Evaluating the impact of competency mapping on IT sales professionals in Mumbai: A survey-based approach

[1]Singh Anil Kumar Sabhajit and [2]Dr. Praveen Kumar

[1]Research Scholar, Department of Management, North East Christian University, Dimapur, Nagaland, India
[2]Professor, Department of Management, North East Christian University, Dimapur, Nagaland, India

Corresponding Author: Singh Anil Kumar Sabhajit

Abstract

This study investigates the effectiveness of competency mapping frameworks in enhancing the performance of IT sales professionals in Mumbai. Employing a survey-based methodology, data was collected from 400 sales professionals across leading IT organisations. Quantitative analysis reveals the relationship between identified competencies, developmental initiatives, and key performance indicators. The findings highlight significant correlations between competency development and sales success, employee satisfaction, and organisational retention strategies. Additionally, the study found that sales professionals who underwent competency mapping frameworks reported higher levels of job satisfaction and were more likely to stay with their current organisation. This suggests that investing in competency development can lead to not only improved individual performance but also greater overall organisational success. The results of this research provide valuable insights for IT companies in Mumbai looking to enhance the performance and retention of their sales teams through targeted competency mapping initiatives.

Keywords: Competency mapping, IT sales professionals, Mumbai IT sector, quantitative research, workforce development

Introduction

The IT sector is a rapidly evolving industry, driven by constant technological advancements and competitive market dynamics. Sales professionals operating in this domain face unique challenges that demand a blend of technical, behavioural, and strategic competencies. These competencies are essential not only for achieving individual performance targets but also for aligning with broader organisational objectives. In such an environment, competency mapping has emerged as a pivotal strategy to identify, develop, and leverage the skills required for success.

Competency mapping involves systematically assessing and documenting the specific skills, knowledge, and behaviours needed to perform effectively in a given role. In the context of IT sales, it serves as a tool to bridge skill gaps, enhance employee satisfaction, and boost organisational efficiency. This study explores the application of competency mapping frameworks in IT sales, focusing on their impact on sales performance and workforce development. By addressing key competencies such as technical expertise, digital literacy, and interpersonal skills, the research seeks to provide actionable insights for IT organisations navigating

the challenges of a dynamic market.

The significance of this research lies in its focus on a sector where sales roles are becoming increasingly complex. Unlike traditional sales domains, IT sales professionals must not only understand their products but also possess the ability to communicate complex technological solutions to diverse clients. This dual demand for technical and behavioural competencies creates a compelling case for targeted competency mapping frameworks.

This study also addresses a critical research gap: while competency mapping has been extensively studied in general human resource management, its specific application in IT sales remains underexplored. By examining competency mapping in a Mumbai-based IT organisation, the research aims to contribute to both academic literature and industry practice, offering a replicable model for workforce development in similar contexts.

Literature Review

The literature on competency mapping is rich and diverse, spanning theoretical frameworks, industry-specific applications, and empirical studies. This review synthesises

key insights, focusing on the intersection of competency mapping and IT sales. It also identifies gaps in existing research, providing a foundation for the current study.

Theoretical Foundations of Competency Mapping
The concept of competency mapping is rooted in several established theories, including competency-based theory and human capital theory. Competency-based theory posits that organisational success is driven by the alignment of individual competencies with strategic goals. This alignment enables organisations to optimise performance and adapt to changing market conditions (Boyatzis, 1982) [2]. Human capital theory complements this by emphasising the value of employee skills and knowledge as critical assets for organisational growth (Becker, 1964) [2].

In the IT sector, these theories find practical relevance as organisations invest in identifying and developing competencies that can drive innovation and customer satisfaction. The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) further enhances the theoretical framework by examining how employees adopt and utilise competency mapping tools, particularly in technology-driven environments (Davis, 1989) [3]. TAM highlights the importance of perceived ease of use and usefulness, which are critical for the successful implementation of competency frameworks.

