

The impact of job competencies to achieve team work collaboration: Evidence from Jordanian firms

Bilal Khalaf Al-Sakarneh^{a*}

^aHead of Business Administration, Al-Isra University, Jordan

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ABSTRACT

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This study aims to investigate the impact of job competencies in achieving team work collaboration in Jordanian industrial companies. The study population includes all 6 Jordanian industrial companies at Aljezah district, Jordan. A random sample of the employees including managers, deputies, assistants and sector managers is selected from the Jordanian industrial companies with the population of 130 individuals. To achieve the study objectives, the researcher uses quantitative, descriptive and analytical methods through several statistical tools to test the study hypotheses. The results show that competencies, knowledge, skills and attitudes, among the employees of Jordanian industrial companies played essential role in achieving the team work collaboration. The study also finds significant differences on the effects on team work collaboration dimensions; including culture differences, time differences and language on job performance. The researcher recommends the organizations to enhance job competencies in the Jordanian industrial companies to improve the performance of the businesses by acquiring appropriate knowledge and skills in achieving the team work collaboration.

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1. Introduction

The business community is characterized currently with the rapid development and continuous change as well as the severe competition between businesses that aim at generating value through achieving the customer's needs which are represented in providing the commodities and services in terms of quantities and quality with low cost at the due time (Delcourt et al., 2017). However, various industrial and service businesses provide a series of products and services that cannot be easily imitated by other competitors. Therefore, the job competency has represented the basis in which organizations rely. However, many organizations may have a competitive objective in all fields compared with other competitors, due to the lack of resources, which require them to gain an advantage to excel on their competitors, while confirming on the need to gain the competitive preferences (de Macedo Guimarães, et al., 2015).

In this regard, Chen and Chang (2010) explained that job competencies are strategically directed by the core competencies of the organization. From a psychological perspective, job competencies and core

* Corresponding author.

E-mail address: bilal_sakarneh@yahoo.com (B. K. Al-Sakarneh)

ones are similar and linked in terms of two types of fitness: first, between the individual and the organization, and second, between the individual and the job. Consequently, job competencies are an introduction to manage human beings in business organizations, which finally leads to the excellence in the organization. Consistent with this, due to the lack of Arabic studies in the field of job competencies and team work collaboration, and the scarcity of adopting such topics in the Jordanian organizations, including the Jordanian industrial companies, this study intends to show the effect of building job competencies in achieving time differences, cultural differences and language on team work collaboration in Jordanian industrial companies (Fisher et al., 2001; Singh, 2003).

1.1. Problem and questions of the study

The method of competency has witnessed a wide prosperity in the business sector due to tools produced by competencies which serve the decisions of selection, training and development, performance management, planning the job tracks, deciding compensations and wages within a complete scientific method. However, due to the challenges that are facing organizations including the Jordanian industrial companies, in terms of the weakness of programs, skills and practices related to the employees' competencies, the development and adoption of such concepts need high flexibility. It is clear that the Jordanian industrial companies do not provide enough concern for job competencies in their effect on the team work collaboration, which motivates the researcher to conduct this study since there is a high need to have field studies in how to achieve team work collaboration adopted.

1.2. Questions of the study

What is the effect of job competencies (knowledge, skills and attitudes) in achieving team work collaboration (cultural differences, time differences and language) for the Jordanian industrial companies?

This question has the following sub-questions:

1. What is the level of job competencies (knowledge, skills and attitudes) for the employees of the Jordanian industrial companies?
2. What is the level of team work collaboration (cultural differences, time differences and language) for the Jordanian industrial companies?
3. What is the effect of job competencies (knowledge, skills and attitudes) for the employees of the Jordanian industrial companies in achieving team work collaboration?
4. What is the effect of job competencies (knowledge, skills and attitudes) for the employees in achieving the team work collaboration (cultural differences, time differences and language) for the Jordanian industrial companies?

2. The Theoretical background

2.1. Job Competencies

2.1.1. The concept of competencies and job competencies

The development in the administrative thought and the theory which is based on resources and the competition that relies on competencies resulted in more concern by many researchers and writers in the field of competencies (Zenun et al., 2007). In this context, Sparrow and Hodgkinson (2006) confirmed that competencies can be directly started and competitively followed, through building competencies separately from the new activities practiced by the organizations. However, confirming on building competencies, results are in a perspective that organizations can re-structure industries and re-write their regu-

