero, R. C. (2006). School Performance as Influenced by Principal's Empowerment and their Administrative Competence. Unpublished Dissertation: University of Iloilo, Iloilo City.

[16] Paniza, A. T. (2004). The attitude of school heads towards empowerment: its relationship to the extent of their implementation of school plans and the attainment of quality education. Unpublished Dissertation: University of Iloilo, Iloilo City.

[17] Serag, M.G. (2012). Empowerment of Department Heads and the implementation of English Programs as viewed by the English Teachers. Unpublished Master's Thesis: University of Iloilo, Iloilo City.

[18] Sorolla, E. M. (2000). Empowerment and achievement motivation of secondary school administrators: their relationship to organizational performance. Unpublished Dissertation: University of Iloilo, Iloilo City.