



Quantifying the Higher Education Leadership Competency Framework for Talent Management in Malaysia

Ismie Roha Mohamed Jais¹

Azian Mohamad Azman²

Erlane K Ghani³



(✉ Corresponding Author)

¹Academy of Language Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia.

Email: ismie@uitm.edu.my

²Centre of Leadership Profiling, Akademi Kepimpinan Pendidikan Tinggi, Malaysia.

Email: azian@mohe.gov.my

³Faculty of Accountancy, Universiti Teknologi MARA Selangor, Malaysia.

Email: erlanehg@uitm.edu.my

Abstract

This paper presents how a Malaysian centre associated with the ministry of higher education developed a framework for assessing leadership abilities in higher education. A qualitative approach is used in this study and the primary focus was on group discussions involving human resource professionals and well-known academics from higher education. The result of this study shows that the Behavioral Event Interview (BEI) instrument is used to quantify each of the five clusters that make up the higher education leadership competencies framework. These five clusters are: impact and influence, achievement and action, leading, cognitive and personal effectiveness. The leaders are then classified into five position levels ranging from Level 1 to Level 5. Level 1 is individual contributor which is coded as 'Reviewable' whilst Level 5: is leading the whole organization coded as 'Significantly Exceeds'. The study's findings provide an instrument for determining whether the potential leaders in high education institutions are ready to take on the responsibility of leading. In order to improve a leader's abilities as a part of succession planning, the findings could assist the center. This study provides some considerations for alternatives to the prevalent frameworks for evaluating leadership skills in the interest of sustaining a high-quality organizational culture.

Keywords: Competencies, Higher education, Leadership, Behavioral event interview, Malaysia.

Citation | Mohamed Jais, I. R. Azman, A. M., & Ghani, E. K. (2022). Quantifying the higher education leadership competency framework for talent management in Malaysia. *Journal of Education and e-Learning Research*, 9(4), 288-295. 10.20448/jeelr.v9i4.4303

History:

Received: 6 September 2022

Revised: 20 October 2022

Accepted: 3 November 2022

Published: 22 November 2022

Licensed: This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

[Attribution 4.0 License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

Publisher: Asian Online Journal Publishing Group

Funding: This study received no specific financial support.

Authors' Contributions: All authors contributed equally to the conception and design of the study.

Competing Interests: The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

Transparency: The authors confirm that the manuscript is an honest, accurate, and transparent account of the study; that no vital features of the study have been omitted; and that any discrepancies from the study as planned have been explained.

Ethical: This study followed all ethical practices during writing.

Contents

1. Introduction	289
2. Literature Review	289
3. Research Methodology	290
4. The Findings	291
5. Conclusion	294
References	294

Contribution of this paper to the literature

This study is the first to examine academics' leadership competencies by way of behavioural event interview (BEI) approach in Malaysian universities. The BEI has contributed significantly in stabilising the ecosystem of competency-based talent management of public universities as scores reported in the leadership report card are consistent and reliable.

1. Introduction

One of the most observed yet less understanding phenomena in the world is leadership (Burns, 1978). Indeed, leadership is a dynamic endeavour that scholars and practitioners have tried to understand for centuries. Leaders influence followers to perform particular actions in order to achieve specific objectives that reflect the values, motives, aspirations and expectations of both leaders and followers. Leadership is a particular form of power related to relational, group-based and intentional leadership so it is important to understand the principles of power. Burns (1978) stated that both leaders and followers participate in a common activity that would be worthless in the absence of power. In other words, if a leader can persuade followers to act in accordance with the organisational goals, then he or she is a good leader (Ghani & Mohamed, 2018). This ability can be achieved through an effective framework for leadership competencies.

Organisational leadership capabilities have been a subject of the corpus of leadership (e.g., (Gigliotti & Ruben, 2017; Ruben & Gigliotti, 2019)). Numerous studies have contributed to the literature on leadership and offered two viewpoints on the competencies of leadership (Chouhan & Srivastava, 2014; Ruben & Gigliotti, 2019). The first perspective is personal and relates to experiences and activities that can improve knowledge and skills related to the job while the second perspective is an organisational and relates to personal and professional growth that encourages employees to grow and transform organisations (Katsinas & Kempner, 2005). However, Smith and Wolverton (2010) hypothesised that leadership in higher education institutions is different from other types of organisations because faculty members work in an environment with limited power but a significant role in decision-making. In contrast, Smith and Wolverton (2010) suggested that, "defining competencies, such as knowledge, skills, behaviours and attributes, that are important for effective leadership and strengthen the probability of achieving desired organisational outcomes has practical implications that might prove useful." As a result, leadership at higher education institutions frequently focuses on helping employees develop their own organisational abilities.

