

Examining the Importance of Organisational Culture, Employee Commitment and Leadership on Project Performance of Organisations in Malaysia



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ABSTRACT: The project performance of organisations have proven to be important in terms of ensuring that the projects remain profitable and that there are no hindrances for the success of the project. Therefore, continuous assessing of the project performance helps to further improve the performance. The study aims to examine the project performance of private organisations in Malaysia particularly in Kuala Lumpur and Cyberjaya, basing it on organisational culture, employee commitment and leadership. A survey was carried out, using questionnaires and valid data collected from 121 respondents. The research findings reveal that organisational culture, employee commitment and leadership influences the project performance. In conclusion, meaningful recommendations are made based on the results to successfully implement, manage and promote better project performances.

KEYWORDS: Organisational Culture, Employee commitment, Leadership, Project performance, Effectiveness, Business Success

INTRODUCTION

Managing projects in organisations is essential and requires attention and complete dedication from all participants. According to [32], projects create and maintain the value of the businesses. Furthermore, [13] highlighted that projects serve as stimulus for new strategy development, driving a business competitive advantage and success. This is because its outcome establishes the direction the organisation takes in the present and future business environment. [24] further described projects as channels to getting to know their organisation's tactics. In addition, [27] concurred and showed that projects are vital on turning businesses objectives to make them reality. Hence why organisations have adopted project management approach, which helps them to quickly and reliably implement new products as well as introducing organisational changes that improves and sustain the organisation's profitability and productivity. Therefore, in the process of managing projects, project performance is vital because it can affect and influence the final outcomes.

Project performance has been traditionally defined and evaluated on the basis of the amount of resources required for the project to be completed [23]. In nowadays economical and revolving world, a lot of organisations from the private sectors are maintaining that they control their projects successfully and the way they implement them is excellent. Regardless of this claim, most projects continuously go wrong in an alarming speed despite the kind of project, or their origin businesses [40] thus misusing huge amount of money annually [41]. [3] further stated that there are numerous issues where projects fail to reach their required performance and values or they end up being given to customers after the intended time or when they have exceeded their budget.

The performance of the project is affected by numerous factors existing in the organisation particularly, the style and culture of the organisation and the level of its project management maturity [4]. Additionally, [39], noted that there is a mixture of projects, organisation and employee's factors adding to the effectiveness of the project. Hence in this study, organisational culture, employee commitment and leadership are examined because they are pervasive and powerful and can be a force that brings in changes or a definite barrier to how the project performs. The importance of the study is to emphasize the awareness and understanding of establishing the importance and influence of organisational culture, employee commitment and leadership on project performance in Malaysia.

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LITERATURE REVIEW

According to [34], project performance is the extent of which the output and outcomes of the project satisfy the budget and schedule goals, operational and technical conditions and finally the needs of the client. Moreover, projects outcomes are critical for flourishing of an organisation; the success of the project relies upon the achievement of goals set [39]. [2] further analysed that there are four indicators of project performance benchmarks namely: cost performance, scheduling performance, quality performance, and stakeholder satisfaction. In analysing the four indicators, [38] explained that cost performance can be affected due to numerous factors such as poor cost estimates, poor project planning and inefficient cost control that can direct to amending of the project budget. As for schedule performance [38] further stated that, in regards to time, it has a notable impact on projects as it can be impacted by numerous factors that direct to amending of schedule activities like estimates, control mechanisms, leadership skills and other factors. Furthermore, [37] argues that scheduling is a key factor that influences project performance because it requires collaboration among stakeholders throughout the project and this collaboration is also time-consuming. [35] stated that quality performance is vital to project performance and that quality is met if the final project satisfies the demands that were made specifically. Lastly, for stakeholder satisfaction, the stakeholder salience theory implies that the interests of different stakeholders have a positive impact on project performance [36] and emphasized that project managers ought to concentrate on advantages on customer requirements and stakeholder's prospects on the end results.

Organisational Culture

Organisational culture is observed as a set of morals, principles and way of doing things in an organisation [17]. The organisational culture of the organisation is termed among the most persuasive dimensions of work environment and sequentially the most motive behind the success of the organisation. It is further defined as a pattern of fundamental assumptions found in discovering how to overcome the situations from the outside adaption as well as the internal integration, which has worked well to be regarded as valid and hence must be taught to those joining the organisation as right route to understand, ponder and can relate to the circumstances encountered [1]. In any case, there is a common consensus that organisational culture incorporates components like ethics, principles, expectations and practices that are widely embraced and leads actions inside the organisation at large.