lations. Therefore, the first ideas of Sparrow and Hodgkinson (2006) stated that organizations can develop fields of experience and knowledge skills, and can become of an increasing importance on the long run to benefit thereof in developing central activities and to provide the organization with a unique advantage. On the other hand, others stated that organizations can develop their competencies on the long run and that such competencies can be supported in any activity inside the organization, which can be useful in developing central activities that add value to the product or service (Pacheco-Ornelas, et al., 2012). Competencies can be defined as the distinguishing capacities such as features and method of performance which differentiate the excellent performance and the level of performance (Leemann, 2005). Sparrow and Hodgkinson (2006) defined competencies as the ability of organizations and employees to work within mental and knowledge frameworks that allow them preserve the level of response for various situations in a correct and appropriate way. Becker (2007) defined it as a conceptual framework that contains three fields; namely the actual content, the competencies of strategic change and the competencies of strategic learning. Hence, the introduction of job competencies is considered a contemporary one, where its growth was linked with a dilemma that faced Ministry of Foreign Affairs/ USA which relates to the admission tests to occupy one of the sensitive positions (Nguyen, 2008).

The movement of job competencies was initiated during the sixties of the last century by the administrative expert who produced a list of competencies which distinguish excelled individuals from others, called competency model. Afterwards, studies have been expanded in explaining competencies and in applying different models in managing human resources until describing competencies within a wider term. Rousku (2014) stated that an employee's competency expresses his/her abilities and strength points that depend on his/her personality, values and his/her developed abilities. Accordingly, the researcher believes that job competency includes a series of knowledge, skills and attitudes that the employees of organizations use to provide them with the ability to achieve the team work collaboration for their organizations.

2.1.2 Importance of job competencies and fields to them

Sanghi (2007) confirmed that job competencies may have various benefits, which reflect its importance in terms of the value-added and embodies the clarity of operations, skills and knowledge an individual may need, in addition to the continuous learning and development as well as to increase the incentives and better future opportunities. Andrews (2011) urges that efficient job competencies require engaging the employees and all staff in the organization to achieve a maximum benefit from using job competencies, since this benefit – on the individual level- provides the employees with the ability .

2.1.3 Dimensions of job competencies

The researcher used the dimensions of job competencies as defined by Tesone and Ricci (2005) and Yaakob & Yunus (2016), as follows:

Knowledge: Knowledge is deemed as one of the intangible resources whose value can be increased through participation therein. In addition to that, one kind of Knowledge can be used for different purposes, while knowledge can be transferred from on individual to another while staying within the mind of the individual who transmitted it. Knowledge is defined as an accumulation with individuals through adding to the gained information and experiences and the previous thought as well the cultural background owned formerly. Knowledge can be divided into two forms: explicit which can be easily expressed and implicit that is difficult to express (Rynes et al., 2001). In this regard, Knowledge is described as the personal ability that is deemed as the output of information and opinion an individual has towards a matter that concerns him/her at some time (Omar, 2019).

Types of knowledge: Ancient Greeks divided knowledge into four main parts (as classified by Hijazi, 2005), namely:

1. *Comprehension knowledge*: which relates to theoretical principles and laws and basic rules of sciences, laws and scientific rules.
2. *Technical knowledge*: it is associated with skills and technical creativity as well as the ability to implement works and possess enough training to implement the tasks, not to forget achieving similarity and application in practical practices like other employees who perform the same tasks.
3. *Knowledge about applied and practical wisdom*: can be mainly noted in the social practices.
4. *The hybrid knowledge*: it expresses a mix of tendencies, attitudes and special abilities needed in a specific field and result in success and excellence in that field.

Skill: A skill has been defined as the ability to do performance complex works easily, accurately and effectively, according to a series of procedures that can be observed directly, which a person/s does/do while seeking to achieve a specific goal or task (Qatami, 2001).

Skills

Technical skills: The technical skill is the specialized knowledge in one of the scientific branches and the ability to use such knowledge in a better way that achieves the goal efficiently. For a leader, technical skills occupy an important position, since he/she has direct relationship with the subordinates at work. Therefore, it is his/her duty to be fully aware of the goal of work, its nature, size, specifications, methods of implementation and the difficulties that may arise during implementation as well as the assignments of every individual and his role (Hussein, 2011; Dwaikat et al., 2015).

Human skills: It means the leader's ability to interact appropriately with the subordinates, coordinate their efforts, create the team work among them, inform them about their responsibilities through cooperation, integration and harmony. It also indicates the ability to manage work and individuals' motivations to encourage them to work and to interact positively with them (Hussein, 2011).