Other research supported Smith and Wolverton's (2010) argument that higher education institutions demand different leadership skills than other types of organisations because of their particular set of leadership difficulties. (Mohamed Jais, Yahaya, & Ghani, 2021). This notion derives from the fact that administrators at higher education institutions must strike a balance between the interests of faculties and departments and those of other stakeholders, such as students (Filan & Seagren, 2003). Mohamed Jais et al. (2021) developed a framework of leadership competencies for higher education that has five main clusters. The clusters are impact and influence, achievement and action, leading, cognitive and personal effectiveness. However, one may ask a question: *How would the potential leaders be assessed based on the five clusters of the higher education leadership competency framework?* The Higher Education Leadership Academy (AKEPT) may benefit from such an evaluation if it were developed, as it would give the institution a reliable means of gauging the leadership skills of its prospective new directors. The rest of this paper is organised as follows: A review of pertinent literature is included in Section 2. Section 3 provides a methodology for modelling. Section 4 introduces the structure and Section 5 concludes this study.

2. Literature Review

Numerous studies have researched leadership throughout the years. The concept of research started with exploring specific individuals that involve changing dimensions, definitions and quantitative and qualitative models (Hunt & Fedynich, 2019). The aim of understanding the qualities of leadership that may effectively lead and motivate an organisation is the characteristics of leadership. (Green, 2014). As a result, several theories were developed to support reasons for the need for leadership (Miska & Mendenhall, 2018). In addition, these studies have also contributed to the leadership literature using various contexts and frameworks (Smith & Wolverton, 2010).

The definition of a leader and the qualities that a person needs to have to become a successful leader have been the subject of several studies. McCleskey (2014) stated that there are more than a hundred different ways to define a leader and the qualities of a good leader. Among the studies that provided the definition of leadership is Gardner (1990). According to Gardner (1990), leadership is the process of persuasion by which an individual compels a group to pursue objectives that the leader and his or her followers share. On the other hand, according to Yukl (2002), leadership is the process of influencing people's opinions and encouraging participation from both individuals and groups in order to achieve common goals. Similarly, according to the definition provided by Dugan and Komives (2007), leadership is a phenomenon that is relational, transformative, process-oriented, learned and change-directed. Wallin (2009) noted that a leader must have the capacity to persuade others and guide his organisation through transformation.

Studies have shown that the leadership in higher education institutions is different from other organisations because it has a specific set of leadership issues. (Gigliotti & Ruben, 2017). Future leaders who possess key role in many organisations frequently participate in the growth of the education process in higher education institutions (Filho et al., 2020). These leaders must possess leadership competencies that can be adaptable in a higher education institution context (Chouhan & Srivastava, 2014). The difficulty lies with a person's abilities to lead their subordinates and take action to create effective and efficient organisations. According to Filan and Seagren (2003), due to its continuous change, modifications and tumultuous environment in the last ten years, higher education leadership is "dynamic, complex and multifaceted and hence offers several prospects for future inquiry." Members of higher education institutions frequently work in an environment with limited oversight but have significant input into strategic decisions.

The leadership competencies framework has been examined in leadership studies. Leadership competencies are "the skills of a leader that contribute to outstanding performance," Mohamad and Abdullah (2017). Organisations can

more effectively identify and nurture the next generation of leaders by creating leadership skills. The leaders possess the key characteristics to achieve desirable organisational outcomes (Ruben & Gigliotti, 2019; Wallin, 2009; Yukl, 2002) known as leadership competencies. Leadership competencies are associated with a leader's skills that contribute to a superior performance (Mohamad and Abdullah 2017). These competencies include hard skills (e.g., knowledge and content expertise) and soft skills (e.g. attitude and behaviours) (Bass, 1998; Bensimon, Neumann, & Birnbaum, 1989). Leaders need to have these competencies regardless of which organisations they are in although the levels may differ between the organisations (Mohamed Jais et al., 2021). For example, McDaniel (2002) conducted a study to identify a leadership competency framework in higher education using a qualitative approach. She created the Higher Education Leadership Competencies (HELIC) model, a system for categorising leadership competencies in higher education into four groups. Context, the first category, refers to a leader's aptitude for navigating a highly visible environment (Filan & Seagren, 2003). The second area of content is a leader's comprehension of strategic planning and how it relates to the organisation's vision and aim (Brown, Treviño, & Harrison, 2005). The process category, which encompasses flexibility and creativity refers to a leader's knowledge and grasp of leadership (Fisher & Koch, 2004). The last category is communication which includes written, vocal and nonverbal exchanges (Kouzes & Posner, 2002).

