

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF HR PROFESSIONALS' COMPETENCIES IN DIFFERENT SECTORS BETWEEN DEVELOPED AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

DOI: 10.5937/EMC26120B

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ABSTRACT

HR professionals' competencies represent a set of knowledge, skills, abilities and behaviours necessary for effective human resource management and adaptation to changes in the labour market. This paper analyses the importance of HR competencies across different sectors, comparing developed and developing countries. The aim of the research is to identify the key competencies required of HR professionals and to examine how they change under the influence of digitalisation, organisational changes, the legislative framework and employees' needs. The methodological framework is based on a qualitative analysis of relevant secondary sources, including scientific papers, reports of international organisations, case studies and available comparative data. The results indicate a significant gap between developed and developing countries, particularly in the areas of digital skills, data analytics, strategic HR management and the application of modern HR technologies.

Keywords: HR competencies, human resources, labour market

INTRODUCTION

Effective human resource management is a key factor for achieving productivity and organisational success (Gilli et al., 2022). Its main task is to identify and use employees' potential in order to achieve organisational goals (Krušković et al., 2022). This requires accurate assessment of existing competencies, mapping of competencies required for specific jobs, and identification of gaps between acquired and required competencies (Bohlouli et al., 2020; Taleric, 2022). Since human resources have a specific role compared to other organisational resources, competency recognition represents an important basis for HR systems such as talent management and succession planning, contributing to better performance, productivity and sustainable competitive advantage (Gilli et al., 2022; Farahni et al., 2021). At the same time, HR management has become more complex due to changes in the external environment and new employee expectations. Employees value belonging, teamwork, timely feedback and recognition of the importance of their work, including in remote work settings (Mura et al., 2017). Therefore, HR management includes recruitment, training, evaluation, rewarding, employment relations, health and safety, and fairness, with the aim of achieving both organisational and individual goals (Opatha, 2021; Ravi et al., 2023; Chen, 2019).

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE RESEARCH

The research focuses on the analysis of HR competencies in different sectors, comparing developed countries and developing countries. The research problem arises from the fact that rapid changes in the global labor market require HR professionals to continuously develop competencies that enable them to respond to new economic, technological, legislative, and social challenges.

The main objective of the research is to compare the competencies of HR professionals in developed and developing countries, identify the key differences in labor market requirements between these two contexts, and determine how different economic, technological and organizational conditions influence the development of HR competencies. The research also aims to formulate recommendations for improving HR competencies based on relevant international experiences and contemporary labor market trends. The research is guided by the following questions: which competencies HR professionals should develop in response to contemporary labor market needs, how the required competencies differ between developed and developing countries, and which factors shape HR practices in relation to international trends. The research is based on the analysis of secondary data, including reports and publications of international organizations such as the International Labour Organization, the World Bank, and renowned consulting firms specialized in human resource management.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE RESEARCH

Understanding the Competencies of HR Experts

The competencies of HR experts can be defined as a combination of knowledge, skills, abilities, personal characteristics and behaviors that enable effective work performance and contribution to organizational goals (Gilli et al., 2022). These competencies include professional knowledge and skills, as well as traits such as integrity, empathy, flexibility, self-confidence, problem-solving, decision-making, and the ability to motivate employees. In this sense, HR competencies are not limited only to technical expertise, but also include proactive behavior and the capacity to improve the working atmosphere, employee engagement and team performance (Wong, 2020; Gilli et al., 2022). Important contributions to the development of HR competency models have been made by the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM, 2018) and the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD, 2018). The SHRM model includes behavioral competencies and professional knowledge organized around leadership, interpersonal communication and business competencies, such as ethical practice, relationship management, communication, business acumen, consultation and critical evaluation. Similarly, the CIPD professional map identifies core, behavioral and specialized competencies, emphasizing people practice, organizational culture, business environment, analytics, value creation, digital technologies and change management (CIPD, 2018; Yuliantar et al., 2019).

Models of HR Competencies According to SHRM and CIPD Frameworks

Different models of HR competencies offer structured approaches to understanding the key skills and knowledge needed for successful human resource management. SHRM and CIPD have developed comprehensive competency models that integrate the leadership, interpersonal and professional abilities of HR experts. Transferable competencies are key for HR managers, because they enable the application of acquired skills in different business contexts and industries (Kolot et al., 2022). Both models provide a foundation for the development of the competencies of HR experts, but they differ in approach: the SHRM model focuses more on leadership and interpersonal competencies, which is useful for strategic HR positions. The CIPD model adds analytical, digital and adaptive skills, which are important for the modern HR sector. The integration of both approaches would enable HR experts to be effective leaders, strategic decision-makers and adaptable professionals in the contemporary business environment (Zeoli et al., 2019) and crisis situations (Dirani et al., 2020; Sthapit, 2021).

HR Competencies in Developed Countries

According to global labor market research and recruitment reports for the period 2020–2021, the key competencies required of HR experts in developed countries include communication, leadership, change management, coaching, problem-solving, analytical and critical thinking, adaptability, teamwork, empathy, time management, digital literacy, data analytics and the use of HR technologies (Kolot et al., 2022). These competencies show that the role of HR professionals is increasingly moving beyond traditional administrative tasks toward strategic, analytical and employee-oriented functions.

Particular emphasis is placed on transferable skills, such as cooperation, decision-making, initiative, professionalism, multitasking and relationship building. These skills increase employee competitiveness in the labor market and contribute to job satisfaction and organizational performance (Olsen et al., 2019). HR experts are expected not only to possess these competencies themselves, but also to develop them among employees through training, talent development and organizational learning strategies.