[10] specified that creating a beneficial working environment culture leads to enhancement of performance in the organisation. In regards to [31] culture was documented as a contributing factor for organisational project results and effectiveness. The relationship among organisational culture and performance has remained established and an adequate extent of accessible facts confirms the relationship among the organisational culture and its performance [18]. This is so because, culture is based on people and subconsciously impacts their behaviour, which in turn impacts their performance and hence the manner of these factors impacts the organisational culture [28]. Thus, it is important to have a comprehensive understanding of organisational culture as it enhances performance and productivity in the organisation [6]. Therefore, it can be hypothesized that:

H₁: Organisational Culture has a statistically significant influence on project performance

Employee Commitment

Employees that are committed to the organisation grow a bond that produces higher organisational performance [5]. Furthermore, employees that are motivated increases commitment to the organisation which ends up with greater productivity and less employees exiting the organisation (Kabir and Parvin, 2011). Successful organisations depend on exceptional performances of their employees to achieve the organisational goals, this is when competent and committed employees are engaged. From this point of view, there is no organisation in today's competitive world that can have an excellent performance unless every employee is committed to the goals of the organisation and unless he/she does not work as an effective team member [22]. They further stated that one of the challenges faced by modern organisations includes maintaining employee commitment in the current business environment. Without the certainty of continuous employment, workers have raised their expectations in other areas. Hence, fostering employees is vital since committed employees execute plans better, remain long, become loyal and productive [8].

It has been stated by [33] that the general achievements of employees are seen on the standard and amount of work done, which suggest that the overall performance of employees is similar to their productivity. Carlson et al (2016) mentioned that there are factors that enhances the performance of employees such as compensation, packages, recruitment and training and development to mention just a few and they stated that the organisation should be in a position to provide such factors to employees in order to promote and improve performance in the organisation. However, [19] discovered that in their study, the three types of commitment have a positive relationship with employee's performance. Furthermore, higher level of employee

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commitment in the organisation for individual projects or to the business is assumed as a major reason for better organisational performance that leads to organisational success [9]. Therefore, it can be hypothesized that:

H₂: Employee Commitment has a statistically significant influence on project performance

Leadership

Leadership is an attempt to use non-coercive types of influence to motivate people to achieve certain goals [12]. Furthermore, leadership can have a notable impact on the entire work processes and also on the performance of different projects [7]. Hence why the awareness of leadership is vital for organisations since a leader has the ability to influence the productivity and performance in the project [26]. [17] explained that leading is the art of communicating a clear vision and empowering employees towards organisational goals. According to [29] there are three different kinds of leadership styles appropriate to the project environment which are transformational, situational and transactional. He further emphasised that they are regarded to be ideal on the start of the project phase as well as middle and ending phases.

Project leadership in any case is altogether more important because it highlights personal commitment from the rest of the project team and provides intangible value to the project's goals and aims for the overall project success [16]. Additionally, leadership capabilities models are seen as functional for project managers to achieve their project goals, which directly connect lack of leadership capabilities leads to project failures [20], [20] further emphasized that leadership is an important instrument which is to be utilized by leaders which reasonably impacts the results of the project, if not, when there are no leadership abilities, the project is bound to fail. Project managers are tasked with making sure that the project succeed, as they are more referred as stakeholders and the organisation have expectations on them in regard to project performance and schedule and hence more pressure on them [15]. Hence on the basis of discussions above it is proposed that leaders play a vital role in successful performance of firm's projects. Therefore, it is hypothesized that:

H₃: Leadership has a statistically influence on project performance.

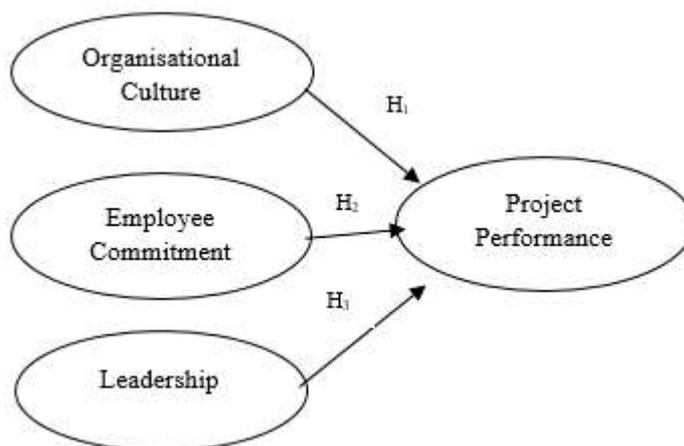


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

METHODOLOGY

The research design selected in this study is descriptive correlative method. The approach was embraced because it aids the essence of the study's issues that pursues at figuring out the relationship among variables [25]. That is, it provides an accurate portrayal or account of the characteristics. It also enables testing of hypothesis to answer questions hence assist the investigator to explain as well as check relations and inspect the reason and influence among elements. The population of this study consisted of 200 private sector employees. These include both senior, executive, junior and contract staff. According to [11] previous studies on organisational culture and performance had the mistakes of collecting data only from senior management which end up leading to limited information to be used as basis for assessment. Hence, the researcher accepted the importance of examining all organisational members in various departments and positions in the organisation to give a strong evaluation of investigation dilemma in place.

