

Individual Reflective Essay:

Description: Over the course of the 'Workplace Culture and its Impact on Organisational Efficiency' module, I was exposed to a vast multitude of concepts and frameworks that profoundly altered my understanding of the complex relationship between culture and efficiency. Among the numerous learning models I utilized, Gibbs' (1988) Reflective Cycle proved indispensable in steering my introspection and development.

Feelings: Initially, I felt overwhelmed by the sophistication of organizational culture. I held a simplistic perspective and equated it to corporation values or mission statements. As I delved deeper, I felt a mixture of intrigue and astonishment, especially as EasyJet case studies brought theoretical concepts to life.

Evaluation: On reflection, the course's approach to instruction, which integrated theory and practice seamlessly, was notably effective. Using Gibbs' cycle, I was able to progress cyclically from theory to observation to reflection, allowing me to solidify my learnings. The EasyJet case study, as highlighted by Johnson and Scholes (1999), demonstrated the interdependence of strategy and culture. The airline's horizontal organizational structure and emphasis on collaboration vividly illustrated the relationship between organizational culture and productivity.

Analysis: The course material enlightened me to the fact that organizational culture is not merely a backdrop; rather, it is a dynamic force that can propel or hinder organizational performance. This is clarified by Schein (2010), who highlights the importance of culture in influencing behaviours, decision-making processes, and overall efficacy. The PESTEL framework, for example, demonstrated how EasyJet's culture adapted in response to external environmental changes, thereby ensuring sustained efficiency.

Conclusion: The symbiotic relationship between personal reflection and professional development is one of the most important insights gleaned from Gibbs' cycle and further readings. As I transition into the professional sphere, recognizing the significance of aligning decisions with organizational culture, as proposed by Handy (1993), will serve as a guiding principle. In addition, Carroll's (1991) pyramid of corporate social responsibility bolstered the importance of integrating ethics into business strategies.

Plan of Action: Moving forward, I am committed to utilizing Gibbs' Reflective Cycle consistently in my professional endeavor. This structured reflection will aid not only in comprehending organizational landscapes, but also in navigating them with proficiency. Armed with the information from this module and the reflective tools I've acquired, I feel prepared to make significant contributions in future positions, ensuring that my decisions promote cultural alignment and operational efficiency.

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Appendix:



Assignment Title: Individual Written Report

Student's Name: Elena Radu

Student ID Number: 2121862

Course Name and Code: Workplace Culture and its impact on Organisational Efficiency

BMSW5105

Due Date: 14/08/2023

University/Institution Name: University of Wales Trinity Saint David

BA (Hons) Leadership and Management Skills for the Workplace

Title: Assessing Organizational Culture and Its Impact on Organisational Efficiency: A Case Study of EasyJet Plc.

Executive Summary

This report provides an in-depth analysis of EasyJet Plc's (one of Europe's foremost low-cost airlines) organizational culture and its impact on its efficiency. The report evaluates EasyJet's unique workplace culture, which is characterized by innovation, safety, flexibility, decentralization, and adaptability, using applicable management models, methods, and theories (Clegg, Kornberger, & Pitsis, 2016).

Extensive research has been conducted on the relationship between EasyJet's organizational culture and structure, as well as their impact on both financial and non-financial performance. (Robbins, Coulter, & DeCenzo, 2017) Research indicates that the company's innovative and flexible culture, coupled with a decentralized structure, has been instrumental in attaining sectoral benchmarks and increasing operational efficiencies.

Using the PESTEL and Porter's Five Forces models, the report evaluates EasyJet's broader operating environment (Grant, 2016). This analysis identifies several key drivers of change in the company's working practices, such as technological advancements, shifting consumer preferences, rising environmental consciousness, and intensifying market competition.

EasyJet's ethical practices are an integral component of its organizational culture. The company's emphasis on passenger safety, long-term supplier relationships, and strategic partnerships demonstrate its commitment to ethical and sustainable business practices, which have resulted in substantial gains (EasyJet Plc., 2023).

The report recommends that EasyJet prioritize sustainability, digitization, and employee development to further improve its performance in light of the obstacles identified in the environmental and ethical analyses. These recommendations are supported by comparative research with other organizations (Johnson et al., 2017) and the potential long-term benefits they can bring to EasyJet.

