



Assessing the Relationship between Competencies and Personal Qualities towards Organizational Performance

Anum Shafeera Amdan, Ahmad Zam Hariro Samsudin, Norliya Ahmad Kassim

School of Information Science, College of Computing, Informatics, and Mathematics,
Universiti Teknologi MARA, 40150, Puncak Perdana Campus, Shah Alam Selangor, Malaysia

Afisha86@yahoo.com; ahmadzam@uitm.edu.my; dnrliya@yahoo.com
Tel: 011-31084486

Abstract

This study examines the relationship between librarian's competencies and personal qualities towards the organization's performance. There are three competencies' dimensions described in this study, namely the technical skills, human skills, and conceptual skills. Conversely, the ten personal qualities dimension of librarians are achiever, able to take control, self-awareness, innovate, risk taker, open-minded, responsible, social, courteous, and ambitious. A questionnaire was used as the main instrument in gathering data, and a total of 634 respondents were involved in this survey. A survey instrument with a seven-point interval scale was built around nine competencies and ten personal qualities variables.

Keywords: Competencies; personal qualities; organisational performance; Industrial Revolution 4.0

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1.0 Introduction

Malaysia as a developing country is shifting way forward dashing into the Industrial Revolution 4.0 transformation with the advancement. Over the past ten years, much concern on Library 3.0 has been expressed by librarians. It offers a great opportunity to reintegrate librarians into the information value chain. Additionally, it produces an engaging user experience that is real, compassionate, experiential, passionate, and interactive. Library 3.0 offers information services based on what users intend, not what they say, by utilizing artificial intelligence. Before becoming obsolete, artificial intelligence (AI) must match customer expectations (Gaudio et al., 2020). As a result, intelligent libraries do not only match words to user requests. Chigwada & Chicita (2021) described libraries as being affected by the seismic technological changes that have arisen from the 4th industrial revolution and stated that librarians should develop their skills to be able to remain relevant in the industry.

It is not easy to foresee the future. However, by looking at the current state of academic libraries, a test is needed to measure the accuracy of previous projections to some extent. The first step in determining the abilities and personal attributes that will be required of librarians is to understand the direction in which they are evolving. Personal qualities can be defined as personal attributes, values, traits, and attitudes. In the literature, words such as personal traits, personal attributes, non-cognitive qualities, personal characteristics and non-academic elements are frequently interchanged. In this study, personal qualities refer to ten qualities dimension of librarians which are achiever, able to take control, self-awareness, innovative, risk taker, open minded, responsibility, sociability, courteousness, and ambition.

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Exhaustive implementation of Library 4.0 practice across diverse areas of library operations and supported by IT systems to enable quick selection for better productivity and quality. Changes in the environment will constantly occur, and these changes will have an impact on librarians' roles, career opportunities, self-image, motivation, and even survival. The growth of Web 4.0 and Library 4.0 for future services, as well as the preparation of Malaysian academic university libraries for Library 4.0, are topics of discussion among librarians (Sharif, 2021). The detected and analyzed information technology facilities may be used by libraries for the following generation. Additionally, this will help the library and the performance of university libraries as a whole.

2.0 Literature Review

Competency, development, and assessment are described as reliable indicators of job success in the organization (Wong, 2020). The competency is used as the benchmark for evaluating librarians. The three dimensions of competencies for librarians in this study include technical skills, human skills, and conceptual skills.

Personal quality is a person's behaviour, thoughts, emotions, and motivations when interacting with people. Knowledge, skills, and talents that contribute to the career of information professionals and librarians are referred to as personal qualities. It is necessary to do a job or task successfully. It is critical to define capabilities and personal qualities as roles, identify training and development opportunities, and evaluate performance.

The constant changes in the workplace, the nature of the work itself, and the advancement of technology will undoubtedly call for a workforce with advanced knowledge in the relevant fields, high skills, and good attitudes. The development of new technology transforms the way work is done and results in a change in the workforce demand from one of low skill to one of high competence. The function of technology and information processing will be altered (Amir, Bunawan & Yahaya, 2018).