3. Research Methodology

3.1. The Setting and the Participants

The study was conducted at AKEPT. The Malaysian Ministry of Higher Education is in charge of this centre founded in 2008 with the goal of developing and forming leaders in higher education institutions. The creation of AKEPT is in line with the Malaysian Blueprint for Higher Education 2015–2025 which emphasises the need to develop capable leaders in order to achieve talent excellence. The AKEPT Leadership Competency and Instrument Committee has been established by AKEPT to design the higher education leadership competency framework. The 12-person committee's goal is to provide general leadership competencies for higher education institutions' personnel management. The committee's members are leaders with extensive experience in many different industries.

3.2. Research Instrument and Data Collection

The aim of this study was accomplished using a qualitative methodology. The research methods used in this study were focus groups and individual interviews. With some modifications to fit the AKEPT context focus group discussion questions were created based on the Spencer and Spencer (1993) Competency Model. The leadership competency framework's cluster types, the appropriate competency themes, the grouping of the competency themes into the pertinent clusters and the determination of whether the competency themes in each cluster would be able to assess the levels of competency among potential leaders. Over the course of a three-year period, focus group discussions were held four times a year. The conversations were taped and the recordings were coded and translated. The competency themes that are a part of the higher education leadership competency framework were then determined by categorising the coded data. The transcriptions' supporting evidence is used exactly in this paper without any editing.

Leadership competency-related materials were also evaluated as a part of data collection for this study. (Tellis, 1997). This study specifically looked at materials on methods and techniques for determining a person's level of leadership ability. The three methods included in this study are The Strategic Plan Presentation, the psychometric test and the Behavioural Event Interview. The study also examined the Pekeliling Perkhidmatan Negara and the Malaysian Education Blueprint, which are congruent with Checkland's Soft System Methodology (Checkland, 1981). The following approaches were used to provide the findings of this study.

3.3. Research Operational Framework

The operational framework for this study was adapted from Alias and Abdul Rahman (2003) with certain adjustments to fit the setting of this study as shown in Figure 1. The picture illustrates how a framework for leadership competencies was created using the findings from interviews and focus group sessions. The competency framework was used to determine the level of leadership competency. Finally, a leadership competency assessment tool was developed.

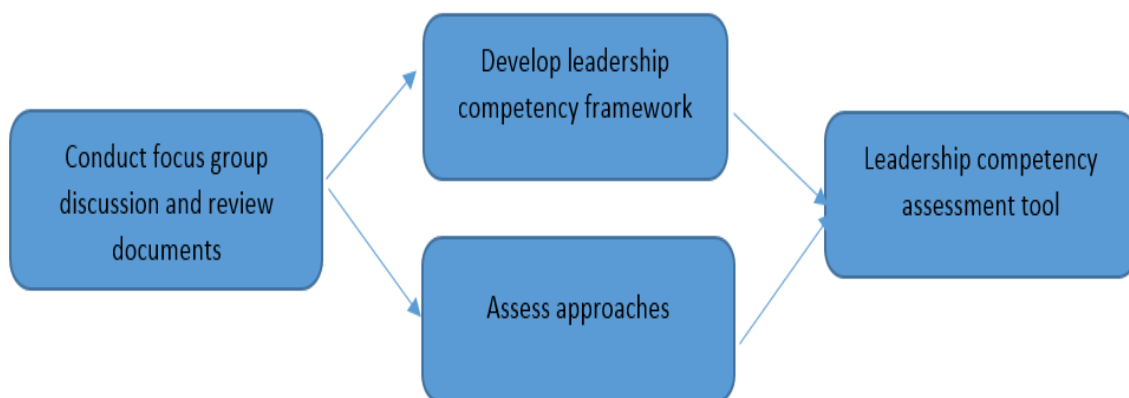


Figure 1. Research operational framework.

