# EFFECTS OF TEAMWORK ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE: A CASE STUDY OF THE HOTEL SECTOR IN CAN THO CITY, VIETNAM

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**Abstract:** Potential effects of the teamwork and employee performance have been identified in the literature and viewed as as one of the most concerns in a branch of the human resource management (HRM). The study aims to examine effects of the teamwork on employee performance basing upon a survey from 120 employees working for 2 to 5 star-ranked hotels in Can Tho city. The widely-used methods for the qualitative data analysis including the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and regression analysis were applied. The empirical results show that the employee performance is positively and directly related with four elements, relevant to the postulated theory. It is also worth noting that two out of these four factors - Recognition and reward and Team trust – are enough of the statistical significance which may explain in the relation with the employee performance at hotels. In conclusion, some main findings and limitations of the study are pointed out.

Key words: Teamwork, Employee performance, Hotel sector, Can Tho city

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### INTRODUCTION

"Teamwork is considered workgroup with a common purpose for achieving a given organization's goals/tasks" (Harris and Harris, 1996). This may imply that individuals who work in a collaborative environment can share their knowledge, skills and experiences with other colleagues in pursing of the planned targets for the whole team. Few of empirical studies found that working in a team does not help team members raise their performance, but also boost to gain a higher level of productivity to the organization; no exception to hospitality sector (Karatepe, 2013). With benefits from the teamwork tool, managers have often assigned more team projects to their employees that aims to enable their knowledge, personal skills and to achieve the organization's performance (Hartenian, 2003). It was noting worth that one of the latest research done by Černevičiūtė and Strazdas (2018) had proved that teamwork could be more productive as compared to other colleagues. For those reasons, teamwork has been widely concerned and become an efficient tool for work assignment to organizations.

In the discipline of human resource management, many studies have empirically proved found positive impacts of the teamwork on the performance of employees, among those were done by Adbulle and Aydıntan (2019); Jawabreh et al. (2020), Adil and Hamid (2020). However, concerns of this topic seems to be rarely in empirical analysis, especially for the hotel sector in a particular place. Tourism industry is considered as one of the fastest growing industries in Can Tho city that contributed to nearly 10 percent of the city's Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP) during the period of 2016 and 2020 (Can Tho Department of Culture, Sport and Tourism, 2020). Due to globally serious impacts from the Covid-19 pandemic at the beginning of 2020, Can Tho only welcomed about 6 million of tourists, almost domestic tourists, rearching at 60.9 percent of the total tourists for the year 2019, and this figure is likely worser in 2021. In particularly to the hospitality sector in Can Tho city, there have a number of 123 hotels ranked with 1 to 5 star-standard and more than 100 unranked guest houses and mini-hotels. According to the survey in 2020 done by Huy et al. (2020), those hotels had created a large number of about 4,500 employments, accouting for 72,6 percent of the total direct employments for the whole tourism industry in Can Tho city. It is deduced to a fact that an assignment for employees in this sector is really required towards the application of systematic and efficient tools by managers. This study is organized as follows: The section 2 starts with literature review and hypotheses. The methods of data collection and analysis are described in the section 3. The findings from the analysed results are revealed in the section 4. Finally, concluding remarks are presented.

## Literature review and hypotheses

Larson et al. (1989) provided the description in their book entitled "Teamwork: what must go right/what can go wrong" that teamwork involves a team of two or more individuals who work together toward achieving a desired goal of the organization. For modern organizations, most tasks are commonly assigned teams than individuals; because a person can have creative ideas but may lack the brainpower to capitalize on those ideas (Woodcock, 2017). Teamwork is an integral aspect of

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an organizational environment as well as a prominent feature in which individuals can work together in achieving the organization's target (Mijakoski et al., 2018). The most recent work specialized into the hospitality sector by Mahmoud et al. (2021) proved that innovation and practices on human resource management within the organization would enable a creativity to employees and also establish professional teams of experts or staffs, and it thus leads to a more competitive and creative organization. In practically, managers usually build teams as groups of members and assign specific tasks or plans with the purpose of enabling employee's knowledge and professional skills (Hartenian, 2003). Because all team members can exchange and share their basic knowledge and professional experiences during the project, teamwork is indeed as a significant strategy for achieving the desired goal in convenience and time efficiency. In the recent study on teamwork, organizational commitment and effectiveness in education sector in Indonesia, Martono et al. (2020) emphasized that teamwork is seen as a key component in the organization and it depends importantly on the leadership style. Therefore, managers can arrange individuals into relevant teams that aims to take advantages of their skills and experiences in assignment.