As emphasized by Livia (2018), in this rapidly changing world, librarians are faced with obstacles that they have to accept in certain conditions. The performance of an organization depends on both the competencies and personal qualities of the librarians. Professionals in the field of library and information science (LIS) are now expected to hold several jobs that call for a range of abilities.

A digitally competent workforce can help reinforce the fundamental pillars needed to mobilize digital innovations to revolutionize the economies, societies, and governments in Malaysia. These pillars include news, commercial products, and e-government services (Bashir & Miyamoto, 2020). The trend of combining traditional classroom instruction with online learning options is becoming more prevalent in educational institutions (Rudestam & Schoeholtz, 2010; Adeoye, 2020).

Technology has been used and invested in more quickly, which has changed in library education. Librarians are to help the students to adopt 21st-century learning standards and practices in the library. In an attempt to execute, lead, and engage with the new learning processes, these changes require a range of behaviours, including creativity, competence, awareness, and dependability (Almas & Machumu, 2021).

3.0 Methodology

This study is delimited to the issues of competencies and personal qualities practices in public universities and libraries in Malaysia. It focused on the three dimensions of competencies and personal qualities of a librarian. The respondents chosen in this study are senior and professional librarians in Malaysia. Descriptive research with a quantitative method is used to collect the data. This research is both descriptive and exploratory. The objective of this study is to examine the relationship between librarians' competencies and personal qualities in organizational performance. Accordingly, the following hypotheses were tested:

H1: Competencies are significantly related to Satisfaction.

H2: Competencies are significantly related to Accomplishment. H3: Competencies are significantly related to Transformation. H4: Personal Qualities are significantly related to Satisfaction.

H5: Personal Qualities are significantly related to Accomplishment. H6: Personal Qualities are significantly related to Transformation.

Interviews and discussions with lecturers and librarians at five (5) Research Universities in Malaysia on the issues related to the topic of research. Personal interviews were carried out on 8th April 2019 to get primary data for this research study. A set of structured questionnaires was developed covering a diversity of competencies and personal qualities toward organizational performance among academic librarians in Malaysia. The questionnaires were pre-tested, and a pilot study was conducted by distributing the questionnaires based on five respondents at the PTAR library. Upon receiving feedback from the pilot study, minor alterations were made to the questionnaires. The questionnaire was sent for actual study to all twenty (20) public university libraries via email using Google Forms to selected librarians at 20 public university libraries in Malaysia. The respondents are academic librarians from grades S41, S44, S48, S52, S54, and JUSA C.

4.0 Findings

4.1 Demographic Profile

Table 1 presents the demographic profile of the respondents. Out of the 240 respondents, 68 were females, and 172 were males. The age category of 35-39 years, 80 people (33.3%), is the highest compared to other age categories, and less than 24 years old are the

lowest as many as one people (0.4%). Meanwhile, 174 of the respondents are from grade S44, and the minority are from grade JUSA. For the highest education level, 58.8% have Master's degrees, and the lowest percentage is 1.3% which is a Doctorate.

Table 1. Demographic Profile

Demographic Data		Frequency	Percentage (%)
1. Gender	Male	68	28.3%
	Female	172	71.7%
2. Age of Working Experience	<24	1	0.4%
	6-10	38	15.8%
	11-15	94	39.2%
	16-20	61	25.4%
	21-25	26	10.8%
	26-30	11	4.6%
	55-59 years old	9	3.8%
3. Grade	S41	42	17.5%
	S44	147	61.3%
	S48	32	13.3%
	S52	14	5.8%
	S54	4	1.7%
	JUSA C	1	0.4%
4. Highest Education Level	Bachelor's Degree	95	39.6%
	Master's Degree	141	58.8%
	Doctorate Degree	3	1.3%

4.2 Reliability Analysis

Table 2 presents the reliability analysis using Cronbach's alpha that was performed on 70 questionnaire items. All scales are considered reliable if the value is 0.70 or higher. As shown in Table 2, there are six dimensions and twelve subdimensions. The results show that the entire instrument has high reliability for further analysis. It was determined that respondents were aware of responding to all the questionnaire items.

