

Competency Based Human Resources Management (Case study)

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Abstract

This research examines the application of the competency approach as a basis for the human resources management activities. This research examines to what extent the competency approach is applied. Also, this research examines the relations between the competency approach application and the advantages that could be achieved due to the application of this approach. What are the challenges or the constraints facing to activate the implementation of the competency approach? And what are the requirements for this approach to make it work? The researcher conducted a survey in organization to answer these questions. The researcher used the

quantitative analysis method to analyze this survey and to test the research hypotheses, and to know the differences according to the demographic variables. A sample of 62 surveys was distributed among employees in the organization, and the response rate was 100%. The analysis showed that the competency approach is applied in a wide way as a basis for the human resources management activities in the. And there a positive effect of the requirements availability and the competency approach implementation, and there is a positive effect of applying the competency approach and achieving benefits.

* Introduction

Human resources are considered the key factor for success to any organization either private or public, so it's very important for the organization to identify and develop the required competencies of its human resources in order to achieve its ultimate goals and objectives.

There is a trend in the public organizations in which they adopt new practices to manage the human resources in order to enable the organization to be more flexible and more adaptable with the changes that could happen in its environment. As a response to the changes in the economic, technological, social variables, one of the new concepts that entered the public management and human resources management is the competency concept (Sylvia, 2002, P.3). This new concept identifies the skills and traits that employee needs to perform his job well. The competency based human resources management is the process that is built on the competency framework and using it as a basis for the human resources management activities” recruitment, selection, training, rewards, and other activities”.

This approach is different from the traditional human resources

management. The new approach focuses on the skills, attitudes and behaviors that employees need to achieve the objectives of the organization and to adapt with changes; on the other hand, the traditional approach is based on the job description, which emphasizes on the formal qualification, experience, and seniority as a basis for human resources management activities and this approach doesn't empower the organization to be adaptive with the changes and doesn't lead to excellence in work.

(Sylvia, 2002, P.3) explained that Competency approach in human resources management is being rapidly applied in several governmental entities as a reaction to globalization consequences, increasing the international competition and increasing of citizens' expectations about the government performance. The first application for the competency approach was in the private sector then it was transferred to the public sector during 1990s with the advent of the new public management. The United States of America and the United Kingdom are considered the pioneering countries to apply this approach in their governmental entities

in responding to challenges and to retain their competitive advantage.

The studies that were conducted about this new approach are supportive for it due to the benefits of applying the competencies as a basis for human resources management activities over the traditional personnel management approach.

*** HRM in Dubai**

HRM has become a very important department in any organization in recent years. Due to the globalization consequences, we are facing in the Arab region several challenges like rapid competition from the developed countries. And to face this competition, we should have a distinguished HRM in our organizations which applies the modern practices to be capable of attracting and retaining highly skilled labors who are considered the key factor to face this competition. But the problem is that the HRM in the Arab world organizations has a secondary role and is dominated by the traditional values which affect badly on its role. But we cannot generalize this issue because there are some Arab countries like UAE and especially Dubai which is more concerned of its human resources.

Dubai started to apply the new practices to manage its human resources and is considered the first Arab country to apply the competency approach. Dubai applied this approach on its governmental institutions. Dubai is one of the fastest growing cities in today's world.

Through our case, we will explain what are the challenges facing in using the competency approach, and what are the requirements for this approach to make it work in the organization, trying to pave the road for this approach to be implemented effectively.

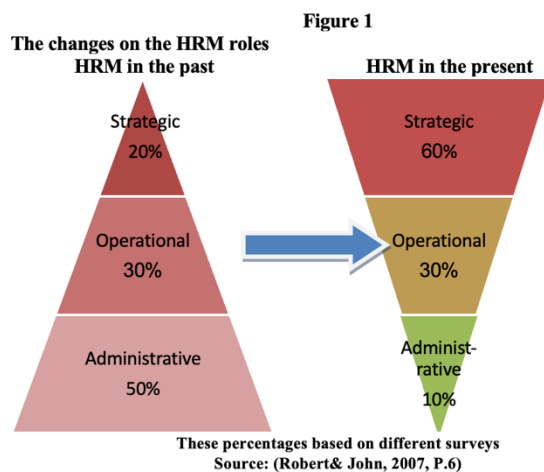
*** (Competency-Based HRM in theory and practice**

(Robert & John, 2007, p.6) explain that the human resources management has three main roles in the organization which are:-

- 1- The administrative role of HRM. This role concentrates on the administrative issues that are related to keeping the employees' records, and applying rules and regulations.
- 2- The operational role and employee advocate role for the HRM. This role concentrates on different activities of the HRM which include the training, recruitment, performance evaluation. This role tries to support the employee and achieve his goals.

3- The strategic role of the HRM. This role is considered the most important role for HRM which enhances the ability of the organization to compete through determining the organization's needs of the human resources to adapt with the challenges and to achieve sustainable progress.

*** The following figure shows the changes on the HRM roles**



This figure shows that the role of HRM has become more strategic rather than administrative or operational to enhance the ability of the organization to achieve its goals and to be capable to face the different challenges. The HRM engaged in setting the strategic goals for the organization.

*** Challenges for managing human resources in the contemporary organizations**

The organizations are facing several changes and challenges which

are related to the globalization phenomenon. We will explain some of these changes that had a huge effect on the human resources management.

The first challenge is the rapid development in the information and communication technology. (Nagiub, 2001, P.11) mentioned that it's very important for the organization to adapt with these new technologies to compete with the others, and this requires from the organization to recruit highly qualified human resources who have the required skills to adapt with this new technology.

The second challenge is the trade liberalization and open markets as a result of the World Trade Organization rules. (El Selmie, 2007, pp.15-16) explains that this challenge means more competition between countries and between organizations. This challenge needs from organization to recruit and retain highly skilled labors who are capable to compete and to have the ability to enhance the organization's ability to achieve its goals.

