Developing a Competency Model for Middle Class Managers at Weaverly Clothing Company in Zimbabwe

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Abstract

The paper focuses on developing a competency model for middle class managers at Weaverly Clothing Company in Zimbabwe. A mixed approach and case study design were used in this study. The targeted population of 30 managers was used with a sample of 25 middle managers. **Methods:** An open and closed ended questionnaire was used as a data collection tool. **Findings:** A competency model for middle class managers at Weaverly Clothing Company is a key tool that contributes to employee performance. A competency model with a set of eight competencies was developed and the elements are as follows: financial competences; leadership competences; communication competences; technical competency; strategic competences; team building competences; professional competencies; and networking competences. **Challenges:** Middle class managers at Weaverly Clothing Company faces some challenges and these are: inability to network with others; lack of interpersonal competences; lack of technical competences and lack of strategic competences and lack of leadership competences. **Recommendations:** Weaverly Clothing Manufacturing Company must add value either through merit compensation or promotion opportunities. Without the organization valuing the competencies, employees and supervisors will not pay the appropriate attention to competency development; there is also a need for an integrated approach to leadership and management selection and development use the developed competency model for middle class managers in order to reduce training costs, reduce staff turnover or increase employee productivity, enhance performance, and as well invest in the competencies of individuals working in the organization in order to increase performance.

Keywords

Middle Class Managers, Manufacturing Company, Competences,

Competency Models, Performance, Turnover

1. Introduction

The world of manufacturing is becoming even extra demanding and turbulent today. This is evidenced by using the accelerating rate of alternate within the region and situations that are exerting big pressure on the economic employer to come to be extra competitive. This has been a situation the middle class managers in manufacturing groups hopes that there may be a developing link among commercial organization average performance and worker talents which will sustain corporation overall. Overall performance can be completed through improved control functionality and the failure of huge scale exchange programmes to deliver the important modifications in person behaviour, globally (Zimbabwe blanketed). For this reason, there is a desire to grow a competency version for middle class managers at Weaverly apparel manufacturing business enterprise that might decorate the functionality to recruit, train, amplify, and keep employees to suit present-day managerial qualities desired by employers.

It is defined a manufacturing organization "as an organization entity hooked up to produce items on the market for wholesalers, shops or end purchasers. It can be similarly cited that its primary objective is to take advantage of its tasks. Further, the manufacturer operates out of a facility and employs human beings and gadget to convert raw materials into completed merchandise. Some manufacturers rely closely on gadget for mass production.

1.1. Research Objectives

The objectives of the study were to:

1) Establish different competencies used by middle class managers at Weaverly Clothing Manufacturing Company in Zimbabwe.

2) Identify the challenges faced by middle class managers at Weaverly Clothing Manufacturing Company in Zimbabwe.

3) Develop a competency model for middle class managers at Weaverly Clothing Manufacturing Company in Zimbabwe.

1.2. Theoretical Model

The current research does not reinvent the wheel, instead there are proven approaches propounded by professional gurus to guide social researches. The study was guided by the multiple-job approach.

Multiple-Job Approach

This method is used when all the jobs do not have anything in common. To go ahead with creating models that are of use, the organization has to be more specific on the potential uses of the model. The multiple job approach

is more cost effective than the other approaches if many competency models are needed although it is the most difficult of the other approaches to implement.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Overview of Core Concepts

The literature indicates that competencies can in fact be used to enhance behaviors and eventually outcomes. These observations only can be the basis for a competency model by comparing data on middle class managers. Elements of competency model item selection are based on the best practices as found in the representative literature. Some of the advantages of competency development is the creation of awareness, understanding job specifics and high self-efficiency thus knowing how to learn, work well with others and creativity within place of business. However, it does not mean that the competency used to discover and develop the data will always remain that one. They quickly change and get outdated as technology and companies develop therefore causing external problems for the company that is products, services and customer preferences to the products and services change too.

