



International Study of Leadership Development in Higher Education (ISLDHE)

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Abstract

The study, which is a work in progress, investigates the leadership development in higher education, at an international level with participating countries, including Puerto Rico. The objective is to investigate the efficacy of the academic programs available for professionals occupying leadership roles such as Head of Department/School, Dean, Chancellor and President in universities, colleges and institutes. In Puerto Rico, the following institutions offer a Master's Degree and/or Doctorate in Educational Leadership: Interamerican University of PR, University of Puerto Rico, Universidad del Turabo, Universidad Metropolitana, Nova Southeastern University, Cambridge College, National University College, University of Sacred Heart, and University of Phoenix.

The research focuses on analyzing the courses of the curriculum offered by each institution, which are aimed at developing the necessary skills and knowledge to be an effective leader in an educational environment, specifically, at a higher education institution. Additionally, an analysis is carried out, of literature published as a result of the academic programs completed by students, these include dissertations and theses that focuses on the topic of leadership development in higher education institutions.

Findings demonstrate that Nova Southeastern University is the only institution offering a concentration in Higher Education Leadership and as a fruition of this program, has published two dissertations.

Introduction

Successful leadership development in education is fundamental for the advancement of colleges, institutions and universities especially in a crisis era such as the one Puerto Rico is going through. By studying the programs available in higher education we gain insight into the preparation of higher education leaders. This information helps us determine the availabilities for future leaders and what is lacking in the educational opportunities.

We decided to evaluate various resources including theses, dissertations, investigations, articles and program offerings. The first step taken was to revise curriculum sequences offered in graduate programs in different institutions. This led to a general idea of what courses are offered to those who pursue management or administrative positions in higher education. Other articles and academic papers offer perspective of the efficiency of these programs and the reality of these leaders' preparation.

Upon evaluation we identified that many programs offered educational or community leadership, but few focused on higher education leadership. Many factors are taken into consideration for this analysis. Among these is the curriculum content and what that subjects address. Important courses, such as those in administration or management, offer some type of preparation even though it is not specific to the focus of higher education leadership.

With our literature review we have come to a set of conclusions that answers the primary question of this research.

Methodology

The study, of qualitative nature, will be guided throughout the following research questions:

- How useful are the leadership development experiences for formal leaders in higher education?
- How do different formal contexts influence leadership development in higher education and what can be learned from these different culturally-sensitive approaches?
- What types of leadership preparation and development are available to novice deans?
- How useful are these leadership development experiences in preparing deans for their leadership role in higher education?
- What knowledge, skills, and attributes/attitudes (KSAs) do these experiences include to promote optimal decanal performance?

The study consists of seven (7) phases; however this work in progress provides the results obtained from Phase 1 and 2.

Phase 1 - Literature reviews regarding leadership in higher education and the influence of leadership development in support of effective leadership approaches.

Phase 2 - Mapping of available formal and informal leadership preparation and development programs specifically targeting Heads of Department/School and/or Deans

Phase 3 - Interviews with Provosts, Directors of T&L centres, HR directors about expectations on deans

Phase 4 - Interviews with Deans, Heads of Faculty/School and/or Chairs to explore their perspectives of the preparation and leadership development activities in which they have engaged and how these have shaped their beliefs about leadership, and their knowledge and skills required to be successful in their role.

Phase 5 - Surveying Associate Deans regarding the knowledge, skills and attributes they deem to be essential and exploring whether leadership preparation/development programs have enhanced their leadership capacities and how.

Phase 6 - Interviews with Provosts, Presidents, Vice Chancellors

Phase 7 - Cross-cultural comparisons with international collaborators to compare and contrast their culture-specific findings with others in the project with the view to distilling the lessons that can be learned and to identify the rich culturally-nuanced differences.

Literature Review

The island of Puerto Rico has a wide variety of academic institutions with Schools and programs offering the adequate knowledge and tools to develop and gain the necessary skills for educational leadership, a fundamental field for the professionals serving the country through their work as leaders in the Education field. Students from Puerto Rico can choose from eleven (11) different institutions that offer a Master's degree, and some offer a Doctorate too, in educational leadership and/or administration. However, after having examined the academic offer from each institution, the findings indicate that only one institution has created a curriculum that specializes in Higher Education Leadership.