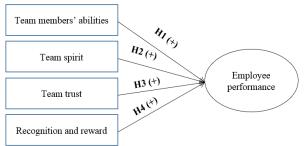
Al-Jammal et al. (2015) reported that employee performance as the levels of efforts and achievements that employees in an organization exert. In the most recent study done in the tourism industry in Indonesia by Idris et al. (2022) indicating that important implications for managers were suggested including encouraging high employee performance by strengthening organizational culture, particularly collaborative, flexible, and team oriented working.

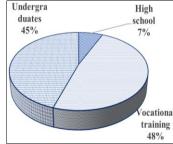
According to the survey of selected private banks in Mogadishu of Somalia, Adbulle and Aydıntan (2019 found that organizational culture-related factors such as team members' trust, cohensiveness, spirit and knowledge sharing are truly potential to improve the whole team's performance. The such finding implies that the teamwork environment creates employees more opportunities to mutually share their professional experiences and also learn from others and as resulting to increase their productivity and the whole team performance. Another paper focusing on the sample of small and medium enterprises in Anambra, Phina et al. (2018) found similar evidences and suggested that managers should endeavour to ensure each member in the team possibly to use necessary skills to perform tasks effectively.

In some recent studies for the tourism industry, for instance Yulianeu et al. (2021) emphasized that the transformational leadership plays an important role in boosting the employee performance in the case of the eco-tourism community.

The basic causal pathway of the HRM performance linkage model is as stated below: Teamwork  $\rightarrow$  Skills  $\rightarrow$  Attitudes  $\rightarrow$  Behavior  $\rightarrow$  Employee Performance. The general framework of this model is indirect linkage through skills, attitudes, and behavior between teamwork and employee performance (Manzoor et al., 2011). Follow up this approach, this study is applied is the HRM-performance linkage model to explain the relationship between two core variables - teamwork and employee performance. In the light of the existent evidences reviewed above, four hypotheses are proposed in this study regarding the context of the hotel sector in Can Tho city, as follows:

- **H1**: Team members' abilities has a positive effect on employee performance.
- **H2:** Team spirit has a positive effect on employee performance.
- **H3:** Team trust has a positive effect on employee performance.
- **H4:** Recognition and reward has a positive effect on employee performance.





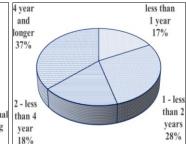


Figure 1. The proposed research framework

Figure 2. Frequency of the respondent's education and experience

## METHODOLOGY AND DATA DESCRIPTION

According the main goal of this study, the target population is comprised of the employees working for 2-5 star-ranked (standard) hotels on Can Tho city. Quantitative methodology is viewed as the most widely accepted approach for capturing the causal effects, particularly variables are almost measured in ordinal scale as Likert scale. According to Loc and Tho (2015), the sample size in the case of using the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) method must be at least 100 observations ( $n \ge 100$ ). In addition, a formula on sample size proposed by Hair et al. (2014) that it requires at minimum of 5 times of variables in the analysis, for example of the EFA tool. With the total 24 variables being incorporated in the analytical framework, thus the sample size for this study is targeted at 120 respondents. Because the total population of employees served at hotels in Can Tho city is not known, all targeted respondents in this study are thus contacted and interviewed with undertaking non-probability sampling method. Measurement of the survey data for this study is followed up a number of previous studies, all factors attributing the teamwork and the employee performance was estimated using a five-scaled Likert adapted from the recent work of Adbulle and Aydintan (2019). In detail, the emplyee performance as a dependent variable was measured in terms of four items consisting of the capacity for completing assigned tasks, career skills learnt, collaborated and supported got from colleagues. Four groups of the teamwork variables are a total of 20 items regarding the team member's ability, the team spirit, the team trust and the Recognition and reward. Each factor comprises of 5 items itself. The survey results from 120 respondents served at hotels in Can Tho city are reported in terms of indicators of the descriptive statistics

