



Impact of Emotional Intelligence of Project Team Members on Project Success: A Study of Select IT companies.

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ABSTRACT

Many MNCs make use of global teams to manage and operate their global operation or projects. Sometimes these teams consist of a group of employees from different countries or cultures who join forces to work on a project. There are two types of global teams, one is the global virtual team and the other is the global co-located team. Not only do teams vary in their degree of heterogeneity and tasks, but they also vary regarding the location of their team members. At one extreme, team members who are from different cultures and countries are all located in the same place and meet face to face to accomplish most of the tasks. At the other extreme, team members are from different countries and cultures and dispersed around the globe and seldom meet or never meet face to face. Instead, tasks are accomplished virtually, with the help of information and communication technologies such as email, telephone, and video conferencing. When working in global multicultural virtual teams, team members may face cultural differences. This demands cultural sensitivity to work successfully in the project environment. One of the important challenges is to create a positive team environment in a virtually distributed team, where the members may never meet each other. Leading a global team can be a highly intense, stressful, and challenging experience. Sometimes such global distributed teams may fail to reach their objectives because of the challenges they face. There are also global multicultural teams which are collocated. This type of team also faces some challenges because the team may consist of people who are from different cultures. Managing a global team is multidimensional and complex. The virtual and cultural differences make the managing of global teams more complex. Under such circumstances, Emotional Intelligence plays an important role in achieving the intended project performance outcomes, i.e., Time, Budget, and Quality. This paper will try to understand the role of emotional intelligence of team members in achieving the intended project outcomes, i.e., adhering to the Time schedules, Budget, and Quality. This study is intended to investigate the global project environments and the impact of emotional intelligence on the team members in projects in general and the project outcomes in particular and also the emotional intelligence of the team members in working cohesively in the multicultural project environments.

KEYWORDS : Emotional Intelligence, Project Success, Global teams

Introduction:

Enhancing productivity level of the employees has been the biggest concern in the current globalization scenario. Organizations have been growing and expanding at an exponential manner with a target to enhance the market share. On the other hand, the increase in clients has been at a minimal level. These players have increased but the clients continue to remain the same. With this scenario for organizations to survive, they have to maintain a low operating cost. Hence, operating the organizations with minimal employees and not with high demanding packages. In such conditions, one of the main problems being faced by the organizations are high attrition and low productivity because of the stressful working environment. To operate in such an environment, we need managers with high emotional intelligence because they have to understand the pulse of the employees and motivate them, enhance productivity, and retain them. Not merely retaining them but ensuring the effectiveness of the team is maintained. To create such a conducive working environment, a manager with low emotional intelligence proves to be a disaster. Managers with high EI would be able to handle the stressed employees.

Organizational strain emerges as a result of structural stressors within and as well as functional stressors related to aspects of organizational life (Lantermann et al., 2010; Shane, 2010; Zhao et al., 2002). Structural stressors are attributed to the departmental and administrative culture, which include bureaucratic styles of management, lack of autonomy, and interpersonal conflicts between executives. Functional stressors consist of aspects of organizational life that cause emotional strain, such as rotating shift work, irregular work hours, and consecutive work days (Kecklund et al., 2008; Vila, 2006). Second, operational stress emerges from routine responsibilities within the organization. Operational stressors manifest from the cumulative effects of exposure to extended periods of inactivity and boredom punctuated by emotionally intense experiences of potential trauma and fear. Operational stress also arises from critical incident experiences in policing, which include the violent and dangerous nature of some aspects of police work.

Gardner and Pierce (1998) noted that when power within organizations is not dispersed, employees may feel their contributions to the workplace are not recognized and valued. As a result, employees may experience diminished job satisfaction, reduced motivation, and elevated stress. Given the overwhelming nature of police stressors in the organization, it is not surprising that some officers determine that premature retirement may be their best option (Violanti, 2007). Indeed, Brough and Frame (2004) found that officers who reported inadequate supervisory support and scored high on measures of job dissatisfaction collectively predicted high job turnover rates.

In such a situation, emotional intelligence plays a vital role, with which he is able to meet the occupational stress and in turn leads to maintaining of work-life balance. Hence, employees should be molded to develop a psychological contract between organization, self, and family. This is possible provided if there exists a high level of emotional intelligence.

Literature Review:

Peter Salovey and John D. Mayer have been the leading researchers on emotional intelligence. In their influential article "Emotional Intelligence," they defined emotional intelligence as, "the subset of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions" (1990). Emotional intelligence (EI) refers to the ability to perceive, control, and evaluate emotions.

A prominent emotional intelligence model was developed by Goleman. He defined emotional intelligence as "the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships" (Goleman, 1998a, p. 317).

