

CORE & TECHNICAL COMPETENCY STATUS OF ACADEMIC LIBRARY PROFESSIONALS IN PANJAB UNIVERSITY CHANDIGARH: A SURVEY

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Abstract *The professional competency includes the necessary knowledge and skills to be possessed by any professionals. It is crucial in case of LIS professionals also. These competencies are based on the values of the organization and not only sharpen the ability of the professional but also contributes to organizational success in the long run. The purpose of this paper is to review the perception, expectations, preferences and current status of two competencies (core and technical) that are required by the library professionals. Core competencies are based on the values of the organization. Technical competencies are the ability of a person to do their job comparatively and on the same level as other professionals in their field. This paper is an attempt to map these competencies level among Library Professionals of Panjab University, Chandigarh. The study is based upon the response received by the LIS professionals (library assistants and assistant librarians) for which a structured questionnaire was prepared.*

Keyword: *Competencies, Continuous Professional Development, CPD, Library Professionals, Assistant Librarians, Library Assistants, Panjab University*

INTRODUCTION

To enhance professional progress and define goals and objectives of an organisation a Competency profiles plays a vital role. Competencies are the characteristics employers look for in their employees. A lot of competency studies have been done to analysis need of necessary competencies to achieve fixed targets and to make the organization successful. The professional competency includes the necessary knowledge and skills to be possessed by any professionals. It is crucial in case of LIS professionals also. These competencies are based on the values of the organization and not only sharpen the ability of the professional but also contributes to organizational success in the long run. Core competencies and Technical competencies are categories of competencies. Core competencies are what an organization does best and are based on the values of the organization. They are considered necessary for all jobs in the organization and all employees are expected to demonstrate these competencies. Technical competencies are professional competencies relate to technical knowledge or skills that are critical for a specific job/role to be successful.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To understand the status and trends regarding Core, and Technical competencies of LIS professionals.
2. To identify the minor and major competencies being preferred by the LIS professionals.
3. To do the comparative analysis amongst the Core, and Technical competencies.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY & METHODOLOGY

This paper is an attempt to map these competencies level among Library Professionals of Panjab University, Chandigarh which include 17 (Seventeen) Assistant Librarians and 26 (Twenty Five) Library Assistants working on permanent basis. To obtain the necessary primary data, a structured questionnaire was prepared. The questionnaire comprised of 20 (Twenty) questions out of which, Core Competencies (Part A) has 8 (Eight) questions, and Technical Competencies (Part B) has 12 (Twelve) questions. For calculating scores assigned by respondents multiples of 10 was taken as base. The total population for survey was 43. The authors were able to obtain data from all the (43)

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respondents thus making the response rate 100%.

DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

Core Competencies

A core competency is a specific factor that a business sees as central to the way the company or its employees work. It fulfils three key criteria including it is not easy for competitors to imitate, it can be reused widely for many products and markets and it must contribute to the end consumer's experienced benefits and the value of the product or service to its customers. Core competencies are particular strengths relative to other organizations in the industry, which provide the fundamental basis for the provision of added value. Core competencies reflect the collective learning of an organization and involve coordinating diverse production skills and integrating multiple streams of technologies. It includes communication, involvement and a deep

commitment to working across organizational boundaries. The following table enlists the main core competencies relevant to the library professionals and libraries:

Figure 1 indicates that highest priority has been assigned to the aspect of Team Work (mean score = 325) followed by Result Oriented (mean score = 313) and Innovation & creativity (mean score = 305). The component further study is having least mean score i.e. 250. It can be interpreted from the above figure that all of the components were give importance and none of the aspect has been highly ignored.

TECHNICAL COMPETENCIES

Technical competencies are usually concerned with effective use of IT systems and computers, or any technical skills which are necessary for a job role. They are behaviours directly related to the nature of training and the technical proficiency required to exercise effective control. Following are the list of several technical competencies along with their scores given by library professionals.

