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ACADEMIC AND WORKPLACE COMPETENCY, ENGAGEMENT, AND PERFORMANCE OF THE GOVERNMENT BANK EMPLOYEES

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Abstract: The study assessed the level of academically acquired competencies of the business education graduates employed at the government banking institutions and the required competencies stated in the competency framework for government employees. The study also placed interest in how engaged are the government bank employees at work. Further, the study investigated the relationship and influence of competencies and employee engagement on employee performance. There were of 112 participants from 11 branches of the government banks in Bukidnon. Descriptive - correlational and causal research designs were used complemented with the unstructured interview. The study indicated that employees in government banking institutions have 'strongly acquired' the knowledge, skills, and attitude, signifying that all the competencies were highly developed during their academic years. The leadership, technical, core, and organizational competencies, on the other hand, were highly required by the government banking institutions; therefore, the bank employees possess the competencies essential for the delivery of the banking functions, and that these competencies were needed to perform the task excellently. Moreover, employees have a high level of engagement in their work and the organization in terms of shared mood. Employees' engagement has a strong relationship with employees' performance. Although acquired and required competencies and employee engagement positively correlate with the job performance of the bank employees, the technical competencies solely correlate with the employees' performance. Furthermore, there exist gaps in the competencies that were highly developed by the graduates from the academe and those learned from their workplace. These gaps are core competence, interpersonal skills, professionalism, technical competence, leadership and management. These gaps may be considered as areas for improvement of the academic institutions.

Keywords: acquired competencies, required competencies, employees' engagement, employee performance, leadership and management

Introduction

The global financial crisis created a revolution in the management of human resources in banks. Banks are deemed to comply with the minimum competency level set by the governing bodies. Organizations like World Bank and Asian Development Bank promote competency standards to manage the most important resources in every organization, its people. The competency framework addresses the gaps among employees in the organization. In the Philippines, the competency framework is gradually embraced, especially by the government agencies, because of fairness and objectivity in the recruitment, hiring, and promotion of employees. Government financial institutions, particularly government banks, are greatly encouraged to adapt the competency framework for better human resource development.

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The Governance Commission for Government-Owned or Controlled Corporations (GCG), the monitoring and oversight body for the government-owned corporations like Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP) and Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP), included in its set of targets for 2020 performance evaluation, the creation of competency framework. Government Banks, therefore, have to fast-track the process of the creation of the framework. Alongside this, the competence of the business education graduates will be subject to inventory. The inventory of competencies of the bank employees will become the basis for further training and other interventions. How prepared is the business education graduate for the competency framework implementation needs to be addressed by the Higher Education Institutions (HEI's).

Business education ensures that the graduate attributes are congruent with the needs of the industry. In previous decades, business and financial education produced graduates with efficiency in traditional retail banking, traditional wealth management services, traditional investment platforms, a traditional marketplace to trade currencies, commodities, and stocks (Gomber, Kauffman, Parker, & Weber, 2017). Traditional financial products take new shapes and financial services more accessible. Financial industries improved when automation and systems combined with existing expertise to help everyone make better decisions. Other than technology skills, there are more relevant competencies that the industry demands from business education graduates. Business people have seen the widening gap between what is taught in schools and required by the business sectors (The Manila times, 2014). The Commission in Higher Education (CHED) encourages State Universities and Colleges to innovate in bridging the gap (Cudes, 2020). Financial institutions worked as partners of Business Schools in the country. Of these, the banking institution plays a significant role in employing the HEIs graduates every year. It is therefore vital that the curriculum offered by the business schools in the country fit the required competencies of the banking industry.

Securing then the complementation of academe with industry is primordial in the design, development, and delivery of instruction. The strategic alliances promote and facilitate various collaborations between the academe and the industry. Academe and industry forge partnerships for student internships/on-the-job training and graduate placement. However, collaboration needs to go beyond these traditional partnerships to bridge the wide gaps between instruction and the workplace, that is, between what is required by the industry partners and what is acquired through instruction and at work. Bernarte (2014) found out that academe-industry partnership is adequately created for curriculum design and job placement. Other related studies also explored the same area. As banks embrace the competency framework in the management of human resources, government banking institutions also embarked on the strategic performance management system (SPMS) for employee performance rating.

