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Developing Human Resource Competency Model for Government Sectors in Kuwait

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Abstract:
The objective of human resource management (HRM) operations is to help firms achieve their objectives by initiating programs and providing assistance and direction on issues affecting employees. Competencies represent the behavioral characteristics that are required to do a job well. The competency standard is the process of obtaining evidence on the degree to which employees are competent on a task following a set level of competency (knowledge, abilities, and values). The training center affiliated with Kuwait's Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) is accountable for devising a policy based on scientific frameworks and research that satisfy the requirements of government bodies. The aim is to develop skills and train their employees by offering multiple programs with scientific subject knowledge, objectives, and training methods aligned with the local market's requirements. This paper aims to develop a Dyslexia Awareness Program that meets the needs of managers, executives, and workers within the Kuwaiti public sector context. The Kuwait government sector and its employees were studied as the system in focus, and a methodological framework was developed that originated by identifying existing frameworks and critical success factors and subsequently defining both the study boundary and scope based on an understanding of primary and contextual factors. The research approach used in this study was performed in three main steps: literature evaluation, qualitative analysis, and model construction. Based on the outcomes of the literature review, quantitative analysis, and evaluation of external and internal variables, a Dynamic Competency Model was developed as a guide to increase the skills of employees in line with the three hierarchical Levels in government institutions in Kuwait.

Keywords: *Models, competency, training, and developments in human resource management*

1. Introduction

Training is a critical function that directly contributes to human resources (HR) development. If HR needs to be developed, the business should provide effective training that encourages the acquisition of new skills and knowledge and the development of healthy behavioral patterns and styles. Competencies are considered to represent the behavioral characteristics that are required to do a job effectively. Since the early 1900s, several scholars have attempted to define competencies. Boyatsis[1] defined competence as a person's fundamental attribute that reflects the knowledge, abilities, and attitudes required to complete a required task effectively. Spencer and Spencer [2] discussed how competence represents a fundamental human trait that is causally connected to criterion-referenced effective and/or better performance in a particular job or setting. Competence can be defined as a person's ability to accomplish a certain activity and their quality, skills, and capacity to complete a task successfully. This concept underlines the need to achieve a given level of performance [3]. As a result, individual behavior manifestations must be contextually relevant and recognizable as being of appropriate character in relation to the expected standards. The recognized competencies may be used as inputs in all HR subsystems, including recruitment, screening, job evaluation, training, and performance management.

Competency-based training promotes growth based on an individual's demonstrated ability to accomplish certain activities, i.e., their capacity to finish a given activity. It involves the study of job functions and how they are translated into tasks or capabilities. A competency approach's main concept is that a job may be subdivided into smaller specific knowledge and abilities (competencies) units. Overall competence is achieved by attaining an appropriate skill level in each of these domains. An employee's competency may be described as their ability to complete a task successfully. It denotes the capacity to employ a collection of skills, values, tools, and processes. Competence is the capacity to apply or employ a collection of linked knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to perform 'critical job functions successfully.' Competencies are frequently used as the foundation for skill standards that define the degree of knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for job success and possible assessment criteria for determining proficiency achievement [4]. Improving any competency should include both the fundamental and behavioral aspects of an individual. To effectively contribute to employee performance and productivity, which will immediately reflect on the organization, the following variables must be considered: Knowledge, Values, Skills, Tools, and Techniques.

The Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) envisions Kuwait's government sectors as a source of excellence for high-quality training programs, backed up by partnerships with top universities across the globe.

The Ibn Al-Haytham In-Service Training Center was designed to serve as a link between PAAET and governmental and private institutions to develop policy based on scientific foundations and perform studies that reflect government institutions' need to develop skills and train their employees. PAEET offers a variety of scientific-based programs to meet the local market's needs. The Ibn Al-Haytham Center aims to stay current by offering training programs that were are meticulously planned to fulfill the requirements and demands of development, support Kuwait's future directions, and contribute to the advancement of humanity and the creation of jobs and career opportunities [5].

