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**HR Competencies: Understanding the Impact on HR and
Organizational Performance in Saudi Arabia**

ABSTRACT

With growing emphasis being placed on HR competencies as a means to increasing HR’s effectiveness in Saudi Arabia, this research study seeks to i) determine if competencies are predictive of success in the HR profession, ii) understand how competencies vary by type of position within HR (entry level, manager, director and executives), iii) determine if there is a relationship between specific competencies and particular responsibilities of HR professionals, and iv) determine the relationship among education, years of HR experience, competencies, and compensation. Numerous areas are identified as gaps between competencies HR professionals should possess compared to current competencies necessary to function effectively as strategic business partners.

16 Researchers in the field of strategic human resource management (HRM) and human resource
17 development (HRD) have emphasized the view that systems of human resource (HR) practices
18 may lead to higher firm performance and be sources of sustained competitive advantages
19 (Wright, Dunford, & Snell, 2001). For clarification purposes, the discussion of HR practices in
20 this paper will include both HRM and HRD.

21 HR competencies deal with the knowledge, skills, and values that successful human
22 resource (HR) professionals demonstrate in all types of positions, companies, and geographies
23 (Ulrich, Younger, Brockbank, & Ulrich, 2012). The techniques help those professionals
24 architect, coach, design, and facilitate programs for effective operations resulting in more
25 efficient and content organizations.

26 In competing in today's tumultuous global economy, there are numerous opportunities
27 and challenges facing Saudi Arabian firms. It is expected that the HR function in these firms
28 partner effectively in helping the firm to create and sustain competitive advantages. To function
29 effectively in HR, Brockbank, Ulrich, & Beatty (1999) argue that for HR to be a profession, HR
30 professionals must master the necessary competencies and that mastery of HR knowledge comes
31 from knowing the concepts, language, logic, research, and practices of HR. Furthermore,
32 mastery of abilities comes from being able to apply the knowledge to specific business settings.

33 With growing emphasis being placed on HR competencies as a means to increasing HR's
34 effectiveness, this research would seeks to i) determine if competencies are predictive of success
35 in the HR profession in Saudi Arabia, ii) understand how competencies vary by type of position
36 within HR (entry level, manager, director and executives), iii) determine if there is a relationship
37 between specific competencies and particular responsibilities of HR professionals, and iv)
38 determine the relationship among education, years of HR experience, competencies, and

39 compensation. Competence of an individual as defined by Becker, Huselid, and Ulrich (2001) is
40 the knowledge, skills, abilities, or personality characteristics that directly influence one's
41 performance.

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43

LITERATURE REVIEW

44 To sustain the transformation of the HR function, HR professionals must develop and
45 demonstrate a new set of competencies to fulfill their changing roles and responsibilities (Yeung,
46 Woolcock, & Sullivan, 1996). In the widely cited and used "Michigan's HR Competency
47 Research," (Brockbank, Ulrich, & James, 1997) the researchers identified five major
48 competencies expected of HR professionals: i) strategic contribution, ii) personal credibility, iii)
49 HR delivery, iv) business knowledge, and v) HR technology. Becker et al., (2001) suggested
50 adding strategic HR performance management as a sixth competency.

51 According to Becker et al., (2001) the strategic performance management strategies are
52 probably a little different and support the notion that HR managers must think differently about
53 HR. The core dimensions of this competency are: a) critical casual thinking, b) understanding
54 principles of good measurement, c) estimating causal relationships, and d) communicating HR
55 strategic performance results to senior line managers. It is argued that with a stronger
56 competency in strategic performance management, an HR professional would be better able to
57 show correlation and causal relationships between HR systems and financial outcomes, customer
58 value proposition, and even competitive advantages.

59 As Ulrich, et al., (1997) pointed out, HR must be competent with strategic contribution
60 and as Becker et al.,(2001) noted, HR must be fully competent with strategic performance
61 management. In a study conducted by Wright, McMahan, Snell, & Gerhart (2001) the authors

62 found that it is not only HR professionals who see value in HR practices, but that top line
63 executives believe that a number of HR activities are critical to the firm's competitive advantage.

64 A competency model can serve as an integrative framework for an organization's entire
65 HR system. It can help align the HR system vertically with the organization's strategic
66 objectives, or horizontally with other HR functions, to ensure harmony and consistency across
67 the many facets of HR activities that impact human performance (Rothwell & Wellins, 2004).
68 Moreover, taking talent-management expertise forward is central to the future success of the
69 entire HR profession (Boudreau & Ramstad, 2003). The authors reiterate that the HR profession
70 "can evolve into a true decision science of talent and aspire to the level of influence of
71 disciplines such as finance and marketing." To achieve such success as a profession, specific
72 resources and capabilities of a company may be used to permanently influence its goals (Zaugg
73 & Thom, 2003). In order for these potentials to be developed into competitive advantages, they
74 must be scarce, valuable, and permanent; additionally their ability to be imitated, transferred, or
75 substituted must be limited (Wenger, 1999: 53 ff.) as cited in Zaugg & Thom (2003).