Furthermore, the increasing demands of the financial institution created work pressures among employees. It is a general observation that many bank employees preferred government institutions such as Landbank of the Philippines and Development Bank of the Philippines because of security of tenure. However, other than a secured paycheck, the organizations are also interested in organizational and employee commitment.

This paper investigated the gap between the acquired competencies of the business graduates employed at the government banking institutions and the required competencies stated in the competency framework for government employees. The study also placed interest in how engaged are the government bank employees at work. Moreover, it sought to determine the influence of competencies and employee engagement on employee performance.

Figure 1 illustrates the schematic framework of the variables in this study. The independent variables include: the acquired competencies in the academe, which are knowledge, skills, and attitudes; the required competencies by the government financial institutions consisting of leadership, core, organizational, and technical; and the employee engagement, which incorporates job characteristics, leadership style, value congruence, perceived organizational support, workplace relationship, procedural Justice, shared vision, and Shared Mood.

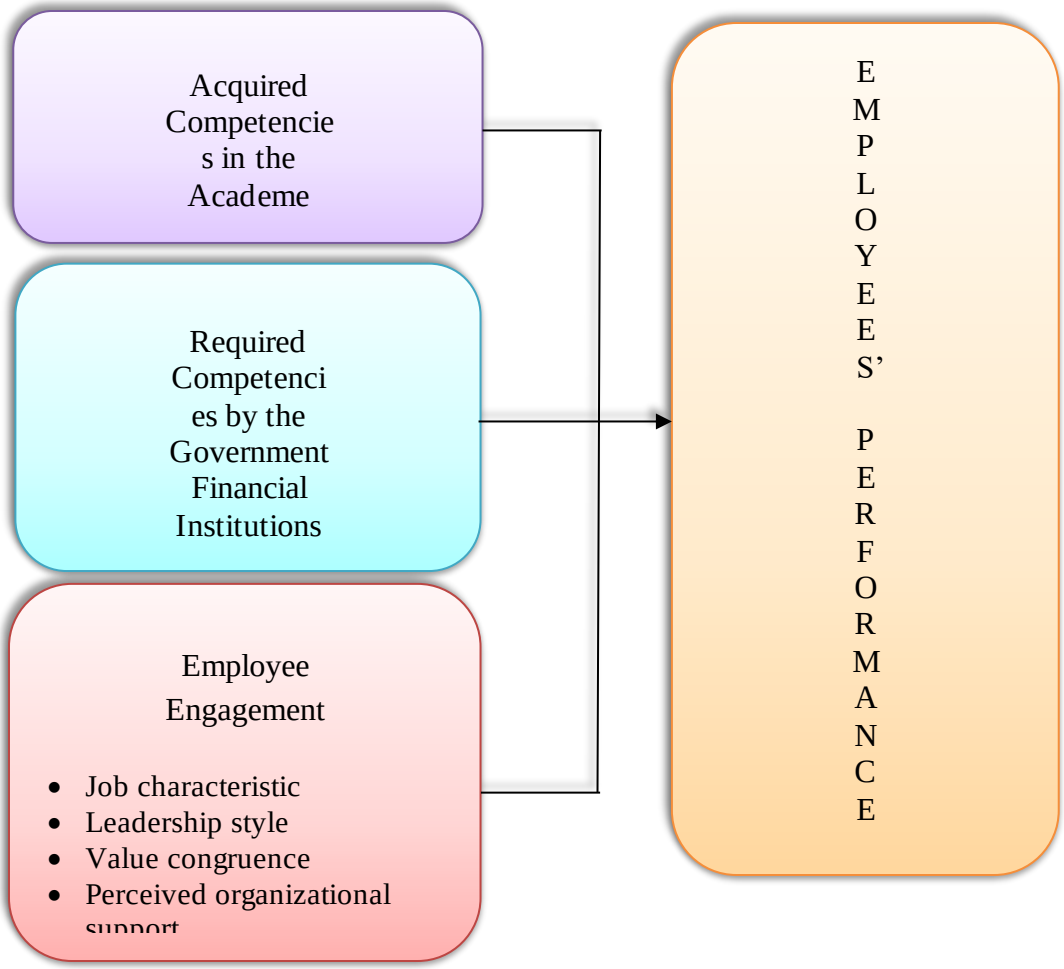

Figure 1: Schematic Presentation of the Variables in the Study.

The knowledge, skills, and attitude in business education are explicit in the Commission on Higher Education CMO 17, s2017 and CMO 27, s2017. Knowledge refers to the familiarity, awareness, or understanding of any information acquired by the employees through experience or education. The cognitive, psychomotor, and affective learning domains provide business education graduates with knowledge of financial institutions. These learning domains include specific technical knowledge about financial management, financial analysis and reporting, banking and financial institutions, monetary policy and central banking, investment and portfolio management, credit and collection, capital market, and other special topics in financial management.

In CMO 46 s2012, the outcomes-based education for the academic programs indicates the entry-level jobs. In a nutshell, Outcome-Based Education (OBE) implies that the best way to learn is to identify

what needs are to be achieved. Once the desired results or exit outcomes have been determined, the strategies, processes, techniques, and means are implemented to achieve the predetermined goals.

