Work Competency and Work Performance among Employees of Fire and Rescue Department Malaysia (JPBM)

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Abstract: Saving lifes and rescue missions has been a noble work for Fire and Rescue Department Malaysia (JPBM) employees. They risk their own lifes to save and rescue others. This paper intends to explore their work competencies, namely skills of receiving orders, skills of duty, skills of communication, skills of conflict resolution, and skills of planning an action toward the work performance. A self administered questionnaires were distributed among JPBM employees. The reponse rate was encouraging as they gave full cooperation in the survey. JPBM employees had shown that planning an actions had an impact on thier work performance. But, this did not indicate that their rest of work competence components were not important to them. Moreover, JPBM's top management needs to capitalize their employees work competence in enhancing their work performance. Management and psychological traninings and courses were seen as major contributor to boost JPBM's employees work competence that will lead to their work performance.
Keywords: Work competency, work performance, firemen, Malaysia

INTRODUCTION

Fire and Rescue Department Malaysia (JBPM) employees has been entrusted to carry out the noble duties of saving lifes and rescue missions from various disasters, may it from act of God or human errors. JBPM employees were taking calculated risking on their own lifes for the sake of others. They work tirelessly to extinguish the blazing fire and saving lifes.

Subsequently, JBPM employees were needed to face challenges of in their work that requires high professionalism, competency, self reliance, and thiking forward. These employees were needed to have the ability to make competent decision in facing real lifes saving situations. In order to have a competent JBPM employees, they were required to follow through various trainings and courses in which will develop their competency as JBPM employees. Moreover, the top management of JBPM were needed to support and provide the relevant trainings, human resources planning, and welfare of their employees.

In JBPM, the organization's excellence was dependent on thir employees' work competency at work. Moreover, the indivual work competency was seen to have an association with their work performance. In certain cases, the public would not happy with the works of saving lifes and rescue made by JBPM employees. This dissatisfactory was due to public's impression that JBPM employees were not having a work competency that later translated and associated with their work performance. Therefore, being a JBPM employees, they were required to have courage, competent, trust, and skills.

Thus, this paper intends to explore the level of work competency among JPBM employees that relates to their work performance. Subsequently, this paper also looks into ways of increasing the work competency and work performance among JBPM employees. These findings would benefited JBPM employees and top management in the long run.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Work Competency

An individual is needed to has the ability and skills to perform a job in order to seen as a competent individual. Thus, Jone and Voorhees [1] stated that competency is a combination of a variety of skills, capabilities, and knowledge in solving a given work. Zakaria [2] indicated that competency as a complex combination of personal knowledge, skills, and motivation as well as other attributes. Meanwhile, Ali [3] stated competency as an efficiency that can be defined as lasting characteristics and traits that determine performance. Novak and Beckman [4] defined competency as the ability or aptitude. Moreover, in the planning of human resources management, JBPM needs to make employees selection based on performance management, planning, career development, training, executive assessment, education, and the list is exhaustive.

In this paper, the JBPM employees competencies were examined on their capabilities of accepting orders, planning an action, communication, carrying out duties, and conflict management. Firstly, accepting orders were seen from the contex of an employees accepting orders from their superiors. Secondly, planning an action was seen think and act about the future and trying to control the future is an important component in the planning [5]. Thirdly, communication was the process of exchange of information, ideas, and behaviors [6]. Forthly, carrying out duties were seen as the employees who can perform tasks as instructed. Finally, conflict management was the ability to resolve conflicts in overcoming the deficiencies or obstacles in ensuring the objectives were achived.

Work Performance

Performance was a result that had been achieved or an outcome [7]. Moreover, Lettieri et al. [8] seen performance as the degree of achievement of tasks that refers to the work of each individual. Other scholars seen performance as produtive in product quality [9] and measured based on the ability to provide the right time and in an appropriate manner. Yusof [10] seen performance as a process that resulted in a prescribed period and what is produces ia a measure of the ability, experience, and motivation.

Relationship between Work Competency and Work Performance

Competence is an element that has to do with performance and it has to do with a person's performance. Thus, there were many elements of competence that can be assessed to determine the maximum performance a person can produced. Amin [11] stated that the skills to carry out activities not only to be learned but also to seen the extent to which performance is present. Rahim [12] seen the relationship in terms of various criterias, knowledge, and other competencies that could polished individuals' performance. Thus, in the context of Malaysian working environement, employees were given a test to see their achievement level of competency known as *Penilaian Tahap Kecekapan* (PTK; Assessment of Competency Level) that is closely related to individual's performance.

