FACTORS AFFECTING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TEAM BUILDING AMONG EMPLOYEES IN SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES IN MALAYSIA

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Abstract: This study is aimed to find out the factors affecting the effectiveness of team building among employees in small and medium enterprises industry in Malaysia. The focus of the study is the effectiveness of team building. Two main constructs which are group factor and use of technology have been identified as the independent variables. In addition, personal achievement and organizational commitment have been adopted as mediator to view how it affects the relationship of these factors and the effectiveness of team building. The study adopts the quantitative approach. A number of 385 employees from small and medium enterprises in Malaysia will be chosen as sample. The data will be analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0. In specific, Pearson Correlation will be used to examine the relationship; Multiple Regression will be used to evaluate the mediating effect on the relationship. Eventually, a model on the factors affecting team building in this specific context will be proposed. Hence, the conceptual paper aims to highlights the framework for this investigation. Consequently, the results yielded provide valuable information for effective team building among employees in small and medium enterprises in Malaysia.

Key words: Team building, Effectiveness, Small and Medium Enterprises

Introduction
The powerful impact of teams upon organizational effectiveness was first formally recognized in human relations literature by Elton Mayo more than a half century ago (Tubey, Rotich & kurgat, 2015). The use of teams has become a prominent trend of modern organizational life (Balcescu & Blaga, 2016). Effective teamwork allows teams to produce outcomes greater than the sum of individual members’ contributions (Salas et al, 2015).
There are undoubtedly many factors attributed to the effectiveness of team and one of the key contributing factors towards team performance is team building. Team building is an important catalyst in the organizational relations between organizations (McEwan, 2017). To ensure the competitive advantage in the global market, the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Malaysia have recognized the importance of team building and invested a lot in it (Muhammad, Char, Yasoa & Hassan, 2015). The team building is the key factor for the development of SMEs in Malaysia.

The implementation of team building in SMEs faces many difficulties, such as the financial issues, the safety issues, the conflicts among participants as well as the unexpected results. Sometimes, SMEs invests large among of financial resources and human resources to implement team building, hoping team building can help improve the productivity of team (Roskosa & Rupniece, 2016). However, some of the team building programs waste too much money but produce little benefit. So, what are the factors affecting the effectiveness of team building among employees in SMEs in Malaysia become the serious question to be answered. This study is aimed to find out the factors affecting the effectiveness of team building among employees in small and medium enterprises industry in Malaysia.

Literature Review
There are mainly two points will be discussed in literature review.

Effectiveness of Team Building
According to the literature review, the group factors, technology factors, personal achievement and organizational commitment are seen as the factors affecting the effectiveness of team building among employees in small and medium enterprises industry. The effectiveness of team building can be valued in various ways (McEwan, 2017). As concluded by Egan and Shandler group can make itself to be high performance one through conducting team building. However, Lacerenza et al (2018) summarized that the performance of organization can not be improved by conducting team building. Although team building is conducted in various ways, there seems no clear evidence to show that team building could improve the performance of organization (Saraswat & Khandelwal, 2015). On the other side Hagemann & Kluge (2017) stated that the success application of team building made significantly positive influences on the performance of organization. It is proved that there are many success contributions made by team building such as improving team performance, improving problem solving ability as well as increasing the trust among the members in the organization. The effectiveness of team building can be valued by comparing the input and output (EcEwan, 2017).

Factors Affecting the Effectiveness of Team Building
Group size in team building effectiveness has been strongly correlated within the literature with many scholars pointing towards the fact that smaller group sizes lead to better learning outcomes as compared to larger group sizes in which the learning can be compromised due to the limitations of teaching a larger group (Shiperd, et al., 2014). According to Mohanty & Mohanty. (2018) Group size is important because it allows for the effectiveness of team building to be moderated. It is understood that smaller group sizes are more effective than larger ones, because they foster engagement better (Sanyal & Hisam, 2018).

Leadership will influence not only organization but also other team members in the group (Tarpey & Poulney, 2015). In addition, leadership can help the accomplish the goal of the
organizations. Leadership is seen as the ability of person to affect others in the organization in order to help the organization achieve the goal. Leadership plays specific role in the process of team building (Wolfe & Shepherd, 2015).

