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The Effect of Organizational Resilience and CEO's Narcissism on Project Success: Organizational Risk as Mediating Variable

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to determine the effect of organizational resilience and chief executive officer (CEO) narcissism on project success via the mediating role of organizational risks. The study also highlighted the potential of the organization to adapt to environmental conditions, while maintaining successful projects according to established standards. The study developed a theoretical framework, within which the hypothetical structure was built on involving the five study variables. The framework was then tested and used in electrical power sector projects in Iraq, particularly in Basra. The study distributed 201 questionnaires to employees in the electricity power sector to obtain the required data, after which data were exposed to AMOS (version 20) software applying path analysis to examine the proposed hypotheses. Based on the results obtained, a negative direct effect was found from narcissistic CEO to successful project as proposed. Such a characteristic was expected to prevent successful projects, as narcissistic CEOs have a higher tendency to impose their opinions on the employees, while monopolizing the decision-making process. Aside from this, organizational risks were found to partially mediate the influence of the successful project in that the decisions made by the narcissistic managers tended to be more dangerous in crisis periods and, as such, such managers were major causes in the failed projects. However, the findings of the study have some limitations, such as the focus on one sector (power projects). The conceptual framework also excluded other variables that could contribute to project success, such as risk management technology.

KEYWORDS

CEO narcissism;
organizational resilience;
organizational risk; project
success

Introduction

According to Hughes, Tippett, and Thomas (2004), a project is deemed by organizations to be a significant challenge when there is no single approach to take to ensure its success, as a result of which, projects often lead to disappointments of the owners' hopes and interests (Cooke-Davies, 2002). In other words, a successful project constitutes an administrative challenge for organizations (Krajewski, Malhotra, & Ritzman, 2013). This may be related to the different risks that the organizations may face when achieving project objectives, owing to their influence of societies, organizations, and individuals (Van Der Vegt, Essens, Wahlström, & George, 2015). This issue has resulted in chief executive officers' (CEOs') inability to manage risks and to overcome them based on the experts' feedback (Di Serio, de Oliveira, & Siegert Schuch, 2011).

Moreover, organizational risks bring about the potential of an organization to respond to the interior/external factors through effective management in

order to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage (Andersen, 2008).

Additionally, aside from organizational risks that affect the success of the project, narcissistic CEOs also significantly impact the strategy of decision making and the operations of project management (Zhu & Chen, 2015). In other words, the CEOs' demonstration of opinions and their impositions of suggestions will result in higher risks and failed projects (Petrenko, Aime, Ridge, & Hill, 2016). This is particularly true as narcissism stems from the characteristics of megalomania and self-love (Hirschi & Jaensch, 2015). It is therefore important to make use of communication techniques that assist in managing risks via the transmission of a directive principle that relates to risk management style to maintain project success (de Bakker, Boonstra, & Wortmann, 2012). In this regard, responding to risk management can be sustained

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via the choice of a clarified strategy determining the risk management project procedures and assigning responsibility to the individuals in unfavorable situations (Lam, Wang, Lee, & Tsang, 2007).

According to Folke, humanity is the major force of change occurrences, and it comprises a stereotypical ecological system depending on the local environment; in relation to this, organizations are often faced with risks and crises threatening their economic and social systems, particularly when they are unprepared (Lee, Vargo, & Seville, 2013). This calls for them to maintain familiarity with their environments and predict events by enhancing their organizational versatility (Jaja & Amah, 2014; Umoh, Amah, & Wokocha, 2014). In particular, organizational resilience assists in responding to threats and risks in the environment in such a way that the organization can overcome the obstacles hindering project success (Manfield, 2016). This encapsulates a combination of interior and exterior assets that assist the organizations in overcoming conditions (Smiley, 2011) and in getting rid of narcissistic CEO practices limiting the reaction to negative circumstances, which ultimately mitigates the risks and heightens the success of the project (Buyl, Boone, & Wade, 2017).

Accordingly, this study attempts to determine the answer to the research question: To what extent do CEO narcissism and organizational resilience affect project success, with the mediating variable of organizational risks? A successful project calls for the setting up of a conceptual approach to understand alternative relationships among variables that could promote success. This study focuses on the power sector, as it is the top important economic sector in Iraq, particularly when, according to the International Economic Forum, the majority of failed projects lay within the power sector scope, because of the higher risk level that it is confronted with (Di Serio et al., 2011).

Theory and hypotheses

Organizational resilience

At present, one of the objectives of organizations is to adapt to local and international changes to maintain prosperity and to react to the changes, both positive and negative (Chu, 2015). In this regard, organizational resilience is the capability of the organization to foresee and resist events by adapting to them and naturally recovering (Jaja & Amah, 2014). Such capability to adapt may be categorized into two parts: first, concentrating on responding to the environmental changes through specified tools, and second, concentrating on the development of new response to environmental changes that could go beyond the potentials at present (Alrob, 2015).

