

An Exploration of Managerial Competency in a Public University: A Qualitative Finding of Training Needs Assessment

Md.Lazim Mohd Zin*

College of Business

School of Business Management

Universiti Utara Malaysia, Malaysia

Emel: lazim@uum.edu.my

Umair Ahmad

Business Studies Department

Arab Open University

Aa`li, Bahrain,

Emel: umair.ahmed@aou.org.bh

Hadziroh Ibrahim

College of Business

School of Business Management

Universiti Utara Malaysia, Malaysia

Emel: hadziroh@uum.edu.my

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Abstract:

Training needs assessment has remained a significant point of interest for many decades as it is vital for developing appropriate training and development programme in any organization. Similar to other organizations academic institutions including public universities have concerns on selecting the right person for the right training programme, the training needs assessment is an essential step to develop an effective training programme. This study aims to assess the training needs of Assistant Registrar in a public university, which focus is given on identifying competencies level and prioritizing training needs among them. Data was collected using face-to-face interview with seven university's head of departments. The research findings show that the training needs' assessment could be used as an effective entity for identifying management competency and appropriate training programme for Assistant Registrars. It could facilitate university in prioritizing training programmes based on their current situation of competencies and performance achievement.

Keywords: *Training needs assessment, Management competency, Training programme*

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1. Introduction

The role of training has been widely accepted as a mechanism to improve employees' knowledge, skills, attitudes and ability. Many organizations are making great strides towards identifying and prioritizing training programme for their employees. However, the issue of poor design and administration of the training programme is often affected by training effectiveness. In most cases, training programmes are implemented when managers and/or top management see that the employees are not able to achieve their goals and performances. In a similar vein, there are no systematic processes used to gather any data that management needs to make an effective decision about the training programme and to measure the effectiveness of training. For instance, the issue of inadequate systematic prospect of determining training needs among employees was first highlighted in 1978, when only about 1 in 10 companies reported using training needs assessment for determining the training programmes (Wright & Geroy, 1992). Training needs assessment (TNA) is a process of collecting and analyzing data for helping the organization to identify and develop an appropriate training programme for employees. TNA is the first step for effectively designing a training programme. In this scene, the TNA process has a significant role since it provides clear guidelines to identify the gap between the employees' current level of competencies and performance achievement (Noe, 2017).

Concerning the TNA implementation in a Higher Education Institution (HEI), despite its importance for designing and implementing a training programme, unfortunately, TNA process has been overlooked for over 20 years in one of the public universities in Malaysia. Since this study is the first effort to unveil the TNA process in that particular HEI, preliminary interview approach to gather the views and opinions from a Head of

Registrar and Dean of School was employed. As pointed by a Head of Registrar, he stated,

"As a Head of Registrar in this public university for almost eight years, I feel that level of competencies among Assistant Registrars is between 30% to 60%, which is far from the level of competency required as stated in their job description and performance standard. One of the reason is because they are not given appropriate training that fit with their current level of competencies and performance in the jobs. Unfortunately, our training process has been overlooked on the importance of training assessment for many years, which in turn, has contributed significantly to identify appropriate training programme for them."

Also, there were Head of Departments who highlighted their concerns on urgent need for appropriate training programmes in the university due to growing skills and knowledge gaps. As shared by one of the Deans,

"The training programme must be designed and implemented such that it could be addressed current weaknesses among Assistant Registrars such as lack of competency in academic administration, poor time management, decision making and communication problem. We have to accept the fact that many training programmes have been implemented for many years, unfortunately, their competencies still unsatisfied and performance achievement is below expectation. Now is the right time to revisit the university training system, and utmost important is look at the overall process on how the training programme is designed, and how employees are selected for participating in any training programme here."

The above situation could ostensibly cause uncertainty of measuring the effectiveness of training programme if a training programme is not designed systematically. Therefore, the crucial role of TNA in this situation must be given the main priority. An assessment of the training needs of an organization is undertaken to determine whether training is the best solution to address the presenting issues. In general, this analysis consists of analyzing the organisation as a whole (e.g. goals, objectives, support for training), the tasks of the job(s) in question, and the employees performing the job(s). Often training programmes fail due to an inadequate analysis phase.