as follows: there are 57.5 percent of them are female (or 69 employees) and 42.5 percent are male (or 51 employees). The respondent's age was categorized into three brackets, 41.7 percent fall in the aged between 16 and less than 25, 51.3 percent of the total respondents age of 25 to less than 40 and only 5 percent of the remaining respondents was in age of 40 and older. In regarding with the respondent's human capital – educational attainment and professional experience, the result reveals that employees serving at hotels in Can Tho city were recorded at highly qualified. 45 percent of the total respondents had at least one university diploma, 48.3 percent graduated from vocational schools or colleges, only 6.7 percent being completed the high school program had no certificate or diploma. According to the work experience, the majority of the respondents had 4 years of work experience and longer, accounting for 37 percent of the total respondents, 18 percent worked from 2 to 4 years, 28 percent worked from 1 to 2 years, and ony 17 percent served at hotel less than 12 months.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In regard with the measurement to quantitative data, for instance an ordinal scale. First of all, the Cronbach's alpha analysis was used to examine the reliability of the proposed items in the framework. The analytical result reported in Table 1 shows that all the values of Cronbach's alpha for the constructed items are acceptable as they vary from 0.384 to 0.839, and firmly exceed to 0.3 as a minimum of cut-off point for the further analysis. Thus, it can be concluded that the reliability assumptions are satisfied and all items selected would be continuously used for the EFA procedure.

Table 1. Analyzing the reliability of scale (Source: The result from the survey of 120 hotel employees, 2020)

Variables	Item	Corrected Item - Total Correlation	Cronbach 's alpha
	ent variables		
Factor 1 -	Team members' abilities		
TMA1	Part of team's performance depends on knowledge, skills, and abilities of each member.	0.219	0.545
TMA2	The abilities of each team member set parameters for what members can do and how effectively they can perform on it.		0.512
TMA3	A team must involve members with technical expertise to be able to perform effectively.	0.254	0.533
TMA4	A team must involve members with problem-solving and quick decision-making skills to be effective.	0.485	0.384
TMA5	A team must involve members with good listening, feedback, conflict resolution, and other interpersonal skills.	0.347	0.471
Factor 2 -	Team spirit		
TS1	Team spirit in an organization is a situation in which a group of people jointly depend on one another to achieve team's goals.	0.403	0.685
TS2	Team spirit of sharing problems among team members in an organization enhances the performance.	0.572	0.609
TS3	Team spirit is a valuable asset for team members as well as an organization as two good heads are better than one.	0.385	0.677
TS4	Team spirit has a positive effect on job satisfaction of employees.	0.461	0.648
TS5	Team spirit and the desire to success bring the best things for employees to improve the performance.	0.498	0.632
Factor 3 -	Team trust		
TT1	Team trust allows team members entirely accept other's strengths and weaknesses.	0.380	0.764
TT2	Team trust facilitates the harmony by avoiding conflicts.	0.572	0.691
TT3	Team trust among team members develops the unique skills and coordination of individuals.	0.601	0.686
TT4	Team trust creates the behavioral basis of teamwork which results in organizational synergy and better performance.	0.503	0.717
TT5	Trust provides atmosphere for team members to discuss their mistakes, accept criticisms, freely expressing their feelings which enhances synergy.	0.572	0.691
Factor 4	Recognition and reward		
RR1	Team members expect the recognition or reward for job well done.	0.677	0.776
RR2	A manager should plan a appropriate system of rewards for team members and incentivize effective participation in the team.	0.568	0.807
RR3	A manager should set team's goals and make them connected to rewards to achieve the best performance from the team.	0.668	0.784
RR4	Recognition and reward can provide both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.	0.710	0.766
RR5	Reward of team should be focused on cooperative efforts rather than competitive ones.	0.512	0.823
Depender	nt variable - Employee performance		
EP1	I've finished the assigned workload.	0.580	0.839
EP2	I am capable of finishing off-duty tasks.	0.633	0.818
EP3	I've been cultivated to enhance my personal skills.	0.724	0.775
EP4	I've supported and collaborated with my colleagues.	0.780	0.757