Objectives

This study determined the influence of the competencies, engagement, and performance of business education graduates employed in government banking institutions. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Describe the level of the academically acquired competency of the business education graduates employed in government banking institutions in terms of:
   1.1 Knowledge;
   1.2 Skills; and
   1.3 Attitude.
2. Assess the level of workplace required competency of the business education graduates employed in government banking institutions in the aspects of
   2.1 Leadership;
   2.2 Core;
   2.3 Organizational, and
   2.4 Technical.
3. Determine the extent of engagement of the business education graduates employed in government banking institutions in terms of:
   3.1 Job characteristic;
   3.2 Leadership style;
   3.3 Value congruence;
   3.4 Perceived organizational support;
   3.5 Workplace relationship;
   3.6 Procedural Justice;
   3.7 Shared Vision, and
   3.8 Shared Mood.
4. Ascertain the level of performance of business graduates employed in government banking institutions.
5. Correlate the employee performance with:
   5.1 Acquired Competencies;
   5.2 Required Competencies; and
   5.3 Employee Engagement.
6. Identify the independent variables that influence employees' performance in government banking institutions.

Methodology

This study utilized descriptive correlational and causal research designs to describe the parameters of the study and identify the variables that influence employees' performance in government banking institutions. A Likert scale was used to guide the researcher in collecting and analyzing the data from 112 business education graduate employees, regardless of position and rank of LBP and DBP in Bukidnon, Philippines.

The variables considered are the acquired and required competencies, engagement, and performance of business education graduates employed in the Government Banks in the Province of Bukidnon. The

research instrument was adopted from Montales, Garcia & Saniel (2020) for acquired competencies, the competency framework of Civil Service Commission for required competency and the eight (8) drivers of the engagement by Edwards (2018) for the engagement. In the analysis Pearson -Product Moment Correlation and Multiple Regression and basic statistics were used.

Results and Discussion

Table 1 displays the acquired competency levels of the business education graduates that the employees of government banking institutions acquired in the academe. The results show the mean and standard deviation in terms of the acquired knowledge of the participants.