4. The Findings

This study consists of three stages to develop the leadership competence assessment tool. The first stage was establishing the importance of the leadership competency framework. This study indicated that the participants believed that a leadership competence framework is required for the higher education institutions using a qualitative method through focus group discussions. One of the committee members, Mr. Y noted:

I just want to share some of my experience for the last ten and half years in public university. What I can say, there are things we should look at before we go into detail about competency, morale, etc. We need to give feedback, the present and future structure of public universities and other universities. We want to develop the process or whatever competency within that framework and we need to consider all these so called, roles of the leadership within this framework.

Another member of the committee commented on the need to have a higher education leadership competency framework. Mr. D noted that:

We need this because we need to develop people with contextual leadership qualities. Sometimes in the old days, we discussed to develop the young people or professional development. You must be a doer, meaning that, before you reach to a certain level, you must experience certain things. And then, luckily, now you summarise here who are the DVC (Deputy Vice Chancellor), who are the possible VC (Vice Chancellor).

Mr. K also commented on the importance of leadership and the need for such a framework in universities. He commented:

They see universities as institutions that will progress the nation forward. So, if you were to draw up all your curriculum to comply with the current requirements of the job market, you would be allowing the job market to dictate your curriculum. But if you are leading a university that conducts research and teaching that is going to explore the future of the job market, then you are attempting to uplift the level of the market operation capabilities of your nation to the next level. That's at that time, it was stated in the blueprint, we would prefer to produce job creators rather than employees. Of course, the challenge is always there because the expectation of the nation from the university is the ability of the university to move from the existing market to the next market, through innovation, and the capabilities of the individuals that we produce. We put the two most important elements of leadership in university.

Mr. K further noted that:

There are two groups of people who play an important role in university leadership. First, the academic leaders, the professors, who have a team of people who will lead building knowledge. Their major focus is how I can build this knowledge to the next level. More importantly, how can I make this knowledge be applicable to the society so that the society can use the knowledge to uplift themselves, get empowered and move on with their life to a better future. The second type of individual is the musical conductor, who looks at a thousand brilliant academics and tries to get them to work together to create a unified piece of music. Musicians are not great performers but when they worked together, they have the power to influence the country by directing where to play their role significantly and when to project themselves. In my opinion, that is the level of competencies required of Vice Chancellors. It is not really a person who is authoritative by nature, because if I, the violinist, refuse to give my best, what can you do to me? There's nothing you can do to me, right? I can still portray my capabilities somewhere else and still earn. I'm not going to contribute to the university. I can still do that, I got plenty of options. These are the two key groups of people that we are talking about. That's where we come to a point; the vice chancellors are basically collegial leaders. People can tell your intention as soon as you start speaking. If the intention could convince the members of the university that this is truly for the sake of the nation, the university and knowledge, then you sound convincing but if they could see the intention is reflecting for 'what is it for me?', If you ask them to do something and they will ask you 'why should I do it?' And if they are convinced, they will do it a lot better than you expected. That's been my experience when it comes to take the challenges of defining competencies for university leaders.

A few of the committee members felt that the universities needed to invest in developing the higher education leadership competency framework. It is considered as an investment. Mr. Y noted that:

Another area that we should consider is the investment part because currently, universities have to generate their own income. In our university, we call it the investment sector. The reason we are not doing investment is that we do not want to create the perception that universities have to do business. This is very discouraging for the academia to listen about the university having to do business. So, we call it the investment sector.

Following additional discussion, it was found that the findings of this study supported the inclusion of five clusters in the higher education leadership competency framework. This is due to the fact that these clusters are required to be taken into consideration when selecting future leaders for higher educational institutions. The five clusters are personal effectiveness, cognition, leading, impact and influence, and achievement and action. Within each cluster, four competency themes were identified. The first cluster, personal effectiveness, has four competency themes: integrity, values and ethics, empathy and organisational commitment and self-confidence. This cluster stresses that a leader needs to recognise the importance of ethical behaviours and show these values to their subordinates (Ghani, Muhammad, & Said, 2012). It shows how mature a person is in their interactions with people and at work, giving them the ability to manage their performance and be effective in the face of current pressures and challenges. The cluster's competency themes are important as they serve as the basis of education. Mr. Y noted on personal effectiveness:

My experience in the university or in the public sector, the basis of education is about virtue. It is about values. In fact, the Prophet of Muhammad was born because of his values. To me, that is the basis of education. You want to create a leader and we need to know the root of the value that they

have. For that matter, I would like to suggest here that we go back to the basis of education. My experience, *siddiq, amanah, tabligh, fatanah*. It is very simple. *Siddiq* means you do the right thing; we should develop a process or a system that requires a leader to do the right thing. You don't lie. *Amanah* means integrity. The word integrity is very crucial in the university. *Tabligh* is performance actually. If you do not perform, we have to consider it. And they must have KPI, they must have all the traits. We can see the track record, the performance of any institution that he handles. *Fatanah*, on the other hand, is about wisdom. We should focus on our university's outcomes. For instance, we should focus on creating professionals, a competent work force for the country, potential entrepreneurs, potential business leaders and corporations etc. What type of leader do we require to produce that kind of outcome?

The second cluster is cognition. Three competency themes—creative and analytical thinking, decision-making skills and planning and organization—are included in the competency cluster. Understanding the context in which you lead and then using the proper leadership style, technique or skill for the situation are the core principles of cognitive leadership. To comprehend their circumstances and the requirements of those they lead, today's leaders must listen and observe without actively participating. It symbolises the person trying to comprehend a circumstance, assignment, difficulty, chance, or body of information. As noted by Mr. S:

Firstly, the technical competency; we think that no one would be competent to accomplish everything but at least they must have one core skill that will help them to manage the university. Secondly, strategic thinking. The third would be authenticity and the ability to articulate their vision.

Similarly, Mr. A noted one of the criteria in selecting a leader:

Knowing a VC's capacity to see the big picture is important to me when making my decision. You need to be committed on a deep level and I think it helps to have a clear vision of where you want to lead the university during your time in charge so that you can effectively cascade that vision down to the rest of the faculty and staff, organise things and get things moving. You need the ability to envision something and then communicate that idea, organise it and put it into motion. All things considered, it comes down to the people.

Mr. TA provided his comments:

Strategic thinking. I find it very strange that many universities' students are so smart, get all the dots but cannot connect the dots. Why is that so? The training of specialisation, silo thinking. They are all in their very narrow phase. I quoted this because the first VC of this university was Prof Sir Oppenheim. He was going to give a speech on Speech day. 1960s. You know what he said, there's over-specialisation in our university today. People are so specialised; they know more and more about less and less. Finally, they know everything about nothing. Of course, this is an absurd situation but it is true in the sense that people are not learning. You are not capable of learning from all the other disciplines. Being an intelligent and learners are two different things. You are looking for learners. We are not proud to say - I don't know about this subject, I'm going to learn it. Then I can see a big picture with you, I can synthesise, connect the dots and then I can be strategic. Otherwise, you are just a specialist; you cannot talk about anything else. This is where we fail.

The third cluster is leading which has teamwork and leadership, leveraging diversity and change leadership as its competency themes. This cluster is of the opinion that the leader may assign assignments to the right people or teams. The leader can also resolve issues by urging others to do so in an open manner (Rosen & Callaly, 2005). As noted by Mr. D:

So much is lost if you abruptly step into a role that requires you to manage people, processes and products without having the necessary experience as a team member or department head in an academic setting. My own experiences corroborated this theory. As a result of counteracting factors. So, it's not something you can claim as a skill. This phrase, "meritocracy," has my full endorsement. Simply put, if you're any good at all, word will spread. While you may be at the bottom, you realise that what you provide there is sufficient. When you reach middle management, people may see that you've achieved success beyond the typical scope of your position. He knows more people outside of that tight circle than anyone else there. He can use that setting to his advantage in carrying out his primary mission. The fourth cluster is impact and influence which has the competency themes of impact, influence, relationship building, analytical thinking, conceptual thinking, decision-making, and tact and courtesy.

Impact and influence are all about a leader's capacity to influence and have an impact on others. It symbolises the person's underlying concerns with how they will affect others also known as their need for "power" (McClelland, 1973) which is influenced by the consideration of the organisation or other goods. It expresses the goal of having a particular impact on subordinates and is a specialised subset of the impact and influence competencies. Mr. A explains:

How do you get that network? For academic I think at the end of it is your reputations. But sometimes, reputation is subject to discipline. In my case, I'm lucky because I'm an economist. I'll be useful forever. If I'm just a mere biologist the chances for Putrajaya to know you is very limited.

In addition, Mr. A noted that:

The VC has to really be able to network, to move, to engage, to get everybody on board and to produce the best in their own fields. Don't forget that the students demand a different kind of leadership. Leaders need to be able to inspire everyone, not just academics.