A simple random sampling was adopted and used. To gather data, questionnaire was adopted for this study and the five point Likert scale was preferred over other scaling approach to measure each construct involved. The scale started from 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (neutral), 4 (agree) and lastly 5 (strongly agree).

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RESULTS

Questionnaires were used to gather data for the study and then analysed through the statistical software which is known as Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive and inferential methods were implemented in the study and the outcomes were gathered and summing them up in tables. [21] and [25] mentioned that the descriptive method assists with changing the information to sections which defines the factors enclosed in the information set, whereas the inferential method is made to give out the end outcomes based on the information gathered and also used to test the connections or associations among the variables.

200 questionnaires were dispersed to targeted participants who were working in various private organisations. Only 121 questionnaires were returned, with the response rate of 60%. The majority gender of the participants was female with 62.8% (n=76). The male participants had 36.4% (n=44) while only 1 respondent preferred not to say with 0.8% (n=1). The majority of the participants are holder of Bachelor’s degree (n=79, 65.3%). Participants with Master’s degree and above had the second higher number with the total of 20 (16.5%). Only 11.6% (n=14) of the participants are Diploma certificate holder. While certificate and below holder among the participants had 6.6 % (n=8).

Table 1. Reliability Test Table- Results of Cronbach’s Alpha

No	Variables	Cronbach’s alpha coefficient
1	Organisational Culture	0.804
2	Employee Commitment	0.926
3	Leadership	0.91

As shown in table 1, the reliability test was used to test if the data is reliable and all the variables value of Cronbach’s Alpha correlation was above 0.70. Organisational culture was 0.804, employee commitment 0.926 and leadership 0.91 which showed that the data set is reliable.

Table 2. Pearson’s correlation analysis among organisational culture, employee commitment, leadership and project performance

		Correlations			
		Organisational Culture	Employee Commitment	Leadership	Project Performance
Organisational Culture	Pearson Correlation	1	.793**	.755**	.508**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	121	121	121	121
Employee Commitment	Pearson Correlation	.793**	1	.748**	.555**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	121	121	121	121
Leadership	Pearson Correlation	.755**	.748**	1	.546**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	121	121	121	121
Project Performance	Pearson Correlation	.508**	.555**	.546**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	121	121	121	121

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

In the above table, the results show the organisational culture and the project performance of organisations. With the indication of the r values, all linear relationships are seen to be positive and reached statistical significance. Bivariate relationships were further identified between organisational culture and project performance, $r = .508$, $p \leq .01$. The correlation analysis underpins that organisational culture have a significant positive relationship with the project performance, therefore, H_1 is supported.

As indicated by the r values, all linear relationships were positive and reached statistical significance. Bivariate relationships were identified between employee commitment and project performance, $r = .555$, $p \leq .01$. The correlation analysis supports that employee commitment have a significant positive relationship with project performance; therefore, H_2 is supported.

Displayed shows the results of correlation between leadership and project performance. As displayed by the r values, all linear relationships were positive and reached statistical significance. A bivariate relationship was identified between leadership and project performance, $r = .546$, $p \leq .01$. The correlation analysis shows that leadership has a significant positive relationship with project performance; therefore, H_3 is supported.

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Table 3. Two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) results for organisational culture, employee commitment, leadership and project performance.

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	42.092	3	14.031	20.811	.000 ^b
	Residual	78.883	117	.674		
	Total	120.975	120			

a. Dependent Variable: Project Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Leadership, Employee Commitment, Organisational Culture

A regression analysis was carried out to test the proposed hypothesis. This method is able to give out outcomes relating to the relationship that exist among variables and whether the relationship is positive or negative. The above table exhibit the F distribution value and sig value. When F distribution value is higher, it suggests that there is association among the independent and dependent variable. Furthermore, the sig value gotten is 0.000, which is > 0.05 . with the results obtained from the F value and sig, states that the hypothesis is accepted and a positive and significant relationship exist between independent and dependent variables exist.

Table 4. Regression Coefficient table showing the results between dependent and independent variables

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.673	.278		6.017	.000
	Organisational Culture	.058	.122	.063	.472	.638
	Employee Commitment	.271	.120	.299	2.263	.025
	Leadership	.271	.121	.274	2.234	.027

a. Dependent Variable: Project Performance

The coefficient table of regression analysis portrays the results obtained in ANOVA test based on β -value and t-value. Therefore, principally based on the value derived, it can therefore be concluded that the hypothesis is accepted and the relationship between independent and dependent variable is significant.

