

# TEAMWORK AND ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE: A STUDY OF AL-HIKMAH UNIVERSITY

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## Abstract

*Self-importance and personal accomplishment have been an area of focus at work place which has led to the concept of teamwork been overlooked by managers and employees. Teamwork has faced a number of problems such as suspicion among team members, personality clash and gap in communication, which with these; organisations cannot achieve its optimum results. Thus, this study examined the impact of teamwork on organisational performance in Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin, Nigeria. The study adopted a survey research design. The study population comprised of academic and non-academic staff, with a total population of 661. Taro Yamane formulae was used to select a sample size of 249. Primary data was employed through structured questionnaire. Simple regression method was used to analyse the data collected. Findings of the study showed that Teamwork had a significant impact on organisational performance with 79.9% of the variation in organisational performance explained by team context, team design and interdependency. Therefore, it was recommended that more emphasis should be on teamwork activities in order for employers to be able to improve on their staff performance and that of the organization.*

**Keywords:** Teamwork, Organisation, Employees and Performance

## Introduction

It is an established fact that teamwork is not only the criteria for a successful management, but a way of improving overall results in organizational productivity. In recent times, there are so much importance on egotism and personal achievement in organisations; where by the concept of teamwork seems to be ignored by managers and employees, due to this, management sees teamwork as a major tool of performance which has led them to poor performance and productivity in the industry market. In turn, teamwork now looks for new ways to adapt quickly, operate more efficiently and better prepare themselves for future.

Not surprisingly, many organisations believe redesigning the structure of their organisation is the solution, on the other hand organisations can have dramatic benefits for the enterprise, including increased profitability, greater overall efficiency and better alignment of teamwork to business needs. Currently many organisational disciplines have implemented team work as essential strategy in achieving success and their mission statements routinely allude to the importance of team work, utilizing such words as corporation, coordination, collaboration, and communication as key component.

Team work enhances organisational cohesion or integration consequently giving rise to synchronization of efforts among the employed resulting in higher productivity. Although Organisational culture, job description, job satisfaction, skills and qualifications of employees together with the organisational structure help in achieving the targets of the organisation. Management team, production team or an entire organisation can be referred to as a team. Cooke (2000) opined that there is an increasing consent among scholars that organisations may be getting work done through individuals, but the super achievement lies in the achievement of set out goals through teamwork. It is an established fact that teamwork is not only the foundation of all successful managers, but the means of improving overall results in organisational performance thus; lack of team work in organisations have posed problems on the overall performance of employees in organisations. The most difficult task confronting managers, organisations and institutions in general is how to get workers do the needful in order to achieve organisational targets, goals and objectives with the required efficiency it deserves. The intricacy of human behavior and dynamics of organisational circumstances, makes management goes about dealing with workers in such manners as could undoubtedly produce sub-optimal results, thereby jeopardizing the chances of the organisations realizing their set goals and objectives efficiently (Mbinya, 2013). Teamwork is also faced with some problems such as structural problems, which include blurred objectives or unaccomplishable tasks to a small group. Other problems include history of mistrust, slacking off, and personality clashes can make it very difficult for some to muster up the interest in anticipating in any sort of work involving others. Thus, this study examined the impact of team work on organisational performance.

Ho<sub>1</sub>: Teamwork has no significant impact on organisational performance.

### **Literature Review**

Team can be defined as a group of people who work together to achieve desired common goals and deliver a good quality of service. Team building, events planning and activities have the potential to bring the people you employed to a strong sense of direction, workable plans and resolutions. A review of academic literature found that the word 'Teamwork' has been used as a catchall to refer to a number of behavioral processes and emergent states (Valentine, Melissa, Ingrid & Amy, 2012). In business setting, accounting methods may be used to provide financial measures of the benefits of teamwork which are helpful in justifying the concept (Ezzamel, Mahmoud & Willmott, 2000). In healthcare, teamwork is a dynamic process involving two or more healthcare professionals with complementary background and skills, sharing common health goals and exercising concerted physical and mental effort in assessing, planning or evaluating patient care. Without teamwork, house take long to build, government collapses and companies are surpassed by their competitors in the market (Edmondson, 1999).

