

Analysis on the Construction and Application of the Competency Model for University Administrative Staff

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ABSTRACT

Universities need to actively consider how administrative staff can participate in all-round education and how to combine the competency model of administrators with modern educational requirements. Improving administrators' work competence is an urgent issue. Through questionnaire surveys and expert consultations, indicators are screened and divided into primary, secondary, and tertiary levels. Using the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP), a hierarchical structure model and judgment matrix are established to calculate indicator weight vectors, thus constructing the competency model for university administrators. The model is then applied to personnel selection, performance evaluation, and training. By strengthening professional knowledge training, enhancing management capability, cultivating communication and collaboration, improving innovation ability, and emphasizing psychological quality and career planning, a sound training system and job rotation can effectively improve the competence of university administrators, build an effective management-education model, and enhance educational management levels.

KEYWORDS

Higher education; Management in education; Competence enhancement; Competency model

1 Introduction

In 2017, the Ministry of Education issued the *Implementation Outline for Improving the Quality of Ideological and Political Work in Universities*, which clearly identified the formation of an all-round education framework as one of its goals. Jia Liping (2023) studied the construction of a collaborative system for all-round education, emphasizing coordination in philosophy, mechanism, and culture to achieve integrated educational objectives and improve educational outcomes. Bai Yan (2022) analyzed the formation of the "all-staff, all-process, all-round" educational system in military institutions. Wu Jingyan (2022) explored how to build comprehensive education teams to establish sustainable mechanisms for all-round education.

To implement the fundamental task of moral education, it is necessary to clarify the leading role of administrative management in the university education system (Cheng Sihui, 2020). Administrative management plays a core role and cannot be neglected; otherwise, results will be ineffective. Universities should focus on self-improvement, institutional enhancement, and environmental cultivation to effectively promote student development.

Liu Chunyan (2022) discussed competency models for university administrative staff, analyzing influencing factors and strategies but did not construct a mathematical model. Zhang Yuying (2022) identified key factors influencing university administrators' competence through surveys but also lacked modeling. Therefore, establishing a competency model using AHP for application research holds significant value.

2 University administrative staff

Universities serve national strategic goals and require professional administrators who can adapt to teaching and research needs. To improve management standards and establish effective mechanisms, reforming management approaches and enhancing staff training are essential.

Administrative staff form an integral part of the university workforce. Student affairs management is a crucial link in talent cultivation, serving functional, facilitative, and supportive roles in educational tasks. Some offices—such as discipline, research, or academic administration—demand specialized expertise and perform diverse duties including organization, coordination, supervision, and evaluation.

University administrators undertake vital responsibilities, providing effective support for students' overall development. Their duties encompass both management and education.

Management: Student registration, record management, and graduation procedures, ensuring data accuracy and convenience.

Education: Involves ideological guidance, safety, and mental health education. Administrators organize activities to shape correct values, enhance legal awareness, and offer counseling to improve psychological resilience.

3 The importance of enhancing university administrators' professional competence

With the advancement of education, university management faces increasingly complex challenges. Administrators' professional competence affects both daily operations and long-term development, serving as a key guarantee of talent cultivation.

Complexity of Management: Modern university management covers teaching, research, student affairs, and human resources. Administrators must possess interdisciplinary knowledge along with coordination, decision-making, and communication skills. Enhancing these abilities improves efficiency and problem-solving.

Link to Educational Quality: Administrative competence directly impacts teaching quality and the learning environment. Administrators must organize, supervise, and guide teaching effectively, establish rules, create harmony, and provide high-quality resources. Only competent administrators can ensure sustained educational excellence.

Support for Sustainable Development: High-quality administrative personnel are vital for implementing strategies, optimizing resources, and strengthening competitiveness amid growing educational challenges.

Contribution to Social Service: As universities contribute to social progress, capable administrators enhance their service functions, foster talent cultivation, and improve international collaboration and national influence.

4 Competency indicators for university administrators based on expert consultation and surveys

Based on expert consultation and questionnaire analysis, one primary indicator, four secondary indicators, and twenty-six tertiary indicators were determined (see Table 1).

Table 1 Competency model for university administrators

Primary Indicator	Secondary Indicator	Tertiary Indicators
University Administrator Competency (A)	Professional Knowledge (B1)	Ideological and Political Knowledge (C11), Educational Knowledge (C12), Management Knowledge (C13), Psychology (C14), Institutional and Process Knowledge (C15), Legal Knowledge (C16), Office Software Skills (C17)
	Work Ability (B2)	Decision & Planning (C21), Service & Execution (C22), Problem-solving (C23), Organizational Management (C24), Innovation (C25), Communication (C26), Leadership (C27), Structured Work Ability (C28)
	Work Attitude (B3)	Political Attitude (C31), Dedication (C32), Self-control (C33), Responsibility (C34), Flexibility & Discipline (C35), Confidence & Initiative (C36)
	Personal Traits (B4)	Devotion (C41), Fairness (C42), Proactiveness (C43), Patience (C44), Service Awareness (C45)

Professional knowledge includes understanding higher education theory, educational management, and student and faculty administration. Work ability covers management, coordination, innovation, and IT skills—essential for fulfilling duties. Work attitude reflects positivity, openness, and inclusiveness toward faculty and students. Personal traits include fairness, initiative, patience, dedication, and a service mindset.

