

THE INFLUENCES OF UNTRUSTWORTHINESS AND TEAMWORK IN TEAM-BASED PROJECTS: MARKETING STUDENTS IN U.S. VS. KOREA

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Abstract

Untrustworthiness, a relatively unexplored concept in team-learning, is investigated as a critical factor that influences the success of students' team-based projects in cross-cultural settings of business schools (i.e., U.S. vs. Korea). Untrustworthiness refers to the negative judgments about the ability or willingness to contribute that a student or several students make toward one or more other of their peers with whom they have been assigned to form a team. Some students deem other students as being either unwilling or unable to effectively contribute toward the group project.

This study examines the negative impacts of untrustworthiness and the positive influences of teamwork to better understand how these critical factors link to the students' success in group work, i.e., effectiveness of team-learning and students' team-based project satisfaction. The relationships among untrustworthiness, teamwork, perceived benefits of working in groups, effectiveness of team-learning, and students' project satisfaction have been explored in each data set of 203 U.S. students and 245 Korean students. Through multiple regression analysis, untrustworthiness has been proven to negatively influence teamwork and effectiveness of team-learning in both data sets independently. However, untrustworthiness does not link to perceived benefits of working in groups based on either the U.S. students or Korean students, while a direct negative impact of untrustworthiness on students' project satisfaction has been observed in the Korean data set only. Teamwork has been proven to positively relate to perceived benefits of working in groups and effectiveness of team-learning across the data sets, and therefore, reconfirmed as an essential element for students' positive team project experience for both countries. Based on the test results, the possible treatments and guidelines for the instructors to mitigate untrustworthiness and to promote teamwork are suggested, along with the limitations of the study.

Table 1. Results of Hypotheses Testing: US vs. Korea

Hypothesis	Standard coefficient		Hypothesis testing	
	U.S.	Korea	U.S.	Korea
H1a: Untrustworthiness --> Teamwork	-.768***	-.616***	O	O
H1b: Untrustworthiness --> Perceived Benefits	.144	.061	X	X
H1c: Untrustworthiness --> Effectiveness	-.315***	-.116*	O	O
H1d: Untrustworthiness --> Project Satisfaction	.132	-.126**	X	O
H2a: Teamwork --> Perceived Benefits	.607***	.697***	O	O
H2b: Teamwork --> Effectiveness	.442***	.516***	O	O
H3: Perceived Benefits --> Effectiveness	.176***	.283***	O	O
H4: Effectiveness --> Project Satisfaction	.712***	.599***	O	O

***p < .001, **p < .01, *p < .05; N = 203 (U.S.) & 245 (Korea)