



**THE SYSTEMS PARADIGM OF LEADERSHIP: INTEGRATING
COMPETENCY DIRECTORIES WITH STRATEGIC
LEADERSHIP BRANDING**

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Abstract

Competency mapping has emerged as a strategic mechanism for developing customer-centric leadership and strengthening organisational adaptability in highly competitive business environments. The present study examines how structured competency frameworks contribute to leadership effectiveness, talent management, and sustainable organisational performance by aligning employee capabilities with institutional goals and customer expectations. Adopting an “outside-in” organisational perspective, the study emphasises that enduring leadership capability is created not merely through individual managerial traits but through institutionalised systems, behavioural frameworks, and competency-driven organisational culture. The study employs descriptive statistics, ANOVA, independent sample t-tests, and OLS regression analysis using data collected from 110 executives in pharmaceutical companies. The findings reveal that organisations implementing competency-based leadership systems achieve superior outcomes in communication effectiveness, teamwork, employee engagement, operational execution, and organisational performance. The empirical results further indicate that managerial hierarchy, compensation structure, and multinational organisational exposure significantly influence leadership competency development. The study also highlights the importance of dynamic competency directories, structured leadership development initiatives, and competency-based talent management systems in sustaining competitive advantage. Practical implications suggest that organisations should institutionalise competency architectures to strengthen leadership pipelines, employee development, and strategic HRM practices. The findings contribute to strategic human resource management literature by positioning competency mapping as a driver of organisational leadership capability and business performance.

Keywords: *Behavioural Descriptors, Service Industry, Organisational Performance, Strategic HRM, Leadership Capability*

1. Introduction

Systemic self-awareness and organisational capability are at the root of great leadership. Organisational leaders who are unaware of their leadership weaknesses can severely limit their ability to inspire employee engagement, build organisational commitment and provide strategic direction to the business. Theories of leadership indicate that it is not simply about the charisma of the individual leader, but the way in which they can connect human capital and the expectations of external stakeholders with the aims of an organisation (Goleman, 2016; Northouse, 2025). Previous leaders, like Churchill and Gandhi, have shown that leaders with very different personalities can be very effective, given their self-awareness and clarity of purpose. From this view, competency-based leadership systems are becoming increasingly significant in today's business world.

Many new and emerging organisational leaders, however, form internal perceptions that are inconsistent with their actual behaviours, which leads to ineffective communication, poor relationship building with employees, and an organisation that does not perform well. These leadership deficiencies often lead to loss of employee engagement, reduced customer satisfaction, increased stress on the job, decreased productivity and sustainability of organisations (Lee et al., 2015, Rast & Tourani, 2012). Leadership skills have also been shown to have a significant impact on the culture, communication networks, and strategic attentiveness of an organisation in a competitive business environment (Hitt et al., 2010).

The systems approach to leadership says that no organisation can be a success without its leaders as a system. Rather, enterprises should have institutionalised leadership development mechanisms that are able to continuously replenish their leadership ranks by fostering competency development, organisational learning, and structured programs of talent management (Ulrich & Smallwood, 2007; Cappelli & Keller, 2014). In addition to individual leadership attributes, organisations are increasingly being asked to have leadership capability systems, cultural routines, and leadership competency frameworks that work together to enhance the leadership capability of all levels of management. These systems can assist organisations in keeping their customers oriented, confidence in investors and flexibility in their operations in the highly volatile markets. In the Resource-Based View (RBV), the leadership competency components are seen as strategic intangible resources that can give sustainable competitive advantage and effectiveness to the organisation (Barney, 1991). Likewise, Dynamic Capability Theory implies that competency-based leadership systems can support the organisation's adaptability and strategic responsiveness in the face of changing market conditions (Eisenhardt & Martin, 2017).

The question of whether or not leaders are “born or bred” is still a topic for debate in the field of leadership and human resource management. Research indicates that some leadership skills are innate, while others can be acquired through structured training programs. So, an organisation needs to know the difference between these and select those that can be taught and those that cannot be taught. (McClelland, 1973; Boyatzis, 2013). Thus, competency mapping is an important strategic human resource management (SHRM) tool which helps companies recognise the gaps in their leadership, assess management competency, and match leadership behaviours with organisational goals (Takey & de Carvalho, 2015; Becker & Huselid, 2006). It reflects the current movement from individual to strategic leadership branding and 'capability building' within organisations.

The leadership code suggested by Ulrich and Smallwood (2007) also provides an account of the need to strike a balance between personal skills and organisational systems in achieving sustainable organisational leadership. This proves that the competencies of leaders need to be purposefully linked with the organisation's objectives and competitive positioning (Pralhad & Hamel, 2009; Kaplan & Norton, 2004).

Although leadership competencies and talent management have gained more attention in the academic field in recent years, the empirical evidence about the relationship between competency mapping and strategic leader branding and organisational performance at various managerial levels is still scarce. The current study aims to close this gap by studying a

competency-based system of leadership in the Indian Pharmaceutical Companies. The study has added to strategic human resource management literature by combining the three concepts of leadership branding, competency mapping and organisational capability in the context of systems-oriented leadership.

