

Assessing an Asian University's Organizational Effectiveness Using the Malcolm Baldridge Model

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Abstract - The study assessed the organizational effectiveness of LPU using the Malcolm Baldridge Assessment Instrument which defines organizational effectiveness in terms of seven categories, namely: leadership, strategic planning, customer and market focus, measurement, analysis and knowledge management, human resource focus, process management and business results. The study employed the descriptive survey method, where 37 department heads, 28 admin personnel and 59 faculty members served as respondents. The study revealed that both leaders and subordinates agreed that LPU is making progress in terms of the seven categories. The leaders and subordinates had congruent perceptions on the organizational effectiveness of the leaders of LPU. When tested by individual criteria, the leaders were found to have higher perceptions in the areas of employees' knowledge of the school's mission and vision and who their important customers are and in soliciting subordinates when planning. Enhancement measures were proposed in the area of process management, measurement, analysis and knowledge management.

Keywords - organizational effectiveness Malcolm Baldridge Award, school mission/vision

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INTRODUCTION

Lyceum of the Philippines University like many other universities in Asia faces rapid and incessant challenges brought about by technological advancements and global demands. As an educational institution it has to deliver the products and services necessary to achieve the outcomes it intends to produce. Since organizations face a varied environment, produce different products, render different services, and their organizational members consist of different kinds of people with different culture and values, the effectiveness of organization is determined in various ways using different models.

In Lyceum of the Philippines University, organizational effectiveness is measured through various quality assurance tools such as voluntary accreditation and certification of the school wide Quality Management System to ISO 9001: 2000. Another comprehensive tool that measures organizational effectiveness is the Malcolm Baldridge Model which provides a basis for organizational self-assessment and improvement of performance (Evans, 2008).

This paper adopts the Malcolm Baldridge Model which defines organizational effectiveness in terms of seven categories, namely leadership, strategic planning, customer and market focus, measurement, analysis and knowledge management, human resource focus process management and business results (Tan, 2003). Through this assessment tool from the Baldridge National Quality Award, the paper attempted to determine the organizational effectiveness of Lyceum of the Philippines University through the leadership perspective of its leaders and subordinates using the seven criteria of Malcolm Baldrige. It also determined if there is a significant difference in the perspective of the Lyceum leaders and subordinates on LPU's organizational effectiveness. The study identified areas for improvement and proposed enhancement measures towards a more focused improvement program for organizational effectiveness of the Lyceum of the Philippines University. The findings of the study will serve as basis in formulating/ reformulating policies that will increase the effectiveness of Lyceum of the Philippines University as an organization.

Leadership for Quality

If there is a crucial challenge to the managers today, it is to develop leaders for tomorrow's organization, leaders who will be competent and brave to face and hurdle the radical and dramatic global challenges such as advances in information technology and escalating global competition. All of these challenges need managers and leaders who are flexible, pro-active and focused on quality.

Quality maybe defined in various ways. It is defined as the totality of features and characteristics of a product or source that bears on its ability to satisfy given need. (American National Standard Institute, ANSI). It may also mean superiority or excellence of a product or service; it can also mean lack of manufacturing or service defects. Today's managers agree that the main reason to pursue quality is to satisfy customers. However, merely satisfying customer needs will not achieve success. In the same manner quality should not be focused solely on the goals or services that an organization produces or provides. Organizations therefore should aim to exceed customer expectation in order to beat the competition. Quality should be embedded in the organization as a way of life, integrated in every decision process and result to organizational effectiveness (Evans, 2000, Evans, 2008, Brelin et.al., 1997).

Leadership for quality is the responsibility of top management. Senior leadership must set directions, communicate the company's vision, create a customer orientation, with clear quality values and high expectations that address the needs of all stakeholders and build team into the way the company operates. It should catalyze and transform potential into reality. It should influence a relationship among leaders and followers who desire for real changes and outcomes that reflect their shared purposes (Evans, 2008, Daft,2008, Smith 1996,).