The academic offerings of Universidad Metropolitana (UMET), National University College (NUC) and the Instituto para el Desarrollo Humano (IDH) all include a master's program related to leadership and administration in educational organizations. UMET's specialty, "Educational Administration and Supervision", and NUC's "Educational Leadership" are part of the School of Education's offerings, and even though IDH's Masters is officially in Business Administration, it is worth mentioning due to the nature of the specialty, "Leadership and Ethical Management", which can be applied to the student's specific job scenario or background discipline through its elective courses. All three programs offer the basic elements of educational leadership through courses with topics such as organizational behavior, ethical and legal aspects, financial management, human resource management, and the latest tendencies in the fields of supervision and administration. A key difference between IDH and the other two institutions is that the latter ones offer courses that align the specialty with its foundations, which is Education. Said courses are aimed to provide the student an insight to the basic concepts of learning behaviors and education principles. IDH, on the other hand, has more courses focusing on financial strategies, the global market and strategic planning with an entrepreneurship point of view.

Universidad del Turabo Master's in Educational Management and Nova Southeastern University Master of Science in Leadership at the Fischer College of Education cover the same topics as the other institutions mentioned, basically a combination of the key concepts from education and fundamental aspects of

administering an educational organization. But most importantly, both institutions have a doctoral program. The doctoral degree from Turabo, "Educational Leadership", gives the student a wider view of what entails to be a leader in an educational environment by including in their curriculum courses that introduce social, cultural and political dimensions, philosophical perspectives, and evaluating instructional programs.

The graduate program of the University of Puerto Rico (UPR) is perhaps one of the most prepared and varied in course offerings but it focuses in leadership towards schools and not higher education specifically. The elective credit options range from specified administrative and management courses to theory, practice and certain areas of focus such as special education and elementary school. Fundamental credit courses have a wide range of options all covering history, philosophy, psychology and pedagogy, the program also emphasizes investigation as a necessary part of the program with qualitative analysis being the main focus. Though the graduate programs from the university are suited to the likes and needs to the graduate students it does not focus or offer higher education preparation.

The Interamerican University (Aguadilla, Arecibo, Barranquitas, Metro, Ponce, San German Campus) offer a thirty-six (36) credit degree program that focuses majority in investigation, philosophy and basic management which all focus on school education. The doctoral program from the Metro campus is one that offers a more extensive approach that includes various specializations but, once again, focuses mostly in research, management and philosophy for schools. The closest to higher education is their "University Teaching" which prepares teachers for higher education teaching but not for administrative or leadership roles.

Among other institutions that have been analyzed is the University of Phoenix which offers an intensive doctoral program that focuses mostly in research, investigation, theory, laws, base management and data analysis in educational areas but lacks mention of higher education models. Also Cambridge College, like other institutions mentioned offers a program in School Administration but

does not apply or adapt to higher education and University of Sacred Heart offers a Certification in Community Leadership but does not focus on education.

Nova Southeastern University offers a Doctorate in Education with an impressive variety in concentrations starting by Educational Leadership, Educational Leadership with a State Approved Program which include Georgia, Nevada, Ohio and Pennsylvania, and finally in Higher Education Leadership. This last one is designed, specifically, for practicing or aspiring educators, trainers staff developers in public or private colleges, universities, hospitals, government, religious organizations, military and private corporations. The curriculum consists of the basic principles of leadership applied to Higher Education Institutions, and it incorporates student affairs.

Interestingly, Nova Southeastern University, the only institution with an academic program that specializes in Higher Education Leadership. The institution provides three options to complete the degree: on campus, off campus or online, this way students residing on the island or outside the state of Florida can complete the program without compromising their professional or personal responsibilities. Nova was the only institution that provided us with results relevant to this investigation. Among the results two (2) dissertations were published: *The Relationship Between Strategic Management and Presidential Leadership in Selected Colorado State Supported and Private Institutions of Higher Education and Transformational Leadership as a Predictor of Effectiveness, Extra Effort, and Satisfaction in Higher Education*.

Conclusion

Taking into account the facts and details that compose each curriculum, we gained a perspective into what might be the product of the student's academic coursework, achievements, investigations and publications. The results of the literature review were limited, which was to be expected due to the nature of the academic programs offered, their main objectives and the key concepts taught through their curriculums, which are mainly related to educational leadership in broader terms or general leadership organizations in an educational environment. In cases where there is a context provided to apply the coursework, it is usually for professionals aiming to be primary or secondary school directors, not necessarily for Higher Education Leadership roles.

UPR and Nova Southeastern University were the only institutions with published material related to Higher Education Leadership. Therefore, the field of Higher Education Leadership has many opportunities for further investigation and development, which not only favors the student and the institution, but also it is also beneficial for the improvement and prosperity of the education of a community.

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