Table 1: Summary of the Level of Academically Acquired Competency of the Business Education Graduates Employed in the Government Banking Institutions

Indicators	Mean	SD	Descriptive Rating	Interpretation
Knowledge	4.12	.516	Strongly Acquired	Competencies are Highly Developed
Skills	4.35	.482	Strongly Acquired	Competencies are Highly Developed
Attitude	4.60	.440	Very Strongly Acquired	Competencies are Excellently Developed
Overall Mean	4.36	.417	Strongly Acquired	Competencies are Highly Developed

The emphasis on values in instruction and the practices maintained by the students in and out of the classroom have developed their attitude. By shifting from employment to employability in today's business education, graduates understand that their attitude to work is as important as the work itself (Hodges & Burchell, as cited by McMurray et al., 2016).

The policies on retaining student honesty are indicated in the student handbook. Any deviating behaviors are addressed accordingly through democratic practices. State, colleges, and university (SUC's) and other higher education institutions (HEI's) with business education programs have guidance and counseling to intervene with students who have problematic attitudes. The result of the study strongly supports that graduates manifest holistic development in knowledge, skills, and attitude.

Employees' acquired skills are highly developed because of the performance-based instructions. Although the curriculum requires a lot from the instructors, the results have proven the effectiveness of the methodologies and strategies employed to achieve the required skills needed from the employees. Knowledge ranked the lowest among the three domains (M=4.12, SD=.516), which has to do with both instructors and employees during their academic years, especially instruction and study habits. According to Ashcraft (2006), knowledge is what a person already knows that could determine what they pay attention to, perceive, learn, remember, and forget. The knowledge that the employees gained from their schooling helped them in their present jobs. In most instances, this competency comes out when an employee is faced with a situation where customers have to be given immediate actions like handling customer complaints, responding to reports or memorandums, and presenting products or services to clients. However, there are instances where employees' acquired knowledge in the academe is replaced with the knowledge they acquired at work.

As observed, the knowledge that is factual information through theories, philosophies, and other general information, usually has lower retention on the learners. Meanwhile, skills and attitudes learned will have higher retention based on the theory of learning by doing (William, 2017).

Table 2: Summary of the Level of Workplace Required Competency of the Business Education Graduates Employed at the Government Banking Institutions

Indicators	Mean	SD	Descriptive Rating	Interpretation
Leadership	4.52	.498	Extremely Required	Competencies are Very Much Needed to Perform the Task Excellently
Core	4.61	.431	Extremely Required	Competencies are Very Much Needed to Perform the Task Excellently
Organizational	4.50	.478	Extremely Required	Competencies are Very Much Needed to Perform the Task Excellently
Technical	4.50	.508	Extremely Required	Competencies are Very Much Needed to Perform the Task Excellently
Grand Mean	4.53	.415	Extremely Required	Competencies are Very Much Needed to Perform the Task Excellently

The core competencies in customer services and problem-solving; leadership competencies in leading the organization, leading self and others; organizational competencies in communication, planning, and organizing, and supervision and control; and finally, the technical competencies, which covers all the main function are 'extremely required' by the government banks. This finding supplements the need for business education courses to fill up the gap between academe and industry. Since the bank employers give a high premium on competencies associated with the four indicators, Business Education must make students job-ready, providing a curriculum that targets the required competencies. The required competencies are Essential 21st-century skills. For instance, core competencies are used by banks to position competitively in the market. They align physical resources and human abilities to these core competencies (Nimsith, Rifas, & Cader, 2016). Organizational competencies significantly utilize knowledge management to create synergy among all employees to achieve goals, strategies, and objectives (Dave, Dave, & Shishodia, 2012). These competencies are soft skills critical for strategizing organizational capabilities (Hafeez et al., 2017).

Lastly, technical competence essential for specific jobs is professional competencies learned by graduates from their college experiences to the actual job exposure they undergo and the technical training for the job. This set of skills has undergone cyclical training and periodic assessment. In most cases, there is given much attention to academic education. The industry suggested that schools shift from more lectures to developing leadership, core, organizational and technical skills to avoid skill mismatched employment market.

