



A STUDY ON FACTORS INFLUENCING TEAM EFFECTIVENESS IN A RESORT ENVIRONMENT

Management

Indrajith

M Com Student, Department of Commerce and Management, Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham

Pravitha N R

Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce and Management, Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham

ABSTRACT

The effectiveness of teams in carrying out organizational goals is of primary importance to management. In the hotel, tourism, and hospitality industry, effectiveness is directly proportional to customer satisfaction and business profitability. To this end, this paper focuses on factors affecting team effectiveness with special regard to age, experience, competency, freedom of expression, and higher management appreciation, among others. Key findings with reference to a Resort and Spa organization include lack of adequate correlation between age of employees and competency. Also, work experience is not significantly linked to freedom of dissent among team members. Performance evaluation and team leader appreciation are closely linked, as expected.

KEYWORDS:

team effectiveness, employees, organization, motivation

1. INTRODUCTION

A team, in a generic sense, is a group of individuals working towards a common objective put forth by the organization they work for. It may consist of like-minded individuals of similar behavior patterns or may be diverse. A theoretical definition of team can be adopted from Kozlowski and Bell1 who define teams to be “collectives who exist to perform organizationally relevant tasks, share one or more common goals, interact socially, exhibit task interdependencies, maintain and manage boundaries, and are embedded in an organizational context that sets boundaries, constrains the team, and influences exchanges with other units in the broader entity”

Although the team is tasked with a common objective, they may be entrusted with different duties that contribute to the common end goal. The educational and socio-economic background of the team members play a key role in the dynamics and the performance. Age and gender are also important factors to consider, along with years of experience. These factors determine the boundaries between the members and identify the comfort zones of the individuals to perform tasks optimally. Before a study of some of the aforementioned parameters is conducted, it would prove insightful to review the available literature on the topic of team effectiveness and its contributing factors.

2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The review of available literature can be limited to team performance for this study. Mathieu et.al2, analyses the literature in the field of team effectiveness between 1997 and 2007. Kirkman et.al3, studied team performance through attributes such as feedback and error discussion and concluded that these factors lead to the ability to adapt and improve. Edmondson4 studied team learning behaviors, and concluded that team leader coaching and shared beliefs among members lead to effective outcomes.

3 THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

In a seminal paper, McGrath5 introduced the model of Input-Process-Outcome (IPO) to study the effectiveness of teams. Inputs refer to factors which allow team members to perform optimally, but also to factors which limit performance and interactions. These could include members' capabilities, personality traits, task at hand, leader influences, organization structure, and work environment. Process refers to the intermediate flow which relates the inputs to the achievement of task objectives. These could be thought of as the work style of the team members, interpersonal behavior while accomplishing tasks, and team interaction and dynamics. Outcomes are the final goals of the teams. This paper relies on this standard framework for team effectiveness, but also acknowledges limitations such as blurred distinctions between processes and outcomes, and the ignorance of the temporal factor in the model. Time plays a crucial role in the performance of the team members. This paper captures the time

effect through analysis of team member age and experience as factors influencing effectiveness, although the variation of performance over time is not studied. Other goals of the paper are to find out whether the role is clearly defined among the Team members, whether tasks are divided into smaller teams, members' discussion of problems, and resource availability.

4 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

For the purpose of this study, the organization of Raviz Resort and Spa, Ashtamudi, Kollam, Kerala is chosen. Primary data among 120 employees is collected through questionnaires and analyzed using statistical tools. Weighted average method is used for studying the opinions of employees. Interval estimation method is used to study if goals are well defined and whether confusion exists among team members. Chi-squared method is used to show the relationship between age of respondents and team members' competency. Also, the relationship between the work experience of respondents and the freedom to express differences in the team is studied through chi-squared method. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) is used to find out any significant relationship between the evaluation of team performance and appreciation by the Team Leader.