76 With a shifting role of HR given the changing business demands, organizations must
77 establish new covenants with customers, manage disruptive technologies, create new forms of
78 engagements with employees and face scrutiny of investors who determine a firm's market value
79 by assessing its intangibles, not just its present or past earnings (Ulrich & Beatty, 2001). Tied to
80 the changing demands of the HR professions are the new competencies enabling HR to be
81 effective in driving firm performance and creating sustainable competitive advantages.

82

83 **METHODOLOGY**

84 This study included HR professionals in Saudi Arabia. The authors e-mailed, mailed, and
85 posted surveys online. The study utilized a cross-sectional design collecting data at one point in
86 time versus a longitudinal research where data are collected from a sample at different points in
87 time in order to study changes or continuity in the sample's characteristics (Gall, Borg, & Gall,
88 1996). The target population was HR professionals in Saudi Arabia. HR professionals for the
89 purpose of this study include individuals who practice in the field of human resources and hold
90 full-time positions. Forty-six HR professionals responded to the survey.

91

92 Survey Design

93 The purpose of this study was to i) determine if competencies are predictive of success in
94 the HR profession in Saudi Arabia, ii) understand how competencies vary by type of position
95 within HR (entry level, manager, director and executives), iii) determine if there is a relationship
96 between specific competencies and particular responsibilities of HR professionals, and iv)
97 determine the relationship among education, years of HR experience, competencies, and
98 compensation. Based on theories, concepts, and frameworks discussed in the literature review,
99 the author designed a survey as the primary means of data collection for the study.

100 The instrument included multiple sections. The first section focused on information of
101 the participants' position classification (job title), industry, years employed in HR, years in
102 current position, and highest educational attainment. The second section of the survey dealt with
103 the participants identifying the competencies, skills, and attributes HR professionals should
104 possess and the competencies the participants' employers emphasize in various employment
105 practices. Compensation information will also be included in this section. The third section of

106 the survey listed 12 specific strategies and activities based on the review of literature and
107 empirical studies (Becker & Huselid, 1998; Brockbank et al., 1999; Giannantonio & Amy,
108 2002). A scale of 1 – 5 was used to indicate the level of competence needed in one’s job and
109 second, the level of the employee’s competence for the specific HR activity.

110 As a way to determine the construct validity of the instrument and to enhance its
111 effectiveness, a pilot study was conducted on a stratified sample of 8 HR professionals including
112 Senior Executives, HR Managers, and HR Generalists. Respondents were asked to review the
113 instrument and provide feedback on the utility of the questions, recommend additional questions,
114 eliminate questions, and determine if the questions will be able to collect the appropriate data
115 needed to fulfill the purpose of the study. Items that were consistently identified by the focus
116 group were included in the final survey.

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Survey Data Analysis

120 The main objective of this research was to determine and understand the competencies, skills
121 that human resources professionals in Saudi Arabia possess, and its relations with the
122 management behaviors. Also the study aims to understand the importance of these competencies,
123 and the availability of these competencies for the human resources professionals. Also the survey
124 is intended to achieve many other objectives such: to predict the availability of these
125 competencies in predicting and how they participate in predicting the level of success of human
126 resources professionals, determining if there is a significant relationship among specific
127 competency and particular responsibilities, in addition to examine if there is a relation between
128 the variables (education, and experience) with the competencies and compensation. To achieve

129 these aims and objectives , secondary data has been collected by a designed questionnaire. SPSS
130 has been used for data entering, and to analyze the data results.

131 In order to analyze the data , descriptive statistics techniques have been used such as frequencies,
132 percentages, averages, correlations, and inductive statistical method such as analysis of variances
133 (ANOVA) and Students' T-test statistics. In addition to that Cronbach's Alpha coefficient is used
134 to measure the questionnaire internal consistency.

135 Based on the above data analysis will proceed as the following scenario:

- 136 1. testing the questionnaire method reliability and validity .
- 137 2. describing the sample of the study according to the variables:(position, industry, years of
138 experiences in HR, years of experience in the current job, and education).
- 139 3. determining the competencies, skills and characteristics available to HR professionals .
- 140 4. analysis of the sample attitudes about the importance of the availability of competencies,
141 and personal skills for the HR professionals to implement and practice main strategies,
142 activities that related to their jobs.
- 143 5. estimating the percentages of time the HR professional spent on doing his job tasks.
- 144 6. sample responses concerning the importance and level of competencies, skills required
145 for HR professionals to work as strategic partner to executive management in the
146 corporate.

147 In the following we will proceed forward in data analysis:

148 First : Questionnaire method reliability and validity

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153 Table No.1, shows reliability analysis

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.930	24

154

155 From the above table we noticed that the value of Cronbach's Alpha coefficient is reaching
 156 (0.93) which is exceeding the (0.70) , the recommended value of the method reliability and
 157 validity . therefore, we believe that the questionnaire method has a high validity, that
 158 guarantee the outcomes of the study.