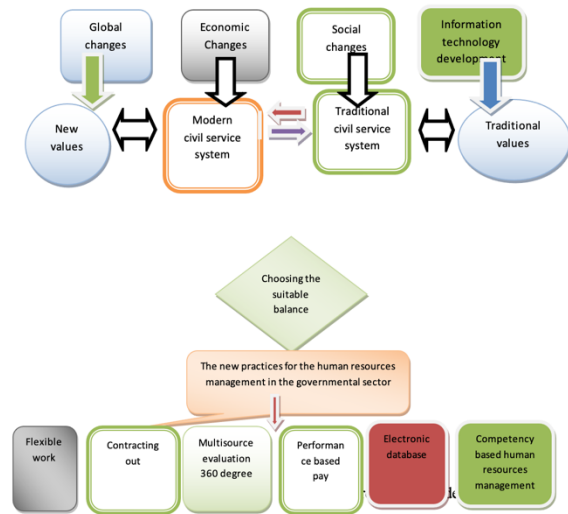
The third challenge especially for the developing countries is the economic alliances between countries like the European Union, Asian countries alliance. (El Selmie, 2007, pp.15-16) shows that these alliances

create huge multinational corporations that have huge abilities to compete and to weaken the other organizations that can't compete with these corporations. So, it's very important for the developing countries to enhance their capabilities through adopting new practices to manage their human resources to be cable of recruiting and retaining highly skilled employees who are capable to compete.

As a result of these changes, there are new practices started to be applied in the field of human resources management. These new practices as shown in the following figure are the competency based human resources management, using the information technology to implement the HRM activities, the performance-based pay, using the multisource evaluation system 360 degree, contracting out some activities of HRM, and applying the idea of flexible time.

And the following figure shows the factors that affected on the human resources management and the new practices that appeared as a result of these factors.

Figure (2) The factors that affected on the Human resources management field



Sources: (El Baradei,2009, p.68)

This figure shows the conflict between the traditional values in the civil service “like patronage system, loyalty for the political party, permanent appointment, the values of protecting the employees regardless of their efficiency, the values of seniority, and guaranteeing jobs for graduates in the civil service regardless of their efficiency” and the new values that concentrate on the efficiency and the importance of the human resources’ competencies. There are new practices for the human resources management appeared in the governmental sector as a result of this conflict and to adapt with the new challenges. these new practices that appeared are the competency based human resources management, using the information technology and communication in the

human resources management, the Multisource evaluation 360 degree, contracting out some activities of the human resources management, and adopting the approach of using the flexible time and flexible work.

In this paper we will concentrate on one of these new practices which is the competency based human resources management. We will explain some definitions and concepts that are related to competency based human resources management.

Definitions and concepts

Many researchers agree about the definition and the content of the **competency** concept. For example, (Dubois & Rothwell, 2004, p.16) showed that Competencies are the characteristics that individuals have and use in appropriate way in order to achieve the desired performance. These characteristics include knowledge, skills, and personal traits. (Sylvia, 2002, p.4) defines competency that it's the skills, knowledge, and behaviors that are required in the human resources to be more effective in their work.

In general, the competency concept is related to two parts, the first part is the skills, knowledge, and traits. And the second part is the performance which is considered as dependent

variable for the skills and knowledge which is the independent variables. And this means that obtaining the required skills and knowledge lead to enhance the performance.

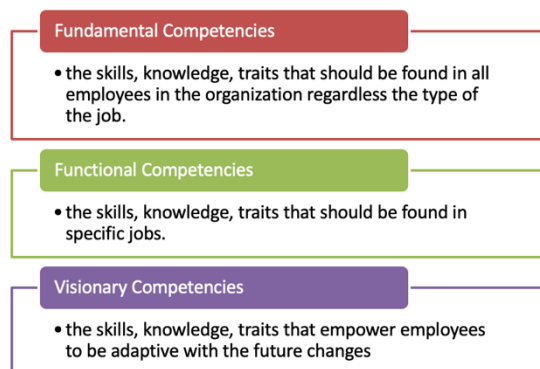
Competency framework is a list includes the required skills, knowledge, and traits that organization needs in its employees to achieve its targets. This framework will be the basis for the human resources management practices. (Michael, 1999, p. 271)) mentioned that there are two types of the competency framework as follow:-

1- Generic competencies are the skills, knowledge, and traits that should be found in all employees in the organization regardless the type of the job.

2- Specific competencies are the skills, knowledge, traits that should be found in the employees who are doing specific job.

(Noordeen, & Gary, 2004, p.116) showed that there are three types of the competency framework as shown in the figure (3)

Figure (3) Competency framework types



*** Differences between Traditional HRM and Competency-Based HRM**

(Dubois & Rothwell, 2004, pp.11-13) explains the difference between the traditional human resources management and new approach which is the competency based human resources management. As shown in the following table:

Table (1) The difference between the traditional approach and the new approach in HRM

	Traditional HR management	Competency Based HR Management
Foundation	Work analysis and job descriptions form the foundation of traditional HR management. And become the basis for recruiting, selecting, orienting, training, rewarding, appraising, and	Competencies are the traits that individuals use for successful and exemplary performance. the competencies are the basis or the foundation for the HR activities

	developing people.	
Major challenges	Work changes rapidly, and job descriptions quickly become outdated The approach is rarely successful in providing leadership on using human talent to greatest advantage	The meaning of the term competency is not clearly and consistently understood Identifying the competencies that distinguish exemplary from fully successful performers is labor intensive and can expensive and time consuming
Role of HR function	Ensures compliance with laws, rules, regulations, and organizational policies and procedures	Selecting and developing more people who can achieve at the measurable productivity levels of exemplary performers.
HR planning subsystem	Concentrates on head count and HR expenses Makes forecasts based on the assumption that the future will be like the past and the same number of people are needed to achieve predictable, measurable work results	Concentrates on talent and the value HR brings to the organization. Does not assume that the future will be like the past or that the same head count is needed to achieve predictable results Favors the use of qualitative planning methods.