Table 1. Core Competencies

A	COMPETENCIES	Total Scores	Mean
A1	Participation in conferences/seminars	1660	277
A2	Further studies	1500	250
A3	Organizing knowledge events like seminar/training programmes, etc.	1680	280
A4	Ability to effectively manage and optimize human, financial and physical resources	1740	290
A5	Ability to qualitative and quantitative measurement, planning and control of resources to maximize results	1770	295
A6	Innovation & Creativity	1830	305
A7	Result oriented	1880	313
A8	Team Work	1950	325
	Total	14010	2335
	Mean	1751.25	

Figure 1. Core Competencies

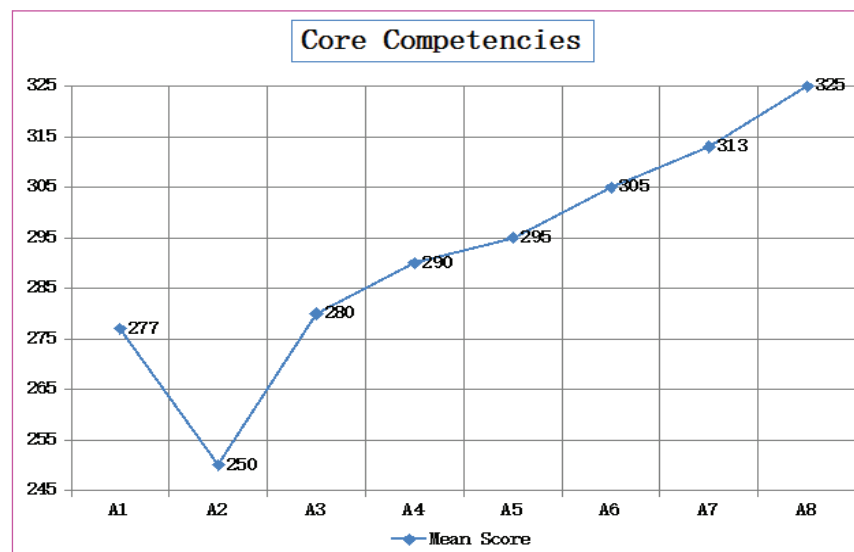
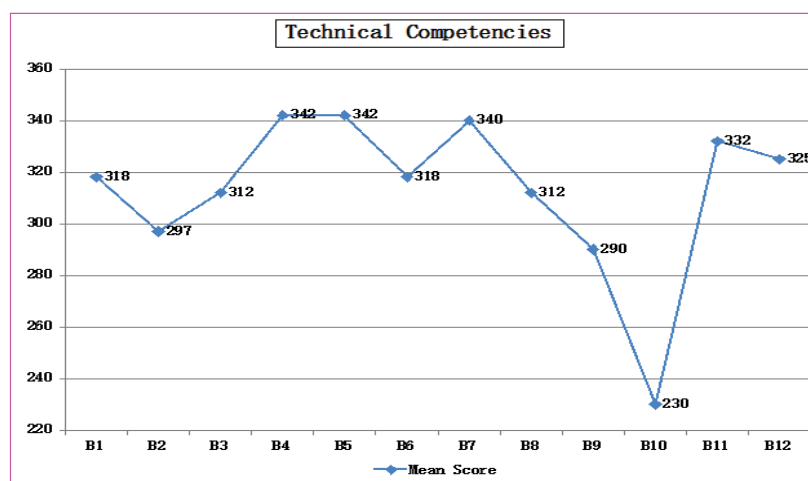
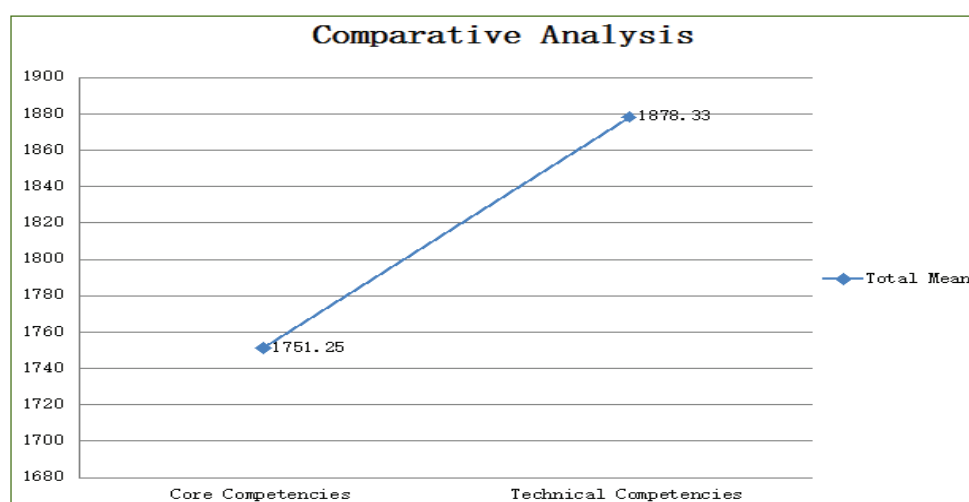


