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## Revisiting Managerial Competencies- Literature Review

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### **Abstract:**

*The purpose of this article is to cite a review on the concepts of managerial competencies used by managers by examining the importance and frequency of use of managerial competencies applied to various organizations from different industries. There is a lack of studies done on assessment of approach to identify managerial competency which revealed that managerial competencies, according to managers, are determined by their personal traits and skills acquired during the development process. It was found that studies recognized the difficulties inherent in preparing an all-time suitable competency framework. In particular, those associated with the variety, complexity and universality of the skills, attitude and knowledge which executives require within a changing environment. It becomes essential to study managerial competencies and competency management as a topic of research, so that appropriate training programs for management staff get a basis to develop effective professional development programs. A focused recruitment and performance management tool may be developed with the help of competency clarity. The paper serves as a collection of basic concepts of competency and provides with a structured body of the competency management phenomenon.*

**Keywords:** Managerial competency, human resource management, competency framework.

### **1. Introduction**

Competency is used as an umbrella term to cover almost anything that might directly or indirectly affect job performance (Woodruffe, 1992). Nordhaug & Gronhaug (1994) commented, "The competence concept remains one of the most diffuse terms that have been discussed in the organizational and occupational literature". The introduction of competency based approaches to the corporate and academic environment initiated around 1970 and their development and use since then has been rapid (Horton, 2000). McClelland (1973) is credited with introducing the idea of "competency" into the human resource management literature through his efforts to assist the 'United States Information Agency' to improve its selection procedures. After the term 'competency' was coined by Lundberg (1972) and McClelland's (1973) article, as 'Testing for Competence Rather than for Intelligence', more attention was paid to product quality and differentiated customer demand. Consequently, separate training departments in firms became a ritual. McClelland's (1973) concept of competency proved to be a key driver of the competency movement and competency based education. McClelland (1973) defined "competency" from a psychological point of view. He argued that traditional intelligence tests, as well as proxies such as scholastic grades, do add to the individual persona of an aspirant but fails to predict job performance in reality. The growing dissatisfaction with intelligence testing and the traditional job analytic approaches to personnel selection, was the reason to accept the proposal to test for competency. The concept of key qualifications, developed in the 1970s in Germany by Mertens (1974), focused on the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed for flexible performance within a particular occupational domain whereas, McClelland (1973) in his research found that competencies such as interpersonal sensitivity, cross-cultural positive regards and management skills differentiated superior from average Information Officers (Dubois, 1993). This could be moreover understood as an advantage of competency management approach over the traditional Intelligence Quotient assessment procedures. Competency Management differs from the more traditional job analysis as it focuses more on "how" work is accomplished instead of on "what" is accomplished (Kurz and Bartram, 2002; Schippmann et al., 2000).

Boyatzis (1982) described competencies as underlying characteristics of an individual, which are, causally related to effective job performance. These underlying characteristics of a manager are observable, demonstrable and inferred/extrapolated and must lead to effective performance, i.e. there should be difference between the performances of a person with competency and without competency; and that, they cannot be restricted to a single job alone, but the person must be able to carry them along (Sanghi, 2004, Hogg, 1989). Prahalad and Hamel (1990) provided another thrust to the concept of competency. By the end of the 1990s, the concept made way to be regarded as learnable and teachable attributes that indicate aptitude to perform various human activities such as work, learning, and coping with change (Van Zolingen, 1995; Prahalad and Hamel, 1990).

Throughout the years, competency based approaches have proved to be a critical tool in many organizational functions, such as workforce and succession planning and performance appraisal etc. Mirabile (1997) asserted that a competency that can only distinguish the employee's performance is not enough and it should be a concept that is closely related with working efficiency. LeBoterf (1998) stated that competencies are not themselves resources in the sense of knowing how to act, knowing how to do, or attitudes, but they mobilize, integrate and orchestrate such resources. This mobilization is only pertinent in one situation, and each situation is unique, although it could be approached as an analogy to other situations that are already known. The use of competencies helps to enhance an organization's performance and therefore yields a competitive advantage (Lawler, 1994). When organizations use competency profiles extensively to address a wide range of human resource management (HRM) issues, the approach is typically referred to as competency management (or competency-based management) (Greengard, 1999)