The preceding definition indicates that organizational resilience is not limited to adaption capability, as it also encapsulates resistance against negative conditions and maintenance of the present status, transforming conditions into opportunities to sustain long-term sustainability (Kantur & Say, 2015).

Hence, in the realm of human resources (HR), organizational resilience is one of the properties that assist CEOs in dealing with stressful cases and adapting to the changes in the environment to achieve positive results despite the faced difficulties and risks (Othman, Hussein, Salleh, & Wahid, 2014). In this background, successful organizations are deemed as those that are able to address environmental challenges through the development of a robust culture that can handle crises while using moral codes to maintain the organization's status, managing fundamental shortcomings, and adapting to a dynamic surrounding (McManus, 2008; Umoh et al., 2014). According to Smiley (2011), organizational resilience comprises of external and internal assets, functioning as temporal stock among employees and work conditions, and, as such, assisting them to overcome adverse conditions (Smiley, 2011).

Organizations have to establish specific strategies to address emergency cases and share them with enforcing individuals when crises arise, and this can be achieved by handling three fundamental barriers: first, the limited awareness of the employees toward the operational environment; second, the management's need to manage limitations through the use of limited resources; and third, the organizational culture and its role in helping the organization to adapt to the surrounding environment (McManus, 2008). In other words, a resilient organization is one that has the capability of maintaining a sustainable development by improvising survival solutions (Kantur & İşeri-Say, 2012).

Therefore, Nishi described organizational resilience as a concept that has multiple dimensions, with no specific universal scales agreed upon by the researchers measuring the concept (Kantur & İşeri-Say, 2012). This is because resilience enhancement on the part of organizations contributes to the development of the community, as this is related to the organizations' response to crisis, providing fundamental services like power, water, sanitary requirements, transportation, medical care, and the like (Alrob, 2015). In the Kantur and İşeri-Say (2012) study, resilience improvement has three dimensions, namely, robustness, integrity, and agility. The authors further stated that organizational resilience improvement consists of robustness, redundancy, resourcefulness, and rapidity (Kantur & İşeri-Say, 2012).

Meanwhile, other authors indicated that organizational resilience enhancement consists of leadership, staff, engagement, awareness of the situation, decision making, innovation, and creativity (Alrob, 2015), and still some others indicated that the concept consists of agility, anticipatory ability, adaptability, and flexibility (Chu, 2015), as well as social skill, autonomy, optimism, humor, problem solving, and spirituality (Othman et al., 2014). Moreover, other studies like Jaja and Amah (2014) and Umoh et al. (2014) reported the organizational resilience improvement dimensions to be composed of organizational learning, adaptive capacity, and dynamic capability.

On the whole, researchers have a consensus on the dimensions of situation awareness, keystone vulnerability, and adaptive capacity (McManus, 2008), as these reflect the fundamental barriers that organizations may face, and thus, in this study, McManus's (2008) dimensions are adopted. More specifically, situation awareness refers to the elements that surround the environment and their time and placements (McManus, 2008), adaptive capacity refers to the system adaptability in cases where the system environment changes (Lee et al., 2013), and keystone vulnerability refers to the level to which individuals, properties, resources, systems, and culture, economic, environmental and social activities are vulnerable to destruction, damage, or distortion upon being exposed to hostility (McManus, 2008).

Narcissism

The concept of narcissism is described as a personal characteristic and operation reflecting a vulnerable feeling toward self and entitlement, aside from the indulgence of the required success and admiration (Ames, Rose, & Anderson, 2006). Meanwhile, Morf and Rhodewalt described narcissism as a diagnostic and statistical psychological disorder. Hence, it can be described as an abnormal type of excessive self-conceit and an exaggerated view toward the relationship of self with problems and other individuals (Back, Schmukle, & Egloff, 2010).

Moreover, it is an extensive conceit pattern that focuses on self and self-importance (Back et al., 2010), and it represents an enlarged form of self, with one's importance and influence (Wales, Patel, & Lumpkin, 2013). It was also defined as the relative individual differences that consist of conceit, self-importance, and personal viewpoints (Campbell, Hoffman, Campbell, & Marchisio, 2011), as confirmed by Blair, Hoffman, and Helland (2008). It is an extensive concept that covers the overblown feeling of self-

importance, imagination of success and indefinite power, need for admiration and entitlement, and intolerance and exploitation of others. According to Resick, Whitman, Weingarden, and Hiller (2009), narcissism is a dark characteristic, and Thomaes, Bushman, Stegge, and Olthof (2008) related that it results in a personality disorder that embodies views of self-conceit and the enlarged feeling of entitlement and exploitation of others.