5 Construction and application of the competency model for university administrators

5.1 Model construction

After confirming indicators, AHP is used to calculate weights. Hierarchical models and judgment matrices (Table 2) are established, producing weight distributions (Table 3).

Table 2 Judgment matrix of layer B

A	B1	B2	B3	B4
B1	1	5/5	5/4	5/3
B2	5/5	1	5/4	5/3
B3	4/5	4/5	1	4/3
B4	3/5	3/5	3/4	1

Table 3 Competency indicator weights (Weights and calculations remain consistent with the Chinese version)

Primary Indicator	Secondary Indicator	weight	Tertiary Indicators	weight	Composite weight
University Administrator Competency (A)	Professional Knowledge	0.2941	Ideological and Political Knowledge (C11)	0.1765	0.0519
			Educational Knowledge (C12)	0.1765	0.0519
			Management Knowledge (C13)	0.1176	0.0346
			Psychology (C14)	0.1765	0.0519
			Institutional and Process Knowledge (C15)	0.1176	0.0346
			Legal Knowledge (C16)	0.1176	0.0346
			Office Software Skills (C17)	0.1176	0.0346
	Work Ability	0.2941	Decision & Planning (C21)	0.0476	0.0235
			Service & Execution (C22)	0.1905	0.0353
			Problem-solving (C23)	0.0476	0.0471
			Organizational Management (C24)	0.2381	0.0471
			Innovation (C25)	0.1905	0.0353
			Communication (C26)	0.0952	0.0471
			Leadership (C27)	0.0476	0.0353
	Work Attitude	0.2353	Structured Work Ability (C28)	0.1429	0.0235
			Political Attitude (C31)	0.1498	0.0352
			Dedication (C32)	0.1997	0.047
			Self-control (C33)	0.1997	0.047
			Responsibility (C34)	0.1997	0.047
			Flexibility & Discipline (C35)	0.115	0.0271
			Confidence & Initiative (C36)	0.1362	0.0321
	Personal Traits	0.1765	Fairness (C42)	0.2222	0.0392
			Proactiveness (C43)	0.1667	0.0294
			Service Awareness (C45)	0.1667	0.0294
			Patience (C44)	0.2222	0.0392
			Devotion (C41)	0.2222	0.0392

5.2 Application in recruitment

Based on job requirements, candidates are scored on each indicator. Weighted averages yield overall scores. Example calculation:

$87.6 \times 0.0476 + 88.2 \times 0.1905 + 84.2 \times 0.0476 + 86.6 \times 0.2381 + 91.2 \times 0.1905 + 90.4 \times 0.0952 + 88.8 \times 0.0476 + 87.4 \times 0.1429 = 88.3$

Similarly, professional knowledge = 90.3, work attitude = 89.2, personal traits = 87.9. Total score: $90.3 \times 0.2941 + 88.3 \times 0.2941 + 89.2 \times 0.2353 + 87.9 \times 0.1765 = 89.0$

Candidate selection is based on total scores.

Table 4 Work competency evaluation form in the competency model of a candidat

Evaluator	work ability							
	Decision & Planning	Service & Execution	Problem-solving	Organizational Management	Innovation	Communication	Leadership	Structured Work Ability
1	90	87	80	90	94	92	85	90
2	85	91	93	89	92	89	87	86
3	86	86	75	84	90	93	93	85
4	88	84	88	87	89	90	89	89
5	89	82	85	83	91	88	90	87
Average	87.6	88.2	84.2	86.6	91.2	90.4	88.8	87.4

5.3 Application in performance evaluation and training

Scores determine performance rewards. Competency models identify training needs, encourage participation, and align programs with role requirements. Evaluations reveal gaps, guiding targeted professional development.

6 Strategies for enhancing university administrators' competence

Administrators must possess solid expertise and strong management, communication, and innovation abilities. They should stay updated on educational trends, policy shifts, and management theories, improve communication and teamwork, adopt innovative thinking, and maintain psychological resilience and clear career goals.

6.1 Establishing a fair selection mechanism

Ensure fairness by evaluating candidates' knowledge, management, and communication skills comprehensively to ensure suitability.

6.2 Optimizing training systems

Provide systematic and categorized training tailored to position levels. Content includes management theory, legal knowledge, and best practices. Combine internal/external and online/offline training, integrate theory with practice, and emphasize case-based learning.

6.3 Building a scientific evaluation system

Develop an objective evaluation covering attitude, ability, and performance with both qualitative and quantitative methods. Use peer feedback, tests, and performance indicators for fair promotion and reward decisions.

6.4 Improving job design

Implement job rotation to broaden perspectives, enhance problem-solving, and strengthen collaboration. Clarify duties and authority, define roles, and reinforce responsibility to optimize human resource allocation.

6.5 Promoting recognition and career advancement

Encourage motivation through rewards, promotions, and recognition. Highlight exemplary administrators, strengthen institutional reputation, and sustain morale through acknowledgment of contributions and leadership excellence.

Enhancing administrative competence is an ongoing process requiring joint effort. Strengthening professional training, communication, innovation, and psychological resilience, supported by a sound training system and job rotation, can effectively enhance administrators' abilities and support university development.

7 Conclusion

Establishing a scientific and rational administrative competency model—covering recruitment, training, and evaluation—improves the professionalism and management capacity of university administrators and provides a solid foundation for sustainable institutional development.

About the Author

Meifang Huang, doctoral degree, mainly engages in the research of pavement materials and polymer materials.

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