A Literature Review on the Effects of Teamwork on Enhancing Organizational Performance

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Abstract
It is well known fact that teamwork is the foundation for enhancing the overall performance of an organization. Currently, organizations worldwide are striving to improve the effectiveness of their teams so as to compete globally. This study tries to examine the effects of teamwork on organizational performance. Several measures of team performance were analyzed including team effectiveness, team members' commitment and team-based organization structure. Besides, the study focuses on the role of team work on improving organizational effectiveness. After re-visited extensive review of literature, the study has been found that the effects of teamwork on organizational performance were not well examined in-depth manner. Lastly, the study suggests future study areas that prospective researchers should concentrate to come up with well established findings to address the limitation of the previous studies.

Keywords: Teamwork, effects, organizational performance

Introduction
In the recent era of ever-increasing competition teamwork is identified as an important way in which work is being reorganized. Human resource management, modern socio-technical theory, business process re-engineering and lean production system all embrace the core principles of teamwork (Benders and Hootegem, 1999). It also has an important linkage with organizational performance. In line with this, several claims have been made by scholars, management consultants and journalists about the advantages of working in teams in organizations more specially teams said to contribute to better outcomes for business organizations since they improve performance of employees, productivity of the firm or organizational responsiveness and flexibility (Greenberg, 2008). Indeed, organizations continue to rely on teams within the work place to achieve through task performance. Concomitant to this, Hertenien (2003) states that the essence of teamwork is work load is reduced and break in to pieces of jobs for everyone to take part. It is a fuel that allows people to attain common goals. A collective action is widely recognized as a positive force for team work in any organization to succeed. Getting to gather with others also can allow individuals to better understand the importance of teamwork and how the organizations operate as well as promote the culture of teamwork success. Hence, this literature review concentrates on the effects of teamwork on organizational performance so as to understand how teamwork can contribute to the accomplishment organizational goals.

Team work enhances organizational cohesion or integration consequently giving rise to harmonization of efforts among the employed resulting in higher performance. In a similar way, (Heggs, 1996) asserts that higher integration among employees institutional objective results in better organizational health. Recent studies show that employees working with the team can produce more outputs as compared to the individuals. Working in team empowers people and assist them to develop autonomy, which is a source of profound job satisfaction and reduce stress (Hayes, 2005). Likewise, research done by psychologists have affirmed that team can expand the outputs of individuals via collaboration and that employees who are working in teams become standard for organization's performance (Flick, 2006). It also the most appropriate means of improving manpower utilization and potentially raising performance of individuals within the organization.

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Research Method
The basic objective of the review is to examine the effects of teamwork on organizational performance. This study is purely qualitative literature review on the issue of teamwork and its effects on organizational effectiveness. To realize this, earlier studies pertaining to teamwork and organizational performance were reviewed from different journals, books and conference proceedings. In the proceeding part, literatures and relevant studies to the issue under review were discussed in detail and then conclusion about the overall review was given at the end.
Discussion

Team Work in Organization

Team works are viewed as an essential features of modern management theory and practices (Dhurup et al., 2015). Most organizational activities of today become complex due to advancement in technology therefore teamwork is a major focus of many organizations. Several authors agree on a team being a group of people that have complementary skills and who share responsibilities for the outcomes (Moura et al., 2014). In line with this, Jones et al (2007) suggests that team's enables people to cooperate, enhances individual skill and provide constructive feedback without any conflict between individuals. In similar way, organizations which emphasize more on teams have results in increased employees performance, greater productivity and better problem solving at work. Research study also concluded that team work is necessary for all types of organizations including non-profit organizations (Pfafl and Huddleston, 2003).