As a result, organisations lay emphasis on the significance of employees working as a team. Hence it has become the focus of most work places, that teamwork gives employees a sense of ownership and promotes cooperation (Mulika, 2010).

### Advantages

1. **Employee performance:** Organisations that practice teamwork do experience increased employee performance, greater productivity and better problem solving at work. Conti and Kleiner (2003) highlighted that two important factors oneself management team and interpersonal team skills. These factors enhance the communication as well as interpersonal relationship between team members and also boost the employee performances. Teamwork is a significant tool of new type and that the good manager is the one who assigns the responsibilities to his/her employee in a form of group or team in order to take maximum output from employees (Ingram,2000).
2. **Boost productivity:** According to (Manz&Neck,2002), boosting productivity means boosting your output at work so that you can respond to tough, difficult competitive situations so that you can handle more challenges at home; when teenagers diversify their interest and need more of your time and support for instance. Importantly boosting productivity shows you how to do this without detriment to the overall balance of your life.
3. **Good decision making and implementation:** Teamwork has been used by companies to implement strategic decision that are taken in response to a range of business challenges and pressures. A company's attitude to the introduction of team is important in the process of implementation in decision making in that an effective team brings out ideal strategy of an organisation hence enhancing its performance.
4. **Team trust:** Trust among the members comes when member of the teams develop the confidence in each other competence. According to (Mickan &Rodger,2000) there is positive relationship between the team performance and trust. Trust generates the behavioural basis of teamwork, which results in organizational; synergy and better performance of an employee.
5. **Recognition and rewards:** According to (Hartenian, 2003) recognition and rewards are the primary focus of the individuals who are working in teams. Perceptive managers know and constantly capture the benefits of the team. Teams show the collective strength of the individuals and boost the motivation and morale of individual as well. Managers critically observe the team members hidden working potential otherwise managers may lose them. According to (Staniforth,2000) teamwork is the collective way of working which result in potential benefits and greater synergy. Managers must thus, plan and deign an appropriate reward system for the employee and encourage their participation in team projects. They should also set the team goals which are linked to the company strategic plan, ensuring of employee performance and unbiased payment methods. After this implementation, managers are able to establish their teams. Periodically monitoring the teamwork activities in order to check its effectiveness should be the primary focus of every business strategy.

### Disadvantages

Along with the existence of positive and constructive team roles, negative and destructive agendas can emerge that undermine the ability of individual teams to function and perform adequately. Negative and destructive roles emerge for a variety of reasons, including personal agendas, resistance to change, immaturity, and lack of motivation and/or team leadership and management. One of a leader's major roles is to observe individual team members and watch for destructive and negative behaviours. When problems surface, they need to encourage the team to collectively recognize and handle them within the team environment. If it fails, it is up to leaders to take specific action with the offending individuals(s). Leaders need to be watchful for the following negative roles and behaviours within their individual teams:

1. **Aggressor:** The aggressor criticizes everything said within the team environment, and is in effect an active naysayer. He or She has the ability to block the introduction of new ideas and concepts by minimizing and deflating the status of other team members and creating a sense of intimidation. If this behaviour and role is not checked it will tend to decrease the team's overall motivation and subsequent member involvement.
2. **Blocker:** The blocker is a dominant personality who automatically rejects the views and perspectives of others out of hand. These individual blocks the team's ability to brainstorm and discuss the merits of new concepts and ideas raised. Like the aggressor, this individual can be highly detrimental to the team effort as he or she intimidates individual members, limits their participation and decreases overall team motivation and involvement.
3. **Withdrawer:** The withdrawer holds back his or her personal participation and refuses to become active within the team environment. This individual focuses on his or her immature behaviour and attempts to resolve the conflict and unrest it creates, which effectively limits the team's ability to make progress of problems and assigned projects
4. **Recognition seeker:** The recognition seeker looks for personal attention and in so doing monopolizes the discussion by continually asserting his or her personal ideas, suggestions and viewpoints. The recognition seeker is also attempting to win the team over to his or her ideas and opinions. Unfortunately, this behaviour minimizes other individual team members input, which hampers overall team participation, involvement and motivation.
5. **Topic jumper:** A topic jumper is unable to explore any specific topic in depth. He or she displays a short attention span and continually interrupts group discussions by attempting to change the subject. These continual interruptions diminish overall productivity by keeping team meetings off-focus.
6. **Dominator:** The dominator displays threatening and bullying behaviour within the team setting. This individual use intimidating and minimizing behaviour in an attempt to take over the team and control all discussions. The dominator will typically hijack the team by coercing it to pursue his or her personal agenda.

