

MODEL DESIGN OF MANAGEMENT COMPETENCES AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS FOR SMES: DIAGNOSTIC EVALUATION OF THE RETAIL SECTOR

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ABSTRACT

The changing and globalizing environment in business has resulted in increasing competition in markets and sectors. These factors drive the search for better strategic management tools that increase business results. SMEs are at the center of these changes with management needs and problems. These SMEs search for human capital with appropriate profiles and competencies that match the management requirements. The existence of this "competitive gap" is a barrier that impacts the survival and growth of SMEs. The present research proposes a model of managerial competencies and its implementation process. This model is easy to understand for SMEs, to increase the development of specific managerial competencies. The impact reduces the mortality rate and increase business as a result. The research methodology was exploratory, descriptive and propositional. The sample size was determined from a stratified probabilistic sampling with a 95% confidence level. The research instrument was applied to 371 partners and managers. The validity and reliability of the instrument was determined by Alpha de Cronbach with a score of 0.86. We propose a model of management competencies and its implementation is established with its own design. The methodology is new, non-theoretical in application, easy to understand, useful to SMEs, easy to use, and promotes the development of specific managerial competencies. The model is selected by the manager or partner. The model seeks to impact the stability and survival of SMEs in the Municipality of Saltillo in the State of Coahuila.

JEL: M10

KEYWORDS: Model of Management Competitions, SME

INTRODUCTION

Intellectual capital is an intangible organizational asset. Designing a model of managerial competencies specifically defines the profile of the human factor. It diagnoses, evaluates and develops managerial talent. The model must be dynamic, comprehensive and flexible and incorporate characteristics that are part of good management practices.

SMEs adapt to face their future. Integrating the most competent managers means the possibility of stabilizing their operation and developments in a competitive environment that requires adaptation and rapid strategic decisions. Few SMEs base their management of human capital on managerial competencies. Some authors claim (Soto. 1999, Whetten and Cameron. 2011), that today's organizations demand highly competitive management professionals not only in the administrative process and functional areas, but also in developing a holistic view of human capital including social, economic, and organizational aspects.

Managers must be aware of change, systemic thinking and possess managerial skills. Know-how is in the human factor. This human factor is intangible, and the biggest concern of organizations regardless of size or sector. The operational and managerial challenge is to resolve problems that impact business performance. OCDE (2013), in its report Latin American Economic Outlook and SME Policies for Structural Change confirms that barriers that impede the productivity growth of SMEs are very diverse.

One dimension the literature recognizes as essential to understanding the productivity of an economy is the provision of human capital and managerial competencies for the productive sector. Studies on human capital and labor markets coincide in pointing out an additional factor that must be analyzed to understand the low productivity of SMEs. This factor is the gap between the knowledge provided by the education system and the skills that are demanded by the productive sector.

Many SMEs face problems in finding managers with appropriate skills, so it can be argued there exists a skill gap that acts as a barrier to productivity growth. This phenomenon is expressed in different ways and reflects the profound heterogeneity of SMEs in Latin America. Depending on factors including size, sector or geographical location, these companies require specific skill types and have varying degrees of difficulty finding them (OECD 2013, p.142). In Mexico there are 4,410,198 formal enterprises, 95.2% are microenterprises and 4.6% are small and medium enterprises that contribute 33.6% of employment, 6% of GDP and 2% of investment. At the national level in Mexico, SMEs generate 5% of GDP and 42% of employment. (INEGI 2014).

Velázquez (2008, p.75) argues that in Mexico “at the age of 10, only 10% of companies mature, succeed, and grow.” According to Centro-CRECE, 75% of new Mexican companies should close their operations after only two years in the market. According to ECLAC (2010), SMEs are characterized by a high mortality rate. By comparison, only Argentina (93%) has a higher mortality rate than Mexico (75%) for the second year. The problem posed for this research is weak management and in particular, the lack of professionalization of SME managers in the region.

In the trade sector, most of the focus is on the manufacturing or industrial sector (Velarde, 2014, Martínez, 2010, Chinchilla 2001, Medina et al., 2012 and Delgado 2005 as quoted in Elizondo (2014). Thus, this research provides a significant contribution. We present a profile design of managerial competencies and their implementation. The data provided serves to integrate a strategic tool in the management of an SME in the trade sector. The results here will influence the mortality rate of SMEs and the stability of their financial and non-financial indicators.

The work is structured in three parts. We begin with a review of the literature. Next, we discuss the methodology used in the empirical study. The study continues with a design of the profile of managerial competencies and their implementation. The paper closes with some concluding comments.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Chronology of the Competencies Concept

Elizondo, Armenteros, Guerrero and Barquero (2012) comment on 1960s research by McClelland at Harvard University. McClelland (1973) attributed the success of individuals in their work more to the person's own characteristics and their competencies, rather than to aspects such as knowledge and skills. However, knowledge and skills are used as the main employee selection factors. This led him to look for new variables, which he called competencies, that would allow a better prediction of work performance. Therefore, competencies are linked to a way of assessing what actually causes superior performance at work rather than the evaluation of factors that reliably describe all the characteristics of a person, in the hope that some of them are associated with performance on the job (p.81). McClelland began his studies in

1953 and published his motivational theory (power, achievement and motivation) when he joined the McBer company in 1970. He studies successful diplomats and identified three significant competencies for job success: transcultural empathy, positive expectation (self-confidence) and the speed of understanding the networks on influence. McBer defines his competency model, which is fueled by the contribution of Boyatzis (1982) on his theory in his pioneering study of the competent managerial function “Competent Manager: A Model for Effective Performance”.

In the 1990s the McBer group commercialized the technique and it suffered a decade of criticism and debate in Europe and the USA. At the same time Spenser, L. and Spenser, S. (1993) presented their work on “Competences in the Work: Models for a Superior Performance”. The United Kingdom National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ) focuses its emphasis on standardization of charges from an initiative by the British government which pushes McClelland’s original idea out of hand. In Latin America the proposals of Chinchilla (1999) Psico Consult (2001) and Alles (2002) are interesting contributions. Ross, Dragonetti and Edvion (2001), as quoted in Medina et al. (2012), states that in a strategic approach to human capital, value comes from competence, attitude, and intellectual agility. Competence is the capacity that generates value through knowledge, skill, talent. Know-how constitutes the potential for the organization. Attitude is manifested in the behavior of people, in their willingness and commitment to achieve goals. Intellectual agility is the capability to adapt, innovate, and transform ideas into new and improved products, processes, and trade (p.83).

Robbins (2009), noted that managerial competencies are the set of knowledge, skills, and associated attitudes that relate to good performance of the manager. They are associated in the labor field with basic and administrative skills, which are fundamental processes learned through life and are converted into habits through organizational behavior, which motivate people to achieve results. However, there must be a rational balance for success. Nowadays, competences are understood as integral actions to identify, interpret, argue, and solve problems. These actions occur with suitability and ethics, integrating knowing, doing, and being (Tobón, Pimienta y Garcia, 2010). Vázquez (2013) states that we can summarize seven characteristics of Competences: 1.) Competencies are a set of behaviors that some people master better than others, which makes them effective in a given situation. 2.) They are personal attributes: knowledge, skills, aptitudes, character, traits, and concepts of oneself. 3.) They are causally related to actions that produce successful results. They manifest in the action through behaviors that can be observed. 4.) They are characteristics underlying the person that function as an interactive and globalizing system; as an inseparable whole that is superior and different from the sum of individual attributes. 5.) They achieve results in different contexts. 6.) Competencies represent the link between the individual characteristics and the qualities required to carry out precise professional missions. 7.) They represent dispositions to act in situations, to problems or demands of very different contexts.

PROPOSED COMPETENCIES FOR BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

SCANS (1992)

The SCANS model is a proposal relating to concern over the challenges that the new demands of the labor market makes on people with respect to the directives (Scans Report, 1992). This report was prepared by the Secretary’s Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS), which is a partnership between the Department of Education, Labor, and the Office of Personnel Management. It was based on interviews and discussions with a large group of key informants from the trade union business, education, academia, and field specialists. They were asked to identify the major areas of skills needed to get a job. They defined five competencies present in effective managers, and a foundation: 1.) Resource management: Time, money, materials and distribution, and personnel. 2.) Interpersonal relationships: Teamwork, teaching others, serving clients, deploying leadership, negotiating and working with diverse people. 3.) Information management: Search and evaluate information, organize and maintain information systems, interpret and

communicate, and use puters. 4.) Systemic understanding: understanding complex interrelations, understanding systems, monitoring and correcting performance, improving or designing systems.

Hay Mcber – Spenser and Spenser (1993)

Adams (1996) confirms that “over twenty years more than one hundred researchers have produced a total of 286 generic competition models, two-thirds are American, and the rest spread over twenty countries.” “Each model had between three and six groups or clusters with two to five competencies per group, and three to six indicators of behavior which demonstrate competence in the position.” Of this total, a comparative analysis was completed and 21 competences were obtained (1. Orientation to the Attainment, 2. Concern by Order, Quality and Accuracy, 3. Initiative, 4. Search of Information, 5. Interpersonal Comprehension, 6. Orientation to Customer Service, 7. Impact and Influence 8. Organizational Awareness 9. Relationship Establishment 10. Other Development 11. Assertiveness and Use of Positional Power 12. Teamwork and Cooperation 13. Team Leadership, 14. Analytical Thinking, 15. Conceptual Thinking, 16. Expertise, 17. Self-control, 18. Self-confidence, 19. Flexibility, 20. Organizational Commitment, 21. Other Competencies) with 360 indicators that were embodied in a behavioral dictionary for management effectiveness. From this result Hay McBer and Spenser and Spenser (1993) list 21 basic competences which integrated into 6 groups: Achievement and action, Human support and service, impact and influence, management, cognitive, and personal effectiveness.