2.1.1. Middle Class Managers

Middle class managers typically consist of general managers, branch managers, regional managers and department managers (Hellriegel et al., 2005: 13). Middle management is the intermediate management level accountable to top management and responsible for leading lower level managers. Sharing the same view, that the middle class managers can include operational supervisors, general managers, branch managers, and department managers. In addition, they may also be categorized as non-management staff, depending upon the policy of the particular organization. In this case, middle managers are employees who supervise other employees in an organization.

2.1.2. Functions of Middle-Class Managers

There are varied roles to managers in each level in associate Passing Corporation. The act roles are in addition divided into three groups: social, informational, and decisional Mintzberg (1973). It has to be compelled to be additionally noted that the middle class managers at each level play all absolutely whole altogether utterly totally different roles to boot, the scholars indicate that the middle class managers' roles correspond with the management levels.

2.2. Competence/Competency as a Concept

"An underlying feature of someone which leads to effective and or advanced performance in a job is defined by Boyatzis (2008) as task competency. It is able to be similarly noted that underlying characteristics of a person may additionally include reasons, tendencies, abilities, factors of an individual self-photo or social role, or information he uses.

Defining Competency Models

The opinion competence models are careful behaviour, specific descriptions of skills and traits required to figure optimally in a peculiar job.

2.3. Conceptual Framework

The concept of competency is based on the theory of performance. A competency is considered as a measurable characteristic of a person that is related to effective performance in a specific job, organization or culture. The conceptual framework of the study is given in Table 1 below:

Table 1. Conceptual framework.

Competency	Sample Competencies/Behavioural indicators.
Networking competency	Tolerance; interacting; adaptability, relationship building, team work; reliance and results oriented.
Interpersonal competency	Building relationships, empathy communication skills, team building, networking, feedback seeking, sensitive to employees' concerns, listens to and understands others ideas and interests, modest, warm/friendly, sympathetic., conflict management.
Leadership (Managerial, people domain)	Ability to influence, motivate and direct individuals and groups to achieve organisational goals, mission or vision; Providing direction, support and standards for accomplishment, communicating compelling vision, motivating others, inspiring, empowering, resolving conflicts/negotiating, hiring and staffing strategically, teamwork, managing diversity, innovation.
Technical competency	Business acumen, quality decision making, intellectual capability, analytic thinking, problem solving, functional/technical skills, planning, organizing ability, priority setting, performance enhancing, managing human resources, managing information and material resources, innovation, administration, developing effective business strategy, delegating.
Strategic orientation	Strategic alignment, strategic thinking and strategic thinking.
Financial competency	management of the finances of an organisation in order to achieve financial objectives; Evaluation and planning; Long term investment decisions; Financial decisions; Working capital management; Contract management and control financial risk.
Qualifications	Certification for the job.
Team building	Managing change, change management, resolving matters.

3. Methodology

The methodology that best answers, explain my research on middle class managers was quantitative survey research and competency model. However, the quantitative survey focuses on measurable variables, stress reliability and it's independent of context including multiple cases, subjects in general and remains the research from phenomenon bias (Neuman, 2000). The quantitative methodology used was in form of a questionnaire. The quantitative methodology used in form of a questionnaire. The questionnaire comprised 25 questions and consisted of both closed and open-ended questions. This enabled the researcher to gather factual information, and gave insight into the respondents' frame of reference and possibly their reasons for their responses. Questionnaires were used because they allow the respondents to respond at their own convenient time. There are different ways a researcher could have accumulated and analyse the data. The brief ones used are mentioned below.

3.1. Population and Sample

A sample is defined as a small portion of a population selected for observation and analysis (Creswell, 2014; Friend and Johnson, 2013; Creswell and Maietta, 2015). Creswell (2014) also defined a sample as a group that is chosen from a population from which to collect data. The targeted population of 30 managers was used with a sample of 25 middle managers.