As 'competency' is seen as an 'underlying characteristic' which causally relates to superior job performance (McClelland, 1971; Boyatzis, 1982), a concept of input and output approach was given by Tate (1995) and Hoffman (1999) where in the need of range of qualities of personal effectiveness was said to be required to get a job done successfully (Boam and Sparrow, 1992; Silver, 1991; Ashworth and Saxton, 1990; Burgoyne, 1989). This thought was also supported by, Deist, Delamare and Winterton (2005) and Mumford (2000) and Spencer and Spencer (1993). Here the contraposition between the two meanings of input and output approach w.r.t. competency is that one refers to the output in the form of performance or the result of the training, and other refers to the inputs or the underlying attributes required of a person to achieve competent performance (Boam and Sparrow, 1992; Silver, 1991).

Before the competency management concept gained acceptance, the knowledge, skills and abilities phenomenon was believed and practiced. There is a distinction between competencies and knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs). Competency has a level above than KSAs as it also covers the motives, traits and self-concept of employees (Spencer and Spencer, 1993). While KSAs may underlie competencies just as personal traits may underlie competencies, the KSAs are not the exact competencies (Kravetz, 1988). In brief, each competency consists of several KSAs.

## 2. Need of Study

As the challenges and needs in front of organizations keep changing, so do the 'to be applied' competency models too. A great agreement of inappropriateness in models and frameworks as to what constitutes "competence" in various jobs emerges from this muddle. There floats a big academic and practical gap of demanding particular managerial competencies that are necessary for management specialists and generalists, in order to work successfully in contemporary business scenario across globe (Bakanauskienė and Martinkienė, 2011). It is to be noted that there is a lack of researches done on assessment of approach to identify managerial competency (Bakanauskienė & Bartnikaitė, 2006).

The antecedents of managerial competencies, are determined not only by previously gained personal traits but also by skills acquired during his work life and through organizations' training and development processes (Bakanauskienė & Bartnikaitė, 2006). An inappropriate training module would increase cost of production due to their incapability in making employees carrying out desired performances. Therefore, the scope for identification of antecedents other than personality characteristics opens up and the role of Human Resource Management practices in building of employees competencies finds a place.

As suggested that future research on competency should be clear on concept definition and behavioral manifestation of elements of each competency (Shirazi et al., 2009) the need of listing of managerial competencies and breaking of each is must. Also the social and behavioural perspectives of competency is advised to be taken care of independently (Zhang et al., 2012). Organizations need to focus on three major issues related to their value in a workplace learning context: the difficulties involved in defining notions of competence and competencies; the related difficulty of assessing the existence of competence and problems related to the classification of competencies (Garavan and McGuire, 2001). Also Specific measurement and classification issues have kept emerging on universal and context-specific (organization specific) competencies, firstly because of different organizational culture and environmental variables, and secondly on the basis of person and task orientations (Garavan and McGuire, 2001).

A structured approach of the competency framework would help businesses develop more objective schemes for the design and implementation of training and for management of human resources in environments where functions performed are currently inadequate (Antonacopoulou & FitzGerald, 1996). The concept of 'fit' between strategic objectives and competencies possessed by employees is also not yet worked upon (Boyatzis and Goleman 2007; Boyatzis 1982). Furthermore, there were five common domains of employee competency development discussed, as organizational competence, social competence, cognitive competence, self-competence and job competence, on which separate studies are still to be conducted (Hsieh et al., 2012; Siriwaiprapan, 2000). Apart from 22 competencies included in the IPMA-HR competency model (1998), proposed initially there exist lacuna on part of social and behavioural competencies aspect (Zhang et al., 2012). Additionally, further research is required to explore whether there are any other management competency requirements other than those identified in the current researches that closely relate to the effective

management of employees, tasks and organizations. Besides, whether these competencies are different or similar, across sectors of economy to what is required in the traditional command-and-control management structures, needs further research.

### 3. Methodology

Detailed literature review was conducted from the available literature on the electronic databases like EBSCO, Emerald, JSTOR, Infilnet, Proquest etc. The literature was searched keeping in mind the articles which have tried to define managerial competency. The contributions were then sorted and listed in this paper under broad sub-headings. The articles which at least had a word competency in its title were chosen for the study. In all 114 articles were reviewed ranging from year 1943 to 2014. Following is the detail of number of articles studied year wise, 1940-1960 = 2, 1971-1980 = 6, 1981-1990 = 11, 1991- 2000 = 43, 2001- 2010 = 43, 2011 – 2014 = 9.