	Favors quantitative methods for workforce planning	
Employee recruitment and selection	Finds candidates to match the qualifications outlined in job specification. Assumes that education, experience, and other qualifications are equivalent to the ability to perform assigned work activities.	Makes section decisions based on demonstrated ability to perform. Compares applicant's talents to competency models that define the traits of fully successful or exemplary performers in their work areas.
Employee training and development subsystem	the process is either vague or ambiguous	Builds individual competencies to achieve exemplary performance and to be adapted with the changes.
Performance management subsystem	Keep costs at a minimum while providing performance feedback to individuals. Makes decisions about pay raises, promotions, and related issues	Periodically assess individuals against competency frameworks for their current work. Provides feedback to individuals to help them move toward exemplary performance

(Dubois & Rothwell, 2004, pp.11-13)

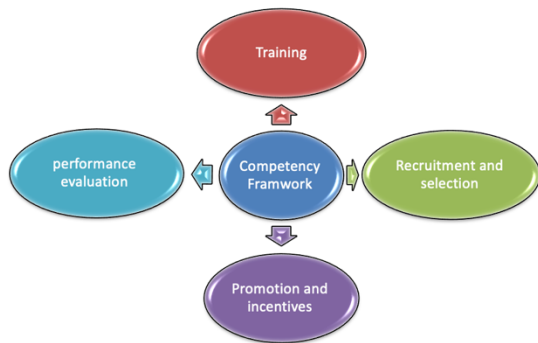
* Effects of competency based human resources management

There are several advantages and benefits that resulted from applying the CBHRM in the organizations as follow:-

(Margaret & Patrick, 2000, pp.128-135) in their statistical Study that was conducted to examine the relationship between the impact of using the competency based human resources management on performance of the Irish organizations. this study has been relying on several variables to determine the performance which are turnover rates, absenteeism rates, sales growth, profits, return on total assets, through distributing a questionnaire to 500 organizations, both owned by the Irish Government or the private sector. This questionnaire was directed to the managers of human resources management and chief financial officer of the organization, The findings referred that there is a direct correlation between the use of the competency as a basis in human resource management, and organizational performance, represented by the low rates of absenteeism, low labor turnover rates, high proportion of profits and sales growth, in contrast to organizations

that do not rely on competency in the management of human resources.

(Byham, 2000, p.4) showed that adopting the competency approach achieves more coordination and integration between different activities of the human resources management in the organization, as a result from using one basis which is the skills, traits, and knowledge for all HRM activities in the organization. And the following graph explains that:-



1- Increasing the ability of the organization to recruit and to retain the talented employees and to reduce labor turnover rates. And increasing the degree of motivation and job satisfaction for the human resources in the organization. (Farnham & Horton, 2002, p.37)

2- Encouraging creativity and innovation, and enhancing the organization's ability to adapt with changes and challenges that organization faces. (Farnham & Horton, 2002, p.37)

3- Providing a high degree of justice in the selection process and evaluation of performance, and achieving transparency, besides improving performance and enhancing the competitiveness of the institution. (Farnham & Horton, 2002, p.37)

Increase the degree of managers' commitment to achieve the organization goals. (Lawler, 1994, p.14)

4- Increasing the organization's ability to achieve customer satisfaction. (Mikkelsen, 2002, p.948)

* Requirements for Effective Implementation of CBHRM

To achieve the expected benefits or advantages of applying this approach, there are some requirements to guarantee the success of applying the competency based human resources management as follow:-

1- Endorsement and support of senior management to make the competencies the basis for HRM activities in the organization. (Farnham & Horton, 2002, p.33)

2- Tests designed to determine the availability of skills in human resources should be at a high degree of credibility and reliability. (Christopher & Lodge, 2004, p. 376)

The organization should provide its employees good career package like

high salaries and other benefits to attract the highly and talented skilled employees.

3- The organization should have proper climate for innovation and creativity, and creating organizational culture that encourages employees to acquire new skills to achieve its targets. (Dubois, 2004, p.221)

4- More flexibility and freedom for employees to be more creative and innovative, and avoiding the routine as a result of applying strict rules and procedures. (Jeanot & Lichtenberger, 2002, p.128)

The selection and recruitment process in the organization should characterize by objectivity and should be away from the cronyism and mediation. The selection process should rely on the criterion of efficiency, competence and availability of skills required in the applicant. (El Baradie, 2009, p.70). Selection and recruitment should be based on attracting talented and highly qualified employees

The organization should start to increase the awareness of those who are in charge of applying the competency based human resources management through attending workshops or conferences or specialized training courses about the

application and implementation of this new approach in the organization. (Dubois & Rothwell, 2004, p.221)

Adopting a new organizational culture that encourages employees to increase their skills, and knowledge.

The organization should have enough financial resources that are necessary to provide training programs to upgrade skills and abilities for its human resources.