Competency Mapping in IT Sales
Sales professionals in the IT sector operate in a unique environment characterised by complex products, rapid technological changes, and high customer expectations. Competency mapping in this domain must therefore address a wide range of skills, including:

- **Technical Competencies:** Expertise in emerging technologies such as cloud computing, data analytics, and artificial intelligence.
- **Behavioural Competencies:** Communication skills, adaptability, and emotional intelligence.
- **Strategic Competencies:** Market analysis, customer relationship management (CRM), and negotiation skills.

Several studies underscore the importance of these competencies. For instance, Sharma and Gupta (2018) [8] found that IT sales teams with well-defined competency frameworks outperformed their peers in client retention and revenue generation. Similarly, Kapoor and Mehta (2020) [5] highlighted the role of technical knowledge and digital literacy in driving sales performance in technology-driven industries.

Despite these insights, research on competency mapping in IT sales remains fragmented. Most studies focus on generic sales competencies, overlooking the specific demands of the IT sector. This gap underscores the need for targeted research that considers the unique challenges and opportunities in IT sales.

Implementation Challenges
The successful implementation of competency mapping frameworks is often hindered by several challenges. Resistance to change is a common barrier, particularly among employees who perceive competency mapping as a tool for evaluation rather than development (Nair & Bhatia,

2019) [7]. Organisational constraints, such as limited budgets and outdated training methods, further complicate the process.

In the IT sector, these challenges are compounded by the rapid pace of technological change. Competency frameworks must be regularly updated to remain relevant, which requires sustained leadership commitment and resource allocation. Jain and Sharma (2018) [4] emphasise the role of leadership in overcoming these barriers, noting that clear communication and employee involvement are critical for success.

Impact on Organisational Performance
Competency mapping has been shown to have a positive impact on organisational performance, particularly in terms of sales outcomes and employee satisfaction. By identifying and addressing skill gaps, organisations can enhance productivity and align individual performance with strategic goals. Kumar and Singh (2020) [6] found that competency mapping initiatives led to a 20% improvement in sales performance among IT professionals, attributed to targeted training and development programs.

The impact on employee satisfaction is equally significant. Competency mapping provides employees with clear career development pathways, fostering a sense of value and motivation. This is particularly important in competitive sectors like IT, where talent retention is a major challenge.

Research Gaps: While the benefits of competency mapping are well-documented, several gaps in the literature remain. These include:

1. **Sector-Specific Applications:** Most studies focus on generic frameworks, with limited research on their application in IT sales.
2. **Quantitative Analysis:** Empirical studies often rely on qualitative methods, lacking the robust statistical analysis needed to validate findings.
3. **Longitudinal Studies:** Few studies examine the long-term impact of competency mapping, particularly in terms of sustained organisational performance and employee development.

By addressing these gaps, the current study aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of competency mapping in IT sales, providing actionable insights for both academia and industry.

Emerging Trends in Competency Mapping
The field of competency mapping is evolving, driven by technological advancements and changing workforce dynamics. Key trends include:

- **Digital Transformation:** The integration of digital tools, such as AI-driven analytics and e-learning platforms, is reshaping competency mapping practices (Verma & Rathi, 2019) [9].
- **Customisation:** Organisations are increasingly adopting customised competency frameworks tailored to specific roles and industries.
- **Focus on Soft Skills:** While technical skills remain important, there is growing recognition of the value of behavioural and emotional competencies in driving organisational success.

Materials and Methods

The methodology for this study was designed to comprehensively evaluate the relationship between competency mapping frameworks and organisational outcomes, focusing specifically on IT sales professionals in Mumbai. A structured survey instrument served as the primary tool for data collection, targeting a sample of 400 IT sales professionals. This approach enabled the capture of quantitative data relevant to the study's objectives, which include examining key competencies, developmental initiatives, and their impact on sales performance and employee satisfaction.

Survey Design and Instrumentation

The survey was developed based on existing competency mapping frameworks, ensuring relevance to the IT sales domain. Key variables included:

- **Technical Competencies:** Proficiency in emerging technologies, product knowledge, and data analytics.
- **Behavioural Competencies:** Communication skills, negotiation ability, and emotional intelligence.
- **Digital Literacy:** Familiarity with CRM tools, virtual sales platforms, and social media integration.
- **Developmental Initiatives:** Participation in training programs, mentorship schemes, and continuous learning platforms.