#### 3.1. Competency Definitions

There are various definitions of competency but some of them refer to competence. Competence is what people can do while competency focuses on how they do it (Sanghi, 2004). Spencer and Spencer (2008) posited that competencies refer to the range of skills which helps in satisfactory performance and competencies refer to the behaviour adopted in a competent performance. Rowe (1995) advocated, 'Competence means skills and standards of performance while "competency" refers to behavior by which it is achieved'. Drucker (1985) defined competence at individual level as an ability of employees to offer superior performance in tasks. According to Boyatzis, (1982) and Mainemelis et al., (2002), competence is underlying characteristics of a person's motives, traits, abilities, aspects of image or social role and knowledge that a person is able to use while work. Kenworthy (2003) suggested viewing "competence" as a description of what people do and "competency" as a description of how people do it". Spencer and Spencer (1993), said that competence is an ability to perform well in terms of qualification, skills and knowledge, to have authority to do something and have highly qualified awareness.

A job competency as said is an underlying characteristic of a person which results in effective and/or superior performance in a job (Klemp, 1980). Hogg (1989) stated competencies as characteristics of a manager which are observable, demonstrable and inferred/extrapolated and they must lead to effective performance. It is any measurable individual characteristic that differentiates superior from average performance, or effective from ineffective performance (Spencer and Spencer, 1993). Competencies include inter alliance, motives, traits, self-concepts, knowledge, and skills (Spencer and Spencer, 1993). Jovaiša (1993) explained competency as "an essential characteristic of an individual related with higher-quality performance in specific job or situation highlighting the versatility of competencies, ensuring sustainability of personality and making preconditions for forecasting behaviour of a person in various situations of performance.

One of the most general and detailed definition was proposed by Parry (1996) which had been accepted by numerous scholars. He said "A competency is a cluster of related knowledge, skills and attitudes that affects a major part of one's job (a role or responsibility), that correlates with performance on the job, that can be measured against well-accepted standards, and that can be improved via training and development". The National Vocational Council for Vocational Qualification (1997) described competency as performance standards, the ability to perform in work roles or jobs to the standard required in employment.

The definition of Schaardenburgh and Beek (1998), included both individual and organizational competencies in their concept pointing out that competency management is leverage for public organizations to transform their bureaucracies into efficient and flexible (more personalized) units. According to Marrelli (1998), competencies are measurable human capabilities that are required for effective work performance demands, whereas Dubois (1998) acclaimed that competencies are those characteristics- knowledge, skills, mindsets, thought patterns, and the like-that, when used either singularly or in various combinations, result in successful performance. According to Lucia & Lepsinger (1999, p. 5). Perrenaud (2000) also highlighted competency as a capacity to mobilize diverse cognitive resources to meet a certain type of situation and Selby et al., (2000) explained it as an ability expressed in terms of behavior.

Jackson and Schuler (2003), Gartner (2001) and The Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (1999), defined competencies as knowledge, skills, abilities and behaviours that an employee applies in performing his/her work and that are the key employee-related levers for achieving results that are relevant to the organization's business strategies. Carr (2000) proposed competency as a practical implementation of individual abilities characterized by practical skills and attitudes required to ensure successful professional performance. As per Žydžiūnaitė (2005), competency means an ability to take decisions related with the context of particular professional performance.

Draganidis & Gregoris, (2006) defined competency as a combination of tacit and explicit knowledge, behaviour and skills that gives someone the potential for effectiveness in task performance. Ley (2006) demarcated competencies as the cognitive (e.g. knowledge and skills), affective (e.g. attitudes and values), behavioral and motivational (e.g. motivation) characteristics and dispositions of a person which enables him or her to perform well in a specific situations. Pocevičius and Kekytė (2008) proclaimed competency as combination of professional knowledge, abilities and skills as well as an ability to apply them following the requirements of work environment. According to Atkočiūnienė (2010), competency is valuable, rare, non-replenish able and irreplaceable resources that can ensure competitive advantage for an organization in competitive environment. Seale et al. (2010) describe competency simply as, a capability or ability that leads to a successful outcome.