The training programs in the organization should aim to bridge the gap between available skills and what is required in human resources to cope with changes, as shown in the following table:

Table (2) Determining the training needs

The required skills in the employees for specific job	The available skills	The gap that will be filled through training
Computer skills (Excel, Access and PowerPoint)	×	
English language skills	×	
Problem solving ability		×
Innovation and creativity		×
Communication and negotiation skills	×	
Using SPSS program		×

Prepared by the researcher

The competency approach should be applied gradually in the

organization. Starting by recruitment and selection for specific positions in the organization until to be generalized for the other activities and for all positions in the organization. (Armstrong, 1999, p.276)

The responsibilities of the human resources management in the organization should be aware of the labor market, the labor supply, the available skills, and determining the best methods to recruit the highly skilled employees for the organization. (Hood & Lodge, 2004, p.374)

On the other hand, there are some obstacles and constraints that could affect badly on the implementation of the competency based human resources management in the organization as follow:-

- 1- The senior and executive management in the organization are less committed to support this new approach which may affect on their positions, and the Lack of commitment by executive management and the lack of adequate support from senior management to implement competency based human resources management affect badly on the implementation process. (Farnham & Horton, 2002, p.33)
- 2- The responsibilities of implementing the competency approach still don't

understand the competency concept and its content of ideas and how to implement it in correct way. (Farnham & Horton, 2002, p.33)

3- The organization is dominated by Organizational culture that does not encourage applying the competency concept as a basis of human resources management activities.

4- The organization faces intense competition by the private sector to attract the best human resources which could lead to influence on the quality of the human resources that can be attracted by the organization. (Hondeghem & Parys, 2002, p.59)

5- The information system for the human resources department in some organizations is still based on the manual traditional system” books, records” and it's not based on the modern information technology which effects on implementing the competency approach effectively.

6- Limited financial resources and low wages and incentives for staff which reduces the chances of competition with the private sector to attract the qualified employees and the ability of the organization to retain highly skilled employees.

7- Speed in the implementation of the competency approach, without the presence of pilot Studies, and not to

follow the idea of gradual approach in the application. (Farnham & Horton, 2002, p.33)

8- The organization suffers from the absence of labor market studies, in terms of labor supply and the skills and knowledge available in the labor market, which may not allow those in charge of human resources management to meet rapid needs of organization.

9- The domination of the personal considerations and mediation in the recruitment and selection process in the public organizations, and the Lack of transparency and weak accountability in the organization. These issues affect badly on the effectiveness of applying the competency approach.

10- Many Arab countries consider public organizations places to reduce the unemployment rate in the society, so they recruit unqualified labors to work in these organization which affect badly on the organization ability to achieve its targets.

11- High degree of centralization and concentration of power in the higher administrative levels could prevent the talented human resources to use their skills in creativity and innovation to achieve excellence in performance.

*** Research Methodology**

This paper seeks to answer the following main questions:-

1- How CBHRM was implemented in our case?

2- What were the requirements for implementation of competency approach?

3- What are the constraints that impede the implementation of competency?

4- What were the effects of applying the competency approach?

5- This paper tries to test the research hypotheses which are:

6- There is a positive relationship between applying the competency approach and achieving different advantages for the organization.

7- There's a positive relationship between the availability of the competency approach requirements and the implementation of competency based human resources management in the organization

8- There's a negative relationship between the competency approach constraints and the activation of the competency based human resources management in the organization.

The research uses a survey to answer these questions, and to test the previous hypotheses. Conducting a survey, a survey in the asset management and using the quantitative

analysis method to analyze this survey and to test the relationship between independent and the dependent variables through SPSS program. A sample of 62 surveys was distributed among employees in the Asset management, and the response rate was 100%.

*** Measures**

To measure our variables, we used Likert- scale type ranging from 1 to 5 as follow 5= strongly agree, 4= agree, 3= undecided, 2= disagree, and 1= strongly disagree. Then the researcher created an index which consists of some variable to measure the main variables which are:-

- 1- Competency based recruitment and selection, which consist of 5 variables as shown in the appendix.
 - 2- Competency based training and development which consist of 4 variables.
 - 3- Competency based Pay system which consists of 5 variables.
 - 4- Competency based performance evaluation system which consists of 4 variables.
- Requirements of competency approach which consist of 19 variables.
- 5- Obstacles of competency approach which consist of 22 variables.

6- Advantages of competency approach which consist of 12 variables.

The research depends on using specific tests to test different relationships in this survey. And to test these relationships, the researcher used the t-test method and the simple regression test. These tests were conducted after satisfying their assumptions.

The survey contains 79 variables including the demographic variables which were entered into SPSS program to assess the validity and the accurateness of the data by doing the data cleaning and alpha reliability test. And the following table shows the reliability test which shows all required indexes are reliable because Cronbach's Alpha is greater than 0.7

Table (2) Reliability test

Index	Cronbach's Alpha
Recruitment and selection Index	0.821
Training and Development index	0.808
Pay systems index	0.779
Performance evaluation index	0.891
Competency based human resources management index	0.894
Requirement's index	0.860
Constraints and obstacles index	0.917

Advantages index 0.896

*** Results**

*** The sample characteristics**

Table (3) shows the sample characteristics. The response rate is 100% out of 60 surveys were distributed. According to gender type, males' figure 96.8%. And most of the respondents, their age is between 20 to 40 years old, which represent approximately 75.8%. And 74.2% of respondents are married. And according to the occupational position, Middle management represents 16.1%, supervisors represent 38.7%, and employees represent 45.2%. Also, we classified the sample according to the years of work, and we found that most of them have less 5 years of work which represent approximately 61.2%. Most of the sample is highly educated which represent more than 87.1%. According to nationality type, the emirati represent 4.8% in the sample and the expatriate represent 95.2%.