Team work is defined as collection of small number of individuals with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose, performance goals and approach for which they hold themselves mutually accountable (Greenberg and Barron, 2003). Three aspects of this definition are important: interaction among individuals, group efforts and interdependence. Team work results in individuals working jointly in a supportive environment to achieve common team goals through the sharing of knowledge and skills. Successful team relies on the synergy between team members in relating an environment, where all members contribute and participate in order to promote and develop effective outcome. In line with this, study confirmed that it is possible to design a system of building within every organization for employees so as to promote and distribute best practices and maximum outputs.

A number of theoretical arguments have been developed to explain why team working might lead to improved organizational performance. Some theories focus on the effort and motivation of individual workers and claim that they work harder. Strategic human resources management theory suggests that an appropriately designed human resources system, which typically includes team work will have significant effect on an employee's job satisfaction, commitment and motivation leading to behavioral changes that result in improved organizational performance (Becker et al., 1997). Similarly, self-leadership theory focuses on participatory decision making, individual’s distribution and team work as important motivating factors and suggests these will lead to more committed employees who strives for greater efficiency and effectiveness (Sims and Mans, 1996). Work design theory, however tends to emphasizes intra group process such as job design, task variety and interdependence (Wall and Marten, 1997). While socio technical theory high lights changes in the structure of an organization and its process as the main mechanism by which performance is enhanced (Van Hootegem, 2000).

It is apparent from this the teamwork–performance link is related to the more general discussions surrounding human resources management and performance, empowerment, self-leadership and so on. However, teamwork research should not be considered only within these contexts since a specific team working literature has emerged over the course of time (Salas et al. 2000).

According to Ingram (2000) team work is a strategy that has potential to improve the performance of individuals as well as organizations, but it needs to be nurtured overtime. Organizations need to look at strategies for improving performance in the light of increasing competitive environment. Top managers need to have the vision to introduce teamwork activities within the organizations, the sensitivity to cultivate it and the courage to permit teams to play an important part in decision making. Conti and Kleiner (2000) reported that teams offer greater participation, challenges and feelings of accomplishment. Organizations with teams will attract and retain the best people and this in turn will create a high performance organization.

Team Effectiveness

Teams in organization vary widely in their effectiveness in carrying out team missions and meeting objectives defined by the organizations (Sikora et al., 2008). As to Meglino et al (2002) found that team members’ belief in team effectiveness were related to higher level of motivation and satisfaction. Nzewi et al (2015 quoting Belbin supports strongly the view that team roles are very crucial to the success of any team and Batemen and Snell (2007) state on the contrary that team performance doesn’t so much depend on role but on three critical criteria’s mentioned here under.

a. The productive output of the team exceeding or meeting the standard quantity and quality as well as the acceptability of team outputs by customer who uses the team products or service.

b. The realization and satisfaction of personal needs by team member

c. The retention of the willingness and commitment to working again without the team burning out after a grueling projects

Likewise, Hackman quoted in Judeh (2011) observes that the effectiveness of the team depends on the degree to which a team outputs meet organizational requirements in terms of quality, quantity and timeliness (performance); the extent to which the team experiences con-
tributes to individual satisfaction (attitude). Delarue et al (2008) also suggests that a team could be considered effective, if it satisfies divers’ aspects of working condition such as job autonomy, job satisfaction, work intensity, team members’ commitment and learning environment. In general, research supports the idea that employees who believe they are members of teams that perform at high levels of effectiveness are more positive about organizations that provide opportunities to feel a sense of accomplishments and to be a part of a group that is respected by other employees, supervisors and top management.