159

160 Second : analysis of the sample demographic characteristics

161 Sample demographic characteristics include : (position, industry , years of experience in HR,
 162 years of working in the current job, and education level.

163 Table No.2, sample distributed according to position.

position					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	employee	32	69.6	69.6	69.6
	manager	14	30.4	30.4	100.0
	Total	46	100.0	100.0	

164

165 From the above, we observed that 69.6% of the participants are employees, whereas 30.4%
 166 are managers. Therefore, the employees have the highest percent of participation in our
 167 current study.

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173 Fig No.1 sample distributed according to position .

174

175 Table No.3, sample distributed according to industry

176

industry sector				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent

Academic	8	17.4	17.4	17.4
Transformation industry	7	15.2	15.2	32.6
Commercial	11	23.9	23.9	56.5
Health care	8	17.4	17.4	73.9
Construction	12	26.1	26.1	100.0
Total	46	100.0	100.0	

177 From the above statistics, we noticed that 17.4% of the respondents working in academic
 178 establishment, whereas 15.2% in transformation industry, while 23.9% in the commercial sector,
 179 where 17.4% in medical services field, while 26.1% working in construction firms.

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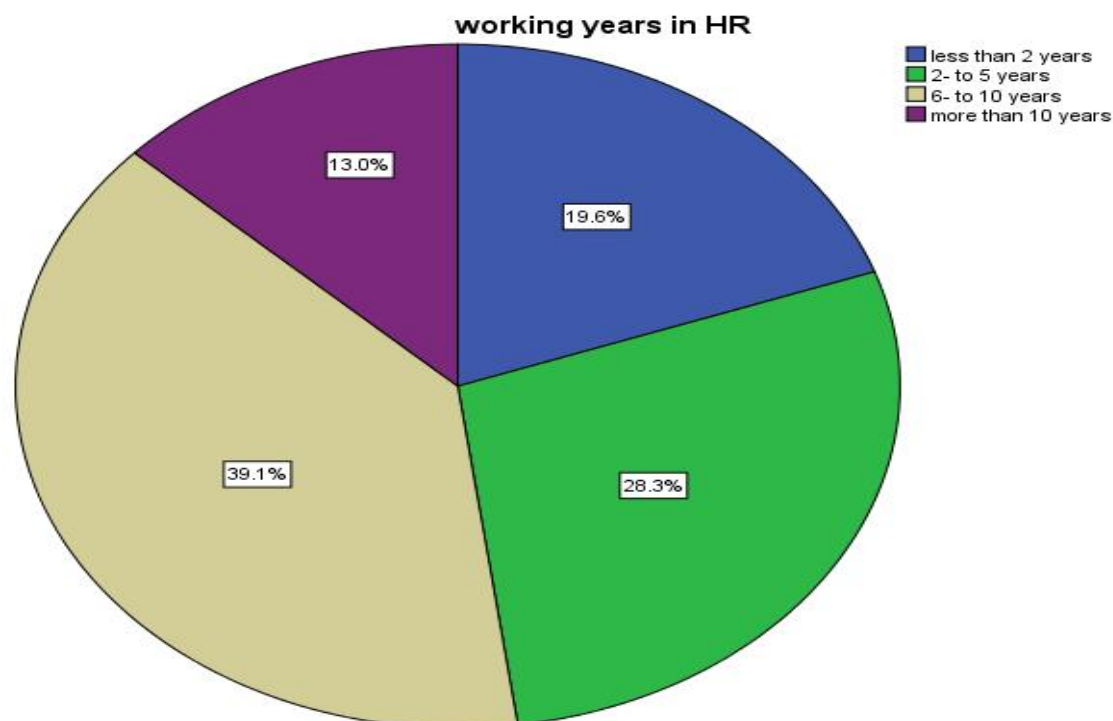
183 Table No.4, sample distributed according to number of working years in Human resources.

working years in HR					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	less than 2 years	9	19.6	19.6	19.6
	2- to 5 years	13	28.3	28.3	47.8
	6- to 10 years	18	39.1	39.1	87.0
	more than 10 years	6	13.0	13.0	100.0
	Total	46	100.0	100.0	

184

185 From the above table , we noticed that 19.6% of the participants working in HR for less than 2
 186 years, whereas 28.3% their working years between 2- to 5 years, while 39.1% working between
 187 6-10 years, where 13.0% their working years in HR is more than 10 years.

188 Therefore, there are 52.1% their years of working in HR more than 5 years, what would an effect
 189 on the evaluation of human resources professionals needed competencies and skills.



190

191

192 Fig. No.3 sample distributed according to working years in HR

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199 Table No.5, sample distributed according to number of working years in the current job .