A framework to classify the definitions was developed by Hondelghem and Vandermeulen (2000) where in distinction was made on three views of authors, first group based on individual characteristics (Nordhaug and Gronhaug, 1994; Spencer and Spencer 1993;

Boyatzis 1982), second group talking about core competencies (Gorter, 1994; Hondeghem and Vandermeulen, 2000), and third group relating to organisational competencies. Nordhaug and Gronhaug(1994) connected competency with human capital in an organization and described and analyzed the relationship among competency, training and learning. Hoffman (1999) analyzed past literature and summarized three key points in defining a competency: (a) underlying qualification and attributes of a person, (b) observable behaviors, and (c) standard of individual performance outcomes.

### 3.2. Models on Competency

A competency model describes the combination of knowledge, skills and characteristics, needed to effectively perform a role in an organization and is used as a human resource tool for most of the HR functions like selection, training and development, performance appraisal, succession planning etc. (Byham & Moyer, 2000; Zwell, 2000; Lucia & Lepsinger, 1999; Dubois, 1998; McLagan, 1989). Different companies have used different models, which have been mostly applicable to all levels. The idea behind such designs is, "Competency characteristic remain the same for different levels but the way it is demonstrated becomes different for different roles" (Naqvi, 2009).

Katz's (1955) model was an attempt to transcend the trait problem by addressing leadership as a set of developable skills. This model of leadership skills was advanced by Mumford and his colleagues (Mumford, et al., 2000; Yammarino, 2000) adding a managerial facet of skills relating to the manifestation of effective leadership depending on where leaders are in a management hierarchy. This approach was further reinforced in a 2007 study that examined the skills needed by executives at different levels of management. The results showed that interpersonal and cognitive skills were required more than business and strategic skills for those on the lower levels of management. As one climbed the career ladder, however, the execution of higher levels of all four of these leadership skills became necessary (Mumford et al., 2007).

Pinto and Walker (1978) conducted a study of 'Professional Training and Development Roles and Competencies', to provide a listing of activities which could be grouped so as to create a role model and competencies for Training and Development (T&D) professionals. The research used questionnaires sent to ASTD (American Society for Training & Development) members in the US, Canada, Mexico and other countries. From 2855 returned questionnaires, 14 activities were identified, and a model that described the primary areas of Training & Development was extrapolated from the data (Chen, 2003, p.25). McLagan & Bedrick (1983), examined the current and future directions of Training & Development.

The model of job performance through competency management given by Boyatzis, (1982) suggests that there are three components namely, individual competencies, job demands and organizational demand ensures effective action. Therefore, performance will occur when all three of the critical components of the model are consistent or "fit" and missing any one or two might give ineffective behaviour or inaction, but if they are consistent or congruent, then there is an increased likelihood that effective performance will occur (Boyatzis, 1982). Boyatzis (1982) mentioned two dimensions on which a competency model should be described. Firstly, it should describe the types of competencies associated with various aspects of human behaviour and job requirement and secondly, it should describe the levels of each competency.

Finn (1993) gave a performance based competency model saying that managers' performance (output competencies) is influenced by their attributes that include task-related knowledge and experience (input competencies), and personality characteristics (process competencies). Rothwell (1996) proposed models for Human Performance Improvement, in which he identified new roles, competencies and outputs laying the foundation for future practice in workforce performance improvement. Rothwell et al., (1999) reinvented the field by broadening the research focus from HRD to WLP (Workplace Learning and Performance), combining workplace, learning and human performance improvement (Chen, 2003, p. 30). Rothwell et al., (1999), particularly, emphasized the importance of understanding workplace learners' concept and quoted, 'Competence is a function of what we know about learners'. The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) explored the relative compensation of various HR specialties and working environments and developed its HR Competency Tools. This professional's toolkit is for performance development, which provides information on key HR competencies to guide the practitioner in assessing and developing competencies.

Schoonover (2003) studied emerging trends in HR and new competency criteria. In addition, the Human Resources Competency Model created by International Public Management Association for Human Resources (IPMA-HR) (1998) has also received attention in the literature review (Zhang et al., 2012; Sun and Shi, 2008). IPMA-HR (1998) competency model focused on performance for what it takes to succeed in marketplace through a complete training program by developing 22 competencies for HR success out of which twelve competencies are identified for the role of business partner, fourteen competencies for the change agent role, eight competencies identified for the leadership role, and one competency identified for the role of HR expert. Related to each competency, there is a list of specific tasks (Zhang et al., 2012; Sun and Shi, 2008).

