

# THE CONCEPT OF COMPETENCIES IN THE WORKPLACE ACCORDING TO ISLAM

Norunnajjah Ahmat<sup>1</sup>, Hafzan Arifin<sup>2</sup>, AB Rahim Ibrahim<sup>3</sup>,  
Norsuhada Mansor<sup>4</sup>, Hazrin Kasim<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Fakulti Pengurusan Teknologi dan Tekno-Keusahawanan  
Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka, MALAYSIA

<sup>2,3</sup>Pusat Pembelajaran Bahasa  
Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka, MALAYSIA

<sup>4,5</sup>Pendaftar  
Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka, MALAYSIA

Corresponding Author's Email: najjah@utem.edu.my

*Article History: Received: 31 July 2022, Revised: 15 August 2022, Accepted: 17 September 2022*

## **ABSTRACT**

*This is a conceptual article meant to look at competencies and how it is working in the workplace. The writing will start with its definition and her concept that fit and suit to the workplace. Then, it continues with its significant toward the employees, employers and organization. Lastly, the article will look further on competencies from the Islamic perspective. The reason is to notify that Islam also acknowledge the importance of competencies in Muslim life as an individual or khalifah, employees, employers and part of Ummah either in the workplace or anywhere.*

**Keywords:** *competencies, workplace and Islam*

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In general competency is well-known for countless types such as skills, tenets or manners. It is usually epitomize the indication on how a duty should be accomplished rather than to discover what is the impartial or a objective of the job prearranged. In the workstation, competency consents worker to see precisely is expected from them and how they should complete their mission.

Definition of competency by Oxford Language Dictionary is the ability to do something successfully or efficiently. More explanation on competency is the capability to apply or use the set of related knowledge, skills, and abilities required to successfully perform 'critical work functions' or tasks in a defined work setting. The examples of competencies are teamwork, problem-solving, customer service, communication, result-orientation, decision-making, self-motivation and integrity. At work, competencies meant that the combination of observable and measurable knowledge, skills, abilities and personal attributes that contribute to enhanced employee performance and ultimately result in organizational success.

Meanwhile in the website of Webster, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/competency>; competence is possession of sufficient knowledge or skill. It was supported by Management Study Guide which said that competence has been long assumed as a

person's aptitude or capability to do an occupation. It was developed in the 1970s by the US Company McBer to ascertain the specific personal features which caused in effective and/or bigger presentation. More information can be proceeded to define competency is as a set of individual presentation conduct which are discernable, assessable and perilous to efficacious individual and corporation performance. Competency also showed the individual distinctive as a one which outcome in an actual and greater performance in a job.

The ideas that come out with competencies started since every job has prerequisite of precise set of proficiency to commence it competently. Second reason is that the individual who implement the job need to be fastened with those competencies. Third reason lies on the fascinating and substance revealing aspect of this term, that emphases not on what a person can do but on what somebody can acquire. This onward looking method makes it quite prevalent amongst training benefactors and staffing professional. Next reason is that, the competencies stands with their detailed behavioral indicators that simplify the demonstration of applicable skills and conduct. It is not a set of duty accomplished like a android neither it is an fundamental capacity which not ever validated. Lastly, competency should embrace inspiration and self-knowledge, an aspiration and inclination to establish effective enactment.

According to Skrinjaric, 2022; the increasing of technology in the fields of digitalization, automation and robotization, means that any organization needs a quick anticipation of consumer values, trends and the needs to adjust with the demand of production. Thus, the company normally requires a constant adaptation of competence and competence-based model. The reason is that the competence-based research would focus on generalizing the findings by looking at various groups of workers and industries and better assess employees' preparedness in terms of competence requirements, as well as to identify the most critical gaps and opportunities for the formal educational system and as part of on-the-job training. However, this is one from various approaches or models that portrays the need of competencies in organization.