1.1 Objectives of the Study

The aim of the research is:

1. To identify the behavioural descriptors of selected customer-focused leadership competencies in the pharmaceutical organisations
2. To compare and contrast some of the leadership competencies in various managerial levels in pharmaceutical companies
3. To compare competency levels at top, middle and bottom management and to evaluate them
4. To compare the competency mapping process of Indian Pharmaceutical Companies with multinational corporations (MNCs)

2. Literature Review

2.1 Leadership and Organisational Performance

Leadership has always been known as one of the most important factors that affects the productivity of an organisation, employee satisfaction and customer satisfaction. According to academic studies, leadership behaviours have a strong impact on organizational culture, communication systems, and employee attitudes, all of which have an impact on external stakeholder relationships and long-term organizational performance (Lee et al., 2015, Hitt et al., 2010). Good leaders help create operational excellence through building trust and strategic clarity, demonstrating emotional intelligence, and facilitating collaborative work cultures (Goleman, 2016; Northouse, 2025). Research on organisational behaviour also shows that leadership quality has a direct relationship to employee motivation, productivity, and turnover, which in turn leads to an increase in the organizational competitiveness (Huselid, 1995).

In the service sector and health care, leadership competency is of particular significance because customer service and the ability of the organisation to respond are significantly influenced by the managerial competency and communication skills of its leaders. Elshaer (2013) found that employees' satisfaction with their jobs was affected significantly by the ability of the managers to communicate effectively with their employees, and Rast and Tourani (2012) noted the relationship between leadership practices and employees' satisfaction outcomes. As a result, more and more, the ability to lead not only represents an individual profile but also a strategic organisational resource that is also relevant to the orientation toward the customer and operational performance.

From the RBV point of view, leadership competencies can be viewed as strategic intangible assets that can provide sustainable competitive advantages (Barney, 1991). Organisations with a very high level of system development are more likely to build organisational commitment, enhance strategic responsiveness, and maintain competitiveness with effective human capital management (Wright & McMahan, 2011).

2.2 Competency Mapping and Strategic HRM

Competency mapping has become an important strategic human resource management (SHRM) practice which helps organisations to identify, evaluate and develop the employee competencies to match the organisational goals (Deb, 2006). McClelland (1973) pointed out that the ability to predict performance in the workplace through competence-based assessment is at least as reliable as competence testing, which is based on traditional intelligence-based assessment methods. Boyatzis (2013) also suggested that emotional intelligence skills greatly influence organisations' leadership effectiveness and managerial success.

The use of competency mapping systems in modern organisations is used to determine gaps in skills and knowledge, to reinforce leadership pipelines and to match employee competencies with the organisation's strategic business objectives (Takey & de Carvalho, 2015). Competency frameworks also facilitate the recruitment, succession planning, performance assessment and leadership development processes, which help organisations in the long-term (Becker & Huselid, 2006). Another aspect of the competency-based leadership system is that it facilitates the organisation's adaptability and long-term strategic responsiveness as per dynamic capability theory (Eisenhardt and Martin, 2017).

It has also been found that at the industry and organisational level, there are varying priorities in competency. For instance, Xuejun Qiao and Wang (2009) identified abilities to communicate, work in a team and always be learning as the most salient managerial skills of middle-level managers in emerging economies. The results support the need for competency mapping aspects to be embedded in a wider strategic HRM system which can support the agility and continuity of the organization's leadership.

2.3 Leadership Branding and Organisational Capability

Newer literature on leadership concentrates on how to shift from individual-focused leadership to institutionalised leadership capability and leadership branding. Ulrich and Smallwood (2007) believed that organisations need to transcend the individual attributes of leadership and create a leadership system that will provide a stable and consistent supply of organisational value to customers and investors. Also, Daash et al. (2020) pointed out that leadership branding is important to reinforce the organisational identity, as it should be consistent with what is expected by customers and the direction of the organisation.

Leadership branding is very much linked to organising capability development in which leadership systems are built up in the organisation's culture, routines and strategic processes. In contrast to charismatic individuals, organisations now pay attention to sustainable architectures for leadership that are able to produce future leaders at various levels of the organisation. This systems approach is in line with the distributed leadership theory, which sees leadership as an organisational process, not of a single executive (Bolden, 2011).

As shown in Figure 1, "Personal Proficiency" is a concept that balances strategic vision, behavioural competencies and competency-based systems that develop the capability of the organisation with competency-based systems that build the competency of the leader.

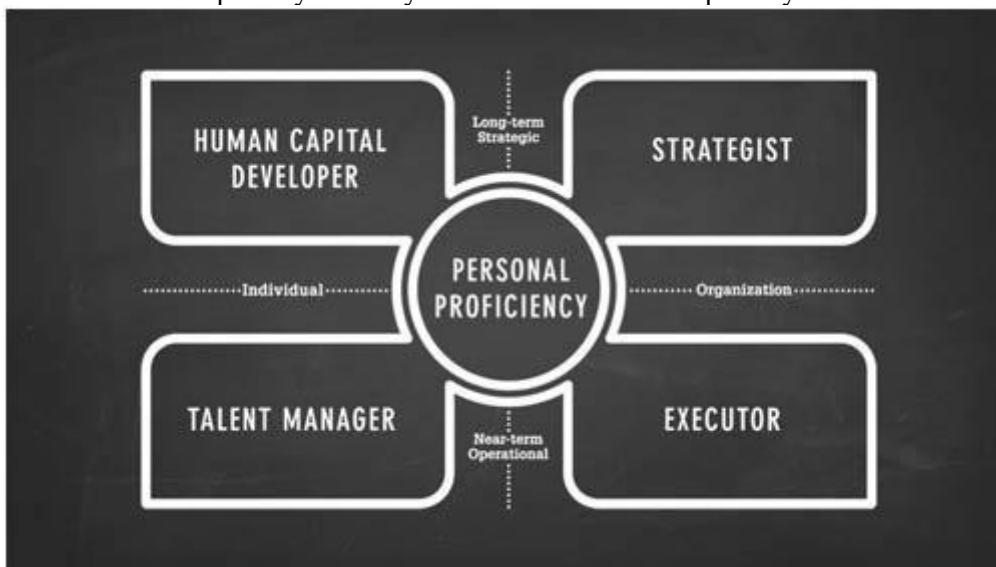


Figure 1: Personal Proficiency

Similarly, each organisation has a different set of competency priorities, based on where they are and what they are competing in. Table 1 illustrates how companies like Wal-Mart, Lexus

and Apple are connecting leadership qualities with the organisational strategy by using cost efficiency, quality management and innovation-oriented leadership identities, respectively.