Despite the crucial role of training needs assessment in training design, numerous studies have suggested that many training programmes are inadequately planned, and in particular, are designed without proper assessment of training needs (Bowman & Wilson, 2008; Denby, 2010; Hamilton, 2013; McLelland, 1993). Most of the firms do not assess the training needs and those who assess actually do not perform the assessment function objectively. The roots of this failure mostly reside in the subjectivity of the approaches and methods used for assessment of training needs. Selection of jobs, people and tasks for training as well as the content carries a high degree of subjectivity, on the part of both trainer and the management. Unfortunately, this subjectivity is not innocent in nature and bites the organization very severely in the long run as well as in the short run. Most managers view the planning of training programmes as simply telling the training department that training is needed and that they accord little importance to the assessment of training needs.

While many studies and scholars have highlighted the importance of TNA for designing an effective training programme and commonly imposed by many organizations, TNA is rarely investigated as empirical research. Moreover, studies on TNA are dominated by descriptive approach (Bowman

& Wilson, 2008; Denby, 2010; Hamilton, 2013; McLelland, 1993). For instance, Hamilton (2013) has described four critical steps of the training assessment process which include proposing of training assessment, type of data needed, type of data gathering instrument and type of data gathered. Commencing almost more than 30 years ago, studies of TNA have investigated TNA process (Olshfski& Joseph, 1991; McLelland, 1993) among many others, unfortunately all these studies did not provide final output of TNA process such as key competency gap and performance outcome basis. As pointed out by Chiu, Thompson and Mak (1990), the implementation of a training programme in response to needs assessment findings would provide valuable information about how an organization might better design a training programme. In a similar vein, it is not surprising that TNA research in HEI is limited (Yousif, Ahmed & Osman, 2019). Therefore, this research aims to examine TNA empirically among Assistant Registrar in a public university in Malaysia. More specifically, research on TNA was conducted to identify the competency gap among Assistant Registrars in a public university.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Training needs analysis concept and its importance

Training needs analysis is viewed as a process of gathering, assessing and analyzing data to determine either training programs is required to be developed or not in the organization. It also defined as the specific process of collecting and analyzing data for supporting an organization's decision about what types of training are needed to improve employees' performance and skills deficiency. As noted by Wright and Geroy (1992), TNA is principally actually a data-gathering process used to identify and compare employees' actual level performance to the desired level of performance. It is measures what

the job expects from employees and what the employees are actually doing in their jobs. Hence, the difference or discrepancy between actual and desired performance will be used as a foundation for helping an organization to identify training programs.

In another view, TNA is considered as the first stage in the training cycle. According to Noe (2017), the training cycle of developing training program consists of four key stages, which includes analysis (TNA), design, development, implementation and evaluation. These stages are theoretically known as the ADDIE model. In the context of the training cycle and the roles of TNA, the process of TNA will help an organisation to identify gaps in employees' knowledge and skills and strengths and weaknesses in processes of developing any training programs in the organisation. These roles have an association with other stages such as training design, development, implementation and evaluation, where the right TNA is preceded by identifying key gaps in performance and skills deficiency.

The role of TNA is significance within the training development process as it provides information about the skill level and knowledge of the organisation's workforce capability. As pointed by Noe (2017), TNA contributes to organisational effectiveness in various areas such as serve as the important function of designing training programmes, helping an organisation to assure the effectiveness of training and establishing the criteria against which behaviour resulting from training will be measured.

2.2 Management competency

Prominent literature in the domain refers to management competency as the ability to meet business goals while effectively using resources and maintaining optimum levels of employee performance and service to customers (Antonacopoulou & FitzGerald, 1996). Despite the fact, there has been an argument as to what

could be said as a holistic definition of management competency. We may consider what CH. Woodruff has asserted. According to him, management competency is a broad business blueprint under which, all the organizational activities fits (*see further.*,Krajcovicova, Caganova& Cambal,2012). His definition and explanation of the concept go a little further than the one underlined above, suggesting that, managerial competency facilitates the organization in positioning itself for business tasks with a competitive mindset. Therein, managerial competency of an individual working in such a position is to ensure he/she has possess the right skills, mind and soul set for the given task(s); immersed to dedicate time and effort and be capable of exercising skills and competency to help achieve organization goals (Draganidis & Mentzas,2006)

