

Concepts and approaches in the area of competency management

Conceptos y enfoques en el área de la gestión de competencias

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Abstract

In the context of dynamic changes caused by globalization and technological progress, competency management is becoming a key element of organizational strategies. This study aimed to diagnose the concepts and approaches of researchers in the field of competency management, especially about construction companies in the Piła region. The main study was conducted using the survey method. The literature and survey results were analyzed to identify approaches to competency management and their effectiveness in implementing the strategies of enterprises. The research revealed that only 36% of the surveyed enterprises actively support the development of competencies, and 52% use strategic human resources management. Only 28% of these organizations use effective intellectual capital management systems. Obstacles in the implementation of competency management systems result from insufficient investments and the lack of an organized approach to the development of human resources. The need to create an environment conducive to learning and to better adapt the strategy to changing market needs was indicated. The research results confirm the importance of competency management as a key factor in motivating employees and improving the

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effectiveness of organizations in the construction industry. They also point to the need to intensify activities in the field of competence development, which may contribute to building a competitive advantage in the market.

Keywords: human capital, business processes, skills management, competency development, knowledge management, organizational culture, learning organization

Resumen

En el contexto de los cambios dinámicos causados por la globalización y el progreso tecnológico, la gestión de competencias se está convirtiendo en un elemento clave de las estrategias organizacionales. El objetivo de este estudio fue diagnosticar los conceptos y enfoques de los investigadores en el campo de la gestión de competencias, especialmente en relación con las empresas de construcción en la región de Piña. El estudio principal se realizó mediante el método de encuesta. Se analizaron la literatura y los resultados de la encuesta para identificar enfoques de gestión de competencias y su eficacia en la implementación de estrategias empresariales. La investigación reveló que sólo el 36% de las empresas encuestadas apoyan activamente el desarrollo de competencias y el 52% aplica la gestión estratégica de recursos humanos. Sólo el 28% de estas organizaciones utilizan sistemas eficaces de gestión del capital intelectual. Los obstáculos para la implementación de sistemas de gestión de competencias resultan de inversiones insuficientes y de la falta de un enfoque organizado para el desarrollo de recursos humanos. Se señaló la necesidad de crear un entorno propicio para el aprendizaje y adaptar mejor la estrategia a las necesidades cambiantes del mercado. Los resultados de la investigación confirman la importancia de la gestión de competencias como factor clave para motivar a los empleados y mejorar la eficacia organizacional en la industria de la construcción. También indican la necesidad de intensificar las actividades en el campo del desarrollo de competencias, lo que puede contribuir a construir una ventaja competitiva en el mercado.

Palabras clave: capital humano, procesos de negocio, gestión de habilidades, desarrollo de competencias, gestión del conocimiento, cultura organizacional, organización que aprende

Introduction

A permanent element of every company today is constant changes resulting from the phenomenon of globalization, technological progress, and universal access to information. This access is one of the most important factors in the development of an organization, while the most important resource is human capital (Goldin, 2014, pp. 2-4). The change of societies from production to information, and at the same time the still uncertain and turbulent environment, lead companies towards new management concepts. Modern managers are faced with difficult challenges that are multidimensional: decision-making, interpersonal, information and negotiation, and social (planning, motivating, controlling, and organizing) (Romer, 2010, pp. 232-235).

In contemporary conditions, which are determined by globalization, the development of knowledge and technology, and the variability of the environment, companies are increasingly achieving their goals thanks to competency management. Obtaining employees with the desired competencies is one of the main challenges (third HR trend) (Walsh, Volini, 2017, pp. 87-91). The importance of competency management is therefore gaining a strategic dimension (Kupczyk Stor, 2017, p. 7).

The goal set by the author, understood as an approach that considers the facts obtained during the research and their pragmatic and operational significance (Pilch, Bauman, 2010, pp. 22-23), was to diagnose the concepts and approaches of researchers in the area of knowledge about competencies in the context of managing professional competencies of employees on the example of construction companies located in the Piła region in Wielkopolska.