Table 1: Leadership Identity

Organization	Organization identity	Leadership identity
Walmart	Everyday low prices	Managing costs efficiently; getting things done on time
Lexus	Relentless pursuit of perfection	Managing quality processes (Lean manufacturing and design, Six Sigma) to improve constantly
Apple	Innovation and Design	Creating new products and services outside the industry norms

These are just a few of the ways in which leadership skills help to differentiate and create strategic competitiveness (Prahalad & Hamel, 2009; Kaplan & Norton, 2004).

2.4 Communication Competencies and Customer Orientation

Communication systems continue to play a key role in an organisation's leadership and customer-focused management. In a hyper-competitive environment, the organisations must have leadership systems which promote transparency, collaboration and strategic coordination throughout the organisation (Senge, 2006). Effective communication skills allow managers to manage the team efficiently, manage conflicts and adapt the organisation's responsiveness to customer requirements.

Customer orientation has been found to be greatly affected by the leadership behaviour, the quality of communication and the organisational culture (Lee et al., 2015). The active listening, understanding and responding of managers are likely to help them establish a conducive work environment that enhances employee satisfaction and customer experiences (Elshaer, 2013). Moreover, the talent management system focuses on the importance of communication skills in improving organisational learning, employee development and inter-functional collaboration (Cappelli & Keller, 2014).

Moreover, companies that have communication competency-based leadership models and have a strong communication culture have been shown to be more effective and have higher employee engagement scores (Day et al., 2014). Communication competency is thus an important organisational competency that helps in providing customer-centric leadership and the sustainability of business.

2.5 Research Gap

Even though there has been an increasing body of literature on leadership skills, strategic HRM and organisational capability, there are still several significant gaps in the literature. Previous studies mostly have explored either specific leadership characteristics or single competency dimensions, and failed to consider a comprehensive study of the roles competency mapping plays at various managerial levels in strategic leadership branding and organisational performance. Moreover, there is a lack of comparative empirical studies on competency-based leadership systems between multinational companies (MNCs) and Indian pharmaceutical companies working in emerging economies.

Moreover, previous research shows a lack of linkage between competency mapping, customer orientation, leadership branding and organisational capability framework. To address this gap, the current study focuses on understanding the impact of a competency-based leadership system on organisational leadership capability, communication effectiveness and customer management practices in the pharmaceutical companies in India.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The study is based on primary data collected from a structured questionnaire which was presented to the Executives of selected pharmaceutical companies. The method of the study is quantitative with a cross-sectional research approach. Prior to the main data collection process, a pilot survey was done with the purpose of validating and finalising the survey instrument. Three pharmaceutical companies having a good organisational reputation, good accessibility with willingness to participate in the study were selected for the first stage. Because the information in the study is related to the competency of the manager and HR, some companies refused to participate because of confidentiality issues. Thus, three prominent pharmaceutical companies, namely, Ajay Biotech, Vestergaard Frandsen (MNC) and Sumitomo Chemicals (MNC) were selected for the sample of the study. The research framework is oriented towards a competency-based leadership system and organisational capability development in pharmaceutical organisations (Ulrich & Smallwood, 2007).

3.2 Sample and Data Collection

The total workforce (executive) of the selected companies was 156, which was small; therefore complete enumeration or census method was adopted. The questionnaires were sent to all executives of the organisations from which they were selected in India. Only 110 valid responses were kept; however, for analysis, after dropping incomplete and unclear responses. The respondents were from all levels of management (top-level, middle-level and lower-level executives). The study included departments like marketing, sales, production, research and development (R&D), human resources, administration and accounts. Given the difficulties in getting access to higher-level individuals in the management, the sample was limited to 110 executives from the three companies. The structure of the sample is shown in Table 2, and the number of executives is 60, 50 of whom participated in the study, and 10 did not respond.

Table 2: Sample Structure

	Total employees (executives)	Number of Units responded and included in analysis	not responded
Vestergaard Frandsen	25(100%)	20(80%)	5(20%)
Ajay Biotech	100(100%)	69(69%)	31(31%)
Sumitomo Chemical	31(100%)	21(68%)	10(32%)
Total	156(100%)	110(71%)	46(29%)

In the same way, Table 3 categorises the respondents based on their management level and also on the years of professional experience and thus gives an insight into the demographic composition of the study sample. This approach of competency-based respondent classification is in line with the previous studies of leadership and HRM that took their interest in managerial capability assessment (McClelland, 1973).