Table (3) Sample characteristics

		Frequency	percent	Mean	Median
Gender	Male	60	96.8	1.03	1
	Female	2	3.2		
Age	less than 20	1	1.6	2.92	3
	20-30	24	38.7		
	31-40	23	37.1		
	41-50	7	11.3		
	more than 50	7	11.3		
Marital status	single	16	25.8	1.74	2
	married	46	74.2		
	Divorced				
Occupational position	Top management			3.29	3
	Middle management	10	16.1		
	Supervisory	24	38.7		
	Employee	28	45.2		
Years of work	Less than 2 years	20	32.2	2.32	2

	2 to less than 5 years	18	29	2.9	3
	5 to less than 10 years	12	19.4		
	10 to less than 15 years	8	12.9		
	More than 15 years	4	6.5		
Level of education	Elementary			2.9	3
	Intermediate school	8	12.9		
	University / college	52	83.9		
	Master or PhD	2	3.2		
Nationality	Emirati	3	4.8	1.95	2
	Expatriate	95.2	95.2		

*** Competency based recruitment and selection**

To measure to what extent the competency approach is used in the recruitment and selection process in the organization, I asked the sample some questions which measure this variable based on the literature review as shown in table (3). The results show that:-

- 1- Approximately 92% of the respondents agree that human resources in the department are recruited on the basis of skills, abilities and personality traits that required by the department to achieve its objectives.
- 2- More than 79% of the respondents agree that selection and recruitment processes are based on attracting highly skilled and talented people.
- 3- On the other hand, we find approximately 64.5% of the respondents refer that the years of experience and seniority still are considered as criteria for selection and

recruitment in the organization. And this means that the traditional approach is used to some extent in the department.

4- 17.7% of the respondents refer that the personal relationships are playing a role in the selection process especially for the high management positions.

Table (3) Competency based recruitment and selection

Recruitment and selection	Strongly agree %	Agree %	Undecided %	Disagree %	Strongly disagree %
human resources are recruited in the organization on the basis of skills, abilities and personality traits required by the Organization to achieve its objectives	19.4	72.6	1.6	4.8	1.6
Selection and recruitment processes are based on attracting highly skilled and talented people	17.7	61.3	12.9	6.5	1.6
years of experience and seniority are the basis for Selection and recruitment in the organization	12.9	51.6	17.7	14.5	3.2
The primary focus in the selection and recruitment of human resources processes is based on the availability of skills and capabilities in the person	17.7	61.3	12.9	4.8	3.2
Personal relationships and nepotism dominate the selection process especially for the higher management positions.	1.6	16.1	50	25.5	6.5

*** Competency based Training and Development**

To measure to what extent the competency approach is used in the

training and development activities in the organization; I asked the sample some questions which measure this variable as shown in table (4). The results show that:-

1- Approximately 93.5% of the respondents agree that organization is concerned to develop skills and abilities of the employees in continuous way.

2- More than 96.7% of the respondents agree that training courses in the asset management contribute in increasing skills and capabilities of employees that enable them to excel and improve their performance at work

3- 82.5% of the respondents refer that the human resources department facilitates opportunities of learning and development for employees in the organization.

On the other hand, we find approximately 58.1% of the respondents refer that Training courses are conducted in traditional way and it does not bridge the gap between what is available from the skills and the skills required to improve performance.

Table (4) Competency based Training and Development

Training and Development	Strongly agree%	Agree%	Undecided%	Disagree%	Strongly disagree%
organization is concerned to developing my skills and abilities continuously	41.9	51.6	4.8	1.6	
training courses contribute in increasing skills and capabilities that enable employees to excel and improve their performance at work	41.9	54.8	1.6		1.6
The human resources department facilitates opportunities of learning and development for employees in the organization.	30.6	51.9	12.9	4.8	
Training courses are conducted in traditional way and it does not bridge the gap between what is available from the skills and the skills required to improve performance	11.3	46.8	16.1	21	4.8

*** Competency based pay**

To measure to what extent the competency approach is used in pay system in the organization; I asked the sample some questions which measure this variable as shown in table (5). The results show that:-

- 1- Approximately 59.6% of the respondents agree that incentives and rewards in the department are determined on the basis of acquiring new skills and capabilities that allow employees to excel in their work.
- 2- More than 64% of the respondents agree that chances of promotion increase as long as employee acquires

skills and capabilities required for transition to a higher position

3- 50% of the sample refer that there is more flexibility for promotion in the organization, regardless of seniority if the employee has the required skills for promotion, and 22.6% of the respondents disagree.

4- Approximately 46.8% of the respondents agree that Wages in the organization are set primarily on the basis of individual skills and abilities, but 22.6% of the respondents disagree.

On the other hand, we find approximately 56.4% of the respondents refer that the main criterion for determining the pay and incentives in the organization is the criterion of seniority and educational attainment

Table (5) Competency based pay

Pay systems	Strongly agree%	Agree%	Undecided%	Disagree%	Strongly disagree%
incentives and rewards are determined on the basis of acquiring new skills and capabilities allowing employees to excel in their work	16.1	43.5	11.3	24.2	4.8
Chances of promotion increases as long as employee acquires skills and capabilities required for transition to a higher position	14.5	50	12.9	17.7	4.8
There is more flexibility for promotion in the organization, regardless of seniority if the employee has the required skills for promotion	11.3	38.7	27.4	16.1	6.5
Wages in the organization are set primarily on the basis of individual skills and abilities	12.9	33.9	30.6	19.4	3.2

Pay systems	Strongly agree%	Agree%	Undecided%	Disagree%	Strongly disagree%
The Main criterion for determining the pay and incentives in the department is the criterion of seniority and educational attainment	3.2	53.2	11.3	27.4	4.8

* Competency based Performance evaluation

To measure to what extent the competency approach is used in the Performance evaluation process in the department; I asked the sample some questions which measure this variable as shown in table (6). The results show that:-

1- Approximately 69.4% of the respondents agree that performance evaluation reports are based on skills and abilities of the employees and the reflection of these skills on the performance.

2- More than 70.9% of the respondents agree that performance is assessed by linking the rates of performance to the skills, knowledge that are available in employees.