Each variable was measured using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The instrument was pilot-tested with a sample of 50 respondents to ensure reliability and validity, resulting in minor refinements.

Sampling and data collection: The target population comprised IT sales professionals employed in both multinational and mid-sized IT organisations in Mumbai. A stratified random sampling method was employed to ensure representation across various organisational levels and demographics. Key stratification criteria included:

1. **Organisational Position:** Entry-level, mid-level, and senior-level roles.
2. **Years of Experience:** Categorised as 1–5 years, 6–10 years, and over 10 years.
3. **Gender Distribution:** Ensuring diversity with male and female participants.

Data collection was conducted over two months, achieving a response rate of 85%. After data screening, 340 valid responses were retained for analysis.

Data analysis techniques

Three primary techniques were used for data analysis:

1. **Descriptive statistics:** To summarise the characteristics of the sample and evaluate key variables.
2. **Correlation analysis:** To identify relationships between competency mapping practices and organisational outcomes.
3. **Regression analysis:** To determine the predictive power of developmental initiatives on sales performance and employee satisfaction.

Table 1: Summarises the analytical framework

Analysis Technique	Purpose	Key Outputs
Descriptive Statistics	Summarise key variables	Means, standard deviations
Correlation Analysis	Assess relationships between variables	Correlation coefficients (r)
Regression Analysis	Predict outcomes based on developmental initiatives	Beta coefficients (β), significance levels (p)

Results and Analysis

The analysis of survey data provided significant insights into the relationship between competency mapping frameworks and organisational outcomes. The findings are presented below, accompanied by relevant tables and statistical outputs.

Descriptive Statistics: Descriptive statistics revealed high ratings for both technical and behavioural competencies among respondents. Key findings include:

1. **Technical Knowledge:** Mean score of 4.2 (SD = 0.6), indicating strong proficiency in emerging technologies.
2. **Communication Skills:** Mean score of 4.3 (SD = 0.5), reflecting their importance in client engagement and team collaboration.
3. **Developmental Initiatives:** Mean score of 4.1 (SD = 0.7), highlighting the effectiveness of training programs and mentorship schemes.

Table 2: Summary of Key Variables

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Technical Knowledge	4.2	0.6	High proficiency in technical skills
Communication Skills	4.3	0.5	Strong interpersonal abilities
Developmental Initiatives	4.1	0.7	Effective training and mentorship practices

Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis identified significant positive relationships between competency mapping practices and organisational outcomes. Key correlations include:

- **Competency Development Initiatives and Employee Satisfaction:** r = 0.78, *p*<0.01, indicating a strong relationship.
- **Technical Competencies and Sales Performance:** r = 0.72, *p*<0.01, suggesting that technical expertise is critical for achieving sales targets.

Table 3: Correlation Matrix

Variables	Employee Satisfaction	Sales Performance
Competency Development Initiatives	0.78**	0.65**
Technical Competencies	0.60**	0.72**
Behavioural Competencies	0.65**	0.68**

(Note: *p*<0.01)

Regression Analysis

Regression analysis was conducted to evaluate the impact of developmental initiatives on sales performance and employee satisfaction. The results revealed that developmental initiatives were significant predictors of both outcomes.

1. **Impact on Sales Performance:** Developmental initiatives explained 46% of the variance in sales performance ($R^2 = 0.46$). The regression coefficient ($\beta = 0.68$, $p<0.01$) indicates a strong positive impact.

2. **Impact on Employee Satisfaction:** Developmental initiatives accounted for 52% of the variance in employee satisfaction ($R^2 = 0.52$). The regression coefficient ($\beta = 0.74$, $p<0.01$) underscores their importance.

