An Empirical Study Of Competency Mapping Of The Employees In The Tourism Sector In Jammu And Kashmir-An Executive Level Perespective

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Abstract
The paper titled “An empirical study of Competency mapping of the employees in the tourism sector in Jammu And Kashmir-An executive level perespective” is an attempt to identify the gap between the competencies present and the competencies that are required for the employees in the tourism department to function at its best. It helps the employees to understand the process and requirements of the department more effectively and thus will be of direct help to develop the training schedule of the employees in such a way that the training program suits better to meet the employee’s and departmental needs. The paper focuses on the fact that there is a gap in the competencies present among the employees of tourism sector as against the competencies demanded by the employees of the sector so that the sector performs as per the expectations and offers not only better revenues and employment opportunities but also helps in pushing the economy on a large scale. The paper also suggests some suitable measures where this gap can be filled. The study uses descriptive research, as it includes surveying and fact-finding. The research explores details for further studies. The research comes up with the results based on statistical tools (t-test) used in the research. Based on this research a competency map will be developed which can be quite handful in suggesting improvements for the tourism sector in the state.

Keywords: Human resource, Tourism sector, Employment, Competencies, Competency Mapping

Introduction
Human resource management is a process that brings into picture the people element in the organizations and tries to connect them together so that the goals of the organization are met. As much weight age, the financial statements and other operating reports of organizations carry, personnel relations go head to head. Over the years, highly skilled, technical and knowledge based jobs are increasing while low skilled jobs are decreasing. This brings our attention to the fact that for future, skill mapping through proper HRM initiatives becomes the need of the hour. Competency mapping, the buzz word in any industry is the competence or the skill set which various thought leaders in business strategy have emphasized in order to compete in a specific environment. Competency mapping is a strategic HR framework for monitoring the performance and development of human resource in organizations. Competency mapping is a process of identifying key competencies for a particular position in an organization, and then using it for training and development, performance management, and succession planning. No two jobs are congruent to each other. In other words, each and every job demands different skills. A person having competencies to do a particular job may not be able to do other job equally well. A person performing outstanding in a particular job may not perform equally efficiently in other job. The present paper focuses on the competencies required in the tourism sector.

The tourism industry is playing an enormous role in the overall development of any country. The Compounded Average Growth Rate (CAGR) of the tourism sector in India since 2001 to 2010 is around 8%. In this context the state of Jammu Kashmir is famous for its varied beauty like hill stations, wetlands, lakes, sanctuaries, wildlife parks, adventurous sports, flora, fauna, ancient faiths, arts and culture and heritage. It provides a liaison with other sectors of the economy, like accommodation, transport, telecommunication, handicrafts and has the potential to not only be the economy driver, but also become an effective tool for employment generation and thus ensuring growth. Tourism is the booming industry. Looking at its economic returns and comparatively light investments and at its potentialities, tourism in the state has always been an area of attention and is required to be encouraged further. According to one estimate, 30 per cent of the state’s population are directly or indirectly connected with this activity subscribing 16 per cent of the state’s domestic product. The sector has much to pay as far as its contributions to economy are concerned. As of now the sector is not generating the revenues and employment which is expected out of it. The main reason for this is the lack of competencies in the employees who are not trained enough before they are offered the job.

Review Of Literature
Kodwani, Amitabh Deo (2009) believes that performance is the mantra of today’s business organization. It is only the people with right abilities who are able to perform better. Competencies are the set of such skills and abilities (technical as well as behavioral) which are required for desired level of performance. Right competencies are the key to superior performance. Most of the business organizations are without proper competency mapping as per the studies in the field.
Uddin, et al. (2012) has explained various tools for implementing Competency Model including Job Analysis, Job Description, Job Specification, Competency Matrix, 360 degree Feedback etc. The author is of the view that Competency mapping can be used for coaching and succession planning.

McClelland (1973) opened up Competency movement. His study demonstrates the data to show that traditional achievement and intelligence scores may not be able to predict Job Success and it is only the exact competencies required to perform a given job effectively and measuring them using a variety of tests, one can be sure about his profile.

Lucian Cernusca, Cristina Dima (2007) looks into some models of competency mapping and appraisal tools for performance management. A business might possess extremely capable human resources, but they might not work on the position that suits them. This is where competency mapping and the appraisal tools come to rescue the HR experts and choose who should work on what position.

Harvard psychologist David McClelland (1970) in the article highlighted the significance of testing for competence. This gave rise to competency models being established as the building blocks of superior performance in many professional and technical academic, organizational, and manufacturing endeavors.

Spencer and Spencer (1993) in the study identified five types of competency characteristics consisting of motives, traits, self-concept, knowledge and skills. Motives are the psychological features that an individual consistently thinks about or wants that stimulate action. Motives drive, direct and select behavior towards certain specific actions or goals and away from others. The traits are physical characteristics and consistent responses to situations or information. The self-concept is an individual’s attitudes, values or self-image. Knowledge is the information that an individual has in specific content areas. The skill is the ability to perform a certain physical or mental task. Knowledge and skill competencies tend to be visible and relatively surface characteristics, whereas self-concept, traits and motive competencies are more hidden, deeper and central to personality. Surface knowledge and skill competencies are relatively easy to develop and training is the cost-effective way to secure the employee abilities. Expectations form opinions with respect to the likely performance of a product or service.

(Rice 2006) studied the leadership development among healthcare executives in the U.S. The author believes, competency-based leadership development does not just drift, however it intentionally focuses on clear career aspirations. The author also mentioned that disciplined approach to career growth will enhance the organization’s performance. Along with these growths is career planning for health leaders that would set as innovative strategies for development.