3- 69.4% of the respondents refer that the performance appraisal process is used to determine the training requirements of skills and abilities to fill the gap in performance.

On the other hand, we find approximately 27.5% of the respondents refer that performance

evaluation processes dominated by personal relationships.

Table (6) Competency based Performance evaluation

Performance evaluation	Strongly agree%	agree	Undecided%	Disagree%	Strongly disagree%
Performance evaluation reports are based on skills and abilities of the employees and the reflection of these skills on the performance	19.4	50	9.7	16.1	4.8
Performance is assessed by linking the rates of performance to the skills, knowledge that are available in person	16.1	54.8	11.3	14.5	3.2
the performance appraisal process is used to determine the training requirements of skills and abilities to fill this gap in performance	21	48.4	14.5	14.5	1.6
Performance evaluation processes dominated by personal relationships and nepotism	8.1	19.4	22.6	40.3	9.7

* The requirements that guarantee the successful implementation of CBHRM

By asking the sample about the requirements that guarantee the successful implementation of competency based human resources management, and are available in the department. The results show that:-

1- More than 72.6% of the respondents agree that the department conducts tests to determine to what extent the recruited employees have the required skills

3- Approximately 79% of the respondents agree that the department

is interested to organize continuing education programs and patterns of open learning and training programs that aim to enhance the skills of employees.

4- More than 87% of the respondents agree that the department emphasis on the importance of the skills, abilities that should be available in the employees, and the benefits that they will get when they develop their abilities and skills.

5- 67% of the respondents refer that there is support from senior management to make the skills and capabilities the basis for HRM activities in the institution.

6- 88.1% of the respondents agree that the department has proper climate for innovation and creativity, and problem solving.

7- 55% of the respondents refer that civil service law emphasis on the competency as a basis for selecting the human resources in the institution and the basis for promotion, but we find more than 35% of the respondents don't know what are the contents of this law?

8- 71% of the respondents agree that the organization emphasis on the objectivity and eliminating the values that encourage patronage and mediation.

9- 77.4% of the respondents agree that the training programs in the department aim to bridge the gap between the available skills and what are required in human resources to cope with changes, and 14% disagree.

10- 69.4% of the respondents agree that selection and recruitment are based on attracting the talented and highly qualified employees, and 15.1% of the sample disagree.

11- 69.4% of the respondents agree that the selection and appointment process in the institution is based on the objectivity and it's far away from the cronyism and mediation. The selection process moved from the traditional norms in the appointment criteria such as seniority and educational attainment, to rely on the criterion of efficiency, competence and availability of skills required in the applicant, but 11.3% of respondents disagree.

12- 46.7% of the respondents agree that the institution is characterized by good salaries and benefits and good career, the institution provides its employees by good career package like high salaries, but 37% of respondents disagree.

More than 85% of the respondents agree that the institution has the financial resources that

necessary to provide training programs to upgrade skills and abilities of the human resources, and 7 % of respondents disagree.

Approximately 74% of the respondents agree that tests designed to determine the availability of skills, knowledge in human resources are at a high degree of credibility and reliability; on the other hand, 11.3% of the respondents disagree.

*** The constraints or the problems that impede the activation of the CBHRM**

Then I asked the sample to what extent the following constraints or the problems that impede the activation of the competency approach are found in the department. The results show that:-
1- 80.6% of the respondents agree that the department Focuses on procedural aspects, and the implementation of regulations and laws rigidly.

2- More than 64.5% of the respondents agree that still there is a lack of understanding of the competency concept and its content of ideas among employees in the department.

3- 26% of the respondents agree that there is a speed in the implementation of this new approach, without the presence of pilot Studies, and gradual approach is not followed.

4- 56.4% of the respondents agree that there is an intense competition by the

private sector to attract the best human resources which could lead to influence the quality of human resources that can be attracted by the institution.

5- 46.7% of the respondents agree that the institution suffers from limited financial resources and low wages and incentives for staff which reduces the chances of competition with the private sector to attract the qualified employees.

6- 30.6% of the respondents agree that the institution is characterized by a high degree of centralization, and concentration of power in the higher administrative levels that they could prevent the talented human resources use their skills in creativity and innovation to achieve excellence in performance.

7- Approximately 36.5% of the respondents agree that there is a high labor turnover rates in the institution.

8- 48.4% of the respondents agree that there is an absence of labor market studies, in terms of labor supply and the skills and knowledge available in the labor market, which may not allow those in charge of human resources management in the institution to meet rapid needs of organization.

9- 38.7% of the respondents agree that selection process in the institution is

based on personal interviews that are not designed carefully, and the personal considerations dominate this process.

10- 45.2% of the respondents agree that there is some resistance from some workers who support traditional system and who benefit from it.

*** The advantages of applying the competency approach in the institution**

By asking the sample about advantages that have been achieved & will be achieved due to the application of the competency based human resources management in the department, the results are as shown in table (7):-

1- 83.9% of the respondents agree that applying the competency based human resources management in the institution encourages creativity and innovation.

2- Approximately 75.8% of the respondents agree that applying the competency based human resources management in the institution increases the institution's ability to retain the talented employees and reduce labor turnover rates.

3- 80.7% of the respondents agree that applying the competency based human resources management in the institution increases the institution's

ability to attract excellent human resources.

4- 77.4% of the respondents agree that applying the competency based human resources management in the institution provides a high degree of justice in the selection process and evaluation of performance.

5- 79% of the respondents agree that applying the competency based human resources management in the institution increases the degree of motivation and job satisfaction for the human resources in the institution

6- 87.1% of the respondents agree that applying the competency based human resources management in the institution improves performance and enhance the competitiveness of the institution.

