

Dear Readers

Welcome to this special issue dealing with the Human Resource aspects of project management research, the importance of which has increased in recent years. As Turner, Huemann and Keegan (2008) point out, human resource management in the project-oriented organisation is a relatively underexplored topic. The three research articles and the case study in this issue address this important aspect of project management.

The first article, by Jigeesh, deals with workforce issues and their impact on projects in the Indian information technology and IT-enabled services industry, building on extent research to understand the people issues on project outcomes. The study is an attempt to close the gap in an area where there is scant research from countries such as India. The theoretical framework is grounded in the PMBOK®. Six major project management issues directly impacted by human resource practices (availability of new resources to operate new technology; availability of resources; skill sets of project workers; retention of project workers; employee-oriented programs; and motivation and coordination among project workers) are considered for their impact on project performance in terms of meeting cost, quality and time constraints. The results suggest that all six human resource issues significantly impact project performance.

The second article, by Dwivedula, Bredillet and Müller, is on work motivation as a determinant of organisational and professional commitment in temporary organisations, and significantly draws from organisational behaviour literature in defining the constructs of work motivation, organisational commitment and professional commitment. Two bases of work motivation, internal and external, and three bases of commitment, affective, continuance and normative, are identified. Furthermore, using self-determination theory as a lens, variables regulating the relationship between the two facets of work motivation and the bases of organisational and professional commitment are developed. Propositions are developed which would be empirically tested as a part of this ongoing research.

The third article, by Hussein et al, takes a broader view in understanding how human resource management impacts on larger business issues such as business process reengineering. It critically analyses the current approach to BPR projects that are fairly linear and normative in nature. It suggests that a successful BPR model is dynamic, accommodating stakeholder and organisation's specific needs, allowing a variety of tools to be employed to execute the project, and creating specific goals for the organisation. In this, the role of the human factor, in terms of changing the organisation's culture, structure, processes and power structures are explained.

In line with the broad theme of the issue, the case study, by Singhanian, focuses on developing a dedicated facility for employee recreation in a government defence contracting company in India. It presents a cost-benefit analysis of such a facility and shows that initiating such measures not only demonstrates managerial commitment to employee welfare, but also significantly improves employee morale.

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Reference

Turner, R., Huemann, M & Keegan, 2008, Human Resource Management in the Project Oriented Organization: employee well being and ethical treatment, International Research Network of Organizing by Projects-IRNOP 8, Brighton.