200

years of working in current job					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	less than one year	8	17.4	17.4	17.4
	from 1- to 4 years	20	43.5	43.5	60.9
	from 5- to 10 years	14	30.4	30.4	91.3
	more than 10 years	4	8.7	8.7	100.0
	Total	46	100.0	100.0	

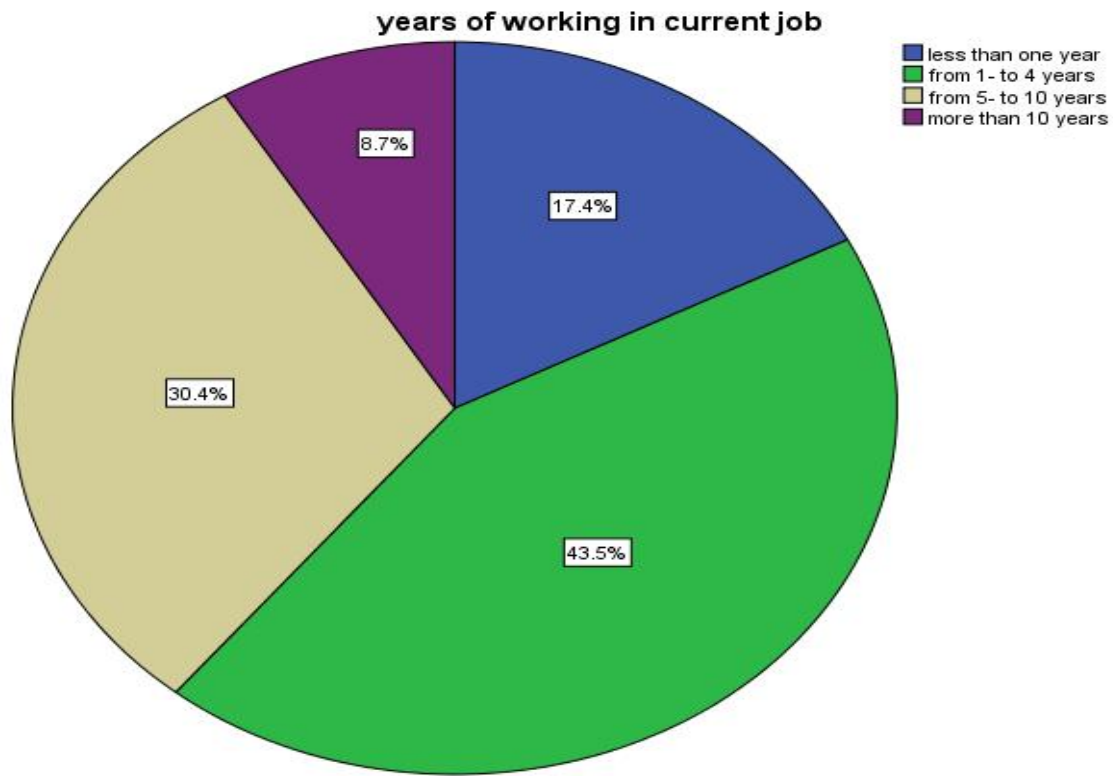
201 From the above table, it is clearly seen that 17.4% work less than 1 year in the current job in HR,
 202 whereas 43.5% working years between 1-4 years, while 30.4% work from 5- to 10 years, where
 203 8.7% work for more than 10 years.

204 Thus, it obvious that the majority of participants work in the current job from 1-4 years, and they
 205 represented 43.5% of the total.

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211 Fig. No.4, sample distributed according to working years in the current job.

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222 Table No.6, sample distributed according to education level .

223

education					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Bachelor	32	69.6	69.6	69.6
	Master	4	8.7	8.7	78.3
	diploma	4	8.7	8.7	87.0
	secondary	2	4.3	4.3	91.3
	high diploma	2	4.3	4.3	95.7
	Phd	2	4.3	4.3	100.0
	Total	46	100.0	100.0	