Table 3: Summary of the Extent of Employee Engagement of the Business Education Graduates in the Government Banking Institution

Indicators	Mean	SD	Descriptive Ratings	Interpretation
Job Characteristics	4.24	.531	Agree	The Employee is Highly Engaged in Work and Organization Most of the Time
Leadership Style	4.37	.639	Agree	The Employee is Highly Engaged in Work and Organization Most of the Time
Value Congruence	4.44	.521	Agree	The Employee is Highly Engaged in Work and Organization Most of the Time
Perceived Organizational Support	4.19	.660	Agree	The Employee is Highly Engaged in Work and Organization Most of the Time
Work Relationship	4.32	.636	Agree	The Employee is Highly Engaged in Work and Organization Most of the Time
Procedural Justice	4.33	.624	Agree	The Employee is Highly Engaged in Work and Organization Most of the Time
Shared Vision	4.47	.592	Agree	The Employee is Highly Engaged in Work and Organization Most of the Time
Shared Mood	4.52	.586	Strongly Agree	The Employee is Extremely Engaged in Work and Organization at All Time
Overall Mean	4.37	0.502	Agree	The Employee is Highly Engaged in Work and Organization Most of the Time

Accordingly, high-quality positive relationships formed at work result in positive emotions (Edward 2018). The results showed that government bank employees were happy and felt positive about their job and the organization they work with. They felt that they were supported in terms of their professional growth and decisions-making. Employees also taking the pride of being part of their respective organizations, and their contributions are valued.

On the other hand, employees felt that there was only a high engagement in work and organization in terms of organizational support. In general, the support measured in this study was on operational and human resource practices, organizational politics, inspiring leadership, working conditions, and availability of resources. The study does not specify in particular the monetary incentives. The result implies that the working conditions as provided by the administration did not necessarily result in an extreme level of engagement. Nonetheless, all other indicators were 'agreed by the participants that their extent of engagement to work and organization was still great.

The government banking institutions respectively had an annual performance evaluation based on targets. The targets versus compliance were monitored periodically (monthly and quarterly). There were two sets of evaluations, one for the branch and the other for individual employees. The assessment of government bank branch' performance used the following indicators: financial targets like credit cards, average daily balance, outstanding deposits, cost of deposits, per capita income, financial ratios, and outstanding loan balances; regulatory and statutory compliance; data quality and risk management. Besides the mentioned financial indicators, government banking industry also used customer service and internal processes as performance indicators. Customer service was assessed separately using the

following key result areas: customer management, customer relationship, and turnaround time. At the same time, the assessment of individual performance used the job description as a basis for the ratings.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics on the Level of Performance of the Business Education Graduates Employed the Government Banking Institution

Range	Description	f	%
5.00	Outstanding	0	0
4.00 – 4.99	Very Satisfactory	112	100
3.00 – 3.99	Satisfactory	0	0
2.00 – 2.99	Unsatisfactory	0	0
1.00 – 1.99	Poor	0	0
Total		112	100
Mean		4.56	
SD		.260	

Table 4 shows the distribution of the ratings on the level of employees' performance in the government banks. The data is based on the Individual Performance Commitment Rating (IPCR) conducted by the supervisors and managers of the Land Bank of the Philippines and Development Bank of the Philippines for the calendar year of 2020. The range of the ratings is adopted from the Landbank of the Philippines. The findings revealed that employee's performance in the government banking industry is very satisfactory, with an overall mean of 4.56. The information also revealed that the distance of the mean rating of each employee is closer with the SD=.260, which further implies that uniform intervention was applied to all government employees.

Saeed, Lodhi, Igbal, Nayab & Yaseen (2013) emphasized that employee performance is affected by several factors that include the competency and engagement showed by the employees in the organization. The assessment of the employee performance is based on the prescribed job description. In the case of government banks, ratings of the individual employee performance used different indicators according to their functions performed. However, customer service is a shared indicator for all employees. The result shown in Table 4 signifies that all employees had properly delivered what was expected from them following their functions and customer care. The result further indicates that all employees worked very satisfactorily in the achievement of the designed goals and objectives.

Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to determine the association between employees' performance in terms of acquired competencies, required competencies, and employee engagement. Table 5 shows the computed Pearson r values of the independent variables of acquired competencies, required competencies, and employee engagement considering employees' performance as the dependent variables.

Table 5: Relationship Between the Employees' Performance with the Acquired and Required Competencies, Employee Engagement and All Sub-indicators of Each Variable

Indicators	Performance Rating	
	Pearson r	Probability
Acquired Competencies	.271	.004**
Knowledge	.196	.039
Skills	.153	.108
Attitude	.361	.000**
Required Competencies	.430	.000**
Leadership	.343	.000**
Core	.317	.001**
Organizational	.382	.000**
Technical	.434	.000**
Employee Engagement	.646	.000**
Job Characteristics	.458	.000**
Leadership Style	.448	.000**
Value Congruence	.539	.000**
Perceived Organizational Support	.525	.000**
Workplace Relationship	.642	.000**
Procedural Justice	.500	.000**
Shared Vision	.583	.000**
Shared Mood	.652	.000**

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), **p<.05

The result indicates that a significant relationship exists between employees' performance and the independent variables. It 7 implies the following; a significant positive relationship between employees' performance and acquired competencies (r=.271; p=.004), including employees' performance and required competencies (r =.430; p=000), as well as between employees' performance and employee engagement (r =.646; p=000). The results show that, as the observation of these three variables increases, the more likely employees' performance will also increase. A closer examination reveals that all sub-variables of the three indicators showed a significant positive relationship to performance except for skills (p=.108).

In terms of the strength of the relationship of the independent variables to performance, it appears that a strong positive relationship existed between employee engagements. Among the sub-indicators of the acquired competencies, required competencies, and employee engagement, the strongest relationship to performance is evident in shared mood and workplace relationship with r values of 0.652 and 0.642, respectively.

A further analysis delves into the strength of the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. Notably, the computed Pearson's correlation coefficient indicates that employees' performance has a weak relationship with acquired competencies (r =.271), moderate relationship with

required competencies (r = .430), and a strong relationship with employee engagement (r = .646). Given the findings, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, the variables on the acquired and required competencies and employee engagement are significantly related to the employees' performance. The association between acquired competencies and employees' performance is significant. However, among the three independent variables, it has the weakest correlation at r = .271. The findings support several studies on education and job performance. Ng & Feldman (2009) found out that education relates to employee performance, particularly cognitive ability.

Furthermore, the findings on the competencies having a positive relationship to performance were already pronounced in the study of Yasar et al. (2013). The findings of the study improve the competencies of the employees and their job performance. The same findings can be a basis for providing the different developmental activities and capability-building initiatives for competency enhancement. This finding justified the cost of training and development on competency and job enhancement of the government banking institutions.

Meanwhile, with employee engagement correlated to performance, increasing developmental activities to enhance engagement to work and the organization will affect performance (Roberson, 2019). With the result presenting a stronger relationship between engagement and performance, the government banks consider the eight (8) drivers of engagement for performance development with greater attention to shared mood and workplace relationships.

Table 6: Multiple Linear Regression Among the Independent Variables and its Sub-Indicators and Employees' Performance

Predictor Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	p
Constant	2.888	.228		12.686	.000
Acquired Competencies					
Knowledge	-.011	.052	-.022	-.210	.834
Skills	-.051	.062	-.095	-.829	.409
Attitude	.003	.076	.005	.041	.968
Required Competencies					
Leadership	.016	.102	.031	.161	.872
Core	.022	.080	.036	.268	.789
Organizational	-.109	.074	-.201	-1.481	.142
Technical	.162	.048	.317	3.363	.001
Employee Engagement	.236	.546	.456	.433	.666
Job Characteristics	.016	.079	.034	.198	.843
Leadership Style	-.014	.118	-.028	-.119	.906
Value Congruence	-.019	.092	-.047	-.207	.837
Perceived Organizational Support	-.098	.087	-.250	-1.129	.262
Workplace Relationship	.165	.105	.403	1.570	.120
Procedural Justice	-.067	.083	-.162	-.813	.419

