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Incompetent Professionalism and Professionalised Incompetence

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ABSTRACT:-

Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi's Head, Heart & Hand approach emphasises developing a child's "head, hand, and heart" in education.

This approach links mental sharpness (Head), emotional intelligence (Heart), and physical skills (Hands) to learning skill improvement, and attitude modification.

Today's busy and sedentary society has reduced trust between employees and bosses, resulting in a lack of understanding and empathy. Confidence between supervisors and employees can be damaged when employers engage in policing activities to determine competency. Lack of understanding and critical thinking might impair decision-making.

Practical knowledge is true knowledge, but theoretical knowledge is essential.

Theory models or frameworks describe or anticipate what will happen, while practice applies knowledge to a specific situation. Theory-practice relationships show how to use evidence to grasp important ideas, explain decisions, and plan for the future.

Colleges and universities are responsible for teaching theory, while we can put it into practice in the workplace. A person's competency is their ability to accomplish specified tasks in a given environment.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSA) and KSC models define and quantify competencies. KSA emphasises fundamentals, while KSC emphasises behavioural skills including teamwork, communication, and problem-solving. KSA emphasises "what" and "how" whereas KSC emphasises "how" and "why" of a work well done.

KSC is a more comprehensive approach since it recognises that effective performance depends on knowledge, skills, and the individual's capacity to apply those talents and interact with others.

Keywords: -Competence, Competency, Incompetent, Professionalism, Knowledge, Skills, Competency deficiency, Competency inadequacy, Imposter Syndrome and professionalised Incompetence.

Content

In the year 1797, Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi took an integrated approach to education and highlighted the importance of nurturing a child's "head, hand, and heart" as part of the educational process.

When it came to philosophy, Pestalozzi's philosophy is centred on:

- **Head-** Promotes intellectual development, critical thinking, and knowledge gain.
- **Hand:** Promoting practical skills, hands-on learning, and vocational training.
- **Heart-** Promoting emotional intelligence, empathy, and moral growth.

Pestalozzi intended to build individuals who were not only knowledgeable and competent, but also morally grounded and capable of making a positive impact on society by incorporating these three components.

This Head, Heart & Hand model connects a person's mental sharpness (Head), emotional intelligence (Heart), and physical skills (Hands) to how they learn new things, improve their skills, and change their attitudes.

Everyone in an organisation is very busy ("busy being busy") and doesn't have much time or desire to listen to people from other departments or people other than "Echo Chamber" (An echo chamber is when a leader's circle of advisors, subordinates, or even peers is mostly made up of people who agree with them and rarely disagree).

Each member of the organisation is deeply rooted in the reasoning associated with their respective functional roles. Every function is sure they know more about the business's fundamental tactical structure than the others. Over the years, the level of trust between employees and supervisors from different departments has dropped to an all-time low.

People sometimes do "policing acts"—actions aimed to watch and judge how others behave—for a number of reasons, such as figuring out who is competent and who isn't. These actions might be official, like competency tests in court, or informal, like watching a co-worker do their job.

The purpose is frequently to find out who is capable and who isn't, which is important for making smart choices about roles, responsibilities, and even legal implications. Interestingly, they are doing all this with pre-set notions/biases that they are competent enough to judge others.

Despite the fact that I had been working on the ground for the past 36 years, I was criticised in the middle of 2012 (i had around 23 years of experience at that time). This occurred when a managing director of a third-party agency questioned interview skills of my team after receiving feedback from a brand representative.

Following that, I offered an invitation to him to accompany me so that we could do some individual interviews with workers and compare the feedback that we obtained. If we conducted the interviews in this manner, my team would also be able to gain insight into the information that they were lacking during the interviews.

After completing around twenty interviews, he gave his feedback and I was taken aback by the fact that he was not able to get any inputs from workers whereas my team was able to acquire inputs on training, the excessive amount of overtime etc. In an effort to uphold his reputation, he referred to our method of conducting interviews as "conventional," despite the fact that it was significantly more effective than his approach.

Theoretical knowledge is crucial and serves as a foundation, but practical knowledge grounded in a solid theoretical framework constitutes genuine knowledge.