Chinchilla (1999)

In the environment of SMEs there is always the big question of whether to train managers and administrators, due to the high turnover. However, an untrained manager or administrator will lack the habits and behaviors necessary for achievement and efficient performance of the SME. Chinchilla (2001) classifies the competences in techniques and directives. He defines the techniques as attributes or definitive traits required by an exceptional worker in a job. The directives are observable and habitual behaviors that justify the success of a person in its directive function. Managerial competences are of personal effectiveness (habits that facilitate a relation of the person with its environment such as: initiative, creativity, autonomy, discipline, concentration, self control, time management, self-knowledge, and personal change). They refer to managerial profile in the strict sense and classify them into strategic areas, because they guide economic results such as business vision, problem solving, resource management, client orientation, and network relationships effective and negotiated. Intra-techs complete intra-technical competencies such as communication, organization, empathy, delegation, coaching and teamwork. To determine what these behaviors are, it is necessary to go deeper into what the directive function means. Following the anthropological model proposed by López (2006), “the management function is to design strategies that produce economic value, developing the capabilities of its employees and joining them with the mission of the company.”

Alles (2005)

Alles (2002) states that “mental or cognitive competences include analytical thinking (information and data processing, determination of cause and effect, organization of data plans) and conceptual thinking (recognition of characteristics in complex data). The type or level of competence has practical implications for human resource planning. Competences of knowledge and skill tend to be visible and relatively superficial features. The competences of concept of self, characteristics and motivations are more hidden. They are more in the personality. Knowledge and skill are relatively easy to develop. The most economical way to do this is through training. Motivational competencies and characteristics are more difficult, from the point of view of personality, to evaluate and develop.”

Alles (2005) states that Spenser and Spenser (1993) introduce the “Iceberg Model”, where they graphically divide competences into two large groups. The easiest to detect and develop, are skills and knowledge, and the least easy to detect are the concepts of oneself, attitudes and values and the very core of the personality. In this scheme the competences are central and superficial.

The Application of a Level Competency Scheme

Alles (2003) defines degrees and proficiency profiles, providing an explanation of each of the levels used as follows: A.) Higher top performance. According to Spencer and Spencer there is a standard deviation above the average performance. Approximately one in ten people reach the top level in a work situation. B.) Well, above the standard. C.) Minimum required for the position but within the required profile. Grade C in this rating relates to Spencer and Spencer’s definition of effective performance: this generally means a “minimally acceptable level of work. It is the point that an employee must reach; otherwise, he would not be considered competent for the position. It does not indicate an undervaluation of competition. D.) Unsatisfactory. This level does not apply to the profile description, since this competence is not necessary for the position, it is not necessary to indicate the level.

As a subject develops to more demanding levels, the required competencies or their specific importance changes depending on the position for the Executive Levels of people with experience and work history. Alles (2003) established the following competences: Development of team, modalities of contact, media skills, leadership for change, strategic thinking, empowerment, dynamism-energy, portability/cosmopolitanism/adaptability, public relations, customer orientation, team, results orientation, integrity, initiative, entrepreneurial, and competition of the castaway.

Model of Competencies of Psico Consult and the Competence Wheel (2001)

The competence model has integrated into multidimensional and contextualized variables. Competences are multidimensional because they involve the conjugation of knowledge (theoretical knowledge), skills (knowing how to do, and how to bring theory to practice), and attitudes (what the person wants to do) which are contextualized because they are only observable in a determined environment and under certain conditions. Psico Consult C.A., affirms that there are benefits for the management by competences in A.) Lower costs and more production, B.) Management Advantage, C.) Motivated and committed employees, D. Increased effectiveness, E.) Facilitates changes and improves climate and F.) Greater permanence in the market.

Once the company has its own Competency Catalog and its Competency Charge Descriptions Manual, you can start applying it to all human resources sub-systems such as recruitment and selection, training, evaluation (using criteria of 360 degrees), plans of succession and others. The circular proposal called The Competency Wheel is composed of 40 competences with three classifications: technical and functional, personal, and administrative management. This defines the techniques and functions as generic and specific knowledge of the position. It defines personal as cognitive, motivation and commitment. Finally, the administrative and managerial area is communication with people, administration, and leadership. Our study of managerial competencies focuses on the latter group. Psico (2001) creates lists the following specific competencies: A.) Communication: listening, reporting, writing reports, and searching for information. B.) With people: conflict management, personal relationships, and teamwork. C.) Administrative: monitoring, effectiveness of resources, organization, and planning. D.) Leadership: people development, delegation, control, motivation, style, and leadership impact. Psico Consult C.A. (2001), argues that implementing a competency model develops organizations and therefore individuals and work teams.

Model of Cardona and García Lombardía (2009)

Cardona studied leadership in three main lines including the leader's personality, leadership styles, and relational approach. Each line includes different authors, models, theories, and proposals. Derived from this, Cardona and García Lombardía (2009) developed and defined their model and competencies as observable and habitual behaviors with a focus towards action and leading to the success of a function or task. They established that competences should be behaviors, not traits of personality, nor knowledge. They should be observable and measurable. They can be learned and developed regularly and can be part of the person's daily actions and habit forming to lead the success of a function. The model is based on the idea that a leader is not born, it is done.

Categories of competences include: business, interpersonal, interpersonal skills include communication skills, conflict, management, charisma, delegation, coaching, and teamwork. External personal competences are divided into two groups, pro activity and personal management. The first includes initiative, optimism and ambition. The second contains the skills of time management, information management and stress management. Internal personal competences are divided into two groups, personal improvement and self-government. Personal improvement has the skills of self-criticism, self-knowledge, and learning. Self-governance includes decision-making skills, self-control, emotional balance, and integrity. Cardona and Wilkinson (2009) defined business competencies as "aimed at achieving economic value for the company." These competencies are shown in the relational approach of leader characteristics through so-called "transactional", "transformational" and "charismatic" traits.

Model COMPETE (2010)

The model of Compete (2010) has a general objective of presenting new transversal competencies required by those responsible for business management in companies. The specific objectives are: A.) To diagnose the needs of qualifications related to transversal competences. B.) Identify the basic competences of special interest for good business management not rooted in the reference group. C.) Detect and define new necessary and specific transversal competencies of the managers in the framework of the new economic model based on knowledge management. D.) To propose formative actions for the qualification of the collective in these new competences. E.) Develop a Guide for the development of basic skills of business managers.

The model COMPETE (2010), is approached from a qualitative perspective, and the following techniques have been applied: Documentary analysis, interviews of experts, interviews of critical incidents and discussion groups. It defines those responsible for business management in companies by differentiating between to levels, depending on the managerial functions performed: Level 1 is High Management, with functions to formulate global objectives, and the determination of strategic plans for the achievement of these objectives. Level 2 is Intermediate Direction, with functions of technical and operative type, relative to the fulfillment of the plans and programs, that would correspond to Intermediate Controls.

COMPETE (2010), presents a diagnosis of the qualification needs of those responsible for business management. Based on a methodology based on competences and management styles, this work identifies deficiencies in the rooting of these competences as evidenced by the repertoire of behaviors that define them. Each competency is analyzed in the behaviors associated to each of the competencies. The work analyzes the level of rooting of new transversal competences in those responsible for business management. COMPETE (2010), are the strategic competencies that present a greater degree of development, in the two managerial profiles analyzed, highlighting customer orientation, negotiation and the network of relationships.

On the contrary, the competences of interpersonal character present a lower level of development in the demonstrated behaviors. Except for delegation, which presents an optimum level of performance, competences such as team management, coaching or teamwork have manifested themselves at their most basic levels. Regarding personal efficacy skills, personal change, learning, self-control, and balance with a moderate level of development are highlighted. It is necessary to emphasize that communication and time management competences presented the lowest levels and, therefore, are both deficient in their influence on improvement and development.

