

Midocean University

Faculty of Management

Bachelor of project management



Project title

The impact of the work environment on employee performance. The Case of Smart Kids School Casablanca

Student name

Safaa ABNAOU

Graduation Project – 1

Faculty of Management - Midocean University

Supervisor

Dr. Mona Moustafa Elashry

Faculty member- Faculty of management- Midocean University

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Introduction:

Putri et al. (2019) posits that the success or failure of a company in achieving its objectives is contingent upon its human resources management practices. This implies that the management of personnel can either positively or negatively influence the attainment of organizational goals. GatraMapan, an Indonesian company founded in 1984, is a leading player in the home furnishing industry, specializing in knock-down panel furniture renowned for its innovative designs and unwavering quality. Its core activities encompass design, production, and marketing processes. To effectively enhance employee performance and thereby contribute positively to the company, GatraMapan must prioritize factors such as workplace discipline and the creation of a conducive work environment.

Gunaseelan et al. (2012) defines the work environment as the setting in which an individual carries out their work responsibilities, encompassing the physical, social, and professional surroundings. It constitutes the context in which interactions with colleagues and tasks occur. The work environment plays a pivotal role in shaping employee performance and efficiency. It comprises various elements such as processes, systems, structures, tools, and conditions within the workplace that can positively or negatively affect individual performance. Additionally, it encompasses organizational policies, regulations, culture, resources, interpersonal relationships, physical workspace, and external factors, all of which influence how employees execute their job duties.

Putri et al. (2019) asserts that employee performance is the evaluation of work outcomes against established standards and expectations. Essentially, it reflects the degree of accomplishment of tasks comprising an employee's responsibilities, indicating how well they fulfill job requirements. Companies anticipate high levels of employee performance, as greater individual performance correlates with increased overall productivity, enabling organizations to thrive in global competition. Employee performance is gauged by the effective and efficient execution of duties and fulfillment of roles, directly contributing to the company's success. It serves as a measure of the extent to which program activities or policies align with organizational goals, objectives, vision, and mission outlined in strategic planning (Badrianto, 2020).

Research Problem:

Despite numerous studies examining the impact of the work environment on employee performance, there remains a need for further investigation into specific factors and mechanisms underlying this relationship. While some research has identified broad dimensions such as physical layout, organizational culture, and social interactions as influential, there is a lack of consensus on the relative importance of these factors and their interactions. Additionally, the contextual nuances across different industries, organizational sizes, and cultural settings warrant deeper exploration to develop comprehensive frameworks for understanding the complexities of this relationship. Smith et al. (2020)

Recent research by Robbins and Judge (2019) emphasizes the role of organizational culture in shaping the work environment and subsequently influencing employee behavior and performance. They argue that a strong organizational culture that aligns with employees' values and expectations can enhance job satisfaction and commitment, leading to improved performance outcomes. Moreover, the study conducted by Smith et al. (2020) highlights the significance of leadership style in creating a positive work environment conducive to high performance. Transformational leadership behaviors, characterized by inspirational motivation and individualized consideration, have been associated with greater employee engagement and performance.

In conclusion, while existing literature offers valuable insights into the impact of the work environment on employee performance, there are still gaps that need to be addressed. Future research should focus on identifying specific dimensions of the work environment that have the most significant influence on different aspects of employee performance. Furthermore, longitudinal studies examining how changes in the work environment over time affect employee behavior and performance would provide valuable insights for organizational management and policy-making. Smith et al. (2020)

How does the work environment influence employee performance?

Research Significant

One significant aspect of this subject is the exploration of the role of physical workspace design in influencing employee performance. Research by Oldham and Fried (2016) highlights how factors such as workspace layout, lighting, and ergonomics can impact employees' cognitive processes, motivation, and task performance. Their findings suggest that well-designed workspaces that prioritize comfort and functionality can lead to higher levels of employee engagement and productivity.

Another significant area of study is the examination of organizational culture and its effects on employee performance. According to research by Denison and Mishra (2017), organizational culture plays a critical role in shaping employees' attitudes, behaviors, and performance outcomes. A strong and positive organizational culture characterized by clear values, norms, and communication channels fosters a supportive work environment conducive to high performance.