3.2. Regression Analysis

This was conducted to find how the independent variables could be used to predict level of success and business growth. In other words, regression analysis examines the influence of independent variables on dependent variables. In this case, technical competencies; personal competencies; social competencies; professional competencies possessed by managers were used to examine their success in performance at Weaverly Clothing Manufacturing Company.

3.3. Variance Analysis

The variance explained by the initial solution, extracted components are displayed in Table 2 below. The first section of Table 2 shows the Initial Eigenvalues. The total Cumulative gives eigenvalue, or amount of variance in the original variables accounted for by each component. The % of variance column gives the ratio, expressed as a percentage, of the variance accounted for by each component to the total variance in all of the variables. The cumulative % column gives the percentage of variance accounted for by the first 25 components. The cumulative percentage for component 2 which is 36.027 is the sum of the percentage of variance for the first and second components which is 22.791 and 13.236.

3.4. Grounded Theory

Is a powerful research method, which emphasizes inductive idea constructing

from naturally happening discipline data (Glaser & Strauss, 2000). Grounded principle is viewed specifically useful in discovering rich insights from social interactions and "developing context-based, process-oriented descriptions and explanations" of complex managerial approaches in specific real-life settings, as it approves the researcher to delve deep into the "lived journey and incidents of the administration world Grounded theory. The traits of grounded theory make it specifically acceptable to examine key issues in manufacturing industry for center type managers , such as complicated decision-making techniques and interactions in relationships and social networks, as they require frequently deep analysis of the empirical records from a real-life setting (Strauss & Corbin, 2008). The processes of grounded idea are designed to advance a well-integrated set of ideas that supply a thorough theoretical explanation of social phenomena underneath study.

3.5. Reliability

Means standard deviation and reliability scores of the total index are based on split sample of CFA and are presented in Table 3 and Table 4. Observed variables should have a Cronbach's Alpha 0.7. The Cronbach's alpha indicates the extent to a group of check may be treated as a measure single latent variable. The counseled worth 0.9 was used as cut-off of the dependableness for the study. The dependance is 1.0 that is higher than 0.9 which is according to the Cronbach's alpha scores level refers to an excellent internal consistency. When looking at the mean scores and standard deviations it was found that the different dimensions have hierarchic order for company model as shown in the table below, strategic is the most important dimension for middle class management (M = 4.88) followed by team building (M = 4.04) and professional (M = 3.92).

The recommended value of 0.9 was used as cut-off reliability for the study. The reliability is 1.000 which is greater than 0.9 (According to the Cronbach's Alpha scores' level) that reflects excellent (high-stakes testing) reliability of the measuring instrument. The Cronbach's Alpha based on standardized items number was 25 items. Furthermore, it indicates high level of internal consistency with respect to the specific sample. Results are shown in Table 2 below.

3.6. Reliability Testing Scores According to Cronbach Alpha

Cronbach alpha table

Cronbach's alpha	Internal consistency
$\alpha \geq 0.9$	Excellent (high-stakes testing)
$0.7 \leq \alpha < 0.9$	Good (low stakes testing)
$0.6 \leq \alpha < 0.7$	Acceptable
$0.5 \leq \alpha < 0.6$	Poor
$\alpha < 0.5$	Unacceptable

Table 2. Reliability statistics of the instrument (questionnaire).

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
1	1	25

Table 3. Display of the mean rating for frequency of use.

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Staffing	2.7600	1.64012	25
Planning	2.8400	1.51877	25
Managing conflict	2.8800	1.61555	25
Entrepreneurship	2.8800	1.69115	25
Motivating	2.8800	1.53623	25
Personal	2.8800	1.61555	25
Organising	2.9200	1.65630	25
Negotiation	2.9200	1.65630	25
Informing	2.9200	1.65630	25
Time	2.9600	1.54056	25
Monitoring	2.9600	1.69509	25
Self confidence	3.0000	1.73205	25
Clarifying roles and objectives	3.0400	1.61967	25
Problem solving	3.0800	1.49778	25
Social	3.2000	1.60728	25
Human	3.2400	1.50776	25
Controlling	3.2800	1.48661	25
Technical	3.8400	1.37477	25
Networking	3.8400	1.37477	25
Communication	3.8400	1.37477	25
Financial	3.8800	1.39403	25
Leadership	3.9200	1.41185	25
Professional	3.9200	1.41185	25
Team building	4.0400	1.27410	25
Strategic	4.0800	1.18743	25
Valid N (listwise)			25

Source: researcher 2020.

