

TAXONOMIC CLASSIFICATION FOR CULTURE OF EXCELLENCE IN PHILIPPINE HIGHER EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

This paper looked into the taxonomic classification of academic cultures and a deviation model for a culture of excellence of Philippine Higher Education. The study made use of model-validity and simulation design. The result revealed that based: // on the synchronization of the features of the four major pillars of the academic institution, namely Leadership, Instruction, Research and Community Valuing, four distinctive cultures were established. The four cultures were then subjected to the criteria of excellence with assigned weight factor. The study further revealed, that it supports the contention that an Academic Sensitive culture is synonymous with Culture of Excellence in the academe. Subsequently, all other cultures formed by means of the pillars are some distance away from a Culture of Excellence. Thus, a non-teaching culture is the farthest from the desired Culture of Excellence in the academe.

Keywords: *taxonomic, pillars, culture of excellence, Philippine Higher Education*

1.0 Introduction

Every organization has a unique way of achieving its vision, mission, goals and objectives and this can be attributed to its own culture of operation. A culture of a certain organization pronounces its way of living, its personality and identity of being distinct or unique from other entities. It comprises of their set of values, beliefs, and rituals or practices. It is a system of ensuring that mechanisms, procedures, and processes for the implementation of their activities leads to the attainment of their objectives. Mendoza (2007) opined that achieving a culture of excellence is a decision to be acted upon coupled with dedication and commitment to achieve extraordinary results. Organization's culture is an indispensable factor in achieving exceptional

results of all its endeavors. Though, varied types of culture exist, but still these are leading to one direction which is to gain such desired excellence. Some types of culture are Community Sensitive Culture which gives emphasis on social concerns and issues; Closed Culture focuses on specific features of an organization; Mainstream Culture which manifests an ordinary or natural way in performing its functions; and Academic Sensitive Culture which is directed towards the development of curriculum and instruction; research, extension, and the entire academy.

Altbach, P. G. & Salmi, J. (2011) averred that visionary leadership, appropriate governance, and effective management are essential factors in the transformation of an academic institution. It may build up a world-class group of professors and researchers and strongly attract brilliant students who will produce exceptional results. Additionally, Sharir (2013) identified essential criteria for a culture of excellence of an organization: a) Vision is understood and communicated, this connotes that employees must understand and demonstrate the set vision of their organizations. Perform duties and responsibilities which are attuned to the direction of their organization; b) Clear Purpose and Meaning. In this aspect, employees' deep sense of commitment and passion is significantly important; c) Mastery of Roles and Focus on High Performers. Employees are inspired and empowered to become masters in their roles and area of expertise with expectation to deliver extraordinary performances; d) Resilience to Change and Challenges. Personnel are highly motivated and have a strong desire to succeed and achieve the organization's vision. They are flexible and resilient enough to deal with uncertainty, challenges and obstacles that seem impossible to overcome; e) Highly Collaborative Team. All members of the organization work together toward a common direction; and f) Pioneer Mentality, this gives emphasis to personnel's full capacity to engage in the creation, formulation, or generation of new knowledge, innovation, invention or discovery of something.

These details are essential features for any organizations which strive toward a Culture of Excellence including Higher Education Institutions in the country. Nonetheless, it is a question if Colleges and Universities in the Philippines are in this direction. How do we know and assess that beliefs, values and practices of a certain college or university have already met the standards of the Culture of Excellence status? The synchronization of the features of the four major pillars of an academic institution like Leadership, Instruction, Research and Community Valuing might be able to establish varied and distinctive academic cultures with corresponding excellence structures.

Hence, this paper looked into the taxonomic classification for a culture of excellence in Philippine Higher Education through the interactions of the four major pillars of an academic institution considering of the six essential features of culture of excellence. It also determined how each established culture deviates from the standards of the Culture of Excellence.

2.0 Conceptual Framework

Every academic institution possesses a distinctive culture: A culture that distinguishes one higher education institution from another. Such an academic culture emerges as a result of the synchronicity of the major pillars, namely: Leadership, Instruction, Research and Community Valuing. In a related study, Panduyos (2018) compressed the major pillars into three (3) which were obtained by deriving the orthogonal principal components of these four (4) pillars. By doing so, Panduyos (2018) succeeded in identifying four different academic cultures, namely: Top Leadership-Led Culture, Mass-Based Culture, Façade Culture (Image Recognition) and Community-derived Culture. Using the four (4) pillars, however, four (4) different cultures can be identified depending on the resultant synchronicity namely: Academic Sensitive Culture; Introverted Culture; Academic-Leadership Sensitive Culture; and Non-Teaching Culture.