Introduction

According to Mullins (2016), workplace culture can be defined as the embodiment of an organization's ethos and values, which are manifested through its operations and practices. If the latter is determined to be incorrect, then it is necessary to address the former in order to properly remedy any concerns. Any additional modifications would be considered superficial in nature and are unlikely to result in a sustained influence.

EasyJet Plc.(Fig.1) was founded in 1995 by Sir Stelios Haji-Ioannou and initially operated as a low-cost airline, commencing operations with a fleet of only two aircraft that served the routes between London Luton and Glasgow as well as Edinburgh (Mason, 2001). Throughout its existence, the airline has experienced a remarkable surge in its activities, currently positioning itself as a prominent low-cost carrier within the European market. Currently, EasyJet maintains a considerable fleet with 308 aircraft, which facilitates the provision of air travel services across 927 routes across 34 countries (EasyJet Plc., 2023).

The operational strategy of EasyJet has been strategically developed to prioritize the provision of cost-effective air travel while maintaining high standards of customer care and safety. The company's motto, "Come on, let's fly!" encapsulates their dedication to ensuring air transportation is available to a diverse clientele. Likewise, the designation of being the preferred airline on the internet highlights their adeptness in utilizing technology, since digital platforms play a pivotal role in their consumer engagement and operational effectiveness.

The organization has adeptly responded to the dynamic and evolving nature of the aviation industry through its agility and innovative approaches. EasyJet's success can be attributed to its organizational culture and structure, which is characterized by decentralization, flexibility, and a significant focus on passenger safety and operational performance (Robbins, Coulter, & DeCenzo, 2017).

Moreover, EasyJet demonstrates a dedication that goes beyond its internal operations. The organization places significant emphasis on fostering enduring business partnerships with its suppliers, so enhancing the effectiveness of its supply chain, which is a vital element for operational efficacy. EasyJet's strength is enhanced by its strategic alliances with important operators and authorities in numerous places, in addition to its supplier relationships (Johnson et al., 2017).

EasyJet has effectively demonstrated its capacity to consistently adjust its operations and organizational culture in response to shifts within the aviation sector, thereby establishing itself as a prominent participant in the industry. The company's commitment to fostering innovation, prioritizing safety, achieving optimal performance, and cultivating strategic relationships serves as the foundation for its ongoing expansion and achievements.



EasyJet logo

Fig.1

Organisational Culture and Structure at EasyJet

Organisational Culture at EasyJet

Culture refers to the aggregate conduct of individuals within an organizational setting, encompassing the commonly held values, beliefs, and perceptions among employees (Schein, 2010). EasyJet's organisational culture is defined by a blend of innovation, safety, flexibility, decentralisation, and a focus on a virtual environment.

EasyJet has a strongly rooted culture of innovation. The organization consistently endeavours to enhance its operational processes and services, actively seeking novel and effective methodologies. The culture of innovation inside EasyJet has facilitated the implementation of several initiatives, including the adoption of drones for aircraft inspection and the utilization of virtual reality for cabin crew training (Grundy, 2017).

EasyJet prioritizes safety as a significant aspect of its operations. The organization's strong commitment to safety is evident in its meticulous aircraft maintenance protocols, comprehensive crew training initiatives, and unwavering compliance with regulatory requirements (Barratt, Choi, & Li, 2011).

EasyJet's organizational culture is characterized by a strong emphasis on flexibility and decentralization. The organization's agile management methodology enables it to

effectively respond to fluctuations in both the market and regulatory landscape. Furthermore, EasyJet employs a decentralization strategy to facilitate decision-making at the operational level, resulting in improved responsiveness and operational efficiency (Robbins, Coulter, & DeCenzo, 2017).

EasyJet actively fosters a corporate culture that places significant importance on the utilization of virtual environments. The company's digital activities encompass a variety of strategies, including the implementation of mobile booking and check-in systems, as well as the development of virtual training programs for its staff (Pilbeam, Corbridge, & Marjoribanks, 2016).