On the preceding basis, it is evident that the narcissism characteristic is composed of different features including prominence, self-trust, feeling of entitlement, conceit, and low level of tolerance (O'Reilly, Doerr, Caldwell, & Chatman, 2014). Narcissism in the current study can be defined as a "continuum between extremes of healthy and unhealthy, with a range of narcissistic responses from the mild and transient to the fixed personality disorder" (MacDonald, 2014, p. 145).

In relation to this, narcissists have a tendency to ignore others' feelings, statements, and behaviors, and hence, they lack empathy toward them (Rijsenbilt, 2011); this leads to outcomes related to self-aggrandizement, cognitive distortions, impaired relationships, externalized and internalized behaviors, and insight defects (Emmons, 1987; Miller, Widiger, & Campbell, 2010).

In contrast to the preceding, the CEO's narcissism has been reported to boost his or her making of successful decisions that can withstand changes and promote creativity (Rosenthal & Pittinsky, 2006; Resick et al., 2009). Because the character of an individual plays a key role in forming his organizational behavior (Engelen, Neumann, & Schmidt, 2016), intensive narcissism is described as a characteristic that contributes to heightened organizational risks (Buyl et al., 2017), as narcissists are often revealed to be risky and adventurous (Campbell et al., 2011).

Organizational risks

Organizational risks represent the potential loss and its significance, along with the related uncertainty. Loss can be divided into six categories, namely, financial loss, performance loss, material loss, social loss, psychological loss, and time loss (Mitchell, 1995). Thus, organizational risk in the current study can be defined as a nonstrategic convenience that stems from different reasons: the project's disconnection from the strategy of the company, the mismatch between the service and product properties and the legal and marketing aspects of the organization, project team weakness, and the risks related to the process of production owing to the

inaccurate information obtained and limited resources (Krajewski et al., 2013).

In the background just described, risks and adverse events lead to factors that the system is unable to control, but because they are unpredictable, they need immediate handling (Van Der Vegt et al., 2015). This leads to uncertainty that confines the decision-making process and, ultimately, influences the achievement of the aims of the organization (Ariff et al., 2014). It thus becomes necessary to address risks by using determination, analysis, determination of priorities, administrative planning, and risk solving and monitoring (Kipyegen, Mwangi, & Kimani, 2012; Gitau, 2015).

Organizational risks have attracted increasing attention because of the advent of globalization and dynamic competition (Saleem & Abideen, 2011). In the literature, risks and problems have been differentiated in that the former are considered to be future occurring and confine the organization's ability to achieve partial/whole objectives, whereas the latter are considered to be the manifestation of risks (Ridha & Alnaji, 2013). Although organizational risks are primarily viewed as negative, in some instances they are positive as they contribute to the urging of the organization to respond to external and internal changes and to manage risks, which in turn leads to profitability using response and innovativeness (Andersen, 2008; Daud, Yazid, & Hussin, 2010). Additionally, risks reflect a significant motive to set up strategic alliances, forming an important strategy of costs mitigation and knowledge sharing (Thechatakerng & Rialp Criado, 2004).

According to a related study (Bin Ishaq, 2015), the majority (80%) of CEOs consider CEOs to be related to negative outcomes, although they represent the potential to produce positive organizational outcomes. Therefore, the organization has to leverage risks by responding to them and achieving a mutual understanding among the organizational members, when it comes to readiness and preparation via documentation and establishment of risk guidelines and procedures (Bin Ishaq, 2015). This calls for the determination of priorities where the risks with the greatest loss shall be addressed prior to those with the least loss—and such risks can be transformed into opportunities to generate positive outcomes (Omasete, 2014). As a consequence, several organizations work with risks managers to determine potential risks and reacting by transforming them from threats to opportunities (Sadiq & Graham, 2014).