Following the result obtained from the reliability measurement in using Cronbach's alpha, the EFA was adapted in this study in order to confirm the four constructed factors of the proposed items. In the meaning of the estimation, the EFA is a necessary tool to ensure that all items are assumed to estimated underlying a construct as hypothesized and without a mixture of items among the constructed factors of items. The EFA result revealed in Table 2 expresses that the assumptions are fulfilled because the testing the appropriateness of the EFA model was the value of KMO equal to 0.805 (0.5 < KMO < 1.0) and additionally the Bartlett's test of correlation of selected items in each constructed factor with its significant value of less than 0.05 as suggested by Watkins (2018). This clearly confirms all items belonged each the constructed factors in the framework are closely related. The results from Table 2 reveal that the factor loading of the constructed factors of items exceeded 0.5. In addition, four new groups of factors are formed by mixing 20 proposed items in the framework.

Specifically, the new first factor (F1) consists of 5 items signed RR1, RR2, RR3, RR4 and RR5 and it may be recalled as the Recognition and reward factor; the second factor (F2) includes 3 items such as TT3, TT4 and TT5 and they are re-called as the Team trust; the third one comprised 3 items of TT1, TT2 and TS1 and re-named as the Team's goal; the final one (F4) was formed with 3 items (i.e. TS3, TS4 and TS5) are re-called as the Team spirit. With 14 selected items belonged four factors in the EFA measurement, the Eigenvalue being 1.054 higher than one and the Average Variance Extracted being 63.59% higher than 50%. These values indicate the EFA model obtained fits the data well and the cumulative variance value may be used to explain the variation of the survey data at 63.59%.

Table 2. EFA results for a scale of factors affecting employee performance (Source: The result from the survey of 120 hotel employees, 2020)

Groups of	Variable	Factor loading					
factor		F1	F2	F3	F4		
	RR4	0.851					
F1:	RR3	0.785					
ecognition	RR1	0.776					
and reward	RR5	0.626					
	RR2	0.565					
	TT4		0.846				
F2:	TT3		0.690				
Team trust	TT5		0.683				
F3:	TT2			0.719			
Team's goals	TT1			0.713			
Team 8 goals	TS1			0.619			
F4:	TS5				0.723		
Team spirit	TS3				0.691		
ream spirit	TS4				0.628		
Eiger	nvalue	4.929	1.701	1.219	1.054		
Average Variance Extracted (%) 35.209 47.360 56.068							
KMO = 0.805							
Sig. = 0.000							
Total Variance Extracted = 63.59%							

Table 3. The EFA results for the scale of employee performance (Source: The result from the survey of 120 hotel employees, 2020)

Varia- bles	Item						
EP1	I've finished the assigned workload.						
EP2	I am capable of finishing off-duty tasks.						
EP3	I've been cultivated to enhance my personal skills.	0.790					
EP4	I've supported and collaborated with my colleagues.	0.747					
KMO = 0.762							
Sig. = 0.000							
Average Variance Extracted (%) = 68.50%							

Table 4. OLS result of the effects of teamwork on the employee performance (Source: Author's results from 120 observations, 2020)

Factors	Estimated coefficient	Sig.	Hypothesis supported		
F1: Recognition and reward	0.441	0.000	Yes		
F2: Team trust	0.290	0.000	Yes		
F3: Team's goals	0.127	0.106	No		
F4: Team spirit	0.072	0.359	No		
Sig.F = $0.000 \text{ R}^2 = 0.276$ ; Estimated error = $0.851$					
Durbin – Watson coefficient = 1.764					

According the independent variable - the employee performance – reported in Table 3. It can be shown that the testing the appropriateness of the model was 0.762 (0.5 < KMO < 0.1) and the Bartlett's test of correlation was less than 0.05. It can be confirmed that the items of the dependent variable were closely related as recommended by Watkins (2018).

To test the hypotheses proposed above, an analysis of the multivariate regression was implemented using the simple Ordinary Least Square measurement that aims to examine effect coefficients of four constructed factors formed from the EFA measurement on the employee performance. The estimated result is presented in Table 4 as follows.