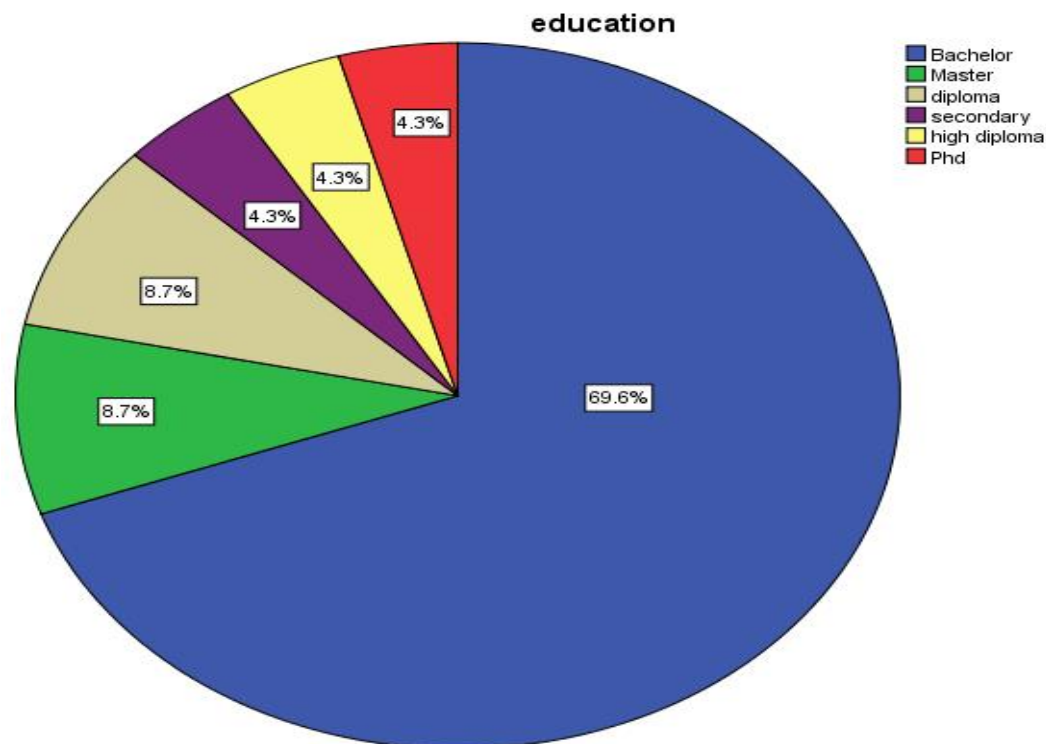
224

225 From the above statistics, it is obvious that the majority of the participants education level is

226 bachelor degree, whereas 8.7% hold master degree, while 8.7% diploma, where 4.3% for

227 secondary , high diploma and Phd. Successively.

228



229

230

231 Fig. No.5, sample distributed according to education level.

232

233

234 3. determining the competencies, skills and characteristics available to HR professionals.

235 Table No.7, shows the most important competencies, skills, and characteristics that HR

236 professionals possessed to work as strategic partner to executive management in the their

237 companies.

Competencies, skills	Frequencies	Percent %
Leadership	6	13.0
Communication skills	2	4.3
Strategic planning	7	15.2

Interpersonal skills	25	54.3
Working experience	6	13.0
Total	46	100.0

238

239 From table No.7, it is obviously seen that one of the most important competency that HR
 240 professional possess in order to work as professional in HR, is the interpersonal skills with
 241 54.3%, followed by strategic planning with 15.2% , while working experience and leadership
 242 have comes in the same rating with 13.0% each, whereas only 4.3% for communication skills.

243

244 Table No.8, shows correlation relationship between competencies & skills of HR professional
 245 and salary .

	Correlation coefficient	P-value
	-0.385**	0.01

246 ** correlation is significant at the (0.01) level.

247 From the above table, it is obviously seen that the value of Person's correlation coefficient is
 248 reaching (-0.385) with negative sign and statistically significant at (0.01), which indicated that
 249 there is a significant inverse relationship between competencies, skills and the salary. That
 250 means, the salary has negative effects on HR professionals to possess the needed competencies .

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253

254 Table No.9, shows the most important competencies, skills, and characteristics that company
 255 take into consideration when selecting, rewarding, and promoting HR professionals to work as
 256 strategic partner to executive management in the corporate.

	Frequencies	Percent %
Knowledgegement competencies	18	39.1
Management relationship	6	13.0
Organizational competencies	15	32.6
Evaluation competencies	7	15.3
Total	46	100.0

257
 258 From table No.9, it is obviously seen that the most important competency that the company take
 259 into consideration when selecting, recruiting a human resources professionals is the
 260 knowledgegement competency with the percent 39.1%, followed by organizational competency
 261 with 32.6% , while evaluation competencies come in the third rating with 15.3%, then
 262 management relationship with 13.0%.

263 Hence, we conclude that the most important competencies for companies when selecting,
 264 recruiting HR, are the knowledge competencies and organizational competencies.

265
 266 Table No. 10, participants attitudes in concern with the extent of importance of the
 267 competencies to enable HR professionals to be effective in practicing the following strategies,
 268 activities that drive the firm performance .

Strategies & activities	High	Extremely moderate	Moderate	Less moderate	Low	average