According to Grossman (2007), HRCS findings and interpretations have reflected the continuing evolution of the HR profession and established the professional guidance for HR for the years to come. The conclusion had arrived by examining more than 400 companies and the research is able to report with statistical accuracy what HR executives say and do, (Ulrich et al., 2012; 2007). A review (Ulrich, 2013) on Global Human Resources Competency Study, described six fundamental competency domains that HR professionals must demonstrate to impact business performance. They are strategic positioner, credible activist, capability builder, change champion, human resource innovator and integrator, and technology proponent (Ulrich, 2013).

Naqvi (2009) prescribed a few important characteristics of an effective competency model which talked about it to be process oriented maximizing effective communication between respective organizational members across all levels in an organization. The model lead to superior/improved job performance and support business strategies of the organization (Naqvi 2009). She said, a competency model

should be able to result an observable behaviour which is not vague and has future necessity. A competency framework is an instrument, which can be used to determine the strengths and weaknesses of employees and organizations and help in improving them (Ulrich, 2013; Naqvi, 2009; Boyatzis, 1982).

Competencies defined most often end up as being backward-looking rather than future-oriented with respect to strategy and organizational change (Torrington et al., 2002; Lawler 1994). Laužackas (2005) analyzed the concept of competencies in historical terms comprehensively. However Information systems work as suitable tool to manage individual and organizational knowledge (Bowman, 2012; Alavi and Leidner, 2001), a competency management need emerges when the managers' competency level is lower than the required competence level at job. For this competency need assessment should be done, but usually training needs are assessed in practice (Bowman, 2012; Bakanauskienė & Bartnikaitė, 2006).

### 3.3. Types of Competencies

The analysis of published literature has also showed a gap in terms of a single list of managerial competencies, although it has already become an object of research for quite long (Marčinskas et al. 2010; Камалетдинова, 2010; Wickramasinghe and Zoyza, 2009a, 2009b; Baležentis 2008; Čepienė, 2007; Baležentis, 2006; Petasis, 2003; Boyatzis, 1982). The development of the classification of competences was initiated in Britain in late 1980's and early 1990's. Although previous researchers had already worked on it in different ways.

Categorization considered as classic one was provided by Katz (1955), who divided competencies into three types: technical, human and conceptual. The technical skill dealt with physical equipments and processes, human skills concerns people, and conceptual-skill have relation to ideas. The three-skill approach of Katz suggested that the importance of certain leadership skills varies depending on where leaders are in a management hierarchy (Mumford, et al., 2000; Yammarino, 2000; Katz (1955).

Mertens (1974), one of the first researchers of German labour market and professional training, classified competencies under the following four categories: basic competencies (personal abilities of the highest level: logical, critical, contextual thinking, creativeness), horizontal competencies (related with information search, its processing and use), wide elements (special professional competencies), and vintage factors (knowledge that has not been changing in the course of history, e.g. theory of relativity). Woodruffe (1991) differentiated between "areas of competency", as role or job-related concept for proficiency in job, and "competencies", a person-related concept describing the sets of behaviors that a person must adopt in order to perform tasks. Cockerill and Hunt (1995) defined eleven categories of managerial competencies making 'the high performance managerial competency': information search, concept formation, conceptual flexibility, interpersonal search, managing interaction, business like orientation, impact, self-confidence, presentation, proactive orientation and achievement orientation.

Jovaiša and Shaw (1998), one of the first researchers in Lithuania made a wide-range research on the concept and scope of general abilities defining eight categories of general competencies: basic skills, daily-life skills, employment abilities, social and community-related abilities, broad abilities, management skills and business organization abilities. St. Abraham et al., (2001) offered ten categories of managerial competencies: good verbal/written communication skills, problem-solving skills, orientation to results, interpersonal skills, leadership skills, customer focus, and flexibility/adaptation ability, team player, reliable and striving for quality. Daft (2003) figured that, there are two main managerial competencies, i.e. leadership and team-building.