7- 85.5% of the respondents agree that applying the competency based human resources management in the institution increases the degree of managers' commitment to achieve the goals of the institution

8- 93.6% of the respondents agree that applying the competency based human resources management in the institution increases the organization's ability to achieve customer satisfaction

9- 83.8% of the respondents agree that applying the competency based human resources management in the

institution creates the appropriate environment for creativity and innovation and encourage employees to develop their skills and abilities.

10- 74.2% of the respondents agree that the competency approach contributed to reduce complaints of employees.

Table (7) The advantages due to applying the competency approach in the institution

The advantages due to applying the competency approach in the institution	Strongly agree%	Agree%	Undecided%	Disagree%	Strongly disagree%
Encouraging creativity and innovation	37.1	46.8	11.3	1.6	3.2
Increase the institution's ability to retain the talented employees and reduce labor turnover rates	12.9	62.9	9.7	14.5	
Increase the institution's ability to attract excellent human resources	19.4	61.3	12.9	6.5	
Increase the degree of motivation and job satisfaction for the human resources in the institution	17.7	61.3	12.9	8.1	
Provide a high degree of justice in the selection process and evaluation of performance, and achieve transparency	12.9	64.5	11.3	11.3	
Improve performance and enhance the competitiveness of the institution	21	66.1	9.7	3.2	
Increase the degree of managers' commitment to achieving the goals of the institution	21	64.5	11.3	3.2	
Increase the organization's ability to achieve customer satisfaction	27.4	66.1	4.8	1.6	
human resources in the institution are committed to develop their skills and abilities	22.6	61.3	14.5		1.6
Create the appropriate environment for creativity and innovation and encourage employees to develop their skills and abilities	17.7	66.1	11.3	3.2	1.6
The competency approach contributed to reduce complaints of employees.	12.9	61.3	16.1	8.1	1.6
The employees have confidence about this system due to the fairness of the application	12.9	67.7	9.7	6.5	3.2

*** The reasons of that encourage employees to acquire new skills in the organization**

By asking the sample about reasons that encourage them to acquire new skills in the department, the respondents mentioned the following reasons:-

1- The organization would like to be the best in performance & distinguished department in DEWA, so we are trying to do our best to achieve this target.

2- Improving skills, innovative ideas, and suggestions are s always appreciated by the higher management.

*** The factors that affect badly on the motivation of employees to acquire new skills in the department**

1- Routine work affects badly on the ability of employees to be innovative.

2- Biased evaluation and giving the mangers the full control of the evaluation.

3- Less recognition from mangers towards our achievements.

4- Less benefits & negative feedback.

Testing the relation between the dependent variable and the independent variable using simple regression.

Table (8)

Dependent variable	Independent variable	R Square	F	Sig	Beta
Competency based human resources management index	Requirement's index	0.627	101.007	0.000	0.792
Advantages index	Competency based human resources management index	0.331	29.634	0.000	0.575

Testing the relationship between applying the competency approach and achieving different advantages for the institution. The result of F statistic shows that the independent variable which is the implementation of the competency approach has an effect on the dependent variable which is the advantages that returned to the institution. In other words, the overall effect of competency approach is positive effect (F= 29.634, p = .000<.01). the competency approach has a positive effect (Beta coefficient = .0.575), (R square = 0.331) on achieving advantages for the organization such as follow:-

- 1- Encouraging creativity and innovation
- 2- Increase the Department's ability to attract excellent human resources
- 3- Improve performance and enhance the competitiveness of the department

- 4- Increase the organization's ability to achieve customer satisfaction
- 5- human resources in the department are committed to develop their skills and abilities

Testing the relationship between the availability of the competency approach requirements and the implementation of competency based human resources management in the institution. The result of F statistic shows that the independent variable which is competency approach requirements has an effect on the dependent variable which is the implementation of the competency approach. In other words, the overall effect of competency approach requirements has a positive effect (F= 101.007, p = .000<.01). The availability of competency approach requirements has a positive effect (Beta coefficient = 0.792), (R Square= 0.627). The competency approach requirements like:-

- 1- The department has proper climate for innovation and creativity, and problem solving.
- 2- Civil service laws emphasis on the competency as a basis for selecting the human resources in the institution and the basis for promotion.
- 3- The institution emphasis on the importance of the skills, abilities that

should be available in the employees, and the benefits that they will get when they develop their abilities and skills

4- The institution emphasis on the objectivity and eliminate the values that encourage patronage and mediation

5- The training programs in the institution aim to bridge the gap between available skills and what is required in human resources to cope with changes

6- The institution has the financial resources that necessary to provide training programs to upgrade skills and abilities of the human resources

*** Discussion**

The analysis of the survey shows that the competency approach is implemented or applied to some extent as a basis for the human resources management activities in organization.

In the recruitment and selection activity, we found that the department uses the competencies as a basis to recruit its employees, and keen o recruit and to select highly skilled and talented employees, but still the educational attainment, years of experience and seniority are considered criteria for selection and recruitment in the institution. On the other hand, some respondents refers that the personal relationships are

playing a role in the selection process especially for the high management positions, and this may affect badly on the effectiveness of applying the competency approach.

In the training and development activity, we found that the department is concerned to develop skills and abilities of its employees, that training courses in the department contributed in increasing and enhancing the required skills and capabilities of the employees that enable them to excel and to improve their performance at work, but still some training programs are conducted in traditional way which don't bridge the gap between what is available from the skills and the required skills to improve performance.

In the pay system process, we found that one of the main criteria to determine the incentives and rewards for employees in the institution is acquiring new skills and capabilities which allow employees to excel in work. Also acquiring these skills gives the employees more chances for promotion to a higher position regardless of the traditional criteria which are the seniority and the educational attainment, but still these traditional criteria play a role in

determining the wages in the department.