Rainsbury, Hodges, Burchell & Lay (2002) suggest that there is an insufficient importance placed on the development of soft skills by many higher education institutions which teach employability skills in particular.

Bath, et al.(2004) opines that competencies should not be taught as a form of a check list but be integrated and contextualized into a curriculum.

Hind et al.(2007) believes that employability skills need to be embedded not only in any one module but must be throughout the curriculum at all levels.

**Objective Of The Study**

a) To key out the core competencies and supporting competencies for the employees in tourism department.

b) To identify the competency gap existing between the employee’s current performance level and the expected level of the performance.

c) To suggest the training mechanism within the department so that the training program will better suited to meet the employee’s and organizational needs.

**Hypothesis Tested**

H0: The present competency level in each one of the fifteen dimensions is same as the expected competency level.

H1: The competency level in each one of the fifteen dimensions is not the same as the expected competency level.

**Competencies expected from the employees working in the tourism sector:-**

From the study it was found that fifteen competencies ought to be present in the employees working in the tourism sector to facilitate the sector and helping in booming the sector. These competencies are:

- Human relations.
- Sales and marketing skills.
- Good communication skills.
- Computer related skills.
- Soft skills.
- Conflict management.
- Ability to work with customers.
- Ability to make decisions.
- Motivation.
- Planning abilities.
- Improvisation skills.
l) Subject knowledge.
m) Rhetoric skills.
n) Interpretations skills.
o) Empathy.

The same can be diagrammatically put in figure as:-

**Figure 1**

Research Methodology
The samples under this study are 30 employees working at the executive level in different functional units (organizations) of the tourism sector. The functional units include units (offices) of Jammu and Kashmir Tourism development corporation (JKTDC) located in Jammu and Srinagar. The functional units also include tour and travel agents from Jammu and Srinagar as well.
number of respondents on which research was conducted was 30 as the research process is time consuming and people at the executive level find it hard to take time to respond to the queries. The number of respondents from JKTDC on which research was carried upon was twenty (ten from Srinagar unit and ten from Jammu unit) and the number of respondents from the tour and travel agents on which study was undertaken was ten, including five from Jammu and five from Kashmir division from different units of tourism department. The study is based on the primary data collected from the respondents. In order to identify the competency of the employees, the researcher interviewed the respondents and used the literature studied so far. There were many competencies found which directly and indirectly affected the tourism sector of which only such selected competencies were streamlined on which consensus was built. These competencies are such that every author who has done study on competency mapping in tourism sector and the respondents interviewed unanimously and collectively believe that such competencies should be present so that employees in the tourism sector perform optimally well. There were fifteen such competencies found which includes human relations, conflict management, ability to work with customers, good communication skills, ability to make decisions, computer related skills, empathy, motivation, soft skills, planning abilities, improvisation abilities, subject knowledge, rhetoric skills, interpersonal skills, sales and marketing skills. The study made use of t-test to identify the gap between the present competency level and the expected competency level.

### Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competencies</th>
<th>Present competency level</th>
<th>Expected competency level</th>
<th>t-test for equality of means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dimensions</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human relations</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>0.912</td>
<td>3.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales and marketing skills</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>3.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict management</td>
<td>4.36</td>
<td>0.556</td>
<td>3.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to work with customers</td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>0.563</td>
<td>3.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good communication skills</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>0.980</td>
<td>4.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to make decisions</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>0.534</td>
<td>3.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer related skills</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>1.154</td>
<td>4.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>2.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>4.36</td>
<td>0.614</td>
<td>2.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soft skills</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>0.932</td>
<td>4.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning abilities</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>0.479</td>
<td>2.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvisation abilities</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>0.520</td>
<td>3.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject knowledge</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>2.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhetoric skills</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>0.498</td>
<td>2.266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal skills</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>0.2626</td>
<td>3.100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source:- Primary data, * is the significance level used in the study(5%)

**Findings From The Study:**

T-test for competency (performance) level of the respondent’s present position in each one of the dimensions as assessed by the respondents themselves is depicted in the table. The table provides competency levels found among the different levels of competency of respondents in each one of the fifteen dimensions. All statements listed in each one of the fifteen dimensions are assessed using a five point Likert-Scale ranging from 1-5 with 1 being the weakest and 5 the strongest liking for the competency to be present. The values present in between represent the corresponding degree of strength as the number itself. Null hypothesis is tested using t-
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competencies of the employees while recruiting them.
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sector economy wise and efficiency wise.

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skills (−3.63) and soft skills (−8.43). The sector and the
attracting more customers (tourists) which will streng t-
h the sector to offer better services and at the same t ime

good communication skills (−5.17), computer related
relations (−2.262), sales and marketing skills (−4.70),
ability to work with customers (9.89), ability to make deci-
sions (5.66), motivation (9.175), planning abilities
(10.77), improvisation skills (7.761), subject knowledge
sions (5.66), motivation (9.175), planning abilities
(13.53).

Conclusion
The present study identifies gaps in the competency level
of employees working in the tourism sector in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. A total of fifteen competencies
were found in these following competencies—human relations (−2.262), sales and marketing skills (−4.70),
good communication skills (−5.17), computer related
skills (−3.63) and soft skills (−8.43).
The sector and the people at the helm should lay more emphasis on these
competencies of the employees while recruiting them and while training the hired employees. This will in-
crease the skill set and hence will offer a better finished product (employee with almost complete required skill).
This will lead to a dichotomy of benefits helping the sector to offer better services and at the same time
attracting more customers (tourists) which will strengthen the sector economy wise and efficiency wise.

References