## **2.0 THE IMPORTANCE OF COMPETENCIES IN WORKPLACE**

In 1990, G. Hamel and C. K. Prahalad made some observation and said that "Competencies owned and nurtured by a company represent its critical resource and competitive advantage, and the company should create a portfolio of services that contribute to and extract value from those competencies." For them, when the hiring managers want to appoint staff for a position in the organization, he or she should think yonder the functional competencies for the individual to succeed at the job which they are to be employed. If looking at the value of cross-functional and core competencies, the new employees thrive at their occupation with the association and are perceived as human capital or an asset potential to be advanced and nurtured rather than a human resource though considered an asset but to be consumed.

Competencies likewise are significant in the making or nurturing or knowing or acknowledging leadership. Study over the past of few periods has exposed that the most vital leadership merits are centered on soft skill or generic skills and emotional aptitude. The question is if these skills point to unfathomable competencies. Most foremost leaders from worldwide business advocate that there are five main themes of competencies that resilient leaders parades; such as extraordinary ethical principles and providing a innocuous atmosphere, empowering persons to self-organize, endorsing connection and fitting among personnel, open to new notions and trialing and dedicated to the professional and scholarly progress of workforces. Obviously, many of these competencies may seem noticeable; it is difficult for leaders to master these competencies because it requires them to act against their nature. Persons are not hardwired to surrender control or be vulnerable to trivial fiascoes. The capability to keenly improve these competencies should be precedence for leaders.

Robert Shepherd (2022) stated that competence and competencies mean diverse things in the workplace. The terms sound similar but they are different, they both matter, and either fails without the other. There are three competencies categories: the Core, the Cross-functional and the Functional. All of them are significantly important but in hierarchy. The core competencies bases at the top of order

and reflected the mandatory one. They bring into line with and are central to an organization's ability to accomplish its strategic determined that is the functional areas where competitive advantages are created and executed properly. They comprises such elements as decision-making skill, team efficiency, individual steadfastness, impetus and pledge to task, adaptability and flexibility, demonstration of the skill that requisite to solve intricate problem, individual truthfulness, grander written and verbal communication skill, inventiveness and grit (the demonstration of perseverance to achieve a desired goal). In general, all employees in the firm should demonstrate these competencies.

Meanwhile, the Cross-functional competencies are beneficial through a extensive matrix of organization and organizational silos. They support the organization's capability to decrease or eradicate silo thinking and silo administration exercise. As a substitute, they catalyze such treasured potentials within the organization as knowledge-sharing across organizational entities. It contains financial insight, perceptible computer application talents and heightened enquiry skill.

Lastly is the functional competencies, occasionally named technical competencies, outline the precise skills that specialists in a specified field or position entail on a day-to-day basis. They are job-specific and comparatively easy to identify in terms of the elements of success they require. The examples such as trades judgment, arbitration skills, hazard valuation skills, podium skills, the skill to cipher professionally in a given indoctrination language, the aptitude to execute and deduce the outcome of data analysis, monetary study, understanding of the tariff code, industrial skills, language expertise and others. Thus, these are the competencies that drive effects and enactment.

### 3.0 ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE ON COMPETENCIES IN WORKPLACE

Competence is an elementary features embraced by a person in meeting to the criteria required to inhabit a position (Spenser, 1997). However the opinion of Becker and Ulrich (2001) stated that the competence covers the part of knowledge, skills and ability or personality characteristics that affect individual performance. Then, competence is the skill or capability of an individual to achieve numerous tasks in a career, where this aptitude is resolute by two features that is intelligent capability and bodily capability. In term of Sharia competency compliance, the main requirement is not skills and knowledge in Sharia but must possess the character and sharia behaviour.

