Introduction to the Study

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Know your core competencies and focus on being great at them.

– Mark Cuban

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Over the years, several attempts had been made to evaluate the competencies required by different organisations. There has been a lot of contemplation regarding the right competencies the employees need to have, in order to compete in a specific environment. (Seema Sanghi, 2007). Striking at the right competencies proved to be an efficient method to match the organisational requirement with the employees. Unlike the corporate environment, very little has been done to understand the competencies required for the faculty in higher educational institutions.

India constitutes nearly 47% of youngsters under the age of 25, hence, greater is the emphasis on the role of teachers and professors who are responsible for shaping the young minds to help them play a greater role in the economy.

The role of faculty in educational institutions has been changing over the past few decades, besides imparting knowledge to students, the faculty engage in research, paper publication, attending seminars and conferences, administrative work and more. Hence, the horizon of competencies required by faculty has broadened.

Competency

Over the years, many people have defined competency and it has evolved in time. Competency may be described as a combination of skill, attitudes and behaviour that an individual or an organization is competent at (Spencer and Spencer, 1993). Competency is the combination of knowledge, skill and personal values of an individual which leads to superior performance in any particular field or job. In 1973, David C. McClelland triggered a series of research after he published a paper, "Testing for Competence Rather Than Intelligence" which stated that traditionally intelligent individuals may not be successful in the completion of a specific task. This made organisations focus on the

competencies required and the behavioural attributes that made individuals perform better. McClelland used 'The Behavioural Event Interview' (BEI) to identify the competencies that made an employee a superior performer (McClelland, 1998).

Spencer and Spencer (1993) in his study had divided competency into five broad characteristics and compared it to an iceberg where only one-tenth of a person's personality is visible.
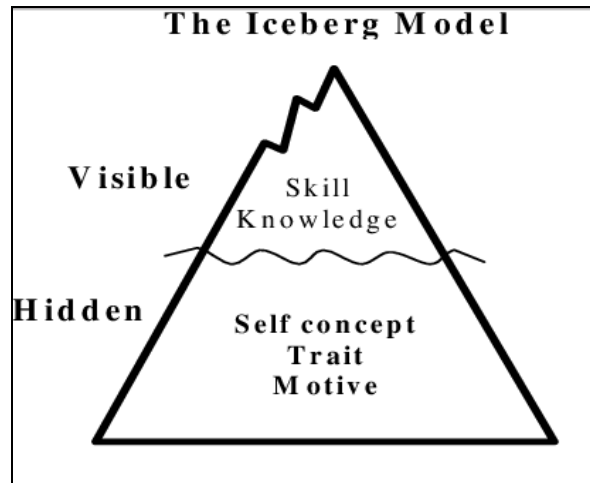
Source: Spencer, L. M. JR. and Spencer, S. M., Competence at Work: Model for Superior Performance, John Wiley and Sons, p.11, 1993.

1. **Skill** includes communication skills and the ability of the person to do a task, physical or mental.

2. **Knowledge** competency is the knowledge a person has in a particular field that would help in performing a task or job.

Knowledge and skill are considered as characteristics that are visible and are easier to change through training.

3. **Self-concept** is the person's moral values and the perception of oneself.

4. **Traits** are the physical characteristics, person's aptitude and consistent response to situations.

5. **Motive** is the ability to set a goal and motivate oneself to work towards achieving it.

Motive, traits and self-concept are the core of a person's character, they are less visible and more difficult to change.

Faculty Evaluation

Annual faculty evaluation is considered as a process that is mandatory and needs to be completed. Very often faculty members are uncomfortable with the process and procedure. The purpose and objective of the evaluation needs to be communicated to the faculty and the faculty need to be comfortable with the process

Most faculties are unaware of how they are perceived by their peers, students and the management. Pavlović N, (2016), brought to light that institutions are using different methods to evaluate their faculty and it was suggested that the institutions should invest in the improvement of the shortcomings that are visible after evaluation.

For higher education institutions, besides the evaluation of faculty by management and heads of departments, students are an important segment in the evaluation process. Research has shown that faculty who give high grades to students are rated higher in the faculty evaluation. This leads to bias and incorrect feedback. For student's evaluation of the faculty, care should be taken to select students who are unbiased and fair. Only then would the evaluation be impartial and beneficial.

This study has tried to bring forth a 360-degree approach to the competencies of faculty. When a faculty is subjected to a 360-degree evaluation besides the head of the department they are also assessed by peers, self and students.
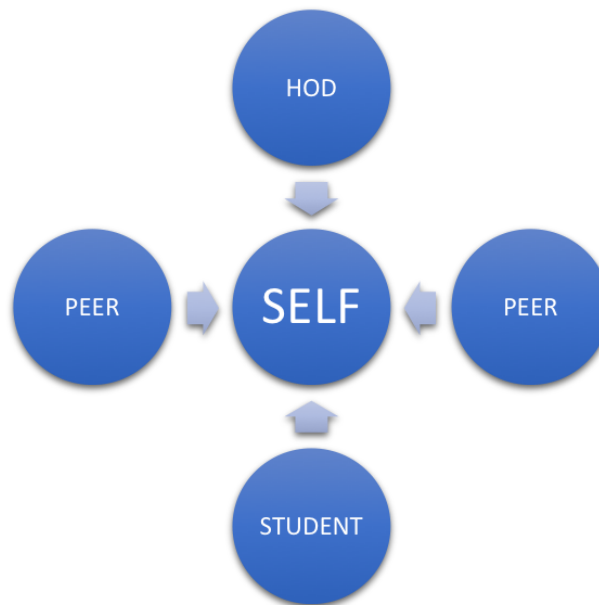
For the faculty, this throws light on understanding of the gap between their self-assessment and the assessment as made by the other stakeholders, giving room for greater improvement. Every faculty is looking to advance their career and leave a mark in their area of expertise. Hence the superiors with greater experience through a structured method would be able to shed light for improvement in the required areas of knowledge, skill and abilities. A 360-degree approach helps to understand the competencies level of the faculty from all the stakeholders in a higher education institution.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Most educational institutions have an annual faculty evaluation which is done primarily by the head of the department and such evaluation may be biased and does not include all the stakeholders of the institution. The prime task of faculty, is to impart knowledge to the students, hence, a greater emphasis has to be placed on the evaluation, given by the student community on the degree of knowledge imparted to them. Besides this, the faculty also gain knowledge and proficiency by interacting with peers and work together towards the institution's goals. Hence, as evaluated by their peers becomes significant along with the faculty's self-assessment. Thus, a rational approach to the competency of faculty would be a 360-degree approach.