The main research problems concerned the following issues: supporting, renewing, and developing competencies; developing human resources to implement the enterprise strategy;

measuring constructive elements of intellectual capital; assigning employees individual skills needed to achieve the company's strategic goals; identifying and developing capabilities that develop in the company over time; and creating, sharing, transferring, and modifying knowledge in the organization.

The main research method was a critical literature review and a survey method using a previously designed survey questionnaire. The study involved 128 respondents. 83 correctly completed surveys were returned, which were then subjected to the analysis of the results.

The article consists of six parts. Part one concerns the competency management process. It presents theoretical approaches to the competency management process. Part two contains a theoretical discussion of competency-based management. Part three includes concepts and approaches of researchers in the field of competency knowledge. Part four discusses typical problems related to competency management in theory and business practice. Parts five and six are devoted to the results of our research and discussion on them.

1. Competency Management Process

One of the most frequently cited techniques for identifying competencies is the competency assessment method of R. Boyatzis (1982), which was used to generate all the activities needed to examine the suitability or validity of a job profile. These activities were divided into the following five stages: identifying measurement principles, analyzing various elements of the job, collecting data on behavioral events, testing, and creating a competency model—Table 1.

Table 1. Principles of assessing competencies necessary to perform a specific job

No.	Stages	Actions	Results
1.	Identifying measurement principles	meter selection, categories of employees sought	details of work performed within a given category
2.	Analyzing work items	constructing a list of characteristics of proper job performance,	a weighted list of characteristics of employees who stand out at work,

		determining the evaluation of points from the list, establishing a weighted list of features, feature cluster analysis	list of clusters for grouping features
3.	Behavioural Event Data Collection	conducting conversations about behavioral events, creating codes for encoding important conversations, linking codes with data about the work performed	a list of features that can distinguish proper execution of the work, list of validated competencies
4.	Testing	selection of measures for assessing competencies appropriate to the performance of the job, archiving measurements with results, linking results with information about the work performed	list of validated competencies assessed with the applied metrics
5.	Creating a competency model	establishing statistical relationships between competencies and work results	validated competency profile (model)

Source: Boyatzis, 1982, pp. 41-43

In this method, the study is performed on people performing a specific job, not on a job or position (Dubois Rothwell, 2004, pp. 45-46). Some organizations are heading in this direction, i.e., developing competency models for a specific type of job. However, most of them still create one model and apply it to each set of jobs (Gangani, McLean, and Braden, 2006, p. 131). Neither of these models has proven effective in practice (differentiating requirements for different jobs and matching individual profiles to a wide range of tasks failed)—Table 2.

Table 2. Comparison of selected competency models

No.	Characteristics	Single type of work	One size fits all
1.	Stages creation	identification of work for which the contractor should have higher qualifications (better preparation), collecting data on potential contractors, collecting data from customers: surveys, employee observations, data analysis and clarification of the competency model with defined features and skills	identification of the staff for which the competency model will be applied, selecting concepts from individual competency models, Senior management is reviewing the model to ensure it supports the organization's mission and values
2.	Requirements	significant costs of the project, the need to create tools that can be applied to employees, the need to create a competency assessment program and a workshop explaining competency models	Creating a competency model requires changes in the HR application (assessment questionnaires, guides, support programs), use of the application for competency assessment as an element of the employee assessment process

Source: Mansfield, 1996, pp. 8-9

From the above-mentioned approaches to creating competency models, the so-called multi-station approach was created, the main features of which are a common set of basic competencies, adapting the model to the needs of the organization, and creating levels of requirements and competencies—Table 3.