In the field of human resources wherein relate to job, career and workplace, the characteristic of Sharia base competency must has three things namely; *Kafa'ah* that is skilful or expert in the field of career attained. Secondly is *himmatul-'amal* which has a great essence or work ethics and lastly is *amanah* that is accountable and steadfast in resounding out every obligation or compulsion (Rukiah, 2015). Sharia base competency should fundamentally be rested on the substance of divine principles as a servant of Allah and be a divine rational as a *khalifah* of Allah. There is no incongruity between divine conscience and rational attentiveness such as in the economic sharia because man as a servant of Allah, converts to a earnest being who continuously conveys out Allah's order and evade His proscriptions. While as a Caliph, the same man can develops into a fruitful and beneficial mortal through the provision of science (Ernie & Hasanudin, 2016).

Competency in Islam also drives man to embrace the knowledge sharing behaviour approach where value of voluntary defiance is appreciated rather than compulsion. Then, it is essential for a corporation to cultivate knowledge sharing behaviour in an organization. Knowledge sharing is a progression in which an individual interchange their acquaintance either implied or unambiguous knowledge (Van & Ridder, 2004). However, knowledge sharing behaviour in the Islamic perspective is not merely partaking the knowledge but it replicate the attitude of Muslim who is necessity to reciprocated guidance for the upright action, *da'wah* and airing religiosity. In fact, in knowledge sharing behaviour in the context of Islam must echoes two vital things which are the commitment to apply knowledge, to counsel and deliver the sharia base competency knowledge.

Another model of competency is known as Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) which was firstly pointed out by Barnard in 1938 but with different name, it was called “willingness to cooperate”. Then, another term was given by Katz in 1964 under the name of “spontaneous innovative behaviour”. However the term of OCB started to be used in 80’s and getting stronger in 90’s and been castoff till now. OCB is defined as charitable, non-voluntary manners of individual who are not getting any direct reward by the official remuneration scheme. It is just been done as an encouragement for the effectiveness of organizational function as a whole. OCB too was regarded as an attitude of the company’s employee with aim to improve the effectiveness of the performance of the company without abandoning the individual employees’ goal of productivity. In short, OCB is a work ethics that surpasses the elementary requirement of a employee and even incline to pay no attention to their own interest and desires.

Regarding to the Islamic point of view, there are not so much study on OCB and Islam but the concept OCB commonly is apparel to Islamic philosophy. In Quran, there is verse command the Muslim to help each other in good deed and piety and forbid His people to help in sinning and transgression (surah 5: Verse 2). Since OCB is a voluntary approach then, it is the action that supported by Islamic Sharia because what they expect are divine reward from Allah. As long as the action of an individual or Muslim is following the Islamic law and *Sunnah*, that if the deed is not done and no punishment from not doing it or sinful and as long as the action or the deed is rewarded if it is done. It is Islamic when the workers perform the caring and empathy approach toward others.

Furthermore, the concept of OCB is accordance to the Islamic perspective because both shares in leading to brotherhood of Islam that covers the elements of *Ta’aruf* (knowing each other), *Tafahum* (understood each other), *Ta’awun* (helping each other) and *Takaful* (benefiting each other). Then, OCB in Islam stick to the values taught in Islam, but under the big umbrella of values and morals, it is called *Akhlaq* (Hamsani, Ernie Tisnawati Sule, Hilmiana and Umi Kaltum, 2017).

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#### **5.0 CONCLUSION**

Competence and competency tend to be categorized in various jobs of description. The scholars normally will decide different numbers of types of competencies for leaders, workers, businessmen, engineers, lawyers and etc. However, in the Islamic perspective, as long as the Muslim follow the Islamic teaching in Quran and *Sunnah* to work hard, to obey the rulers as long as not wrong or sinful instruction, do the best job done, *amanah* or dignity or honesty or trustworthy, responsibility, accountability, truthfulness and so on. The same thing when the Muslim do the conduct accordance to the *Akhlaq* of the Prophets SAW and it suit in any workplace and any kind of career or job.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Acknowledgements to IPTK of UTeM, who initiate the grant of Short Term Research, PJP/2022/TD/IPTK/S01841 and Pejabat Pendaftar for their cooperation.

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