### Factors Associated with Teamwork

According to (Pfaff & Huddleston, 2003) today, business competition, customer expectations, new technology, many other developments, it is more critical than ever to build teamwork in your organisation. The many challenges that your organisation faces, the more critical it becomes that teamwork is effective. The key elements to successful teamwork are trust, communication and effective leadership; a focus on common goals with a collective responsibility for success (or failure). However, without trust and communication the team will have difficulty functioning effectively. The whole process of organisational teamwork must begin with a company leadership team that creates a business strategy and a focus on the critical goals of the enterprise. Next there is the process of communicating the vision, values and mission of the organisation to a team or teams that will be responsible for planning and executing the mission and building trust in the teams and within the teams to carry out their assigned responsibilities.

According to Patrick (2002), senior executives, middle management and assigned team leaders, must foster and expect that team member activities include the following factors:

1. **Trust among team members:** Building trust takes time. If trust is lacking it must be the responsibility of the team leader to focus first on building trust, i.e getting team members to open up (among the team) and expose their weaknesses and fears to each other. In some cases, a team building exercise can be utilized. In certain business cases, due to time pressures, the leader may have to take responsibility for building trust or change the team to achieve the necessary level of trust for team success.
2. **Prepare to engage in debate around ideas:** Disagreements can lead to conflict, but conflict can be good. If ideas are not presented and debated, the team will miss opportunities to find the best solutions to problems. Respect for the thoughts and ideas of the other team members will be developed through healthy debate.
3. **Learn to commit to decisions and plans of action:** Team results will only come about as a result of team commitment to team decisions; this includes agreeing on the specifics of action plans. If some team members are not consistent with their commitments, the team will not succeed.
4. **Hold one another accountable against their plans:** Team members must be prepared to check among themselves to assure progress and overcome obstacles to progress. Ad hoc meetings may be necessary to coordinate actions between departments or groups to assure progress.
5. **Focus on achieving collective results:** The vision and/or mission of the team must be accepted by all team members and critical goals viewed as the collective responsibility of the team. If a return to profitability is a critical goal of an executive team, priorities and time commitments must be pulled for elsewhere. Focusing on results that in any way does not support the critical goal(s) of the team will lead to team failure.

### **Performance of Employees**

In this era of increased competition, leaders recognize the importance of teamwork more than ever before. Teams can expand the outputs of individuals through collaboration. Employees who are working in teams become the standard for the organisation. It means improving man-power utilization and potentially raising performance of individual. With a support of upper level management, an employee works confidently in team and increases productivity of the organisation. Nowadays, in the business world, managers are assigning more team projects to employees with opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and develop their skills (Hartenian, 2003).

According to (Cohen & Bailey, 1999) an employee is a collection of individuals who are interdependent in the tasks and who share responsibility for the outcomes. Team's enables people to cooperate, enhance individual skills and provide constructive feedback without any conflicts between individuals (Jones, Richard, Paul, Sloane & Peter, 2007). Teamwork is an important factor for smooth functioning of an organisation. Most organisational activities become complex due to advancement in technology; therefore, teamwork is a major focus of many organisations. A research study concluded that teamwork is necessary for all type of organisation including non-profit organisations. Team members enhance the skills, knowledge and abilities while working in teams (Froebel and Marchington, 2005). This means that employees who work in teams are able to improve upon their skills, ability and knowledge by learning from each other as they are working in a team, and due to that it enable them produce effectively and efficiently as compared to employees who work individually in organisations.

### **Impact of Teamwork on Organisational Performance**

Teamwork is the concept of people working together co-operatively, as in sales team, sports team, organisations etc. It has also become so valued that many large corporations have developed specific tests to measure potential employee's teamwork ability. Hence, it has become important in most work places, the beliefs are that teamwork gives employees a sense of ownership and encourages cooperation (Adeleke, 2008).