The Impact of the Work Environment on Employee Performance

Research Questions:

How do different aspects of the work environment (physical, social, psychological) influence employee performance?

To what extent does a positive work environment contribute to increased employee motivation, engagement, and productivity?

Are there specific factors within the work environment that have a stronger impact on employee performance compared to others?

Research Objectives:

To investigate the relationship between various work environment factors and employee performance.

To identify key elements of a positive work environment that contribute to improved employee performance.

To assess the potential impact of workplace interventions designed to enhance the work environment and its effect on employee productivity.

Research Hypotheses:

H1: A positive work environment will be positively associated with employee performance.

H2: Employees working in a physically comfortable and stimulating environment will demonstrate higher levels of performance compared to those in a less desirable environment.

H3: Employees who experience strong social support and positive relationships within the workplace will exhibit greater motivation and engagement, leading to improved performance.

Research Model:

A conceptual model will be developed outlining the proposed relationships between various work environment factors (independent variables) and employee performance (dependent variable). Mediating variables such as motivation and job satisfaction may also be included in the model.

Suggested Industry/Organization:

The empirical study could be conducted in a variety of industries. Here are two examples:

A knowledge-based industry, such as a technology company, where creativity and innovation are crucial.

A customer service-oriented industry, such as a call center, where employee interaction and well-being significantly impact customer satisfaction.

Research Methodology:

A quantitative approach will be employed using a survey instrument to collect data from employees on their perceptions of the work environment and their level of performance.

Statistical analysis will be conducted to assess the relationships between the variables and test the research hypotheses.

Suggested Structure:

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- 5. Discussion
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Abstract

This project investigates the impact of the work environment on employee performance within a school setting. Drawing on research within organizational psychology, it explores the scientific evidence linking various aspects of the work environment to employee well-being and performance.

The study will utilize surveys and questionnaires to assess employees' perceptions of the work environment, encompassing physical factors (lighting, noise level, temperature), social environment (relationships with colleagues and supervisors, communication, teamwork), and psychological environment (job control, workload, work-life balance, sense of purpose).

Employee performance will be measured using a combination of self-reported performance, supervisor ratings, and, where applicable, objective data such as student test scores or absenteeism rates.

Through data analysis techniques like correlations and regressions, the project aims to identify significant relationships between specific work environment factors and employee performance.

By understanding these relationships, schools can develop strategies to cultivate a positive work environment that empowers employees, fosters engagement, and ultimately drives improved student outcomes and overall organizational success.

Literature Review

- The Work Environment:

The work environment plays a crucial role in shaping employee performance. It encompasses a variety of factors that influence not only an employee's physical and mental well-being, but also their motivation, productivity, and overall satisfaction. This section delves into the three key components of the work environment: physical, social, and psychological.

1. Physical Environment:

The physical environment refers to the tangible aspects of the workplace. Lighting, temperature, noise level, and workspace layout all have a significant impact on employee performance. Research by (Vischer, 2008) suggests that inadequate lighting can lead to eye strain, fatigue, and decreased productivity. Similarly, studies by (Hedge et al., 2009) have shown that excessive noise levels can disrupt concentration and hinder cognitive function.

Furthermore, a well-designed workspace layout can promote collaboration and communication among employees. Conversely, a cramped or cluttered workspace can lead to feelings of stress and discomfort (Veitch et al., 2002).

As mentioned earlier, the physical environment refers to the tangible aspects of the workplace. Here's a deeper dive into some key elements:

- **Lighting:** Research by (Heerwagen & Basel, 2000) suggests that natural light not only improves alertness and productivity, but can also positively affect sleep quality, leading to better overall well-being. Additionally, studies by (Knez & Hygge, 2012) have shown that the color temperature of lighting can influence mood and focus. Warm tones tend to promote relaxation, while cooler tones can enhance alertness.
- **Temperature:** Optimal temperature can vary based on individual preferences and activity levels. However, research by (Zhang et al., 2010) suggests a temperature range between 68°F and 77°F (20°C - 25°C) is ideal for most office tasks, as temperatures outside this range can negatively impact cognitive function and concentration.
- **Noise Level:** Excessive noise is a well-documented productivity killer. Studies by (Evans & Hygge, 2000) demonstrate that noise disrupts concentration, hinders communication, and can lead to increased stress and fatigue. Implementing sound-

absorbing materials and creating designated quiet zones can significantly improve focus and well-being.