Attitude: Attitudes represents a complex mental process that has tendencies and fixed relative attitude towards things and individuals. According to Sakarneh (2016), components of attitude are as follows:

1. Feeling and emotions that include an individual's feelings and his/her neutral, negative and positive emotions towards things and situations subject of the attitude.
2. Relevant information and beliefs which are associated with the individual, his perceptions and opinions towards things, people and events.
3. Behavioral attitudes: the individual's tendency to act / behave in a specific way. These acts can be estimated and measures the behavioral aspect of the attitudes.

Al-Khateeb (2004) mentions a series of tasks relevant with attitude, which are:

1. Accommodation and adaptation with the events, situations and people in work environment,
2. Defending self and interests,
3. Express values, culture and traditions,
4. Provide standards and reference frameworks that allow the individual to organize his knowledge. Understand and explain things and matters around,
5. Help in predicting the individual's behavior as knowing the person's attitude helps in predicting his public manners, conduct and behaviors,
6. Decrease the tension which an individual may suffer while attempting to achieve his objective.

2.2 *Team work*

The purpose of team work is to improve the employees' capabilities to take part in planning, trouble shooting, and decision-making. According to Lucas (2019), increased participation promotes:

1. Understanding of decisions
2. Participation and implementation plans
3. Help in contribution to problem-solving and decision making
4. Building in decisions, processes, and changes
5. Ability and willingness to participate in performance evaluation and improvement.

There are many factors influence in team work to fulfill the intended role of improving organizational effectiveness, it is critical that teams develop into working units and they are focused on mission and goals and reason for on existing (Sigalas et al., 2013). When someone is employed as leader for a team, team work starts and there is a need to adapt plans and ideas to fit the skills, abilities and knowledge, of the existing team work collaboration, which include cultural differences, time difference and language.

Cultural differences: A team work sometimes may have a communication a problem within cultural differences and sometimes it more significant within conventional team work (Hijazi, 2005). Cultural differences influence the individuals perceive information in the team work (Yaakob & Yunus, 2016). Distribution itself does not have any impact on the team work performance and cultural diversity and work process and employee mobility may have a negative impact on the team work performance. (Rousku, 2014). According to Lucas (2019), the more cultural differences among team members, the greater the expected difficulty in communication. The environment in which workers work can arise from different cultures. Some workers appear to be aggressive with others, and others do not want to be interested because they do not believe in this method. Some people find different cultures who do not understand each other's behaviors or behaviors of people from other countries, leading to mistrust among themselves (Alexander, 2000).

Time difference: Time difference becomes another problem for business organizations. Time is an obstacle for accomplishment of different tasks when the team is not in the same area and need to take the cards at the same time. Thus, individuals may need to work for a longer period of time to reach the goals of their team (Pacheco-Ornelas et al., 2012). The bigger distance teams have, the more time difference. The result of different time-period contributes to the non-participation of all members of the task forces to accomplish the work. Qatmin (2014) emphasize the importance of arranging time between all team members until the goal of the team is accomplished. When we need to call the task force meeting at the same time, for example, we require fast communication with others how reside in different locations. People may face some difficulty for communication because of the time difference between different destinations (Hussein, 2011).

Language: One of the main problems facing the task force is the difference in the languages spoken. When the team members speak in various languages, they have a problem communicating with one another as a conversation between the two, thus complicating the communication process and the lack of harmony between the team, but this problem can be resolved if one language is commonly used (Pacheco-Ornelas et al., 2012).

Collaboration: this concept illustrates the relationship between members of team work by taking advantage of the expertise and skills enjoyed by the members of one team, which leads to the achievement of the objective that was found for this team, and shows images of cooperation using modern technology in the business environment and technology infrastructure of the Internet and social Media and others.

3. Research Model and hypotheses

3.1. Research Model

Based on the theoretical background and the literature review related to job competencies and team work collaboration the researcher has developed a conceptual model to examine the relationship between the

job competencies and team work collaboration which include. Fig.1 shows the summary of the proposed study.