Table 3: Respondent Classification

Respondent Classification	Vestergaard (MNC)	Ajay Biotech	Sumitomo Chemical(MNC)	Total
Level 1 (0-5 years of experience)	6	37	4	47
Level 2 (6 - 10 years of experience)	5	15	13	33

Level 3 (>= 10 years of experience)	9	17	4	30
Total	20	69	21	110

3.3 Measurement of Variables

This was also one of the most significant parts of the study, as the reliability of the findings was dependent on the quality of information from the respondents obtained by the instrument. A closed-end questionnaire with a standardised 5-point Likert scale was designed to gather data on the factors associated with leadership competencies, communication effectiveness, organisational capability and customer-oriented management practices. Responses were measured on a Likert scale from Strongly Agree (5) to Strongly Disagree (1), with each response given a numerical value for quantitative analyses. The competency descriptors in the questionnaire were adapted from the literature discussed and were based on the behavioural indicators of leadership effectiveness, communication skills, strategic responsiveness and organisational performance. The questionnaire was developed to assess the differences in perceiving leadership competency at the various management levels and the different types of organisations (pharmaceutical companies). The competency mapping approach used in the study is similar to the approaches used in previous research related to competency development for leadership and organisational performance measurement (Takey & de Carvalho, 2015; Boyatzis, 2013).

3.4 Statistical Tools and Techniques

To investigate the leadership competency patterns among companies and managerial levels, descriptive statistics, independent sample t-tests, one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and regression analysis were used in the study. To identify factors that have an impact on the leadership competency scores, OLS regression analysis was used.

The regression model used in the study is represented as follows:

$$Y = a + b_1Income + b_2Education + b_3Nature\ of\ Company + b_4MidLevelDummy + b_5TopLevelDummy + b_6Communication + e$$

Where:

- Y represents the competency score of active leadership.
- Independent variables include education, income, communication level, management level, and nature of organisation.

The regression coefficients were estimated using the Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) method, and the influence of the explanatory variables on leadership competency scores was determined. Multi-collinearity and Heteroscedasticity diagnostic tests were undertaken because of the use of cross-sectional data. Independent sample t-tests were used to compare the competency scores of multinational corporations (MNCs) and Indian pharmaceutical companies, while ANOVA was used to detect any differences in competency scores among the various managerial levels.

3.5 Reliability and Validity

Reliability analysis was made to determine the internal consistency and stability of the competency indicators for this study. Data from the respondents were all suitable for analysis as there were no cases excluded in the reliability testing process, as can be seen from the Case Processing Summary tables. As illustrated in the first 2 reliability summaries, all 110 responses were able to be included in the statistical analysis, thus ensuring completeness and consistency of data used to determine competency.

In the same manner, the third Case Processing Summary reveals that no cases in this summary were excluded from the current analysis of the 21 cases that were considered for

inclusion in the analysis for each specific competency construct. These results validate the data used and justify the competency measurement framework used in this study.

Reliability Tables

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Table 4. Case Processing Summary for All Variables (N = 110)

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	110	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	110	100.0

Source: basic data, compiled by author from SPSS output
Reliability test:

Table 5. Case Processing Summary for Reliability Analysis (N = 110)

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	110	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	110	100.0

Table 6. Case Processing Summary for Scale Reliability Test (N = 21)

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	21	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	21	100.0

Table 7. Reliability Statistics of the Scale (Cronbach's Alpha = 0.709)

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	N	of Items
.709	9	

The reliability of the instrument was measured by the Cronbach's Alpha value of 9 competency items in the Reliability Statistics table, which was 0.709, which is above the minimum acceptable level of 0.70 commonly recommended in social science research. This shows that the internal consistency and reliability of competencies indicators used in the study are satisfactory. Based on the results, it can be concluded that the items on the questionnaire are adequate to measure the leadership competency constructs and support further statistical analysis.

4. Results

4.1 Respondent Demographic Profile

In this section, the data obtained from the survey have been analysed and interpreted to support the objectives of the study. Demographic characteristics, experience, income and competency mapping practices adopted in the companies were used for classification of the respondents. The baseline characteristics of respondents in the three companies, Vestergaard

Frandsen, Sumitomo Chemical and Ajay Biotech are provided in Table 8. Important demographic aspects related to age, education, income, marital status, professional experience and competency mapping practices within the selected pharmaceutical companies is provided.

Table 8. Baseline Characteristics of Respondents (Total Sample size:110) (Objective 1)

Baseline characteristics of Respondents		VESTERGAARD FRANDSEN		Sumitomo Chemical		Ajay Biotech	
		Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Age	Less than 25 years	0	0	0	0	4	6.7
	25-35 years	1	5	4	19	22	36.7
	35- 45 years	8	40	11	52.4	17	28.3
	Above 45 years	11	55	6	28.6	17	28.3
Education	Primary school level	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Secondary school level	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Higher secondary school level	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Degree	20	100	21	100	60	100
monthly income	Below Rs.15,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Rs.15,001 - 30,000	0	0	0	0	10	16.7
	Rs. 30,001- 50 ,000	0	0	4	19	18	30
	Above Rs. 50,000	20	100	17	81	32	53.3
marital	Single	0	0	0	0	25	35

status	Married	20	100	21	100	44	63.3
Experience	Up to 5 years	6	30	4	19	38	63.3
	6-10 years	4	20	11	52.4	6	10
	Above 10 years	10	50	6	28.6	16	26.7
no of children	Nil	0	0	2	9.5	14	23.3
	One	14	70	11	52.4	21	35
	Two	6	30	7	33.3	13	21.7
	More than two	0	0	1	4.8		
birth order	First	9	45	6	28.6	29	48.3
	Second	11	55	11	52.4	28	46.7
	Third	0	0	2	9.5	1	1.7
	Others	0	0	2	9.5	0	0
Competency mapping	Yes	20	100	21	100	0	0
	No	0	0	0	0	60	100
year of competency mapping		Early 2020	100	Early 2019	100	not responded	0

From Table 8, it can be concluded that almost half of the respondents (55%) in Vestergaard Frandsen are older than 45 years. The majority of employees at Sumitomo Chemical (52.4 per cent) are in the age group of 35-45 years, as compared to Ajay Biotech, which has a comparatively younger employee structure with 36.7 per cent being in the age group of 25-35 years. In terms of education, 100% of respondents in all companies were graduates, which means there is a relatively qualified workforce in the pharmaceutical industry. Likewise, there is a more experienced managerial workforce at Vestergaard Frandsen as 50 per cent of the respondents have more than 10 years of professional experience. Conversely, the experience of Ajay Biotech was quite young, with 63.3 per cent having work experience of five years or less. The competency mapping variable depicted in Table 4 also reveals that both the multinational companies (MNCs) had a formal competency mapping system, while Ajay Biotech was not engaged in the formal practice of competency mapping.