				e		
understanding the business	16(34.8)	12(26.1)	12(26.1)	5(10.9)	1(2.2)	3.80
deliver human resources practices	12(26.1)	8(17.4)	20(43.5)	4(8.7)	2(4.3)	3.52
manage changes effectively	16(34.8)	11(23.9)	13(28.3)	4(8.7)	2(4.3)	3.76
manage cultures effectively	10(21.7)	8(17.4)	19(41.3)	7(15.2)	2(4.3)	3.37
participates in strategic planning	16(34.8)	8(17.4)	10(21.7)	10(21.7)	2(4.3)	3.57
possesses adequate technical competencies in HR	20(43.5)	9(19.6)	14(30.4)	2(4.3)	1(2.2)	3.98
possesses adequate competencies in OD	6(13.0)	6(13.0)	10(21.7)	3(6.5)	0(0.0)	3.60
understand and uses management accounting concepts and practices	14(30.4)	10(21.7)	12(26.1)	8(17.4)	2(4.3)	3.57
understands and uses marketing strategies	8(17.4)	7(15.2)	13(28.3)	11(23.9)	7(15.2)	2.96
measures HR practices to determine effectiveness	10(21.7)	12(26.1)	14(30.4)	7(15.2)	3(6.5)	3.41
stays abreast with applicable research findings	7(15.2)	6(13.0)	13(28.3)	14(30.4)	6(13.0)	2.87
reads academic and	7(15.2)	8(17.4)	10(21.7)	10(21.7)	11(23.9)	2.78

practitioner journals on a regular basis						
Total						3.43

269

270 The statistics in the above table shows the participants responses concerning the importance of

271 the of competencies and skills that HR professionals should possess to practice the strategies,

272 activities to work as strategic partners with the senior managers in company, the statistics have

273 shown that the competencies, skills are extremely moderate important for HR professionals in

274 Saudi Arabia firms to implement the following strategies and activities:

- 275 ▪ possesses adequate technical competencies in HR.
- 276 ▪ understanding the business.
- 277 ▪ manage changes effectively.
- 278 ▪ participates in strategic planning.

279 The previous responses are supported by the average means values comes as follows : (3.98,

280 3.80, 3.76, 3.60, and 3.57).

281 Moreover the competencies and skills are moderately important to HR professionals to

282 implement the following strategies and activities:

- 283 ▪ understands and uses marketing strategies
- 284 ▪ stays abreast with applicable research findings
- 285 ▪ reads academic and practitioner journals on a regular basis

286 the responses to the above items of strategies and activities are supported by the average means

287 values (2.96, 2.87, and 2.78) .

288 Thus, we conclude that HR professionals or the management in Saudi firms don't take careful
 289 attention to the competencies, skills HR professionals must possess to help in implementing the
 290 strategies and activities that make the firms succeed.

291 table No.11, sample attitudes in concern of the extent of availability of competencies, skills for
 292 HR professionals to implement the strategies, activities that considered as standard to HR
 293 professionalism .

Strategies & activities	High	Extremely moderate	moderate	Less moderate	Low	average
understanding the business	10(21.7)	14(30.4)	14(30.4)	4(8.7)	4(8.7)	3.48
deliver human resources practices	7(15.2)	14(30.4)	14(30.4)	6(13.0)	5(10.9)	3.26
manage changes effectively	9(19.6)	16(34.8)	15(32.6)	1(2.2)	5(10.9)	3.50
manage cultures effectively	9(19.6)	8(17.4)	14(30.4)	8(17.4)	7(15.2)	3.09
participates in strategic planning	8(17.4)	11(23.9)	11(23.9)	10(21.7)	6(13.0)	3.11
possesses adequate technical competencies in HR	9(19.6)	13(28.3)	14(30.4)	7(15.2)	3(6.5)	3.39
possesses adequate competencies in OD	2(4.3)	7(15.2)	10(21.7)	5(10.9)	0(0.0)	3.25
understand and uses management accounting concepts and practices	9(19.6)	9(19.6)	13(28.3)	10(21.7)	5(10.9)	3.15
understands and uses	4(8.7)	7(15.2)	14(30.4)	14(30.4)	7(15.2)	2.72

marketing strategies						
measures HR practices to determine effectiveness	2(4.3)	11(23.9)	16(34.8)	10(21.7)	7(15.2)	2.80
stays abreast with applicable research findings	1(2.2)	8(17.4)	12(26.1)	11(23.9)	14(30.4)	2.37
reads academic and practitioner journals on a regular basis	6(13.0)	6(13.0)	6(13.0)	9(19.6)	19(41.3)	2.37
Total						3.04

294

295 The statistics in table No.11, displays the participants responses concerning extent of availability
 296 of competencies, skills and personal experiences for HR professionals to implement the
 297 strategies, activities that considered as standard to HR professionalism. The statistics have shown
 298 that the only competencies, skills that are extremely moderate available for HR professionals in
 299 Saudi Arabia firms related to the following strategies and activities: manage changes effectively,
 300 and understanding the business.

301 While the competencies, skills to implement the following strategies and activities are
 302 moderately available as the means value ranged between (3.39 –to 2.72) :

- 303 ▪ possesses adequate technical competencies in HR
- 304 ▪ deliver human resources practices
- 305 ▪ possesses adequate competencies in OD
- 306 ▪ understand and uses management accounting concepts and practices
- 307 ▪ participates in strategic planning

308 ▪ manage cultures effectively

309 ▪ measures HR practices to determine effectiveness

310 ▪ understands and uses marketing strategies

311 ▪ also from table No.11, we noticed that the competencies including : stays abreast with

312 applicable research findings, and reads academic and practitioner journals on a regular basis,

313 are less moderately available to HR professional working in Saudi firms.