Table 2. Summary of Reliability Analysis

Dimensions	Variables	Number of items in a component	Cronbach Alpha
Technical Skills	Computer Skills	4	0.882
	Library System Skills	6	0.928
	Overall	10	0.984
Human Skills	Creativity Skills	5	0.964
	Communication Skills	5	0.974
	Managing Conflict Skills	5	0.976
	Overall	15	0.977
Conceptual Skills	Organizational Skills	5	0.968
	Strategic Thinking Skills	5	0.979
	Innovative Skills	5	0.978
Problem-Solving Skills		5	0.966
	Overall	20	0.984
Competencies		45	0.987
Personal Qualities		10	0.954
Organization Performance	Satisfaction	5	0.939
	Accomplishment	5	0.956
	Transformation	5	0.952
	Overall	15	0.964

4.3 Relationship between competencies dimension and organizational performance dimension

To investigate whether the competencies dimension is significantly related to organizational performance which comprises technical skills, human skills, and conceptual skills, correlation analyses were performed. This section focused on correlation analyses to determine the relationships, if any, between variables of competencies and organization performance. As the variable values were found to be normally distributed, the analyses were carried out using Pearson Coefficient Correlation, a parametric correlation tool. The summary statistics of the correlation analyses are presented and are discussed in Table 3 to Table 6 as follows: -

Table 3. Summary Statistics of Correlation Analysis between Satisfaction, Competencies, and Personal Qualities

Dimension	Sub dimension	Satisfaction	
		Pearson Coefficient of Correlation (r)	p-value
Technical skills	Computer skills	0.612	0.000**
	Library system skills	0.564	0.000**
	Overall	0.607	0.000**
Human skills	Creativity skills	0.652	0.000**
	Communication skills	0.583	0.000**
	Managing conflict skills	0.613	0.000**
	Overall	0.669	0.000**
Conceptual skills	Organization skills	0.690	0.000**
	Strategic thinking skills	0.702	0.000**
	Innovative skills	0.648	0.000**
Competencies	Problem-solving skills	0.694	0.000**
	Overall	0.738	0.000**
Personal qualities		0.725	0.000**
		0.786	0.000**

** Significant at 0.01

4.4 Relationship between Technical Skills and Satisfaction

According to Table 3, satisfaction is positively and moderately correlated with computer skills ($r = 0.612$; $p < 0.01$), library system skills ($r = 0.564$; $p < 0.01$), and technical skills ($r = 0.607$; $p < 0.01$). That is, to a moderate extent, an increase in satisfaction is associated with an increase in computer skills, library system skills, and technical skills. This implied that the respondents believed satisfaction is the most important element and occurred more in their working organization.

4.5 Relationship between Human Skills and Organizational Performance

On the other hand in Table 3, satisfaction is positively and moderately correlated with creativity skills ($r = 0.652$; $p < 0.01$), communication skills ($r = 0.583$; $p < 0.01$), managing conflict skills ($r = 0.613$; $p < 0.01$) and human skills ($r = 0.669$; $p < 0.01$). That is, to a moderate extent, an increase in satisfaction is associated with an increase in creativity skills, communication skills, managing conflict skills, and human skills.

4.6 Relationship between Conceptual Skills and Organizational Performance

Based on Table 3, satisfaction is positively and moderately correlated with organization skills ($r = 0.690$; $p < 0.01$), innovative skills ($r = 0.648$; $p < 0.01$), and problem-solving skills ($r = 0.694$; $p < 0.01$). That is, to a moderate extent, an increase in satisfaction is associated with an increase in organization skills, innovative skills, and problem-solving skills.