Managerial competency is attracting much of significance due to tough economic conditions globally for better employee performance (Veliu& Manxhari, 2017). Therefore, businesses these days are pushing for the enhancement of managerial competencies (Vakola, Eric Soderquist & Prastacos,2007).There have been different models explaining about what to be looked into when assessing an individual's managerial competency with regards to an assigned job role (e.g., Sandhi, 2016; Krajcovicova,Caganova & Cambal,2012). Therein, majority of these indicate towards prospects such as skills for a job role, leadership, teamwork, decision making, communication, task understanding & prioritization etcetera. It is crucial and equally critical for an organization to highlight the right skill and ability set required for each job to responsively compare them with that of the responsible individual to find the 'right' gap for necessary action to ensure peak performance (Lakshminarayanan, Pai & Ramaprasad, 2016). More importantly, this is also becoming vital due to growing competitive business markets pushing hard to strive for more to satisfy customer needs

(Vakola, Eric Soderquist & Prastacos,2007). Hence, managerial competency and its responsive assessment for effective action can be termed essential for businesses that aspire to strategically outperform and sustain in the existing global economy regardless of the industry, sector or division.

3. Research Method

This section discusses the research method and procedure used to carry out the present study. Specifically, the qualitative data collection method and the procedure used were explained. This analysis aims to identify the key competency deficiency, training issues and problems related to Assistant Registrars.

3.1 Data collection procedure – Interview

In the present study, face-to-face interview technique was used to conduct training needs analysis. In this level of training needs analysis, the interviews with seven management teams which includes Deans, Head of Departments and Head of Assistant Registrar were performed. As mentioned in the literature part, the purpose of the organizational analysis is to examine company-wide goals and problems to determine where training is needed. Therefore the aim of these interviews was to gather the views and opinions of the management team of the university about the training needs analysis among Registrar Registrars. Convenience sampling was used in selecting the participants for the interview. This approach has the advantage to obtain extensive information quickly and effectively. A total of seven university's management team were selected and interviewed, of three Deans of Schools, one Head of Departments, one Head of Assistant Registrar and two Director of Departments. These people were selected based on their vast experience and the scope of work that focuses on the management of the university. They were also the person in charge of planning, organizing and monitoring Assistant Registrar

jobs, responsibilities and performances. According to Romney, Weller, and Batchelder (1986), as long as the participants are knowledgeable about the area of study, a small sample (as little as four individuals) is somewhat adequate to provide the necessary information.

This organizational analysis utilized semi-structured interviews for data collection. The interview questions developed were scrutinized by the research supervisor with assistance from experienced and qualified individuals in the academic field to ensure that the data collection can be performed optimally. The interview plan followed the guidelines of Cresswell (2012) who recommended for (1) identifying the interviewees, (2) determining the type of interview will use, (3) audio taping the questions and responses during the interview, (4) taking brief notes during the interview, (5) conducting the interview at a quiet and suitable place, (6) obtaining consent from the interviewee to participate in the research, (7) being flexible with the plan, (8) obtaining additional information by using probes such as "tell me more" or "I need more detail", and (9) being courteous and professional by thanking the interviewee and assuring them of the confidentiality of the responses when the interview is over. The following data were collected from the interviewees:

- a. Background information of the interviewee, such as personal background and work experience.
- b. Management competency among Assistant Registrar
- c. Issues and problems that relate to training needs among Assistant Registrars.

Each interview lasted for about one to two hours and was recorded by a Micro-audio recorder (MP3) with the permission of the participants themselves. These interviews were transcribed

and evaluated afterwards. There were also participants who simply agreed with the researcher's sample key competency and just provided a brief explanation without elaborating in detail how they are possibly related to training needs input. Therefore, the research results are originated from the answers that were given by the interviewed participants.