Table 4. Displays the Eigenvalues as well as the competency item factor loading for the three-factor solution (N = 25).

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	4.638	18.550	18.550	4.638	18.550	18.550
2	3.524	14.094	32.645	3.524	14.094	32.645
3	2.971	11.885	44.530	2.971	11.885	44.530
4	2.192	8.768	53.298	2.192	8.768	53.298
5	1.905	7.621	60.919	1.905	7.621	60.919
6	1.748	6.991	67.910	1.748	6.991	67.910
7	1.397	5.590	73.499	1.397	5.590	73.499
8	1.266	5.065	78.564	1.266	5.065	78.564
9	1.016	4.066	82.630	1.016	4.066	82.630
10	0.878	3.510	86.141			
11	0.713	2.851	88.992			
12	0.645	2.581	91.573			
13	0.549	2.195	93.768			
14	0.471	1.884	95.652			
15	0.375	1.501	97.152			
16	0.283	1.132	98.285			
17	0.143	0.571	98.856			
18	0.112	0.448	99.304			
19	0.077	0.308	99.611			
20	0.064	0.257	99.868			
21	0.020	0.079	99.948			
22	0.010	0.039	99.987			
23	0.003	0.012	99.999			
24	0.000	0.001	100.000			
25	$-1.994E{-}016$	$-7.975E{-}016$	100.000			

## 3.7. Factor Analysis

3.7.1. Discussion

When the factor analysis is run for the importance items using ML without forcing a four-factor solution, the data show a seven-factor solution with Eigenvalues above 1.0. I denote which loading is used by using bold font-type to identify which loading is retained on the respective factor. Item 21 (communication

competencies) is retained on Factor 1; item 22 (Ability to use computers) is retained on Factor 2; item 23 (Ability to network with other managers in the textile industry) is retained on Factor 3. Item 14 (Human competencies) did not load on any factor and is not retained in the solution; item 4 (Ability to solve problems) is retained on Factor 4; item 5 (Leadership styles) is retained on Factor 5; and competency item 6 (Ability to control) retained on Factor 6; item 7 (Ability to monitor activities) is retained on Factor 7; item 8 (Ability to motivate workers) is retained on Factor 7.

Figure 1 shows the scree plot for the Free for All Importance ML factor extraction and identifies a flattening of the trend line between five and seven factors. The following scree plot is utilized to provide further evidence of the flattening out, or the reduction of variance explained by increasing the number of factors retained in the solution. Furthermore, two of the factors in the seven-factor solution are not stable factors and do not meet the factor stability threshold established by Costello and Osborne (2005).