Organisational Structure at EasyJet

EasyJet operates with a flat organisational structure. This is characterised by fewer layers of management, promoting quick decision-making and increased flexibility (Robbins, Coulter, & DeCenzo, 2017). The structure supports its culture of decentralisation, allowing for greater employee autonomy and a more direct line of communication between management and staff.(Fig.2)

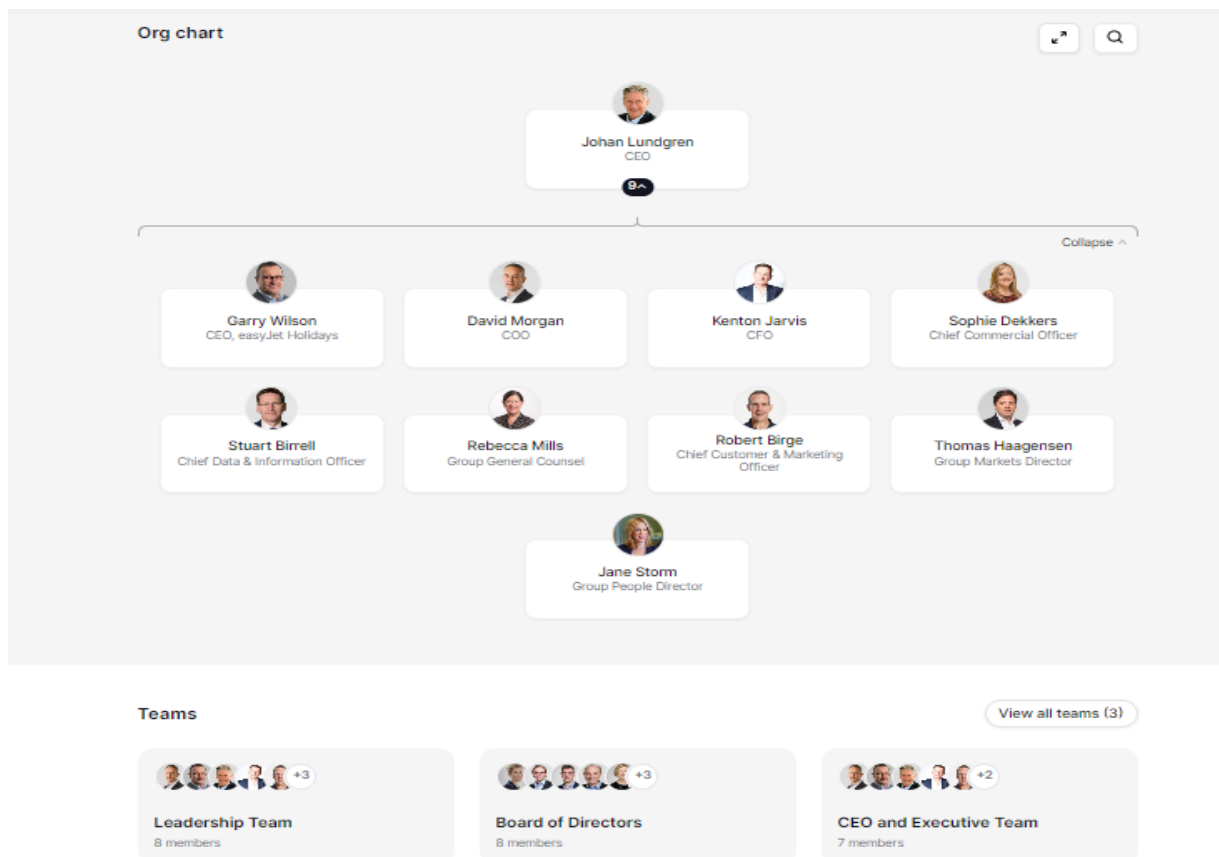


Fig.2 EasyJet Organisational Structure (the hierarchy and departments within the company.) Source: <https://theorg.com/org/easyjet>

Impact of Organisational Culture and Structure on EasyJet's Performance

The performance of EasyJet is significantly influenced by its organizational culture and structure. According to Mason (2001), the airline's ability to promptly adjust to market changes and maintain competitiveness, while assuring sustained expansion, may be attributed to its culture of innovation, safety, and adaptability, as well as its decentralised structure.