It is critical to leverage Kuwait's training potential to power and enact innovation-based training methods that provide public sector HR with focused, up-to-date training and development opportunities designed to enhance the productivity and capability of the public sector continually. This will facilitate personnel contributing to the country's rising economy and responding to local and global issues. Various competency-based frameworks and approaches have been introduced to solve the existing problem. As a result, the contribution such frameworks may make is frequently overlooked; as a result, the purpose of this report is to present a Dynamic Competency Model that applies to Kuwaiti public sector leaders, managers, and employees. The primary goal is to create and implement effective training programs that can satisfy the needs and expectations of Kuwait's new age of project development, as described in the Kuwait Labor Market Report [6]and the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor. 2021-2022 [7]

Section II provides a literature review. After that, an explanation of the methods employed in this study will be offered. This will include a look at how the Dynamic Competency Model was created. The final section presents the research conclusion.

2. LiteratureReview

Competencies can be understood as personal characteristics that can help an individual to perform better [8, 9]. The three attributes required for task completion are aptitudes, skills, and knowledge. Zarifian[10] characterized competencies as an individual's capacity to take the initiative, exceed expectations, rise to the demands of new challenges encountered at work, and accept responsibility for performance. A talented professional exhibits practical competence based on earlier experiences and updates knowledge and skills in response to changing circumstances [11].

Empirical Knowledge, know-how (learning through practical experiences and using the senses – sight, discernment, reflexes, intuition, sensitivity, and so on), and formalized know-how (how to employ procedural Knowledge) are two types of know-how [12]. Another kind of know-how concerns an understanding of the mental abilities needed to execute the cognitive operations required for problem formulation, analysis, and resolution, project design and execution, decision-making, creation, innovation, generalizations, and analogical reasoning, among other things. Behavioral competencies have typically been described as aptitudes or characteristics linked with knowing-how-to-be, such as connection capacity, flexibility, proactivity, and different increasing demand abilities in organizational contexts. Finally, regulating emotional reactions is connected to emotional and physiological resources, which may be a barrier or assistance in addressing difficulties.

All HR tasks are ultimately associated with performance criteria, which are used to evaluate people's performance to make decisions about training, career progression, and compensation, among other factors [13]. In enterprises, there are numerous ways to approach performance management, the most common are the job-focused approach, the person-focused approach, and the role-based approach [14]. These macro competencies have been emphasized as fluid and critical in enabling individuals to carry out their responsibilities [15]. The role-based approach is a variation of the person-based approach that considers the work context. The context here relates to the existing situation as well as the members of the connected employment group's mutual expectations. This strategy is more helpful than the other two since it stresses context. Competency frameworks may aid in the development of training needs and provide critical behavioral output indicators for the role-based system of performance management [1, 16].

Employees with cultural intelligence or multicultural experience are more demand as firms become more global. Building international management expertise for employees has become a critical aim for bridging managerial skills shortages [17], and there has been a requirement for a greater emphasis on cultural intelligence in the post-secondary course. It is feasible to promote more significant commitment by leveraging flexibility in programming and enabling trainers to tailor learning experiences to employees' abilities, interests, and objectives [18]. There is a degree of a divide between the social aspects of digitalization and workplace technology. A 2015 study on the technological abilities of accounting graduates supports this claim [19]. The findings revealed that e employers prioritized more industry-specific technical skills, whereas entry-level graduates tended to display technical skills in more generic technologies [19]. Digital abilities are transferrable since they are employed in various settings, including academic and professional. Employees at all levels, including managers and workers, are increasingly needed to demonstrate technical knowledge to succeed in the workplace [20].

Competency-based strategies have produced a strong link between a company's business strategy and its human resource strategy [21, 22]. Competency-based techniques are at the core of all strategies [23] since they provide a paradigm for designing the tools and processes required to enhance performance in a change-oriented organizational context [24]. A competence framework underpinned by competency models is an essential instrument in contemporary HR management and practice. The usage of competence models in the commercial sector has grown dramatically during the last 20 years worldwide. Competency frameworks have previously been implemented in the public sector within several countries. They have yielded promising results in an effective, unambiguous, rules-based hiring process, clear and thorough employee communication, and customized training and development [3].