3.2 Data analysis

The qualitative data obtained from the interview was transcribed immediately; that is, a day after the interview session was ended. This is to ensure the crucial information about training needs input and other cues such as participants' body language and filed note were not lost. Creswell's (2012) guidelines for analyzing qualitative data was used to analyze interview data. The data were "hand analyzed" rather than using a computer software. According to Creswell (2012), the hand-analyzed data involves the researcher reading the data, mark them by hand, and dividing them into parts. At first, the researcher explored the data to obtain a general sense of the data. Next, the coding process was done to segment and label the texts to form descriptions and broad themes in the data. This process also involved examining any overlaps and redundancies before collapsing the codes into broad themes. Then, these themes were layered into several main themes to portray the complexity of the phenomenon. The analysis was not performed upon any particular models of theories. The transcripts were not returned to the participants for comment or correction, therefore, no feedback on the findings was granted. In this study, these steps/procedures were used to collect data on key competency of Assistant Registrar, and issue and problems indicated among them.

4. Findings and discussion

4.1 Respondents' profile

As mentioned above, a series of interviews were conducted with seven head of departments in the

public university which includes three Deans of Schools, one Heads of Department, one Head of Assistant Registrar and two Directors of Department. The respondents consist of 71% male and 29% female. For the respondents age, 80% are between 50 - 56 years old, and all of them are married and PhD holder. Based on the respondent's work experience, the study found that 73% of the respondent have the working experience of 20-25 years, 17% have been working for 15-19 years, 10% of the respondent have the working experience less than 14 years in the public university.

4.2 Interview finding and discussion

Five major key competencies deficiency of Assistant Registrars emerged from the interviews. They were job roles, leadership, decision making, teamwork and task priority. The results of the interviews are reported below.

4.2.1 Key competency deficiency and training issue

4.2.1.1 Job roles

The interviewee informed that job role is the main issue of competency deficiency among Assistant Registrar. As pointed by majority of the interviewees, job role is described as a description of what an Assistant Registrar does. It relates with a common term used in the human resource management area, which known as the job description. This is document describes the main responsibilities and tasks to be performed by them. There were several issues on job roles among Assistant Registrars, for instance, an interviewee A stated,

As a Dean, I feel that some of Assistant Registrars are not really aware of their main job roles. They are still learning and mastering tasks, responsibilities and knowledge that require in their jobs. It is not surprising that some of them are not able to meet job performance standards. In

this situation, the Assistant Registrar should be able to obtain the right information, but they are constrained due to the ambiguity of their main roles and responsibilities. This situation has caused some tasks and decisions to be delayed or abandoned. Sometimes staff in the same department or in other departments are forced to complete the work without proper process and procedure. Therefore, their performances are affected and it is difficult to be resolved.

Interviewee B also noted a similar concern,

If one could not perform the work in the office because of unclear tasks and responsibilities, one would not be able to do so because this competency can only be developed through proper on the job training practice. This practice can be implemented as a tool to overcome any issues related to poor understanding of their specific tasks, responsibilities and skills specification require in any departments in the university.

The above situations could ostensibly cause the Assistant Registrar to experience role ambiguity even without them realizing it. However, the Deans and Head of Department noted that urgent action should be taken to reanalyze Assistant Registrar's job description and job specification. With that, any issue that has been highlighted on poor understanding of their job roles can be solved with an appropriate training programme such as task management training.

4.2.1.2 Leadership

Many of the management teams believed that the issue of Assistant Registrar's ability to influence and motivate employees for reaching university's and department's goals could also contribute toward competency deficiency problem among them. Interviewee E stated:

"...their ability to influence others co-workers is essential to ensure the right and equal development opportunities are available for all employees in the university. I feel that a good Assistant Registrar must be able to encourage staff to participate in challenging work to inspire other workers by having great opportunities for growth. In addition, they must be able to build strong alliances between school, department and teams. These are three solid examples of crucial motivating factors to become great leaders."