Table 3. Creating competency models according to the multi-station approach

No	Characteristics	Description
1.	A common set of core competencies	building models from a set of basic competencies to match specific employees to specific positions, developing a set of core competencies for a wide range of positions Each set should contain 20 to 40 separately defined competencies and 5 to 15 types of behavior related to their demonstration before a set of core competencies is used to build a model, organizations can adapting sets of basic competencies to the needs of the organization (adding competencies reflecting skills that are important for the changes being implemented)
2.	Adapting to your needs	adapting the demonstration of competencies for each job position, even for those where the required competencies are identical, including in the competency model a detailed description of how to demonstrate competencies in a given job position, creating information: how, when, and who should demonstrate specific competencies, during training related to building a competency model, employees should add specific behaviors resulting from their experience for given positions, conducting critical incident interviews with staff who are considered effective
3.	Determining competency levels	defining a set of levels for basic competencies to match their scope to a given position, the levels are used to assess the people needed for a given position, each competence included in the set of basic competencies should have a set of specific levels assigned to it
4.	Requirements	to build a competency model, you need to gain support from employees as well as their superiors, when building a model, you should focus on the future needs of the organization, implementing a multi-station model requires cooperation between employees, their superiors, and experts in a given field,

		the action plan must also consider anticipated changes in the market or organization that may affect technology or the type of work, assessment criteria should be introduced for each critical task, for core competencies, as well as for behaviors in a given position that demonstrate specific competencies.
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Source: Mansfield, 1996, pp. 13-16

With the increasing degree of internal changes in organizations, the approach to the process of improving human resources is also changing - from training and coaching to comprehensive development. A competency-based approach to human resources management methods, which is forced by competition and customers, as well as the effectiveness of employee motivation, is becoming necessary (Ellström, Kock, 2008, pp. 5-20).

Some authors assume that the competency management process should include the following activities: identifying competencies, allocating (building teams), acquiring, mobilizing, developing, characterizing, and evaluating (Capece, Bazzica, 2013, p. 43).

Identifying competencies is used to integrate all processes concerning the inventory of required competencies. Allocating is used to assign different missions to actors with different types of knowledge. Acquiring competencies involves recruiting, selecting, and employing people who can meet the future needs of the organization. Mobilizing refers to creating the working conditions needed by human resources to realize their competencies. Developing competencies includes training and learning on the job. The purpose of characterizing them is to store key features that can be reused. Evaluating consists in establishing criteria for evaluating competencies, i.e., comparing the planned results because of the applied competencies with the current ones. As a result, it is possible to revise previous arrangements regarding the competencies held by employees and to check which competencies are needed to carry out specific activities.

The essence of competency management is to create a set of premises for making personnel decisions. This set should include universal definitions of stimuli determining employee

effectiveness. In this way, personnel operating at different organizational levels can identically understand key issues occurring in the organization, which creates a chance to achieve a certain level of consistency during the assessment of individual components of work (Moczyłowska, 2008, p. 58).

A well-prepared competency management system enables the integration of various areas of human resources management into a whole. Basing decisions concerning personnel on the principles of competency applies to such areas of management as selection and recruitment of job candidates, training needs for employees, rating systems, career paths, employment optimization, evaluation of the results of the training conducted, and the dismissal of employees (Oleksyn, 2010, p. 10).

The theoretical approaches to the competency management process presented above lead to the conclusion that this process can be seen in a broader or narrower perspective, depending on the focus on linking competencies with the company's goals, its business processes, and project or job requirements.

2. Competency-based management

Competency-based management is one of the latest trends in the field of human resources management. The importance of skillful management of employee teams, stimulating their development and commitment, as well as managing their competencies is growing, which facilitates the achievement of the organization's goals and mission (Tripathi, Agrawal, 2014, pp. 352-353). Competency-based management in an organization should begin during recruitment. If this does not happen, then a candidate, even with high qualifications, usually has problems with adaptation, which undoubtedly affects the effectiveness of his work (Strebler, Bevan, 1996, p. 17). The significant benefits of this type of management include (Andrews, 2011, p. 7): benefits for employees: knowledge of the competencies they need to achieve success in the job market, knowledge about what competencies they lack, learning and development plan, a record of their achievements in professional development,

recognition of their competencies in many other tasks; Tactical advantages: knowledge of competence requirements for subordinates, understanding the strengths and weaknesses of direct reports, a basis for discussions about career development planning with subordinates, the ability to develop development plans and train subordinates, the ability to identify experts for task-based work; Benefits in HRM: succession planning, proper deployment of personnel, identifying the true learning requirements of staff, proper use of staff development and education solutions; Strategic benefits: vision of the organization's possibilities, development and learning plans aligned with the business strategy.

