A percepção do professor-gestor sobre capacitação e desenvolvimento de competências gerenciais na UFRN

The perception of the teacher-manager about training and development of management competences at UFRN

La percepción del docente-director sobre la formación y desarrollo de habilidades directivas en la UFRN

Sabrina Rosa Mendes
Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Norte
UFRN, Caixa Postal, 1524, Campus Universitário Central, Lagoa Nova, Natal/RN - CEP 59078-900
https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9335-3937
brinna.rosa@gmail.com

Marcos Fernando Machado de Medeiros
Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Norte
UFRN, Caixa Postal, 1524, Campus Universitário Central, Lagoa Nova, Natal/RN - CEP 59078-900
https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9335-3937
marcos.medeiros@ufrn.br

Maria Teresa Pires Costa
Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Norte
UFRN, Caixa Postal, 1524, Campus Universitário Central, Lagoa Nova, Natal/RN - CEP 59078-900
https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9335-3937
teresapires.psi@gmail.com

Resumo: Sob a luz da Política Nacional de Desenvolvimento de Pessoal da Administração Pública Federal - PNPD e respectivas atualizações, esta pesquisa tem como principal objetivo analisar a percepção do professor-gestor sobre a relevância da capacitação e desenvolvimento de competências gerenciais na sua atuação como gestor na Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Norte. A metodologia quali-quantitativa combina pesquisa aplicada, descritiva, e levantamento de campo, utilizando a análise documental, a análise de conteúdo e a estatística descritiva para a análise dos resultados. Para a coleta de dados utilizou-se o método de grupo focal e questionário on-line. Os resultados do grupo
focal permitiram identificar que a forma como os docentes desenvolvem suas competências ao assumirem cargos de gestão acontece na prática, na vivência do dia a dia, pois existem competências que não podem ser desenvolvidas a partir de capacitações, sendo estas mais efetivas para desenvolver competências técnicas e operacionais. Na percepção da maioria dos professores-gestores, os efeitos e impactos da capacitação, em termos de desenvolvimento de competências gerenciais, ainda não são percebidos na prática.

Abstract: In the light of the National Policy for the Personnel Development of the Federal Public Administration - PNDP and respective updates, this research has as main objective to analyze the perception of the professor-manager about the relevance of training and development of managerial skills in his performance as a manager at Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte State. The qualitative-quantitative methodology combines applied and descriptive research and field survey, using document analysis, content analysis and descriptive statistics for the analysis of results. For data collection, the focus group method and online questionnaire were used. The results of the focus group made it possible to identify that the way teachers develop their skills when they assume management positions happens in practice, in their day-to-day experience, as there are skills that cannot be developed through training, which are more effective for develop technical and operational skills. In the perception of most teacher-managers, the effects and impacts of training, in terms of developing managerial skills, are not yet perceived in practice.

PALABRAS CLAVE
Gestión por competencias.
Docente-gerente.
Capacitación.
Introduction

Public services in Brazil have undergone several reforms in recent decades, ranging from public activities being transferred to the private sector, to citizens participating in executing public services through co-production. Some challenges arose from these transformations, such as the need to develop new managerial skills, as well as the need for new forms of leadership (Sicilia et al., 2016; Sorensen & Torfing, 2018).

It was through the 1995 management reform with the New Public Management (NPM) that the human resources area of the Brazilian federal public administration began a considerable modernization process, paying greater attention to public servants (Bandeira et al., 2017). After decades of efforts to professionalize public servants, the National Policy for Personnel Development of the Federal Public Administration (Política Nacional de Desenvolvimento de Pessoal da Administração Pública Federal - PNDP) was created in 2006 through decree n. 5,707, with the aim of contributing to the professional development of personnel based on the competency model in training plans (Brasil, 2006).

It is in this context of encouraging new management forms, and in accordance with the demands for change with regard to providing quality public services that the strategic people management policy was established within the scope of the Brazilian federal public service, taking the competency-based management model as a paradigm (Perseguino, 2017).