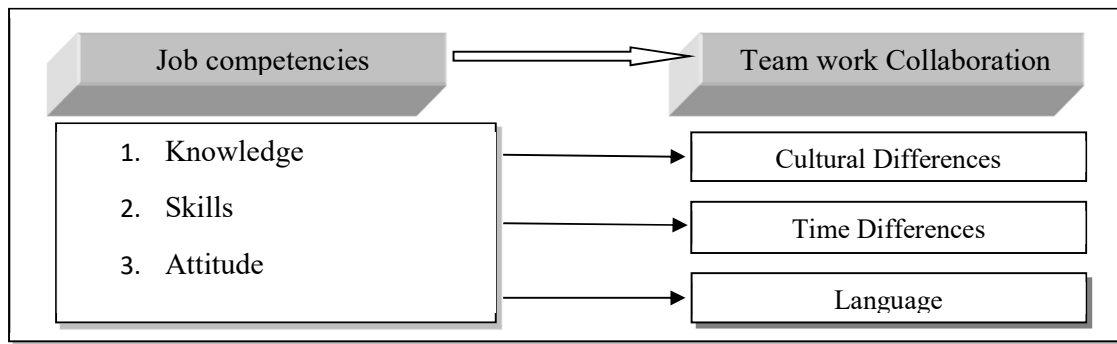


Fig. 1. The proposed study

3.2 Population of the study

The population of the study consisted of all 6 Jordanian industrial companies in Aljeeza distract. A cluster random sampling technique was used to select the respondents surveyed for this research and a total of 140 questionnaires were administered to potential respondents chosen from the employees of the higher and middle administrations including managers, deputies, assistants and sector managers. A total of 130 usable questionnaires were returned, giving a response rate of 92.8 percent which is acceptable size according to Hijazi (2010).

3.3 Data collection

To achieve the goals of the study, we developed a questionnaire to find the answers for the questions of the study, where the instrument was developed after reference to the relevant literature. Two main sources were used to collect data, specifically: In dealing with the literature, the researcher used secondary sources represented in books, Arab and foreign relevant references, periodicals, essays, reports and previous studies that examined the subject of the study. In addition, to handle the analytical aspects of the study, we have collected the primary data through the main questionnaire as a main instrument of the study. The questionnaire included a number of phrases that reflected the goals and questions of the study, the questionnaire comprises two sections, the first section covers the questions about Job competencies, while the second section covers the questions about factors affecting team work collaboration. We selected (31) items measuring Job competencies and factors affecting team work collaboration which were developed by the researcher based on the theoretical background and literature review, as follow: Questions 1-15 are associated with Job competencies and questions 16-31 measure team work collaboration developed by researcher based on literature review. All items were measured using a five-point Likert-type scale (ranging from 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree).

3.4. Validity and reliability of the data

The reliability of the scale is very important as it shows the extent to which a scale produces consistent result if measurements are made repeatedly, this is done by determining the association between scores obtained from different administrations of the scales. If the association is high, the scale yields consistent result, thus, it is reliable. Cronbach's alpha is most widely used method. It may be mentioned that its value varies from 0 to 1 but, satisfactory value is required to be more than 0.6 for the scale to be reliable. The test results for over all instruments is 0.832. In order to test the hypothesis, simple regression analysis has been used to assess the impact of job competencies to achieving team work collaboration.

3.5 Testing hypothesis

3.5.1. The main hypothesis: The effect of job competencies on team work collaboration

The first hypothesis examines whether or not job competencies (knowledge, skills and attitude) has any impact on the employees in the Jordanian industrial companies for team work collaboration. To test this hypothesis, multiple stepwise regression was used to ensure the effect of job competencies (knowledge, skills and attitude) on the workers in the Jordanian industrial companies in achieving the team work collaboration. Table 1 demonstrates the results of the survey.

Table 1

The summary of the effect of job competencies on team work collaboration

Coefficients				ANOVA			Model Summary			Dependent variable	
Sig* level	T Value	Effect degree		Sig* level	DF	F	Adjusted (R ²)	(R ²)	(R)		
0.021	6.155	0.190	Knowledge	0.000	4	39.766	.269	.262	.519	Team work collaboration	
0.073	.596	0.242	Skills		209						Regression
0.000	6.499	0.527	Attitude		213						Remaining
					Total						

According to Table 1, the statistical analysis shows significant statistical effect at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) for job competencies (knowledge and attitudes) of employees in the Jordanian industrial companies in achieving the team work collaboration. R coefficient amounted to 0.519 whereas R² is equal to 0.262. This reflects the core interest in job competencies with its two dimensions after getting rid of the values of standard mistakes that resulted from the team work collaboration. Furthermore, the results of regression coefficients show that the value of the effect factor (β) is equal to 0.190 for knowledge and it is meaningful when the level of significance is five percent. This value is confirmed through t-value which is calculated for the same variable and amounted to (6.155). On the other hand, the value of β is equal to .527 for the attitude (which is significant at $\alpha \leq 0.05$ with t-value =6.499). This means that one percent increase in job competencies (knowledge and attitude) will result in an increase of the team work collaboration by 0.190 and for knowledge by 0.527. This is also confirmed by F value for the effect model (F-value = 39.766, $\alpha \leq 0.05$). Therefore, we conclude that knowledge and attitude significantly contribute to team work for reaching better job performance.