- **Workspace Layout:** Modern office design principles emphasize open spaces for collaboration, but a balance is crucial. (Weinstein, 2000) argues that open floor plans can be detrimental to focus and privacy. Strategic use of partitions, designated areas for focused work, and access to private meeting rooms can address these concerns and promote both collaboration and individual productivity.
- **Ergonomics:** Properly designed workstations that promote good posture and minimize physical strain can significantly reduce discomfort and musculoskeletal disorders (Bernard, 1997).

2. Social Environment:

The social environment focuses on the interpersonal relationships that employees have with their colleagues and supervisors. Supportive and collaborative relationships have been shown to boost morale, engagement, and knowledge sharing (Eisenberger et al., 1986). In contrast, a toxic work environment characterized by conflict, bullying, or lack of trust can significantly hinder employee performance (Fox et al., 2001).

Effective leadership also plays a critical role in fostering a positive social environment. Leaders who provide clear direction, offer recognition, and create a sense of belonging can motivate employees and encourage them to excel (Avolio et al., 1999).

The social environment focuses on the quality of interpersonal relationships within the workplace. Here are some key aspects to consider:

- **Team Dynamics:** Strong, cohesive teams characterized by trust, open communication, and mutual support have been shown to improve employee engagement, problem-solving, and overall performance (Hackman, 2002).
- **Leadership Style:** Supportive and transformational leadership that inspires, empowers, and provides clear direction has a positive impact on employee motivation and performance (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Conversely, micromanagement, authoritarian

leadership, and lack of recognition can lead to disengagement and decreased productivity.

- **Organizational Culture:** A positive organizational culture that values diversity, inclusion, and fairness fosters a sense of belonging and psychological safety, encouraging employees to take risks, share ideas, and contribute their best work (Schneider, 1985).
- **Conflict Resolution:** Constructive conflict resolution mechanisms that address disagreements effectively and fairly are essential for maintaining a healthy social environment. Unresolved conflict can create tension, hinder collaboration, and negatively impact employee well-being.

3. Psychological Environment:

The psychological environment refers to the emotional and cognitive aspects of the workplace. Factors such as job autonomy, workload, and work-life balance all contribute to an employee's psychological well-being.

Employees who feel they have control over their work experience are more likely to be motivated and engaged (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). Similarly, a manageable workload can help employees avoid burnout, while an unhealthy work-life balance can lead to stress, absenteeism, and decreased productivity (Demerouti et al., 2001).

In conclusion, the work environment is a multifaceted concept that encompasses the physical, social, and psychological aspects of the workplace. By understanding and optimizing each of these elements, organizations can create an environment that fosters employee well-being, motivation, and ultimately, high performance.

The psychological environment focuses on the emotional and cognitive aspects of the workplace. These factors influence employee well-being and their ability to perform effectively:

- **Job Autonomy:** Employees who have control over their work tasks and decision-making processes tend to be more motivated, engaged, and satisfied (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Micromanagement and excessive control can stifle creativity and lead to feelings of frustration.

- **Workload:** A manageable workload that allows employees to complete their tasks without feeling overwhelmed is essential for avoiding burnout. Chronic stress due to excessive workload can negatively impact physical and mental health, leading to decreased performance and increased absenteeism (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2005).
- **Work-Life Balance:** Organizations that prioritize work-life balance by offering flexible work arrangements, encouraging breaks, and respecting employees' personal time can contribute significantly to employee well-being and performance. Conversely, a culture that glorifies overwork can lead to burnout and ultimately, decreased productivity.
- **Sense of Purpose:** Employees who feel their work is meaningful and contributes to a larger goal are more likely to be engaged and motivated (May et al., 2004). Organizations can foster a sense of purpose by clearly communicating the company's mission and values, and aligning individual work with these goals.

- **Employee Performance :**

The work environment plays a crucial role in shaping employee performance. A positive and well-managed work environment fosters motivation, engagement, and ultimately, high performance. Conversely, a negative work environment characterized by stress, conflict, and lack of resources can significantly hinder employee effectiveness.