The model for organizational culture is schematically shown below.



Figure 1

Within the same culture, higher education institutions strive or compete for a secure place as a distinguished culture of excellence. Thus, among all academic institutions possessing an academic-sensitive culture, these higher education institutions aim to establish a culture of excellence.

3.0 Research Design and Methods

The study uses the model-validity and simulation design. The simulation for the synchronicity of the characteristics of the four (4) pillars were assessed based on the established criteria. Two coded values were used. One (1) shows the existence of the characteristics while Zero (0) for non-existence. A resultant synchronicity value of one (1) is achieved if the interaction of the characteristics of each of the pillars is also one (1). In the simulation process, the formula $2^4 = 16$ was considered, four (4) represents the highest number of characteristics of one pillar and the base two (2) signifies the coded values used for the existence and non-existence of such attributes. Hence, at the start of the simulation procedure sixteen (16) possible arrangements were used. By using the criteria below for the synchronicity of the characteristics of the four pillars, it resulted only to four (4) different arrangements having a resultant synchronicity value of 1.

Leadership (L)

1 = Leader is qualified, has the vision and direction of the institution and/or other traits

0 = Leader is not qualified and has no vision and direction for the institution.

Instruction (I)

1 = Faculty members are qualified and have a commitment towards work, or qualified with VS teaching performance, possessing three characteristics

0 = other combinations

Research and Development (RD)

1 = The faculty is able to publish research output

0 = The faculty does not publish researches

Community Valuing (CV)

1 = Consulted by the community and the community utilized the institution's introduced technology or consulted by the community and the program is sustainable or possessing the 3 characteristics

0 = other combinations

On the other hand, the four (4) pillars were rated based on the given indicators corresponding to Sharir (2013) identified criteria for a culture of excellence of an organization:

Table 1. Criteria for a Culture of Excellence

Criteria	Weight Factor
1. Vision is understood and communicated.	28.6%
2. Clarity of purpose and meaning	23.8%
3. Mastery of roles and focus on high performers	19.0%
4. Highly collaborative teams	14.3%
5. Resilience to change and challenges	9.5%
6. Pioneer Mentality	4.8%

These criteria are placed against the four different cultures earlier identified to produce the Deviation Model for Culture of Excellence:

The deviation model is:

$$\text{Deviation (D)} = (1 - \text{Excellence Score}) 100\%$$

where,

$$\text{Excellence Score} = (\text{Leadership Weight}) (\text{Instruction, Weight}) (\text{Research Weight}) (\text{Community Valuing Weight}) 100\%$$

This multiplicative model takes into account that the pillars interact with each other so that a deficiency in one dimension can actually be traced back to the deficiencies or lack of support from the other pillars. An additive model, on the other hand, assumes that the pillars operate independently of each other which is not the case in real situations. The model was tested for validation in the case of small and young state college.

Table 2. Excellence and Deviation Scores of the Distinctive Cultures

Criteria for Excellence	Leadership	Instruction	Research	Extension
1. Vision is understood and communicated.				
2. Clarity of purpose and meaning				
3. Mastery of roles and focus on high performers				
4. Highly collaborative teams				
5. Resilience to change and challenges				
6. Pioneer Mentality				
EXCELLENCE SCORE				
DEVIATION SCORE				

Leadership

- A leader must have understood and communicated the set vision.
- A leader must have the right mindset for the attainment of the institution's vision and mission.
- Leader advocates extraordinary performances.
- Leader promotes internal and external collaborations.
- Leader motivates employees to stay focused and on track despite difficulties and challenges.
- The leader is creative and innovative

Instruction (Faculty)

- Faculty demonstrate awareness and deep understanding of the institution's vision and mission.
- Faculty live the values of loyalty and commitment for achieving the institution's vision
- Faculty must show expertise in their duties and responsibilities.
- The faculty is empowered to engage in team building activity, technical and skills development training.
- Faculty develop the tolerance to continue to move forward despite challenges, change and potential distractions
- Faculty strengthen inventions and innovation

Research

- Research programs are anchored on the institution's vision and mission.
- Researchers are committed to work meaningfully and significantly.
- Researchers are nurtured, mentored, rewarded, and recognized to produce exceptional outputs.
- Researchers are empowered to conduct research collaboratively.
- Researchers are flexible in dealing with change, challenge and uncertainty.
- Researchers are creative and innovative for the formulation of new knowledge.