Team has been around for as long as anyone can remember and there can be few organisations that have not used the team in one sense or another. It is common to hear of management teams, production teams, service team or even whole organisations being referred to as teams that is, many organisation today are moving towards 'team based' approach to work, this means that working in teams is the basic method used to get work done in these organisations. As a result, employers stress the importance of employees working as a team and advertise for staff with the ability to work in such a way.

Companies are not just looking for technical ability but looking for people who can work on teams to solve problems.

## **Theoretical Review**

There are a number of models describing factors which influence team performance. For this study, Thompson's model of teamwork and Tuckman's Teamwork Theory was adopted. These two theories were adopted because the first theory believes that team performance is influenced by 3 concepts, which are team design, team context and team interdependence which were the variables used in these works. The second theory explains the stages a team faces before accomplish its task.

### **Thompson's Model**

This model came up in 2007 from Thompsons. These are ability, motivation and strategy used to help the achievement of targets in organisations. According to (Thompson,2007), for a team to achieve optimum performance, team members must have the ability to carry out assigned tasks together in order to achieve the organisational goals, be properly motivated and formulate a proper strategy on how to achieve their team targets hence performance. However, within an organisation, a team's performance is affected equally by other factors within the organisation such as job description, organisational culture, job satisfaction and organisation's values among other factors.

According to (Thompsons,2007), the rationality behind teamwork in organizations is based on three arguments; The team context must support organizational, team design and team interdependence. Essential conditions must support ability of employees, motivation and strategy, while team performance supports the productivity, cohesion and integration of the teams. People must be encouraged to work together to be able to develop entirely new ideas, products, procedures, and means through creative approaches. This theory is relevant to this study in that it aims at stressing the importance of teamwork and achievement of targets of organization. The theory highlights the need for teamwork of staff and thereby useful knowledge and skills in teamwork management.

### **Tuckman's Teamwork Theory**

Dr Bruce Tuckman published his forming, storming, norming and performing model in 1965. Tuckman's model explains that as the team develops maturity and ability, relationships establish, and the leader changes leadership style. Beginning with a directing style, moving through coaching then participating, finishing delegating and almost detached. The optimal or performing position is reached when relationships have developed within the group and it has started delivering with a clear focus on the task. However, Tuckman's ideas clearly indicate that it takes time to reach the 'performing' stage and it's normal for these teams to go through ups and downs as they develop relationships. Particularly in the early period which is perhaps why Tuckman called it the storming phase.

### **The four (4) phases of teamwork theory**

1. **Forming:** During the forming stage, members of the project team meet each other and learn about the task s they will perform. Team members try to see how they fit in with each other and understand what is expected of them.

2. **Storming:** The storming stage is characterized by interpersonal such as conflict and polarization. During this stage it is common for team members to challenge each other, including the project manager. People begin to see themselves as part of a team. However, at this stage they may challenge each other, and the team leader, about such things as what the team is doing, and how things should be done. As the stage title suggests, conflict and confrontation typify this stage, as differences surface. This may result in some loss of performance or focus on the task. At this stage, some of the skills that will help you build your teamwork are conflict management, active listening, and relationship building.
3. **Norming:** As conflicts become less intense and team members begin to understand and accept each other, the team will gradually move into the norming stage. This is the phase where team members start to come together, developing processes, establishing ground rules, clarifying who does what, and how things will be done
4. **Performing:** In performing stage, team members are comfortable with each other and group norms have been accepted. Interpersonal and structural issues have been settled and support task performance. Team synergy is high during this stage which results in high performance. This is the final stage where increased focus on both the task and on team relationships, combine to provide synergy. Performance is delivered through people working effectively together.

The value of Tuckman's model is that it helps us understand that teams evolve. It also helps us to consider how they may encounter different problems at different stages of their development. One limitation of the model is that it makes team building appear too linear and sequential. Tuckman's famous phases are part of a teamwork theory based on stages of team development

### Methodology

Descriptive survey was adopted for this study which allows the researcher to use various forms of data as incorporating human experience. The population for the study consists of the staff of Al-Hikmah University. There is a total of 661 staff. The sample size for this study is 249 staff using the Taro Yamane formulae. All data used in this study were sourced from primary data, obtained directly from respondents through the administration of structured questionnaires. The questionnaire is appropriate because it is assumed that the respondents are literate and they would be able to respond to the questions unaided. The multiple linear regression model was used to achieve the objective.

