

Shiva Foroutan, 3MT® Presentation

Imagine taking your car to the mechanic for a routine maintenance job, like changing the timing belt. You expect everything within the engine to work smoothly, right? But what if I told you that the gears responsible for coordinating the movement of pistons and firing spark plugs must be perfectly aligned for your engine to run smoothly? It's a meticulous game, a challenge of alignment.

Now, here's the twist: this alignment challenge isn't just limited to the world of mechanics. It is also found in the intricate fabric of social systems. For centuries, philosophers have analyzed how societies are governed, how decisions trickle down from the highest levels of power to the lower levels. Yet, often, there's a disconnect between the high-level standards and strategies defined at the top and the ground real practices done by those at the lower units.

This misalignment between the strategy of organizations and what is practiced at the lower level lies at the heart of a persistent key question in organizational theory: how work is organized. Organizational structures exist to enhance productivity, just as Adam Smith observed how organizing pin production in a factory dramatically boosted output.

In today's management literature, a spotlight shines on project-based organizations as a way of organizing work. Projects offer a focused approach to work. But there's also this paradox: while projects excel in their independence and temporariness, the organizations face challenges in ensuring projects' norms, values and way of working are aligned with the organizational strategies.

And this is where I step in. My research builds on the existing literature on the coupling between different organizational practices by considering the context of work being organized in projects. I specifically look at the Talent Management practices because they are considered as long-term strategic assets for organizations and for temporary projects it seems irrelevant. By understanding how project managers view and practice TM, we will theorize how organizational level practices are drilled down to project level practices and ensure smoother operations and greater success.

So, as we navigate the dynamic landscape of project management, let's not just focus on the gears and cogs but also on the invisible threads that bind them together. Because in the end, it's the alignment that keeps the engine of progress running smoothly.

Thank you.