Goleman (1995, 1998) and Bar-On (1997) included motivation in

their research. Goleman also suggested that emotional intelligence is largely a set of (positive) attitudes (see also Cooper & Sawaf, 1997). Finally, both Goleman (1995, 1998) and Bar-On (1997) include empathy in their definitions of emotional intelligence.

Scholars tend to view emotional intelligence as a factor which has a potential to contribute to more positive attitudes, behaviors and outcomes. At the same time, as Schutte et al. (2002) note, "evidence exists that emotional intelligence can be conceptualized as either ability (Ciarrochi et al., 2000; Mayer et al., 1999) or a personality trait (Schutte and Malouff, 1999; Schutte et al., 1998)". The most comprehensive discussion about this issue is provided by a recent study of Mayer et al. (2000). As indicated, however, this issue has not yet resolved. In this study, I rather view emotional intelligence as a competency that is expected to augment positive attitudes toward work, and drive positive behaviors and better outcomes.

The concept of emotional intelligence goes back to early studies in the 1920s (for a review, see Bar-On and Parker, 2000). In the early 1980s, scholars began to systematically conceptualize the idea of emotional intelligence.

Notably, Gardner's (1983) conceptualization of intrapersonal intelligence and interpersonal intelligence and Steiner (1984) work on emotional literacy were the building blocks of what Salovey and Mayer (1989-1990) first termed as emotional intelligence.

Based on Bar-On's previous work, Bar-On et al. (2000, p. 1108) view emotional intelligence as a non cognitive intelligence which is defined as an array of emotional, personal, and social abilities and skills that influence an individual's ability to cope effectively with environmental demands and pressures".

According to Van Maanen and Kunda (1989, p. 53), emotions are "ineffable feelings of the self-referential sort", and are comprehensively defined as "self-referential feelings an actor (employee) experiences or, at least, claims to experience in regard to the performances he or she brings off in the social world". States of feeling refer to basic emotions (e.g. joy, love, anger) and social emotions (e.g. shame, guilt, jealousy, envy), as well as to related constructs as affect, sentiments and moods (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1995).

Nicholas Clarke, (2010) investigated the potential role of emotional intelligence (EI) abilities within learning in teams. The research focuses on examining how EI abilities are enacted within team contexts and how these are associated with critical reflection and team processes associated with learning. The two EI abilities, emotional awareness and emotional management, were found to influence the three critical reflection processes: problem analysis, theorizing cause and effect relationships, and action planning, as well as processes associated with team learning including team identification, social engagement, communication and conflict management. EI may offer insights into how differences in the nature, direction and depth of critical reflection can occur in team learning contexts. Developmental initiatives that aim to improve the emotional abilities of team members may help individuals to better manage the emotional context of learning in teams.

Rebecca Turner, Beverley Lloyd Walker, (2008) examined the influence of increased EI capabilities on project success. Results of the case study and survey indicate that developing EI capabilities will contribute to increased project management success.

Alan R. Pleslak, (2005) explored the relationships between emotions and overall team processes and task performance. It was found that team emotions at the start of the project are more positive than negative. Negative emotions grow more than positive over the life of the project. Emotions show increased intensity over the life of the project. Initial emotions did not significantly affect overall team processes. Final emotions somewhat affected overall team processes.

Crissie M. Frye, Rebecca Bennett, Sheri Caldwell, (2006) in an exploratory study, studied the relationships between the emotional intelligence (EI) of self directed teams and two dimensions of team interpersonal process team task orientation and team maintenance

function were investigated using the five dimensional model of emotional intelligence. measured by the Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ i[®]) in a sample of thirty three work teams. Average team emotional intelligence scores were calculated by aggregating the individual emotional intelligence scores of each team member and dividing the sum by the number of team members. Regression analyses of team averaged emotional intelligence across all five sub dimensions of the EQ i[®] reveal significant predictive relationships between team averaged interpersonal EI and Team Task Orientation ($r = .37$) and team averaged interpersonal EI and Team Maintenance Functions ($r = .31$). Team averaged interpersonal EI predicted 10 percent of the variance in Team Maintenance Function while team averaged interpersonal EI and team averaged general mood EI combined to predict 16 percent of the variance in Team Task Orientation.

Dirk Lindebaum & Peter J. Jordan (2012) argue that context and nature of tasks are neglected issues in studies of EI and performance at work. The construction industry provides a unique context to test this proposition. Findings suggest that project managers' levels of EI are linked to most relational performance dimensions. However, project manager EI was not associated with cognitive task related performance dimensions. Therefore, they argue that, while contributing to some aspects of project manager performance, the benefits of EI in this present context should not be overstated. Rather, it should be only one of a set of competencies that are required by successful construction project managers.