The last cluster is achievement and action. There are three competency themes within the cluster: namely achievement orientation, initiative and proactive behaviour and information seeker. A good leader would set challenging goals and initiatives to go above and beyond typical expectations and make necessary sacrifices to achieve exceptional results (Mohamed Jais et al., 2021). It represents a bias towards action and is directed more to task accomplishment than to impact on other people. Mr. D noted:

If you are really good, people will see it. While you are at the bottom, you know that you deliver enough things at that particular level. When you are in mid-range or middle management, you are able to deliver beyond that level, so people can see it. You have to experience at the contact, you experience with the people. In general, experience with people is analogous to experience with money. That's the term contextual. Over and above of IQ (Intelligence Quotient) and EQ (Emotional Quotient).

Based on the findings, this study can conclude that the higher education leadership framework can be used as a reference in assisting the ministry to identify the potential leaders in the higher education institutions. Table 1 presents the higher education leadership competency framework.

Table 1. Higher education leadership competency framework.

Cluster	Competency
Cluster 1 Personal Effectiveness	01. Self Confidence 02. Empathy 03. Organisational Commitment 04. Values & Ethics
Cluster 2 Cognition	05. Conceptual Thinking 06. Analytical Thinking 07. Decision Making Ability 08. Planning and Organising
Cluster 3 Leading	09. Teamwork & Team Leadership 10. Leveraging Diversity 11. Change Leadership/ Adaptability
Cluster 4 Impact & Influence	12. Impact & Influence 13. Organisational & Environmental Awareness 14. Networking/ Relationship Building
Cluster 5 Achievement & Action	15. Achievement Orientation 16. Initiative & Proactive Behaviour 17. Information Seeker

The second stage relates to the identification of a suitable instrument to determine the level of leadership competency of the potential leaders in higher education institutions based on the competency framework developed in the first stage. This study found that in determining the level of leadership competency, it was decided to utilise the Behavioural Event Interview (BEI) developed by McClelland (1973) in the focus group discussions. The BEI is a technique that uses a structured interview to select a potential candidate to describe a situation or an experience he had at previous work. The aim of the BEI is to obtain a detailed description of how a candidate goes about doing his work and elicit stories that describe the candidate's specific behaviours, thoughts and actions in an actual situation. The potential leaders were asked about five or six important situations they had experienced, such as the situation, who was involved and what they thought, felt, or wanted to do in that situation. Mrs I explained:

In 2015, these were the instruments utilised in terms of measuring competency. AKEPT use Behavioural Event Interview (BEI) as well as second instrument is 360 Evaluation. These two instruments for BEI, what was measured was competency. In a 360-degree evaluation, the focus is squarely on those three areas: honesty, connections and efficiency. We have had feedback and challenges along the way. We collect every word, suggestion that has come from the ground. Among them is the willingness of the university community to provide feedback. They always check with us whether, at the end of the day, this information will be treated confidentially, will impact them in the future in terms of career development.

She further explained:

We are looking for the instrument's credibility. This is a study that is being done to look into the standing of all the instruments that are nonexistence in terms of human resources. Of course, there are numerous tests such as personality and psychometric tests. This is where we stand in terms of BEI which is at zero points. This is a document we hold on strongly to simply because, when participants or when National Taught Talents come back to us in terms of contesting their leadership score, this what we hold on to and we have the accuracy of 0.6. We need other instrument that universities may use to compensate for the 0.39 differences. This is where we make them feel good about it and we tell them that this is the leadership competency, something to do with your academic leadership power, so they understand that BEI is for institutional leadership rather than for academic leadership.

Mrs. Z also commented on the usefulness of the BEI instrument:

For me, I love the BEI. The psychometric test is more realistic as compared to survey. Sometimes the psychometric test tries to think 'Who are you?' I think the BEI is really 'What's in you?' If I recalled back my experience in 2017, it's the first BEI session with and last year 2019, being called again to revise and check on my response in 2017. My suggestion for the BEI, maybe AKEPT can look into when to give the BEI. I think BEI is good for young leaders. Another suggestion I have is that AKEPT conduct BEI for the young leaders. There are several other components that are still missing that can add in. Number 1 on the personal achievement. I think, to be appointed as a leader at a young age, personal achievement is very important.

Table 2 presents the level of leadership competency based on the BEI instrument that could be used to determine the leadership competency of potential leaders in higher education institutions. Based on the focus group discussions, this study found that the committee developed the level of position based on the higher education leadership framework developed earlier.