To bring about successful change, leaders must work with others within the organization and carry responsibilities that include understanding the organization's internal and external environment, including its culture, creating a vision of a desirable future and obtain buy-in, designing a plan that moves the organization toward the envisioned future, integrating the various units in implementation of the plan and to monitor progress and institutionalizing achieved

changes and making continuous change an integral part of the organization's culture (Beach ,2006).

Since effective leadership does not happen overnight, managers should work hard to develop effective leaders. Effective leaders are described as competent, knowledgeable, and skilled in their area of expertise, with strong character, integrity and honesty and are willing to accept responsibility. A culture of leadership maybe created by employing various strategies such as mentoring and coaching that will help people become outstanding leader-managers who will create competitive advantage for their organizations. (Kotter 2007,Bateman2007) .

FRAMEWORK

The Malcolm Baldridge National Quality Award (MBNQA) aims among others to stimulate companies to improve quality and productivity for the pride of recognition while obtaining a competitive edge through increased profits and to recognize the achievement of those companies that improve the quality of their goods and services and provide an example to others (Evans, 2008).

The Education Criteria for Performance Excellence (ECPE), the most recent document issued by the MBNQA is designed to establish a framework for integrating total quality principles and practices in educational organization. The criteria consist of a hierarchical set of categories, items, and areas to address referred to as categories which are as follows: leadership, strategic planning, customer and market focus, information and analysis, human resource focus, process management, and business results.

Organizational Profile Environment, Relationships, and Challenges

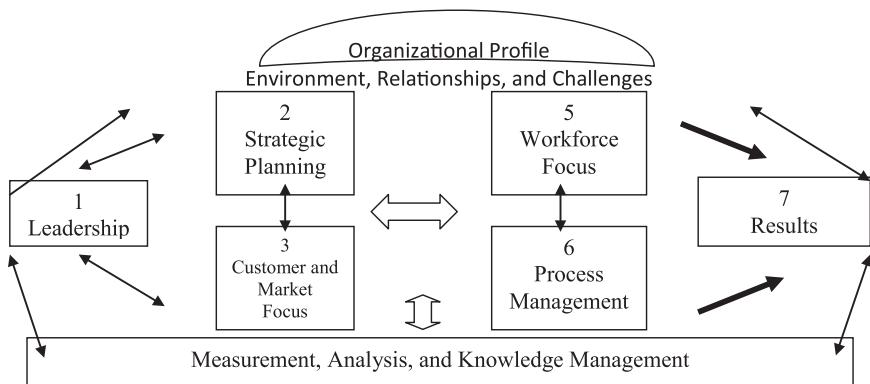


Figure 1. Systems perspective of the baldridge education criteriafor performance excellence

The systems operations are composed of the six Baldridge categories that define the operations of the organizations and the results it wants to achieve. Leadership, Strategic Planning, and Customer Focus represent the leadership triad. These three categories are placed together to emphasize the importance of leadership focus on students, stakeholders, and strategy. The next three categories, namely Workforce Focus, Process Management and Results represent the results triad. The organization's workforce and key processes accomplish the work of the organization that yields the organization's overall performance results. Measurement, Analysis and Knowledge Management are critical to the effective management of the organization and to a fact -based knowledge-driven system for improving performance and competitiveness. It serves as the foundation for the performance management system (PQA Criteria, 2009).

A brief description of each category is in order. The leadership category examines how an organization's senior leaders address values, direction, and performance expectations, as well as their focus on customers and other stakeholders, empowerment, innovation, and learning. The strategic planning category examines how an organization

develops strategic objectives and action plans, how chosen strategic objectives and action plans are deployed and how progress is measured. The customer and market focus category examines how an organization determines requirements, expectations, and preferences of customers and markets; it builds relationships with customers and determines the key factors that lead to customer acquisition, satisfaction, and to business expansion. The information and analysis category examines an organization's information management and performance measurement systems and how the organization analyzes performance data and ensures hardware and software quality. The human resource focus category examines how an organization motivates and enables employees to develop and utilize their full potential in alignment with the organization's overall objectives and action plans. The process management category examines the key aspects of an organization's process management, including customer – focused design, product and service delivery, key business, and support processes. This category encompasses all key processes and all work units. The business results category examines an organization's performance and improvement in key business areas – customer satisfaction, product and service performance, financial and marketplace performance, human resource results, and operational performance.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study employed the descriptive survey design. Fifty-nine faculty respondents were chosen from stratified proportionate random sampling from a population of 292 regular and full time teachers employed during the SY 2008-2009 65 administrative personnel and department heads of LPU.