The prioritization of safety culture has resulted in a discernible influence on EasyJet's non-financial performance, as evidenced by the enhancement of its reputation and the establishment of trust among its customers (Barratt, Choi, & Li, 2011). In a similar vein, the implementation of a flexible and decentralized culture has resulted in heightened operational efficiency, hence making a positive impact on the organization's financial performance.

The dedication of EasyJet to digital innovation and virtual worlds has had a substantial impact on its non-financial success. According to Pilbeam, Corbridge, and Marjoribanks (2016), the implementation of the company's digital strategies has resulted in enhancements in customer satisfaction as well as operational effectiveness, as seen by reductions in costs and increases in revenues. In essence, the organizational culture and structure of EasyJet have a significant impact on both its financial and non-financial success.

Environmental Analysis of EasyJet Plc

PESTEL Analysis

The PESTEL analysis, sometimes known as PESTELE, is a methodology utilized by marketers to assess and track the macro-environmental elements that exert influence on an organization inside the external marketing environment. The outcome of this process is utilized to ascertain potential risks and vulnerabilities, which are subsequently incorporated into a SWOT analysis (Oxford College of Marketing Blog,2022).(Fig.3)

Political	Economic
1. Transfer of ownership from UK AOC to EU AOC due to uncertainties of Brexit 2. Impact of French industrial action on pension changes	1. Impact of Covid-19 on the economy and airline industry 2. Fluctuation in macroeconomic factors like fuel costs, foreign exchange, etc.
Social	Technological
1. Initiatives for maintaining gender balance in the pilot community	1. Continuous improvement in the digital interface like introduction of new Bag-sizer on the easyJet app 2. Introduction of new bag-scanning feature to iPhone
Legal	Environmental
1. Heavy regulatory environment with three different European airlines' regulators 2. Changes in the European airspace supply controlled by ATC (Air Traffic Control) 3. Bribery charges on Airbus and EasyJet's founder	1. Operating in net-zero carbon flights across network 2. Research on Hybrid and Electric 'Green' aircraft propulsion technologies

Fig.3

PESTLE Anal-

ysis of EasyJet (Tasneem Sayeed,2020)

Political: The political context under which EasyJet operates holds substantial ramifications for the organization. The airline business is subject to extensive regulation, wherein political considerations such as aviation legislation, taxation, and international relations play significant roles (Bieger, Wittmer & Witt, 2007). The occurrence of Brexit has presented notable obstacles, characterized by uncertainties surrounding laws and the possibility of limitations on aviation privileges.

Economical: Economic considerations, such as the volatility of fuel prices, fluctuations in exchange rates, and periods of economic recession, can exert a substantial influence on the operational dynamics of EasyJet. The company's costs are directly affected by the extreme volatility of gasoline prices (Graham & Guyer, 1999).

Sociocultural: Sociocultural factors have contributed to a rising inclination among consumers to opt for low-cost airlines, mostly driven by an emerging culture of financial prudence. Furthermore, the demand for air travel has been augmented by social trends such as heightened mobility and the adoption of a globalized lifestyle (Bieger, Wittmer & Witt, 2007).

Technological: EasyJet has consistently utilised technological advancements to improve its operational processes. The aforementioned advancements encompass several aspects of the aviation industry, such as enhancements in the process of ticket reservation, check-in procedures, aircraft upkeep, and training methods (Grundy, 2017).

Environmental: The global rise in environmental awareness has placed airlines under mounting scrutiny to mitigate their carbon emissions. EasyJet has implemented many tactics to tackle this issue, including fleet modernisation and the implementation of carbon offset schemes (Whyte, 2013).

Legal: The aviation sector is obligated to adhere to a multitude of legal obligations, encompassing safety rules and labour legislation. The adherence to these legal obligations holds significant importance for EasyJet's operational activities and reputation (Graham & Guyer, 1999).