Factors 4 and 7 in the "free for all" solution do not have 3 or more competencies load with values of 0.3 and above and are not retained as a viable solution. As such, the theoretical framework that guides this research allows for the important items to be forced into a four-factor solution. Forcing the factors in a four-factor solution follows the methodological framework established in the literature as well as allows for the examination of the fourth research question. Table 4 displays the eigenvalues as well as the competency item factor loading for the three-factor solution.
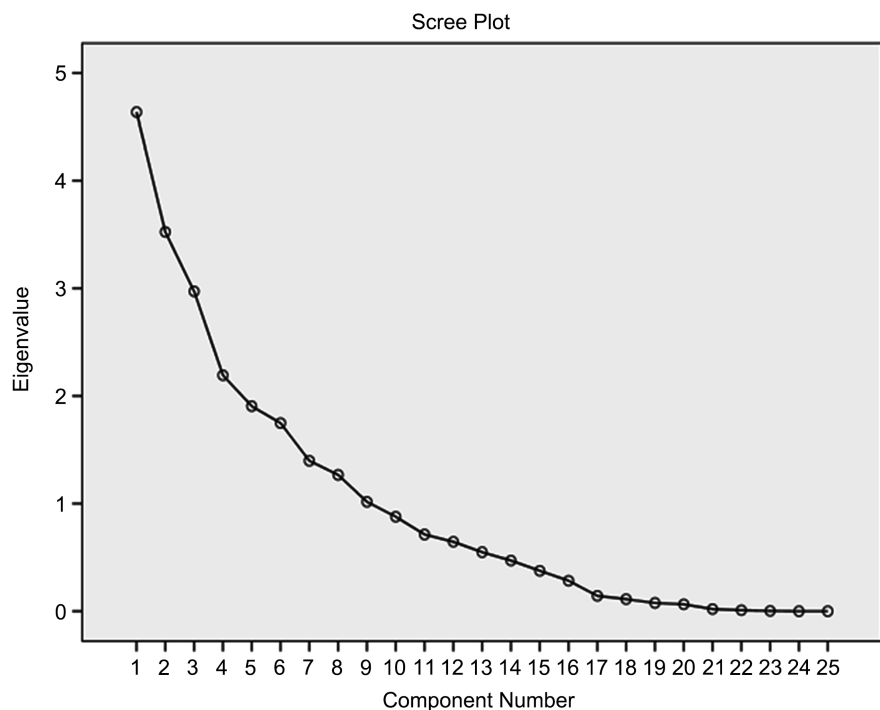
Figure 1. Scree plot of the ML with direct obliging rotation for importance using ratings of managers (N = 25).

3.7.2. Research Objective 1: What Different Competencies Are Possessed by Middle Class Managers at Weaverly Clothing Manufacturing Company?

The research found that there are definitive competencies that are important to the successful middle-class managers at Weaverly Clothing Manufacturing Company in Zimbabwe. Specifically, this research developed a tool whereby any profession can identify the important and frequently used competencies. By taking the highest and lowest rated competencies, one can utilize a two-by-two matrix to identify the high and low importance competencies as well as the high and low frequency competencies. In addition, exploratory factor analysis unearthed commonalities amongst the competencies. The competency model established by this research is a great tool for the development of the Management profession. The competencies identified were: technical; interpersonal; strategic; networking; leadership; team building; professional and financial competences. In this case, middle class managers need these competencies in order to improve their job performance.

3.7.3. Findings: Research Question 2

The finding of the study strongly indicates that these competencies were significant and valuable in successful job performance for the middle-class managers at Weaverly Clothing Manufacturing Company in Zimbabwe. It can be further noted that the high mean scores for importance and frequency ratings establishes criterion-related validity for the competency items. Thus, had there been a wide range of mean scores with a large deviation from the mean, it may have been concluded that the competencies identified may not have been an appropriate list. However, it is logical to conclude that the competencies established are relevant, valuable, and central to the performing of middle-class managers at Weaverly Clothing Manufacturing Company in Zimbabwe. Equally important to the research is how frequently the competencies are utilized by middle class managers. Now that the importance of the competency has been established, the second research question logically follows as to how often the competency is used. Competencies that are used frequently are naturally of interest in this study.

Using a five-point Likert scale (1 = Never, 2 = Rarely, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Often, 5 = Always), all items have mean score above three. This shows a high frequency of use for each competency. Again, this isn't totally unexpected as I developed the competencies in association with sales manager experts. The top eight competencies, by mean scores, are utilized more frequently than the others: networking (M = 3.84, SD = 1.39), communication (M = 3.84, SD = 1.374), and strategic competences (M = 4.08, SD = 1.187). The top-rated competency items, particularly the top three, have very low standard deviations indicating agreement among the respondents.

3.7.4. Research Question 3: What Challenges Faced by Middle Class Managers at Weaverly Clothing Manufacturing Company in Zimbabwe?