Competency frameworks are helpful because they allow people to contribute significantly to their development by highlighting the gaps between required and actual abilities [23]. The objective of competence models should be to ensure that training initiatives are more matched to the workforce's needs. Several studies have emphasized the importance of Organizational, Job, and Person (OJP) Analysis in this setting) [25, 26]. Recent research by ([27] examined their role and relevance in various areas. Later, competency-based education and training, as well as evaluation methodologies, were discussed. The goal of this study was to develop a Competency-based Education and Training Model that both researchers and practitioners could use.

Units of competency with particular learning goals based on criteria defined by the educational or industrial context are widely used in training programs [28]. The organization's core competence is preserved when a systematic training model is coupled with a well-crafted strategy. An organization's systematic approach to identifying training needs is vital to any training plan's effectiveness. The Training Needs Analysis (TNA) is an essential strategic tool for assessing how to develop and maintain a company's core skills. TNA should be based on business objectives [29], and underpinned by a systematic approach with a relevant focus on strategic drivers [30]. Alainati[31] performed research during the COVID-19 pandemic that reviewed tactics and instructor competency within online learning contexts.

The report also provides a model for HRM-Instructor competency and presents recommendations for Kuwait's education and education system. Acquiring data and deciding whether a person has proven competency is known as assessment [32]. The purpose of assessment is to ascertain if a person can perform to the required standard within the workplace in line with the applicable recognized industry or corporate competency standards. Proficiency-based assessment is a process through which an assessor works with a trainee to collect evidence of competency using the national qualifications' unit requirements as benchmarks ([33]. Many educational institutions have shifted to competency-based education to achieve both equity and quality.

The beginning of a conceptual change in education and learning is a performance review [34]. Performance evaluation allows for a complete view of the learner by integrating training, knowledge, and assessment. As a result, there is an inextricable relationship between teaching, learning, and evaluation, with all three working together to improve students' awareness and instructors' capacity to educate them successfully. The Competency-Based Assessment (CBA) is concerned with achieving job competence. A focus on abilities in the competencies the post holder needs to demonstrate [35]. The competency-based evaluation considers the quality of a worker's skills concerning industry expectations. The significance of putting knowledge and skills into practice in a real-world context was emphasized by Waugh and Gronlund[36].

3. Methodology

The research method is crucial in reaching the study goals and following a clear plan and analysis of each phase. The research approach implemented in the current study was divided into three phases: literature evaluation, qualitative analysis, and model construction. The literature gap was defined during the first phase. The second phase (qualitative analysis) involved an analysis of the essential phrases that characterize present and prospective job abilities and competencies. This phase also included a review and discussion of existing competency models. The new Competency Model was developed in the third phase (Proposing and Developing).

A methodological framework was created (see Figure 1). The technique was based on the principles of systems thinking [37, 38]. Several publications on employment and the Kuwaiti labor market, such as the Kuwait Labor Market Report [6] and the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, were analyzed and reviewed [7]. The framework began by recognizing current models and important success elements and determining its boundaries based on an awareness of primary and contextual aspects, with the Kuwait government sector and its personnel serving as the focus system.
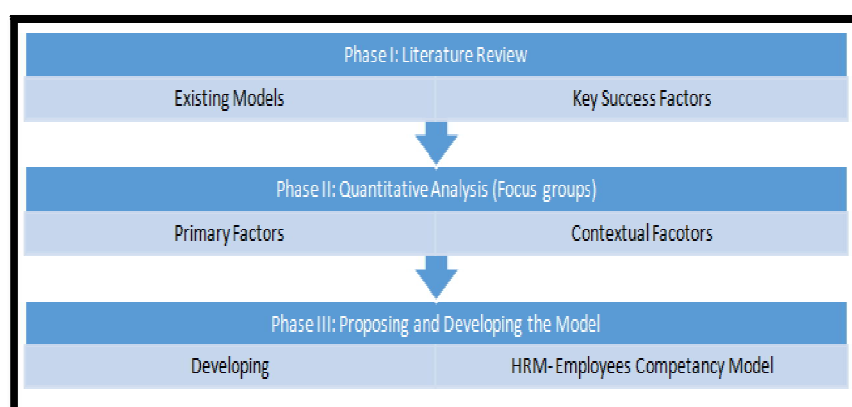