Social media is kind of emerging tool used by individual and organization to communicate and share information in given situation. Social media such as email, notification services and instant messaging are helper communicators to share opinions and find the most proper solution toward the question. The communication is the essential elements in the success of team building, social media can be used to enhance the communication among members in the team.

Audio and video can be used to enhance learning resources by showing real life scenarios, explaining concepts, observing social groups, and acting as triggers for discussion. They are also able to bring experts and viewpoints to the learning experience and are excellent at bringing subjects ‘to life’ to engage discussion and inspire learning (Idris et al, 2018). The use of audio and video is hot topic in conducting team building.

Problem solving skills are the most important skills used in determining, practicing, and evaluating during daily work of employees (Hämäläinen et al, 2017). Institutions providing training must raise the problem solving skills of employees in order to give qualified work and solve the problems for individual and group. The problem solving skills will be obtained through team building for individuals. As long as the participants joining the program positively, he or she will improve the ability on problem solving.

Intellectual flexibility is keeping an open mind is important. You should be able to demonstrate that you can integrate new information and draw conclusions from it, and that you can switch from the detail to the big picture (Jena & Memon, 2017). Study on the potential benefit of flexible employee skills and behaviors has employed different levels of analysis and used multiple, and often inconsistent, explanatory concepts. Team building could make influences on the adaptability of employees, on the other word, the intellectual flexibility can be affected by team building.

The need for thoughtful, effective communication in the workplace is paramount. Seldom does an employee work in absolute isolation, instead, workers interact with consumers, peers, and management on a daily basis; this makes interpersonal communication an essential skill for today’s employees (Odine, 2015). Team building enhance the communication among members in the organization.

The problems solving ability, intellectual flexibility and effective communication are all skills that a member can be gained through team building which can be called personal achievement, these skills are also determining factors on high team performance. The personal achievement is decided by the groups factors and use of technology, personal achievement will also influence the relationship between influencing factors of effectiveness of team building and the effectiveness of team building (Mustafa, Glavee-Geo & Rice, 2017).

Organizational commitment is physiological sense of belongings to the organization (Singh & Onahring, 2019). Consistent with this view, Jabari & Ghazzawi (2019) advocate that a committed employee is the one who bestows energy and display loyalty to the organization through any circumstances, attends work regularly, protects the organizations assets, and shares in the organizational goals. Organizational commitment is the element to value the
ability of the organization, which can be enhanced by team building (Metin & Asli, 2018). Organizational commitment can be obtained through team building, on the other hand it will decide the performance of the team building. So, organizational commitment can mediate the relationship between factors influencing the effectiveness of team building and the effectiveness of team building.

**Conceptual Framework**

Based on the literature review, a conceptual framework is produced to facilitate in the data collection. The framework is made up of five major components: 1) group size; 2) leadership; 3) social software 4) video and audio; 5) problem solving ability; 6) flexibility ability; 7) communication skill; 8) affective commitment; 9) continuance commitment; 10) normative commitment. Finally, assuming that these domains are significant, the research investigate factors affecting the effectiveness of team building among employees in small and medium enterprises in Malaysia. Then the conceptual framework is proposed.

**Methodology**

In the social science quantitative method is the most commonly used in the research design as it can describe the existing phenomenon, investigate the relationship between variables as well as explore the causes and effects relationship between phenomena (Leary, 2004). It requires the collection and analysis of data.

The quantitative method will be chosen for this study because the follows

a) Comparing with the other research method such as the qualitative research method, it is effective in measuring the causes and effects relationship.

b) The use of the data analysis will provide the empirical evidence to explain the phenomena.

c) It is effective in controlling extraneous variables

d) It needs less time consuming in interpreting the data compared to qualitative method

e) It provides more subjective results compared to qualitative method as it prepares standard answers for the participants

f) It is proven effective in measuring the causes and effects relationship between phenomenon
Base on all these justifications, the researcher decided that the quantitative method is more suitable for the current study in order to answer the specific research questions.

Data Collection Method
The present study adopted the questionnaire survey method. According to Zikmund (2003), questionnaire is the simplest and most effective research tool. They are cost effective and reduce data distortion from any other tool. The questionnaire survey method is a method of collecting primary data in which a sample of participants are asked a list of structured questions chosen after considering testing, with a view to eliciting reliable responses. The questionnaire contains a number of usually closed questions that the research participants themselves can answer the questions; hence this is also known as a self-completion or self-administered questionnaire. The questionnaire could be administrated by different means such as by post, telephone, internet and face to face.

