

Academic Qualifications and Professional Experiences effect on the Project Team skills in Malaysian Automobile Industries

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Abstract: Malaysia is unique within the Islamic world in developing a motor car industry that is geared towards both internal and export markets. After achieving initial success, its export performance has failed to match that of its international competitors. The main goal of this research is to uncover the factors that are suspected to contribute to this failure which is in the technology and styling of its models. In this study there are two independent variable (Academic qualification and professional experience) and three dependent variables (Technical skills, Human, conceptual skills). This study search to determine, inside a Malaysian based environment, the extent in which Academic Qualification and Professional Experience influence management skills (Technical, Human or Interpersonal, and Conceptual skills) in Malaysian Automobile Industries (Proton, Perdua, Inokom, MTB).

Keywords: Project Team skills, Technical skills, Human skills, Conceptual skills, Academic Qualification, Professional Experience, Automobile industry.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of study

There are two basic pillars in any professional career, firstly academic qualification and second most important is an experience. In anywhere in the world standards of education are different but common things are to finished school first, high school, degree and then master in any field. Some start their career at an early age, some just finish high school, most people starts their career after bachelors degree and few starts career late after finishing their masters degree and PhD respectively. In these entire scenarios, they get professional experience sooner or later. In addition, a professional experience is generally fabricated of on-the- job exercise, a variety of short courses, working experience, more interaction with people (customers, clients, teams, and stakeholders), understanding of organization culture and environment that just as combined structure of a professional learning.

Furthermore, the academic path center on the theory instead of a practical application and leads to a skill. With any occurrence, by this recognized qualification accompany with a label that can be highly considerable, yet, regularly these labels are not to deal with as equal in the recruitment zone. The real question is who get more advantage in their practical profession? Who has more experience or who has more academic qualifications?

In common observation, the unqualified person cannot do certain task easily or efficiently as compared to the educated people. One of the old proverbs; “**Knowledge is power**”, it is a powerful thought and people still believe in it. It means that a knowledgeable person can perform better at everyday jobs that require knowledge. However, even the general tasks educated people can handle better besides the task that requires the specific knowledge. As a matter of fact, the lack of both knowledge and education make a person crippled and incompetent. At this point, education does not imply the formal college certifications and educations although, it contains mere knowledge. Though a person may not have a degree but, the keeping of knowledge will make him efficient (Van Vugt, 2006).

One of the old proverbs; **“Practice makes a man perfect”**. In the case of a skilled or experienced worker, a worker having high-quality experience in his job can grow to be a leader due to his special gift of experience he gained during the course of his work.

In this research, the researcher tries to explain each valuable element which affects or gain the performance of employees in any field of industry, but the researcher’s target industry is Malaysian Automobile Industry.

2. RELATED THEORY

2.1 Management Skills theory corresponding by Robert L Katz

Robert L. Katz was a social psychologist. In 1974, in his famous article, “Skills of an Effective Administrator” in Harvard Business thought about the managerial skills relationship (competencies) and hierarchical levels of management. The conclusion was based on the setting of the three areas of managerial skills and their determination, characterized into different levels.

The basic principle of Katz’s theory is that an administrator (manager) must have three different skills set:

- Technical skills - Particularly for lower management competencies is important.
- Human skills - For all levels of management competencies required.
- Conceptual skills - Particularly for top management competencies with a substantial.

Every level of management involves from top to bottom. This is the best and precise way to skillful your employees and team by these management skills, to hire best candidates who are best Academically and Professionally. These management skills is the core of his/her personality.