Project success

Prior literature considers a successful project to be one that achieves the technical performance specifications

and tasks performance, as well as meeting the satisfaction of the organization's major figures (i.e., clients, project team, and users) (Hughes et al., 2004), and that meets standards relates to costs, scheduling, quality, performance, safeguards, and operational environment (Cheng, Tsai, & Sudjono, 2012; Cooke-Davies, 2002). Other authors indicated that the project team, consisting of contractor, owner, and designer, and the oversight attempts and related factors are crucial for successful project (Chua, Loh, Kog, & Jaselskis, 1997). With regard to the differences in project success, standard oversight methods are utilized to compare the estimations to actual values in order to rectify procedures pertaining to divisions of time, cost, quality, and other success factors (Russell, Jaselskis, & Lawrence, 1997). In other words, it is crucial for the project manager and the team members to take several measures to ensure project success, including persistence, commitment, coordination, and control. However, such measures will fail unless high management via administrative support reinforcement of project adaptability projects to the daily activities (Kerzner, 2003). In this regard, 15% of projects assigned 50% of general budgets all over the world fail because of performance delay, manufacturer weakness, and lack of maintenance before the project handover (Scott-Young & Samson, 2008). In a related study by Shenhar and Dvir (1996), 70% of projects passed over financial appropriations, and owing to pressures, it has become a must to provide training to employees and collaboration with professional project managers to achieve successful projects (Saadé, Dong, & Wan, 2015).

Furthermore, Serrador & Turner (2015) indicated that successful projects require efficiency, based on their examination of 1386 projects globally. They found that 60% of the owners indicated efficiency as a crucial issue for successful projects. Malach-Pines, Dvir, & Sadeh (2009) described project efficiency as the level to which the project satisfies the time and cost requirements. According to relevant studies, a successful project is one that satisfies the time, cost, and quality requirements (iron triangle) (Atkinson, 1999; Berssaneti & Carvalho, 2015). Nevertheless, owing to the complexity, volume, and independence of projects, it is difficult to determine standard factors (Mir & Pinnington, 2014). Also, differences can arise in classifying project success standards owing to their types. This may be exemplified by projects that are complex and fixed (price contracts), where the client's satisfaction is viewed as a crucial issue in its success, and high-performance projects, where a major issue is the owner's satisfaction (Müller & Turner, 2007).

To conclude, project success is primarily dependent on the future prediction of the organization—and if the

organization is able to predict the future accurately and effectively, then it can prepare for it (Martínez & Fernández-Rodríguez, 2015) and manage a successful project by minimizing the risks (Mitchell, 1995) and the narcissistic CEO leadership and by enhancing the resilience of the organization (Kantur & Say, 2015).

CEO's narcissism, resilience improvement, organizational risks, and project success

The success of the project is dependent on the personal characteristics of the manager, as the manager has a major influence on the working team (Hassan, Bashir, & Abbas, 2017). This is because such characteristics are utilized by the project manager in his or her leadership position, and hence, they influence the project success (Wang, 2009). In regard to this, the higher the narcissism of the CEO, the higher will be the likelihood of the project to succeed, as narcissistic CEOs are more confident in tackling challenges and in being proactive in their decisions and actions (Hirschi & Jaensch, 2015). In another related study, Williams and Williams (2017) stated that narcissistic CEOs could result in limited performance, and in turn, this influences success.

In relation to the preceding, organization sustenance and survival in adverse situations are mostly related to the resilience of the organization in reducing CEO narcissism, and this differs from one organizational condition to the next (Buyl et al., 2017). Hence, organizational resilience refers to the capability of the organization to determine the obstacles that it faces and adopting preventive measures to overcome them and mitigate risks (Jaja & Amah, 2014). Kantur and Say (2015) explained that improving resilience has been focused on as a major issue in projects success owing to the transference to the ecological systems.

Nevertheless, organizations are still faced with pressures and risks that confine their capabilities of achieving successful projects. As such, improving their resilience contributes greatly in their rapid response and handling of negative conditions and risks (Vogus & Sutcliffe, 2007). As a consequence, narcissistic CEOs assist in limiting organizational risks through the use of proactivity (Chatterjee & Hambrick, 2007). On the other hand, narcissism has been evidenced to mitigate organizational resilience through the mitigation of nonresponse to the environmental changes, due to which the risks increase and influence the success and performance of the organization (Petrenko et al., 2016).

Moreover, some authors indicated that improving organizational resilience can minimize narcissism of CEOs and open up avenues of opportunities for recovery following negative conditions, and this can promote successful projects (Van Der Vegt et al., 2015), while others

indicated that CEOs' narcissism led to proactive decisions, boosting resiliency and reducing risks, which in turn would lead to successful projects (Zhu & Chen, 2015). This argument was also supported by other authors who related that narcissistic leanings of the CEO positively affects performance, contributing to its resiliency, competitiveness, and successful projects (Wales et al., 2013). On the basis of the preceding discussion, the following hypotheses are proposed to be tested:

H1: There is a negative relationship between CEO's narcissism and project success.

H2: There is a positive relationship between resilience improvement and project success.

H3: There is a positive relationship between CEO's narcissism and organizational risks.

H4: There is a negative relationship between resilience improvement and organizational risks.

H5: There is a negative relationship between organizational risks and project success.