4.7 Relationship between Competencies and Personal Qualities

Conferring to Table 3, it shows that satisfaction is positively and highly correlated with competencies ($r = 0.725$; $p < 0.01$) and personal qualities ($r = 0.786$; $p < 0.01$). That is, to a high extent, an increase in satisfaction is associated with an increase in competencies and personal qualities.

Table 4. Summary Statistics of Correlation Analysis between Accomplishment, Competencies, and Personal Qualities

Dimension	Sub dimension	Accomplishment	
		Pearson Coefficient of Correlation (r)	p-value
Technical skills	Computer skills	0.559	0.000**
	Library system skills	0.513	0.000**
	Overall	0.554	0.000**
Human skills	Creativity skills	0.599	0.000**
	Communication skills	0.552	0.000**
	Managing conflict skills	0.601	0.000**
	Overall	0.554	0.000**

	Overall	0.635	0.000**
	Organization skills	0.616	0.000**
	Strategic thinking skills	.0659	0.000**
	Innovative skills	0.620	0.000**
Conceptual skills	Problem-solving skills	0.658	0.000**
	Overall	0.690	0.000**
Competencies		0.676	0.000**
Personal qualities		0.653	0.000**

** Significant at 0.01

4.8 Relationship between Technical Skills and Accomplishment

Table 4 shows that accomplishment is positively and moderately correlated with computer skills ($r = 0.559$; $p < 0.01$), library system skills ($r = 0.513$; $p < 0.01$), and overall technical skills ($r = 0.554$; $p < 0.01$). Hence, to a moderate extent, an increase in accomplishment is associated with an increase in computer skills, library system skills, and overall technical skills. This showed that the librarians performed at least basic skills and requirements for technical skills.

4.9 Relationship between Human Skills and Accomplishment

Furthermore, Table 4 shows that accomplishment is positively and moderately correlated with creativity skills ($r = 0.599$; $p < 0.01$), communication skills ($r = 0.552$; $p < 0.01$), managing conflict skills ($r = 0.601$; $p < 0.01$) and the overall human skills ($r = 0.635$; $p < 0.01$). Thus, to a moderate extent, an increase in accomplishment is associated with an increase in creativity skills, communication skills, managing conflict skills, and overall human skills.

4.10 Relationship between Conceptual Skills and Accomplishment

On the other hand, Table 4 shows that accomplishment is positively and moderately correlated with organization skills ($r = 0.616$; $p < 0.01$), strategic thinking skills ($r = 0.659$; $p < 0.01$), innovative skills ($r = 0.620$; $p < 0.01$), problem-solving skills ($r = 0.658$; $p < 0.01$) and the overall conceptual skills ($r = 0.690$; $p < 0.01$). Hence, to a moderate extent, an increase in accomplishment is associated with an increase in organization skills, strategic thinking skills, innovative skills, problem-solving skills, and overall conceptual skills.

4.11 Relationship between Competencies and Personal Qualities

Table 4 shows that accomplishment is positively and moderately correlated with competencies ($r = 0.676$; $p < 0.01$) and personal qualities ($r = 0.653$; $p < 0.01$). As such, to a moderate extent, an increase in accomplishment is associated with an increase in competencies and personal qualities.