Despite having great development opportunities, lack of positive leadership attitude among Assistant Registrars is believed will give negative effects of work accomplishment. In this regard, those who have a positive leadership approach will feel that the attitude facilitates them in their job accomplishment, but those with a negative leadership style are likely to perceive the leadership approach being practised by them is not useful. Interviewee G explained,

"Leadership style of Assistant Registrar plays a major role in aligning department's goals and university's goals. Sometimes the problem with leadership can be overcome by the implementation of certain strategies. Anytime there is a KPI; then they will work hard to achieve the KPI. Being a leader, he or she needs to motivate others. If it is still not achieved, this means that there might be a problem with their leadership approach in the department. So, as a Dean, I feel not secure in that sense. What they need to do are to foster team cooperation, build trust and integrity among team members and create commitment to team goals."

4.2.1.3 Decision making

Problem-solving and decision making skills are the two main contributing factors of failure among

Assistant Registrars' jobs. In the context of problem-solving, Assistant Registrars who are not able to solve jobs related problems will feel that the jobs will give them problems and stress. One Head of Department stated that they would feel that making the decision on the managerial aspect is very difficult, especially when it is related to students' administration issue. This will cause them to feel operationally stressed. For example, some of them are not able to assess the right information on academic matter, lack of ability to assess any potential impact of a number of options when deciding a course of action, lack of effort to analyse and interpret information from a variety of sources, and unable to suggest innovative solutions to problems. An interviewee highlighted the importance of decision making and problem-solving:

"I am of the opinion that all Assistant Registrars should be able to make right decision in performing their tasks and responsibilities, and they must have a positive attitude toward the collective decision-making process. This positive attitude would indirectly instil the feelings of pleasure and contentment in mutual collaboration within the department. Other than this, they would also feel less burdened with the decision they have made"

In a similar vein, an interviewee C described:

"Some of them are not capable of solving managerial and technical problems such as financial, student development and academic promotion programme. They have minimum knowledge and skills in these areas. For example, they are not sure about key steps to be taken to solve any problems such as to identify the problem, search for alternatives, weigh the alternatives, make a choice, implement the choice, and evaluate the results. A good approach to make the right decision is to know a process that

assures they are assessing all relevant information and considering any possible effects of each probable decisions."

4.2.3.4 Teamwork

Collaboration and teamwork are crucial for ensuring organisations success. Collaboration and teamwork are grounded on the principle of cooperative process that encourages employees to achieve impressive results mutually. Interviewee E stated:

Trust, openness and collective engagement are the glue that holds all employees together in one team. This can stimulate good team working environment. For example, collaborating with others colleagues to accomplish goals and objectives, providing assistance and support to other team members when needed, promoting open participation and communication within the department and throughout the organisation is the glue for team success. Therefore, these positive attitudes must be developed among Assistant Registrar and all employees in the university.

On the other hand, the teamwork culture that is developed will give a significant impact on team and department performance. This is also similar in the context of collective decision-making process where the process, procedure and employee involvement are continuously being improved, making Assistant Registrars feel stressed as they have to be constantly aware of the importance of team collaboration. An interviewee G stated,

"...work in team will always be performed in the university. Normally, it would give an effect on the changing of the workflow and jobs activities. The drawback is the aspect of informing the employees about the way to work together as a team. So, collaboration

among employees in the same department or different departments is crucial. Any weakness on this key competency must be addressed immediately."

4.2.3.5 Task priority

Every Assistant Registrar and employee has experienced being assigned tasks and jobs by different stakeholders in the university that are all top priorities. In principle, it might be difficult to complete every single task expected of them on time. Based on findings from the interview, task management skill is a major issue among Assistant Registrars. Among the issues are they are not able to focus on tasks that have high priority, not effective in dealing with job interruptions, and not able to prioritize new tasks according to its relative importance. Interviewee D described that:

"In assessing key competency deficiency of Assistant Registrar, many of the discussed issues related to time or task management. The main concern here is a task priority. This means that we have given them sufficient time to complete the tasks, but the same problems still occur, the tasks could not be completed on time. In my opinion,

this problem occurs because of time management skills. From the managerial aspect, it is already sufficient, and other aspects do not give rise to problems; but after looking into it, the problem is related to the technical and operational aspects of jobs. In responding to this situation, the technical structure is the solution to the chaos. This structure helps the prioritize tasks that seem to be equally important and require their utmost attention."