1.3 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study concentrates on the recent and important concept of Human resource i.e. competencies of teaching faculty in Higher Education institutions. The teaching faculties in Arts and Science Colleges in Coimbatore city have been considered to be the respondents for the study.

1.4 OBJECTIVES

- To study the socio-economic and job-related profile of the target faculty.

- To analyse the expected competencies for the faculty by the respondents namely faculty and Head of the Department (HOD).

- To examine the influence of the personal profile of target faculty on his/her competency.

- To analyse the difference between self-assessment and the assessment by peers.

- To analyse the difference between self-assessment and the assessment by HOD.

- To analyse the difference between self-assessment and the assessment by students.

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

> **Period of Study**

The study had been undertaken from 2015 - 2020.

> **Area of the Study**

Coimbatore is considered an educational hub in the southern state of Tamil Nadu after Chennai, with 8 universities, 89 colleges for Arts and Science (Aided and Self Financing) and 43 College for Education, 86 colleges for Professional Education (Medical, Engineering, Law, Marine College and Aviation Academy) and 29 institutions for Special Education (Music, Physical Education and Management Colleges). Therefore, Coimbatore is purposely selected for the study.

> **Sampling**

Purposive sampling technique has been applied for selecting the samples.

> **Source of Data**

Primary data have been used for the study. The data have been collected from the respondents using well-structured questionnaire. The questionnaires were coded and collected personally to maintain confidentiality.

Selection of Sample

A pilot study was conducted for which data had been collected from 30 faculty respondents, 10 HODs and 40 students corresponding to the faculty. Based on the reliability and validity tests, necessary changes had been incorporated in the questionnaire.

The sample size considered for the study includes faculties working in aided and self-financed Arts and Science Colleges, affiliated to Bharathiar University.

The distribution of the same has been presented below:

S. No.	Nature of College	Number of College	Number of Faculty	No. of Sample Selected
1	Aided Colleges	8	832	44
2	Self-financed Colleges	44	3,215	298
Total		**52**	**4,047**	**342**

As per, Taro Yamini (1967), the estimated population size will be:

$$n = N/1 + N(e)^2$$

Where, n = Required Sample Size, N = Population,

e = error allowed during sample 5 % (0.05)

Estimated sample size = $4047 / 1 + 4047 * (0.05)^2 = 364$ respondents

Sample size arrived as per Taro Yamini is 364.

For the collection of data, prior permission was sought from the Principal of all the institutions selected for the study. A total of 390 questionnaires were distributed to faculty; for each faculty respondent we required:

➤ 1 questionnaire for self-evaluation by the faculty,

➤ 1 questionnaire from their respective department head,

➤ 2 questionnaires from peers, and

➤ 4 questionnaires from students.

Only those departments in the educational institution which had a minimum of 3 faculty members and a department head were selected for the study. Questionnaires were distributed to three faculty members (including one self-evaluation and two peer evaluation) the department head and four student from the final semester.

Hence, group of eight questionnaires formed a set for each faculty member. Only 342 such sets were complete and used for the study.

Framework of Analysis

The following statistical tools have been applied to analyse the primary data collected from faculty and stakeholders of various Arts and Science colleges.

Percentage Analysis, Descriptive Statistics (Mean and Standard Deviation), Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), Repeated Measures ANOVA, t-Test, Mean Rank Analysis, Kendall's Coefficient of Concordance.

Hypotheses

Suitable null hypotheses have been framed and applied.

Difficulty Faced by the Researcher

For the collection of data, prior permission was sort from the Principal of all institutions selected for the study. Questionnaires were distributed to the department head, three faculties and four students from the final semester. The respondents both faculty and Head Of Department (HOD) were hesitate to give their feed-back on their colleagues. The respondents participated in the study after they were assured that the data collected would be kept **confidential** and for academic purpose only. The questionnaires were personally delivered; a clear explanation was given on how to fill it and collected from all the respondents.

1.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The present study is confined to the Arts and Science College faculties in Coimbatore city which may not represent the entire population.

1.7 CHAPTER SCHEME

This study consists of six chapters and the chapters are as follows:

Chapter I   Introduction of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research methodology, scope of the study, limitations of the study and chapter scheme.

Chapter II Deals with the reviews of literature.

Chapter III Presents the overview of the study.

Chapter IV Deals with the socio-economic and job-related profile, the expected competencies for the target faculty and the influence of personal profile on his/her competencies.

Chapter V Analyses the difference between self-assessment and the assessment made by peers, HOD and students.

Chapter VI Presents the findings, suggestions and conclusion of the study.