Table 1: Comparative Proposals of Competences Directives

| Element | Scans 1992 | Hay McBer 1993 | Chinchilla 1999 | Psico Consult 2001 | Alles 2003 | Cardona 2009 | Compete 2010 |
|--------------------------|--|--|---|---|---|--|--|
| Competency Groups | Management of means. Relationships Interpersonal. Management of Information. Understanding Systemic. Domain technological. | Achievement and Action. Support and Human. Services Impact and Influence. Management. Cognitive. Effectiveness Personal. | Internal studies. Personal Effectiveness. Strategic. | Techniques and Functions. Personals. Directives. | Cardinals. Executive Levels. Intermediate Executives Levels. Initial levels. From knowledge. Competencies | Business. Interperson les. External Personal. Internal Personal. | Strategic. Interpersonal. Personal Effectiveness. |
| Theories that Sustain it | Classical theory of Competencies Directives, leadership, behavioral psychology | Theory of Motivation of McClelland, Leadership, Psychology Behaviorist, Model of analysis Situational | Analysis Strategic, Leadership, Psychology Constructivist | Leadership, Psychology Constructivist, Analysis model Situational. Culture Organizational | Theory of Motivation of McClelland, Analysis Strategic, Leadership, Psychology, Constructivist, Iceberg Model | Leadership, Psychology Behaviorist, Model of Analysis Siutational | Theory of Motivation of McClelland, Leadership, Psychology Behaviorist |
| Methodology of building | Interview- Discussion- Identification – Definition of Competences | Motives and Social Behaviors- Applications- certification Occupational | Define the Model Selection- Performance- Development | Analysis-Design Application | Define Mission Vision- Define Competencies- Validation test- Design of Processes | Leader is made- Habits- Success labor | Forces qualitative, Analysis Documentary film, Interviews with Experts, Interviews of Critical Incidents and Discussion Groups |
| Vision of the Person | Humanistic / Social Man: Empathy of the competencies of the individual, the company and the technology | Humanistic Psychological /Social. Man: Creator, Innovative, Leader, Entrepreneur, Line up Organization with your vision | Humanistic /Social Man: Agent Exchange, Potentialize the “do” at work, Ecology of Man | Humanistic / Social Man: Evolution according to the company and the technology. | Humanistic Psychological Man: innovative, leader, Entrepreneur Owner of Competences and coefficient emotional | Humanistic / Social Male: Leader, Successful managerial performance due to the relational approach | Humanistic / Social Male: Evolution according to the company and the technology |
| Competencies | The competencies Work managers needed for job success based on experience and training | The Competencies are in people, experts are needed to identify them. | Observable and habitual behaviors that make possible the success of a person in its | The abilities demonstrated by the person for contribution to the satisfaction of the customer and | Competence refers to the personality characteristics, resulting in behaviors, that | Competencies must be behaviors, be observable and measurable; learn and | Those behaviors observable and usual justify success of a person in their |

| | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|---|---|---|--|
| | | The high direction defines the performance upper and specific criteria | directive function | the improvement continues the processes of quality and efficiency | generate a successful performance in a job | develop regularly; and lead to the success of a function | activity or function |
| Total Competencies / Directive Competences | 14/11 | 18/08 | 18/13 | 40/17 | 16/10 | 14/10 | 16/16 |
| Country of Origin | United States | United States | Spain | Venezuela | Argentina | Spain | Spain |
| Main feature of the proposal | Competencies Labor generated by specialists, Entrepreneurs and Academics | Functional environment In order to Certify | Strategic Based on selection of staff and your development | Flexible to organizational culture and practices with a focus on quality, efficiency and organizational performance. Design of unique models from key processes | Levels Organizational From one Redefinition of Mission and vision | Flexible model that gives special relevance to the self-knowledge of the competences and gives importance to the aptitude and the attitude of the competition | High Levels Address and Intermediate Address |

Table 1 shows a summary of seven proposals for competency models based on the most important elements of each proposal: Competence Groups, theories that support it, construction methodology, personal vision, definition of Competence, total competences and the sum of managerial competencies, country of origin and main characteristic of the proposal. Table 1 shows that of the seven model proposals: three have three groups of classification of the competences, two models have six groups of competences, two proposals have five and six groups respectively. Of the seven proposals we find in the classification of Competences similar between Psico Consult, Chinchilla, and COMPETE. The classification of Alles is a proposal of Competences by Levels with groups towards innovation (knowledge) and technology (e-competencies). Four models are supported theoretically in the conductivist approach and three in the constructivist approach. Source: authors

Each proposal has its own construction methodology such as: Interview, discussion, identification, definition of Scans, motives and social behaviors, applications, occupational certification (Hay McBer), define model, selection, performance, and development (Chinchilla), analysis, design, application (Psico Consult), define mission and vision, define competencies, validation test, process design (Alles), the leader is made, habits and work success (cardona) and qualitative approach, documentary analysis, interviews to experts, critical incidents and discussion groups (Compete). The vision of the person is based on a social and humanistic view of man. The country of origin of the proposals are three from Spain, two from the United States, and one each from Argentina and Venezuela. With respect to the Construction Methodology, Psico Consult has a friendly process considering only three phases: diagnosis, design, and application. Psico Consult has the main characteristics of being flexible to the organizational culture and practices with focus of quality, efficiency, and organizational performance and to design unique models from key processes. For the purposes of our research, the Psuco Consult classification allows us to diagnose and propose a design of directive competences for the commerce sector.

In addition to the models previously studied, we detail the specific competences of other authors to find similarities as shown in Table 2. Each model proposes specific managerial competencies. We believe that the models of Directed Competences Investigated and Psico Consult offer a greater number of specific Directives Competences (17). Gutierrez, Villanueva, and Casas present 15 of these competencies; Charlo and Núñez 14; Chinchilla, Thorton, and Byham 13. Specific Customer Service directives are mentioned in 11 models studied and Coaching is referenced in 10 models.

As shown in Table 2, Customer Service and Coaching are Specific Directives competences considered by a significant number of authors. We add them to the 17 previously selected Psico Consult (2001) model competencies which forms a new proposal of 19 Competencies Specific directives (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Proposed Management Skills for SMEs

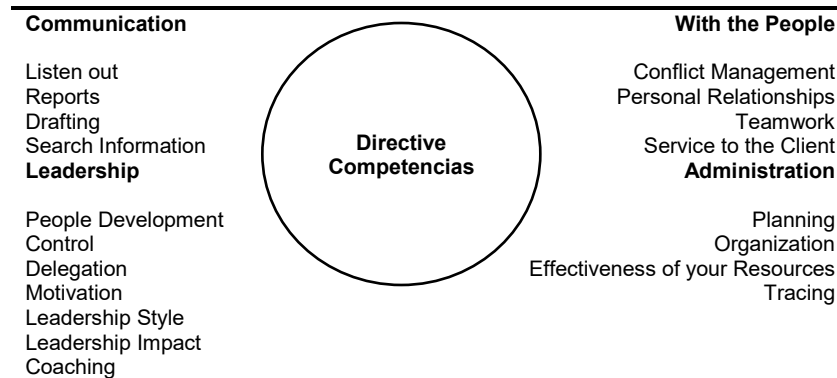


Figure 1 presents the proposal for managerial competencies, for the SMEs sector Commerce. These competencies were based mainly on the model of Psico Consult (2001) which forms a new proposal of 10 Specific Directives in four generic competences. The design of the proposal establishes the relationship of competences in generic axes and allows the adaptation of SMEs in the sector based on their own needs. The success of the proposal is that it is flexible and adaptable. Source: the authors.

METHODOLOGY

This section describes the origin and basis of the exploratory, descriptive, and proactive work of the research. Our goal is to design a methodology that is easy to understand and adaptable to SMEs. We believe this approach will promote the development of specific directives that will reduce the mortality rate and improve stability of firms in the region.

The research uses specified study subjects and locations, instrumented reliability, subject study population, sample size. We describe the instrument and the basis of its design along with variables. We use descriptive techniques and Chi-square tests for the processing of sampling data. Finally, the sample size is calculated.

The research process was based the problem and objective of the study. The bibliography of the authors that are referenced was selected and investigated. Thirdly, the research was designed and instrumented to validate the sample to study subjects. The exploratory stage was application of 371 surveys that produced a response rate of 90%. Using this data we describe and assess managerial competencies. The proposal section involves designing a profile of managerial competences for the SMEs sector, retail trade. The result of the literature review and the application of the instrument led to the design of a proposal for Directive Competencies and its evaluation. We specifically focus on the commerce SMEs sector in Saltillo, Coahuila and its methodology of implementation.

The research developed here is an exploratory, descriptive, and prepositive analysis based on the following justification. Exploratory research “is the research design that has as primary objective to facilitate a greater penetration and understanding of the problem faced by the researcher” (Malhotra, 1997). It is descriptive because “it is the type of conclusive research that has as main objective the description of something, generally the characteristics or functions of the problem in question” (Malhotra, 1997). The research seeks to deal with research lines of faculties that depart from a diagnosis. Set goals and strategies are designed to reach them to solve problems at the local and global level (Del Rincon, 1995).

The study subjects were owners, managers, and supervisors of firms in the SMEs sector, trade, in Saltillo, Coahuila. Participants were asked their perception of each question. We use a Likert scale from 1 (unfavorable) to 5 (favorable). A total of 371 surveys were applied directly from January to April 2017. Reliability of the instrument was identified using Cronbach’s alpha coefficient. We obtained a value of 0.80 which is considered a good value. Values of 0.60 to 0.70 are considered the lower limit of acceptability (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, and Black, 1999).