In addition to the benefits of competency-based management, there are also disadvantages (losses), such as very high expenses already during the creation of the key competency scheme, time consumption, and a lack of connection with the strategic way of thinking and subjective identification of competencies (Yang et al., 2006, p. 61). For these reasons, many organizations refrain from creating and implementing any solutions that are based on competencies.

Competencies in each organization are used for a specific purpose; for example, M. Homer (similarly N. Gangani et al. (2006, p. 131) and G. Capece and P. Bazzica (2013, pp. 41-44)) consider competency management to be a key process, but they treat it only as combining competencies that are needed for business purposes with the training needs of the staff (Homer, 2001, pp. 58-59). Such an approach indicates the subordination of competencies to business purposes, while competency management is the same as developing training plans, and management is not the same as development.

As you can see, competency-based management can be understood in different ways; it can bring benefits or losses, and it requires the use of various instruments, techniques, and methods. To be effective, it must refer to all activities or processes that take place in the organization (creation of services and products). Competency-based management should therefore be recognized as part of the strategic management of the organization, and it should be based on people with specific competencies, not on competencies themselves.

3. Concepts and approaches of researchers in the field of knowledge about competencies

Over the last twenty years, the literature on competency management, as well as human resource development, has seen the introduction of several new approaches and theories. Schools in this area have undertaken discussions in the following six categories (Laakso-Manninen, Viitala, 2007, p. 8): strategic human resources management, learning organization, intellectual capital management, competency-based strategic management, individual management of skills and competencies, and knowledge management.

Various approaches have been developed to competency management, such as learning organization, strategic human resources management, intellectual capital management, individual competencies, skills management, competency-based strategic management, and knowledge management—Table 4.

Table 4. Key approaches to competency management

No.	APPROACH	RESEARCHERS	MAIN QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS
1.	A learning organization	Argyris and Schön, Senge	Which organization is best at supporting the renewal and development of competencies?
2.	Strategic Human Resources Management	Legge, Becker and Gerhart, Ulrich and Lake	How does an organization plan, organize, supervise, and develop human resources to implement its strategy or improve its competitive position?
3.	Intellectual capital management	Edvindhsson and Malon	How can the human and constructive elements of intellectual capital be measured?
4.	Individual competencies, skills management	Dubois, McClelland, Lawler, Leford, Wood, Wood, and Payne	How can the individual skills needed to achieve strategic goals be assigned in the right places, at the right time, and at the right cost?

5.	Competency-based strategic management	Prahalad and Hamel, Sanchez and Heene, and Stalk, Evans, and Schulman	How can you identify, leverage, and develop capabilities that have competitive value, are built on organizational procedures, and develop over time within the company?
6.	Knowledge management	Nonaka and Takeuchi, Davenport and Prusak, Walsh and Ungson, and Dixon, Probst, Raub, and Romhardt	How is knowledge created, shared, transmitted, combined, and modified, and how can these processes be managed?

Source: Laakso-Manninen, Viitala, 2007, p. 9

In the early 1980s, the earliest studies focused on examining the learning process of organizations. Based on this trend, an interest emerged in organizations that best support the generation and development of competencies. The debate on this issue began to expand into the area of competency management. In addition, research by various authors began to focus on the strategic importance of competencies and the role of organizational learning.

A few years after it was widely recognized that continuous learning plays a key role in the success of organizations, debates began to focus on the topic of learning (what needs to be learned). From the beginning, the answer was sought in competencies, which became the basis for the chosen strategy of companies. A new term, "strategic competencies" appeared, which was associated with the competitiveness of companies' basic skills and abilities (Laakso-Manninen, Viitala, 2007, pp. 9-10).