The mediating variable of organizational risks

According to the international economic forum, there are many risks that can challenge humanity, and they take may relate to water, food, terrorist attacks and cybercrimes, crises, financial crises, and extreme weather, to name a few (Van Der Vegt et al., 2015). In the context of organizations, risks have become basic factors considered by CEOs owing to their major effect on the success of projects (Carvalho & Rabechini Junior, 2015). Organizational risks have been increasingly focused on owing to its effect on the iron triangle factors (time, cost, and quality) when it comes to project success—these factors tend to increase in cost when the project is confronted by risks (Akintoye & MacLeod, 1997). Throughout the years, the adverse view of risks stems from a traditional premise, as current researchers believe that organizational risks reflect avenues for opportunities to be leveraged when it comes to achieving successful projects (Hillson, 2001). It is thus necessary that risk management cover project facilities to enable negotiations of risk mitigation, particularly because risks are nontransferable and are considered a basic factor in project success (Schieg, 2006).

In addition, the project consists of different variables, and it appears that specifying the cause and effect among them is quite difficult; this makes risks play a major role in

affecting the performance of the project and the decision-making process (Renuka, Umarani, & Kamal, 2014). In order to maximize project success, it is thus necessary to come up with an understanding of the potential risks and their quantitative assessment to expect the effects of their occurrences and to prepare for their handling and resolution (Kishk & Ukaga, 2008). No project is risk free, but risks can be controlled and mitigated and should not be ignored throughout the project viability assessment, analysis, and monitoring, to mitigate losses and risks intensity using planning and steering clear of unfeasible projects in order to maximize profitability (Lam et al., 2007). In this, organizational risks influence project success by minimizing the efficiency of the project (Maina, Mbabazize, & Kibachia, 2016). Therefore, risks management can positively influence project success by analyzing the risks within a limited budget and by promoting adherence to the standards (de Bakker et al., 2012). Risky projects are confronted with higher problems, which lead to failed projects (Krajewski et al., 2013).

Hence, for the overcoming of the organizational risks influence over project success, high response should be provided to risks through enhanced resilience, as this could resist unfavorable conditions and transform them into opportunities—one way is to stimulate the proactive behavior of a CEO's narcissism (see Figure 1) (Buyl et al., 2017). Therefore, this study proposes the following hypotheses for testing;

H6: There is a negative relationship between CEO's narcissism and project success, with the mediating effect of organizational risks.

H7: There is a positive relationship between organizational resilience improvement and project success, with the mediating effect of organizational risks.

Methodology

Study sample

The sample of the study comprises employees working in five projects in the electricity production sector in Iraq, particularly in Basra, involving either the construction of

new power station plants (gas and steam) or maintenance and rehabilitation of plants and product units (Units 2 and 3), which covered Al-Hartha Thermal Power Plant, Shat Al-Basra Gas Plant, Najibiyah Thermal Power Plant, and Khor Al-Zubair Gas Plant. These employees were rich informants, were very familiar with technical aspects of projects, and were in close working relations with project managers. Hence, they were also aware of the way project managers work with them.

The data were collected from 207 out of 445 total employees. The sample size was calculated according to Thompson's equation, which follows. This equation provided provides a relevant accuracy and confidence level for sample selection (Thompson, 2002). The questionnaires were randomly distributed, after which 201 questionnaires were retrieved and represented the final study sample. Hair and his colleagues argued that a sample size of more than 200 cases would be good for structural equation modeling (SEM) and to obtain more reliable results (Hair, Black, B J, & R E, 2009):

$$n = \frac{N \times p(1 - p)}{[[N - 1 \times (d^2 \div z^2)] + p(1 - p)]}$$

The measurement scales

First, the variable of CEO's narcissism was measured by using a 37-item scale proposed by Emmons (1987), and an organizational resilience variable was measured by using the Lee et al. (2013) scale consisting of 20 items divided into situation awareness (measured by seven items), adaptive capacity (measured by seven items), and keystone vulnerability (measured by six items).

The organizational risks variable was measured by Øien's (2001) scale composed of 17 items, and the project success variable was measured by Hughes et al.'s (2004) scale comprising 32 items divided as follows; cost (measured by five items), scheduling (measured by five items), quality (measured by four items), performance (measured by seven items), and operation environment (measured by six items).

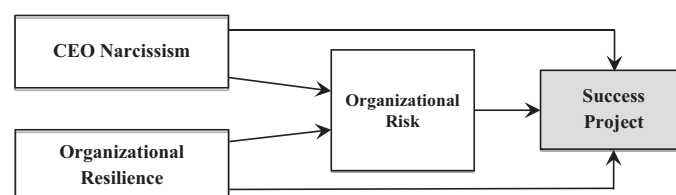


Figure 1. The proposed conceptual model adapted from Buyl et al. (2017).