The researcher found that the inability to network with others; lack of interper-
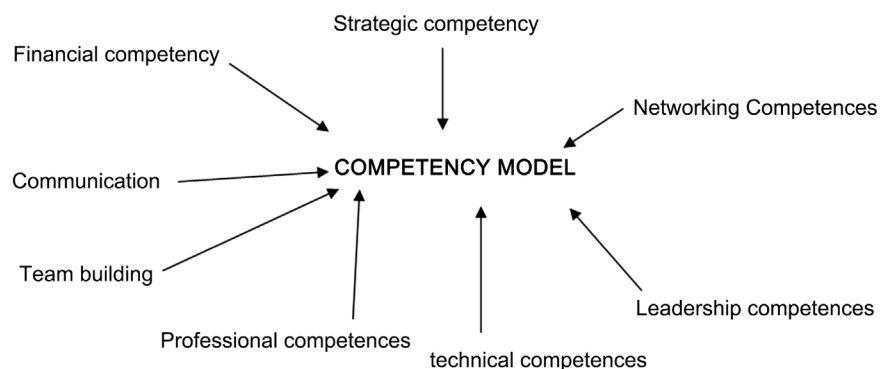
sonal competences; lack of technical competences and lack of strategic thinking and lack of proper leadership styles, lack of sound financial foundation as technical skills since all business activities are now driven by ICTs, were the major challenges affecting managers at Weaverly Clothing Manufacturing Company.

Figure 2 developed Competency Model for Middle-Class Managers at Weaverly Clothing Manufacturing Company.

4. Discussion of Findings

The researcher found that the middle-class managers had job specific competencies, general management competencies and corporate specific competencies. This clearly further suggests that middle class managers at Weaverly Clothing Company relied more on personal experience on the job rather than having competences needed to be successful on the job. This corroborates the findings by Abbaszadeh, Eyni and Rabiei, 2012; CZI, 2017; Friend and Johnson, 2013 who note that in most manufacturing companies' world over middle class managers possess three discrete categories of competencies which are: job specific competencies, general management competencies and corporate specific competencies which are not enough to excel in this modern society. This is also against that suggested middle class managers must possess the following competencies in order to be successful: knowledge competencies including 1) applied foundational knowledge; 2) professional knowledge; professional practical competencies; administrative function and process; managing-self competencies; communications; and mobilizing innovation change.

The researcher found that there was a strong relationship between the managerial competencies possessed by middle class managers at Weaverly Clothing Manufacturing Company and business growth. It was also noted that each middle-class managerial competency contributes to its business effectiveness. This view concurs with that of (Adsule and Berad, 2014; CZI, 2017; Friend and Johnson, 2013) who found that a positive relationship exists between the competencies possessed by managers, organizations and employee performance. In addition, Brewster, Sparrow and Harris (2015) also found that this study has studied and explored the link between the managerial competencies and the

Figure 2. Developed competency model for middle class managers.

organisational effectiveness. Results showed that all the competencies viz. leadership, problem solving, strategic competency and customer focus had a positive relationship with the organisational effectiveness.

The researcher found that inability to network with others; lack of interpersonal competences; lack of technical competences and lack of strategic thinking and lack of proper leadership styles, lack of sound financial foundation as technical skills since all business activities are now driven by ICTs, were the major challenges affecting managers at Weaverly Clothing Manufacturing Company. The findings corroborate those of Deeter-Schmelz et al. (2016) who found that managers in most manufacturing companies in developing countries are facing challenges related to inability to network with others; lack of interpersonal competences; lack of technical competences and lack of strategic competences and lack of leadership competences. It is further noted that this has an implication on managers failing to achieve or to steer the organisation.

5. Conclusion

The study focused on developing a competency model for middle class managers at Weaverly Cloth manufacturing Company in Zimbabwe. In addition, competency-based management is a major strategic approach for many organizations and may be critical in gaining and upholding a strategic advantage. Thus, competency-based management has become a key tool for use in recruitment and development as well as for implementing organizational changes. The developed competency model takes a set of eight competencies into its ambit. The competences are: strategic management competences; networking competences; communication competences.