Instrument Used to Gather the Data

The instrument that was used to gather the data is an assessment tool from the Baldridge National Quality Program downloaded from the Baldridge National Quality Program website at www.baldridge.nist.gov. It is designed to reveal the respondents' leadership perspective which will help assess how the leaders of the organization

are performing and what can be improved. The questionnaire is composed of 40 items distributed into the seven categories of the Baldridge criteria. The items were answered using the 5 point Likert scale with 5 as strongly agree and 1 – strongly disagree.

To analyze the data, weighted mean and rank were used to determine how the respondents perceived the organizational effectiveness of LPU; t-test was used to determine the significant differences between the ratings of the faculty and administrative staff (subordinates) on one hand and those of the deans and the department heads (leaders) on the other hand.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Organizational Effectiveness of LPU in Terms of the Malcolm Baldridge Criteria

Table 1. Organizational effectiveness of LPU in terms of the baldridge criteria

	Leaders		Subordinates		Combined Group		
Categories	Weighted Mean	VI	Subordi-nates	VI	Mean	VI	Rank
1. Leadership	4.46	A	4.23	A	4.34	A	2
2. Strategic Planning	4.25	A	4.01	A	4.13	A	4
3. Customer and Market Focus	4.46	A	4.25	A	4.36	A	1
4. Measurement, Analysis and Knowledge Management	4.10	A	4.11	A	4.10	A	5
5. Human Resource Focus	4.34	A	4.08	A	4.21	A	3
6. Process Management	3.98	A	3.89	A	3.94	A	7
7. Business Results	4.01	A	4.09	A	4.05	A	6
GRAND MEAN	4.23	A	4.09	A	4.16	A	

The data clearly reveal that both the leaders and their subordinates agree that LPU is effective in terms of the above categories with the Customer and Market Focus (WM = 4.36) perceived highest followed by Leadership (4.34). Although interpreted also as agree, the combined group perceived lowest Process Management (3.94). These results indicate that LPU leaders are doing well in meeting the customers' requirement, expectations and preferences.

Both the leaders and their subordinates agree that employees know who their most important customers are and what they should do to satisfy their customers. This obtained a composite mean of 4.46 for the leaders and 4.25 for the subordinates. Specifically, the leaders strongly agree that the employees know who their most important customers are keeping in touch with their customers tell the employees what they need and want. On the whole, although relatively with lower perception, the subordinates agree with their leaders that customer's satisfaction is primordial and that they should find ways to solve the problems of the customer to satisfy them and eventually keep them in the organization.

The customer is said to be the judge of quality. Understandably current and future customer needs and keeping pace with the changing market require effective strategies for listening to and learning from customers. The importance of satisfying the customer has been highlighted in the operational processes of LPU by making it as one of the wildly important goals (WIG) of the institution. Moreover, since LPU is certified to ISO 9001:2000 where customer satisfaction is one of the leadership principles, LPU puts heavy emphasis on satisfying the customers in all its daily processes and transactions. This is demonstrated by the institutional mandate that all work units should obtain a customer satisfaction rating of not lower than 4.0 using a 1 to 5 Likert scale with five as the highest. LPU uses surveys to determine students and stakeholders' satisfaction as well as through a complaint box aptly termed VIEWS which means Very Important Expressions of Wise Suggestions. Data gathered through this are processed in the appropriate bodies such as the MANCOM, Academic Council and Deans' Council.

Information on the customers' satisfaction and dissatisfaction is important because by understanding this, management will come

up with the management improvements that can create satisfied customers who reward the company with loyalty; repeat business and positive referrals (Evans & Deans, 2003).