Research Framework and Hypotheses

In this paper, the research framework is examined between work competency and work performance. Figure 1 depicts the research framework.
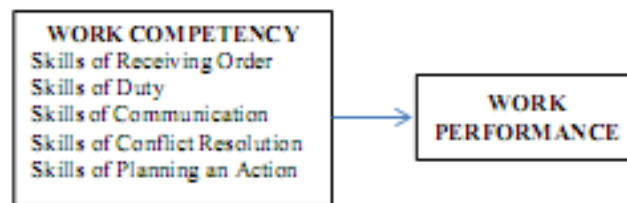
Fig-1: Research Framework

The hypotheses of this paper are listed as:
H_1: Work competency has a positive effect on work performance
H_{1a}: Skills of receiving order have positive effect on work performance
H_{1b}: Skills of duty have positive effect on work performance
H_{1c}: Skills of communication have positive effect on work performance
H_{1d}: Skills of conflict resolution have positive effect on work performance
H_{1e}: Skills of planning an action have positive effect on work performance

METHODOLOGY

The population of this study was employees of JBPM in a capital city of Perak. These employees were the respondents that received a self-administered questionnaire for them to answer pertaining to their work competency and work performance.

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The data analyis were done on demographic, correlations, and regression of JPBM employees.

Demographic

Data analysis were done using SPSS. Table 1 elaborates the demographic of the respondents. Two-third of the JBPM employees were male (n=72, 72%) as compared to female (n=28, 28%). This was due to the nature of the work to save lifes and rescue for male employees, whereby female employees were stationed at the branch to handle management and office administrative.

Malays (n=95, 95%) dominated the JBPM as compared to other ethnic. Indians had only 4 (4%). This a normal scenario as other ethnic, Chinese, were not interested in the line of duty. Seventy seven respondents (77%) were married as compared to single (n=23, 23%).

Age wise, 38 respondents (38%) were aged below 30 years old, 35 respondents (35%) were aged between 30 to 39 years old, 18 respondents (18%) were aged between 40 to 49 years old, and 9 respondents (9%) were aged 50 and above. These age brackes were ideal to the JBPM as they have the mixture of young and matured employees to handle complex and critical cases that involved saving lifes and rescue. The younger employees had the ability and agility to maneuver

themselves in and out from the risky situation that may caused their lives.

Academically, JBPM had various qualifications among their employees. SPM had 40 holders (40%) which is the minimum entry qualification to be JBPM employees. STPM had 29 holders (29%), certificates were 7 holders (7%), and diplomas were 24 holders (24%).

Experience wise, 37 employees (37%) had less than 5 years of working experience. Twenty-one respondents (21%) had 6 to 10 years, 16 respondents (16%) had 11 to 15 years, 5 respondents (5%) had 16 to 20 years, 11 respondents (11%) had 21 to 25 years, and 10 respondents had more than 26 yeas of working experience. In the context of JBPM working promotion, there will be an interview for a promotion after they served the department for 5 years.

Table 1: Demographic Information

Item	n	%
Gender		
Male	72	72
Female	28	28
Ethnic		
Malays	95	95
Indians	4	4
Marital Status		
Single	23	23
Married	77	77
Age (years old)		
30 and below	38	38
30-39	35	35
40-49	18	18
50 and above	9	9
Academic Qualification		
SPM	40	40
STPM	29	29
Certificate	7	7
Diploma	24	24
Service (years)		
5 and below	37	37
6-10	21	21
11-15	16	16
16-20	5	5
21-25	11	11
26 and above	10	10

Work Competency Analysis

Work competency analysis were done on each components, namely accepting orders, planning on actions, communicating skills, carrying out duties, and managing conflicts.

Skills of Receiving Order

Table 2 shown the distribution among respondents on skills of receiving orders among JBPM employees. The highest mean was 4.60 (SD=0.60) on "accept order in a positive manner". Followed by mean of 5.57 (SD=0.76) for "convey orders to colleagues", and mean of 4.53 (SD=0.74) for "accept orders without hesitation". Finally, the mean of 1.74 (SD=0.86) for "gove orders to superiors" had the lowest mean. In summary, the means had shown that JBPM employees shown a high competency in receiving orders. Even, they had not shown an attitude of disoveying orders from their superiors.

Table 2: Mean in Receiving Orders Skills

No	Item	Mean	SD
1	Accept orders in a positive manner	4.60	0.60
2	Convey orders to colleagues	4.57	0.76
3	Accept orders without hesitation	4.53	0.74
4	Give orders to superiors	1.74	0.86

Skills of Duty

Table 3 shown the respondents response on their skills of duty among JBPM employees. The highest mean was 4.19 (SD=0.61) on "able to solve conflicts that involved colleagues". Followed by mean of 4.18 (SD=0.61) on "able to solve work conflicts", mean of 4.12 (SD=0.62) on "able to solve conflicts that involved community", and the least mean of 4.03 (SD=0.66) on "able to solve conflicts that involved superiors". The overall means indicated that the JBPM employees had a competency in their skills of duty involving colleagues, superiors, and community.

