

Mapping the Edge: Assessing Employee Competencies in Coimbatore's Expanding Hypermarket Sector

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Abstract

This study explores competency mapping within Hypermarkets in Coimbatore to assess employee strengths, weaknesses, and required skills, focusing on executive and managerial levels. Competency mapping identifies essential knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors, offering organizations insight into employee abilities and areas needing development. The data collection, drawn from primary sources and analyzed through percentage and chi-square methods, provides a structured approach to understanding competencies. The study found distinct gaps between competencies required and those employees possess, highlighting the need for targeted training and supportive workplace practices. These findings aim to help hypermarkets optimize workforce effectiveness, promoting better job satisfaction, quality work, and customer satisfaction by aligning employee skills with organizational needs.

Keywords: Competency Mapping, Employee Skills, Hypermarkets, Workforce Optimization

Introduction

Competency mapping is a critical tool for assessing and enhancing employee capabilities by identifying their knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors relevant to job roles. In the fast-evolving retail sector, especially within Hypermarkets in Coimbatore, the demand for specific competencies has intensified. As hypermarkets compete to meet consumer expectations, competency mapping provides a structured approach to evaluate and align employee skills with organizational needs, fostering efficiency, customer satisfaction, and career growth.

In 2024, the need for competency mapping in Hypermarkets in Coimbatore is driven by the shift toward a customer-centric, technology-driven market. Hypermarkets, serving as one-stop shops, require employees adept in both technical and interpersonal skills, such as product knowledge, communication, and adaptability to digital tools. With the rapid expansion of e-commerce and digital interfaces, the workforce must adapt to omnichannel retail environments where competencies in digital tools and inventory management have become essential. Competency mapping can highlight gaps and offer

insights into targeted training needs, ensuring that hypermarkets can maintain a competitive edge while fostering a productive, well-aligned workforce.

The structured approach of competency mapping thus enables hypermarkets to thrive amid industry shifts by continuously upgrading workforce capabilities, aligning with organizational goals, and enhancing employee satisfaction and retention through clear career development pathways.

Review of Literature:

Competency mapping has become a significant area of research in human resource management, emphasizing the alignment of employee skills with organizational goals. A review of studies from 2014 to 2024 reveals evolving trends, methodologies, and applications in diverse sectors. Recent research highlights the broad applicability of competency mapping across industries. Mishra and Mehta (2016) explored the impact of competency mapping in the healthcare sector, identifying core competencies that drive improved patient outcomes. Similarly, Kumar et al. (2018) examined competency mapping in the education sector, highlighting the necessity of aligning faculty skills with pedagogical goals to enhance student learning outcomes.

In the manufacturing industry, Patel and Sharma (2020) demonstrated the impact of competency mapping on operational efficiency. Their findings suggest that organizations that systematically assess and align employee competencies with job requirements experience improved productivity and employee satisfaction.

Methodological Approaches to Competency Mapping

The methodologies employed in competency mapping research have also evolved, with many studies adopting a mixed-methods approach. Kumar and Raghav (2017) used a Delphi method combined with job analysis to identify critical competencies in the IT sector. Similarly, Gupta and Verma (2021) applied machine learning algorithms to develop a competency mapping framework that assesses real-time performance metrics, enabling more accurate and timely skill assessments.

Impact on Employee Performance and Retention

Research has increasingly focused on the role of competency mapping in enhancing employee performance and retention. Kaur and Singh (2019) found that competency-based performance appraisals lead to higher levels of employee engagement and job satisfaction. Furthermore, competency mapping was shown to reduce turnover rates by aligning employee roles with their core skills and career aspirations (Jain & Bansal, 2023).

Emerging Trends: Digital Competency Mapping

The integration of digital tools in competency mapping has gained momentum, particularly since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Malik and Ahmed (2022) discussed the shift to virtual competency mapping platforms, which allow for remote assessments and real-time feedback. This shift has not only made competency mapping more accessible but has also improved the scalability of these assessments across large organizations.

Statement of the problem

Organizations rely on employees' competencies to drive performance and achieve strategic objectives.

However, a persistent challenge in hypermarkets in Coimbatore is the gap between the competencies required by companies and those possessed by employees, particularly at various levels of the organizational hierarchy. This mismatch can lead to suboptimal job performance, decreased customer satisfaction, and inefficiencies that affect the overall business. Therefore, it is essential to investigate and accurately identify the job competencies necessary for various positions and assess employees' alignment with these competencies to improve both individual and organizational performance. This study aims to evaluate the competency levels of employees in hypermarkets in Coimbatore, focusing on managerial, supervisory, and executive roles, to better understand competency gaps and provide recommendations for enhancing workforce capabilities through targeted training and development initiatives

Research Methodology

This study employs a descriptive research design to analyze the competencies of employees at two hierarchical levels—executive and managerial—within selected hypermarkets in Coimbatore, India. The study is based primarily on primary data, collected through a structured questionnaire targeting employees, and supplemented with secondary data from industry sources, including websites, journals, and reports on Hypermarkets in Coimbatore. The questionnaire is designed to capture insights on competencies related to personal attributes, knowledge, job-related skills, and interpersonal abilities, among other factors. Simple random sampling was used to ensure a representative sample across various roles within the hypermarket workforce.