In terms of leadership, employees agree that through the school leadership, there is an environment or culture created where the employees know the mission, vision, goals and values of the institution and which serve as guideposts in what the organization and employees should do to achieve its goals. There seems to be a strong agreement among the leaders ($wm=4.25$) and their subordinates (4.23) that the employees know the organization's mission or what it is trying to accomplish and the leadership team uses the organizational values to guide the organization and employees creates a work environment that helps the employees do their job shares information with their employees about the organization and encourages learning among employees that help them advance in their careers. The subordinates' perceptions on these leadership practices are comparatively lower. However, both subordinates and leaders agree on the role of leaders (combined mean =4.13) in influencing people to bring about change toward a desirable future. Both perceive the leaders to create a vision and inspire others to achieve this vision.

The findings on LPU's organizational effectiveness in terms of leadership indicate that senior management has set the directions and values of the school and the expectations that address the needs of its customers and stakeholders. These findings are indicative of the senior management's commitment and involvement in planning, reviewing quality performance and recognizing employees for quality achievement. These could be a result of the institutional activities that have been instituted in the university, such as the Mission Statement Awareness Week which has drawn support and participation of all the sectors in the community – the teachers and staff, the school officials, and the students who look forward with enthusiasm to every celebration. Competitions such as mission statement recitation, essay writing, painting and other similar activities provide students opportunity to participate and become aware of the school vision and mission, appreciate the school's history and become proud of its achievements and share in what the school wants to accomplish in the future.

In terms of human resource focus, both the leaders ($wm=4.34$) and employees ($wm=4.08$) agree that the human resources cooperate and work as a team and that leaders encourage and enable the employees to develop their job skills so that they can enhance their careers. It is also perceived by the two groups that the managers and the organization care about their employees, that the employees are recognized for their work and that they have a safe work place.

The findings imply that LPU has maintained a work environment and support climate that motivates the employees to perform with dedication and commitment. This is enhanced through recognition of employees for their dedicated service and for outstanding performance during the Annual Awards Convocation. LPU also conducts a periodic training needs analysis the results of which become the basis of the training given to employees. Presently there is a Training Institute Program (TIP) that has been established which aims to equip employees and teachers with the skills and competencies required of a teacher or a staff. Support is also given to an identified employee in attending outside seminars.

Since human resource is the most important resource of the organization, LPU invests on programs that will make its people more effective and efficient. Recently LPU officially announced its application for certification to the Investors in People. In the IiP Diagnostic report, it was confirmed that LPU's human resource are given access to training and development opportunities through the provision of scholarship and other forms of financial assistance. The said IiP report also revealed that the school atmosphere is friendly, family-oriented and very open to improvement ideas with regular weekly or monthly meeting. The management of human resources is critical to the success of an organization. Their training, experience, judgment, intelligence, relationship and insights can add economic value to the organization. Thus organization should ensure that the activities and output of the employees match the organization's effectiveness and competitive advantage.

In terms of strategic planning, the results show that both the leaders and their subordinates agree that the school leaders plan for the future and the employees on the other hand are aware of this plan, how it affects them and can feel if they are making improvement. This

has a composite mean of 4.25 for the leaders, 4.01 for the subordinates and a combined group of 4.13 (agree). There is as well instituted strategic planning process that consists of nine steps: namely; preparation, mission-vision review and SWOT analysis, current state performance analysis, future state brainstorming and development of goals and objectives, resource allocation, action planning, board approval, strategic plan and action plan deployment, and strategic plan monitoring. During the period that the researcher conducted this study, the identified planning participants reviewed the vision and mission and the strategic directions of the University for AY 2009-2012, conducted the SWOT analysis and presented the results during the planning conference. Strategy formulation that involves the subordinates during the planning enhances the ability of the organization to prevent problems. Strategic decisions that are group-based are likely to produce better results because group interaction generates varied strategies or more reliable forecasts (Pearce and Robinson, 2000).

These findings support the diagnostic results of the Investors In People which showed that the members affirm that LPU has a practice of yearly planning preceded by consultation meetings among team members where suggestions are solicited. The plans are cascaded to the members in department meetings. Somehow this creates a feeling that the subordinates are able to influence the school and department plans (IIP Diagnostic Report, 2009).