The training needs analysis at organizational level results indicated that five areas of competencies are important to be developed among Assistant Registrars. This is aligned with the interview findings above that shows the core competency skills deficiency among them. Therefore, appropriate training program is important to be designed, developed and implemented for continuously improving and building competent Assistant Registrars in the public university. The public university could benefit from this competency development for achieving the university's mission and goals. Summary of all key competencies of Assistant Registrars are depicted in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Key competency deficiency and training area

Interviewee	Key competency deficiency	Issue and problem	Training area
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job roles • Problem-solving • Decision making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond quickly and appropriately to unforeseen problems (academic and students' administrative matter) • Handling multiple tasks simultaneously (e.g., co-workers, customer issues and operations) • Organizing, planning and directing resources to accomplish goals and objectives • They are not able to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task management

		coordinate tasks independently	
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job specification • Job roles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English language –writing appropriate grammar, style and language. • Organize ideas clearly both verbally and in writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English Language competency
C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem-solving • Decision making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are not able to assess the information required, risks, benefits and potential impact of a number of options when deciding a course of action • Lack of effort to gather, analyze and interpret information from a variety of sources • Unable to suggest innovative solutions to problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision making
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jobs/tasks priority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unable to focus on tasks that have high priority • Ineffective in dealing with interruptions • Unable to prioritize new functions according to their relative importance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time management
E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration • Teamwork • Leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with other colleagues to accomplish goals and objectives • Provide assistance and support to other team members when needed • Build alliances between school, department and teams • Promote open participation and communication within the department and throughout the organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teamwork
F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication • Creative thinking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate effectively with all levels of the organization • Covey ideas confidently • Delivers message to co-workers in an appropriate manner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication
G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership • Job empowerment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectively lead co-workers • Empower others to succeed within their jobs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management Leadership Programme

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- Influencing and inspiring staff
 - Meet regularly with a subordinate, to align their work with the goals and objectives of the university
 - Foster team cooperation, build trust and integrity among team members and create commitment to team goals
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5. Discussion

This study has empirically analyzed a training needs analysis of Assistant Registrar in a public university. The originality of this research lies in the training needs analysis process in the studied public university. This is the first scholarly attempt of its kind addressing the training needs analysis in the public university and contributing with an insight on understanding key competency problems and deficiency among Assistant Registrars.

The first objective of the study was to identify key competency deficiency among Assistant Registrars. Training needs analysis at the organizational level was conducted to achieve this objective. The findings from the organizational level analysis show that five key competencies deficiency of Assistant Registrars were job role, leadership, decision making, teamwork and task priority. These findings were aligned with the aims of organizational analysis that involve a process of analyzing general weaknesses and to highlight where, in the organisation, training areas are most needed. Hence, these five areas of training are considered the most needed areas of training among Assistant Registrars.

Meanwhile, the findings from the person and task analysis show that five key competencies deficiency which includes task management, decision making, leadership, managerial and communication. As suggested by Noe (2017), training needs analysis results from three levels of

analysis should be integrated into one conclusive training needs. Therefore, the competencies deficiency were classified into five areas such as job role (managerial job), leadership, decision making, teamwork and task priority. Regarding job role deficiency, the finding indicated that there are uncertainties and ambiguities over the roles and responsibilities to be performed by Assistant Registrars. The findings from organizational needs analysis show that the majority of the interviewees agreed that job role is related to Assistant Registrar's job description. Based on the issue as highlighted by one of Dean that some of Assistant Registrars are not known their main job responsibility and some of them are still learning and mastering tasks, responsibilities. In addition, some of them also could not perform well because they are not clear about tasks and responsibilities. Key results of the interview shown the training needs analysis exercise at the organizational level has revealed that training program must be developed and implemented for helping them to understand their job description and job specification. In this regard, most of the Deans and Head of Departments have recommended "Task Management Training" as an appropriate training program. The "Task Management Training" refers to a process of managing a task through its life cycle, which involves planning, organizing, monitoring, evaluating, and reporting (Fukuzawaa, Johob & Maeshirob, 2015). This training will help Assistant Registrar to achieve organisation's and department's goals and to collaborate with other departments for the accomplishment of collective goals in the

university. In addition, it is a new approach for helping them to involve in multiple tasks, and task management training programme is believed to be a key training to maximize their productivity and performance in the workplace. According to Fukuzawa et al. (2015), it is evident that task management is a crucial training area for employees, especially for those who are handling multiple tasks.