Data collection methods

As mentioned, the primary data collection method utilized was the questionnaire, as it is the most fundamental and widely utilized method for collecting data. A questionnaire consists of a set of questions, where the replies are noted down through the selection of specified options. The final questionnaire in this study consisted of 106 items that covered four study variables, and a pentagonal Likert scale was utilized for rating with the following reply range: 1 depicted *strongly disagree*, 2 depicted *disagree*, 3 depicted *agree to some extent*, 4 depicted *agree*, and 5 depicted *strongly agree*.

Study results

Assessing the model fit

This study used structural equation modeling (SEM) for the assessment of the model fit. Accordingly, this was conducted by comparing the model based on multiple fit and choosing the best model as tabulated in Table 1, with the help of AMOS (version 20). with the following indicators: (a) RMSEA, the root mean square error of approximation, with a confidence interval of less than 0.80 (Arbuckle, 2006); (b) CFI, the comparative fit index; (c) IFI, the incremental fit index; 4) NIF, the normed fit index, for which the value should exceed 0.90 (Bentler & Bonett, 1980; Hair et al., 2009; Hu & Bentler, 1999); and (e) the ratio of χ^2/df , that should not exceed 2.5 for model acceptability (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001).

This study examined model 1, with the entire set of variables under one single underlying coefficient, and the results obtained were as follows: NFI = 57, IFI = 55, CFI = 56, χ^2/df = 5.23, and RMSEA = 21. Next, model 2 was examined, with two coefficients (project success and other variables), and the results obtained were as follows: NFI = 66, IFI = 62, CFI = 65, χ^2/df = 4.56, and RMSEA = 19.

This is followed by the examination of model 3, with three coefficients, the first being project success, the second CEO’s narcissism (independent variable), and the third, two variables of resilience improvement and organizational risks. The obtained results were as follows: NFI = 85, IFI = 82, CFI = 84, χ^2/df = 2.30, and RMSEA = 11. Lastly, the study tested model 4 (with three coefficients), with project success being the first

Table 1. Assessing the models’ fit.

Models	χ^2/df	CFI	IFI	NFI	RMSEA
Model 1	5.23	.56	.55	.57	.21
Model 2	4.56	.65	.62	.66	.19
Model 3	2.30	.84	.82	.85	.11
Model 4	1.35	.93	.91	.94	.05

coefficient with resilience improvement, two independent variables as the second coefficient, and the mediating variable of organizational risks being the third coefficient. The obtained results were as follows: NFI = 91, IFI = 91, CFI = 93, χ^2/df = 1.35, and RMSEA = 5. On the basis of these results (see Table 1), it seems that model 4 indicators are the best, where the model has a distinct structure and capacity and contains the best data for the study sample (Hair et al., 2009).

Reliability, descriptive statistics, and correlation coefficient

The present study utilized Cronbach’s alpha to ensure reliability and consistency of the final scales on the study variables, as recommended by Pallant (2011). Table 2 indicates that the Cronbach’s alpha values range from 0.812 to 0.968, and they are statistically acceptable in both administrative and behavioral studies as they are above the value of 0.70, indicating their internal consistency and reliability (Pallant, 2011).

Descriptive statistics analysis is used to treat, describe, and transform preliminary data into mini-numbers and models in such a way that they represent the results to the larger community (Brace, Kemp, & Sneglar, 2006) (see Table 2).

It is clear from Table 2 that organizational risks (mediating variable) obtained the highest mean at 3.42, with standard deviation of 0.80, while resilience improvement (independent variable) obtained the lowest mean at 2.45, with standard deviation of 0.66. The table indicates that the occurrence of the correlation among the variables is at ($p < .01$), where a negative correlation was found among CEO’s narcissism, resilience improvement, and project success. In contrast, a positive correlation was found between CEO’s narcissism and organizational risks, a negative correlation between resilience improvement and organizational risks, and a positive one between resilience improvement and project success. Lastly, a negative correlation was noted between organizational risks and project success, and these supported the proposed study hypotheses.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics.

	Mean	Standard deviation	CON	RES	OR	PS
CON	3.32	.78	(.968)			
RES	2.45	.66	-.68**	(.843)		
OR	3.42	.80	.45**	-.51**	(.902)	
PS	2.62	.65	-.41**	.44**	.47**	(.812)

Note. N = 201. Alpha reliabilities appear in parentheses. CON = CEO’s narcissism, RES = resilience, OR = organizational risks, PS = project success.

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (two-tailed).

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed).