Figure 1: Research Methodology Framework

In addition, qualitative analysis was performed with respect to focus groups in Kuwait. In July and August 2021, the researcher planned four focus group meetings, each of which was led by the researcher, who began by explaining the study's goal to 11 to 12 employees and managers in each session and emphasizing the significance of their comments in terms of the study aims. Participants were drawn from Kuwait's many ministries, organizations, and institutes. The researcher gave the participants the task of introducing themselves, which improved the group cohesion. The focus group

discussion was directed by order of the statements, which were designed to elicit members' thoughts on the abilities and competencies of workers in their respective firms. The goal of the debate was to determine what skills are required and how to improve the capabilities of employees and managers in Kuwaiti enterprises. The focus group response was assessed using Nyumba et al.'s Three Coding Methodology [39]. Each session was around 90 minutes long. Sessions were taped, which helped compile a summary of key factors that aided in understanding the needed abilities and the issues that employees and companies face and informing suggestions for improving worker competencies.

4. A New Dynamic Competency Model

This section provides a new dynamic competence model in which competencies mirror the demands and capabilities necessary for effective performance in Kuwait's public sector. Designing and developing an effective training program necessitates the development of competencies. The following stages have become universally acknowledged as necessary for an effective and beneficial training program:

- Setting training goals
- Developing competencies
- Assessing training needs
- Designing the training content and curricula
- Training delivery
- Training Evaluation

These phases can be broadly classified into three main aspects: training planning (steps 1 to 3), training design (steps 4-5), and training evaluation (step 6). Increasing competency is at the heart of creating and implementing an effective training program.

According to research and literature, developing a set of 'Values' and a 'Code of Conduct' that specifies the frame of work in which a government employee is supposed to operate is just as important as developing competencies [40]. These may be expressed in a set of behavioral skills, which relate to a sequence of tasks or behaviors that the incumbent is required to accomplish in order to do their job. These may not have proficiency levels, but they may be expected to be exhibited as part of social responsibility by all levels of government employees. The 'values' and 'code of ethics' produced may be easily connected with the development of competencies to build a dynamic model that considers the overall values required in Kuwait's public sector.

The suggested model is dynamic in the sense that, as a result of direct evaluation and feedback, the 'degree of competency' might change direction as a result of any training. Certain levels are taken into account in the model (or groups). The levels are as follows:

- Level 1: Higher management (Leadership)
- Level 2: Management
- Level 3: Other employees

The author will review Level 3 first, followed by Levels 1 and 2.

4.1. Level III: Competency Groups

The bulk of employees who perform the work are addressed in Level III of the competence model. In addition to the technical group, this level's abilities include four general competency groups (profession). Any 'job function' necessitates the use of both competencies. Technical capabilities are often derived from the job description and the domain environment in Kuwait. The four general competency groupings are as follows:

- ICT competency
- Task (job) Execution
- Maintaining Professional Environment
- Personal effectiveness

As shown in Table 1, learning the competence for these group competencies has a 'complexity degree.' An inexperienced employee, for example, has a 'low complexity degree' (which may be quantified), whereas an experienced person has a 'high complexity degree.' Both degrees are evaluated at distinct stages of competency acquisition. For example, in the ICT group, 'understanding data' is simpler to learn than 'analyzing,' which is easier to learn than 'consolidating data' (or dashboarding). At the advanced stage of a profession, the competencies become more sophisticated and have a greater impact.