Table 2. Technical Competencies

B	COMPETENCIES	Total Score	Mean Score
B1	Basic Word Processing skills	1910	318
B2	Basic Spreadsheet skills	1780	297
B3	Basic Power Point skills	1870	312
B4	Access to a PC with internet at work place	2050	342
B5	Knowledge and understanding level of the Internet	2050	342
B6	Ability level of converting an MS Word file into PDF	1910	318
B7	Knowledge of ICT (IT) resources own by his/her work place	2040	340
B8	Provide email alert to users	1870	312
B9	Provide SMS facility service to users	1740	290
B10	Knowledge about hardware	1380	230
B11	Ability to identify and retrieve information from electronic sources	1990	332
B12	understanding and using the Intranet as an internal communication	1950	325
	Total	22540	3758
	Mean	1878.33	

Figure 2. Technical Competencies**Figure 3. Category Wise Analyses**

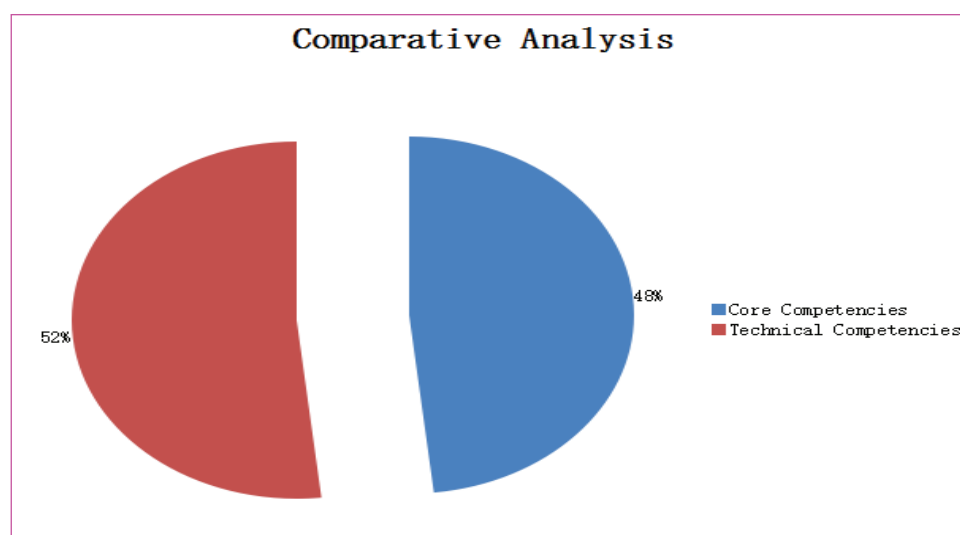


Figure 2 above presents the mean scores assigned to various technical competencies. According to this figure it can be readily interpreted that the respondents have given maximum importance to the two components - “access to a PC with internet at work place” and “knowledge and understanding level of the Internet” (mean score = 342). The second aspect which has gained the attention of the respondents is the aspect of “knowledge of ICT (IT) resources own by his/her work place” (mean score = 340). The component knowledge about hardware got least score (mean score = 230).

CATEGORY WISE EVALUATION

Table 3. Category Wise Analysis

Category	Competencies	Mean Scores (total)
A	Core Competencies	1751.25
B	Technical Competencies	1878.33

Table and figure 3 above reveal that library professionals have given prime significance to the category B i.e. Technical Competencies (52%). Categories A i.e. Core Competencies (48%) has been given less emphasis by library professional as compare to technical competences.

CONCLUSION

By analysis the competencies preferences of the library professionals it can be concluded that there is strong need to

facilitate all domains of competencies with greater emphasis on technical competencies. This is very true with changing scenario where we are witnessing adoption of ICT in library products and services. Organizations can and should play a more understanding role by giving ample opportunities to their employees to attain higher level of competencies which will benefit the organization itself. For this, a more holistic approach has to be implemented to have more skilled staff with greater job satisfaction because an skill and satisfied library professional can understand and meet the user needs in a better way.

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