In terms of Measurement, Analysis and Knowledge Management both the leaders and subordinates know how to measure the quality of their work and they know how to analyze and review them to see if changes are needed. This obtained a composite mean of 4.10 for leaders and 4.11 for subordinates. The combined group mean is 4.10. They agree that the information needed to determine how the organization is doing is made available to the employees.

Performance measurement is used in making decision for setting and aligning organizational directions and resources. Being certified to ISO 9001:2000, LPU utilizes measurements and analysis of data. A regular schedule of measurement, analysis and improvement (MAI) is set every end of the semester or as warranted necessary by stakeholders to monitor the performance of the various work units

as well as its employees. Comparative data and information are obtained by benchmarking best practices and performance in other institutions. Evans (2002) postulated that the organizations need good performance measures to lead the entire organization in a particular direction, to manage the resources needed to travel in that direction by evaluating effectiveness of action plans; and to operate the processes that make the organization work and continuously improve. Data and information support analysis at all organizational levels. At the work level, data provide real information to determine variation, root causes and take corrective action as needed. At the process level, operational performance data help managers determine if they are doing the right job and if they are using resources effectively. Therefore, a company should select performance measures that best represent factors that will lead to improved customer, operational and financial performance.

In terms of process management, both leaders ($wm=3.98$) and their subordinates ($wm=3.89$) agree that LPU has good processes for doing their respective work. These processes relate to the instructional activities, research and community extension activities which are considered the three fold functions of a higher educational institution. This result indicates that both the leaders and subordinates have a clear understanding of the tri-fold functions and that they have control over their personal work processes. However, the two groups have similar lower perception on the availability of things that they need in order to do the jobs. This is indicative of the possible lack of the resources needed by both the leaders and the subordinates in the pursuit of their respective goals and objectives.

LPU has installed processes and procedures as required by the Quality Management System which is certified to ISO 9001: 2000. Each work unit head is empowered to determine his own processes, take measures to supervise and regulate its activities, and enhance these activities to realize their goals. This finding is affirmed by the results of the recent surveillance audit by the Det Norske Veritas which stated that QMS of LPU is robust and functional and that no non conformances were found in the audit conducted at the different work units. One strength found by DNV was creative and continuous improvement that permeates in the organization.

The comparatively combined low rating for Process Management ($wm=3.94$) is indicative of the need to provide the employees what they need to be able to do their jobs and be given feedback on the quality of their work.

In terms of business results, both the leaders ($wm=4.01$) and the subordinates ($wm=4.09$) agree that LPU has performed well in key business areas. Being an educational institution LPU has achieved its goals in terms of the tri-fold functions evidenced by the accreditation status of twelve of its programs and the international certification of its quality management system to ISO 9001:2000. This is also demonstrated by the notable board performance ratings obtained by the different colleges, the achievements in national and international competitions as well as the schools laudable performance in cultural and sports activities. A remarkable achievement which LPU considers a milestone is the grant of level three statuses to the Accountancy program which gives LPU the distinct reputation of being the only tertiary school in the country with level three statuses in Accountancy program. However, there seem to be lack of transparency in terms of the financial status of the organization as affirmed by some observations during academic council meetings where department heads have expressed their desire and interest in knowing the financial performance of the school. Javier (2000) in a previous study stated that the employees identified settling of disagreement and conflict between management and employees and priorities in relation to allocation of resources as areas that need improvement.

2. Significant Differences in the Perceived Organizational Effectiveness of LPU.

Table 2. Significant differences in the composite mean ratings of the leaders and their subordinates

CATEGORIES	Leaders Mean	Subordinates Mean	t Value	β	VI
1. Leadership	4.46	4.23	1.059	.299	ns
2. Strategic Planning	4.25	4.01	.764	.45	ns
3. Customer and Market Focus	4.46	4.25	1.533	.137	ns
4. Measurement Analysis and Knowledge Management	4.10	4.11	-1.494	.147	ns
5. Human Resource Focus	4.34	4.08	.672	.507	ns
6. Process Management	3.98	3.89	.208	.837	ns
7. Business Results	4.01	4.09	1.000	1.00	ns