WEIGHTED AVERAGE METHOD TABLE SHOWING RANKS OF OPINIONS OF EMPLOYEES IN VARIOUS ATTRIBUTES

SL. NO	Weights Attributes	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Not at all	WA	RANK
		5	4	3	2	1		
1.	Goal well defined	40	74	4	0	2	34	1
2.	Members support Team Decision	46	56	6	12	0	33	4
3.	Members discuss their problems	48	40	24	8	0	32.5	5
4.	Team get adequate resources for functioning	48	56	8	6	2	33.5	3
5.	Task divided into small teams	60	40	10	6	4	33.7	2

FORMULA:

Weighted Average, $X_w = ((W5 \times X1) + (W4 \times X2) + (W3 \times X3) + ((W2 \times X4) + ((W1 \times X5))/N$

CHISQUAREANALYSIS-I**SHOWS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE AGE OF RESPONDENTS AND THE TEAM HAVE COMPETENT MEMBERS**

Null Hypothesis H_0 : There is no significant relationship between the age of respondents and the team has competent members.

Alternate Hypothesis H_1 : There is significant relationship between the age of respondents and the team has competent members.

Total number of respondents = 120

Rating Age	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Total
	O _i	E _i	O _i	E _i	O _i	E _i	O _i	E _i	O _i	E _i	
18 – 25	12	10.67	6	6.67	1	1.67	1	0.67	0	0.33	20
25 – 30	17	10.67	2	6.67	1	1.67	0	0.67	0	0.33	20
35 – 35	15	22.4	19	14	5	3.5	2	1.4	1	0.7	42
35 – 40	16	16	11	10	1	2.5	1	1	1	0.5	30
Above 40	4	4.26	2	2.66	2	0.66	0	0.26	0	0.14	8
Total	64		40		10		4		2		120

Where O_i = Observed Frequency & E_i = Expected Frequency.
Expected Frequency can be calculated using the formula:

$E_i = (\text{Row Total} \times \text{Column Total}) / \text{Grand Total}$

Chi-Square can be calculated using the formula: $\chi^2 = (\sum (O_i - E_i)^2) / E_i$

O_i	E_i	$O_i - E_i$	$(O_i - E_i)^2$	$(O_i - E_i)^2 / E_i$
12	10.67	1.33	1.7689	0.1657
6	6.67	-0.67	0.4489	0.0673
1	1.67	-0.67	0.4489	0.2688
1	0.67	0.33	0.1089	0.1625
0	0.33	-0.33	0.1089	0.33
17	10.67	6.33	40.0689	3.7552
2	6.67	-4.67	21.8089	3.2697
1	1.67	-0.67	0.4489	0.2688
0	0.67	-0.67	0.4489	0.67
0	0.33	-0.33	0.1089	0.33
15	22.4	-7.4	54.76	2.4446
19	14	5	25	1.7857
5	3.5	1.5	2.25	0.6428
2	1.4	0.6	0.36	0.2571
1	0.7	0.3	0.09	0.1285
16	16	0	0	0
11	10	1	1	0.1
1	2.5	-1.5	2.25	0.9
1	1	0	0	0
1	0.5	0.5	0.25	0.5
4	4.26	-0.26	0.0676	0.0158

2	2.66	-0.66	0.4356	0.1637
2	0.66	1.34	1.7956	2.7206
0	0.26	-0.26	0.0676	0.26
0	0.14	-0.14	0.0196	0.14
TOTAL				$\sum (O_i - E_i)^2 / E_i = 19.3468$

Calculated value: 19.3468

Level of significance : 5 % (0.05)