Table 2. Position level.

Level	Descriptors
Level 1: Individual Contributor	No supervision of others; typically repetitive tasks; tasks are completed within the same day, e.g., many clerical & trade jobs, lecturers.
Level 2: Supervising Day-to-Day Tasks	Supervision of different, mostly repetitive, tasks within the same process or operation; or no supervision involved but requiring coordination with the jobs of others, e.g., the deputy head
Level 3: Managing Function	Supervision of varied processes within the same function, e.g., head of faculty, centre, academy, or institute.
Level 4: Integrating Diverse Functions	Supervision of dissimilar functions, e.g., deputy vice chancellor
Level 5: Leading Whole Organisation	Lead and steer the whole organisation, e.g., vice chancellor

Subsequently, the committee developed five (5) competency variances as shown in Table 3 that range in value from +1.51 and above, representing succession success that 'significantly exceeds' to -1 and below which represents 'reviewable'. 'Significantly exceeds' indicates that the potential leader has significantly exceeded the position requirement and should be considered for a position 1 level above the target position within 24 months to avoid demotivation. Meanwhile, -1 and below indicate that the potential leader is not ready to hold the targeted position and therefore, should be considered for alternative positions. Mr. N supported the implementation of the BEI and the competency variants for identifying the level of leadership competency. He noted that:

For VC position is level 5. We have an average competency level, 4.79 for example. That is the average score for all 15 or 19 to evaluate competencies (first version). The average comes from scores for each component. Each component will have a statistical variant. We have a range of -1 to 1.51.

Table 3 presents the level of leadership competency based on the BEI instrument.

Table 3. Level of leadership competency based on BEI instrument

Competency Variance	Succession Status	Descriptors
+1.51 & Above	Significantly Exceeds	Significantly exceeds the position's requirements. Best considered for a position 1 level above the target position within 24 months to avoid demotivation.
+0.50 to +1.50	Exceeds	Exceeds the target position's requirement. Best placed in the target position within 18 months to avoid possible demotivation.
-0.49 to +0.49	Suitable	Ready to assume the target position immediately.
-0.99 to -0.50	Developable	Target for development on competencies with -0.50 or wider gaps. Reassess for suitability for the target position at the end of the competency development initiative.
-1 & Below	Reviewable	Consider subject for alternative positions.

5. Conclusion

This research identifies the competency themes in identifying leadership competency skills in Malaysian higher education institutions. Additionally, this study describes the process of developing a leadership competency framework for those institutions. Both of these findings are presented in this study. According to the findings of this study, there are five different categories that ought to be incorporated into the structure for leadership competencies and they are as follows: personal effectiveness, cognition, leading, impact and influence and achievement and action. When evaluating a leader's skills, it is important to pay attention to the five clusters that make up this framework. This study then created a scale to gauge the future leaders' level of leadership proficiency. The BEI instrument was created to be used together with the leadership framework developed earlier. Finally, the committee developed the competency variances that provide descriptions of the succession status. This paper provides some insight and understanding of the possible alternatives to the existing leadership competency frameworks to sustain an organisational culture of excellence. The leadership framework that was previously developed was intended to be used in conjunction with the BEI instrument. The group also created the competency variances which describe the succession status. This paper offers some insight into potential alternatives to the current frameworks for measuring leadership ability in order to maintain an excellent organisational culture.

References

- Alias, R. A., & Abdul Rahman, A. (2003). *Development of information systems service quality: Model for institute of higher learning context*. Paper presented at the Research Seminar RM7 & RM8, Aerospace, IT and Communication Focus Group, Johor Bahru.
- Bass, B. M. (1998). *Transformational leadership: Industrial, military, and educational impact*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Bensimon, E., Neumann, A., & Birnbaum, R. (1989). Making sense of administrative leadership: The "L" word in higher education. ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report No. 1. Washington, DC: The George Washington University.
- Brown, M. E., Treviño, L. K., & Harrison, D. A. (2005). Ethical leadership: A social learning perspective for construct development and testing. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 97(2), 117-134. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2005.03.002>.
- Burns, J. M. (1978). *Leadership*. New York: Harper & Rowe.
- Checkland, P. B. (1981). *Systems thinking, systems practice*. Chichester: Wiley.
- Chouhan, V. S., & Srivastava, S. (2014). Understanding competencies and competency modeling—A literature survey. *IOSR Journal of Business and Management*, 16(1), 14-22. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.9790/487x-16111422>.
- Dugan, J. P., & Komives, S. R. (2007). Developing leadership capacity in college students: Findings from a national study. A Report from the Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership College Park, MD: National Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs.
- Filan, G. L., & Seagren, A. T. (2003). Six critical issues for midlevel leadership in postsecondary settings. *New Directions for Higher Education*, 124, 21-31. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1002/he.127>.

