

UGSM-Monarch Business School Doctoral Research Plan

Leadership Competencies and Organisational Performance of State
Owned Organisations in Uganda

PROGRAM:	D. Phil. in Business Research
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Despite the natural resource endowment of African countries, and Uganda in particular, the performance of both public and private organisations may be considered to be lacking with respect to similar organizations in other regions of the world. It is argued that the poor performance may be attributed to a number of governance factors, such as: board size, ownership structure and board independence (Tusiime et al, 2011). The slow development of the Ugandan economy with respect to state-owned or parastatal organizations may also be explained by the ineffective application of leadership competencies by CEOs and Senior Managers (“SM”). In general, the relationship between CEO and SM leadership competencies and organisational performance remains unclear (Jing and Avery, 2008). Moreover, it is argued that the ethical climate plays a critical role in shaping the leadership effectiveness of CEOs and SMs. With this in mind, the contemplated research will examine the ethical climate as a contextual factor that mediates or moderates the variance of organisational performance in relation to CEO and SM leadership competencies within the Ugandan context of public organizations.

Public organisations, otherwise known as Parastatals, are any autonomous or semi-autonomous entity wholly or partially owned by government that operate under a Board of Directors (Kauzya, 2008). Parastatals are formed to improve service delivery on behalf of government, yet there is disagreement as to whether they are of much value to society (Rondinelli, 2008).

An effective leader needs the ability to translate knowledge into performance.

Boyatzis (1982), called these abilities “competencies” which he defined as “the underlying characteristics of a person that lead to effective and outstanding performance”. Bolden and Gosling (2006) argue that evidence remains scarce as to how the use of competencies might impact upon performance at an organisational level.

A number of theories have been put forward on how competencies are acquired and their importance to organisational outcomes. Two such theories are the Human Capital Theory by Becker (1983) and the Experiential Learning Theory by Kolb (1984). The Human Capital Theory assumes that education develops both generic and specific competencies which are both directly relevant to productivity which is reflected in better organisational level outcomes. The Experiential Learning Theory is arguably the most popular theory that explains how leaders learn by doing. One of the criticisms of this latter theory is that learning styles may not be stable over time while other critics suggest that the theory is too narrowly focused and restrictive in that it does not address contextual factors.

It is widely believed that leadership competencies create the vital link between organizational effectiveness and people’s performance at an organizational level (Judge, *et al.*, 2002a, 2002c; Judge and Piccolo, 2004; Keller, 2006; Purcell *et al.*, 2004; Yukl, 2002). Despite this, the theories do not adequately explain the seemingly poor performance of public and private organisations in Ugandan context given the fact that SMs and the CEOs of these organisations undergo rigorous recruitment

procedures to ensure that they have the necessary educational qualifications and experience.

The Theory of Reasoned Action by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) assumes that behaviour is influenced by individual perceptions and attitudes as well as social factors. This theory will constitute the point of departure of the research with regard to developing a better understanding of the relationship between leadership competencies of CEOs and SMs and the performance of Parastatal organizations in Uganda. In the context of this research, the social factor is seen as the ethical climate which may be considered to be a moderating or mediating factor of the leadership competency and organisational performance relationship. This view is supported by Simha and Cullen (2011) who argue that ethical climates have a strong influence on several organizational outcomes. Jing and Avery (2008) argue that most studies that have examined the link between leadership paradigms and behaviours and performance have shown a positive relationship but none have explained the nature of this connection as to how and why leadership affects performance. The contemplated research will directly address this gap in knowledge. The study will, therefore be guided by the following objectives:

1. To identify leadership competencies that improve effectiveness of CEOs and SMs in parastatal organisations in Uganda;
2. To examine the relationship between leadership competencies of CEOs and SMs and organisational performance of parastatal organisations in Uganda;
3. To establish the relationship between the ethical climate and organisational performance of parastatal organisations in Uganda;

4. To generate a model that will explain how ethical climate influences the relationship between leadership competencies of CEOs and SMEs and organisational performance of parastatal organisations in Uganda.

It is believed that the scope of this research does not appear to have been covered elsewhere which provides opportunity to contribute original knowledge to the domain of leadership competencies and organisational performance.

2.0 PROVISIONAL RESEARCH QUESTION

Keeping the above discourse in mind a provisional research question has been developed as:

“What are the characteristics of a new framework or model that explains the impact of the ethical climate on the relationship between leadership competencies of CEOs and SMEs and organisational performance of parastatal organisations in Uganda?”