On the other hand, Tarricone (2002) states that successful teamwork relies up on synergy existing between all team members creating an environment where they are all willing to contribute and participate in order to promote and nurture a positive, effective team environment. Team members must be flexible enough to adopt to cooperative working environments where goals are achieved through collaboration and social interdependence rather than individualized competitive goals (Luca and Tarricone, 2001). Research has provided a number of attributes that have been consistently identified in literature. Summary of literature on the successful attributes needed for effective team work as follows:

a. **Interdependence** - team members need to create environment where together they can contribute for more than an individuals. A positive interdependent team environment brings out the best in each person enabling the team to achieve their goals at a far superior level.

b. **Interpersonal skills** - the ability to discuss issues openly with team members, be honest trustworthy, supportive, show respects & commitment to the team and to its individuals.

c. **Open communication and positive feedback** - actively listening to the concerns and needs of team members and valuing their contribution and expressing this helps to create an effective work environment.

d. **Team leadership and accountability** - team members need to be accounted for their contribution to the team and the project. They need to be aware of team process, best practice and new ideas. Effective leadership is essential for team success including shared decision making and problem solving.

e. **Appropriate team composition** - is essential in the creation of successful team. Team members need to be fully aware of their specific team role and understand what is expected of them in terms of their contribution to the team and the project. Teams require the right number of members with the appropriate mix and diversity of tasks. A balance between homogeneity and heterogeneity of members’ skills, interests and backgrounds is preferred (Hackman 1990).

f. **Flexibility** - is the ability to maintain an open attitude, accommodate different personal values and be receptive to the ideas of others. Flexibility requires honesty, self-knowledge, reflection and regulation. Without understanding the diversity of personal and professional values, individuals risk judging others according to their own value systems.

g. **Individual Contribution** - the literature highlights different levels of individuals’ experience and skills within teams. Establishing and managing relationships between individuals who have a variety of personalities & a range of professional experiences is a critical component of teamwork.

### Team Members’ Commitment

Team commitment describes a psychological state which binds an individual to the party of interest (Van Vuuren et al., 2007). Akintayo (2010) defines employee commitment as the degree to which an employee feels to his or her organization. In this sense, employee commitment reflects the attitude of an employee towards an organization (Zhen, 2010). Team members’ commitment generally described as a working condition that if achieved can sustained team effectiveness and contribute to high organizational performance. Team commitment consists out of three basic dimensions; normative, continuance and affective commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990), which makes team commitment a multidimensional construct.

Team commitment is associated with beneficial outcomes like extra role behavior and team performance (Becker & Billings, 1993). Besides, research proved that commitment within teams influence organizational behavior and job performance (Bishop et al., 2000). A number of variables associated with commitment are: attachment to team, eagerness to make constructive changes, reluctance to quit team, likeness for the team, willingness to remain with team, team pride, optimistic perception of team and keeping to time. Besides, Bassoff (1983) asserts that committed individuals are more willing to invest personally in the team, contribute to the decision making and respect the balance of interdependence and collaboration.

### Team Structure

Organizations can be structured in various ways, and the structure of an organization can determine the modes in which it operates and performs. The team structure is a newer type of organizational structure, often seen as less hierarchical, in which individuals are grouped into...
teams. Likewise, organization theorists suggest that success in today's technology rich and financially volatile environment is best achieved through flatter structure which is best supported through systems of teams providing necessary coordination for all flexible and responsive organizations (Griener, 2010). There is nothing like one size fits all type of concept at play when handling different types of team structures for specific goals in mind. Deep thought and consideration is required to identify, assemble and also convince the team members to work together on a variety of assignments (Boakye, 2015).

Team structures organize each function into an objective-based group. Members’ from each department work together to solve problems and to find opportunities. Employees might be involved with product development teams or a diversity task force. The team structure can help remove barriers between departments and foster effective problem-solving relationships. It can also motivate employees and increase decision-making times. According to Tara Duggan (2013) using a team-based approach for solving business problems enables to capitalize employees’ strengths and minimize their weaknesses. A team-based organizational structure groups employees who perform specific duties into project teams that perform specific functions. This type of organizational structure allows organizations to ensure the best coverage for activities such as product development, customer support and process-improvement initiatives. Furthermore, team structure reduce management by eliminating layers of management, employees get to make decisions without getting multiple approvals. Additionally, employees feel empowered and morale increases. It also improves the relationships when people work on teams; they share the responsibility for completing work on schedule. Further, by adopting a team-based structure enables organizations to staff projects with resources that complement each other.