According to Perseguino (2017), research related to Competency-Based Management (CBM) in federal universities in Brazil has been shared since 2008, however, the majority of research directs its analysis to the administrative technician category, whether within the scope of the perception of the competence concept, or in evaluating instruments and processes (plans and annual training instruments, competency mapping processes, performance assessment processes and competency-based competitions).

Among the various obstacles and limitations to be faced by Federal Higher Education Institutions in implementing this management model, Silva, Mota & Lima (2022) conclude that it is up to the managers of these respective Institutions to identify a consistent methodology for implementing the model, without ceasing to take their specificities into account. Despite the small number of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) which have implemented this management model, the authors consider competency-based management to be a solid model that tends to stimulate individual and organizational competencies, with a view to achieving institutional objectives with greater effectiveness (Silva, Mota & Lima, 2022).

From this perspective, the guiding question for this study emerges: What is the teacher’s perception of training in the process of developing managerial skills in their role as a teacher-manager? To this end, the work was structured by presenting an initial discussion on “Competency-based management in Federal Higher Education Institutions”, and then presenting and discussing some publications that promote this debate in order to identify the reflection under construction on the topic.
Competency-based management in HEIs

A common idea was created that the work of public servants was marked by low performance, little dedication, lack of creativity and flexibility (Marques, 2015). However, the transition from the bureaucratic public administration model to a managerial model has required a new stance from public universities and consequently from their employees (Pascuci, 2016).

And there is a history of barriers when it comes to managing public employee profiles, which make it impossible to perceive points of excellence and improvement to achieve this objective (Carvalho, 2009). Furthermore, what is currently observed is that Brazilian public servants experience an identity crisis and face the need to give new meaning to their work (Silva, 2021).

The lack of a consistent personnel policy meant that these employees sought training based on individual rather than institutional interests. Likewise, some existing training programs deviate from the real needs of the university, in addition to cases in which employees do not show interest in attending the courses that are offered (Souza, 2009).

In a study conducted with a sample of 50 universities, it was identified that only eight institutions adopted the CBM model and that the majority only consider the model at the strategic management level. Furthermore, none of the federal universities have fully implemented the model in all of their people management subsystems (Perseguino, 2017).

According to Jovanelli et al. (2020), the decree that introduced the National Policy for Training Servants of the Federal Public Administration established guidelines for training civil servants with the aim of achieving improved efficiency and quality of public service, as well as recognizing public servants throughout the permanent training process, changing the view that employees should only participate in events related to the activities performed in their respective position or function.

In a study conducted in one of the 20 largest HEIs in Brazil, Silva et al. (2021) identified that despite legislation requiring adoption of competency-based management since 2006, the institution still has not been able to comply with it for the following reasons: complex environment; need for change in organizational culture regarding political customs; rigidity in its structure; and the need to motivate employees to train themselves, despite the stability guaranteed through current legislation.

Furthermore, the main perspectives identified by the authors regarding the challenges faced were: dissemination of competency-based management as a priority in organizational culture; mapping and allocation of servers according to the skills required for the position; more objective regulation of people selection, in a way that takes into account the skills necessary to fill the position (Silva et al., 2021).

In a study conducted by Gomes et al. (2021), the authors sought to understand how the current people management model contributes to the choice of employees to occupy positions of trust. It was identified that although priority is given to occupying positions by individuals within the workforce and the formal education of employees is encouraged, the process of choosing positions of trust is still influenced by subjective aspects, unrelated to competency-based management.

It is generally clear that the concept of
teaching competence within the scope of university management is restricted to in-depth knowledge of the discipline to be taught (Berger et al., 2019). However, given the need to occupy management positions, it is necessary to know the skills and main challenges of teachers in this scenario.

Thus, in seeking to outline the main difficulties faced and the skills necessary to exercise the position of manager at IFMG, Silveira (2019) points out that the majority of employees do not have specific training to exercise the management position, they experience work overload and accumulation of functions, and concludes that the challenges and skills reported are linked to leadership, creativity, curiosity, communication, motivation and self-learning, followed by the need for collaboration, negotiation and innovation.

Although there is an opportunity for technical employees to access management, a large proportion of public university managers are composed of teaching employees, since the legislation defines the activities of direction, advice, leadership, coordination and assistance as the activities of higher education teachers (Brasil, 1987).