Table 2: Comparison of Specific Competences of Different Authors

| Generic Competences | Specific Competences | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------|--|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|--------------|-----------------|--|----------------|------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| | Thornton and Byham (1982) | Dulewicz (1989) | McCauley (1989) | Bouygues (1989) | Scans (1992) | Spenser and Spenser-Hay McBer (1993) | Chinchilla (1999) | Psico Consult (2001) | Alles (2002) | Urdaneta (2005) | Cardona, García Lombardía y Wilkinson (2009) | Compete (2010) | Gutiérrez (2010) | Villanueva and Casas (2010) | Charlo and Núñez (2012) |
| Communication | 1 Listen | X | | | | | X | X | | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| | 2 Reports | X | | | X | | X | X | | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| | 3 Drafting | X | | | X | | X | X | | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| | 4 Search Information | X | | | X | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Administrative | 5 Conflict Management | X | X | X | X | | X | X | | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| | 6 Personal Relationships | | X | X | X | X | | X | X | | | X | | | X |
| | 7 Teamwork | | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | |
| | 8 Tracing | | | | | X | | X | | | | | | | |
| | 9 Effectiveness of your Resources | | | | X | | X | X | | | X | | X | X | |
| | 10 Organization | X | | | | | | X | | X | | | X | X | X |
| Leadership | 11 Planning | X | | | | | | X | | X | | | X | X | |
| | 12 People Development | X | X | X | X | X | | X | X | X | | | X | X | X |
| | 13 Delegation | X | | | | | | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| | 14 Control | | | | X | | X | X | X | | | | | | X |
| | 15 Motivation | | | | | | | X | | | | | | | X |
| | 16 Leadership Style | X | | | X | | X | X | X | X | | | X | X | X |
| | 17 Leadership Impact | X | | | X | X | X | X | X | X | | | X | X | X |
| | 18 Service (orientation) to the Client | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | X |
| | 19 Coaching | X | X | X | | | | X | | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| | 20 Strategic Thinking | X | | | | | | | X | X | | X | X | X | |
| | 21 Entrepreneur | | | | | | | | X | | | | | | |
| Considered by other models | 22 Organizational Commitment | | | | | | | | | | | X | | | |
| | 23 Change and Learning | X | X | X | | | | | | | | X | X | X | X |
| | 24 Problem analysis | X | | | | | | | X | | | X | X | X | X |
| | 25 Time management | | | | X | | | | | | X | X | | | X |
| | 26 Decision making | X | | | X | | | | | | X | X | X | X | |
| | 27 Stress Management | | X | X | | | | | | | X | | | | |
| | 28 Achievement orientation | X | X | X | | | | | | | | | X | X | |
| | 29 Technology Domain | | | | | X | | | | | | | | | X |
| | 30 Networking | | | | X | X | | | | | X | | | | |

The first column of Table 2 describes the generic competences (communication with people, administrative, leadership and competencies referenced by other models. These models include Thornton and Byham (1982), Dulewicz (1989), McCauley (1989), Bouygues (1989), Scans (1992), Spenser and Spenser-Hay McBer (1993), Chinchilla (1999), Psico Consult (2001), Alles (2002), Urdaneta (2005), Cardona, García Lombardía and Wilkinson (2009), Compete (2010), Gutiérrez (2010), Villanueva and Casas (2010), and Charlo and Núñez (2012). Each competition marked with an X was considered by each respective author. The most referenced articles are used to integrate the specific proposal of skills in our study. Source: The authors.

The study population consists of all SMEs in the retail trade sector, which includes 10,605 economic units in the Municipality of Saltillo in the State of Coahuila (INEDI, 2017). Sample size estimation was obtained

from a stratified probabilistic sampling with a 95% confidence level by maximum variance. The instrument used included socio-demographic control variables such as age, gender, education, position, seniority, size, stage, and subsector. We used descriptive techniques and Chi square tests to determine the level of significance with a 90.95 and 99% confidence.

Based on the literature review, we developed an instrument based on the Model Competence Wheel of Psico Consult A.C. (2001). We added validated questions to the MSME Strategic Development questionnaire regarding the use of formal internal control systems and sectorial environment (FAEDPYME, 2009, Medina 2011, Martinez Serna, et al, 2012 and Elizondo 2014), and business performance based on variables proposed by Quinn and Rohrbaugh (1983). Table 3 shows the total variables of this study.

The result of the literature review and the instrument application led to the design of a proposal for Directives and its Evaluation for the SME sector commerce in Saltillo Coahuila and its methodology of implementation.

Table 3: Operationalization of Study Variables

| Variable | Indicators | Items | Alpha* |
|---------------------------|---|-------|--------|
| Communication Skills | Listening, executive reports, writing, and information search | 12 | 0.887 |
| Competition with People | Conflict Management, Personal Relationships, Teamwork, and Customer Service | 12 | 0.894 |
| Administrative Competence | Monitoring, resource effectiveness, organization, and planning | 12 | 0.899 |
| Administrative Competence | People development, delegation, control, motivation, leadership style, leadership impact, and coaching | 21 | 0.942 |
| Sectoral Environment | Facility to enter new companies, competition among companies in the sector, bargaining power of customers, bargaining power of suppliers and substitute products | 5 | 0.694 |
| Company Profiles | Quality of the product, efficiency of internal processes, organization of personnel tasks, customer satisfaction, speed of adaptation of the needs of the markets, image of the company and its products, market share, profitability, productivity, motivation of the workers, satisfaction of the workers, permanence of the personnel, assistance and punctuality of the personnel | 13 | 0.899 |
| Internal Control | Quality of service, cash flow, budgets, economic-financial analysis, internal audit and quality system | 6 | 0.859 |

Cronbach's alpha is between 0.7 and 0.9 in 6 variables so it is be at an acceptable level for most variables. According to Hair, Anderson, Tatham and Black, (1999), the sectorial competitive environment obtained a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.69 to 0.70 which is considered the lower limit of acceptability. Table 3 shows the operationalization of study variables used in the instrument design. It is based on the Competence Wheel of the Model of Psico Consult A.C. (201). We add validated questions from the MSME Strategic Development questionnaire regarding the use of formal internal control systems and sectorial environment alongside business performance based on variables proposed by Quinn and Rohrbaugh (1983).

Table 4 shows the population of the study. The sample includes all SMEs in the retail trade sector (10,605) of the Municipality of Saltillo in the State of Coahuila (INEGI, 2017). The sample size estimation was obtained from the stratified probabilistic sampling, with a 95% confidence level by maximum variance.

$$n = \frac{Npq}{(N-1)B^2} + pq \quad (1)$$

$$n = 371$$

Owners, managers, and supervisors of SMEs in the retail trade sector of the municipality of Saltillo in the State of Coahuila, were asked to participate in the study. They indicate their perception of each question with a scale of 1 (total disagreement) to 5 (total agreement), 1 (poor) to excellent (5), deficient (1) to efficient (5), and little use (1) to much use (5). The total number of surveys distributed was 371, in the period from January to April 2017. Reliability of the instrument was examined using the Cronbach Alpha coefficient. The research instrument included socio-demographic variables (age, sex, schooling, respondent's rank, seniority in the company, size, and subsector). Descriptive statistical techniques were used and Chi square tests determined the level of significance with 90, 95, and 99%, confidence.

Table 4: Population of Total Economic Units and Application So Sampling of SMEs Retail Trade Sector of The Municipality of Saltillo of the State of Coahuila

| Sub-Sector | Activity | No. Economic Units | Sample |
|--------------|--|--------------------|------------|
| 461 | Groceries, food, drinks, ice and tobacco | 4,994 | 157 |
| 462 | Self-service and departmental | 570 | 25 |
| 463 | Textiles, costume jewelry, clothing accessories and footwear | 1,162 | 28 |
| 464 | Health care | 432 | 28 |
| 465 | Stationery, recreation and other articles of personal use | 1,440 | 43 |
| 466 | Household appliances, computers, interior decoration and used articles | 813 | 21 |
| 467 | Hardware store and glasses | 558 | 40 |
| 468 | Motor vehicles, spare parts, fuels, and lubricants | 628 | 25 |
| 469 | Internet commerce, catalogs, print, television, and alike | 7 | 4 |
| Total | | 10,604 | 371 |

Table 4 shows the retail trade sector with subsectors in the second column. The number of economic units in the grocery, food, beverage, ice and tobacco (4,994), stationery, leisure, and other personal items (1,440) and textiles, costume jewelry, clothing and footwear (1,162) sub-sectors are significant. These sub-sectors represent 71.63% of the total economic units. The sample size of the investigation (371) was obtained from stratified probabilistic sampling, with a confidence level of 95% by maximum variance.

RESULTS

Demographic Description

The characteristics of the owners, managers, and supervisors that make up the sample are as shown in Table 3 which indicates: 49% are owners, 31% are seniors of 1 to 4 years experience, 47% have a university degree and 10% have a graduate degree. The sample is mostly male (55%) and with an age of less than 40 years (49%) and 40 to 55 years (40%). Among those employed as a manger or director, 64% are male. Some 30% of the sample have experience in management positions from 1 to 4 years. 28%, from 5 to 9 years and 30% with more than 10 years. SMEs in the retail trade sector who participated in the empirical study include the subsectors grocery, food, beverages, ice and tobacco (42%), stationery, recreation and other articles for personal use (12%) and hardware and glassware (11%). Company stage of life is more representative with 61% in maturity, 40% consolidated and 33% in the development stage.

The overall leadership competency has the top ten specific competencies rated into four categories: motivation, control, leadership style, and delegation. On the other hand, generic competition with people has four specific competencies of the first ten most valued competences: customer service, conflicts, personal relationships and teamwork. Least valued are the general competence of communication: reports, writing and search for information. Respondents perceive the specific competences reports, writing, information search, people development and coaching as unimportant. This may be related to the numerous communication and leadership problems that create a limited culture of management skills in communication and leadership in SMEs allocated in the retail trade sector.