Porter's Five Forces Analysis

Porter's Five Forces Analysis is a strategic framework that was conceived by Michael E. Porter, a professor at Harvard corporate School. Its purpose is to assess the intensity of competition within a particular industry and formulate a comprehensive corporate strategy. The model delineates five fundamental competitive factors that exert influence over the structure and dynamics of all industries and markets (Michael E. Porter, 2008). (Fig.4)



Fig.4

Source: coggle.it/diagram/Xrlqvl3D8hxsKhwU/t/easyjet-porter%27s-5-forces

Threat of New Entrants: The aviation industry presents significant obstacles for potential new entrants, mostly stemming from the enormous financial investments, strict regulatory requirements, and specialized expertise necessary to operate within this sector (Doganis, 2006). Consequently, the threat posed by new competitors is rather minimal.

Bargaining Power of Suppliers: The bargaining strength of suppliers is a prominent factor for EasyJet, as its suppliers, primarily aircraft manufacturers and fuel providers, possess substantial leverage. This leverage is attributed to the limited availability of replacements and the crucial role these supplies play in facilitating the airline's operations (Doganis, 2006).

Bargaining Power of Buyers: The airline business exhibits a significant level of bargaining power among buyers. There exists a wide array of choices available to consumers, with the associated costs of switching being quite minimal (Bieger, Wittmer & Witt, 2007).

Threat of Substitute Products: The potential for substitute products poses a little threat to long-distance travel, but presents a larger level of concern for short-distance routes, as alternative modes of transportation such as trains and vehicles can serve as viable options (Doganis, 2006).

Rivalry Among Existing Competitors: The airline sector is characterized by intense competition among existing players. EasyJet encounters significant rivalry from both traditional airlines and other budget airlines (Bieger, Wittmer & Witt, 2007).

The primary drivers for change

Several significant factors contribute to the shifts in EasyJet's operational procedures, namely the growing emphasis on environmental awareness, advancements in technology, evolving consumer tastes, and alterations in legal

frameworks. EasyJet has been compelled to implement more environmentally friendly methods due to the increasing focus on sustainability. Additionally, developments in technology have resulted in modifications to ticket booking systems, check-in procedures, and training techniques within the airline industry (Grundy, 2017).

Ethical Approaches at EasyJet Plc

Ethical practices and methods encompass the fundamental concepts and standards that an organization incorporates into its operational and decision-making procedures, with the aim of upholding fairness, openness, and responsibility. This entails the adherence to stakeholder interests, the preservation of integrity in corporate transactions, the adherence to legal obligations, and the contribution towards the well-being of society and the environment (Trevino & Nelson, 2016).

EasyJet Plc, a prominent European airline, exhibits its dedication to ethical behavior through several projects and regulations that exemplify its corporate responsibility. The airline has implemented a code of conduct that encompasses ethical issues, including the avoidance of corruption and bribery, the prevention of discrimination and harassment, and the management of conflicts of interest. According to Crane and Matten (2016), the organization imposes an expectation upon its employees to conform to

these values, and in instances where infractions occur, corrective measures are implemented.

EasyJet places great importance on environmental sustainability as a key component of its ethical framework, recognizing the substantial carbon emissions associated with the aviation business. The airline has strategically allocated substantial resources towards the acquisition of technologically advanced, fuel-efficient aircraft in order to effectively mitigate carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions. Additionally, the airline has successfully implemented a carbon offset scheme as part of its sustainability efforts. The aforementioned effort facilitates clients in their participation towards environmental projects, hence mitigating the carbon emissions associated with their air travel (EasyJet, 2023).

The incorporation of ethical frameworks into EasyJet's organizational culture

EasyJet effectively incorporates these ethical concepts into their organizational culture by placing a significant emphasis on transparency, responsibility, and sustainability. The dissemination of these fundamental principles is achieved through several means, including training initiatives, internal communications, and the establishment of business policy. EasyJet (2023) emphasizes the cultivation of an ethical culture within the organization, wherein personnel receive comprehensive training to uphold elevated ethical norms and are actively incentivized to disclose instances of non-compliant conduct.

The advantages of employing ethical approaches

The ethical approaches implemented by EasyJet yield a multitude of advantages. First and foremost, the implementation of corporate social responsibility initiatives serves to bolster the company's corporate reputation, thereby attracting clients who prioritize engagement with socially responsible enterprises. EasyJet's ethical commitment gives the company a notable competitive edge in the fiercely competitive airline sector (Crane & Matten, 2016).