It is in this context that the choice of managers for trust functions acquires peculiar contours within the scope of Federal Higher Education Institutions (FHEIs), since the complexity and specificity of the educational area in which the manager needs to deal with administrative, pedagogical, academic and scientific duties requires preparing individuals to assume managerial positions (Barbosa et al., 2016).

Methodological elements of the study

In the search for answers to the problem, a cross-sectional study with a qualitative and quantitative approach was conducted. This is a descriptive study which seeks to capture the perception of teacher-managers about training and development of managerial skills. It is configured as a field survey, with the Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte as the research locus.

Data collection occurred in three stages. A documentary analysis was initially carried out to describe the Competency-Based Management Model adopted by UFRN through its strategic documents, such as: Statute of UFRN, Training Needs Survey (Levantamento das Necessidades de Capacitação – LNC – 2021), Institutional Development Plan (Plano de Desenvolvimento Institucional – PDI 2020-2029), Management report (relatório de Gestão 2021), People Development Plan (Plano de Desenvolvimento de Pessoas 2021). Then, to deepen the topic and capture the perception of teacher-managers about training and development of managerial skills, a focus group was held in December 2022 with 5 teachers occupying management positions. The focus group interview script was structured into 3 parts: a) academic and professional trajectory; b) role of training; c) aspects that influence participation or non-participation in training actions.

Finally, the results of the focus group served as the basis for preparing an online questionnaire divided into 7 blocks using a Likert scale ranging from 1 (totally disagree) to 5 (totally agree), to assess the degree of agreement among teacher-managers on aspects relating to the development of managerial skills. The questionnaire was made available to teachers occupying academic and administrative management positions, thus constituting the third stage of
data collection which aimed to increase the sample representativeness.

Document analysis, content analysis and descriptive statistics were used to analyze the results, configuring data triangulation to complement and validate the results. The group interview was transcribed and the results analyzed in light of the qualitative approach of content analysis following the guidance of Bardin (2011), and followed the steps of: a) organization (survey of what would be used and evaluation of what would be useful to answer the research problem); b) coding (defining registration unit and context unit); and c) a posteriori categorization (grouping verbs, words or phrases into large categories).

Descriptive research “has the primary objective to describe the characteristics of a given population or phenomenon or to establish relationships between variables” (GIL, p.47, 2008). This study is considered descriptive since it was possible to describe certain characteristics of UFRN teacher-managers through applying the questionnaire and after categorizing its variables, such as their distribution by age, sex, and education level (among others), as well as identifying whether variables linked to “training” and “development of managerial skills” are related.

It is worth highlighting that all ethical procedures were carefully respected, and the study was registered and approved by the UFRN ethics committee. Furthermore, an Informed Consent Form (ICF) was presented at all of the data collection stages.

Presentation and discussion of the results

This section presents the discussion of the results in three stages: 1) Description of the UFRN Competency-Based Management (CBM) Model; 2) Focus Group; and 3) Online questionnaire. The project to implement the UFRN CBM model resulted in 11 institutional competencies that support the planning and subsystems of the people management area and achievement of the organizational strategy. They are: citizenship and social responsibility, communication, teaching, ethics, extension, strategic management, people management, innovation and technology, internalization and internationalization, research, and sustainability.

Competency mapping was performed for academic managers and administrative managers. Thus, management skills were mapped for managers of academic units in the positions of Center Director and in the roles of Department Head, and Undergraduate and Postgraduate Course Coordinators. The mapping of managerial competencies for managers of administrative units was performed for the roles of Pro-Rectors, Superintendents and Secretaries, Directors, Coordinators, Sector Heads, Technical Advisor and Administrative Secretaries.

The profile of each manager in their respective positions and functions was outlined in the project to implement the UFRN CBM model, as well as the knowledge, skills and attitudes expected of each one. General individual competencies were also mapped.

A basic official tool for the construction of UFRN’s People Development Plan is the Training Needs Survey (LNC) which is carried out annually, and aims to identify gaps in knowledge, skills and attitudes of employees to generate the necessary skills for better performance of the units and the achievement of the institution’s
strategic objectives, as well as the demands of Formal Education courses and training activities.