Strategy and competencies are strongly related. Researchers C. Long and M. Vickers-Hoch defined human capabilities as one of the most important factors in creating added value for the customer. According to these authors, the main capabilities result from the following two factors: human resources and key competencies (Long & Vickers-Koch, 1995, pp. 13-15). The very beginnings and storage of competencies as capital have been presented in the form

of several concepts. Competencies are most often discussed in terms of human capital and intellectual capital. Human capital is the ability of organizational members to work and develop their activities, while intellectual capital is structural and social capital. Organizational competencies, including information systems, research and development activities, innovations, corporate culture, and customers, are usually built from human capital (knowledge and competencies of employees) (Sveiby, 1997, pp. 83-85).

In most cases, the following 8 stages of creating a competency model can be identified: establishing a team for the competency system; identifying units, measuring performance, and validating the sample; creating an initial list of competencies; defining behavioral indicators and competencies; presenting a preliminary competency model; cross-analysis of the competency model; working on improving the model; and validation and finalization—Table 5.

Table 5. Stages of creating a competency model

No.	STAGE	DESCRIPTION
1.	Establishment of a team for the competency system (ZDSK)	The main task of the team is to supervise the implementation of the undertaken initiative. The team consists of top management staff and employees with outstanding knowledge of the positions that were included in the model.
2.	Unit identification, performance measurements, and sample validation	At this stage, a scale is prepared that defines the levels included in the model (distinguishing, average, minimal)
3.	Creating an initial list of competencies	The initial list of competencies can be the foundation of the competency model being built. Competency models previously developed by other companies are usually used to create it.
4.	Defining behavioral and competency indicators	At this level, information is collected about the competencies needed for specific job positions included in the model. Information is collected through interviews, focus groups, or surveys.

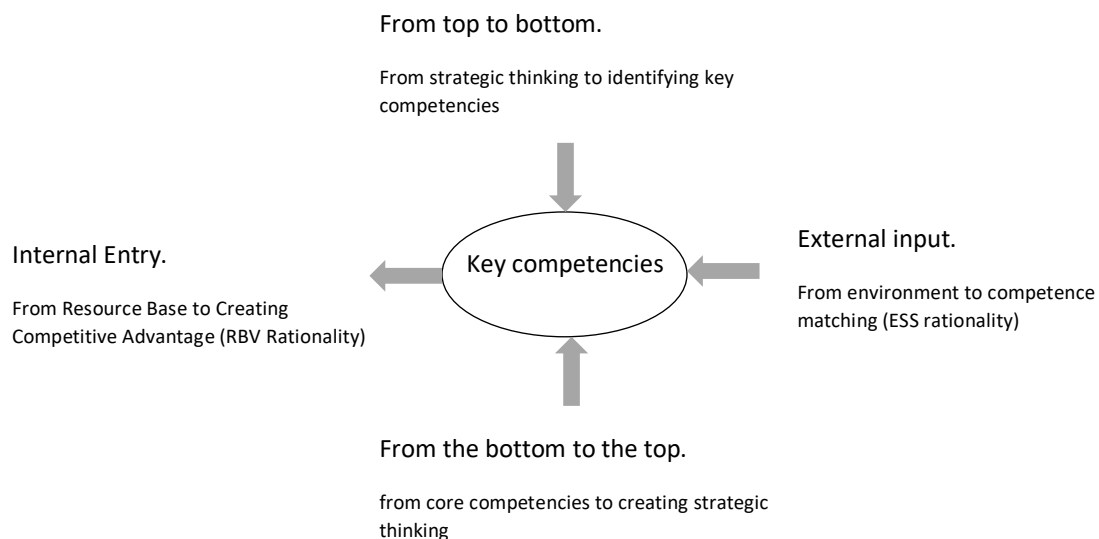
5.	Presentation of the preliminary competency model	At this stage, a quantitative analysis of the research results from interviews or surveys is carried out, as well as an analysis of the substantive content of these results.
6.	Cross-analysis of the competency model	The obtained results are supplemented by additional studies conducted among groups of employees who did not participate in the construction of the initial model.
7.	Work on improving the model.	Repeating uncertain analyses, deepening survey research.
8.	Validation and completion of work on the model	Converting competencies into a database of questionnaires, which are used to assess employees who stand out for their effectiveness, by other employees, managers, or reporting persons. Then, the assessments contained in the questionnaire are correlated with the assessment of work performance to determine the adequacy of its fit to the given competencies. The final stage is to eliminate those competencies that have not been correlated with the work performed.