Table 3: Mean in Skills of Duty

No	Item	Mean	SD
1	Able to solve conflicts than involved colleagues	4.19	0.61
2	Able to solve work conflicts	4.18	0.61
3	Able to solve conflict that involved community	4.12	0.62
4	Able to solve conflicts that involved superiors	4.03	0.66

Skills of Communication

Table 4 shown the skills of communication among JBPM employees. The highest mean was 4.80 (SD=0.43) on "communicating with colleagues". Followed by mean of 4.46 (SD=0.58) on "communicating with superiors" and mean of 4.45 (SD=0.56) on "communicating with communities". Unfortunately, JBPM employees indicated a mean of 3.82 (SD=0.81) on "couunicating in multiple languages". Thus, the overall means had indicated that JBPM employees had a good competency in communication skills.

Table 4: Mean in Communication Skills

No	Item	Mean	SD
1	Communicating with colleagues	4.80	0.43
2	Communicating with superiors	4.46	0.58
3	Communicating with communities	4.45	0.56
4	Communicating in multiple languages	3.82	0.81

Skills of Conflict Resolution

Table 5 shown the respondents competency on managing conflicts among JBPM employees. The highest activity was 4.69 (SD=0.60) on "planning before implenting the works". Followed by mean of 4.60 (SD=0.59) on "encourage colleagues to be creative and innovative", mean of 4.22 (SD=0.5) on "being creative and innovative toward works", and mean of 3.91 (SD=0.57) on "make innovation to the organization". Thus, the overall means had indicated that JBPM employees have a good competency in conflict resolution management.

Table 5: Mean in Conflicts Resolution Skills

No	Item	Mean	SD
1	Planning before implementing the works	4.69	0.60
2	Encourage colleagues to be creative and innovative	4.60	0.59
3	Being creative and innovative toward works	4.22	0.50
4	Make innovation to the organization	3.91	0.57

Skills of Planning an Action

Table 6 shown the competency on planning an actions among JBPM employees. The highest activity was with the mean of 4.75 (SD=0.46) on "help colleagues in their duties" among JBPM employees. Followed by mean of 4.57 on "good in carrying out duties" (SD=0.57) and "completed their duties even late in the day" (SD=0.78, respectively. Finally, the mean of 4.27 (SD=0.47) on "proactive in carrying out duties. Thus, the overall means had indicated that JBPM employees the competency on planning an actions.

Table 6: Mean in Planning on Action Skills

No	Item	Mean	SD
1	Help colleagues in their duties	4.75	0.46
2	Good in carrying out duties	4.57	0.57
3	Completed the duties even late in the day	4.57	0.78
4	Proactive in carrying out duties	4.27	0.47

Work Performance Analysis

Table 7 shown the work performance analysis among JBPM employees. The highest mean was 4.85 (SD=0.52) on "allowances will increase work performance". Followed by mean of 4.80 (SD=0.53) on "employees should be given salary that commensurate with work performance", mean of 4.73 (SD=0.57) on "rewards should be given to employees with good work performance", mean of 4.64 (SD=0.57) on "good communication with employer will increase work performance", mean of 4.61 (SD=0.49) on "working environment will increase work performance", mean of 4.50 (SD=0.67) on "satisfied with their work performance", mean of 4.42 (SD=0.77) on "pressure at work affected work performance", and finally mean of 4.22 (SD=0.64) on "employees of the month will increase work performance". Thus, the overall means had shown that JBPM emplyees have a good work performance.

Table 7: Mean in Work Performance

No	Item	Mean	SD
1	Allowances will increase work performance	4.85	0.52
2	Employees should be given salary that commensurate with work performance	4.80	0.53
3	Rewards should be given to employees with good work performance	4.73	0.57
4	Good communication with employer will increase work performance	4.64	0.50
5	Working environment will increase work performance	4.61	0.49
6	Satisfied with their work performance	4.50	0.67
7	Pressure at work affected work performance	4.42	0.77
8	Employee of the month will increase work performance	4.22	0.64

Correlations Analysis

The relationship between components of work competency and work performance were investigated using the Pearson correlations coefficient. Preliminary analyses were performed to measure non-violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity. The ranges for value of r for the study's correlation analysis were ranged between very weak to high as depicted in Table 8.

Table 8: Correlation Values

Value of r	Strength of Relationship
-1.0 to -0.5 or 1.0 to 0.5	Strong
-0.5 to -0.3 or 0.3 to 0.5	Moderate
-0.3 to -0.1 or 0.1 to 0.3	Weak
-0.1 to 0.1	None or very weak

Pearson's correlation analysis was used to test the relationship between the work competency, namely receiving order skills, skills of duty, communication skills, conflict resolution shills, and planning an action skills, and work performance are depicted in Table 9.