Robert M. Leichta, Gretchen A. Macht, David R. Riley & John I. Messner (2013) provides an introduction to emotional intelligence (EI) and the importance of EI to the AEC community. Here, we describe an exploratory study, which was undertaken to identify which EI traits of students were linked to success in a team-based undergraduate construction engineering course. Ninety-five students were randomly divided into teams to complete projects during the Spring 2008 semester. Individual exam scores, project scores, and team member evaluations were compared with individual trait assessments, using the Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i). The resulting analysis identifies specific individual team member traits that may lead to improved performance in team projects. The relationship between team performance and EI was explored from a three-pronged perspective, using the mean, the maximum and the range of each of the aggregated EQ-i components for the team as a whole. The results showed three areas with significant correlation to team performance, with all three involving the range of team-aggregated EQ-i traits. The outcomes suggest a balance in a team, when team selection is based on EI scores, can impact team outcomes. The results of the study will be used to improve professional and collaborative skills in the undergraduate engineering curriculum at Penn State and may be extended to other institutions.

Rajashi Ghosh, Brad Shuck, Joseph Petrosko, (2012) explored the relation between emotional intelligence (EI), team learning and team psychological safety, using a context sensitive approach.

Post analysis, evidence suggested EI was significantly and positively related with team psychological safety and team learning. Likewise, team psychological safety was significantly associated with team learning. Q Sorting technique was used to establish discriminant validity between the three scales. Bootstrapping revealed that team psychological safety mediated the relation between EI and team learning.

Lianying Zhang, Weijie Fan, (2013) explored application of project manager's EI to improve project performance. The results of the study indicate high expressions of six EI factors in project performance of large and complex scale; whereas the effects of self confidence and teamwork have not been confirmed. Additionally, international involvement and contract type are found to moderate the relationships between certain EI factors and project performance.

Nicholas Clarke, (2010) offer insights into how emotions can influence project manager behaviours and decisions specifically within the context of undertaking their roles in relationship management in projects. It shows that the emotional awareness of project managers may be a factor that helps to explain how project managers may arrive at decisions that affect their inter personal relationships on pro-

jects. The data suggest that project managers are consistently subject to emotion generating situations during project management and their emotional awareness plays a part in determining how they potentially respond to the emotional information generated. Emotional awareness was found to be particularly significant in underpinning decisions and behaviours that were likely to affect the subsequent pattern of inter personal relationships in projects.

Panagiotis V. Polychroniou, (2009) investigated the relationships between social skills, motivation and empathy (emotional intelligence components) and transformational leadership in Greek organizations giving emphasis on supervisor subordinate interaction on a team basis. In particular, this study aimed to investigate employees' perceptions regarding their supervisor's emotional intelligence as well as transformational leadership. Results provided support for the model which suggests that supervisors' emotional intelligence components such as social skills, motivation, and empathy are positively associated with transformational leadership increasing team effectiveness with subordinate.

Project Success

Ani Birgit Raidén , Andrew R. J. Dainty & Richard H. Neale (2006) found from their research suggested that project priorities often took precedence over the delivery of the strategic intentions of the organization in meeting employees' individual needs. This approach is not sustainable in the long term because of the negative implications that such a policy had in relation to employee stress and staff turnover. It is suggested that a resourcing structure that takes into account the multiple facets of AMO may provide a more effective approach for balancing organisational strategic priorities, operational project requirements and individual employee needs and preferences more appropriately in the future.

Conal Monaghan, Boris Bizumic, Katherine Reynolds, Michael Smithson, Lynette Johns-Boast & Dirk van Rooy (2014) This paper explores the influence two components of the aggregate personalities of the team members: conscientiousness and agreeableness and self-categorization theory that argues that identifying as team members and the team's performance norms should substantially influence the team's performance. The results emphasize the importance of taking into account personality (particularly conscientiousness), and both team identification and the team's norm of performance, in order to cultivate higher levels of performance in student software engineering project teams.

Hypothetical Model:



Objective:

1) To study the Impact of Emotional Intelligence of the teams members on the project performance in a global virtual project team

Hypothesis:

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Project Success

Alternate Hypothesis: There is significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Project Success

Scope of the Study

The Scope of the study has been limited to project team members working in project teams in software development centers in MNCS.

Methodology:

The aim of this study is to find the impact of the emotional intelligence on project success, especially among the software engineers working in the project teams. The scope of the study is pertained to Indian software engineers who are working in global teams in IT industry. The sample of the study constitutes individuals employed in Indian Software Industry. Questionnaires were administered to assess their level of emotional intelligence transformational leadership and

the organisational climate as perceived by them and the level success of the project.

Appropriate statistical tools were used for data analysis and the results indicate that there exist a significant relation between the emotional intelligence of project team members and project success and between organisational climate and project success and also between the transformational leadership style and project success.