It can be further concluded that competency model is a list of competencies which are derived from observing satisfactory or exceptional performance for a specific occupation. In this case, developing and usage of competency models at Weaverly Clothing Manufacturing Company has a huge set of benefits which are: improve recruitment and selection practices, improve individual career progression, improved performance management due to improve assessment and improve communication on strategic issues. In addition, the competency model provides identification of the competencies the middle-class managers need to develop in order to improve performance in their current job or to prepare for other jobs via promotion or transfer. They can be also useful in a skill gap analysis, the comparison between available and needed competencies of individuals or organizations.

The findings of this study are also expected to be used as a means for evaluation of certification and professional development programs. This study also may help educators and address important managerial competencies within the manufacturing industry.

The implications of this research are practical and benefit the professional development of the middle-class managers. One outcome was the development of

a competency model for middle class managers at Weaverly Clothing Manufacturing Company in Zimbabwe. A competency model emerged from the data collected through a questionnaire. The factors serve as the pillars of the competency model. The purpose of competency model, in the literature, is to inform job behaviors and influence performance. Creating a standard to judge performance against provides a clear understanding regarding which job competencies should be emulated and encouraged in the management profession. The competency model established in this study is particularly important for middle level management. The competency model establishes a road map whereby middle-class managers can influence their profession toward.

The competency models established by the exploratory factor analysis for both importance and frequency include competencies that span the external and internal environment. Utilization of the competency model is appropriate for middle class managers at Weaverly Clothing Manufacturing Company seeking to improve their competencies. One meaningful way in which this is done is through the annual performance evaluation. Typically, the middle-class manager and their supervisor (Top management) establish performance goals for the year upon which the middle-class manager is evaluated. These goals must include a review of the manager's current competency attainment level (based on the competencies established by the competency model in this study) and a plan for lower-managers will develop or under-developed competencies from a desired skill set. Tying competency development to the annual performance evaluation provides incentive for the middle-class managers to seek development and attainment of the competencies as job security and merit decisions are a direct result of the performance evaluation.

Having competency development part of the annual performance evaluation places responsibility on the supervisor is to develop and implement training programs to ensure employees are able to learn the desired competencies. One of the practical impacts of this research is that responsibility for competency attainment is shared with the supervisor and the middle-class manager. Competencies cannot be developed without the appropriate training regimen and focus. The training has to be a priority of the middle-class manager (Weaverly Clothing Manufacturing Company); otherwise, the competency development may not be in proper focus. Additionally, the organization (Weaverly Clothing Manufacturing Company); has to value employees who seek after, possess, and utilize the appropriate competencies. The organization (Weaverly Clothing Manufacturing Company) has to add value either through merit compensation or promotion opportunities. Without the organization valuing the competencies, employees and supervisors will not pay the appropriate attention to competency development.

6. Recommendation

- The Weaverly Clothing Manufacturing Company must add value either

through merit compensation or promotion opportunities. Without the organization valuing the competencies, employees and supervisors will not pay the appropriate attention to competency development.

- There is a need for an integrated approach to leadership and management selection and development. There is a need for Weaverly Clothing Manufacturing Company to use the developed competency model for middle class managers in order to reduce training costs, reduce staff turnover or increase employee productivity, hence performance.
- Invest in the competencies of individuals working in the organisation in order to increase performance.

7. Future Research

The process by which this research dissertation answered a set of questions also raised other questions that now provide an opportunity for future research and exploration. It is completely beyond the scope of a paper to cover all aspects of managerial competencies. The present study only covers few aspects of managerial competencies up to some extent. It is quite evident from the review of above research studies that in Zimbabwe, very limited research work has been done in the area of managerial competencies assessment. This area offers many opportunities for the researchers and the future researches can be conducted in Zimbabwean context which otherwise has remained a less researched area in the country.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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