The theories are models or frameworks that are used in study to explain or predict what will happen. Most of the time, they are unique to a certain area and often work together or against each other.

Practice means using what you know or can do in a certain scenario. It could include talking about things you've done, talking about how you've made or built something, or thinking about what could happen in a real-life circumstance.

The link between practice and theory is crucial because it shows that you can utilise evidence to better grasp significant ideas, explain why you made a decision, and plan for future practice. The level of this relationship between theory and practice also shows how well you think critically and how much you've grown.

The "knowledge base" that one gains frequently includes both practical and theoretical components that strengthen one's professional practice.

Though universities and colleges are responsible for teaching theory, while work places (factories) are where the real practice happens. In the field of social auditing, 70-80% of professionals have never worked in factories, thus they are basing their work on what they think factory work is like.

The two types of knowledge that can be characterised are **propositional knowledge**, which is defined as "knowledge that exists regardless of direct contact with a specific situation," and **procedural knowledge**, which is defined as "information that can only be articulated through processes in a specified context with a clear aim to manage a certain situation.

Latin word "Competentia" means "has the right to speak" or "is authorised to judge."

A person's "ability or capacity to act appropriately in a given situation," or their ability to perform specific duties, is referred to as their competencies.

The comparison between 'Competency' and 'Competence'

Competency	Competence
Focus on the results	Focus on a person's behaviours
Describe the features of the area of work tasks or job outputs	Describe the attributes of the person
Constitute of the various skills and knowledge needed for performing the job	Constitute of the underlying attributes of a person for superior work performance
Not transferable as each skill and knowledge is more specific to perform the job	Transferable from one person to another
Assessed by performance on the job	Assessed in terms of behaviours and attitude

Task-oriented	People-oriented
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(SOURCE: YUVARAJ, R. (2011), COMPETENCY MAPPING –A DRIVE FOR INDIAN INDUSTRIES. International Journal of Scientific & Engineering Research, 2(8), 1-7)

Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary says that "**competent**" means "having the necessary or sufficient skills or qualities whereas meaning of "incompetent" is "not having the skills needed to do something well." That seems to be as good as any dictionary we've looked at, and better than several we've looked at.

There are two models; **KSA** and **KSC**, used to identify and measure competencies, although they have different focusses. **KSA (Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities)** looks at the basic things that are needed to do a job well, while **KSC (Knowledge, Skills, and competences)** looks at a wider range of things, including not only abilities but also broader behavioural competences. KSC basically makes things more complicated by adding behavioural factors like teamwork, communication, and problem-solving, which are all important for doing well at work and fitting in with the organisation.

The KSA Model:

- Knowledge: This is the theoretical and practical understanding of a subject or endeavour. In other words, it's what someone knows.
- Skills: The learnt ability to do things or activities, or "how" someone can do something.
- Abilities: This is the "can do" part of a person's innate ability or talent for a certain activity.

The KSC Model:

- Knowledge: Like the KSA model, this shows how well you know something or how to do something.
- Skills: Like the KSA model, this means being able to do certain things.
- Competencies: This is the larger group that comprises skills and talents as well as behaviours, attitudes, and personal attributes that can be seen and that help someone do their job well. This involves things like being able to cooperate with others, talk to them, solve problems, lead, and be flexible.

Key Differences:

- Scope: KSA looks at the basics, while KSC looks at more general behavioural characteristics.
 - Focus: KSA is more about the "what" and "how" of doing a work well, whereas KSC is more about the "how" and "why" of doing a job well.
 - Complexity: KSC is a more complete model because it understands that doing well depends not just on knowledge and abilities, but also on the person's ability to use those skills in different settings and work well with other people.

In other words, picture a career that needs both technical knowledge (KSA) and the ability to interact well with others. The KSA model would look at the technical abilities and knowledge that are needed, while the KSC model would also look at how well the person works with others and deals with conflicts on the team.

KSC is a more comprehensive model, recognizing that effective performance relies not only on knowledge and skills but also on the individual's ability to apply those in a variety of situations and interact effectively with others.

The Dunning-Kruger Effect and Imposter Syndrome

If people who aren't good in their field of study think they are experts, what do real experts think about their own skills?