Source: Draganidis, Mentzas, 2006, p. 58

F. Draganidis and G. Mentzas created their definitions of concepts used in their research—related to competencies. These authors started a discussion on knowledge about competencies, competency management, and competency-based management. Among the most important concepts, they distinguished: competency identification, which means actions subject to detection of types of competencies necessary to perform a specific task; competency model, as a certain outline of duties for a given job position, for a department or other organizational units; competency assessment, which consists in comparing competencies appearing in the model with individual competencies required for a given job position; competency standard, as certain necessary skills that employees should have to properly perform a given task; competency-based management, as the possibility of using a previously developed set of competencies, which as a result should make a positive contribution to the results of the work of the entire organization; competency profile, meaning a set of documents describing competencies for a specific job position (Draganidis, Mentzas, 2006, p. 55).

An entirely different concept of competency management was presented by BC Yang, BE Wu, PG Shu, and MH Yang in their model, which was created by combining theories of strategic management and competencies in the area of HRM. The authors focused on work valuation activities and process analysis. This model aimed to create a systemic tool that could help organizations precisely identify their key competencies. The model was called "a model identifying key competencies oriented in a process" (Yang et al., 2006, p. 64) (IKKZP), and the premises of structuring the model were included in the reasoning process, which can proceed from the top down and from the bottom up - Figure 1.

Figure 1. Rationale for structuring the IKKZP model.



Source: Yang et al., 2006, p. 65

In the IKKZP model, the top-down approach is to create a strategy, which starts with an analysis of external factors, and then key competencies are formulated to respond to challenges from the external environment (ESS rationality: environment–strategy–structure). In the bottom-up direction, where the action strategy is initiated as a result of examining existing competencies, the process starts with the use of internal resources (RBV rationality: resource-based view). Similarly, the bottom-up perspective is oriented towards core competencies, and the top-down perspective is oriented towards strategic thinking (Yang et al., 2006, p. 68).

Thanks to these perspectives, the model can combine competencies at both the individual and organizational levels and create a bridge between organizational strategy and human resources management.

4. Typical problems in the area of competency management

Competency models most often consist of a catalogue describing the desired competencies. There are various operational definitions assigned to individual competencies, as well as indicators of their implementation, according to which employees are assessed. In practice, such an approach does not always work, if only because the so-called situational variables or outcome criteria are rarely considered. For example, a group of features moderating the relations between competencies and performance effectiveness suggests that the situation should determine performance effectiveness (Klendauer et al., 2012, pp. 481-482).

The content of competency models often results from theoretical studies and does not consider research relating to specific tasks or situational characteristics. There is therefore a need for models that better reflect the results obtained in reality, in a specific situation, in the context of many constraints, such as economic, ergonomic, and others specific to a given task (Mansfield, 1996, pp. 8-15).

The main obstacles that appear during the creation of a competency model are lack of connection with strategic reasoning, large expenses, time-consuming processes, and subjectivity in the identification of competencies. For these reasons, entrepreneurs often refrain from creating any solutions that would be based on competencies (Yang et al., 2006, p. 61). All the more so because managers often feel dissatisfied with the existing methods and tools intended to support knowledge and competency management. Often such an approach is perceived as too complicated, poorly known, and not very popular, or the opposite (Capece, Bazzica, 2013, pp. 40-41). The introduction of a competency management system in a situation where the managerial staff is excluded from supporting it in their daily work becomes impossible.

The attention of people who are involved in the process of creating a competency management system should not focus on it as a goal in itself, because this process should vary depending on the level of employee empowerment, the culture of the organization, the business strategy, the management systems currently used, or the technology. A common problem is the belief that such a system is not needed at all (Lucia, 1999, pp. 86-87). Failure to make employees aware that these models will determine the success factors and allow them to focus on the most effective work causes a great reluctance on their part to potential changes. For this very reason, the key problem of proper implementation of competency-based human resources management is the common acceptance of its principles.