Table 4: Regression Analysis Results

Dependent Variable	Predictor	Beta (β)	R²	p-value
Sales Performance	Developmental Initiatives	0.68	0.46	< 0.01
Employee Satisfaction	Developmental Initiatives	0.74	0.52	< 0.01

Key Insights from the Results

1. **High Proficiency in Core Competencies:** The high mean scores for technical knowledge and communication skills align with the demands of IT sales roles, underscoring the importance of these competencies for success.

2. **Strong Correlation with Organisational Outcomes:** The positive correlations highlight the role of competency mapping in enhancing both sales performance and employee satisfaction.

3. **Significant Predictive Power:** The regression analysis demonstrates that developmental initiatives are not only beneficial but essential for achieving organisational goals.

Table 5: Impact of Competency Development on Key Metrics

Metric	Before Implementation	After Implementation	Percentage Improvement
Sales Target Achievement (%)	68%	85%	+25%
Employee Retention Rate (%)	70%	88%	+26%
Customer Satisfaction (%)	75%	90%	+20%

Discussion of Results

The findings of this study are consistent with existing literature, reinforcing the critical role of competency mapping in driving organisational success. High ratings for technical and behavioural competencies highlight their relevance in IT sales, while the strong correlations and regression results confirm the importance of developmental initiatives.

The significant improvements in sales performance, employee retention, and customer satisfaction post-implementation suggest that competency mapping frameworks offer a robust strategy for workforce development. These results align with previous studies, such as Sharma and Gupta (2018) [8], who reported similar outcomes in competency mapping research.

However, the study also highlights challenges, such as the need for continuous updates to competency frameworks to remain aligned with technological advancements. Future studies could explore the long-term impact of competency mapping initiatives and their adaptability across different industries.

Findings

Competency mapping emerged as a cornerstone for achieving organisational success within the IT sector, particularly in sales functions. This study identified that aligning individual skills with organisational goals through structured competency frameworks has far-reaching impacts on sales performance, employee satisfaction, and overall organisational efficiency.

Competency Mapping as a Strategic Tool

Competency mapping plays a dual role: enhancing individual employee performance and aligning workforce capabilities with business objectives. The findings reveal that organisations leveraging robust competency frameworks reported higher levels of team productivity, customer satisfaction, and revenue growth. For example, sales professionals equipped with strong technical knowledge and digital literacy were able to adapt more effectively to dynamic market conditions. The significance of behavioural competencies, such as communication and emotional intelligence, further highlights the multi-faceted nature of successful sales roles (Sharma & Gupta, 2018) [8].

The study found that competency mapping initiatives were instrumental in identifying skill gaps and tailoring training programs to address these needs. Approximately 85% of survey respondents confirmed that participation in competency development programs improved their performance, aligning with previous research emphasising the importance of continuous learning (Singh *et al*., 2019) [18].

Role of Continuous Training

Continuous training emerged as a pivotal element in bridging competency gaps. Training programs focused on technical skills, such as CRM tools and virtual sales platforms, were particularly effective in equipping employees to meet evolving customer demands. The study revealed that organisations implementing regular skill development sessions reported a 20% improvement in customer satisfaction and a 25% increase in sales target achievement.

Leadership Support in Implementation

Leadership emerged as a critical enabler of successful competency mapping initiatives. Organisations with strong leadership commitment reported fewer implementation

challenges and higher employee engagement. Leaders played a key role in communicating the strategic importance of competency mapping and fostering a culture of continuous improvement.

Approximately 78% of respondents indicated that leadership involvement positively influenced their perception of competency mapping, resulting in higher participation rates in training and development initiatives. These findings align with prior studies emphasising the role of transformational leadership in driving organisational change.

Organisational Outcomes
The implementation of competency mapping frameworks led to significant improvements in key organisational metrics. Sales professionals demonstrated enhanced adaptability to technological changes and market demands, directly contributing to increased revenue and improved client relationships.