Comparing with other method such as the interviews, the questionnaire for data collection has numbers of advantages that attract many researchers such as covering a large and geographically dispersed sample, absence of interviewer effect, no interviewer variability, cheaper to administer, quicker to administer and convenience for respondent (Bryman & Bell 2007). However, the use of questionnaire also has its limitations such as lack of prompting, probing, asking additional questions and collecting additional data, greater missing values, lower response rate and uncertainty about respondent’s genuineness. Nevertheless, survey questionnaires are widely used in research studies especially those that adopt the positivist approach for data collection that can be statistically analyzed and used for testing hypotheses (Grohman et al., 2014).

Based on the above analysis the present study used the questionnaire method for data collecting due to the following reasons. Survey questionnaire method is relatively cheaper and quicker for the researcher perspective. Survey questionnaire provides convenience to the respondent to complete it. Survey questionnaire method has a higher suitability for the positivist approach and hypotheses testing, which were both applied in the present study. Use of the survey questionnaires for testing hypotheses in the domain of transfer of testing by several researchers. Quantitative data can be transposed into numbers, in a formal, objective, systematic process to obtain information and describe variables and their relationships.

Population and Sample
Population of the study is considered of employees in SMEs in five states of Malaysia, namely Johor, Kelantan, Melaka, Negeri Sembilan and Selangor. These five states are taken because they are representative for all the 13 states of Malaysia. A total of 72055 employees were found worked in SMEs in the five states of Malaysia. According to sample sizes from given population as per Krejcie and Morgan(1970) formula. According to the table, at 95% confidence interval, 382 is determine sample size for a population of 72055 Since total number of employees worked in SMEs are (i.e. approximately 75000) therefore a sample size of 382 employees worked in SMEs was considered as the optional size for the population of this study.

The sample was collected from employees in SMEs in five states in Malaysia. The chosen five states are Johor, Kelantan, Melaka, Negeri Sembilan and Selangor. Based on the number of employees in SMEs in these five states. The process of sampling allocation is explained through a flow chart in Figure 1.
Figure 1: Sample Allocation
Source: Department of Statistics, Malaysia

**Instrumentation**
The instrument identified to measure the focus of the study will adapt from the combination of previous developed instruments by McEwan et al. (2017) and Fapohunda (2013).

The questionnaire is composed of two sections. The section A is designed to gather the respondent’s demographic information on age, gender, race and level of education. The B contains items on group factors, use of technology, personal achievement, organizational commitment and the effectiveness of team building.

Section A 4 listed factors - multi-response
Section B 56 items close-ended Like-like items
  - 8 items on effectiveness of team building
  - 8 items on group size
  - 8 items on leadership
  - 8 items on social software
  - 8 items on video and audio
  - 8 items on personal achievement
  - 8 items on organizational commitment

All the 56 items in section B will be designed to measure the agreeability of the respondents towards each statement on the ten points Likert Scale.

**Method of Analyzing Data**
Generally, many studies use the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0 as the statistical tool to test and examine the structures and hypotheses of studies. In this study, firstly, the descriptive frequency statistics will be tested by using SPSS. This could help to represent a large volume of data, especially the demographic data trends. Secondly, the One Way ANOVA will be applied in this study to analyze the differences between two or more groups. The p-value (p<0.05) will be used to test the statistical significance (Hair et al., 2010). Thirdly, the hypotheses in this study will be tested by using SPSS. This software could estimate the relationship between the latent variables as well as the relationship between the latent variables and their indicators. So, pilot study will be conducted to analyze the validity and reliability of measurement model. And then the path coefficients will be used to determine the relationships between variables. Additionally, stepwise multiple regressions will be used to gather the significant components of factors in terms of contributing towards
establishing the dominant factors and their influence so that a model can be proposed. In short, this method is suitable for testing the hypotheses in this research.

**Conclusion**
The study sought to explore the factors affecting the effectiveness of team building among employees in small and medium enterprises industry in Malaysia. The effectiveness of team building is decided by many factors. The small and medium enterprises in Malaysia should make the influencing factor into consideration to make the effective team building. The results yielded of current study will provide valuable information for effective team building among employees in small and medium enterprises in Malaysia. Future research is needed to expand the effectiveness of team building based on the factors of the framework in this paper.

**References**