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

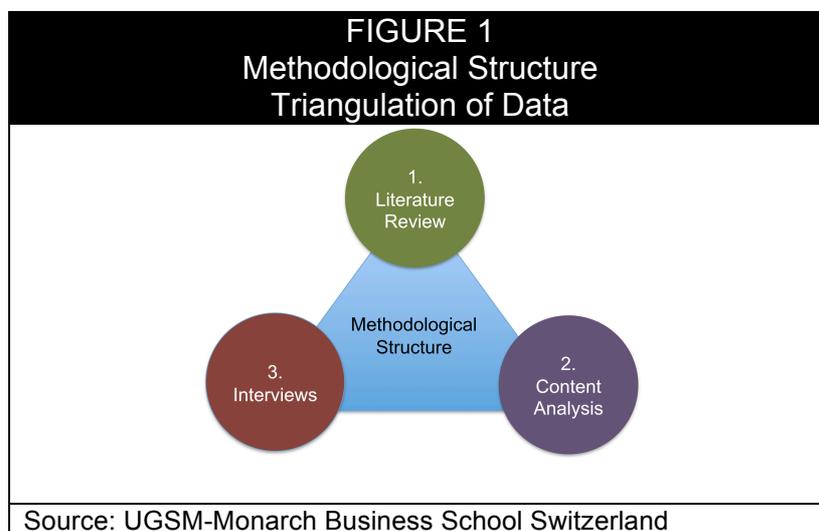


Figure 1 shows that the aim of the contemplated research is to respond to the provisional research question by way of a triangulation of research data, being: 1. literature review of existing seminal academic authors (desk research); 2. content analysis of existing corporate data (desk research), and; 3. interviews with primary stake holders in industry (field research).