These findings allow us to infer that SMEs in the retail trade sector prefer managers, supervisors, and directors with specific managerial competencies that resolve conflicts, with a focus on customer service, promoting teamwork and the ability to relate easily. Firms want a leadership style that impacts the performance of results with motivation, control, and delegation. Recall that Chinchilla (2001) concluded

that companies look for managers capable of creating teams, developing collaborators, and having qualities of leadership and motivation.

Table 5: Self-Evaluation of Competences Directives of Partners, Managers and Supervisors of SMEs Sector Retail Trade

| Directive Competencies | | | Place | |
|------------------------|------------------------|-------|---------|----------|
| General | Specific | Media | General | Specific |
| Communication | Listen out | 3.96 | 11 | 3.62 |
| | Reports | 3.31 | 19 | |
| | Drafting | 3.50 | 18 | |
| With the People | Search Information | 3.71 | 17 | 4.02 |
| | Conflicts | 4.03 | 6 | |
| | Personal relationships | 4.00 | 8 | |
| | Teamwork | 3.96 | 10 | |
| Administrative | Customer Service | 4.10 | 2 | 4.00 |
| | Tracing | 4.05 | 5 | |
| | Resource Effectiveness | 3.93 | 14 | |
| | Organization | 4.07 | 3 | |
| Leadership | Planning | 3.94 | 13 | 3.97 |
| | People Development | 3.89 | 15 | |
| | Delegation | 3.98 | 9 | |
| | Control | 4.06 | 4 | |
| | Motivation | 4.11 | 1 | |
| | Leadership Style | 4.00 | 7 | |
| | Leadership Impact | 3.95 | 12 | |
| Coaching | 3.83 | 16 | | |

Table 4 shows the self-assessment of managerial competencies of SME owners, managers, and supervisors in the retail trade sector. The 3 best self-evaluated specific competences are: motivation, customer service and organization. Management competences from lower to higher are: reports, writing and search for information. The generic communication competence communication turned out to be the one with the lowest self-evaluation.

Economics, technological, social, and environmental trends, among others, as well as those of the industrial sector play a significant role during the process of strategic planning and its medium- and long-term projection. This occurs especially in conditions of turbulence, instability and risks. For this reason, it is important to identify the perception of managers and/or directors of MSMEs based on the model of the five competitive forces of Porter (2008 p.25). Porter's five competitive forces (1980 p.350) is a powerful analysis methodology that allows us to identify the main characteristics of the competitive environment in which SMEs develop their activities. It allows research on the structure of the industry, pointing out the opportunities and threats that SMEs face when competing within their specific environment.

López, Medina, and Armenteros (2016), in their empirical research of 704 entrepreneurs or directors/managers of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MIPYME) found sector competition equaling 3.95, negotiation power of the client 3.51, entry of new companies 3.40, substitutes 2.71, and bargaining power of suppliers 2.68. The similarity in most of the results regarding competitive forces of the sectorial environment in the retail trade sector is inferred. In relation to the study of Lopez, Medina and Armenteros (2016), and our research, as shown in Figure 2, we observe a similarity in the variables. We find a high competition among the companies of the sector (3.95 to 3.80), bargaining power of the clients (3.51 to 3.58) and ease for new businesses (3.40 to 3.57). Similarity is observed in most of the results regarding the competitive forces of the sectorial environment of the State of Coahuila with the Municipality of Saltillo in the retail trade sector. When measuring the perception of SME business results, shown in Table 6, we find that quality of service, customer satisfaction, profitability, and productivity are the ways in which SMEs, in their sectorial environment, face competition.

Figure 2: Perceptions of the Competitive Sector Environment SMEs Sector Retail Trade in Saltillo Coahuila

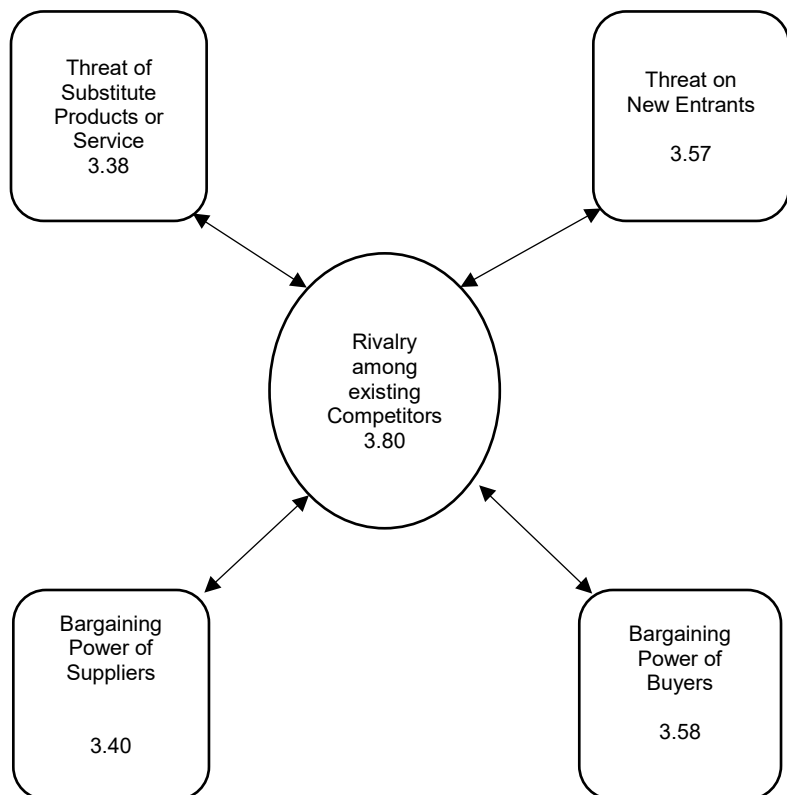


Figure 2 shows that companies view the sector’s most competitive factor is “there is high competition among companies in the sector” (3.80), followed by the “negotiating power of customers” (3.58) and the possibility of new businesses (3.57). The competitive factor less valued by SMEs in the retail sector refers to the “ease of creating substitutes for products offered in the sector” (3.38) and the bargaining power of suppliers” (3.40).

Table 6: Perception of Business Results of SMEs in the Retail Sector

| Axos | Results | Media | Desv. Tip. | Error Standard | Variance |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------|------------|----------------|----------|
| Internal Processes | Quality of service | 4.51 | 0.683 | 0.035 | 0.467 |
| | Internal operating process | 4.09 | 0.903 | 0.047 | 0.815 |
| Open System | Organization of personnel tasks | 4.09 | 0.874 | 0.045 | 0.765 |
| | Customer Satisfaction | 4.33 | 0.746 | 0.039 | 0.556 |
| | Rapid adaptation of market needs | 4.16 | 0.818 | 0.042 | 0.669 |
| Rational System | Image of the company and its services | 4.22 | 0.821 | 0.043 | 0.674 |
| | Participación en el mercado | 4.18 | 0.850 | 0.044 | 0.723 |
| | Cost effectiveness | 4.24 | 0.801 | 0.042 | 0.642 |
| Human Means | Productivity | 4.25 | 0.787 | 0.041 | 0.619 |
| | Motivation of workers | 3.96 | 0.928 | 0.048 | 0.861 |
| | Satisfaction of workers | 3.97 | 0.940 | 0.049 | 0.883 |
| | Permanence of staff | 3.83 | 1.174 | 0.061 | 1.379 |
| | Assistance of punctuality of staff | 3.90 | 1.048 | 0.054 | 1.099 |

The perception of participants regarding their business performance compared to competitors ranges from regular (3) to good (4). “Quality of service”, “customer satisfaction”, “profitability” and “productivity” have higher values. Those with less weight are: “staff retention”, “attendance and punctuality”, “motivation” and “worker satisfaction”.

The model of Quinn and Rohrbaugh (1983) is used by FAEDPYME (Foundation for the Strategic Analysis and Development of SMEs in Latin America). FAEDPYME is a consortium of 80 universities to investigate the influence of business leadership, strategy, and competitive success. Studies of great depth and scope in Columbia, Spain, Mexico, Panama and Latin America confirm the acceptance of the results presented here.

Analysis by Means of Variables

We are interested in identifying any association between the level of development of managerial competencies with the stage of maturity, use of internal controls, gender of director or general manager and performance business. We use a Chi square test for this purpose with a level of significance of 95%.

H1-the Level of Development of Managerial Skills is Associated with the Stage of Maturity of the SME

We consider the growth, development and consolidation states of maturity. The FAEDPYME report Colombia (2012), taking into account the age of the company (Young: less than or equal to 10 years of creation), show finding contrary to that presented according to the size of the company. We observed that 50% of the evaluated variables have significant differences. These variables are: it has more efficient internal processes (young people: 3.8) and it has more satisfied clients (mature: 3.9). Other variables do not present significant differences. This implies that self-perception in the face of competition is not determined by the age of the MSME.