4.2 Leadership Competency Descriptors

Leadership competency descriptors were examined for their connection to the energetic leadership behaviour, strategic thinking skills, effectiveness of communication and responsiveness of the organisation. Descriptive statistical analysis is used to find the Mean of the competency scores and the mean of the behavioural indicators of all the respondents sampled for the study.

Table 9. An Energetic Leader who Initiates, Executes, Influence and Inspires: Model the Way (Total Sample size:110) (Objective 2)

Behavioural	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
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Descriptors							n	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Statistic	
Having a clear sense of mission, knowing where we are headed, and seeing the end	110	5	5	5	0	0	0	
Doing all that builds trust and promotes integrity	110	5	5	5	0	0	0	
Being able to take a judicious decision in the absence of a clear picture, precedents and guidelines.	110	5	5	5	0	0	0	
Going the extra mile to seize the opportunity for challenging and bigger initiatives.	110	4	5	4.4059	0.0491	0.49352	0.244	
Being able to uncover the gifted abilities of other individuals.	110	4	4	4	0	0	0	
Strategists: Leaders need to have a point of view about the future and be able to position the firm for the future customers.	110	4	5	4.4059	0.0491	0.49352	0.244	

Displaying good peripheral vision for how to scope, scan and interpret signals hidden in plain sight.	110	3	5	3.8119	0.098 2	0.98704	0.974
Engaging everyone shopping for ideas, searching for the best practices as well as the “next practice”	110	4	4	4	0	0	0
Being able to consistently invest the majority of his time in fewer areas that produce the greatest results.	110	4	4	4	0	0	0
Knowing what causes momentum in the organisation and how to keep it going	110	3	4	3.4059	0.049 1	0.49352	0.244
Valid N (listwise)	110						

Descriptive statistics pertaining to the energetic leadership competencies of respondents are shown in Table 9. The results indicate that the mean scores for the knowledge and skills, such as a clear sense of mission, building trust, integrity and taking judicious decisions, were the highest mean scores among the respondents. Additionally, strategic positioning, leadership indicators (e.g. sensing future customer needs) were rated as high average. However, mean values for the competencies with the organisational momentum and peripheral vision were relatively low, suggesting a moderate variation in the leadership adaptability and strategic scanning ability of executives. The attributes of leadership related to clarity of mission, integrity and ability to execute remain strong attributes of the pharmaceutical executive, as the results show.

Table 10. A Master Thinker (Total Sample size:110)

Behavioural Descriptors	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation	Variance
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Statistic
Challenge the status=quo and ask incisive questions that open minds and incite the imagination.	110	4	5	4.5941	0.04911	0.49352	0.244
With aero gravity thinking, create an open source approach to searching for opportunities.	110	4	4	4	0	0	0. 000
Engage everyone shopping for ideas.	110	4	5	4.5941	0.04911	0.49352	0.244
Picking up early warning signals of issues that are just emergent or gaining traction.	110	4	5	4.5941	0.04911	0.49352	0.244
Envision the future by imagining ennobling possibilities.	110	5	5	5	0	0	0
Have the personal imagination to construct patterns from emerging disparate trends.	110	5	5	5	0	0	0
Always search for the missing links and missing ingredients.	110	5	5	5	0	0	0

Develops methodologies for anticipating and detecting breaks in the continuity of the external landscape to pinpoint “WHAT IS NEXT”	110	4	5	4.4059	0.0491 1	0.49352	0.244
HR Professional Should be the Master Thinkers in the Organisation with Respect to Manpower and	110	3	5	3.8119	0.0982 1	0.98704	0.974
Organizational Issues							
Valid N (listwise)	110						

The competency descriptors related to the “Master Thinker” leadership behaviour are highlighted in Table 10. The findings show that the competencies of envisioning future possibilities, identifying missing links and constructing patterns from emerging trends had high mean scores consistently across the respondents. Similarly, competencies of "challenging the status quo" and "early warning signals" also came up as important leadership competencies. Based on the reliability statistics obtained from SPSS, the value of Cronbach's Alpha of 0.709 is above the acceptable threshold value, which shows that the internal consistency and reliability of the competency indicators used are satisfactory. The descriptive results thus indicate that strategic thinking, future orientation and analytical capability are crucial aspects of leadership competency in the pharmaceutical industry.

4.3 Comparison Between MNCs and Indian Firms

A comparative analysis has been done to see the differences in competency descriptors between the multinational corporations (MNCs) and Indian pharmaceutical companies. Independent sample t-tests were used to identify if there were any significant differences in the scores of leadership competency between organisational types.