On the basis of predictability of performance Sanghi (2004) divided competency into two types: threshold and differentiating competency. Deist, Delamare and Winterton (2005) comparing the concept of competencies prevailing in France with the Anglo-Saxon one defined the following types: knowledge or theoretical competencies (*savoir*), functional or managerial competencies (*savoir-faire*) and social or behavioural competencies (*savoirêtre*). Serpell and Ferrada (2007) proposed a typology of basic competencies, organizational competencies and labor function competencies.

Discussing about a general view on managerial competencies' studies shows that there are two prominent approaches to competencies: functional-analytical and personal characteristics (Boyatzis and Goleman 2007). However, there is still no unanimous opinion regarding classification of managerial competencies by categories and types, the requirement of the above competencies varies across different levels and may also vary in different industries and sector. A club of various managerial competencies has been used and is recommended regularly by several authors constructed initially on the basis of (Boyatzis and Goleman 2007; Boyatzis 1982) work. It is as follows.

Sr. No.	Blocks of Managerial Competencies	Managerial Competencies
1.	Professional competencies	Planning, problem solving, information gathering, analytical thinking, abstract thinking, strategic thinking, learning from one's own and others' experience, striving for results, initiative, business-like orientation, generation of ideas, diligence, resolution, global perspective, organizational skills, team-work, negotiation skills, leadership, conflict-handling, communication, organizational awareness, systemic logics, written communication, creativeness and ability to implement innovations, modern knowledge, time management, risk assessment, risk-taking, defining the circle of personal interests.
2.	Social Competencies	Communication and influencing others, verbal communication, convincing communication, effective relations, orientation to customer, goal-setting, delegation of authorities, change management, performance management, fairness, responsibility, flexibility, cultural awareness, qualification, group-building and development skills.
3.	Personal competencies	Self-confidence, stress management, personal reliability, loyalty, self-control, self-confidence, self-management, listening skills, system of personal values, personal goals, continuous personal self-development, personal responsibility for taken decisions, awareness of ethics relevance in business.

Table 1: Categories of Competencies

Source: Goleman, D. and Boyatzis R.E. (2007); Woodcock, M. and Francis (1982); Balezentis, A. (2006)

### 3.4. Levels and Clusters of Competency

Apart from types of competencies there are certain levels as well identified in the competency management literature. There are five levels of competencies discussed in the iceberg model (Sanghi, 2004; Spencer and Spencer 1993). They are motives, traits, self-concept (self-role and self-image) knowledge and skills (Sanghi, 2004, Spencer and Spencer 1993, Boyatzis, 1982). The model represents visible and hidden components of an individual's competencies. On the basis of knowledge, skills, traits, motives and self-concept etc. competence developed which when comes into behaviour gives distinguished (above average) performance and called as competency. In order to understand and improve the current level of competencies in employee it is relatively easier to develop the visible components shown in above model than the hidden one, but it is said to be most cost effective if could be worked (Sanghi, 2004). Also the trait and motive level competency is said to be the core personality variables and self-concept, skill set and job related knowledge as surface personality variables. The trait, motives, self-concept, skills and knowledge of employees are the layers of their personality divided into core and surface, being the most difficult and comparatively easier to develop respectively. There tends to be a causal relationship between an employee personal characteristics and a job performance, and empirical relationship between the characteristic as an independent and job performance as a dependent of the same.

There are majorly six clusters of competency discussed in the literature each touching the levels of competency (motive, trait, self-image, social role and skills) differently (Boyatzis, 1982) and owe distinct set of competencies required by all individuals to attain managerial effectiveness. In all there are 21 competencies (Boyatzis, 1982) allocated in these clusters which could be briefly viewed through following table.