Two assessments are conducted after the event to evaluate the training: impact and reaction, to understand the employee’s perception of the training activity carried out in order to contribute to improve these activities. Assessments (impact and reaction) are made using an agreement scale, in addition to providing space for criticism and suggestions regarding service, infrastructure, support services, teaching material, additional content, etc.

Knowing the context in which the institution finds itself in terms of implementing the competency-based management model, we moved on to the second stage of the study, the focus group. The accessibility criterion was used with the participation of 5 managers in this stage. The profile of the participants was initially identified: of the 5 participants, 3 were male and 2 were female. They had an average age of 48.40 years, with a minimum age of 35 years and a maximum age of 65 years. The average length of service at UFRN is 16 years, the shortest time being 7 years and the longest time being 26 years. The average time specifically holding a management position was 5.8 years, with the shortest being 4 years and the maximum being 10 years. Of the 5 participants, only one did not take the manager training offered by the institution, and the manager who spent the most time in a management position was the only one who did not take this type of training. Two of the participants took a course in the area of Public Management (PM) or Administration (ADM). One of them did not say what their training was, while the other explained that they had completed a Master’s and Doctorate in ADM.

Although everyone considers training courses as important actions in the process of developing skills, it was emphasized that the way in which teachers develop their skills when taking on management positions happens in practice, in everyday life, as there are skills that cannot be developed through training. This corroborates Rodrigues & Villardi (2017), who highlight the need for individual efforts, sacrifices and reflections to improve skills as a teacher-manager.

Almost all participants believe that having training in the management area can be a facilitator, but it is not enough due to the peculiarities of public management, especially university management. In the participants’ perception, learning sources are multiple, ranging from courses, board meetings, and manager forums, evidencing a form of informal collective learning.

The participants’ perception regarding the role of training is that it is ideal for developing technical and procedural competence, meaning they need to be related to the manager’s practical experience, day-to-day processes, and operational issues, such as the use of systems. Pessoa et al. (2022) highlighted the Institutional Competencies (legislation, graduation resolution) and the Technical and Technological Competencies (Use of the SIPAC and SIGAA Systems) in their study as competencies that need to be developed by teacher-managers.

Training in relation to emotional and political skills, meaning behavioral skills, is no longer considered effective according to the perception of these managers. Still in the study by Pessoa et al. (2022), socio-emotional skills were the most highlighted, which corroborates the findings of this study regarding its importance.

Training policies need to be improved...
for the majority of participants, especially with regard to prior and advance planning of training.

It is necessary to allocate training in formats and times that are conducive and viable for that manager and this planning should be built together with the manager, thus bringing management to the local reality. Participants also stated that some courses should be mandatory within training policies, since only waiting for the manager’s will and voluntarism does not work, as there are topics that need to be general knowledge, so training policies need induce the manager to participate.

Another factor mentioned by participants is the need to prepare teachers to do teaching, research, extension and management from the beginning of their career and entry into the public sector, as the training policy is designed for after the management position, when it should be designed from the beginning of teacher training, including the probationary period. Finally, a factor which was considered important by the participants, and which would motivate participation in training actions, would be the workload of management courses being valued within the Individual Teaching Plans (Planos Individuais Docentes – PID) and influencing progression. These were the findings of the focus group.