Table 7: Management Skills and the Stage of Maturity of SMEs

| Competition Directive Generic | Results | Chi Square | Gl | S.I.G. Asisntot |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|------------|----|--------------------|
| Communication | Listen out | 12.650 | 8 | 0.0243 |
| | Reports | 20.039 | 8 | 0.022** |
| | Drafting | 18.447 | 8 | 0.219 |
| | Information Search | 22.719 | 8 | 0.008*** |
| With the People | Conflicts | 14.129 | 8 | 0.155 |
| | Personal relationships | 6.137 | 8 | 0.636 |
| | Teamwork | 11.536 | 8 | 0.198 |
| | Customer service | 9.030 | 8 | 0.390 |
| Administration | Tracing | 16.808 | 8 | 0.131 |
| | Resource Effectiveness | 11.060 | 8 | 0.211 |
| | Organization | 15.613 | 8 | 0.085* |
| | Planning | 18.444 | 8 | 0.022** |
| Leadership | People Development | 18.416 | 8 | 0.066* |
| | Delegation | 8.856 | 8 | 0.413 |
| | Control | 13.876 | 8 | 0.162 |
| | Motivation | 11.770 | 8 | 0.263 |
| | Leadership Style | 17.157 | 8 | 0.033 |
| | Leadership Impact | 9.285 | 8 | 0.324 |
| | Coaching | 7.205 | 8 | 0.546 |

Level of Significance 0.01 ***0.05 **0.1*

This table specifies a value of significance with $\alpha = 10\%$. The remaining values are >0.10 . Therefore, H1 is not generally accepted. There is a relationship with significant values in "information search, reporting, planning, organization, and development of people". Table 7 confirms that maturity stage and managerial competencies do not have significant relation to most of the variables. Stages of maturity of SME considered are: growth, development, and consolidation.

H2- the Level of Development of Managerial Competencies is Associated with the Use of Internal Controls of the SME

Next, we consider internal controls (Table 8). Specifically, we consider: quality in service, cash flow, budgetary, control, economic and financial analysis, internal audit, and quality systems.

The FAEDPYME Colombia report (2012) states that in a competitive environment, it is essential that companies use all instruments related to information management that are within their reach. Accounting generates information on the aggregation of expenses and costs, as well as the economic and financial position of the firm through the analysis of the financial statements. The access and use of different forms of financing can limit the competitiveness of the company. For this reason, it is essential that companies use economic-accounting techniques, such as cash flow, internal audit, cost accounting, annual budgeting, and economic and financial analysis.

Table 8: The Level of Development of Managerial Competencies and the Use of Internal Control

| Directive Competences | | Asymptotic Signalization | | | | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|----------|----------------|----------|----------------|
| Generics | Specifications | Generics | Specifications | Generics | Specifications | Generics | Specifications |
| Communication | Listen out | 0.020** | 0.011** | 0.012** | 0.019** | 0.003*** | 0.008*** |
| | Reports | 0.036** | 0.011** | 0.000*** | 0.000*** | 0.000*** | 0.000*** |
| | Drafting | 0.129 | 0.006*** | 0.001*** | 0.000*** | 0.018** | 0.003*** |
| | Search Information | 0.032** | 0.002*** | 0.013** | 0.000*** | 0.000*** | 0.000*** |
| With the People | Conflicts | 0.000*** | 0.000*** | 0.023** | 0.010** | 0.011** | 0.002*** |
| | Personal relationships | 0.001*** | 0.000*** | 0.002*** | 0.028** | 0.008*** | 0.002*** |
| | Teamwork | 0.000*** | 0.000*** | 0.000*** | 0.000*** | 0.001*** | 0.000*** |
| | Customer Service | 0.000*** | 0.018** | 0.006*** | 0.005*** | 0.116 | 0.000*** |
| Administration | Tracing | 0.000*** | 0.000*** | 0.000*** | 0.002*** | 0.001*** | 0.001*** |
| | Resource Effectiveness | 0.000*** | 0.000*** | 0.000*** | 0.000*** | 0.000*** | 0.000*** |
| | Organization | 0.085* | 0.000*** | 0.000*** | 0.002*** | 0.018** | 0.003*** |
| Leadership | Planning | 0.000*** | 0.000*** | 0.000*** | 0.000*** | 0.012** | 0.000*** |
| | People Development | 0.001*** | 0.000*** | 0.000*** | 0.002*** | 0.005*** | 0.014** |
| | Delegation | 0.003*** | 0.000*** | 0.000*** | 0.009*** | 0.200 | 0.083* |
| | Control | 0.000*** | 0.000*** | 0.000*** | 0.000*** | 0.062* | 0.001*** |
| | Motivation | 0.000*** | 0.000*** | 0.000*** | 0.001*** | 0.013** | 0.000*** |
| | Leadership Style | 0.000*** | 0.000*** | 0.000*** | 0.000*** | 0.000*** | 0.000*** |
| | Leadership Impact | 0.000*** | 0.000*** | 0.000*** | 0.001*** | 0.000*** | 0.000*** |
| | Coaching | 0.000*** | 0.001*** | 0.000*** | 0.000*** | 0.002*** | 0.000*** |

Level of Significance 0.01 ***0.05 **0.1*

This table uses a value of significance with $\alpha = 10\%$. The remaining values are >0.10 . * indicate a significant relationship between the level of managerial competencies and the use of internal controls of SMEs. We find significance in the 98% of the variables, so H2 is accepted. We infer there exists a relationship between the level of specific managerial competencies and the use of internal controls in “teamwork”, “monitoring”, “resource effectiveness”, leadership style, leadership impact and coaching. It follows that as SMEs require the use of internal controls, management needs to use those specific managerial competencies in controlling their business performance.

H3-the Level of Leadership Development Is Related to the Subject’s Gender

Next, we consider the gender of the director or general manager. Independent of the gender of the director or general manager, it is necessary to strengthen managerial. Perception in self-evaluation, by gender, of the managers and directors is valued with a scale that ranges from 4.14 to 2.64 for males and 4.06 and 3.17 for females. Table 9 and Table 10 show that the level of managerial competencies is average for both genders, with the four highest specific managerial competencies for the males being: customer service, organization, conflict management and control. Less valued skills are: coaching, reporting, and writing.

Table 9: Comparison of the Use of Internal Controls Saltillo-Colombia-Spain

| Internal Controls | Saltillo Coahuila | Colombia | Spain |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|----------|-------|
| Quality of Service | 4.23 | 4.10 | 2.81 |
| Cash Flow | 4.14 | | |
| Budget Control | 4.04 | 4.00 | 2.96 |
| Economic - financial analysis | 3.75 | 4.10 | 3.04 |
| Internal audit | 3.55 | 4.20 | 2.51 |
| Quality Systems | 3.95 | 4.10 | 2.81 |

Table 9 shows a comparison of our data with FAEDPYME Columbia (2012) and FAEDPYME Spain 2012: Considering the studies of FAEDPYME Columbia and Spain (2012) we infer there are significant differences in means (Table 9) with Spain in each of the Internal Controls. However, when comparing with Colombia data the differences are significant in internal auditing and financial economic analysis. The weakness in the use of the Internal Controls is a competitive disadvantage that diminishes the efficiency in the SMEs.

Table 10: The Level of Development of Managerial Competences Is Related to the Gender of the Subject

| Directive Competences | | Media | | | Competition Place | | Sig. | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|---------------------|---------|------|-------------------|-------|------|----------|
| Generics | Specifications | Women | Generic | Men | Generic | Women | Men | Asisntot |
| Communication | Listen out | 3.94 | 3.55 | 3.99 | 3.68 | 6 | 12 | 0.303 |
| | Reports | 3.17 | | 3.41 | | 19 | 18 | 0.108 |
| | Drafting | 3.45 | | 3.55 | | 18 | 17 | 0.348 |
| With Th People | Search Information | 3.65 | | 3.77 | | 17 | 16 | 0.538 |
| | Conflicts | 3.94 | 3.94 | 4.11 | 4.09 | 6 | 3 | 0.106 |
| | Personal relationships | 3.90 | | 4.08 | | 10 | 6 | 0.318 |
| | Teamwork | 3.89 | | 4.02 | | 12 | 10 | 0.465 |
| | Customer Service | 4.04 | | 4.14 | | 2 | 1 | 0.110 |
| Administration | Tracing | 4.02 | 3.94 | 4.09 | 4.05 | 3 | 5 | 0.626 |
| | Resource Effectiveness | 3.86 | | 4.00 | | 13 | 11 | 0.210 |
| | Organization | 3.99 | | 4.14 | | 4 | 1 | 0.180 |
| | Planning | 3.90 | | 3.98 | | 10 | 13 | 0.500 |
| Leadership | People Development | 3.78 | 3.90 | 3.92 | 3.82 | 15 | 14 | 0.323 |
| | Delegation | 3.93 | | 4.07 | | 8 | 7 | 0.674 |
| | Control | 3.98 | | 4.11 | | 5 | 3 | 0.204 |
| | Motivation | 4.06 | | 4.04 | | 1 | 8 | 0.392 |
| | Leadership Style | 3.91 | | 4.04 | | 9 | 8 | 0.226 |
| | Leadership Impact | 3.84 | | 3.92 | | 14 | 14 | 0.097 |
| | Coaching | 3.78 | | 2.64 | | 15 | 19 | 0.249 |
| Level of Significance | | 0.01 ***0.05 **0.1* | | | | | | |

This table uses a value of significance with $\alpha = 10\%$. The remaining values show >0.10 indicating no relation between the level of managerial competencies and the gender of the SME subject in 100% of the variables. Thus, H3 is not accepted. Table 10 shows similarity in the specific competences that are better valued in women and men. The first five with higher performance are: customer service, follow-up, organization and control. Lowest performance scores are for reports, writing, and information search.