The present study also reveals that leadership was a key competency deficiency. The leadership problem was viewed as a main competency that needs to be developed among Assistant Registrars. This problem could be seen based on the comment and opinion given by the majority of the Deans and Head of Departments. For instance, their ability to influence and motivate employees to achieve the university's and department's mission and goals was dissatisfied. This is consistent with the focus group results. Most of the participants in the focus group discussion agreed that lack of leadership competency particularly in the aspects of collaborating with others colleagues, providing support and assistance to other departments and inspiring team members must be resolved through proper training program and management initiative. In this context, one appropriate training program could be a 'Leadership Training'. For example, Barling, Weber and Kelloway (1996) have introduced a "Transformational Leadership Training" as a training mechanism to improve managers' performance. The "Transformational Leadership Training" is aimed to develop managers with intrinsic value such as charisma (providing a vision and a sense of mission, and raising followers' self-expectations), intellectual stimulation (helping employees emphasize rational solutions and challenge old assumptions), and individualized consideration (developing employees and coaching). The effectiveness of training managers in transformational leadership is believed to give significant effect on Assistant Registrar's and subordinates'

organizational commitment and performance (Barling et al., 1996).

Another key competency deficiency emerged from the study is decision-making skills. As shared and commented by one of the Deans, some of Assistant Registrars are not able to make the right decision on the academic matter and not able to suggest innovative solutions to any administrative problems. Similarly, lack of decision-making skills was also addressed by participants in the focus group. Two sub-competencies of decision making which includes 'generating new ideas and solutions' and "gathering facts and analysing problems accurately" were important competencies that need to be developed among Assistant Registrars. Based on the organizational and person/tasks analysis findings, it is appropriate to design and implement a specific training programme on decision making in the public university. For instance, a Group Decision Making approach could be implemented if a major purpose of decision making is to pool their information, knowledge, and expertise from various departments in the university. As pointed by Lam and Schaubroeck (2000), consensus decision making from all employees or managers in the department can benefit from pooling their information to obtain accurate and unbiased decision.

Final area of competency deficiency is teamwork. As mentioned by one of the Deans, teamwork culture is very important because this attitude will help the university to accomplish its goals and objectives, and it is a crucial component for ensuring organizational success. The results from the focus group also revealed that communication and collaboration in a team as a foundation for teamwork success. This kind of competency typically aims to develop a bigger picture of teamwork culture in the organization. According to Driskell, Salas and Driskell (2018), teamwork is grounded from the principle of working in teams,

which focuses on performing of teamwork processes. It is also relying on the integration of individuals' efforts to support effective team performance and the accomplishment of a shared goal in the organization (Dirks, 2019). In the context of Assistant Registrar's job, collaborating with other colleagues and departments in the university is an example of a common value of teamwork competency. Hence, in an effort to resolve this competency deficiency, training for teamwork is required. The fundamental aim of this training is to enhance teamwork culture in the university and to enable Assistant Registrars to move beyond individual knowledge and skills. This effort is believed will facilitate achievement of collective team goals (Dirks, 2019).

6. Conclusion

This study has been the first attempt that investigated training needs analysis for identifying management competency deficiency and appropriate training programme among Assistant Registrars in a public university in Malaysia. This study used a face-to-face interview with seven head of departments, which aims to identify main areas of management competency and possible training areas needed among Assistant Registrars. The findings from organizational level analysis show that five key competencies deficiency of Assistant Registrars were job role, leadership, decision making, teamwork and task priority. Several areas of training programmes were also highlighted in responding to the major management competency deficiency, which includes Task Management Training, Transformational Leadership Training and Group Decision Making. Despite the research limitation that only rely on a face-to-face interview, the research finding is believed to has significant, and merit impacts on the role of training need analysis and further investigation on management competency among Assistant Registrars in public university.

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