Management Skills by Robert L. Katz

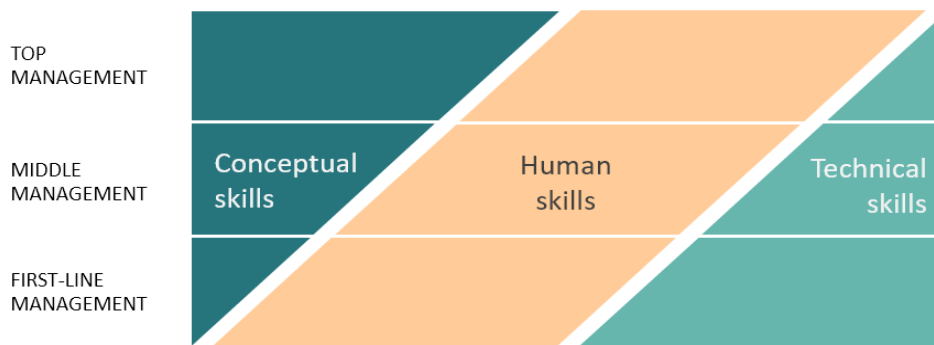


Figure 1: Management skills

2.1.1 Technical Skills

These skills information about the manager’s knowledge and ability to use different techniques to achieve what they actually want to achieve. Technical skills are not related only to production tools, machines and other equipment, but also, they are skills that will be used in designing numerous types of products and services, marketing the products and services and required to enhance sales.

2.1.2 Human Skills

Human skills are one of the most important management tasks. Human Skills is to work with people. Human skills present a manager’s knowledge and ability to work with people. Without people, there will not be a need for the existence of management and managers. These skills will facilitate managers to become leaders and motivate employees for better actions. Moreover, they will help them to make more effective use of human potential in the company. These skills are essential for all hierarchical levels in every organization.

2.1.3 Conceptual Skills

A knowledge or ability of a manager for more abstract thinking is all about Conceptual skills. It means manager can easily see the whole through analysis and diagnosis of different circumstances. They can predict the future of the business or department as a whole in every situation. These skills are related to an individual's ability to **think out of the box** and beyond expectation to handle the task smoothly. These skills are the ability to portray a vision of a new product, the impact and a company's position in the market. They are the ability to envision how things will look five years in the future, plan and organize to take this vision of the future and translate it into a sequence of steps that need to be accomplished to reach long term objective.

3. PROBLEM STATEMENT

In every industry there are a lot of people who works together, some of them highly trained and skillful and some of them are the decision maker or leaders, who can lead the organization in the right direction toward success. Project managers are one of them, who are strong in both knowledge areas (Education and Experience). However, there are a lot of examples of a failed project in the world because of project managers. Behind the failure of projects there are several reasons but who is in charge and commanding the project. Hiring the best man is a challenge. (Van Hoek, Chatham, and Wilding 2002). According to Elsdon; in an organization to achieving supply chain objectives especially critical in the "People dimension", organizations make an investment in human capital, to improve their market competitiveness (Elsdon, 1999).

According to Hunt, "to increase the ability to efficiency and/or effectively produce market contributions and enhance organization performance can be edge by the individual professional skills and knowledge" (Hunt, 2000).

According to statistics a lot of project failed and behind failure there are different reasons, most common not to meet triple constraint (Scope, Time and Cost) of the projects. Most of the IT projects have an average schedule overrun of 70% and cost overrun of 200% during one out of six projects. According to Harvard Business review; around 45% of companies are unclear about the business objectives and scope of their IT projects, they admit it. As per an IBM study, about 40% projects meet triple constraints (Harvard Business Review). During the past one year, only around one-third of all projects were successfully closed on the time and budget set. (Standish Group). Every year the US economy loses \$50-\$150 billion as a result of failed projects. (Gallup Business Review). Due to lack of participation from senior management around 33% projects failed. (University of Ottawa). By IBM research 2008 "Biggest barriers to success listed as people factors: Attitudes 58%, Culture 49%, and less support from senior management 32%.

3.1 Volkswagen Group (VW) Vehicle Emissions System (Project Failed)

Poor management is one of the reasons behind many project's failure. In Volkswagen case, the problem was **man-made** or intentional. The engineers intentionally designed and installed into the engine a control computer, a so-called "defeat device" (a piece of software rather than a physical device).