Additionally, the promotion of an ethical culture inside the organization yields a favourable work environment. The presence of this environment has the potential to result in enhanced levels of job satisfaction, reduced rates of staff turnover, and heightened

levels of productivity. An ethical strategy ultimately diminishes the likelihood of encountering legal risks, penalties, and reputational harm that are typically linked with unethical corporate operations (Trevino & Nelson, 2016).

EasyJet Plc's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) refers to a company's commitment to effectively impact society and the environment beyond its primary profit-driven goals. It entails confronting the effects of operations on stakeholders, such as employees, customers, communities, and the environment (Carroll & Buchholtz, 2014).

CSR is profoundly embedded in EasyJet's strategic and operational decisions. The company is committed to operating ethically, assuring inclusive and sustainable growth. It accomplishes this through the following main initiatives:

1. Environmental Persistence

EasyJet's dedication to environmental stewardship is one of the company's most important CSR initiatives. EasyJet has taken significant measures to reduce its environmental impact, in recognition of the substantial carbon footprint of the airline industry. The company operates one of the youngest aircraft fleets in the world, which substantially reduces fuel consumption and CO2 emissions (2023, EasyJet).

Additionally, the company maintains a carbon offset program through which passengers can offset the carbon emissions from their flights. This investment in renewable energy and reforestation initiatives demonstrates EasyJet's continued commitment to environmental sustainability.

2. Employee Welfare

EasyJet acknowledges that its employees are its most valuable asset. The company is committed to maintaining a safe, diverse, and respectful workplace. It provides equal employment opportunities to all employees, regardless of gender, ethnicity, or religion. The company offers competitive compensation packages and opportunities for continuous professional development (EasyJet, 2023).

3. Community Engagement

EasyJet is involved in the communities in which it operates. Several charities and non-profit organizations receive financial and volunteer support from the corporation. For

instance, EasyJet has partnered with UNICEF to assist in the protection of children in peril by gathering passenger donations onboard (EasyJet, 2023).

4. Customer care

The company is committed to providing safe, dependable, and affordable travel services to its customers. This includes maintaining transparent pricing policies, enhancing service quality, and enhancing the consumer experience as a whole. EasyJet also ensures complete compliance with consumer rights and laws (2023, EasyJet).

In conclusion, EasyJet's CSR initiatives play a crucial role in its operations and contribute to the company's reputation as a corporate citizen that acts responsibly. This reputation not only distinguishes EasyJet in the competitive aviation market, but also lays the groundwork for responsible and sustainable growth.

Recommendations for EasyJet Plc

Based on the environmental and ethical concerns outlined in this research, I suggest the subsequent recommendations for enhancing EasyJet's performance.

The augmentation of investment in sustainable technologies.

Based on the theoretical framework of the resource-based view (RBV), which posits that sustained competitive advantage can be attained through the possession of distinctive and valuable resources (Barney, 1991), it is recommended that EasyJet augment their allocation of resources towards sustainable technology. Electric or hydrogen-powered aircraft have the potential to revolutionize the aviation sector by substantially mitigating greenhouse gas emissions (Sims, Rogner & Gregory, 2003). An example of this can be seen in Airbus' recent proposal for hydrogen-powered aircraft, known as ZEROe, which aims to achieve a carbon-neutral commercial airplane by the year 2035 (Airbus, 2020). EasyJet can enhance its competitive position by embracing this technology early on, so gaining the advantages associated with being a pioneer in its adoption.

2. Promote the Improvement of Ethical Supply Chain Practices:

Aligned with the stakeholder theory, EasyJet has a vested interest in acknowledging and prioritizing the needs and concerns of its various stakeholders, which included suppliers (Freeman, 1984). EasyJet should strive to establish an ethical supply chain

by ensuring that its suppliers comply to rigorous social and environmental criteria. This strategy will not only facilitate the achievement of its sustainability objectives but also cultivate favourable connections with stakeholders. An example of this may be seen in the sustainable supply chain methods implemented by H&M, which have resulted in a notable enhancement of customer trust and brand loyalty (Henninger, Alevizou, & Oates, 2016).

