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## Factors Influencing Project Achievement: Exploration of the University's Strategic Projects

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## Research Highlights

In dynamic and challenging economic era, an organization should be prepared to reform its operation and business approaches. This study was based on the implementation of the transformation program in the Malaysian public universities. This program has been designed and implemented to transform the institution in reaching the new heights towards global recognition and achievement. According to Saliunas (2007), the main intention of transformation programs are to enhance the organization's achievement by increasing or developing new capabilities through organizational restructuring, business processes enhancement and changes, new technology adoption and resources optimization.

Due to the uniqueness of the project resources and implementation, and the nature of organization, there are several elements that should be given attention in governing these projects to be successful achieved the organization's desired goals, such as; (i) leadership competency, (ii) project team engagement, (iii) project management practice, and (iv) information technology adoption.

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## Research Objectives

Past studies have indicated the importance of team engagement, project leadership and project management practices as the key drivers (Alias, Ahmad@Baharum, & Idris, 2012; Androniceanu, Ristea, & Uda, 2015; Banihashemi, Hosseini, Golizadeh, & Sankaran, 2017; Bjorvatn & Wald, 2018; Musawir, Serra, Zwickael, & Ali, 2017; Too & Weaver, 2014). One of the strategies to cope with the project challenges is to deploy a system that monitors, tracks and manages project performance. However, having the system does not guarantee for the project success. Therefore, all these key points : project leadership competency, project team engagement, project management practices and system adoption were investigated as the critical success factors for university projects. It is the aim of the study to validate the assumptions and to evaluate the governance of university projects. The research is important as managing projects requires close coordination and corporation from various sources. By identifying the critical issues of project governance and the use of the system, cases of project laggings could be minimized.





To meet the objectives of this study, an online survey was designed using Survey Monkey. The questionnaires were divided into three sections: demographic profile, project leadership (Dulewicz & Higgs, 2005), project team engagement (Suprpto, Bakker, & Mooi, 2015; Wang, Chou, & Jiang, 2005) and project achievement (Toor & Ogunlana, 2010). Face and content validity procedure was performed by the seeking the opinions from the experts in the field.

The population of the study was the project managers and the project members of public university strategic program. The number of project is 58. The population is 265 which involve 58 project managers and 207 project members. Therefore, by referring to Krejcie, R. & Morgan, D. (1970), 155 respondents were chosen as samples by using proportionate stratified sampling technique. The questionnaires were sent to 34 project managers and 121 project members via official email.

## Results

The conceptual model was empirically analyzed using SmartPLS version 3 for confirming on the validity and reliability. All of the item loadings exceed the minimum recommendation value of 0.6, which is required for an exploratory study (Ramayah, Cheah, Chuah, Ting, & Ali Memon, 2016). All constructs meet the minimum value of the threshold requirement of composite reliability (CR) > 0.7 and average variance extraction (AVE) are greater than 0.5 (Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2014).

A discriminant validity procedure was conducted by assessing the cross loading criterion, Fornell and Larcker criterion and Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT) (Ab Hamid, Sami, & Mohmad Sidek, 2017). There is a clear evidence of the discriminant validity establishment following the suggestions of Gold, Malhotra, and Segars (2001) and Kline (2011). The square-root of the AVEs of all latent variables are higher than the correlations on other variables. The results of the HTMT inference using bootstrapping confidence interval technique are less than 1. Therefore, it is confirmed every construct is truly distinct from one another.





In addition, prior to the structural model development, a procedure for addressing the collinearity issue was conducted. The results indicate multicollinearity is not an issue in this study.

## Findings

It was found project leadership ( $\beta = 0.289$ ,  $p < 0.10$ ), project management practices ( $\beta = 0.496$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and system adoption ( $\beta = 0.178$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) play their roles as predictors to project achievement. On the other hand, there is no evidence that supports the relationship between project team engagement and project achievement. Thus, it could be concluded that there is significant relationship between project leadership, project management practices and system adoption with project achievement. It was also found that there are medium effect sizes of project leadership and project management practices to project achievement, while the effect size of the system adoption is considered as small.

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