Table 11. Competency Descriptors Across MNC and Indian Firms

Variables	MNC			Indian			t-test
	Freq.	%	Avg score	Freq.	%	Avg score	
Master thinker	41	40.6	4.56	69	59.4	4.42	1.23
An Energetic Leader who Initiate Execute Influence and Inspires	41	40.6	4.6	69	59.4	4.1	3.23*

A Great Communicator and a Skilled Builder of Relationships and Networks	41	40.6	4	69	59.4	5	2.21**
A lifelong learner for High Technical Expertise Related to the concerned	41	40.6	4.64	69	59.4	4.29	0.78
A Wonderful Team player	41	40.6	4.15	69	59.4	4.6	3.96*
A Live Example of Deciding, Acting, Delivering and Staying Fast	41	40.6	4.17	69	59.4	3.92	0.45

A comparative competency score of MNCs and Indian pharmaceutical companies is given in Table 11. Analysis of results indicates that there are significant differences between the categories of an organisation in competency items such as energetic leadership, communication ability, and team-building attitude. On average, the competency scores of MNC firms were relatively higher than those of Indian firms with respect to the dimensions of energetic leadership and strategic responsiveness. On the other hand, there were no statistically significant differences between the two organisational groups for competency descriptors like master thinker, lifelong learner and fast decision-making. Thus, a t-test was carried out, and the results suggest that there are significant differences between the scores achieved for the selected leadership competencies at multinational and domestic pharmaceutical organisations. The comparison of the perception score of energetic leadership competency between Indian pharmaceutical firms and MNC's has been done graphically in Figure 2.

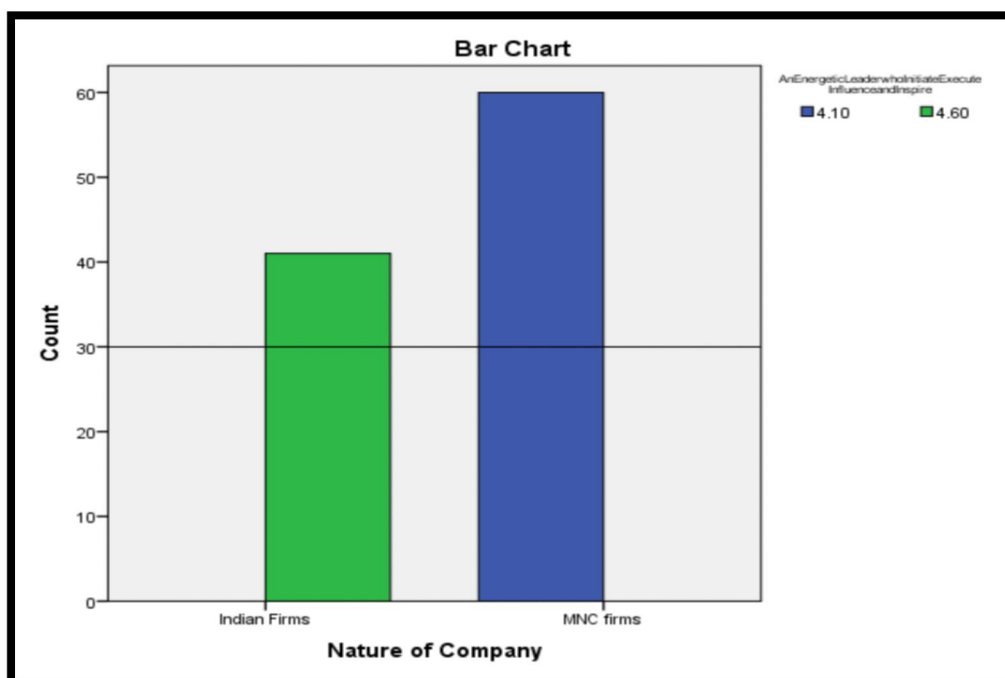


Figure 2. Perception Score for Descriptor “An Energetic Leader” in Indian Firms vs MNC

The figure shows that the mean perception score for energetic leadership is relatively high in multinational companies as compared to Indian companies. So, the graphical representation supports the findings of the statistics in Table 11.

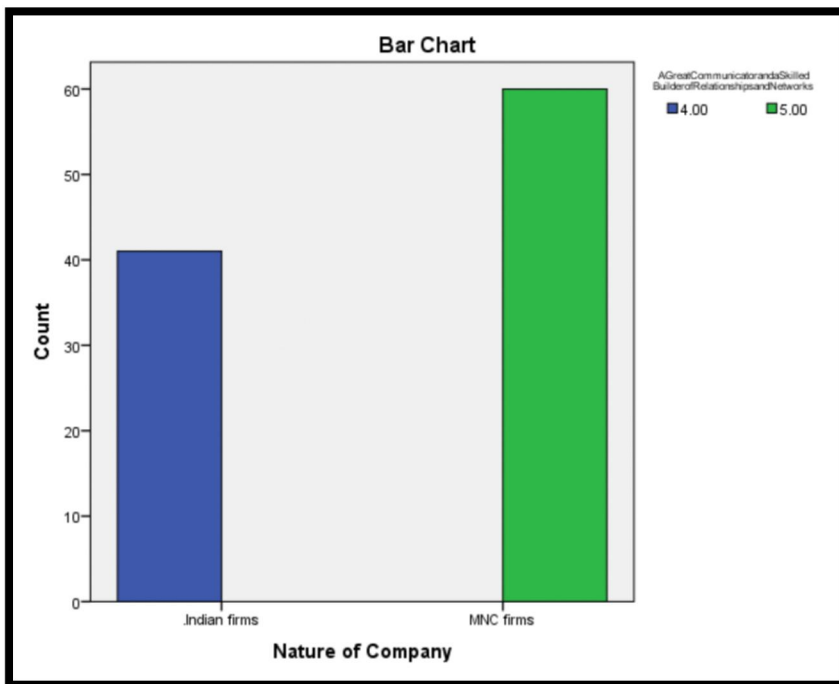


Figure 3. Perception Score for Great Communicator and Skilled Builder of Relationships and Networks in Indian Firms vs MNC

Similarly, Figure 3 reveals the difference between communication competency and relationship-building skills of Indian organizations and Multinational companies. They show that the scores of the MNCs were found to be higher on communication effectiveness and networking capability, which indicates that there is a need to have competency-based leadership systems in the framework of multinational organisations.