Table 9: Corelations between Work Competency and Work Peformance

No	Item	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Skills of Receiving Order	1	0.62**	0.54**	0.55**	0.60**	0.54**	0.79**
2	Skills of Duty		1	0.62**	0.67**	0.79**	0.62**	0.85**
3	Skills of Communication			1	0.75**	0.78**	0.59**	0.86**
4	Skills of Conflict Resolution				1	0.76**	0.60**	0.89**
5	Skills of Planning an Action					1	0.72**	0.86**
6	Work Performance						1	0.70**
7	Work Competency							1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Relationship between work competency and work performance were analyzed on JBPM employees. A strong relationship of work competency, as a whole, and work perforance (r=0.70). Moreover, the relationship between components of work competency and work performance were strong as indicated by skills of receiving order (r=0.79), skills of duty (r=0.85), skills of communication (r=0.86), skills of conflict resolution (r=0.89), and skills of planning an action (r=0.86). Overall, the high values of correlations indicated that JPBM employees had a strong indication on factors of work competence and work performance; and the overall on work competence and work performance.

Regression Analysis

Simple regression analysis was used to measure the main hypothesis between work competence

and work performance. Furthermore, multiple regression analyses were done on the sub-hypotheses individual influence of work competency on work performance. These analyses were employed to determine whether the main hypotesis and sub-hypotheses are supported or rejected based on JBPM employees.

Simple Regression Analysis on Work Competence and Work Performance

In Table 10, the simple regression analysis was conducted on work competence and work performance. JBPM employees had the R^2 value showed 58% for the dependent variable of work performance, which was explained by work competence. This means that 42% of

the variance for work performance was explained by other unknown additional variables that have not been explored. The simple regression model (F=91.32, p<0.00) was proven to be a significant model due to the F ratio being significant in predicting work performance. Overall, the F ratio result presented that the combination of servant leadership was a good fit in predicting work performance. Work competence (β=0.70, p<0.00) was significant predictor for work performance for JBPM employees. Moreover, this explained that work competence was positively related to work performance among JBPM employees. Therefore, hypothesis H_1 was accepted in explaining JBPM employees.

Table 10: Comparison of Regression Analysis on Work Competence and Work Performance

	Work Performance	
	β	Sig.
Work Competence	0.70	0.00
R^2	0.48	
Adjusted R^2	0.48	
F – change	91.32	
Sig.	0.00	

Multiple Regression Analysis on Components of Work Competence and Work Performance

In Table 11, the multiple regression analysis were conducted on components of work competence and work performance. JBPM employees had the R^2 value showed 55% for the dependent variable of work performance, which was explained by work competence. This means that 45% of the variance for work performance was explained by other unknown additional variables that have not been explored. The multiple regression model (F=22.69, p<0.00) was proven to be a significant model due to the F ratio being significant in predicting work performance. Overall, the F ratio result presented that the combination of servant

leadership was a good fit in predicting work performance. The only accepted sub-hypothesis was skills of planning an action (β=0.52, p<0.00). Unfortunately, the other sub-hypotheses were rejected, namely skills of receiving order (β=0.14, p<0.12), skills of duty (β=0.06, p<0.63), skills of communication (β=0.01, p<0.91), and skills of conflict resolution (β=0.08, p<0.52). Moreover, this explained that work competence of planning an action skills were significantly had an impact on JBPM employees as they must have the said skills in their line of duty. Therefore, hypothesis H_{1e} was accepted in explaining JBPM employees impact of work competence and work performance.

Table 11: Comparison of Multiple Regression Analysis on Components of Work Competence and Work Performance

Work Competence	Work Performance	
	β	Sig.
Skills of Receiving Order	0.14	0.12
Skills of Duty	0.06	0.63
Skills of Communication	0.01	0.91
Skills of Conflict Resolution	0.08	0.52
Skills of Planning an Action	0.52	0.00
R^2	0.55	
Adjusted R^2	0.52	
F – change	22.69	
Sig.	0.00	

CONCLUSIONS

JBPM's top management has to acknowledge their employees' work competency especially on planning on actions. The action planning skills among

JPBM's employees were the essence in their line of duty toward saving lives and rescue missions. Although the other skills were not significant in analyses but they have precedence toward JPBM employees' action

planning skills. Thus in order to be good in action planning skills, JPBM employees' have to be also good in receiving orders, carrying out their duties, great communication skills, and able to manage conflicts.

Moreover, JPBM's top management needs to promote various management and psychological tranings and courses toward enhancing their employees' skills. JPBM's top management has to show and let their employees has the feel of their noble career is being appreciated. Last but not least, the Malaysian communities has to show to our JPBM employees that they were also being appreciate by the public.

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