Hypotheses testing

This study examined the effects (direct and indirect) among the study variables, and the proposed hypotheses were tested by conducting a path analysis using AMOS (version 20). (see Figure 2 and Table 3 for results).

On the basis of the Table 3, it can be concluded that the proposed hypotheses are supported in that CEO's narcissism has a direct negative and significant effect on project success, whereas resilience improvement has a direct positive and significant effect on project success. In addition, CEO's narcissism has a direct positive and significant effect on organizational risks, whereas resilience improvement has a direct negative and significant effect on organizational risks. Organizational risks, on the other hand, have a direct negative and significant effect on project success.

For the indirect effects, the terms established for their presence are as follows:

- (1) The presence of the effect of the independent variable on the mediating variable at a significant level (path a).
- (2) The presence of the effect of the mediating variable on the dependent variable at a significant level (path b).
- (3) The presence of the total effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable at a significant level.

When these three terms are maintained, the significant indirect effect (mediating effect) can be said to be maintained through path a*b, by conducting the Sobel

test. The results indicated in the table show that the two indirect effect hypotheses are supported in that there is a negative mediating effect of organizational risks on the CEO's narcissism–project success relationship, and a positive mediating effect of organizational risks on the resilience improvement–project success relationship. Because both direct and indirect effects hypotheses were supported, a partial mediating effect of organizational risks is present in both the relationships. In contrast, an overall mediating effect is said to be present when the direct effect hypothesis is not supported (Baron & Kenny, 1986).

Discussion of results

In order to determine the answer to the question of why the electricity projects of 2003 have led to failure in Iraq and the role of the CEOs in this respect, a conceptual framework was proposed to shed light on the correlations between CEO's narcissism, resilience improvement, project success, and organizational risks. In this study, the authors determined the primary factors that contributed to project factors through the combination of factors that the project manager is faced with during the planning period, the performance, and handover, following prior studies (e.g., Buyl et al., 2017; de Bakker et al., 2012; Hassan et al., 2017; Petrenko et al., 2016; Schieg, 2006; Zhu & Chen, 2015).

This study showed a negative direct effect of CEO's narcissism on project success. The reason is that narcissistic CEOs are self-centered and heavily rely on

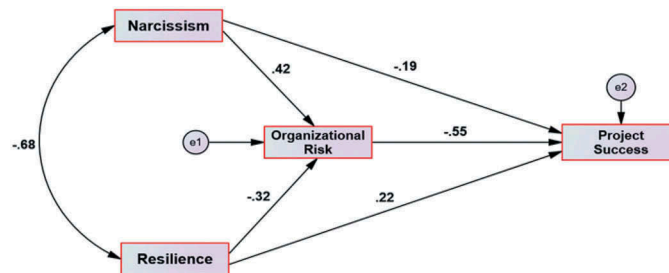


Figure 2. Testing hypotheses of study.

Table 3. Testing of hypotheses.

Path	Total effect	Direct effect	SE	C.R.	P
Narcissism → Project success	-.425**	-.192	.065	-2.943	.002
Resilience → Project success	.399**	.221	.054	4.075	.001
Narcissism → Organizational risk	—	.422	.062	6.772	0.05
Resilience → Organizational risk	—	-.323	.064	-5.010	0.05
Organizational risk → Project success	—	-.552	.072	-7.464	0.05
Path	Indirect effect (Sobel TEST)		Z value	P value	
Narcissism → Organizational risk → Project success	→	→	-.233	-5.089	0.05
Resilience → Organizational risk → Project success	→	→	.178	4.215	0.05

CR = Critical Ratio.

their own wisdom in making decisions. The findings of our study align with those of O'Reilly, Doerr, and Chatman (2017). O'Reilly et al. found that managerial narcissism causes risk to the organization because narcissistic CEOs do not consider potential risk factors while deciding the fate of organization. Furthermore, CEOs who are highly narcissistic can cause negative consequences for the organization they lead (e.g., Blair et al., 2008; Buyl et al., 2017). On the other hand, our study has concluded that the organizational resilience improvement has a positive effect on the project success. This is because an organization with high resilience can lead to a better understanding of organizational continuity and survival during adverse events (Van Der Vegt et al., 2015)