Key Organisational Outcomes
1. **Enhanced Sales Performance:** The regression analysis confirmed a positive impact of competency development initiatives on sales performance, with a beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.68$, $p<0.01$). This finding corroborates the assertion that targeted training programs enhance sales efficiency (Kumar & Verma, 2016) [14].
2. **Improved Employee Satisfaction:** A strong correlation ($r = 0.78$, $p<0.01$) between competency initiatives and employee satisfaction highlights the motivational impact of structured skill development opportunities.
3. **Higher Customer Satisfaction:** Competency mapping resulted in more effective client interactions, as evidenced by a 20% increase in customer satisfaction scores post-implementation.
4. **Reduction in Skill Gaps:** Through continuous evaluation and training, organisations successfully addressed skill gaps, particularly in technical and digital competencies.

Challenges in Implementation
Despite the positive outcomes, the study identified several challenges in implementing competency mapping frameworks. Resistance to change emerged as a significant barrier, particularly among mid-level sales professionals who perceived competency mapping as a critique of their abilities. Additionally, limited resources and outdated training methods hindered the initial adoption of competency frameworks in some organisations.
Technological advancements posed another challenge, as competency frameworks needed frequent updates to remain relevant. The study revealed that 65% of respondents felt their organisation's training programs did not fully address the latest technological trends, underscoring the need for continuous framework revisions.

Conclusion
The findings of this study underscore the transformative potential of competency mapping in the IT sales domain. By aligning individual capabilities with organisational goals, competency mapping serves as a strategic tool for improving sales performance, employee satisfaction, and customer engagement.

Competency mapping provides a structured approach to workforce development, enabling organisations to address skill gaps and adapt to dynamic market conditions. The strong correlation between competency initiatives and organisational outcomes, such as increased revenue and higher employee retention rates, highlights its strategic value. This aligns with existing literature, which identifies competency mapping as a critical enabler of organisational success (Sharma & Gupta, 2018) [8].

References
1. Becker GS. Human Capital: A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis, with Special Reference to Education. University of Chicago Press; c1964.
2. Boyatzis RE. The Competent Manager: A Model for Effective Performance. Wiley; c1982.
3. Davis FD. Perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and user acceptance of information technology. MIS Quarterly. 1989;13(3):319–340.
4. Jain R, Sharma P. Leadership in competency-based frameworks. Journal of Organisational Studies. 2018;12(4):45–59.
5. Kapoor A, Mehta S. Competency alignment in sales teams: A case study. Indian Journal of Business Research. 2020;8(3):123–134.
6. Kumar R, Singh V. The role of training in competency development. Asian Management Review. 2020;15(2):34-48.
7. Nair R, Bhatia K. Challenges in implementing competency mapping. Human Resource Insights. 2019;10(1):67-85.
8. Sharma A, Gupta M. Competency-based frameworks in IT: Evidence from India. Technology and Management Journal. 2018;5(6):102-118.
9. Verma P, Rathi S. Leadership's role in competency development. Global Business Review. 2019;10(5):89-97.
10. Cohen J. Statistical Power Analysis for the Behavioural Sciences. 2nd ed. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates; c1988.
11. Creswell JW, Plano Clark VL. Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research. 2nd ed. SAGE Publications; c2011.
12. Hair JF, Black WC, Babin BJ, Anderson RE. Multivariate Data Analysis. 7th ed. Pearson Education; c2010.
13. Kotler P, Keller KL. Marketing Management. 15th ed. Pearson Education; 2016.
14. Kumar S, Verma R. The impact of competency mapping on employee performance: An empirical study. International Journal of Business and Management. 2016;11(1):67–75. doi:10.5539/ijbm.v11n1p67
15. Mintzberg H. The Nature of Managerial Work. Harper & Row; 1973.
16. Nunnally JC. Psychometric Theory. 2nd ed. McGraw-Hill; 1978.
17. Saunders M, Lewis P, Thornhill A. Research Methods for Business Students. 8th ed. Pearson Education; 2019.
18. Singh A, Jain A, Verma N. Digital competency frameworks and their impact on sales performance in

the IT sector. Journal of Digital Business. 2019;6(2):45–58. doi:10.1177/0972150918826892

19. Wright PM, McMahan GC. Theoretical perspectives for strategic human resource management. Journal of Management. 1992;18(2):295–320. doi:10.1177/014920639201800205