4.4 ANOVA Analysis

The One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to see if there were any significant differences in energetic leadership competency scores among higher, middle, and lower level management.

Table 12. ANOVA – An Energetic Leader who Initiates, Executes, Influences and Inspires

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.039	2	.519	10.075	.000
Within Groups	5.051	98	.052		
Total	6.089	100			

The results of ANOVA for energetic leadership competency at various management levels are shown in Table 12. The results indicate that the F-statistic value is significant, showing that there is a significant difference between the competency scores of the different managerial

groups. This suggests that both individual and organisational levels of perception of leadership skills vary. The findings also suggest that managerial experience and organisational responsibilities might affect the leadership style and competency building in pharmaceutical companies.

4.5 Regression Analysis

A regression analysis was done to determine factors with an impact on energetic leadership competency scores of the respondents. The effect of variables like income, management level, communication and organisational category on the leadership competency perception scores was examined by the model.

Variables	Coefficient	t-value
Montly income	0.147*	4.294
Education	0.003	1.252
Dummy (Mid-level management)	0.158*	2.883
D_MNC	0.023***	1.823
C	3.778*	16.345
Adjusted -Rsquare	0.396	
F stat	18.437*(P value-0.000)	
n	101	

Figure 4. Regression Coefficients of the Simple Average Score of Energetic Leaders who Initiate, Influence, and Inspire

The regression coefficients for the explanation of variations in energetic leadership competency scores are given in Figure 4. Results indicated that the energetic leadership competency scores were statistically higher with a positive effect on MNC organisational category, middle-level management position and monthly income. The results indicate that executives in multinational companies have relatively high scores on energetic leadership traits as compared to executives of Indian pharmaceutical companies. Likewise, transitioning from lower-level management to middle-level management is positively related to the scores on the energetic leadership competency. The regression model also shows a positive effect of income level on the perception of energetic leadership by the respondents. However, statistically, education was not found to be a determinant since the majority of the respondents had approximately the same level of education. The overall F-statistic and R-

square values indicate that the overall fitted regression model is moderately well able to describe the data and that this model is statistically significant.

5. Discussion

The results obtained in the present study clearly support the theories of strategic human resource management and competency-based leadership theories that structured competency architecture, in a significant way, enhances the capability of the organisation, effectiveness of leadership and sustainability of the business (Becker & Huselid, 2006; Deb, 2006). The increased competency scores of employees working in multinational corporations (MNCs) also lend weight to the idea that those organisations that have formal competency models, employee development programs and clear leadership succession plans are more likely to achieve managerial outcomes and organisational effectiveness (Ulrich & Smallwood, 2007).

In addition, the study is in line with the competency theory of McClelland (1973), which states that success in organisations is more dependent on measurable competencies and behavioural abilities as compared to conventional intellectual indicators. The high percentage of communication skills, energetic leadership, active listening and customer orientation in the findings also further support the EI and competency models of leadership proposed by Boyatzis (2013) and Goleman (2016), which cited interpersonal effectiveness and motivational skills as essential parts of a leadership model.

The results are seen from a resource-based perspective, the human competencies are an important resource, rare, inimitable and can provide a sustained competitive advantage as proposed by Barney (1991) in Resource-Based View (RBV). Similarly, the findings corroborate the basis of the core competency model, developed by Prahalad & Hamel (2009), which identifies that competitiveness in organisations is increasingly dependent on human competencies that are unique and spread across several layers of management.

Given the theory of distributed leadership (Bolden, 2011), which suggests that middle-management roles will be at a functional level between strategic vision and operation, the competency differences found in the sample of mid-level managers can also be understood in this context. Perhaps these managerial positions have higher competency scores given that communication, coordination, execution discipline and adaptive leadership skills are more critical.

Moreover, a positive relationship between compensation and leadership competency is consistent with the strategic talent management literature, which shows that financial compensation, organisational recognition, and career advancement opportunities are directly correlated to employee motivation, organisational identification, and leadership performance (Cappelli & Keller, 2014; Lee et al., 2015). The results also confirm the dynamic capability theory that dynamic capabilities to create and accumulate management capabilities and adaptive learning systems help organisations to be resilient and sustainable in their long-term performance (Eisenhardt & Martin, 2017).

In a knowledge-intensive and competitive environment, the competency-based leadership system has been increasing its importance in organisations, as the findings of the present study show. As a result of these findings, it is evident that the organisations can no longer continue operating under the traditional administrative management structures and need to establish a competency architecture that consists of a number of dimensions of competency (behavioural, operational, communication and strategic leadership). The so-called “dual-axis competency architecture” indicates that there are competencies that are universal to all organisations, like integrity or discipline, and organisation-specific competencies, like customer orientation, active listening and interpersonal communication. This result is consistent with the literature in strategic HRM, which considers that the sustainable performance of the organization depend on the human capital competencies in alignment with the strategic organisational objectives (Wright & McMahan, 2011; Huselid, 1995).