It can be seen in Table 4, adjusted R<sup>2</sup> equals to 0.276 which means that the variation of independent variables explains 27.6% of the variation of employee performance; the remaining 72.4% is for the out-of-model variables and random errors. Simultaneously, Durbin - Watson coefficient equals to 1.764 (approximately equals to 2) meaning that there is no autocorrelation. Finally, the statistical value of the estimation model being less than 0.05 indicates that the employee performance was significantly associated with the explanatory factors in the frame work.

Concerning to the hypotheses introduced in the study, the multivariate estimation shows that there is enough evidence of confirming the hypothesis H3 and H4 in the framework in which the Recognition and reward and the Team trust have positive contributed to the employee performance at the statistically significant level at 0.01. Meanwhile, two remaining factors in the hypothesis H1 and H2 are also expressed to have positive effects on the employee performance, but their value of the acceptable significant level exceeding 5%. In general, the effect direction of the factors attributing the teamwork into the employee performance is fairly consistent with previous studies done by Adbulle and Aydıntan (2019); Manzoor et al. (2011); Phina et al. (2018). From the estimation results displayed above, some discussions are made as following:

First, the *Team members' abilities* was expressed to have no impact on the employee performance in an organization. However, during the survey of 120 respondents it was recorded that *Team members' abilities* was still paid much attention by the asked employees. Therefore, managers should give an endeavor to assign appropriate tasks in accordance with their specialized capacities and the strengths. Additionally, the regularly training is needed to enhance their professional skills moreover. Next, the *Team spirit* means that members in a team are interdependent. This should be consolidated when like-minded people are gathered in a group so that the organization can enjoy and utilize the full potential of the team. Furthermore, like-minded individuals working in a group can shorten the time to solve problems.

Besides, the *Team trust* influences positively on employee performance. Completing all the tasks punctually can show a sense of responsibility and establish trust for the whole group. Honestly sharing difficulties, actively accepting mistakes, being self-corrected, and changing to adapt to other team members are ways to create a comfortable atmosphere and enhance the performance of staff. Last but not least, the *Recognition and reward* is the most influential factor in the analysis. Therefore, managers should pay more attention on policies toward rewards in order to motivate employees. Setting goals for the whole team with "attractive" rewards is necessary in practise. However, managers must be careful to ensure that those are collaborative activities instead of individual competition. Also, from the information of the survey, the interviewers suppose that there are many difficulties when working in a group, for instance, lacking interconnection, refusing to listen to or share with others, being conservative. Therefore, managers working in hotels should take care and encourage the employees by team building activities to enhance the efficiency of teamwork. In brief, teamwork activities

for an organization bring numerous benefits and directly impact the performance of employees. When an employee gets an appropriate opportunity to work in a group, their performance may be automatically improved and accompanied by job satisfaction. Besides, teamwork is considered a tool to take advantage of employees' skills as a result of an available mechanism for learning from other members. The results imply that a tendency to quit a job will be extremely decreased. Importantly, teamwork makes sure that individual productivity is much greater with group arrangements.

#### CONCLUSION

The study aims to estimate the effect of the teamwork on the employee performance in the hotel sector in Can Tho city. The research is implemented by directly interviewing 120 employees serving at the hotel sector in Can Tho city. The research results have confirmed that the vital role of teamwork impacts employee performance. In detail, this theoretical model consisting of four factors of the teamwork, including *Team members' abilities, Team spirit, Team trust,* and *Recognition and reward*. Of which, two factors - *Recognition and reward* and *Team trust* – had positive and significant effects on the employee performance. This study is expected to provide more evidences of the effects of the teamwork on the employee performance for the hotel sector. However, there are still some caveats for this study such as the representativeness of the survey sample in the population of hotel employees because such data was being lacked. Second, a proportion of the hotel employees can work part-time or event-related work which may results to a fact that they had enough or much time to work together with many colleagues in order to accumulate or share professional knowledge and skills during the work. Finally, simple technique of the estimation for the correlation between the teamwork and the employee performance certainly remains itself limitations regarding assumptions of the normal distribution, constant error heterogeneity and so on.

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