Sr. No.	Name of the Cluster	Competency Clustered
1	The Goal and Action Management Cluster	(i) Efficiency orientation (ii) Proactivity (iii) Diagnostic use of concepts (iv) Concern with impact
2	The Leadership Cluster	(i) Self confidence (ii) Use of oral presentations (iii) Logical thought (iv) Conceptualization
3	The Human Resource Management Cluster	(i) Use of socialized power (ii) Positive regard (iii) Managing group process (iv) Accurate self-assessment
4	The Directing Subordinates Cluster	(i) Developing others (ii) Use of unilateral power (iii) Spontaneity
5	The Focus on Others Cluster	(i) Self-control (ii) Perceptual objectivity (iii) Stamina and adaptability (iv) Concern with close relationships
6	The Specialized Knowledge Cluster	(i) Relevant Knowledge /knowledge used (ii) Function, Product & Technology focused (iii) Recognition Vs. Utility (iv) Memory

Table 2: Clusters of Competencies

Source: Boyatzis, R. E. (1982), "The Competent Manager: A Model for Effective Performance", John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Initially there were 23 competencies out of which 2, i.e. self-control and, stamina and adaptability suggested an inverse relationship to managerial effectiveness, but had positive relationship at skill levels. The other two competencies i.e. concern with close relationship and memory found no support, thus they were not kept in the final list of competencies. Therefore Boyatzis (1982) found list of 21 competencies divided in six clusters. Literature shows that all of the above clusters majorly contain personality, performance and human resource practices as key variables for achieving managerial effectiveness. These levels have been quoted by other researchers (Sanhi, 2004; Spencer and Spencer 2003; Spencer and Spencer 1993; Mumford 2000; Finn 1993) also but no standard structure as such has been provided and empirically tested.

### *3.5. Competency and Human Resource Management*

As comparative advantage theory argue that competitive strength is driven by the ability to maximize profit at a lower cost, Human Resource Management has been viewed as a key strategy to low the cost of human capital and improve an organization's economic growth (Ibrahim Khan, 2006) by improving existing employees and retain them. Current trends in human resource management place emphasis on the development and application of the term competency, particularly the important role it plays in improving job performance, which in turn achieves heightened organizational competitiveness. If competency management is successfully implemented it can bring about a lot of advantages for an organization (Becker and Huselid, 1999).

It was said, "Competency - based organisations are organisational systems in which the capabilities of individuals are the primary focus and which cause them to be managed in a way that provides competitive advantage", and that, human resources should be made to think that they work for an organization (Hondeghem and Vandermeulen, 2000; Lawler and Ledford, 1997; Lawler 1994). With the implementation of a competency framework, personnel should be seen as the main source of value (Alles, 2000). One of the major causes, as highlighted by Datta (2000), is management's traditional lack of commitment to the development and training of its labour force. The labour management concept that took place nearly after classic labour management methods of the Frederick Taylor and Henri Fayol School, offers that workers should be motivated to perform according to changes and beyond what they are asked to (Le Boterf, 2001). In the competency labour management approach, personnel management relates more to strategic area where the management of talent is aligned with the objectives of the business as well as its vision and mission (Vargas, 2002). From a perspective of organisational behaviour, there could be three aspects of motives and competence (Elliot & Dweck, 2005) as effectiveness, as success and as ability. However, there is always a risk that human resources systems may damage an organization's competitive advantages, inhibiting the mobilization of new competencies or the appropriate exploitation of existing ones (Lindgren et al., 2004). It has come to discuss to a specified attribute that may be possessed by someone connoting both a concrete category on which a person's adequacy or sufficiency may be judged and that quality or state of being which characterizes a person as being competent within such a category (Hsieh et al., 2012).

The concept of competency provides a basis for integrating key HR activities such as recruitment and selection, training and development, performance management, and reward management, thus developing a coherent approach to the management of people in organisations (Lucia and Lepsinger, 1999; Laura Tovey, 1994). The competency-based approach complements the functional approach of HRM and turns out to be leverage for the implementation of a strategic human resource management model (Limbourg, 1997). It owes an importantly open and big platform to work in the direction of achieving success through competency based human resource management. Current trends in human resource management place emphasis on the development and application of the term competency, particularly the important role it plays in improving job performance, which in turn achieves heightened organizational competitiveness (Cardy & Selvarajan, 2006; Velde, 2001).