The results also indicate that the effectiveness of the various organisations is dependent on the energy of the leaders. The proactive leader who is effective at motivating, starting, inspiring

and executing organisational goals greatly affects the engagement of employees and the effectiveness of the organisation. This is in line with Leadership theory, in which it is believed to have a positive impact on employee morale, communication climate and organisational commitment (Day et al., 2014; Northouse, 2025). The findings also support the "HR from the outside in" approach (Ulrich, 2012) that the skills of the modern leaders should be a blend of internal managerial requirements and external customer and stakeholder demands.

Another key discovery is the lack of depth in using competency mapping systems in many organisations. The study suggests that competency frameworks are often symbolic HR tools, which are used for branding of an organisation instead of being a structured development tool. This reinforces the previous concern expressed in the literature on competency management, of a "rating-game culture" where competency systems are merely utilised for compliance/reputation purposes, and not for the purpose of real competency development (Takey & de Carvalho, 2015). Therefore, it is crucial that competency mapping is not only recorded, but also in the recruitment, training, appraisals, succession planning and leadership development processes.

The empirical modeling results provide valuable managerial insights, as well. The positive coefficient of the middle management level indicates that exposure and organisational role operational responsibility level influence managerial competency development very well. In the course of their daily management, middle managers need to be subjected to strategic planning and operational performance, and they have to use their coordinating and decision-making power to improve their leadership (Xuejun Qiao & Wang, 2009). Likewise, a positive correlation is also found between pay and leadership competency, which is one of the variables that can be referred to as an indicator of the importance of the pay-for-performance system to improve managerial competency and commitment (Rast & Tourani, 2012).

The study also shows that energetic leadership, teamwork and communication capability are more effective in a multinational company compared to a home country company. This could be related to the fact that the MNCs have good institutionalised HR systems, structured training programs, competency-based performance evaluations and Continuous Organisational Learning Culture (Kaplan & Norton, 2004). But the results indicate that there is no significant difference in the two groups in aspects of lifelong learning, as well as master thinking, so that strategic thinking ability of employees may be determined by orientation and organisational culture that is not necessarily dependent on the institution.

On balance, the results suggest that competency-based leadership development is not an HR problem but a strategic capability of the organisation that has an impact on competitiveness, innovation, employee engagement, and long-term sustainability of the business (Hitt et al., 2010; Senge, 2006).

6. Managerial Implications

Results of the study show that it is important to create a balanced competency model which includes a mix of all managerial competencies and organizationally specific behavioural indicators. The HR profession must make consumer orientation, active listening, effective communication, integrity, and good execution skills official components of recruitment, performance reviews and leadership development programs. In addition, there should be means and ways for organisations to facilitate cross-functional communication where employees can put forward ideas and discuss competency refinement in a safe environment.

The study, moreover, indicates the role energetic leadership plays in an organisation. Leaders who are able to inspire teams, institute strategic initiatives and propel the positive momentum of the institution are a significant factor in the performance of the institution. Organisations, therefore, must have formal leadership retention strategies, succession planning and delegated autonomy, which can foster future leaders organically by providing the opportunities for them to be exposed to both work and other leadership development roles.

The other major implication has to do with the use of competency mapping systems at the surface. Many organisations continue to use Competency Frameworks, and it is only as a

symbolic HR positioning or as a brand. For this reason, it is essential that human resource departments provide very clear guidelines regarding competency hierarchy from the bottom to the top of the management hierarchy and that competency systems be used as development tools and not as public relations activities. Organised competency directories that are linked to training systems, promotion criteria and leadership assessment systems.

The findings also indicate that implementation is the most critical and important in competency architecture. Employers should give mandatory workshop(s) to develop competencies with qualified experts so that the employees can develop a three-tier developmental plan to handle self-development, supervisory co-ordination and capability development of the subordinate. This can improve the execution consistency and improve long-term organisational capability development.

The empirical findings also show that the compensation system, exposure and institutional infrastructure in the organisation are significant factors pertaining to the development of competency. Organizations particularly domestic companies, should be more attentive to establish structured leadership training programmes, communication development programmes and collaborative learning mechanisms to reduce the competency gaps with the multinational companies. To ensure organisations are resilient and strategically competitive in the long run, continuous learning systems, mentoring systems, and competence management systems for talent management are necessary.

7. Conclusion

The study shows that competency mapping should not be regarded as a one-off HR intervention, but rather as a strategic institutional capability which allows organisations to become agile in the longer-term and brand themselves with stronger leadership. Organisations need to move from an “Inside-Out” approach of focusing on the individual leader, to an “Outside-In” approach that creates sustainable systems, routines and culture. Human capital is a fluid element, and organisations need to continually reframe their competency frameworks to remain competitive and adaptable. The results indicate that employees are treated as internal customers and are empowered to influence the satisfaction of external customers, which is a key factor in the establishment of a supportive organisational culture. Combining the three components of behavioural competency frameworks, talent analytics and fair compensation systems can produce distinctive and customer-centric leadership architectures hard to copy. The study also adds value to the fields of Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) and organisational management as it demonstrates that competency mapping has a positive effect on leadership effectiveness, employee engagement, organisational adaptability and sustainable competitiveness. The findings validate the added value of competency models in strengthening leadership brands, in increasing the performance of an organisation, as well as in the development of sustainable human capital, regardless of the management field. The study builds on the concepts of strategic HRM, dynamic capability theory and leadership development, and brings them together in a single institutional framework. Also, the research lays down the direction for future research. The proposed model can be tested in different other industries, firm sizes and international business environments to improve the generalisability of the model. Future studies can be done using a longitudinal design or Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) or a mixed method design to examine the impact of competency mapping on leadership, retention, organisational culture and business performance. Comparative analysis of the practices of competency development in domestic companies and multinational companies can also give more profound insights into competency development practices and the building of strategic leadership capability.

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