Among the most important factors that positively influence the possibility of introducing a competency system are employee involvement, administration, and its control. Awareness and willingness to apply recommendations based on the implemented system daily are also necessary. In modern organizations, a competency-based system is treated as a "common good" (Schuster & Zingheim, 1992, p. 184).

The condition for the correct implementation of a competency-based system is to ensure the appropriate level of resources (financial and human). Both quantitative and qualitative deficits related to employees may result in the necessity of additional training or additional recruitment, which entails additional costs of implementing the system. However, the most common problem is the lack of financial resources, mainly those that may surprise the management of the organization, for example, increased costs of salaries and related charges and administrative costs (Sienkiewicz, Trawińska-Konador, 2013, p. 165).

Another major problem is that the effects of the competence management system are spread over time, which often causes conflicts of interest and interaction with other systems. All the more so because the introduction of new solutions is always associated with a sense of uncertainty and threat for employees (Centkowska 2014, pp. 10-11).

4. Discussion of the results of our own research

The research was conducted using a survey method, in which 128 respondents took part, of whom 83 provided correctly completed surveys. Analysis of the results allowed for the formulation of conclusions regarding the effectiveness of various approaches to competency management. The main research problems concerned supporting the development of competencies, developing human resources to implement one's competitive strategy, measuring constructive elements of intellectual capital, assigning employees individual skills necessary to implement the company's strategic goals, identifying and developing capabilities that develop in the company over time, and creating, sharing, transferring, and modifying knowledge in the organization—Table 6.

Table 6. Key approaches to competency management in the surveyed entities

No	Question	Suggested answers	Answers	
			number	%
1.	Does your company support the renewal and development of competencies?	Yes, as a learning organization	30	36.14%
		NO	36	43.38%
		I have no opinion	17	20.48%
2.	Do you plan, organize, supervise, and develop human resources to implement your strategy or improve your competitive position?	Yes, through strategic human resources management	43	51.81%
		NO	27	32.53%
		I have no opinion	13	15.66%
3.	Do you measure constructive elements of intellectual capital?	Yes, through intellectual capital management	23	27.71%
		NO	51	61.45%
		I have no opinion	9	10.84%
4.	How do you assign individual skills needed to achieve strategic goals to employees?	through individual competencies	47	56.63%

		through skill management	36	43.37%
		other, what?	0	0.00%
5.	How do you identify and develop capabilities that have competitive value and grow within the company over time?	through competency-based strategic management,	35	42.17%
		by observation	31	37.35%
		by analyzing the results of work	17	20.48%
6.	How do you create, share, transfer, and modify knowledge in the organization?	using a knowledge management system	14	16.87%
		through training	34	40.96%
		using an appropriate motivation system	35	42.17%

Source: own study based on the conducted surveys

In the area of supporting competence development, only 36% of surveyed companies declared that they conduct such activities, and as many as 64% were of the opposite opinion or were unable to comment on this matter. Planning the development of human resources to implement one's strategy looks slightly better. Such activities are conducted, through strategic human resources management, by over half of surveyed companies (52%). Intellectual capital management is declared by only 28% of surveyed companies; as many as 61% are of the opposite opinion, and 11% have no opinion in this respect. Individual skills are assigned to employees by defining individual competencies (57%) and by managing skills (43%).

Developing skills that have competitive value and develop in the company over time is implemented through strategic management based on competencies (42%), by observation (37%), and to a lesser extent by analyzing work results (21%). The majority of surveyed companies create, share, transfer, and modify employee knowledge using an appropriate motivation system (42%), as well as through training (40%); only 17% of managers notice the knowledge management system.

5. Discussion

Implementing methods to support the development of competencies would contribute to increased efficiency and improved quality of work performed. However, this requires appropriate preparation of specialists, which may be a financial barrier, which most of the surveyed companies were unable to cope with. Supporting the development of competencies can also be done more simply and cheaply. It is about building special internal relations in the company, consisting of expanding the repertoire of their competencies by learning from each other. Such an approach (educational constructivism) is worth recommending due to the low costs of its implementation and, at the same time, improving the organizational culture in the company (Wach-Kąkolewicz, 2015, pp. 90-91).