Legend:

NS – Not Significant

Table 2 shows that when the composite means of the leaders and subordinates were tested for significant differences ($\beta=.05$), the findings reveal that there were no significant differences in the organizational effectiveness of LPU as perceived by its leaders and its subordinates. However, when the individual item mean ratings were tested for their significant differences, the perceptions of the leaders and the subordinates differed significantly in some items. This is shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Significant differences in the paired and individual item mean ratings

Item no.	Leaders' Mean	Subordinates' Mean	t Value	f	VI
1. Our employees know our organization's mission (what we are trying to accomplish)	4.75	4.41	2.26	.032	s
2. As a leadership team plans for the future, we ask our people for their ideas	4.39	3.95	2.201	.036	s
3. Our employees know who their most important customers are.	4.82	4.45	2.26	.032	s

The above data show that leaders had significantly higher perception than the subordinates on the statement that LPU's employees know its mission or what it is trying to accomplish ($f=.032$). Similarly, the leaders had a significantly higher rating for the statement that in planning for the future, the leaders ask its people for their ideas. They have the same higher perception than the subordinates in the employees' knowledge of who the most important customers are.

Both the leaders and the subordinates are in agreement that the Lyceum leaders are making progress. However, what LPU is trying to accomplish is clearer among the leaders than among the subordinates. Probably, this arises from the fact that leaders meet more often than the subordinates. Information and updates are given during Deans' Council meeting, Academic Council meeting and Division meeting. This result is indicative of the lack of dissemination of information to the rank and file employees and the teachers. The result also indicates that the employees do not agree as much as the leaders do that their ideas and opinions are solicited in formulating the school's long range and short range plans. This is explained by the fact that the leaders, especially the deans who are the line department heads are very much aware that their customers are their students and that these students as the primary customers should be satisfied. This is not so much felt among the subordinates because they are only concerned with the

instructional or support services and not so much with the quality of service they render.

This is corroborated in the findings of the IiP Diagnostic which states that senior management team is clear on the corporate strategy and exhibits a strong shared understanding of what needs to be done to achieve the corporate vision. However, there is weak evidence to indicate that the same thing is happening in the middle management level. Moreover, business planning heavily involves senior management and middle management personnel. At the level of the staff, only a select few are invited to influence and participate in the process.

Based on the findings, measures have been proposed to enhance the organizational effectiveness of the Lyceum of the Philippines University. The activities and/or initiatives are aimed to raise the level of readiness of the University to apply for the Philippine Quality Award. Since most of these activities will emanate from the management, the persons responsible for the activities would involve the top management, the deans and the department heads. Participation of teachers, staff and students will be solicited as necessary.

CONCLUSIONS

Both the leaders and subordinates perceive LPU to be effective as an organization in terms of the seven Baldrige categories, namely leadership, strategic planning, customer and market focus, measurement, analysis and knowledge management, human resource focus, process management, and business results. What the school is trying to accomplish and who their important customers are, have become clearer to the leaders than to the subordinates. The subordinates' ideas and opinions are not as much solicited when formulating long range and short range plans.

Although LPU is making progress; it has to address the weak areas identified such as transparency in financial processes and provision of resources needed by employees. Generally, the perceived level of organizational effectiveness may be improved by addressing all categories of performance excellence as defined in the Baldrige framework. Moreover, it may implement the herein

proposed enhancement measures that are designed to improve LPU's organizational effectiveness.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Specific recommendations include actively involving the subordinates (teachers and staff) in the activities that will help them understand the schools' vision mission, goals and objectives, focusing on importance of customer satisfaction in orientation meetings and in every department meeting. The subordinates will understand the importance of meeting the needs of the customers, involving the leaders and the subordinates in the budget process and for management to be transparent in some financial concerns without compromising confidentiality and safety of school's resources. It is also recommended that recognition of performing employees be done as frequently as necessary with appropriate incentives sufficient to motivate them to render better performance. Management may also look into the job-related needs of the employees and address the same with urgency.

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