Shared Vision	-.031	.097	-.070	-.316	.752
Shared Mood	.151	.078	.341	1.927	.057
R= .751a	R2 = .490	f-value = 7.670	p-value = 0.000		

Table 6 presents the multiple linear regression analysis between the independent variables of acquired competencies, required competencies, employee engagement, and the dependent variable employees' performance. The adjusted R2 value signified that the data captured by the employee performance is 49% from the independent and sub-variables. The regression analysis reveals that there exists a significant relationship of the independent and dependent variables (P=0000).

Findings showed that the independent variables did not influence employee's performance. However, the sub-indicator of required competency, technical competencies, showed a significant influence on employee performance (p=.01; B=.162). There is a lone predictor of performance. The result on technical competence having a significant influence over the performance of the employees shows that the technical skills of the employee critically affect the performance of the employees' functions in carrying out their duties and responsibilities on a day-to-day basis.

The predictive model deduced from the multiple regression is:

$Y1 = 2.89+.162X$

Where;

Y1 = employees' performance

X = technical competencies

The model generated shows the linear movement of the performance and the technical competencies. The technical competencies, being the bank-related competencies, are significant

in the performance of the banking services. These competencies like marketing of bank products and services, cash management, safe-keeping and custodianship of the bank and customer assets, ATM servicing and maintenance, bank account verification and authentication, mathematical or numerical competencies, credit and collection, banking operating system, among, others are essential for the performance of the services. The technical banking competence makes the bank function on a day-to-day basis. The performance of the employees is greatly defined according to the execution of the technical tasks. Indicators of performance are task-based and quantified by the number of transactions. It shows how duties are delivered to the customers.

Conclusions

The graduates employed in government banking institutions have strongly acquired competencies in knowledge, skills, and attitude from their academic institutions. All the competencies are highly developed during their academic years and that the higher education institutions where they graduated from have complied with the Philippine Standards and Guidelines for the business courses.

The leadership, technical, core, and organizational competencies, on the other hand, are highly required by the government banking institutions. Therefore, the bank employees possess the competencies

essential for the delivery of the banking functions, and that these competencies are needed to perform the task excellently.

The extent of employees' engagement of the business education graduates employed at the government banking institution is high in terms of job characteristics, leadership style, value congruence, perceived organizational support, work relationship, shared vision, and procedural justice. Hence, the bank employees possess the competencies essential for the delivery of the banking functions.

The government bank employees have a high work engagement since they perform very satisfactorily. Moreover, there is a significant positive relationship between acquired competencies, required competencies, and employee engagement with performance.

Although acquired and required competencies and employee engagement positively correlate with the job performance of the banking institution employees, only the technical competencies influence the employees' performance, thus explaining the complexities of the employee performance of the government banking industries.

Recommendations

Based on the result and discussion of the study the following suggestions are put forward.

As an academic institution providing more graduates in banking industry, may forge stronger relationship in LBP and DBP in the fields of research, and instructions to enhance the student's learning on banking operation and management. They may also consider actual banking practitioners as mentors or instructors to close the gap between academe and the banking industry.

The LBP and DBP mangers may consider a mechanism to increase organizational commitment. The organizations may also revisit their tool for training needs assessment to focus on the employees' weaknesses and perhaps provide appropriate interventions to increase the commitment and performance of their employees. Future research may also utilize different variables to conduct a separate study on employee engagement.

Limitations of the Study

This study was limited to the business education graduates regardless of position and rank employed in the government banking institutions in the Province of Bukidnon, Philippines. Further, the level of academically acquired competency was limited to knowledge, skills and attitude. Likewise, the level of required competency was limited to leadership, core, organizational, and technical. The employee engagement was limited to job characteristics, leadership style, value congruence, perceived organizational support, workplace relationship, procedural justice, shared vision and shared mood. The coverage of the study was from January to July 2021.

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