Moreover, CEO's narcissism has a direct positive effect, with significance, on organizational risks, while the organizational resilience improvement has a negative effect on the organizational risks. Also, organizational risks have a direct negative effect, with significance, on the project success. Consequently, results indicate that a CEO with a high level of narcissism and low resilience shall lead to double the organizational risks, which limits the project success. In addition, the present results demonstrate that the CEO's narcissistic characteristic has a negative effect on performance due to the absence of administrative policies (Williams & Williams, 2017). This happens because narcissistic CEOs usually choose persons who are similar to them in various positions to control the administrative decisions and then control the board of directors; this is done to secure personal interests (Zhu & Chen, 2015). Yet the resilience improvement is deemed a key factor that works as a remedy to unfavorable conditions, so as to overcome the organizational risks. Our results have shown the presence of negative mediation of the organizational risks in terms of the relation between CEO's narcissism and the project success, and positive mediation of the organizational risks concerning the relation between the resilience improvement and the project success. Accordingly, this indicates that the failure of power projects is attributed to the wide outbreak of risks that require high communication and coordination so as to overcome such risks by the use of the resilience improvement, which takes part heavily to recover such projects from corruption, collapses, and disturbances via motivating and promoting the dynamic capabilities. This helps the projects to confront a group of defective challenges that limit the success of those projects (Manfield, 2016).

Therefore, CEO's narcissism causes delay and stalling in the performance of projects, leading to delay in the

project handover and exceeding the assigned budget, as well as a weakness in conformity to the specifications, while the organizational resilience improvement contributes to increasing the project success opportunities through its fundamental role in decreasing risks.

Conclusions and implications

This study provides various avenues for future studies to explore. First, organizational resilience is a topic that has not been extensively explored, and based on this study's results, resilience is related to the perception of elements in the environment, spatial and temporal elements, adaptability of changes in the environment, and the level to which individuals, properties, resources, culture, economy, environment, and social activities are exposed to harm, distortion, or destruction.

The preceding discussion highlights the importance of adapting to and engaging in proactive behavior, in order to safeguard and mitigate negative long- and short-term social and economic effects for the organizational survival and stability throughout adverse situations (Van Der Vegt et al., 2015). Second, although this study supports the negative effect of CEO's narcissism on project success and its positive effect on organizational risks, several authors, including Hirschi and Jaensch (2015), showed that narcissistic CEOs are more confident in facing challenges and are more dedicated to adopting proactive behavior. On the other hand, Williams and Williams (2017) revealed that narcissism is an illness that could limit the performance and success of the organization. This study provided the way organizational resilience can assist in leveraging CEO's narcissism to mitigate organizational risks (a primary determinant of project failure).

Third, this study's results confirmed the significant factors behind project success, particularly in the context of the Iraqi power sector, and these results are aligned with those reported by Hughes et al. (2004) in that the five factors of cost, scheduling, quality, performance, and safety and operational factors are subjective integral factors, and along with traditional factors of cost, time, and quality, they determine project success. The present study also contributes to the literature by examining the negative effect of CEO's narcissism in the context of Iraqi power projects.

The work extends that of the Buyl et al. (2017) study that revealed companies led by narcissistic CEOs to be floundering during the financial crisis of 2008, but their recovery after the crisis was notable and hence they are considered to be the reasons behind their organizations' recovery, noting their relevance in the long term. However, in the context of the Basra electrical power

plan, the present work shows that the effect of narcissistic CEOs in the long term is negative, as opposed to the Buyl et al. (2017) results. This study specifically includes that organizational risks form one of the fundamental limitations in literature, and the study suggests their in-depth analysis and examination. In conclusion, it can be stated that there are positive and negative sides to narcissistic CEOs in that they may contribute to performance even with the use of limited resources, but at the same time, such CEOs may negatively influence the organization in the time of crisis, as this study noted.

Limitations and future research

As expected in any study, certain limitations occur herein and pave the way for future research. The first limitation is the sample study, which is limited to Basra power projects, and in this, including other sectors' projects may assist in obtaining more generalized results, as past studies have recommended examining importation chains, financial systems, and food safety (Di Serio et al., 2011). The present study's sample comprised 201 employees in electricity power projects, and this may not be enough to generalize to the population of the sector; thus, generalization of results has to be conducted with caution. The second limitation is related to the development of a conceptual integral framework based on the correlations of CEO's narcissism, resilience improvement, and organizational risks—variables that were carefully chosen based on the literature (Buyl et al., 2017). This study excluded other variables that could contribute to project success, like risk management technology's role in mitigating CEO's narcissism.

Finally, this study examined the effect of CEO's narcissism and organizational resilience on project success, through the mediating role of organizational risks in the context of Basra, Iraq, electricity power plants. There are additional questions that need to be resolved and explored, like "what are the effects of CEO's control or other characteristics on project success?" and "do these characteristics relate to CEO's narcissism when it comes to project success?," and also, "does CEO's narcissism affect project success in the same way in the face of different organizational risks?" It is therefore hoped that this study can be extended by future authors to address these questions and other questions related to the topic under study.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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