A defeat device is any motor vehicle hardware, software, or design that interferes with or disables emissions controls under real world driving conditions, even if the vehicle passes formal emissions testing.

This is arguably one of the most expensive scandals in modern corporate history reported in September 2015), people's confidence has shaken on a solid brand when it was revealed that Volkswagen cheats government emission testing. A story on the scale of Enron or the BP spill in the Gulf of Mexico, the story is a financial disaster and an embarrassment for the company's shareholders.

In addition, at least \$25 billion has been lost due to a dive in stock price and fines of up to \$18 billion right after proofs of the cheating.

According to media reports, it indicate that "NO (nitrogen oxide) emissions" are a significant pollutant with links to both lung illnesses and asthma, also in real world driving conditions some Volkswagen diesel cars emit up to 40 times the national standard for nitrogen oxide (NO). More than 11 million vehicles are affected including Volkswagen, Lamborghini, Skoda, Bentley, Audi, Bugatti, Seat, and Porsche brands (plus Ducati bikes and truck makers Scania and Man).

3.2 Malaysian government ICT project fails

ICT stand for Information and Communication Technology. it propose the most important transformational opportunities by contributing to the enhancement of productivity, growth, prompt of a knowledge-based economy, wealth creation, poverty reduction and competitiveness. From this project it dramatically improves the relationship between citizen and state, it is also a tool to enable government to improve public services, it should be considered as a transformational force.

In Malaysia, ICT was pledged as the catalyst of economy growth under the Economic Transformation Program (ETP). ETP is comprehensively focused on sustainable initiative that will transform Malaysia. According to ETP by the year 2020, Malaysia consider into a high-income nation. However, ICT projects provision in such contexts that lead to low success rates because particular challenges exist for the success and sustainability. As e-government projects are prominent for their high failure rate, the government has recognized the problems related to the successful development of those projects. The implementation strategy of the ICT projects handled by the Malaysian public sector, those are in-sourcing, outsourcing and co-sourcing.

According to the Attorney's report in 2006, for underutilized systems and as a solution, custom spent RM 290 million, one of the Consulting firm was appointed named as Deloitte Consulting to prepare a plan worth RM 451 million to overcome this problem [W. L. Lee. (2007)].

As I mentioned, example of Volkswagen case and ICT, the Malaysian government projects failure in the problem statement of study reason is very clear most of the project fails because of project team skills, poor management, lack of experience in that area, untrained employees, unqualified personnel for this position, communication gap between the high and low rank officers, inexperienced project manager, scope creep, unrealistic schedule, lack of resources and budgeting.

The researcher is just considering only those issues that related to project team skills and management skills of employees in these industries. To avoid any project failure, it requires an experienced person managing the team who is strong in its technical, interpersonal and conceptual skills. A person who makes a decision under stress, understand project financials, to manage tasks, resources, human issues, stakeholders, and users, to communicate well, to negotiate well, to argue well and most important of all, who has the ability to have dogged determination to see things through. The research aims is to investigate Academic Qualifications and Professional Experiences effects on the Project team skills in Malaysian Automobile Industries.

4. SCOPE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

The scope of the study is based on the automobile industry of Malaysia. The researcher focuses on the effectiveness of management skills of the employees in this industry by the significant effects of Academic Qualification and Professional Experience of the decision maker. Most Industries rely on that person who is academically and professionally strong enough in the field of project management.

Likewise, concentrate on the adequacy of administration abilities of the workers in this industry by the huge impacts of scholastic capability and expert experience of the leader.

The Heavy Industrial Policy in the mid-1980s denotes a noteworthy change of industrialization methodology in Malaysia towards building a broadly claimed and controlled car industry. The initiation of the main national car extend, PROTON, in 1983 with the arrangement of a joint venture between the Heavy Industry Corporation of Malaysia (HICOM), Mitsubishi Motor Corporation (MMC) and Mitsubishi Corporation (MC) of Japan was the Malaysian government's endeavor to build nearby substance, excuse the business to accomplish economies of scale and redesign the gathering business to an assembling industry with global aggressiveness (Abdulsomad, 1999).