Objectives of the Study

1. To identify the competency levels of employees concerning their job roles in hypermarkets.
2. To compare the required competencies for job performance with the actual skills possessed by employees.
3. To analyze employees' perceptions regarding the prevailing competencies within the hypermarket sector in Coimbatore.

Hypothesis Statements

1. H01: There is no significant relationship between the designation (executive vs. managerial) and the positive attitude of employees.
 - a. H11: There is a significant relationship between the designation and the positive attitude of employees.
2. H02: There is no significant relationship between age group and the need for supervision.
 - a. H12: There is a significant relationship between age group and the need for supervision.

Sample Size

The sample size for this study comprises 180 respondents from various hypermarkets located in the Coimbatore district. This sample includes individuals from both executive and managerial levels, providing a comprehensive overview of competencies across different roles within the organization.

Variables	Category	Executive Level		Managerial Level	
		No.of Respondents	Percentage	No.of Respondents	Percentage
Gender	Male	23	36	19	76
	Female	42	64	6	24
Age	14-24	26	41	3	12
	25-35	20	30	5	20
	>36	19	20	17	68
Experience (in Years)	0-2	35	54	10	40
	2-4	6	9	6	24
	More than 4	24	37	9	36
Work Schedule	Day	30	46	13	52
	Noon	35	54	12	48

The demographic analysis of hypermarkets in Coimbatore reveals distinct patterns across gender, age, experience, work schedules, and designation levels. At the executive level, 64% of employees are female, while managerial roles are predominantly male (76%). Age distribution shows that 41% of executives are aged 14–24, with only 20% over 36, whereas 68% of managers are over 36. Experience levels further highlight the contrast, with 54% of executives having 0–2 years of experience compared to 36% of managers with over four years. Work schedules are relatively balanced, though executives slightly favor noon shifts (54%), while managers lean toward day shifts (52%). Designation levels indicate that 72% of executives are at a low level, while 80% of managers are at a middle level. This analysis underscores a gender imbalance in managerial roles, a younger and less-experienced executive workforce, and provides valuable insights into the organizational structure and workforce composition.

Designation	No.of Respondents	Percentage
Low level	47	72
Middle level	18	28
Total	65	100

The analysis of executive-level employees in hypermarkets in Coimbatore reveals a hierarchical structure, with 72% of executives holding low-level roles focused on foundational or operational tasks, while 28% occupy middle-level positions. Key competencies such as gaining trust, quality awareness,

and maintaining a positive attitude are critical, yet responses indicate variability in proficiency, with notable gaps in stress management and resilience under pressure. For instance, while 31% strongly agree on quality awareness, mixed responses on trust-building and positivity highlight areas for improvement. Addressing these gaps through targeted training and organizational support can enhance executive effectiveness, ensuring better performance and satisfaction in customer-facing and managerial roles. This analysis underscores the need for strategic interventions to strengthen competencies and foster a supportive work environment.

Designation	No.of Respondents	Percentage
Middle level	20	80
Top Level	5	20
Total	65	100

The analysis of managerial-level employee designations in hypermarkets in Coimbatore, based on a competency mapping study, reveals several key insights. Managerial employees are categorized into two levels: middle-level management, comprising 80% of respondents and responsible for daily operations and team supervision, and top-level management, making up 20% and focused on strategic decision-making. The study identifies critical competencies, including knowledge-level competence (fundamental concepts and professional expertise), job-related competence (emotional resilience, proactivity, creativity, and mental agility), and interpersonal competence (persuasiveness and self-awareness). Middle-level managers play a pivotal role in operational efficiency and workforce management, underscoring their importance in organizational stability. Additionally, the study finds no significant relationship between managerial designation and positive attitude, suggesting that attitude remains consistent across management levels. These insights emphasize the importance of role-specific competencies, blending knowledge-based and interpersonal skills, to enhance team performance and overall organizational efficiency in hypermarkets.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Gaining trust and Confidence	17	16	19	8	5
Effectiveness under pressure	9	18	22	5	11
Understanding the business	24	11	17	9	4
Quality awareness	31	19	8	7	0
Positive attitude	16	11	16	13	9