Degree of Complexity	ICT Competency	Task (job) Execution	Maintaining Professionalism	Personal Effectiveness
1 (low)	Understanding & generic utilization	Executions (Doers)	Efficient Communication	Commitment and Reliability
2	Data Analysis	Problem solving	Time Management	Stress Management
3	Data Consolidation	Knowledge transfer (developing)	Teamwork	Conduct
4	Expert Utilization	Decision Making (team level)	Teams managing and developing	Self-Development
5 (high)	Planning &Vision development	Managing	Project Management	Setting & achieving goals

Table 1: Competency Groups

A competency model can be defined as 'a collection of competencies that define successful performance in a particular work setting' [4]. This model provides the foundation for critical human resource tasks, including training and recruiting and hiring, to mention a few. They outline what skills and knowledge need to be taught. must be selected for and what must be trained and developed. A Dynamic Competency Model is provided here that may be readily adjusted to meet an individual's skills or a group of individuals. This model took into account all of the previous competency components and a specific set of capabilities based on the organization's levels. The Dynamic Competency Model is presented in Figure 2.
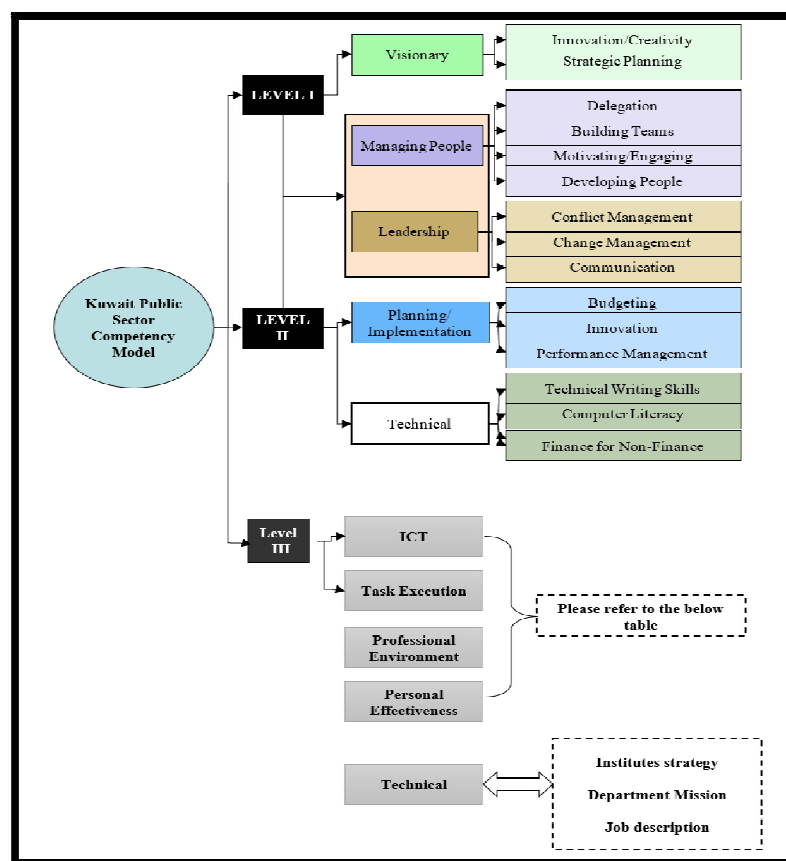

Figure 2: The Dynamic Competency Model

4.2. Level I and II Competencies
The competence model's building blocks, or groups, are designed as follows:
- Competency Group
- Competency Name
- Competency Definition
- Proficiency Levels
- Behavior/Value Indicator

Table 2 lists the competencies and their respective performance levels.