3. Strategies for Improving Employee Engagement:

In order to address the esteem and self-actualization needs of its employees, EasyJet could consider implementing additional flexible working arrangements and fostering diversity and inclusiveness inside the organization, drawing upon Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory (Maslow, 1943). According to Knutson (2020), the implementation of Microsoft's remote working policy has demonstrated the potential to enhance both worker happiness and productivity.

One area of focus that has shown significant improvement is stakeholder communication.

The legitimacy theory (Suchman, 1995) emphasizes the importance of transparency in effectively conveying corporate social responsibility (CSR) operations to stakeholders. EasyJet has the potential to boost public trust, customer loyalty, and company reputation by enhancing the disclosure of its corporate social responsibility (CSR) operations.

There are several potential advantages that might be derived from a particular situation or action.

The aforementioned guidelines are in accordance with several theories and concepts in the fields of management and environmental sustainability. EasyJet, through the implementation of sustainable technologies, effectively mitigates its ecological footprint while simultaneously establishing a precedent across the industry, aligning with the anticipated benefits associated with the first-mover advantage principle.

The implementation of ethical supply chains is in accordance with stakeholder theory, which has the potential to result in cost efficiencies, enhanced reputation, and risk mitigation. The implementation of strategies to increase employee engagement, utiliz-

ing Maslow's theory as a theoretical framework, has the potential to cultivate a workforce that is highly motivated, hence exerting a favourable influence on the financial performance of the organization. In accordance with the legitimacy theory, enhancing stakeholder communication has the potential to cultivate trust and loyalty, so bolstering the brand value of EasyJet. Therefore, these recommendations not only provide enhancements in performance and profitability for EasyJet, but also strengthen its environmental, ethical, and social position.

Conclusion

This report comprehensively analyses the environmental context and ethical approaches of EasyJet Plc. It utilizes analytical models such as PESTEL (López et al., 2018) and Porter's Five Forces (Porter, 2008), and incorporates relevant theories and concepts.

EasyJet operates in a complex and competitive environment, influenced by various regulatory, economic, social, technological, environmental, and legal factors (Ho, 2014). EasyJet (2022) has successfully maintained a strong market position by prioritizing low-cost business models and consistently improving their services, despite facing various challenges. The need for proactive strategies arises from increased competition, environmental concerns, and evolving consumer expectations (Bieger et al., 2007).

EasyJet demonstrates a commendable ethical approach through its commitment to corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives. These initiatives include efforts to reduce CO2 emissions, enhance social mobility, and ensure ethical supply chain practices (EasyJet, 2022). EasyJet has incorporated ethical practices into its organizational culture, demonstrating its dedication to ethical behaviour in its operations (Cavaliere, 2010).

However, there are several areas that could be improved, including the adoption of sustainable technologies (Kolk, 2016), the enhancement of ethical supply chain practices (Christopher, 2016), the promotion of employee engagement (Harter et al., 2002), and the improvement of stakeholder communication (Freeman, 2010). EasyJet could improve its operational performance, customer loyalty, stakeholder relations, and industry reputation by focusing on these areas.

The recommendations mentioned in the text were supported by examples of successful implementations by other organizations. For instance, Airbus' investment in zero-emission aircraft (Airbus, 2021) and H&M and Microsoft's adoption of ethical supply chain practices and flexible work policies respectively (H&M, 2021; Microsoft, 2021) were cited as benchmarks. EasyJet could achieve comparable success in specific domains by emulating these prominent figures in the industry.

The analysis of EasyJet's environment and culture offers valuable insights into the company's industry operations. EasyJet can effectively navigate its future growth path while maintaining its commitment to ethical practices and environmental sustainability by leveraging insights and strategically implementing proposed recommendations (Jones et al., 2018).

This report demonstrates a comprehensive comprehension of EasyJet's business environment, organizational culture, and ethical practices. The arguments presented are informed and supported by relevant theories, concepts, and analytical tools (Grant, 2016). The proposed recommendations demonstrate the application of academic knowledge to a real-world context, which is a characteristic of a competent business analyst (Mintzberg, 2005).

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