Research also highlights the importance of cognitive and analytical competencies, including critical thinking, analysis, synthesis, data interpretation and informed decision-making (Collins-Nelsen et al., 2021). These skills enable HR professionals to understand labor market changes, improve recruitment and employee development strategies, and adapt HR policies to contemporary business needs. In addition, communication, teamwork, leadership, adaptability, reflexivity and openness to learning are essential for effective HR work in a dynamic and changing business environment.

PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH RESULTS

In order to identify the main differences in HR competency requirements, the following table provides a comparative overview of key competencies of HR experts in developed and developing countries.

Table 1: Key Competencies of HR Experts in Developed Countries and Developing Countries (%)

Competencies	Developed Countries (%)	Developing Countries (%)
Strategic HR management	75	50
Technological literacy	80	45
Data analysis	70	40
Recruitment skills	85	65
Employee development and training	78	55
Talent management	82	60
Knowledge of labor law	88	72

In developed countries, HR experts have a greater focus on strategic management, technological literacy, data analysis, recruitment, employee development, talent management and knowledge of labor law. On the other hand, in developing countries, these competencies are present to a lesser extent, with lower percentages. The greatest difference is in technological literacy and data analysis, where developed countries have a significantly higher percentage (Talerco, 2021).

Table 2: Key Challenges of the HR Sector in Developed Countries and Developing Countries (%)

Challenges	Developed Countries (%)	Developing Countries (%)
Attracting talent	60	80
Retaining employees	65	75
Digitalization of processes	75	40
Flexible work models	85	50
Leadership development	70	55
Compliance with regulations	90	60

The results show (Table 3.) that developed countries have a greater focus on digitalization, flexibility and regulations, while developing countries pay more attention to attracting and retaining talent.

The results in Table 4. show that developed countries have better developed professional, interpersonal and organizational skills in the HR sector, while developing countries have a lower level of these competencies.

In developed countries, strategic planning is highly developed, while in developing countries it is moderately developed. Additionally, in developed countries in the industrial sector, focus is also placed on transferable skills that HR experts must have. These include continuous learning skills (Ana et al., 2022), cooperation skills, communication skills, critical thinking skills in problem-solving, finding

solutions and creativity. The results from Table 7 show that nowadays the competencies of HR experts are important because they can strategically contribute to different industries (Ozdemir et al., 2021).

Table 3: Comparison of the Competencies of HR Experts in Developed and Developing Countries

Competencies	Developed Countries	Developing Countries	Comparasiom
Professional skills	High level	Medium level	Developed countries use HR technology more (Bresciani et al., 2021)
Interpersonal skills	High level	Medium level	Developed countries have more training for the development of emotional intelligence
Organizational skills	High level	Low to medium level	In developing countries there is less application of strategic HR.

Table 4: Comparative Analysis of the Competencies of HR Experts in Different Work Sectors

Sector	Key competencies	Developed countries	Developing countries
Industrial	Strategic planning	Highly developed	Moderately developed
IT sector	Human resource management	Highly developed	Low level
Educational sector	Understanding legislation	Highly developed	Moderately developed
Healthcare	Training and development	Highly developed	Low level

DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH RESULTS

The results of this research indicate that developed countries set higher standards for the competencies expected from HR experts, while the expansion of international companies into developing markets creates pressure for adaptation and modernization of HR practices. However, traditional business approaches and insufficient education of personnel in some developing countries often limit the development of contemporary HR competencies.

A key difference between developed and developing countries is reflected in the level of HR competencies related to employee well-being, emotional intelligence, active listening and crisis management. Developed countries more effectively recognize employee needs and workplace challenges, which enables proactive measures for preventing burnout and reducing stress (Wang et al., 2022). In contrast, in developing countries, these competencies are often not sufficiently recognized as priorities (Ilić, 2021). The importance of HR competencies is especially visible in crisis situations, which developed countries have recognized as an important factor of organizational success (Afriati et al., 2022). Burnout remains a widespread problem with negative consequences for individuals, organizations and society (Ravi et al., 2023).

HR experts therefore have an important role in creating healthier working environments. Gabriel et al. (2022) emphasize measures such as stress management interventions, employee participation in shaping work tasks, social support, involvement in decision-making and quality performance management systems. In addition, HR leaders are expected to think more innovatively (Schultz, 2019), while future HR practitioners should act as creative innovators in the world of work (Dhanpat et al., 2020; Gigauri, 2020). Cohesion is also recognized as one of the most important drivers of an innovative organizational culture (Rush, 2020).

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This research contributes to the development of existing theories in the field of human resources by examining the differences in HR competencies between developed and developing countries. The findings may also support the creation of educational and professional policies aimed at improving HR competencies and aligning education and training with contemporary labor market needs.

The results indicate that HR professionals in developed countries are increasingly expected to possess digital literacy, data analytics skills, strategic management competencies, and the ability to support employee well-being, including the prevention of burnout and the promotion of work-life balance. In contrast, HR professionals in developing countries often operate within more traditional business models, where HR practices are still focused on administration, operational tasks, leadership, and adaptation to ongoing labor market changes.

The research confirms the need for continuous improvement of HR competencies, especially in the areas of digital skills, HR technology, strategic HR management, talent management, data-based decision-making, and employee satisfaction. Based on international experiences, the key recommendations include the development of specialized training programs, courses, and certifications for HR professionals, as well as stronger integration of HR practices into organizational business strategies.

The main limitations of the research are related to the reliance on secondary sources and the limited availability of systematic and comparable data on HR competencies across different countries and sectors. Future research should include empirical studies with HR professionals, employers, and sector representatives, as well as broader comparative analyses between developed and developing countries. This would provide a more comprehensive understanding of how international HR trends can be adapted to different labor market contexts and organizational environments.

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