There is a wealth of research that confirms this symbiotic link between the work environment and employee performance. Studies by (Wright & Cropanzano, 2000) have shown that a supportive work environment characterized by trust, fairness, and recognition leads to increased employee satisfaction and commitment, which in turn translate to higher levels of performance.

Furthermore, research by (Hackman & Oldham, 1976) on job characteristics suggests that employees are more motivated and perform better when their jobs offer a sense of autonomy, control, and variety. Additionally, research by (Eisenberger et al., 1986) highlights the importance of perceived organizational support (feeling valued and supported by the organization) in fostering employee well-being and performance.

The Impact on Different Performance Dimensions:

The work environment can positively impact various aspects of employee performance, including:

- **Productivity:** A well-designed physical workspace with proper lighting, temperature, and minimal distractions can improve concentration and enhance productivity (Veitch et al., 2002)
- **Quality:** Supportive team dynamics and effective communication promote collaboration and knowledge sharing, leading to higher quality work (Hackman, 2002).
- **Creativity:** An environment that encourages innovation and risk-taking can foster creative problem-solving and the development of new ideas (Amabile, 1998).
- **Engagement:** Employees who feel valued, respected, and have opportunities for growth are more likely to be engaged and enthusiastic about their work (Deci & Ryan, 2000).
- **Retention:** A positive work environment can reduce employee turnover and contribute to a more stable and experienced workforce.

Conclusion

By understanding the work environment-performance relationship, organizations can leverage this knowledge to create a workplace that fosters employee well-being and unlocks their full potential. Investing in a supportive, well-managed work environment is not just an ethical responsibility; it is a strategic investment that leads to improved performance, increased productivity, and ultimately, a competitive advantage.

Delving Deeper into the Work Environment-Performance Relationship: A Multifaceted Connection

The link between the work environment and employee performance is a complex and multifaceted one. Here, we'll explore some key aspects of this relationship and the research that underpins it:

1. Mediating Factors:

Several factors can mediate the impact of the work environment on employee performance. These factors influence how employees perceive and respond to their work environment:

- **Employee Characteristics:** Individual personalities, skillsets, and preferred work styles can influence how employees react to different work environments. For example, some employees may thrive in fast-paced, dynamic environments, while others may prefer a more structured and predictable setting (Fisher, 1983).

- **Cognitive Appraisals:** Employees' interpretations and evaluations of their work environment play a critical role. A stressful work environment may not necessarily lead to decreased performance if employees perceive they have the resources and support to cope with the stress (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).
- **Job Demands-Resources Model:** This model suggests that a healthy balance between job demands (workload, pressure) and job resources (control, support) is crucial for employee well-being and performance. A positive work environment can provide employees with the resources they need to cope with job demands, ultimately enhancing performance (Demerouti et al., 2001).

2. Specific Environmental Factors and their Impact:

- **Physical Environment:** Research suggests that inadequate lighting, excessive noise, and poor temperature control can lead to decreased concentration, fatigue, and ultimately, lower productivity (Vischer, 2008) (Hedge et al., 2009) (Zhang et al., 2010). Conversely, a well-designed physical environment with ergonomic workstations and access to natural light can promote physical comfort and well-being, leading to improved performance.
- **Social Environment:** Supportive relationships with colleagues and supervisors, open communication, and a sense of belonging can significantly enhance employee engagement and motivation. Conversely, a toxic work environment characterized by conflict, bullying, and lack of trust can lead to decreased performance, absenteeism, and turnover (Fox et al., 2001).
- **Psychological Environment:** Employees who feel they have control over their work experience and are challenged appropriately are more likely to be motivated and engaged in their work (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). Additionally, a healthy work-life balance and a sense of purpose in their work can contribute to increased job satisfaction and improved performance (May et al., 2004).

3. Measuring the Impact:

Measuring the impact of the work environment on performance can be complex. However, some key metrics can be used:

- **Productivity:** Individual or team output, such as sales figures, units produced, or projects completed.
- **Quality:** Error rates, customer satisfaction ratings, or rework needed.
- **Employee Engagement Surveys:** These surveys can assess employee motivation, satisfaction, and commitment.

- **Absenteeism and Turnover Rates:** High rates can indicate a negative work environment impacting employee well-being.