Dunning and Kruger discovered that individuals at the upper end of the competence spectrum possessed more accurate perceptions of their own knowledge and talents. But these experts often thought they were less capable than others did.

People who are really competent and better than the normal, but they aren't sure how much better they are than others. In this situation, the problem isn't that specialists don't know how well-informed they are; it's that they think everyone else is too.

The reverse of the Dunning-Kruger effect could happen in some people. This is known as "**imposter syndrome**." When someone is too sure of their own skills, it's called the Dunning-Kruger effect. When someone is too sure of their own skills is the opposite of this. People who have phoney syndrome are scared that other people will find out they are fakes and don't trust their own skills.

- **Incompetent Professionalism:** This term shows how a person's professional behaviour can be different from how competent they really are. It refers to people who do not have the skills, knowledge, or judgement to do their jobs well, even though they act like pros (for example, by

dressings, talking, or following certain rules). The Merriam-Webster Dictionary says this can include technically qualified people who keep making mistakes, don't think critically, or don't meet performance standards.

- This refers to people who have jobs or names that make them seem professional, but they don't have the skills, knowledge, or abilities to do their jobs well.
- It means that there is a gap between how someone acts as a professional and how well they can actually do their job or meet standards.
- One example is a certified professional who regularly makes mistakes in their work, misses deadlines, or doesn't do what they're supposed to do, even though they are qualified to do so.

Example:-A doctor who has all the latest medical tools but misdiagnoses patients because they haven't worked with them before.

Similarly, an Expert in social auditing, disclose the information about workers (who gave negative feedback) to Supplier or facility.

Although "competency deficiency" and "competency inadequacy" are related, they possess distinct characteristics. A deficiency in the necessary skills, knowledge, or abilities for a particular role or task is referred to as a competency deficiency. On the other hand, competency lack means that the person has the skills they need, but they are not enough or right for the situation.

In essence, deficiency is a deficiency, whereas inadequacy indicates a gap between the task requirements and the skills.

Three Forms of Incompetence		
Competence Deficiency - A competency deficiency is when someone doesn't have the skills, knowledge, or abilities they need to do a job or work well.	Competence Inadequacy - competency inadequacy suggests that the individual possesses the necessary skills; however, they are not sufficient or suitable for the given situation	Managerial Misfit is a situation in which an individual's personality, work style, or values conflict with the needs or culture of a managerial post.
Partial or global lack of capability for one or several dimensions of the Competence Base Not enough or unbalanced Competence Base	Oversized inadequate Competence Base impeding new learning Too much inadequate Competence	Managerial priorities and actions in contradiction to the Competence Base Misuse of the existing Competence Base
Cause: Not enough training, experience, or natural skill in areas like professional knowledge, communication, delegating tasks, or making decisions.	Cause: It is possible that the cause is a lack of expertise, a mismatch between the management and the employees, or a mix of the two.	Cause: The person's personality does not meet the requirements of the managerial job, which makes it hard to lead and motivate others and could affect the performance and dynamics of the team.
For example: A manager who isn't good at investigation might find it hard to organise and carry out a social audit well.	For example: A manager who has difficulty delegating tasks (a deficiency) and motivating their team (a misfit) is an example of someone who can be considered generally ineffective in their role.	Example -A manager who likes to work alone and avoid conflict might find it hard to do a job that requires good teamwork and conflict resolution.

Source:

- **Professionalized Incompetence:**

Professional incompetence means when someone does professional work badly enough or often enough that it falls far below the standards expected of a member, associate, affiliate, trainee accountant, or student: that is called professional incompetence. This can happen as a principal, an employee, a director, or an individual.

The term shows how systems or organisations may prevent people from being competent by prioritising false professional traits on top of actual performance. The Oxford English Dictionary says this may occur when companies try to look professional (for example, by using complicated processes or large bureaucratic systems) but don't care about the quality of the work they're making. In some cases, this can mean that people are not held responsible for their mistakes as long as they keep up the image of professionalism.

- This word refers to when an organisation or system has built structures, processes, or even a culture that makes it hard or impossible for people to do their jobs well, even if they have the skills they need.
- It seems like incompetence has become a normal part of the work environment, possibly because of inefficient processes, a lack of support, or even unfair incentives that encourage mediocrity and prevent initiative.