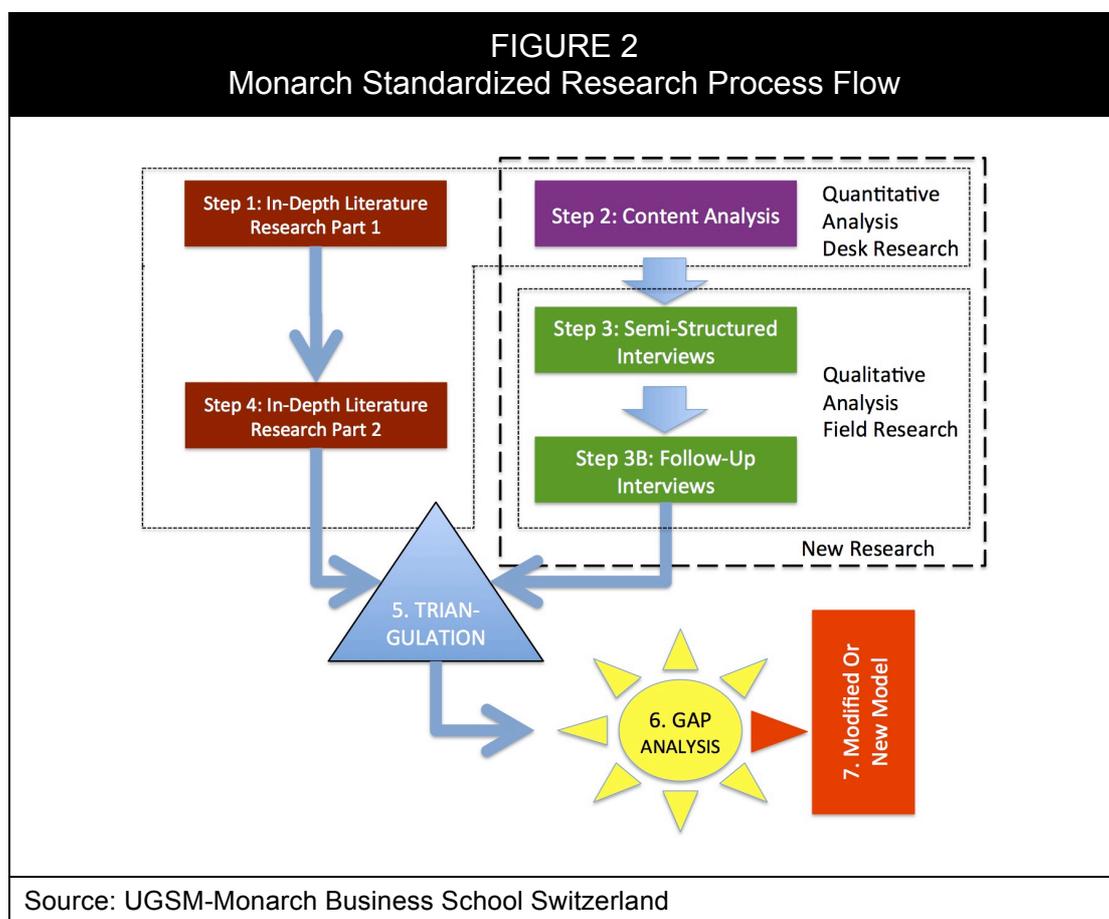


Figure 2 illustrates the steps within the Monarch Standardized Research Process Flow that will be followed within the contemplated research, as:

1. **In-Depth Literature Review-Part 1:** In-depth review of the seminal authors within the domain of Intellectual Capital will be the first step completed in order to provide a solid academic foundation to the research.
2. **Content Analysis:** An analysis based on data obtained from annual reports, white papers, supporting commercial documents and other commercial data sources will be examined.
3. **Two-Step Semi-Structured Interview Process:**
 - Step 1. **Preliminary Interviews:** The development of preliminary interview questions will be informed by and synthesized from the review of the literature and content analysis. Stakeholders to be interviewed will be industry participants considered knowledgeable with respect to the research at hand. A minimum sample of thirty (30) unique participants will be interviewed. Interviews will be held in person at a location amenable to the subjects and are expected to be approximately thirty (30) minutes in length. Telephone interviews will be used in the case that physical interviewing is impossible due to resource or time constraints. Interviews will be tape recorded unless objected to by the participant in which case manual notes will be taken.
 - Step 2. **Follow-Up Interviews:** of a more specific and narrow view informed by the first round of interviews, content analysis and literature review will be concluded with a smaller sub-set of 15 respondents obtained from the first round sample. These interviews will seek to uncover deeply held personal beliefs and

understandings on the research subject that will further uncover important aspects in responding to the provisional research question.

4. **Step 4-In-Depth Literature Review-Part 2:** A second more in-depth literature research review will be completed to further refine the scope and consideration of the existing knowledge within the academic field to add more expertise and specificity to the research analysis.
5. **Step 5 & 6 - Triangulation of the Data & Gap Analysis:** A triangulation of the data will be considered and analyzed in order to determine whether or not the existing academic knowledge is congruent with the practical application of the field on a commercial basis. The result of this analysis should dictate whether or not a “Knowledge Gap” exists between the academic (theoretical) and the practical (applied) domains.
6. **Step 7: Development of New Model:** Building on the Gap Analysis a thorough analysis of the existing frameworks within the academic domain will be made. This analysis will inform whether or not the existing frameworks sufficiently address the requirement for practical application within the industry and whether or not they may be further improved or modified.

The contemplated research is expected to conclude over a 36 month period. A breakdown of the time allocation by the different phases of the research is outlined in Table 3 below.

Leadership Competencies and Organisational Performance
of Parastatal Organisations in Uganda

TABLE 3 Provisional Research Timeline													
		Year 1				Year 2				Year 3			
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
PART A	Pre-Literature Review												
	Literature Review Part 1												
	Research Plan												
	Chapter 1												
	Chapter 2 & 3												
	Content Analysis												
		Official Submission of Chapters 1, 2, 3 and Slide Presentation To Obtain Authorization To Continue On To Field Research											
PART B	Interviews Part 1												
	Literature Review Part 2												
	Interviews Part 2												
	Data Analysis												
	Chapter 4, 5, 6												
	Manuscript Perfecting												
	Submission												
Source: UGSM-Monarch Business School Switzerland													

The research will be privately funded. No requests for supplementary grants, assistantships or scholarships will be made. The total budget of the project is approximately USD \$14,850. No additional resources or funding will be requested of UGSM-Monarch Business School Switzerland. The budget is presently funded and research may begin immediately upon approval.

TABLE 4 Research Budget	
	In USD
Conferences	1,000
Hotel Accommodations	3,850
Travel	4,000
Books & Articles	1,500
Statistical Software	1,500
Miscellaneous Expenses	3,000
TOTAL	\$14,850

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