The market economy modifies the orientation of an individual towards improving their qualifications, including acquiring new competencies. An important place for creating pro-development orientations should be employers who, by supporting employees, increase their work efficiency, which contributes to better implementation of the company's strategy (Różański, 2014, pp. 84-85). The majority of the surveyed entities noticed this regularity and applied it in practice.

Intellectual capital management means changes in immeasurable resources. According to A. Stosik and M. Kowalewski (2011, p. 254), currently there is a period of intellectual resources of an organization in the form of a factor determining management success. Even though the basis for managing a virtual, learning, or self-reconstructing organization is intellectual capital, the companies studied do not notice it, although in practice one can notice the existence of certain features of learning organizations. Firstly, these companies improve the processes of their activities thanks to the greater knowledge of employees. They often operate based on the processes of eliminating errors and supporting team and organizational learning (Hudson, 1993, p. 17).

Developing the ability to perform professional work enables employees to self-fulfill, support themselves and their families, and lead a decent existence in all dimensions of life, and also brings measurable benefits for the company. (Sienkiewicz, Trawińska-Konador, 2013, p. 9). Strategic management, which integrates the main goals, policies, and sequences of the company's activities into a coherent system based on competencies, allows for selecting and arranging resources into a valuable composition that considers employee competencies and the company's shortcomings, as well as anticipated changes in the environment (Kałkowska et al. 2010, p. 13). Such advantages are well interpreted by the entities studied.

When the knowledge management system means system integration and is part of internal organizational processes, then knowledge starts to create added value for the company (Kłak 2010, p. 62). Apparently, the companies surveyed do not yet notice these benefits; hence, they focus more on motivating and training employees, which is not a glaring mistake. Probably, with time, these companies will start to appreciate the knowledge management system more.

Conclusion

The research results confirm the thesis that competency management plays a key role in motivating employees, allowing for the improvement of their engagement and adaptation to the requirements of the labor market. Competence management, based on well-thought-out models and strategies, is the foundation of organizational effectiveness in the construction industry. The research conclusions can be the basis for further work on improving human resources management systems in the context of a dynamically changing labor market.

The analysis of concepts and approaches in the area of competency management, especially in the context of construction companies in Wielkopolska, provides valuable information on the current state and future of this key process in human resources management. This study identifies five stages of the competency management process, including identification, allocation, acquisition, mobilization, and development of competencies. The analyzed approaches, such as competency-based management and the concepts of a learning

organization, have shown that skillful management of competency development affects work efficiency, motivation, and employee engagement, which has achieved the first part of the research objective stated at the beginning. The second part of the research objective concerned key approaches to competency management. This objective was achieved on the example of construction companies located in the Piła region in Wielkopolska.

As a result of the conducted research, it can be noticed that despite the growing awareness of the importance of competencies in organizational processes, many companies struggle with difficulties in the form of ineffective competency management systems and low support for the development of their own human resources.

The identified problems, such as insufficient investment in competence development, lack of systemic approaches to knowledge management, and limited number of organizations using modern concepts of strategic human resources management, indicate the need to intensify activities in this area. Enterprises should strive to create environments that support learning, discovery, and development of their employees' competencies, which will help not only to increase the effectiveness of operations but also to build a competitive advantage in the market.

It is also necessary to strengthen communication between employees and management in parallel, which will allow for better identification of individual competence needs and adaptation of development strategies to them. Taking care of human capital, treated as a strategic resource, should become a priority for managers, which, combined with modern knowledge management methods, will help to better adapt competencies to changing market needs and customer expectations.

The future of competency management in organizations requires constant adaptation to dynamic market conditions and an active search for innovative ways to use human potential. It is becoming necessary not only to implement theory into practice but also to shape an

organizational culture that will support the development and adaptation of competencies in the pursuit of efficiency and success in a complex business environment.

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