For females, the highest specific competences are: motivation, customer service, follow-up, and organization. The least valued are: reports, writing, and information search. Charlo (2012) in her study "The directive woman in the great Spanish company: profile, competencies and styles of management" concludes that the characteristics that stands out in women are responsibility, followed by tenacity and perseverance, empathy towards subordinates and communicative skills. In men, however, the most outstanding feature is the ability to exercise command, followed by responsibility, tenacity, and perseverance and discipline. Therefore, men and women agree on the importance of responsibility, tenacity, and perseverance. However, while a man stands out for his need for command, the woman does so by dealing with his subordinates.

The Proposal of Profile of Managerial Competences of SMEs of Commerce

The main objective of defining a competency profile is to implement a new style of management in the company to effectively and integrally manage the human factor in the organization. Ernest and Young Consultores (1998), lists the following objectives: A.) Improving and simplifying the integrated management of human resources; B.) The generation of process of continuous improvement in the quality and allocation of human resources; C.) The matching of the human resources management with the strategic lines of business; D.) The linkage of the manager in the management of his human resources; E.) Contribution to the professional development of individuals and the organization in a changing environment, and F.) Decision-making objectively and with homogenous criteria.

Alles (2004) clearly defines the general characteristics in the successful implementation of a competency-based human resource management system as: A.) The system is applicable and not theoretical; B. Understandable by all members of the organization; C.) Useful for the company; D.) Reliable; E.) Easy to use, and F.) That as a whole allows the professional development of people.

The most complex features of a position are competencies according to Spenser and Spenser (1993) and their Iceberg Model explains that knowledge, skills, and abilities are more on the surface and are easier to detect, but attitudes and values, the concept of oneself and the deeper personality traits, are below the surface and are more difficult to assess.

Profile of Directive Competencies and Their Degrees: The word profile according to the dictionary of the Real Academia Española defines in Geometry represents a body cut real or imaginary by a vertical plane. In painting an apparent contour of the figure, represented by lines that determine the shape of the form and conduct as the considerations in the conduct or social deal. *Generic Competition* is the standard definition of the competition with aspects of communication with people, administration, and leadership. *Specific Skills* based on the proposed classification of competences are: Listening, writing of reports, reports, information search, conflict management, personal relations, teamwork, customer service, planning, effectiveness of resources, follow-up, people development, control, delegation, motivation, leadership style, leadership impact, and coaching.

Levels, Grades, and Associated Behaviors: A tiered competency scheme was applied, in which three grades have been differentiated for each competency: Grade A: High, superior performance, Grade B: Optimal, above standard and Grade C: Minimum required for the position, but within the required profile. *Management Competencies by degrees:* allow the respondent to be placed in specific behaviors for further evaluation. From each generic competency the specifics by degree are described.

Evaluation of Analysis and the Staff Competences

The reflection of this section points to the conceptual meaning of Performance Evaluation. Chiavenato (1994) argues performance evaluation is a systematic assessment of the performance of each person in the position or potential future development. Any evaluation is a process to stimulate or judge the value, the excellence, the qualities of some person. The evaluation of individuals can be carried out using several approaches. Hartle (1993) notes that: Performance Evaluation must be conceived as a process or set of processes that seek to establish a shared knowledge about what is to be achieved and how it will be achieved with the participation of the management that increases the chances that it can be achieved.

Table 11: Description of Performance Levels

| Performance Level | Description |
|-------------------|--|
| Excellent | Outstanding in performance of the directive competition and maintains its effectiveness. Obtains extraordinary achievements against others in action and responsibility. |
| Domain | Regularly exceeds expected achievements. It is above average but needs to develop more in its directive competition |
| Regular | What you expect in this competition. T fulfilling the main demands of the position. Professional and efficient with training, experience, and knowledge. |
| Low | Below average in directive competition. Reflects performance that does not fully meet the requirements of the position. Needs improvement and development of Competencies. |
| Poor | Below the requirements of his position and his performance in terms of quality, quantity, and achievements. |

This table describes the levels of performance of Directive Competencies used in our research. Determining the level of action with respect to generic and specific Competences is of utmost importance. Establishing the terminology will facilitate the application of the instrument designed. The performance levels shown are the starting point for assessing the observable behavior of managers. Source: The authors

Validation of the Competences Directives

This section points to the conceptual meaning of Performance Evaluation. McGregor (1994) reiterates that most people need and want feedback regarding their performance. This allows development of a plan to correct any deficiencies that the evaluation has discovered and allow them to reinforce things the

subordinate does correctly. Finally, evaluation can and should be central to the career planning process in the company. It provides a good opportunity to review the person’s career plans in the light of their demonstrated strengths and weaknesses. Each level is valued by the evaluated and the evaluators who will give the result of performance. For each specific competition, 3 affirmations are used that value behavior performance: A.) The average of the evaluation 360/180 degrees will be determined. B.) A maximum and minimum of performance is determined by directive competence and C.) The difference between the result of the valuation and the corresponding maximum is the area of development that shows the gap of the Specific Directive Competition

Implementation of the Competency Profile and its Evaluation

Figure 3 shows the final proposal of a design of Directive Competences and its Evaluation according to a process that will allow a dynamic and flexible profile. Performance grades enable users to find three SME performance scenarios for partners, managers and supervisors. Describing observable behaviors is the starting point. Behaviors are valued from 360 or 180 degrees. The process involves affirmations with a Likert scale to obtain a diagnosis (personal, departmental, branch, business unit and hierarchical level). This allows validating and applying the design of managerial skills and its evaluation.

Figure 3: Proposal for the Design of Managerial Competences and Their Evaluation of SMEs

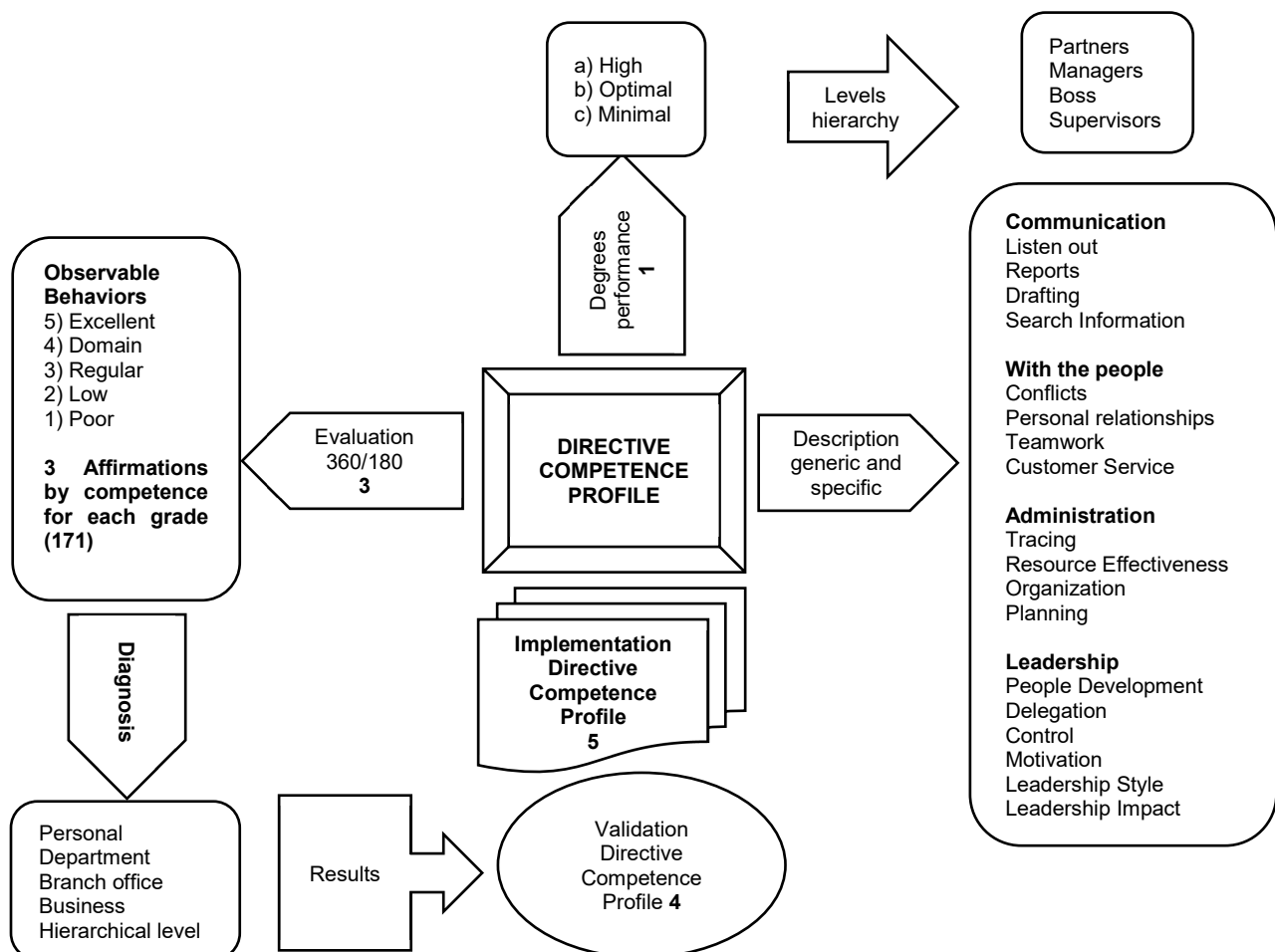


Figure 3 shows the design of managerial competences and its evaluation for SMEs in five stages. This model allows for the selection of performance levels to describe specific and generic managerial competencies, evaluate observable behaviors and obtain a personal, departmental, branched, company or hierarchical level to finally validate and implement the profile of managerial competencies. Source: the authors

Intervention Methodology for the Implementation of the Competency Profile for SMEs

The proposal to the managers of the intervention is to implement the profile design of managerial competencies in Step 1 of the proposed methodology (Figure 4). This seeks to identify the most valuable intangible asset to be identified with specific competences by locating its actual performance and future growth. The partner or manager will establish bases in the format designed for the beginning of the methodology, selecting the specific Competences Directives (Step 2).