Community Valuing

- Extension programs are geared toward the institution's vision and mission.
- Extensionists work significantly with a deep sense of passion and definite purpose.
- Extensionists are inspired to become masters in their areas of expertise.
- Extensionists are resilient in dealing with the challenges during the conduct of the extension program
- Teams work together toward a common vision
- Extensionists are motivated to share new skills and inventions to the community and for its sustainable utilization

4.0 Results and Discussion

The table below shows the simulation result of the synchronization of the various characteristics of the four pillars. Out of 16 combinations, four (4) academic distinctive cultures were established, namely: Culture A: Academic Sensitive Culture; Culture B: Introverted Culture; Culture C: Academic-Leadership Sensitive Culture; and Culture D: Non-Teaching Culture.

Table 3. Result of the Simulation on the Synchronization of the Components of the Four Pillars

AQ	CS	V	DT	L	FQ	TP	C	I	B	PR	P U	R	CC	UT	S	CV	Result
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
1	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1
1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1

Legend:

AQ – Academic Qualification
 V – Vision
 L – Leadership
 C – Commitment
 B – Budget
 PU – Publish Research
 CC – Community Consultation
 S – Sustainable

CS – Communication Skill
 DT – Delegate Task
 FQ – Faculty Qualification
 I – Instruction
 PR – Produce Research
 R – Research
 UT – Utilized Technology
 CV – Community Valuing

These four existing cultures of academic institution are taxonomically classified in terms of their unique features on how they can attain the standard of excellence. The functionality of these pillars needs to be strengthened to come up with exceptional outputs leading to a culture of excellence.

Table 4. Excellence and Deviation Scores of the Four Distinctive Academic Cultures

Academic Sensitive Culture	Leadership (%)	Instruction (%)	Research (%)	Community Valuing (%)
1. Vision is understood and communicated.	28.6	28.6	28.6	28.6
2. Clarity of purpose and meaning	23.8	23.8	23.8	23.8
3. Mastery of roles and focus on high performers	19	19	19	19
4. Highly collaborative teams	14.3	14.3	14.3	14.3
5. Resilience to change and challenges	9.5	9.5	9.5	9.5
6. Pioneer Mentality	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.8
SCORE	100	100	100	100
Excellence Score				100%
Deviation Score				0 %

Introverted Culture	Leadership (%)	Instruction (%)	Research (%)	Community Valuing (%)
1. Vision is understood and communicated.	0	28.6	28.6	28.6
2. Clarity of purpose and meaning	23.8	23.8	23.8	23.8
3. Mastery of roles and focus on high performers	19	0	0	0
4. Highly collaborative teams	14.3	14.3	14.3	14.3
5. Resilience to change and challenges	9.5	9.5	9.5	9.5
6. Pioneer Mentality	4.8	0	0	0
SCORE	71.4	76.2	76.2	76.2
Excellence Score				31.59%
Deviation Score				68.41%
Academic-Leadership Sensitive Culture	Leadership (%)	Instruction (%)	Research (%)	Community Valuing (%)
1. Vision is understood and communicated.	28.6	28.6	28.6	28.6
2. Clarity of purpose and meaning	23.8	23.8	23.8	23.8
3. Mastery of roles and focus on high performers	19	19	19	19
4. Highly collaborative teams	0	14.3	14.3	14.3
5. Resilience to change and challenges	9.5	9.5	9.5	9.5
6. Pioneer Mentality	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.8
SCORE	85.7	100	100	100
Excellence Score				85.7%
Deviation Score				24.3 %
Non-Teaching Culture	Leadership (%)	Instruction (%)	Research (%)	Community Valuing (%)
1. Vision is understood and communicated.	0	28.6	28.6	28.6
2. Clarity of purpose and meaning	23.8	23.8	23.8	23.8
3. Mastery of roles and focus on high performers	19	0	0	0
4. Highly collaborative teams	0	14.3	14.3	14.3
5. Resilience to change and challenges	9.5	9.5	9.5	9.5
6. Pioneer Mentality	4.8	0	0	0
SCORE	57.1	76.2	76.2	76.2
Excellence Score				25.26%
Deviation Score				74.24 %