The last stage of the study refers to the online questionnaire applied in December 2022. It is worth noting that only 64 teachers responded to the questionnaire out of a universe of 363 teacher-managers. In block 1 (Development of Management Skills), 82.8% partially or completely agree that learning happens when you are in a vice/deputy position. Another 96.9% partially or completely agree that learning happens in practice as daily needs and demands arise, while the remainder preferred to not give their opinion. Despite this, 84.4% partially or completely agree that training courses are important in the process of developing managerial skills. Then in block 2 (Sources of teacher-manager learning), 89% of participants agreed that although courses, manager forums and council meetings are considered learning sources, the greatest learning source occurs on a daily basis, meaning informally. In block 3 (The role of training), 81.3% partially or completely agree that training can mainly fulfill its role with regard to technical, operational and procedural skills, but not with regard to political skills. Even so, 71.9% partially or completely agree that the training activities carried out by them had a positive influence on their performance as a manager. In block 4 (UFRN’s training policies), 64% partially or completely agree that the institution’s training policies need to be improved and better planned. Furthermore, 59.4% partially or completely agree that some courses should be mandatory in training policies; also, 71.9% partially or completely agree that teachers should be prepared for management from the beginning of their career. In block 5 (Factors that influence participation in training actions), 93.7% partially or completely agree that the amount of demand accumulated by the teacher is a factor that influences participation in training actions, and 79.7% partially or completely agree that the lack of advance planning also influences this. Lastly in block 6 (Motivational factors), 81.2% partially or totally agreed that training needs to be directly linked to some procedure in the manager’s day-to-day life, 84.3% partially or totally agreed that the training format is a motivating
factor to participate in the training, and finally 79.7% partially or completely agree that if the training hours for managers were valued within the PID, they would feel motivated to participate in these activities.

In order to identify the profile of the participants, a series of questions were asked about gender, age group, length of service and course completion at the end of the questionnaire. It is observed that the majority of respondents identified themselves as male (56.3%) and the rest as female (43.7%). Regarding the age range of the participants, 37.5% were between 40-49 years old, 26.6% were between 50-59 years old, 25% were between 31-39 years old and 10.9% were between 60-69 years old. The majority of participants (95.3%) have a Doctorate degree. Of the total number of participants, only 21.9% completed a course in the Administration or Public Management area. Moreover, 21.9% have worked at the institution for 0-5 years; 25% have worked for 6-10 years; 32.8% have worked for 11-15 years; 1.6% have worked for 16-20 years; 6.3% have worked for 21-25 years; 7.8% between 26-30 years; and 4.7% have worked at UFRN for more than 30 years.

It can be seen that 23.4% of participants work or have worked as a manager for a period of up to 2 years; 34.3% of participants work or have worked as a manager for 3-5 years; 17.2% for 6-8 years; 15.6% for 9-11 years; 1.6% for 14-16 years; and 7.8% for 17 years and over. Furthermore, 60.9% of participants took some training course for managers offered by UFRN in the last 18 months. Finally, the majority of participants (90.6%) performed the Training Needs Survey (LNC) at some point since taking on the management position.

Final considerations

This work achieved the proposed objective of analyzing the teacher-manager’s perception of training and development of managerial skills in their role as a manager at UFRN.

It was observed that the institution has taken important steps in the quest to implement competency-based management and develop the competencies necessary for good individual and institutional performance in employees, using the LNC as a basic strategic tool for diagnosing and verifying competency gaps so as to guide actions and plans within institutional people management policies. Despite this, no indicator used by the institution to monitor these actions was identified. In other words, there is an important database which cannot be ignored and that could be used in the monitoring/evaluation stage suggested in various competency-based management models proposed for public administration, such as those of Brandão & Bahry (2005) and Montezano & Isidro (2020).

In the perception of most participants, the way in which teachers develop their skills when taking on management positions happens in practice in everyday life, as there are skills that cannot be developed through training, which is more effective in developing technical and operational skills.

For the specific objective of analyzing possible correlations between training and developing managerial skills, the statistical results indicate that the majority of participants (90.6%) performed the Training Needs Survey at some point since taking on the management position, and that 60.9% took some training course for managers offered by UFRN in the last 18 months.

Despite the sample limitations, the
contributions of the study are evident by enabling analysis from the point of view of employees who had their skills mapped and management applied, and not just the managers who coordinated the process (Landfeldt, 2016). The study also contributed to verifying whether training was able to have the necessary effect in terms of developing the competencies of employees who manage universities after more than 15 years of legislation, and whether these effects can already be seen in practice, confirming that several efforts will still be necessary until an approximation of the current reality to the notion of competencies is perceived (SILVA, 2021). Finally, the study presents results which can support improvement in institutional training policies, not to mention the academic contribution to the topic in studies on competency-based management.

References


Silva, A. B. (2021). *Gestão de Pessoas por Competências nas Instituições*
Públicas Brasileiras. 2ª ed. Editora UFPB.