Level Competency	Behavior	Performance Level		
		Developing	Meets Expectations	Proficient
Level 1 Visionary	Innovation/ Creativity	Maintains the status quo and does not actively seek to improve performance Has difficulty incorporating new ideas and does not encourage calculated risk-taking.	Accepts new ideas and applies innovative solutions to make organizational improvements.	Explores and understands trends, opportunities, and risks that could affect the institution's operations. Supports a work environment that encourages creative thinking and innovation; Provides the means to implement the ideas and foster change.
	Strategic Planning	Does not set SMART objectives or a vision for ambitious long-term business goals. May meet simple targets, but struggles to meet ambitious ones	Formulates objectives and priorities and implements plans consistent with the organization's long-term interests in a global environment.	Can think at a macro scale and go beyond the present situation. Is sensitive to broader political and government priorities. Has the ability to design alternative scenarios and business models. Capitalizes on opportunities and manages risks
Level I & II Managing People	Delegation	It does not allow others to act without supervision and behaves in a centralized manner. Assignments and expectations are not clear Work is delayed during their absence.	Delegates responsibility and authority as appropriate. Provides support when required. Sets clear expectations and holds others accountable for delivering results.	Communicates context, purpose, and long-term benefits to empower others to take greater responsibility. Communicates expectations regarding outcomes or deliverables, timelines, and quality of work and provides support. Expresses appreciation to others for taking on tasks.
	Building Teams	Does not fully recognize the value of teamwork. Tends to focus on individual success rather than the success of the team.	Recognizes the value of teamwork and creates some sense of shared objective. Assigns meaningful roles to team members.	Encourages and facilitates cooperation within the organization and with stakeholders, fostering commitment, team spirit, pride, trust. Builds teams that exceed expectations.
	Motivating/ Engaging	Has difficulty motivating people to action without the use of direct command and authority.	Ensures people understand their role and delivers positive and encouraging messages to motivate people.	Inspires motivates, and guides others toward goal accomplishments. Consistently develops and sustains cooperative working relationships Understands, practices, and exemplifies a commitment to public service
	Developing People	Does not regularly give feedback or gives feedback that is not specific, constructive and/or helpful. May acknowledge need for people development but fails to focus on it.	Provides valuable constructive feedback and leads by example. Ensures everyone has a development plan and provides an opportunity for implementation.	Develops leadership in others through coaching, mentoring, rewarding, and guiding employees. Provides regular feedback and opportunities to learn through formal and informal methods. Takes ownership of people development.

Level Competency	Behavior	Performance Level		
		Developing	**Meets Expectations**	**Proficient**
Leadership	Conflict Management	Avoids conflict situations and does not actively seek to resolve them.	Identifies situations of possible conflict and seeks to resolve them. Acts as a mediator as and when required.	Encourages creative tension and differences of opinions. Anticipates and takes steps to prevent counter-productive confrontations. Manages and constructively resolves conflicts and disagreements.
	Change Management	Is resistant to change and prefers to maintain current status.	Creates conditions and processes to support change. Brings in practical improvements.	Encourages produces and sustains change in self and others. Develops an environment in which others can express themselves and act without fear. Operates with transparency.
	Communication	It is focused only on its own area and fails to support peers across the Sector. Disregards impact on areas outside own unit.	Appreciates that all Public Sector employees have external and internal customers that they provide services and information to and Communicates where and when required. Is courteous to internal and external customers.	Appreciates that all Public Sector employees have external and/or internal customers to whom they provide services and information and actively seek to provide it. Honors all of the Government's commitments to customers by providing helpful, courteous, accessible, responsive, and knowledgeable service through self and others Engages key stakeholders in constructive discussions through open dialogue
Level II Planning & Implementation	Budgeting	Does not demonstrate adequate capability for effectively preparing, managing and implementing budget processes.	Prepares, justifies, and administers the budget for own area and effectively monitors expenditures.	Plans administer, and effectively monitors expenditures to ensure cost-effective support of programs and policies. Serves as an advisor and assistant in budget formulation, presentation, and execution services and documentation.
	Innovation	Does not challenge the status quo and prefers to continue business as usual. Lacks the courage to propose new ideas	Occasionally proposes new ideas and different ways of conducting the business. Actively seeks to improve programs and services.	Continuously discovers and find new ways of doing things and challenge prevailing assumptions. Improve on traditional ways with more effective action while engaging management.
	Performance Management	Activities are not structured or planned. No clear objectives are set to measure performance against. There is an apparent lack of accountability in holding people responsible for achieving results.	Sets clear, well-defined performance outcomes and tracks progress. Provides feedback on progress. Monitors and evaluates plans while focusing on results and measuring attainment of outcomes.	Develops and implements strategies that optimize individual performance within the Public Sector. Sets clear and ambitious targets linked to the overall objectives. Holds self and others accountable to achieving the goals.Addresses performance problems promptly. Communicates and drives implementation plans.