Table 5. Summary Statistics of Correlation Analysis between Transformation, Competencies, and Personal Qualities

Dimension	Sub dimension	Transformation	
		Pearson Coefficient of Correlation (r)	p -value
	Computer skills	0.449	0.000**
Technical skills	Library system skills	0.454	0.000**
	Overall	0.468	0.000**
	Creativity skills	0.564	0.000**
	Communication skills	0.473	0.000**
Human skills	Managing conflict skills	0.555	0.000**
	Overall	0.577	0.000**
	Organization skills	0.579	0.000**
	Strategic thinking skills	0.605	0.000**
	Innovative skills	0.560	0.000**
Conceptual skills	Problem-solving skills	0.606	0.000**
	Overall	0.635	0.000**
Competencies		0.604	0.000**
Personal qualities		0.585	0.000**

** Significant at 0.01

4.12 Relationship between Technical Skills and Transformation

Table 5 shows that transformation is positively and moderately correlated with computer skills, ($r = 0.449$; $p < 0.01$), library system skills ($r = 0.454$; $p < 0.01$), and overall technical skills ($r = 0.468$; $p < 0.01$). Thus, to a moderate extent, an increase in transformation is associated with an increase in computer skills, library system skills, and overall technical skills.

4.12 Relationship between Technical Skills and Transformation

Table 5 shows that transformation is positively and moderately correlated with computer skills ($r = 0.449$; $p < 0.01$), library system skills ($r = 0.454$; $p < 0.01$), and overall technical skills ($r = 0.468$; $p < 0.01$). Thus, to a moderate extent, an increase in transformation is associated with an increase in computer skills, library system skills, and overall technical skills.

4.13 Relationship between Human Skills and Transformation

Table 5 shows that transformation is positively and moderately correlated with creativity skills ($r = 0.564$; $p < 0.01$), communication skills ($r = 0.473$; $p < 0.01$), managing conflict skills ($r = 0.555$; $p < 0.01$) and the overall human skills ($r = 0.577$; $p < 0.01$). Hence, to a moderate extent, an increase in transformation is associated with an increase in creativity skills, communication skills, managing conflict skills, and overall human skills.

4.14 Relationship between Conceptual Skills and Transformation

Table 5 shows that transformation is positively and moderately correlated with organization skills ($r = 0.579$; $p < 0.01$), strategic thinking skills ($r = 0.605$; $p < 0.01$), innovation skills ($r = 0.560$; $p < 0.01$), problem-solving skills ($r = 0.606$; $p < 0.01$) and the overall conceptual skills ($r = 0.635$; $p < 0.01$). As such, to a moderate extent, an increase in transformation is associated with an increase in organization skills, strategic thinking skills, innovative skills, problem-solving skills, and overall conceptual skills.

4.15 Relationship between Competencies and Personal Qualities

Table 5 shows that transformation is positively and moderately correlated with competencies ($r = 0.604$; $p < 0.01$) and personal qualities ($r = 0.585$; $p < 0.01$). Hence, to a moderate extent, an increase in transformation is associated with an increase in competencies and personal qualities. This implied that the respondents considered all the ten personal qualities applied to all librarians in the organization.

Table 6. Summary Statistics of Correlation Analysis between Organizational Performance, Competencies, and Personal Qualities

Dimension	Sub dimension	Organisation Performance	
		Pearson Coefficient of Correlation (r)	p -value
Technical skills	Computer skills	0.560	0.000**
	Library system skills	0.514	0.000**
	Overall	0.554	0.000**
Human skills	Creativity skills	0.600	0.000**
	Communication skills	0.553	0.000**
	Managing conflict skills	0.602	0.000**
Conceptual skills	Overall	0.635	0.000**
	Organization skills	0.617	0.000**
	Strategic thinking skills	0.660	0.000**
Competencies	Innovative skills	0.620	0.000**
	Problem-solving skills	0.659	0.000**
	Overall	0.691	0.000**
Personal qualities		0.677	0.000**
		0.653	0.000**

** Significant at 0.01

4.16 Relationship between Technical Skills and Organization Performance

Table 6 shows that organizational performance is positively and moderately correlated with computer skills ($r = 0.560$; $p < 0.01$), library system skills ($r = 0.514$; $p < 0.01$), and overall technical skills ($r = 0.554$; $p < 0.01$). Thus, to a moderate extent, an increase in organizational performance is associated with an increase in computer skills, library system skills, and overall technical skills.