### Analysis of Research Hypothesis

H<sub>01</sub>: Teamwork has no significant impact on organisational performance

TABLE 1: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.799 <sup>a</sup>	.659	.648	0.01361

Source: Author's Computation, 2018

a. Predictors: (Constant)



From the model summary table shown in table 1, it was found that, the R value is (0.799), R square (0.659), adjusted R square (0.648) and the standard error of estimate is (0.01361). The large value of R indicates a stronger relationship between the observed and predicted values of the variables. In other words, the R value depicts that teamwork accounted for (79.9%) of the variation in organisational performance. The value of R-square (64.8%) indicated that the model properly fits the data. More so, the value of adjusted R (64.8%) showed that the value of R square closely reflected the goodness of fit of the data to the regression line.

#### ANOVA<sup>a</sup>

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	168.056	3	22.695	68.436	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	49.088	219	.192		
	Total	217.104	222			

(Source: Author's Computation, 2018)

a. Dependent Variable: customer loyalty

b. Predictors: (Constant), team context, team design, team interdependency

Furthermore, the analysis of variance in table 2 (Anova) showed regression sum of square value of (168.056) which is higher than the residual sum of square value of (49.081). This implies that the model accounted for most of the variations in the dependent variable. More so, the F calculated value of (68.436) is greater than the tabulated value of (3.90) indicating a significant relationship. In addition, the significant value of P (0.000) is smaller than (0.05) which means that the independent variables (team context, team design and team interdependency) to a high extent accounted for the variations in the dependent variable (organisation performance). Hence, the research hypothesis that 'teamwork has no significant impact on organisational performance' is rejected and its alternative is accepted.

#### Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	.233	.066		3.555	.000
	Team cont.	.592	.080	.466	4.113	.000
	Team Des	.421	.075	.447	5.611	.000
	Team inter	.407	.019	.349	3.746	.002

a. Dependent Variable: non-performing loan

b. Predictors: (Constant), team context, team design, team interdependency

(Source: Author's Computation, 2018)

Table 3 shows the model coefficient (that is, the intercept and the slope). From table 4.3.1.3, the results show that "team context" (t-value = 4.113, p-value = 0.000) is statistically significant at 5% level. This implies that team context brings about 46.6% improvement to organizational productivity. The result shows that "team design" (t-value = 5.611, p-value = 0.000) is statistically significant at 5% level. This implies that team design brings about 44.7% improvements to organisational performance. The result also shows that "team interdependency" (t-value = 3.746, p-value = 0.002) is statistically significant at 5% level.

This implies that interdependency among the team brings 34.9% improvement to quality of team work. By implication, this result has shown that for a team to achieve optimum performance, team members must have the ability to carry out assigned tasks together in order to achieve the organisational goals, be properly motivated and formulate a proper strategy on how to achieve their team targets. This result support the study of Pamela (2013) who also emphasized the significance of organisational culture on formation of teams and various job descriptions of employees on achievement of organisational goals.

### Conclusion

This study shows a strong positive and significant of teamwork on organisational performance. However, Findings of this study show that team context, team design and interdependency among team significantly impact organisational performance. The results showed that 79.9% of the variation in organisational performance was explained by team context, team design and interdependency among team. This implies that team context brings about 46.6% improvement to organisational performance, team design brings about 44.7% improvement to organisational performance, and interdependency among the team brings 34.9% improvement to quality of team work. This is in line with the study of Pamela (2013) who also emphasized the significance of organisational culture on formation of teams and various job descriptions of employees on achievement of organisational goals.

### Recommendations

The study therefore recommend that employers may be able to improve their performance by increasing the volume of teamwork and taking action to raise the performance level of the individual, but to succeed in this they need to pay attention to the team context, team design and team interdependency. Teamwork activity within the organisation is very much beneficial and its effect is directly on employee productivity. When an employee acquires adequate opportunities of teamwork his/her performance automatically improves and he/she will be satisfied with the job and this could ensure that skills are better utilized which might reduce the possibility of an employee quitting a job.

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