In the performance evaluation process, we found that most of the performance evaluation reports are based on skills and abilities of the employees and the reflection of these skills on their performance, and this through linking the rates of performance to the skills, knowledge that are available in employees. Also, the HRM in the department depends on the performance evaluation reports to determine the training requirements of skills and abilities to fill the gap in performance. But still personal relationships play a role in the performance evaluation for some employees but in a narrow way.

The analysis shows that there are several requirements, that guarantee the successful implementation of CBHRM, are available in the organization. These requirements help the department to apply and to guarantee the implementation of CBHRM. We found that there are support from senior management to implement the competency approach as a basis for the human resources management in the department, the organizational climate in the department encourages the innovation and creativity among

employees, besides civil service laws emphasis on the competency as a basis for selecting the human resources in governmental institutions here in Dubai. Also, to some extent the objectivity values dominate in the institution. Also, the training programs play an important role to bridge the gap between the available skills and what is required in employees, besides. The analysis shows that the department is keen to attract highly qualified employees, who are capable to achieve the institution goals, through conducting reliable tests to determine to what extent the recruited employees have the required skills.

On the other hand there are some constraints or the problems that may impede the activation of the CBHRM in the department which are: the organization still focuses on procedural aspects and the implementation of regulations and laws rigidly, and the department is characterized by a high degree of centralization, and concentration of power in the higher administrative levels that they could prevent the talented human resources use their skills in creativity and innovation to achieve excellence in performance. There is a lack of understanding of the competency concept and its content of

ideas among employees in the department. There is a lack of commitment by some executive managers who resist to implement competency based human resources management due to the effects of this system on their positions. Also, there is an intense competition by the private sector to attract the best human resources which could lead to influence the quality of human resources that can be attracted by the department. There are a labor turnover rates in the department due to the intense competition from the private sector. The absence of labor market studies, in terms of labor supply and the skills and knowledge available in the labor market, which may not allow those in charge of human resources management in the department to meet rapid needs of organization, besides the policies adopted by the government that aim to make public institutions a place to reduce the unemployment rates in the community, so this may lead to appoint unqualified graduates in the public institutions.

The analysis shows that there are several advantages have been achieved & will be achieved from applying the competency approach in the department. We find that this approach encouraged creativity and

innovation among employees enhanced the department's ability to retain the talented employees, increased the institution's ability to attract excellent human resources. This approach improved the performance of the employees, and increased the degree of motivation. Applying CBHRM in the department creates an appropriate environment for employees to develop their skills and abilities.

*** Conclusion and Recommendations:**

The competency approach has become a very important approach to be applied fully in the organization to enable it to be more flexible and more adaptable with the changes that could happen in the environment and to be able to compete with the rapid competition among other peers and increasing the citizens' expectations about its performance. There are several advantages and benefits which result from applying this new approach because this approach empowers the organization to attract and to retain the talented and skilled employees who are capable to compete and to adapt with the rapid changes. This approach encourages creativity and innovation among employees. It enhances the institution's ability to retain the

talented employees and enhances the institution to reduce labor turnover rates, increases the institution's ability to attract excellent human resources. This approach improves the performance of the employees, and increases the degree of motivation and job satisfaction for employees in the institution and contributes to reduce complaints of employees.

We found in this paper that the competency approach is implemented or applied to some extent as a basis for the human resources management activities in the organization. We found that 92% of the respondents agree that human resources in the department are recruited on the basis of skills, abilities and personality traits that required by the department to achieve its objectives. 92.5% of the respondents agree that training courses in the department contribute in increasing skills and capabilities of employees that enable them to excel and improve their performance at work. 65.5% of the respondents agree that chances of promotion increase as long as employee acquires skills and capabilities required for transition to a higher position. 69.5% of the respondents agree that performance evaluation reports are based on skills and abilities of the employees and the

reflection of these skills on the performance. Also, the analysis shows that there are several requirements CBHRM, are available in this institution, helped the institution to apply and to guarantee the successful implementation of CBHRM. For example, there is support from senior management to implement the competency approach as a basis for the human resources management in the department, the organizational climate in the department encourages the innovation and creativity among employees, besides civil service laws emphasis on the competency as a basis for selecting the human resources in governmental institutions here in Dubai. But there are some constraints that may impede the activation of the competency approach in the department which are: the institution still focuses on procedural aspects and the implementation of regulations and laws rigidly, and the institution is characterized by a high degree of centralization, and concentration of power in the higher administrative levels that they could prevent the talented human resources use their skills in creativity and innovation to achieve excellence in performance. There is a lack of understanding of the competency concept and its content of

ideas among employees in the institution. Also, there is an intense competition by the private sector to attract the best human resources which could lead to influence the quality of human resources that can be attracted by the institution. Also, to some extent there's a Lack of transparency and weak accountability in the institution, besides the policies adopted by the government that aim to make public institutions a place to reduce the unemployment rates in the community, so this may lead to appoint unqualified graduates in the public institutions. So, we recommend eliminating these obstacles as follow:-

- 1- The institution should emphasis more on the objectivity and eliminating the values that encourage patronage and mediation.
- 2- Activating the accountability and transparency, more flexibility of applying the procedures and rules and encouraging the innovation and creativity.
- 3- Increasing the awareness among managers and employees about the benefits of applying this new approach either on the employees themselves or on the institution.
- 4- Providing more incentives for employees to increase the ability for the institution to attract highly skilled

employees and increase the ability of the institution to compete with the private sector which could attract the highly skilled labors due to the benefits that it provides.

The institution should conduct studies about the market labor, in terms of labor supply and the skills and knowledge available in the labor market, which allow those in charge of human resources management in the institution to meet rapid needs of organization.

The institution should focus more to achieve transparency and accountability. And make the appointment in the public institution based on the efficiency and effectiveness, to appoint only qualified graduates in the public institutions.

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