The table shows the excellence scores of the four identified academic cultures and the corresponding deviations from the standard Culture of Excellence. **The Academic Sensitive Culture** absolutely satisfies the essential criteria for attaining a Culture of Excellence. It appears that the four pillars of this academic institution, namely leadership, faculty, research and community valuing are interacting harmoniously toward a common direction. This demonstrates the manifestation of the uniqueness of organization's personality that they have understood and communicated their vision. The leader and employees have a passion and commitment of their roles and responsibilities with high regard to expertise and exemplary performances. The values of collaboration, staying focused, despite difficulties and challenges, and pioneer mentality are evidently practiced. The result also signifies that this institution embraces a culture which is strongly concerned toward the unprecedented development of an institution. It is directed towards the professional growth and development of its leader, faculty and staff, curriculum and instruction; research and development, extension and the entire operation of the academe.

The Introverted Culture is 68.41% distant from a distinguished culture of excellence. The institution demonstrating this type of culture gives importance in terms of the leader's qualifications, vision and who knows how to delegate tasks even if the communication skill is not so strong. The faculty qualifications and commitment, research budget and publications of research outputs, community consultation and sustainable extension program are also strengthened. In terms of excellence criteria, the institution is weak in terms of mastery of roles, unprecedented performances and pioneer mentality.

The Academic-Leadership Sensitive Culture is almost similar to Culture A with a distinction that the leader is not into the delegation of tasks to subordinates. It appears that the leader prefers to perform all his functions without asking help from his employees. In this case, the leader tends to deviate from collaboration in terms of performing all his functions. This type of academic culture is 24.3 % away from the standard Culture of Excellence.

The Non-Teaching Culture which is 74.74% away from the renowned Culture of Excellence. The institution establishes a culture where it gives emphasis to the academic qualifications, vision and direction of the leader. It also gives importance to the academic qualifications and commitment towards work of the faculty. Sufficient research budget and publications of research outputs are evident. In community valuing, it focuses on community consultation with the institution and with sustainable extension program. Based on the criteria of culture of excellence, the

institution does not strongly embrace on extraordinary performances, collaboration as well as pioneer mentality.

Table 5. Validation of Deviation Model in the case of a Small State College

State College	Leadership (%)	Instruction (%)	Research (%)	Community Valuing (%)
1. Vision is understood and communicated.	28.6	28.6	28.6	28.6
2. Clarity of purpose and meaning	23.8	23.8	23.8	23.8
3. Mastery of roles and focus on high performers	19	0	19	19
4. Highly collaborative teams	14.3	14.3	14.3	14.3
5. Resilience to change and challenges	9.5	9.5	9.5	9.5
6. Pioneer Mentality	4.8	0	0	0
SCORE	100	76.2	95.2	95.2
Excellence Score				69.06%
Deviation Score				30.94%

Table 5 shows the model validation result based on the type of culture demonstrated by a small academic institution, the Northwestern Mindanao State College of Science and Technology. With the type of culture this institution shows, the Leadership pillar noticeably embraces the six essential characteristics of a Culture of Excellence. On the other hand, in terms of Instruction, Research and Community Valuing pillars, Sharir (2013) criteria for excellence are not fully satisfied. This is attributed to the faculty qualifications that not all of them are full-fledged masters, hence, it cannot be assured that all of them can produce unprecedented outputs, inventions and innovations. In this case, the established Culture of the said institution is 30.94% away from the Standard Culture of Excellence and it nearly manifests an Academic –Leadership Sensitive Culture.

5.0 Conclusion

The study supports the contention that an Academic Sensitive culture is synonymous with culture of excellence in the academe. Subsequently, all other academic cultures formed by means of the four pillars, namely Leadership,

Instruction, Research and Community valuing are some distance away from a Culture of Excellence. Thus, a non-teaching culture is farthest from the desired culture of excellence in the academe.

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