314

315

316 Table No.12, explain the estimated time in percentages the HR professional stays in thinking

317 about and practicing the following tasks :

Tasks	Average mean	Standard deviation	Std. Error
change agent	7.85	5.9	1.6
administrative tasks	34.1	18.6	2.8
staffing	19.0	15.7	2.6
compensation	11.4	10.5	2.2
assessing organizational needs	8.7	7.1	1.4
design HR strategies and initiatives	9.2	6.9	1.3
implementing HR strategies and initiatives	11.3	7.4	1.3
serving as an internal consultant	8.8	9.9	2.7
intervene with legal issues	12.1	11.6	3.0
partnership with senior executives on strategy formulation	10.7	6.5	1.5

engaged with labor relation issues	16.6	13.1	2.6
other tasks	17.9	9.7	2.5

318 The above statistics showed the average estimated time the human resources professional stays
 319 in practicing the above tasks, and it is obviously seen that the most important tasks the human
 320 resources professional spent time to practice include : administrative tasks, staffing , other task,
 321 and engagement with labor relation issues.

322 Table No.13 Examining relationship between competencies and number of years working
 323 experience in Human resources management

324

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	9.569 ^a	12	.654
Likelihood Ratio	12.374	12	.416
Linear-by-Linear Association	.004	1	.948
N of Valid Cases	46		

325 From the above table we noticed that as the value of Person Chi-Square is equal to (9.57)
 326 approximately and statistically not significant at (0.654), this indicated that there is no significant
 327 correlation relationship between the competencies , skills that assumed to be possessed by human
 328 resources professionals and their working experiences. This also mean that the working
 329 experience has no effect on the possess of HR professional to the required competencies help
 330 them to carry their tasks, and responsibilities.

331 Also we examine if there are significant differences between competencies related to working
 332 years experiences as shown in ANOVA table No.14 below:

333 Table No.14, analysis of variances results

ANOVA					
competencies required for HR professional					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	52.300	15	3.487	.486	.913
Within Groups	107.700	15	7.180		
Total	160.000	30			

334 From the above table , it is clearly seen when conducting analysis of variances techniques to
 335 detect if there are significant variation between HR professionals possessing of competencies
 336 attributed to differences of working experiences, it obvious that there is no significant variations
 337 as the F value is equal to (0.486) and statistically not significant .

338

339

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342 Table No.15 Examining relationship between competencies and education level .

343 To test for this relation between competencies and education level, Chi-Square technique has
 344 been performed as shown in the below table :

345

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	31.555 ^a	20	.048
Likelihood Ratio	25.754	20	.174
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.537	1	.060
N of Valid Cases	46		

346

347 From the statistics, we noticed that the value of Person Chi-Square is equal to (32.56) with

348 significant level less than (0.05) , therefore, we conclude that there is a significant relationship

349 between the education level and competencies availability to HR professionals. This means that

350 as the human resources professionals acquired high level of education they are supposed to have

351 sufficient competencies help to manage to human resources in the company and participate

352 actively in the all activities.

353

354 Table No.16, testing the relationship between scores on competencies and the abilities of HR

355 professionals to implement the strategies and activities related to their jobs.

Correlations			
		average scores of strategies and activities	Total scores of human resources possessing of competencies
average scores of strategies and activities	Pearson Correlation	1	-.543 ^{**}

	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	46	32
Total scores of human resources possessing of competencies	Pearson Correlation	-.543 ^{**}	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	32	32
** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

356

357 From the above table, it is obviously seen that the Person Correlation coefficient is equal to
 358 (0.543-) at significant level less than (0.01) , this indicated that there is a negative relationship
 359 between statistically significant at the (0.01) level . This may be interpreted as that low
 360 possessing of the required competencies has a negative effect on HR professionals to carry on
 361 their assigned tasks and responsibilities.

362 Thus we conclude that HR professionals in Saudi organization don't possess the required
 363 competencies that support them to implement the strategies and activities, and thus they are
 364 unable to work as strategic partners in the companies they work for .

365

366 **Final findings :**

367 Based on data analysis of the study, we concluded with the following findings:

368 1. The study revealed that the most important competency that HR professionals possessed is
 369 the interpersonal skills with 54.3% percent.

370 2. The study detected that there is a statistically significant and inverse correlation relationship
 371 between competencies, and salaries obtained by HR in their organizations at (0.01) significant

372 level. That means, the salaries affect negatively on HR professionals to possess the needed
373 competencies.

374 3. The study showed that the most important competencies participants employers' emphasize
375 and take into consideration in various employment practice (selection, recruitment,
376 promotion) are knowledgement and organizational competencies, with 39.1%, and 32.6%
377 successively .