Degree of freedom = $(m-1)(n-1)$ where "m" = no of rows and "n" = no of columns,

$$= (5-1)(5-1)$$

$$= 4 \times 4$$

$$= 16\%$$

Table value at 5% : 26.30

5 RESULTS

- (35%) are between the age group of 30 years and 35 years.
- Majority of respondents (70%) are having experience of work between 1 – 3 years.
- (27%) are in House Keeping department in the organization.
- Majority of respondents (80%) are working as a team in the organization.
- It is evident that majority of respondents (62%) are often having a well-defined goal.
- (82%) of respondents are having no confusion among the team members.
- The majority of respondents (75%) in the team know their role.
- (50%) in the team always have clarity on how to work to get the goal.
- (47%) of respondents in the team often support the team decision.
- Majority of respondents (55%) are strongly agreed that their views are considered by the team members.
- (54%) of respondents strongly agree that they support each other in the team.
- (54%) in the team agree that they have enough support from the team leader.
- (45%) of respondents agree that the team is a strong one.
- (40%) in the team always discuss their problems.
- (50%) agree that the team have alternative solution for a problem.
- It is evident that majority of respondents (73%) have no hesitation in team to take hard decisions.
- (47%) in the team are always free to express their differences.
- (47%) of respondents in the team are often having adequate resources for functioning.
- (50%) strongly agree that they get adequate support to perform the task.
- The majority of respondents (54%) strongly agree that in their team have competent members.
- (47%) of respondents strongly agree that the team performance is appreciated by the team leader.
- (50%) in the team said that the task is always divided into small teams.
- (45%) strongly agree that they ask others help in the team.
- (50%) are often having high sense of responsibility among team members.
- (47%) of respondents agree that the team performance helps in achieving goal.
- Majority of respondents (57%) are good in team performance.
- The most ranked attribute is Well-defined goals of the company.
- In Chi Square Analysis I, there is no significant relationship between the age of respondents and the competency of team members.
- In Chi Square Analysis II, there is no significant relationship between the experience in work of respondents and the members' freedom to express their difference in the team.
- In ANOVA, there is a significant relationship between the evaluation of team performance and the team performance appreciated by the team leader.

6 DISCUSSION

Some key observations from the results of the study are that 62% of team members feel they have a well-defined goal and 75% know their role. A large proportion (82%) feel there is no confusion among the team members. These are positives for the organization. The weighted

average method also concludes that the highest ranked attribute is the goal definition of the organization.

In terms of the Process phase of the IPO model, it is of concern that only half the sample know how to work towards the goal. This does not bode well for the organization. Only 47% support the team decision, which could mean the Leader or management may be dictating the goals and roles without discussion among the employees. This hypothesis is supported by the members' assessment that 55% of the individual viewpoints are taken into consideration. Only 54% feel they have adequate support from the team leader. But, on a positive note, 73% members are confident to take tough decisions. The other parameters studied through percentage analysis prove no evidence in either direction of the factor being studied (mostly 45-55% response). The first Chi-Square analysis studies the relationship between age and competency. There is no significant relation. It would be expected that older members would be more work-oriented, less impulsive and more experienced. But this need not be the case, as the accumulated experience through age need not be in the hotel management or hospitality industry. Also, the seriousness towards the task at hand often exhibited by older members may be overshadowed by the quality of the task, which may require younger and faster hands with technology expertise.

The second Chi-Square analysis concludes there is no significant relationship between the experience in work of respondents and the members' freedom to express their difference in the team. This means the management or team leader could have a tight hold and that age of the team member does not translate to freedom of expression of differences. Another obvious explanation is that the older members are outnumbered. This is borne out in some sense by the fact that 35% of the sample is in the age group of 30-35 years. Also, skewness in the data is to be expected because of the majority (70%) having only 1-3 years of experience in the current organization, meaning they have not yet found their footing in the company to have confidence in voicing differences. The relatively young workforce is still gelling together and time may be a factor to determine more expected trends.

The ANOVA study shows significant relation between the team performance evaluation and the team leader appreciation. This is a positive for the organization in terms of rewards and recognition for the employees and their respective job satisfaction.

7 CONCLUSION

A study was undertaken to determine the factors affecting team effectiveness in a Resort organization. Attributes such as employee age, years of experience, team performance, freedom of expression, and other self-assessments related to work conditions, job satisfaction, and higher management appreciation were analyzed to obtain a sense of the team effectiveness. The highest ranked attribute of the Raviz Resort and Spa, Kollam, was found to be the goal definition of the organization. Another positive aspect of the organization was found to be the team leader appreciation as evaluated by the performance of the members. A cause for concern is the relatively young work force and lack of experience, but these do not seem to have a bearing on the competency levels, although freedom of expression of differences seems to be a problem. As the temporal factor was not under consideration the IPO model's deficiency is inherent in the study. Future work should investigate the time factor on the level of effectiveness, especially with respect to job satisfaction, experience, and employee retention.

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