According Belbin (2010) successful teams require action-oriented, people-oriented and thought-oriented members. Action-oriented team members’ challenge the team to improve processes, encourage other team members’ to get things done and ensure work gets done on time. People-oriented roles guide the team, provide support and get resources for the project. Thought-oriented team members come up with ideas, evaluation options and provide specialized knowledge. This balance ensures that the team considers all angles to complex problems and solves them efficiently. Research conducted by Delarue et al (2008) revealed that adopting team based organizational structure yields positive outcomes to the organization. In a similar way, Harley (2001) states team-based work facilitates improved work processes and improved orientations at work, from which flows improved organizational performance. On top of this, Doorewaard et al (2002) show that the implementing of team-based work proved there to have a positive influence on the productivity, the quality of work and the experience of work.

The Effect of Team work on Organizational Performance

The effect of teams on organizational performance has been studied by many academics and practitioners for the previous years (Jones et al., 2008). The main reason for this attention is the belief that teams can affect the performance of organizations. The work of a team is deliberated by some researchers to be particularly important in achieving organizational goals and inducing performance among subordinates. Several reasons indicate that there should be a relationship between teamwork and performance. Scholars and practitioners suggest that effective team can facilitate the improvement of organizational performance.

Now days when markets are highly concentrated and competitive as a result of globalization and continuous innovation, organizations strive to words efficient utilization of valuable resources. One of the ways of achieving this is the application of teamwork which is thought to be the most effective way of human resources management leading to better organization performance (Zabzhahab, 2016). In line with this fact, Boakye (2015) states that team provides in knowledge, attitude, skill and experience whose integration makes possible to offer rapid, flexible and responsive to problems and challenges, promoting performance and improving satisfaction of these making up the team. Thus, the success of organizations depends to a large extent on the effectiveness of teams (Nzewi et al., 2015).

According to Ayaz (2016) team work is vital to organizational performance and for the accomplishment of quality and productivity enhancement. Concomitant to this, organizations which emphasize more on teams have result in increased performance and better problem solving at work. In a similar way, research done by scholars confirmed that effective team behaviors can facilitate the improvement of performance when organization faces new challenges as team work is one of the key driving force for improving organizational performance (Jones et al., 2008). On the top of this, Judeh, 2011; Agarwa and Adjrakor,2015) suggest that team work brings benefits in terms higher productivity, better organizational performance, competitive advantage, increased product quality and quantity in which highly contributes to organization performance compared to other factors.

Conclusion
From the in-depth review of previous of literature on team work and its effects on organizations performance, it can be concluded that team work has a significantly positive contribution for enhancing organizational performance as it services as driving force for the accomplishment of organizational goals. Furthermore, the review enlightens that most organizations recognize team work as a major tool for realizing their visions as working in team creates an opportunity to exploit diverse knowledge, skill and attitude of individuals in combination which is a source of competitive advantage. It also concluded that team commitment, appropriate team composition, interdependence, team leadership and accountability are the essential elements effective team. The existence of these components in the team leads to advancement of organizational performance. Moreover, team based organizational structure has significant contribution for the attainment organizational goals.

On the bases of the information acquired from the studies, it is clear that team work is a key instrument to promote organizational effectiveness. However, the previous studies were not investigated the effects of motivation, self team management and composition of work force (diversity) on team performance. Hence, it requires thorough investigation to reach on sound conclusion. To mitigate the research gaps, it is recommended to conduct comprehensive study on the effects motivation on team performance as motivation plays a decisive role in improving organizational performance. There may also need to conduct further study on the effects team based organizational structure on team performance. This would be imperative in the 21st century where tasks require expertise to work together so as to maintain competitive advantage. Finally, researchers should also carry out a study to examine the effects diverse work force to augment team performance which is a burning issue in the era of globalization.

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