For instance, a company with too many rules and regulations, not enough resources, or a management style that doesn't encourage new ideas can unintentionally encourage professionalised stupidity, making it hard for even skilled workers to reach their full potential.

Example:-A company that puts flashy marketing efforts ahead of high-quality products, which makes customers unhappy and, eventually, fails.

"**Incompetent professionalism**" and "**Professionalised incompetence**" are both terms for when people or groups don't meet standards or do a good job, even though they have or seem to have professional credentials or structures in place. But they bring up different parts of the problem:

Key Differences: Though both terms refer to a bad situation, "professionalised incompetence" stresses how systems can cause or worsen incompetence, whereas "incompetent professionalism" concentrates on the individual's lack of skill.

- **Impact:** There may be significant effects from either scenario, such as monetary losses, harm to one's reputation, or even injury to the general public.
- **Overlap:** It's crucial to remember that these two ideas may cross over. A system that encourages professionalised ineptitude might make it easier for those who are already deficient in knowledge or abilities to flourish, which exacerbates the issue.

Essentially, "professionalised incompetence" and "incompetent professionalism" both highlight a crucial problem: the requirement that professional standards be based on actual ability and successful performance rather than only outward appearances.

To put it briefly, "professionalised incompetence" highlights how the environment or system itself contributes to a lack of overall competence, potentially impeding even competent professionals from performing effectively, whereas "incompetent professionalism" focusses on the individual lacking competence despite their professional status.

Indicators:-

- Being on purpose not keeping one's word - It appears to be the standard practice to make a promise, but at the same time, one is already considering the justification that will be offered on later time.
- A lack of coordinated marketing activities consciously leads to incompetence. An organisation must pursue a customer whose personality and work preferences are compatible with those of the company. The establishment of trust in business partnerships and the elimination of any possibility of incompetence are both outcomes that result from an organization's clarity regarding who and how to collaborate with.
- When it comes to vital operations, giving preference to inferior candidates or workers Top management does not have the expertise necessary to understand the requirements of a job, and as a consequence, they hire individuals who are not qualified. What is even worse is that these individuals think themselves to be a unique group of individuals with the intention of expanding the business.
- Consistently deflecting responsibility is indicative of incompetence. People who are incompetent will always feel the need to assign blame to others; however, they are also fast to claim credit for any positive developments that have occurred. They will refer to it as "TEAM ACCOMPLISHMENT" rather than recognising the competent individual or individuals.
- Their finished product is of lower quality. An employee who frequently displays poor job performance and asks assistance from their colleagues is the most unmistakable indication that they are incompetent in their position.

One of the most distinguishable signs of incompetence is a lack of performance that is not associated with laziness or any of the additional criteria mentioned above.

Conclusion

The Dunning-Kruger Effect and Imposter Syndrome can occur when people think they're experts in their subject. The Dunning-Kruger effect and imposter syndrome result from overconfidence. Despite appearing professional, incompetent professionals lack the skills, knowledge, and judgement to do their professions properly. Competency deficiency and inadequacy are similar yet separate. Competence deficiency means a lack of skills, knowledge, or abilities for a function or task, whereas inadequacy means the person has the talents but is unsuitable.

Three types of incompetence are competency deficiency, competency inadequacy, and managerial misfit. Competency deficiency is a lack of the skills, knowledge, or abilities needed to perform a specific task or job effectively.

Professionalised incompetence occurs when a person or group falls short of professional work standards. This can happen to principals, employees, directors, or individuals. The concept shows how systems or organisations can prevent competence by prioritising bogus professional qualities above performance. Companies with intricate processes or massive bureaucratic systems that don't care about quality can achieve this.

Incompetent professionalism and professionalised incompetence occur when people or groups fail to achieve standards or perform well despite having professional credentials or frameworks. They emphasise different elements of the problem: the environment or system contributes to a lack of competence, potentially preventing even skilled professionals from performing well, and the individual lacks competence despite their professional standing.

Professionalised incompetence includes purposely breaking promises, not coordinating marketing efforts, favouring inferior applicants or personnel, diverting accountability, and producing poor work. Unrelated to laziness or these variables, underperformance indicates incompetence.

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