Research Design

The purpose of this study is to study the impact of emotional intelligence on project success. The data were collected from the respondents with the help of a structured questionnaire. The Statistical tools used for the purpose of data analysis are correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis to draw the inference.

Measures

To measure the relationship between the variables emotional intelligence and project success a structured questionnaire is used to collect the primary data. Emotional Intelligence: Emotional intelligence scale constructed by Dhar, Hyde and Pethe (2001) is based on 10 factors having 34 items with reliability of .88 and validity .93 standardized on Indian population. It is used to measure the level of emotional intelligence. The items of the scale are directly related to the concept of emotional intelligence. It includes self-awareness, empathy, self-motivation,

emotional stability, managing relations, integrity, self-development, value-orientation, commitment and altruistic behavior. To measure the Project Success a scale developed by Jeffrey k. Pinto and Dennis P. Slevi was used.

Procedure

For the survey four major IT hubs viz. NCR, Hyderabad, Bangalore and Chennai were selected. For Each IT hub 8 companies were selected making 32 companies in total. A tool of 600 questionnaires were sent to these 32 companies out of which 278 responses were received. For the study only 233 completely filled questionnaires were considered and the rest discarded due to incomplete data. The data collected were then sorted and was set for further analysis by using SPSS 20.0.

Analysis:

Test of Reliability: For the reliability analysis Cronbach's alpha coefficient is widely used as a measurement value which describes how the data is close to normal distribution. A Cronbach's alpha value of 0.6 and above normally considered as effective reliability for judging a scale. In this study Cronbach's alpha value is .955 for the variables used for this study which demonstrated high reliability.

Results:

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.955	46

Relation between Emotional Intelligence and Project Success

H0: There is no significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Project Success

H1: There is a significant relation between Emotional Intelligence and Project Success

Correlations			
		EI	PS
EI	Pearson Correlation	1	.871**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	223	223
PS	Pearson Correlation	.871**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	223	223

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Interpretation:

The correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Project Success $r = .871$ and the significant value is .000. This indicates that Emotional Intelligence and Project Success are not independent of each other. Here the value of r is .871 so it is considered to be a Strong correlation. Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected and alternate hypothesis is accepted and indicates that there is a significant relation between emotional intelligence of project team members and project success

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.871 ^a	.758	.757	1.26751

a. Predictors: (Constant), EI

R is the correlation, its value is .871 and R square is degree of determination, its value is .758. The degree of determination shows the extent to which emotional intelligence influences the project success. Here the project success is determined to an extent of 75 % by emotional intelligence.

ANOVAa						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1113.425	1	1113.425	693.037	.000b
	Residual	355.056	221	1.607		
	Total	1468.482	222			

a. Dependent Variable: PS

b. Predictors: (Constant), EI

ANOVA table shows that the significant value is less than 0.01, which means the dependent variable that is project success is significantly predicted by the independent variables namely emotional intelligence at 99 % confidence level

Discussions:

Project success depends on the team. Teams' performance depends on the team leader who acts as a facilitator. Facilitator's effectiveness depends on his potentials and the level of emotional intelligence possessed by him. Emotionally intelligent individuals are "optimistic", a trait that enables them to focus on the resolution, rather than the reasoning (who is at fault). The work in any given organization imposes difficulties that may result in feelings of frustration. Emotionally intelligent individuals would know not to hold the organization responsible for every feeling of frustration (Abraham, 1999), as they are adept at placing themselves in positive affective states, and able to experience negative affective states that have insignificant destructive

consequences (Salovey and Mayer, 1989-1990). This is especially true for senior managers who have to reconcile the feelings of frustration of conflicting interest groups within and outside the organization.

Employees in a team possess different mindsets. Nurturing these mindsets at the shortest span is the efficiency of the team leader. This can be done effectively only when they are able to place themselves in a positive state of mind. In addition, emotionally intelligent individuals would know how to avoid dysfunctional emotions and use them in adaptive ways to alleviate feelings of frustration. Furthermore, on the fundamental level, people are motivated not only by the rational exchange approach (Vroom, 1964), but also by the extent to which they are connected emotionally to their work and by the extent to which their contents provide them with such experiences as joy, excitement, surprise and frustration (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1995). Thus, emotional intelligence is expected to augment a higher level of affective commitment to the organization, and diminish the level of continuance commitment. Which in turn enables effective project performance.

Conclusion

We found a direct and significant relationship between emotional intelligence and project team members in an organization. This intensifies the important role that emotional intelligence may have in retaining valuable organization members. The results of this study also indicate that emotional intelligence augments both contextual (altruistic citizenship behavior) and task performance. Contextual performance of senior managers is valued, because the latter oftentimes serves as a "role model" and "character" for the organization's members to follow.

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