The biggest makers of vehicles in Malaysia are the two national organizations, i.e. PROTON and PERODUA. These two makers consolidated created more than 79 percent of the aggregate number of vehicles throughout the years.

In Malaysia, four major vehicle organizations who creates and gathers autos i.e. PROTON, PERODUA, INOKOM and MTB (Malaysian Truck and Bus) PROTON and PERODUA produces (traveler) Passenger vehicles (PV) and INOKOM and MTB produces (business) commercial Vehicles (CV).

The researcher is based in Malaysia which makes data collection easy and faster.

5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In this study, the researcher determines to know what extent Academic Qualification and Professional Experience have influence on management skills (which are Technical, Human or Interpersonal, and Conceptual skills) in Malaysian Automobile Industries.

1. To what extent at which Academic Qualification (AQ) has an influence on Technical skills, Human Skills and Conceptual Skills of employees in Malaysian Automobile Industry.
2. To what extent at which Professional Experience (PE) has an influence on Technical skills, Human Skills and Conceptual Skills of employees in Malaysian Automobile Industry.

6. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The researcher's aim and objective are to analyze and verify the affecting factors Academic Qualification and Professional Experience on the employee's management skills in the Automobile industries of Malaysia. The researcher is curious to know which variable ("Academics Qualification" or "Professional Experience") takes more advantages and effect on the project team skills only by focus on technical skills, human or interpersonal skills and conceptual skill in these successful automobile industries. The researcher's focus only in this thesis is four Malaysian producers and assemblers companies in automobile industry and these are national and non-national companies. They are as follow;

- Proton
- Perodua
- Inokom
- MTB

In this study, first, it is good to understand what a Management skill is. For a better understanding of management skill the researcher used Robert Katz theory.

According to Katz's, he classifies three types of skills that are essential for a successful management process in any industry. All these skills come from strong academic qualification and a lot of work experience. Project Manager is a complete package.

- Technical skills
- Human skills (Interpersonal skills)
- Conceptual skills

6.1 CORE OBJECTIVES:

1. To determine the extent at which Academic Qualification (AQ) influences on Technical skills, Human Skills and Conceptual Skills of employees in Malaysian Automobile Industry.
2. To determine the extent at which Professional Experience (PE) influences on Technical skills, Human Skills and Conceptual Skills of employees in Malaysian Automobile Industry.

7. METHODOLOGY

7.1 Research Method:

Robert. L Katz theory of Management skills were used for better understanding of Technical, Human and Conceptual skills.

For this, Quantitative (Cross-Sectional Study) design was deployed. Selection of the target population and sample size and the instrument used for this study are a set of Questionnaires with multiple scales which include Likert Scale.

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7.2 Sample Size:

For this study targeted population would be Project Teams, from Automobile industries in Malaysia. The sample would be Project Team; Team leader, Managers, technical staff and other members from Automobile industries in Malaysia. This study seeks to collect a sample size of 364 utilizing purposive sampling as the targeted sample need to be exposed to project Team skills which include Technical skills, Human or interpersonal skills and conceptual skills.

7.3 Research Instrument:

A questionnaire shall be used to collect feedback from the potential respondents.

7.4 Sampling Method:

This research will be using non-probability/non-random sampling which would be divided into two categories purposive sampling and convenience sampling.

8. DATA ANALYSIS

Statistical software will be use to carry out Data analysis; Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to analyze in a statistical manner.

An empirical finding based on the collected data, the empirical analysis will be conduct by the demographic analysis, descriptive analysis, reliability analysis, Normality check, and Correlation and Multivariate Two-way MENOVA test.

8.1 Pit Falls and Limitations:

The limitation or problems which might be encountered during this research will be participant's willingness to give out sensitive and crucial information and language barriers.

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