- Filho, L. W., Eustachio, J. H. P. P., Caldana, A. C. F., Will, M., Lange, S. A., Rampasso, I. S., & Kovaleva, M. (2020). Sustainability leadership in higher education institutions: An overview of challenges. *Sustainability*, 12(9), 3761. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12093761>.
- Fisher, J. L., & Koch, J. V. (2004). *The entrepreneurial college president*. Connecticut: Praeger.
- Gardner, J. W. (1990). *On leadership*. New York, United States: Simon & Schuster.
- Ghani, E. K., & Mohamed, J. I. (2018). A gap analysis on leadership development course effectiveness in higher education in Malaysia. In N. P. Olofube (Ed.), *Encyclopaedia of institutional leadership, policy and management* (pp. 67-81). Port Harcourt: Pearl Publications.
- Ghani, E. K., Muhammad, K., & Said, J. (2012). Development of integrated information management system service quality model in an accounting faculty. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, 3(7), 245-252.
- Gigliotti, R. A., & Ruben, B. D. (2017). Preparing higher education leaders: A conceptual, strategic, and operational approach. *Journal of Leadership Education*, 16(1), 96-114. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.12806/v16/i1/t1>.
- Green, J. E. (2014). Toxic leadership in educational organizations. *Education Leadership Review*, 15(1), 18-33.
- Hunt, T., & Fedynich, L. (2019). Leadership: Past, present, and future: An evolution of an idea. *Journal of Arts and Humanities*, 8(2), 22-26.
- Katsinas, S. G., & Kempner, K. (2005). *Strengthening the capacity to lead in the community college: The role of university-based leadership program*. Lincoln, NE: National Council of Instructional Administrators.
- Kouzes, J. M., & Posner, B. Z. (2002). *The leadership challenge* (3rd ed.). New York: Jossey-Bass.
- McClelland, D. C. (1973). Testing for competence rather than for. *American Psychologist*, 28(1), 1-14. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0034092>.
- McCleskey, J. A. (2014). Situational, transformational, and transitional leadership and leadership development. *Journal of Business Studies Quarterly*, 5(4), 2152-1034.
- McDaniel, E. A. (2002). Senior leadership in higher education: An outcomes approach. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, 9(2), 80-88. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/107179190200900207>.
- Miska, C., & Mendenhall, M. E. (2018). Responsible leadership: A mapping of extant research and future directions. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 148(1), 117-134. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-015-2999-0>.
- Mohamad, R. N. S., & Abdullah, C. Z. (2017). Leadership competencies and organisational performance: Review and proposed framework. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 7(8), 824-831. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.6007/ijarbs/v7-i8/3297>.
- Mohamed Jais, I. R., Yahaya, N., & Ghani, E. K. (2021). Talent management in higher education institutions: Developing leadership competencies. *Journal of Education and e-Learning Research*, 8(1), 8-15. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.20448/journal.509.2021.8.1.8.15>.
- Rosen, A., & Callaly, T. (2005). Interdisciplinary teamwork and leadership: Issues for psychiatrists. *Australasian Psychiatry*, 13(3), 234-240. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1440-1665.2005.02195.x>.
- Ruben, B. D., & Gigliotti, R. A. (2019). *Leadership, communication, and social influence: A theory of resonance, activation, and cultivation*. Bingley: Emerald Publishing.
- Smith, Z. A., & Wolverton, M. (2010). Higher education leadership competencies: Quantitatively refining a qualitative model. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, 17(1), 61-70. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1548051809348018>.
- Spencer, L. M., & Spencer, S. M. (1993). *Competence at work: Models for superior performance*. John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Tellis, W. (1997). Introduction to case study. *The Qualitative Report*, 3(2), 1-14.
- Wallin, D. (2009). Change agents. *Community College Journal*, 79(6), 31-33.
- Yukl, G. (2002). *Leadership in organisations*. Upper Saddle River, N.J: Prentice Hall.