Key competencies identified for executive-level employees include gaining trust and confidence, which

is crucial for establishing credibility within the organization, with varied but generally positive responses highlighting its importance. Effectiveness under pressure is another critical skill, though responses indicate moderate confidence, suggesting room for growth in this area. A strong understanding of business and basic concepts is widely acknowledged as essential for decision-making and strategic contributions, with a majority of executives emphasizing its significance. Quality awareness stands out as a top priority, with a strong consensus on maintaining high standards of work. Lastly, maintaining a positive attitude is valued, though mixed responses indicate variability in this trait. Overall, quality awareness and business understanding are the most strongly agreed-upon competencies, while effectiveness under pressure and a positive attitude present opportunities for targeted development and training interventions.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Understanding the business	5	2	8	9	1
Knowledge about Principles	6	10	8	1	0
Ability to move others	12	4	5	4	0
Emotional stress and strain	4	5	4	2	1
Innovations in Work	4	6	10	2	3

Competency analysis at the managerial level reveals critical insights into the skills and attributes necessary for effective leadership. Managers demonstrated strong knowledge-level competence, with 40% expressing confidence in their grasp of essential management principles, enabling them to oversee operations effectively. Job-related competencies, such as emotional resilience, adaptability, and proactive behavior, were highlighted as vital for navigating complex business environments and fostering innovation. Interpersonal competence, including persuasion and self-awareness, was deemed essential for team leadership, conflict resolution, and clear communication. Additionally, innovation and problem-solving abilities were identified as key to creating dynamic work environments and addressing challenges creatively. Key findings showed that 48% of managers strongly agreed on their ability to influence outcomes, underscoring the importance of persuasion and motivation. Interestingly, no significant relationship was found between job designation, age, and certain competencies, suggesting a uniform distribution across demographics. Recommendations include targeted training to enhance interpersonal and job-related skills, fostering supportive environments for creativity and resilience, and implementing continuous competency assessments to ensure managers adapt to evolving demands. This analysis underscores the importance of ongoing development in knowledge, interpersonal skills, and innovation to sustain managerial effectiveness in dynamic retail settings like hypermarkets.

Designation	Positive attitude				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Low level	9	5	11	8	7
Middle level	7	6	5	4	3
Total	16	11	16	12	10

The document analyzes the relationship between job designation and a positive attitude among employees in Hypermarkets in Coimbatore.

A chi-square test was conducted to examine if a significant relationship exists between the employee's designation level (low or middle) and their positive attitude. The results are as follows:

- Null Hypothesis (H0): There is no significant relationship between designation and positive attitude.
- Alternative Hypothesis (H1): There is a significant relationship between designation and positive attitude.

Degrees of freedom	Calculated value	Table value	Level of significant	Accepted/ rejected
4	2.7451	9.49	5%	Accepted

The calculated chi-square value was 2.7451, which is below the table value of 9.49 at a 5% significance level. Consequently, the null hypothesis was accepted, indicating no significant relationship between an employee's designation level and their positive attitude.

This finding implies that, within this sample, employees' positive attitudes were not significantly influenced by their hierarchical level in the organization, suggesting that factors beyond designation may play a role in shaping positive workplace attitudes.

Age group (yrs)	Limited supervision				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
20-24	8	6	4	5	3
25-35	7	3	4	4	2
36-45	6	6	2	4	1
Total	21	15	10	13	6

Degrees of freedom	Calculated value	Table value	Level of significant	Accepted/ rejected
8	2.313	15.5	5%	Accepted

The document's analysis of the relationship between age group and limited supervision concludes that there is no significant relationship between the two variables. The study used chi-square analysis with a calculated value of 2.313, which was less than the table value of 15.5 at a 5% significance level. This result supports the null hypothesis, indicating that age does not significantly influence whether employees experience limited supervision in their roles within the hypermarkets studied in Coimbatore.

Hypotheses Analyzed

Designation and Positive Attitude:

Null Hypothesis (H0): There is no significant relationship between the designation of employees and their positive attitude.

Result: The null hypothesis was accepted, indicating no significant relationship between designation and positive attitude.

Age Group and Limited Supervision:

Null Hypothesis (H0): There is no significant relationship between age group and the need for limited supervision.

Result: The null hypothesis was accepted, suggesting no significant relationship between age group and limited supervision.

Key Findings

- A significant portion of employees at the executive level (72%) held low-level positions, while the majority of managerial respondents (80%) were at the middle management level.
- A notable 40% of executive-level employees were in the 20-24 age group, and many had 4-5 years of work experience.
- 33% of employee-level respondents were effective under pressure, with a high proportion agreeing on the importance of quality awareness (47%).
- Among managers, 40% expressed strong knowledge of management principles, and 48% agreed on their ability to influence others effectively.
- No significant relationship was found between designation and positive attitude or between age group and limited supervision.

Conclusions

The study underscores the importance of aligning competencies with organizational roles to ensure operational efficiency. The findings recommend HR departments to assess competencies continually and identify training needs. Improving communication skills, providing appropriate training, and fostering a supportive work environment are emphasized to bridge competency gaps. The organization's investment in competency mapping was viewed as crucial for maintaining competitive advantage and supporting individual career development.

By focusing on these competencies, hypermarkets can enhance employee effectiveness and job satisfaction, thereby contributing to overall business success.

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