Hamel and Orahala (1995) recognize “in any case, in order to manage the stock of essential competencies of a company, senior executives must be able to disaggregate essential competencies into their components, to specific individuals with a talent specific”. Hamal and Prahalad (1995) affirm that one has to imagine the future, but also to construct it. They note the need for more than annual or incremental planning is recognized, and a strategic architecture is required, to provide a blueprint for building competencies needed to dominate future markets. Selecting and identifying specific directives (Step 2) is the first line in the design of a strategic architecture for SMEs.

A level of competency scheme is applied in which three grades are differentiated for each competency (Step 3): Grade A: High, superior performance; Grade B: Optimal, above standard; Grade C: Minimum required for the position, but within the required profile.

Figure 4: Intervention Methodology for the Implementation of the Profile of Managerial Competences for SMEs

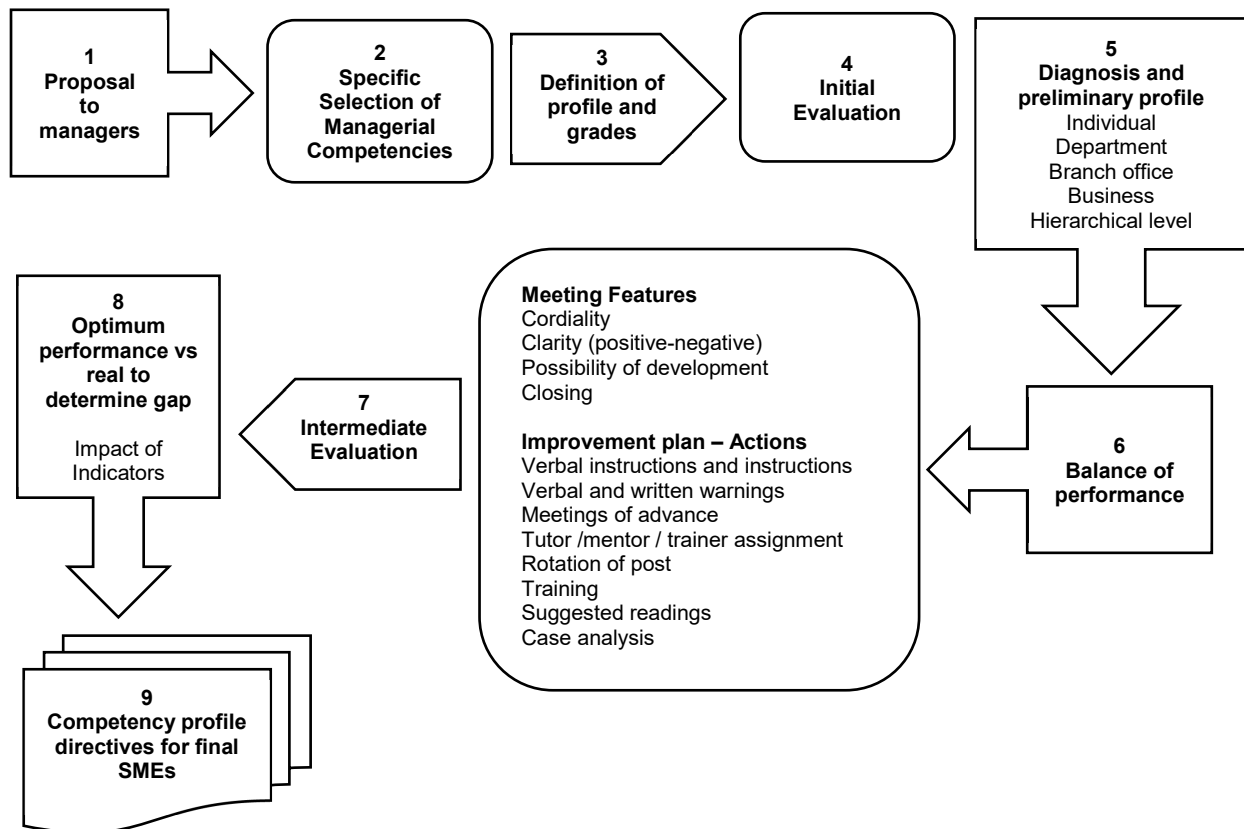


Figure 4 shows the intervention methodology for implementation of the profile of managerial competences for SMEs. The origin is the proposal to management. The company selects specific competences necessary, with their degrees, for an initial evaluation. This allows diagnosis and determination of an initial profile. The evaluated manager must know his performance balance with an improvement plan in his specific competencies. A midterm evaluation is then applied to determine the performance gap. Improvement of the competences impacts the business indicators. Source: the authors.

The degrees we established in our research are: Grade A: High, superior performance, Grade B: Optimal, above standard. Grade C: Minimum required for the position, but within the required profile

For the initial assessment of competences (Step 4), three characteristics must be considered: (Cardona and Garcia, 2009). A.) Relevance- Measure what you want to measure, B.) Reliability- Which responds to reality and is testable, C.) Standardization- Making it possible to compare them (between individuals and temporarily for each individual).

The proposal of 19 managerial competences, as shown in Figure 1, to be evaluated in our model is specifically established as being relevant in our trade subsector. When applying the approach we can confirm that they are specific directives with different intensities (contrastable) that impact successful SME management. We standardize them to observe the changes in performance between individuals and in general.

Describing Management Competencies by degrees is the diagnosis of General and Specific Directives Competences based on performance. Evaluation 360 is the instrument integrates several opinions that allow the analysis of performance through personal charts, departmental, branches, hierarchical levels and total organization. The result will provide a starting point for a future development plan of Competencies. In the case of SMEs with reduced staff, the 180-degree evaluation can be applied. This derivation is particularly useful for organizations with small staffs. Firms might graduate to from 180-degree to 360-degree evaluation.

When applying the initial evaluation, we obtain the diagnosis and preliminary profile. Step 5 describes the diagnosis and preliminary profile. Progress meetings (Step 6) suggested by Alles (2005) are key to the success of the performance assessment interviews. Alles (2005) provides an analytical guide to the characteristics of improvement meetings. The intermediate evaluation (Step 7) determines the gap covered in the implementation and evaluation process according to Romero (2008 p.6). Step 7 determines the optimal performance and compares it against actual performance. Step 8 establishes a tailored, dynamic and flexible profile utilizing characteristics noted by Cardona and Garcia (2009). Finally, to finish Step 8, the impact of indicators is determined according to Quinn and Rohrbaugh (1983). This process defines the definitive Profile of Directive Competences of the SME.

CONCLUSIONS

The research provides a model of managerial skills and its implementation for SMEs in the retail trade sector, in Saltillo Coahuila. The research was exploratory, descriptive, and propositional. Stratified probabilistic sampling was applied, with a confidence level of 95%. A total of 371 surveys were applied to partners, managers and supervisors in the retail trade sector. The self-assessment of managerial competencies establishes that motivation, customer service, organization and control are highly valued competencies. Specific managerial competences with the lowest evaluation are: reports, report search and coaching, and generic communication skills. Retail sector SMEs require partners and managers to perform their management with knowledge and motivational behaviors, customer service, and organize activities with monitoring, conflict resolution and measure results through control. Leadership of managers and partners is based on personal relationships, delegation and teamwork.

The competitive environment shows high competition among companies, where customers are key because of their bargaining power. The least valued competitive factor is the bargaining power of suppliers. The competitive environment is confirmed at an average level by the results obtained with values from 2.68 to 3.95.

Business performance in the retail trade sector is perceived to meet the forces of competition with quality service, customer satisfaction, profitability and productivity. The variables with greatest weakness are: staff retention, attendance, punctuality, motivation, and worker satisfaction. We infer that problems in the retail trade sector are: stability, high turnover, satisfaction, and motivation of the personnel. A strong association was found between managerial competencies and the use of internal controls (98%), confirming that managers and owners with greater managerial competence use more internal controls for the management and operation.

The result of the literature review led to the design of a proposal for Directives Competences and its implementation methodology. Owners and managers require innovative proposals to manage and operate SMEs as more business development and performance of management competencies are achieved.

An implementation methodology is established with its own design that provides a non-theoretical, easy-to-understand application methodology. This methodology is useful to SMEs because it is easy to handle and promotes the development of specific Directives. The methodology is selected by the Director or partner, which is important because of the growing role that this sector has had in the last twenty years. The classification of nineteen specific Directives provides a starting point for the management and development of the human factors in SMEs.

This research updates theoretical references and meaningful data for stakeholders. There are many related topics available for future research. These topics include: A.) Implementing a cases study of the proposals develop here, B.) Recognizing new management profiles by management competencies and their evaluation, and C.) Development of talent in the manager from the evaluation of competences.

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