4.17 Relationship between Human Skills and Organization Performance

Table 6 shows that organization performance is positively and moderately correlated with creativity skills ($r = 0.600$; $p < 0.01$), communication skills ($r = 0.553$; $p < 0.01$), managing conflict skills ($r = 0.602$; $p < 0.01$) and the overall human skills ($r = 0.635$; $p < 0.01$). Thus, to a moderate extent, an increase in organizational performance is associated with an increase in creativity skills, communication skills, managing conflict skills, and overall human skills.

4.18 Relationship between Conceptual Skills and Organizational Performance

Table 6 shows that organization performance is positively and moderately correlated with organization skills ($r = 0.617$; $p < 0.01$), strategic thinking skills ($r = 0.660$; $p < 0.01$), innovative skills ($r = 0.620$; $p < 0.01$), problem-solving skills ($r = 0.659$; $p < 0.01$) and the overall conceptual skills ($r = 0.691$; $p < 0.01$). Thus, to a moderate extent, an increase in organizational performance is associated with an increase in organization skills, strategic thinking skills, innovative skills problem-solving skills, and overall conceptual skills. This

finding is paralleled with the statement of organizational commitment that entails identification with an organization and acceptance of its goals and values as one's own.

4.19 Relationship between Competencies and Personal Qualities

Table 6 shows that organization performance is positively and moderately correlated with competencies ($r = 0.677$; $p < 0.01$) and personal qualities ($r = 0.653$; $p < 0.01$). As such, to a moderate extent, an increase in organizational performance is associated with an increase in competencies and personal qualities. Overall, it shows competencies and personal qualities are positively correlated with satisfaction, accomplishment, and transformation. All these findings support the six formulated hypotheses:

H1: Competencies are significantly related to Satisfaction.

H2: Competencies are significantly related to Accomplishment. H3: Competencies are significantly related to Transformation. H4: Personal Qualities are significantly related to Satisfaction.

H5: Personal Qualities are significantly related to Accomplishment. H6: Personal Qualities are significantly related to Transformation.

5.0 Discussion

The analysis of the relationship used Pearson's correlation coefficient as it determined the relationship between dimensions. Based on the analysis of the findings, all the dimensions were correlated with a degree of moderate to strong correlation. There were nine dimensions of competencies namely computer skills, library system skills, creativity skills, communication skills, managing conflict skills, organizational skills, strategic thinking skills, innovative skills, and problem-solving skills. These findings were supported by Calantone et. al. (2002), and Liao and Wu (2009). This implied that the interpretation of this relationship is that on average, a respondent who has a moderate perception of employees' skills and competencies is fairly likely to have a moderate perception as well.

Based on the above finding, this implied that the remaining dependent variable might be explained by other variables and not included in the study. For example, if more factors or variables are added to the model that is useful to explain the dependent variable (organizational performance), then more variation can be explained and a better model for predicting the dependent variables can be produced. The positive and significant relationships between personal qualities and organizational performance improvement measures support the findings by Kumar and Khairuddin (2006) and Hernandez (2003).

6.0 Conclusion

This study has presented the findings on the relationship between librarian competencies and personal qualities in Malaysian organization performance. It is evident from the literature examined based on previous studies of Library 4.0 that had produced personal qualities (Kassim, 2004; Tsiligiris & Bowyer, 2021). This study has filled the gap in competencies and personal qualities for librarians. The study found that the library environment requires academic librarians to have a mix of "hard" and "soft" skills and knowledge, and personal qualities that are appropriate for the organizations.

The results of the hypotheses testing also reveal that the requirements of competencies and personal qualities are almost similar among public universities and libraries in Malaysia. The explanation for this could be that the organizations are more likely to be information technology, therefore the essential competencies and personal qualities are given comparable weight and have similar criteria. While the scope of respondents only concentrates more to librarians, it is advisable to do a study on support staff in every library in Malaysia to see the impact of globalization in the future study.

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