To make sure of the effect of job competencies (knowledge, skills and attitudes) in each of the team work collaboration, the main hypothesis was divided into three sub-hypotheses, as follows:

The effect of job competencies on cultural differences

The first sub-hypothesis examines the effect of job competencies in achieving cultural differences. Table 2 demonstrates the results of the implementation of the regression function.

Table 2

The summary of testing the second hypothesis based on regression technique

Coefficients				ANOVA			Model Summary			Dependent variable	
Sig* level	T Value	Effect degree		Sig* level	DF	F	Adjusted (R ²)	(R ²)	(R)		
0.299	1.22	0.054	Knowledge	0.000	4	121.443	.734	.514	.811	culture Differences	
0.123	1.523	0.067	Skills		209						Regression
0.000	13.234	0.677	Attitude		213						Remaining
					Total						

Table 2 shows the effect of three factors associated with job competencies in achieving the cultural differences. The results of statistical analysis show that attitude has positive effect on reaching cultural differences. The adjusted R-Square is equal to 0.734, which means the regression independent variables could describe approximately 73% of the changes on the dependent variable. According to the results, an increase of about one percent in attitude will increase 0.677 in cultural differences. In summary, we

can confirm the sub-hypothesis and conclude that there was a positive and meaningful relationship between the attitude as one of the job competencies' variables and cultural differences when the level of significant is five percent.

The effect of job competencies on time differences

The second sub-hypothesis of the survey investigates the effects of job competencies on time differences. Table 3 shows the results of our survey.

Table 3
The results of testing the second sub-hypothesis

Coefficients			ANOVA			Model Summary			Dependent variable
Sig* Level	T. value	β	Sig* Level	DF Freedom degrees	F Value	Adjusted (R^2)	(R^2)	(R)	
0.000	2.987	0.187	Knowledge	4	Regression	0.643	0.633	0.677	Time Differences
0.093	1.543	0.087	Skills	209	Remaining				
0.000	12.233	0.533	Attitude	213	Total				

Table 3 shows the effect of job competencies (knowledge, skills and attitudes) of employees of the Jordanian industrial companies in achieving the advantage of quick service provision. The results are statistically meaningful ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) for job competencies (knowledge and attitude) of employees of the Jordanian industrial companies in achieving the time differences. The adjusted R-Square is equal to 0.643, which means the independent variables (Knowledge, Skills, Attitude) could describe the changes of dependent variable (Time differences) for about 64%. F-value and t-values are meaningful when the level of significance is five percent. Therefore, the second sub-hypothesis of the survey is confirmed.

The effect of job competencies on language differences

The third sub-hypothesis of this survey investigates the relationship between job competences and language differences. Table 4 presents the results of our survey for testing this sub-hypothesis.

Table 4
The results of the regression analysis between job competencies and language

Coefficients			ANOVA			Model Summary			Dependent variable
Sig*	T	β	Sig*	DF	F	Adjusted (R^2)	(R^2)	(R)	
0.289	1.022	0.066	Knowledge	4	regression	0.643	0.543	0.655	language
0.176	1.433	0.087	Skills	209	Remaining				
0.000	13.543	0.743	Attitudes	213	Total				

Table 4 shows the effect of job competencies (knowledge, skills and attitudes) of the employees of the Jordanian industrial companies in achieving the language. The results of statistical analysis show a significant effect at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) for the job competencies the employees of the Jordanian industrial companies in achieving the language. Adjusted R-Square is equal to 0.643, which means the independent variables could approximately explain 64% of the changes on dependent variable, which is language difference. Moreover, t-value associated with attitude is meaningful when the level of significance is five percent and this means that attitude plays significant influence ($\beta=0.743$) on language differences.

4. The Results, conclusion and recommendation

The purpose of this study was to examine whether certain factors of job competencies (knowledge, skills and attitudes) for the employees the Jordanian industrial companies could help in achieving the team work collaboration dimensions (culture differences, time differences, language). The regression analyses results have supported the study hypotheses of the survey. The result of the main hypothesis of the survey

is consistent with Hamidi (2015), Delima (2016), Cobanoglu et al. (2007) and Tesone and Ricci (2005). In light of the results of the study, the researcher would recommend the following:

Enhancing job competencies in the Jordanian industrial companies helps improve the performance of the business through acquiring knowledge and skills and attitudes. The Jordanian industrial companies are recommended to provide their employees with more training in communications skills, time management to enhance team work collaboration. The Jordanian industrial companies are recommended to generate trust with the employees which will be reflected in a positive way on achieving their objectives and promote high performance levels.

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