DISCUSSIONS

The results and the conclusions of this research indicated that those who work in private sectors in Kuala Lumpur and Cyberjaya have a statistically significant influence on how the project performs. Most private sectors in Kuala Lumpur and Cyberjaya have been facing failure of projects or delays in delivering them to their final users. Therefore, this study focused on the three factors that are seen as crucial to how the project performs. Majority of the respondents have been with their current organisations for more than five years, with mostly five and above working experiences. Therefore, they had better understanding of their organisations.

Hypothesis (H₁) highlighted on the organisational culture and focuses on the theory that trust, value, motivation, innovation, team work are qualities that the organisation should possess and exercise in creating a more innovative and productive working environment that will lead to better project performance and also the success of the projects. This study supported this argument by showing a statistically significance ($r = .508, p \leq .01$), confirming that organisational culture influences the project performance. This finding is in agreement with past studies such as Wong (2020), [30] that established that there is a strong relationship among organisational culture and performance. In addition, [31] recognized that culture is a contributing factor for project results and effectiveness, thus supporting H₁.

Hypothesis (H₂) highlighted the significance of employee commitment in the project performance. Five questions were developed with regards to factors that influence and make employee committed to the organisation. The main objective for the set questions was to make the research to validate and investigate the participants' answers associated traits that are essential to make employees committed to the organization, which are vital to achieve the overall project performance. The study supported

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this argument by showing a statistically significant influence ($r = .555$, $p \leq .01$) thus supporting H₂. The finding is in agreement with studies such as [19], [9] which argued that employee commitment is positively related to project performance.

Leadership has been considered or praised repeatedly as being the vital element that effectively and efficiently influence the successfulness of project performance of an organisation. This study supported this argument as a bivariate relationship was identified between leadership and project performance, ($r = .546$, $p \leq .01$) confirming that leadership has a statistically influence on project performance. This finding is consistent with past studies such as [2], [7], [20] that stated and confirmed that there is a significantly correlated relationship between leadership and performance, thus supporting H₃. The general attainment of any project is credited basically to leadership as they possess the power to take charge as well as monitor every process involved in the project while creating important project decisions. Additionally, when the project does not become successful to perform its main targets and objectives the managers are found fault. The liability is generally credited to their failure or to their inadequacy in not utilising authority given unto them to accomplish and achieve the goals set. Hence on the basis of the above it is established that leaders play a vital role in successful performance of firm's projects.

The findings indicated that all the factors have statistically significant influence on the project performance. The regression and correlation showed strong and positive relationship, which means that, when the organisational culture is strong, the project performance will increase, and vice versa. When employees are committed in the organisation then the project performance will surely increase as well. And lastly, when the leadership has excellent qualities, it would definitely affect the project performance in a positive way. Therefore, all these factors are supported and accepted as statistically influential on the project performance. This implies that in terms of the cost, time and quality of the project, a strong organisational culture, high level of employee commitment and strong leadership provides smooth operation of the project with ensuring that the project does not go over the budget, it gets delivered on the expected time and on agreed quality that the customer needed.

Moreover, the research findings showed that the employee's perceptions regarding leadership styles had an effect on their commitment to the corporation. The employee's perceptions of organizational culture had an impact on the extent of dedication they contribute to the organizational assignment. Also, organizational subculture and management encouraged employee's commitment. Therefore, leadership and subculture affect workforce dedication.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The study lies in the significant of culture in organizations, employee commitment and leadership on the project performance. It shed more light on how these factor influences the project performance. Three main objectives of the study were; does culture of the organization have an influence on the project management; does employee commitment have an influence on the project performance and does leadership have an influence on the project performance. In conclusion, it showed that they are vital factors on the performance of any project.

In businesses, there are more trials in creating a successful organisational culture, which is a vital element in enhancing the performance and productivity [14] as well as implementation of projects. Therefore, in order to arrive at the highest possible effort from employees, managers, and leaders are required to express a culture of commitment characterized with optimism thereby fostering performance. This promotes a constructive and productive working environment with practical measures that support the basics of the organisation and its present and future projects.

On the other hand, in the modest world, every organization is faced with new challenges regarding sustained productivity and creating committed workforce. Hence, it is important to understand the concept of commitment and its feasible outcome [22], that is, which behaviours implies employee's commitment and how it works. Project Leaders can use diverse techniques and styles to inspire their workers and thereby develop the individual and organizational performance. Retention of some of the first-class employees is an aspect most people of corporations are facing. Turnover is steeply-priced, and workers are the principle sources that help companies achieve their strategic goals. Leaders should make sure that the organizational lifestyle and leadership patterns that they appoint are effective in improving the commitment of personnel who work for their organisations by reviewing their management.

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