378

379 4. In response to the importance of competencies that HR professionals should possess to
380 practice the specific strategies, activities and work as strategic partners with the senior
381 executives in the firm, the study showed that competencies, are extremely moderate important
382 for HR professionals in Saudi Arabia firms to implement the following strategies and
383 activities:

- 384 ▪ possesses adequate technical competencies in HR.
- 385 ▪ understanding the business.
- 386 ▪ manage changes effectively.
- 387 ▪ participates in strategic planning.

388

389 5. The study revealed that the competencies including: stays abreast with applicable research
390 findings, and reads academic and practitioner journals on a regular basis, are less moderately
391 available to HR professional working in Saudi firms. Where for implementation of other
392 strategies are extremely moderate and moderate.

393

394 6. The study clarified that, most important tasks the human resources professional spent time
395 to practice include: administrative tasks, staffing , other task, and engagement with labor
396 relation issues.

397
398 7. The study didn't detect any significant correlation relationship between the competencies,
399 skills that assumed to be possessed by human resources professionals and their working
400 experiences. This also means that the working experience has no effect on possessing of HR
401 professional to the required competencies help them to carry their tasks, and responsibilities.

402
403 8. The results proved that there is a significant relationship between the education level and
404 competencies availability to HR professionals. This means that as the human resources
405 professionals acquired higher level of education they are supposed to have sufficient
406 competencies help to manage to human resources in the company and participate actively in
407 the all activities.

408
409
410 9. When testing to find if there is a significant relationship between Total scores of human
411 resources possessing of competencies, and the level of availability of competencies to
412 implement strategies and activities that assumed as standard to HR professionalism, the study
413 showed that there is an inverse correlation relationship .

414

415

416

417

Discussions and Conclusion

418 It is suggested that high performing HR professionals think and act from outside/in which means

419 that HR must turn outside business trends and stakeholder expectations into internal actions.

420 Effective HR professionals are reportedly credible activists which involve doing what they

421 promise, building personal trust relationships and being relied on (Ulrich et al., 2012). As Saudi

422 Arabia continues to focus on strategic HR and building organizational capabilities through

423 people, the HR function becomes an even more critical player.

424 With the results, it is the hope that HR practitioners will be able to utilize the information

425 to enhance practices in organizations to enhance firm competitiveness and researchers will be

426 able to build on this knowledge base to create additional new knowledge on HR competencies

427 and the impact on firm performance.

428

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471

HR COMPETENCIES SURVEY

472

473 Dear HR professional,

474 This survey is intended to collect data on HR competencies and to help with the understanding of

475 how specific competencies relate to career growth, compensation, and individual and firm

476 performance among other factors.

477

478 The information provided is strictly confidential and at no time will your name or your

479 organization's identity be identified. The results of this study shall be made available to you

480 upon completion.

481

482 Thank you for your participation.

483

484 KAU research team

485

486

487

HR COMPETENCIES SURVEY

488

489 Personal Information:

490

491

492

1. Please identify which category best describes your current position:

493

494 2. Please identify which industry classification best describes organization:

495

496 3. How many years have you worked in HR?

497

498

499 4. How many years have you been working in your current position?

500

501

502 5. What is the highest educational attainment?

503

504

505 6. In your opinion, what competencies, skills, traits, and attributes **should** HRM

506 professionals possess to effectively serve as strategic business partners? *(Please list as*

507 *many as necessary)*

508 a.

509 b.

510 c.

511 d.

512

513

514 7. What competencies does your company emphasize in selecting, rewarding, and

515 promoting HR employees?

516 a.

517 b.

518 c.

519 d.

520

521

522 8. Please list your annual salary. \$ -----

523 *(This is to determine the relationship, if any, between particular competencies and*
 524 *compensation)*

525

526 9. Please list the level of importance you place on the following items and your level of
 527 expertise for the respective question:

Item	Importance 1 – Low; 5 High	Personal Expertise 1 – Low; 5 High
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528

1. Understands the business							
2. Delivers HR practices							
3. Manages changes							

effectively						
4. Manages culture effectively						
5. Participates in strategic planning						
6. Possesses adequate technical competence in HR						
7. Possesses adequate competence in OD						
8. Understands and uses management accounting concepts and practices						
9. Understands and uses marketing strategies						
10. Measures HR practices to determine						

effectiveness						
11. Stays abreast with applicable research findings						
12. Reads academic and practitioner journals on a regular basis						

529

530

531 13. On a weekly basis, please list the percentage of your time spent on the following tasks.

532 *(The total should be 100%)*

533

534

- 535 • Change agent
- 536 • Administrative tasks
- 537 • Staffing
- 538 • Compensation
- 539 • Assessing organizational needs
- 540 • Designing HR strategies and initiatives
- 541 • Implementing HR strategies and initiatives
- 542 • Serving as an internal consultant
- 543 • Intervene with legal issues

544 • Partnering with senior executives on strategy formulation

545 • Engaged with labor relations issues

546 • Other tasks (please identify)

547

548 We sincerely thank you for taking the time to participate in this survey.

549