4. The Business Case for a Positive Work Environment:

Investing in a positive work environment is not just an ethical imperative, it makes good business sense. Studies have shown that organizations with positive work environments experience several benefits, including:

- **Increased Employee Retention:** A positive work environment can reduce turnover costs and create a more stable and experienced workforce.
- **Enhanced Innovation and Creativity:** A supportive environment that encourages risk-taking can foster the development of new ideas and solutions.
- **Improved Customer Satisfaction:** Engaged and motivated employees are more likely to deliver excellent customer service.
- **Enhanced Employer Brand:** A positive work environment can attract and retain top talent, giving the organization a competitive edge.

By understanding the multifaceted relationship between the work environment and employee performance, organizations can leverage this knowledge to create a workplace that fosters well-being, motivation, and ultimately, a high-performing workforce.

Research Methodology:

1. Participants:

- **Target Population:** Employees within a school, encompassing teachers, administrators, support staff, or a combination thereof, depending on your research question.
- **Inclusion Criteria:**
 - Representatives from various departments (e.g., English, Math, Special Education), grade levels (elementary, middle, high school), and experience levels (new teachers, veterans).
 - Minimum employment duration at the school (e.g., at least 6 months) to ensure participants have experienced the work environment.
- **Exclusion Criteria:**
 - Individuals on temporary leave or experiencing personal situations significantly impacting performance (e.g., recent bereavement).

2. Measures:

Work Environment Survey:

- Utilize a survey or questionnaire to assess various aspects of the school environment:
 - **Physical Environment:** Lighting, noise level, temperature, workspace ergonomics (desks, chairs).
 - **Social Environment:** Relationships with colleagues and supervisors, communication, teamwork, sense of belonging.
 - **Psychological Environment:** Job control over daily tasks, workload, work-life balance, sense of purpose derived from work.
- Consider using standardized scales specifically designed to measure these constructs for increased reliability and validity.

Employee Performance Measures:

There are several ways to gauge employee performance in a school setting:

- **Self-reported Performance:** Employees rate themselves on specific tasks or overall job effectiveness.
- **Supervisor Ratings:** Supervisors evaluate employee performance based on pre-determined criteria (e.g., lesson planning, classroom management, student engagement).
- **Objective Data (if applicable):**
 - Student test scores (teachers)
 - Absenteeism rates (all staff)
 - Customer satisfaction ratings (support staff)

3. Data Analysis Procedures:

Once collected, data will be analyzed using statistical software depending on the data type:

- **Correlational Analysis:** Investigates the strength and direction of the relationship between work environment variables and performance measures (e.g., is there a correlation between job control and teacher satisfaction?).
- **Regression Analysis:** Explores how changes in one variable (work environment) predict changes in another (employee performance). This can help identify the most significant work environment factors influencing performance.

Additional Considerations:

- **Pilot Testing:** Before administering the final survey to all participants, conduct a pilot test with a small group to identify any ambiguities, confusing wording, or length concerns.
- **Data Security and Confidentiality:** Ensure informed consent is obtained, and all data is stored securely and confidentially according to ethical research guidelines.

By following these steps, you can effectively collect and analyze data to understand the relationship between the work environment and employee performance within your chosen school setting.

Conclusion :

A growing body of research underscores the significant impact of the work environment on employee performance. Studies by Demerouti et al. (2001) highlight the Job Demands-Resources model, which demonstrates that a healthy balance between job demands (workload, pressure) and job resources (control, support) is crucial for employee well-being and performance.

Furthermore, research by Veitch et al. (2002) suggests that even seemingly minor aspects of the physical environment, such as lighting conditions, can influence employee health and performance. Additionally, Hedge et al. (2009) found that excessive office noise can lead to decreased concentration and ultimately lower productivity.

The social environment also plays a critical role. Eisenberger et al. (1986) found that employees who perceive strong organizational support are more likely to be engaged and motivated. Conversely, Fox et al. (2001) demonstrated that a toxic work environment characterized by conflict and lack of trust can lead to decreased performance and turnover.

In conclusion, the evidence is clear: a positive work environment is not just about employee well-being, it's a strategic investment that pays off. By prioritizing factors like a supportive social environment, adequate resources, and a well-designed physical space, organizations can cultivate a high-performing workforce that drives innovation, success, and a competitive edge.

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