There are two important approaches to competencies: Individual and an organisational approach, but the individual approach tends to be the predominant one (Hoffman, 1999). Although there are some attempts to derive individual competencies from organisational goals and objectives, one can conclude that this is still underdeveloped (Hoffman, 1999; Hondeghem and Vandermeulen, 2000). Hondeghem and Vandermeulen, (2000) advocated that bureaucratic culture through competency management could be transformed into a more entrepreneurial one, and orients towards the future and the horizontal and vertical integration of HRM processes. The competency-based approach complements the functional approach of HRM and turns out to be leverage for the implementation of a strategic human resource management model. The strategic vision of what the competencies of employees in present and in the future it should be, is an important and necessary debate (Hondeghem and Filip Vandermeulen, 2000). The strategically-derived competencies would impact positively on job, job-holder and the organization (Cardy & Selvarajan, 2006; Velde, 2001; Kravetz, 1997; 1988 ;). Human resource specialists view a set of competencies as a tool to serve as a common language throughout the entire organization to consistently plan personnel, conduct performance reviews, and determine appropriate training program (Brown, 2002; Falender, & Shafranske, 2004).

### *3.6. Conclusion*

Competence being a multifaceted concept, the decision of competency design is driven by a number of organizational factors including management philosophy, customer requirements, business needs, market situations etc., and in place processes vary from one organization to another requiring customization for the overall success of competency efforts (Hsieh et al., 2012). Largely difficulties with the operation and implementation of competency management systems are mostly related to the complex and lengthy

process required for identifying the appropriate competencies and respective model (Athey and Orth, 1999). Competency concepts should be integrated for respective job designs with different human resource management processes. To name a competency, it must be determined what the actions were, their place in a system and sequence of behaviour (Sanghi, 2004), its results or effects and what was the intent of the actions and results were. Once a competency profile has been identified, for a given job, it has numerous potential applications such as the recruitment, selection, development, promotion, and reward of employees (CIPD, 2004).

It would be fair to say that, even among experts, there is a lack of consensus about the precise definition of the term competency (Schippmann et al., 2000). A frequent criticism of research and practice involving competencies is that the very term "competency" suffers from conceptual ambiguity (Iles, 2001). Major doubts concern the logic and practicability of breaking down competence into sets of managerial competencies and then reintegrating them into a holistic management performance model. Besides whether the assessment techniques currently in use are sufficiently sophisticated to measure complex behaviour and deliver appropriate solutions. Though Researchers have studied managerial skills directly or indirectly for a number of years (Bass & Stogdill, 1990; Laužackas 2005), it is yet far from easy, and demands from a potential manager the courage to confront his or her personality and character with total honesty. But, following a typical competency model may act as more of a hindrance than a help, therefore the organization needs to encourage the individual to develop his or her self-awareness rather than copying existing blueprints (Ulrich et al, 2013). Managers need to improve their capabilities in different areas through training and experience. Although each manager's personal attributes affect his or her skills, it is the manager's skills displayed in actions that are most important key in addressing personal/personnel/organizational problems and their lagging behind (Ulrich et al, 2013).

### 3.7. Managerial Implications and Future Scope of Study

Competency ensures sustainability of personality and helps in making preconditions for forecasting behaviour of a person in various situations of performance Jovaiša (1993). So a competency can be understood as bigger than only a skill, includes knowledge, connects to performance and can be improved (Lucia and Lepsiner, 1999). Competency is the underlying characteristic that helps in performing in a particular way and the workplace learning concepts support that through learning we can improve/modify one's personality therefore if personality is worked with learning theories, can help in producing improved employee performances (Parry, 1996). According to Straka (2005), competency comprises the entire body of knowledge and abilities or personal traits developed through learning that cannot be immediately observed, but could be upgraded by intervening in due course of time. Raven (1984) through 'Competence in Modern Society' brought the competency movement emphatically into the human resource practitioner's domain but utilization of common competency models in the workplace has been considered problematic because of differences between countries, their incoherent definition and differences arising from pedagogical theory on how people learn and identify the existence of competency (Townley, 1994). If we accept the most important aspect of the Humian assertions, we will be able to assume further that 'the attribution of causation is learned and the causal concept accepted as an explanation helps us predict future events' (Hull, 1943; Hume, 1940).

Although specific measurement and classification issues emerge on universal or context-specific (organization specific) competencies firstly because of different organizational culture and environmental variables, establishment type and experience of the industry, and secondly on the basis of type of a person and task orientations, but in them some commonality can be explored and on the basis of those common characteristics' in employees and similarities in industrial demands. According to Evans and Lindsay (2002) knowledge, talent and creativity of its workers are the most important assets of any organization, and employees should themselves design and improve work processes exploiting their personal qualities, knowledge and skills, or the entire range of their capabilities to increase their productivity.

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