	Project Management	Lacks the experience and know-how of running large scale projects. Does not fully recognize the complexity of project management and hence falls short of delivering results	Researches and collaborates to ensure a clear understanding of the project. Has good Knowledge of the principles, methods, or tools for developing, scheduling, coordinating, and managing projects and resources, including monitoring and inspecting costs, work, and contractor performance.	Designs implement and manages ongoing projects and directs the related resources, personnel, and activities to successful completion. Evaluate performance by reviewing progress toward goals and operational plans and making adjustments as needed.
Technical	Technical Writing skills	Written communication lacks accuracy and clarity to convey the intended message. Mastery of the written language is not reflected in the communication.	Uses correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling; communicates information in a concise and organized manner; produces written information that is appropriate for the intended audience.	Expresses facts and ideas in writing in a clear, convincing, and organized manner with correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling. Produces written information that is appropriate for the intended audience. Is sought out for advice on drafting correspondence
	Computer Literacy	Has minimal understanding of computer applications. Does not support automation activities to improve work flow or seek to develop self in this area.	Has basic computer skills to meet the requirements of the job. Understands how to use applicable systems and search engines Is willing and actively seeks to develop computer literacy skills.	Is proficient in computer office applications and utilize and share this knowledge to improve work efficiency. Utilizes and stays current on available technology and office equipment.
	Finance for non finance	Does not demonstrate an understanding of basic financial Knowledge required at this level.	Has a background knowledge and understanding of public sector financial procedures. Can effectively read and understand financial statements and comprehend basic economic analysis.	Knowledge of the principles and methods of finance and financial procedures and can analyze financial statements and use related information in budget preparation. Knowledge of the principles and methods of cost-benefit analysis, including the time value of money, present value concepts, and quantifying tangible and intangible benefits.
	Customer Service	Is not sensitive to the customer's needs and does not view the job as one of a service provider. Lacks the commitment or personal drive to resolve customer issues actively.	Builds and maintains effective working relationships with customers. Conveys a positive attitude when interacting with customers and staff and communicates effectively.	Works with customers to assess needs, provide assistance, resolve problems, satisfy expectations; knows products and services. Demonstrates a commitment to public service; serves and satisfies internal and external customers; holds self-accountable for quality outcomes

Table 2: Competencies & Performance Level

5. Conclusion

An employee's competency may be described as their ability to accomplish and fulfill a certain assignment. It denotes applying a set of skills, values, instruments, and processes. Any organization's economic success is dependent on its human capital. We live in a globalized economy that creates strong parallels during a period of tremendous information explosions, changes, and advances. HR managers consider how to achieve a competitive advantage that will allow their organizations to stand out from the competition and how to identify, find, and retain the competencies that will enable staff to cope with change. Competency frameworks, competency-based management, and competency models are essential tools in today's HR management practices. Ibn Al-Haitham training center is affiliated with the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) in Kuwait, which is accountable for devising a policy based on scientific foundations and research that meet the needs of government institutions to develop skills and train their employees. PAAET also offers several programs, scientific content, remarkable goals, and training regimes that are compatible with the requirements of the local sector.

This study aims to create a Dynamic Competency Model for Kuwaiti public sector leaders, managers, and workers. The Kuwait government sector and its employees were used as the system in focus. A model was developed that began by identifying current frameworks and key success factors and trying to define both its boundary and its scope based on a comprehension of primary and contextual factors. The research approach used in this study followed three stages: literature evaluation, qualitative analysis, and model construction. A Dynamic Competency Model was presented as a guide to increase employees' abilities at government institutions in Kuwait, based on a literature study, quantitative analysis, and external and internal variables. The findings revealed that employing a technique that supports how people are trained is critical. A Dynamic Competency Model was created to assist government employees in Kuwait that may help executives, managers, and employees. This will aid personnel in driving the country's rising economy and responding to local and global issues. It is anticipated that the developed framework will positively impact the Kuwait public sector's human resource competence model.

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