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A STUDY OF HUMAN RESOURCES RELATED CONFLICTS IN SOFTWARE INDUSTRIES IN HYDERABAD

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ABSTRACT

The Key to Software Project's success lies in the team cohesiveness and motivating work environment. During implementation of software projects, many conflicts are arising between managers and team members because of various reasons, conflicting priorities and human perceptions. Project Managers constantly having conflicts with the senior management while providing human resources on time to complete their projects within time. Managers also having intra individual Role conflicts while playing several roles simultaneously on different project's tasks. Team members have conflicts with their managers because of work allocations within the project, lack of recognition and appreciation for their achievements, creation of opportunities to enhance career prospects in the organization, not resolving personal complaints to their satisfactory levels, providing comfort working environment and flexible working hours in the project. Project Managers trying to resolve these conflicts by supporting team members in balancing their personal and work life by creating motivating working environment and flexible working hours, rewarding high performers through rationalized recognition mechanisms and creating opportunities to enhance career prospects for high performers. The present study has been conducted to understand the perception of human resource conflicts in various software industries located in Hyderabad and why they are arising during software project management and their resolution methodologies and how these are interrelated with each other. After getting the data through a simple questionnaire, interpretation was done using relevant statistical tools to check the efficiency of the results.

KEYWORDS

Career prospects, Human Resource Conflicts, Recognition, Role conflicts, Work life balance.

INTRODUCTION

Human resources related conflicts between individuals takes place owing to several factors, but most common are personal dislikes or personality differences. Continuous and swift growth in the information technology field increasing the various conflicts arising between groups and teams in the form of team's performance management, project management, quality management etc. Conflicts are unavoidable in Software Project Management because of the Nature of Projects trying to address the needs and requirements of many stakeholders, necessity of obtaining resources on time from Management, appreciation and recognition patterns followed in the project, fulfilling the career aspirations for all the associates working in the projects and because of work allocations, Projects Schedules, Projects Priorities, Resources, Technical Opinions, Project Costs, Personalities etc. Because of the new era of software offshore development and new operating models, many conflicts are arising because of different barriers like communication issues, cross-cultural issues, Emotional & Face values, limitation of resources, competition and differences in values, goals, attitudes, expectations, Group conflicts etc., while delivering the projects to the customers. When there are only differences of opinion between individuals about task-related matters, it can be construed as technical conflict rather than interpersonal conflict. Of course, technical and interpersonal conflicts may influence each other due to role-related pressures. It is often very difficult to establish whether a conflict between two parties is due to manifest rational factors, or it emanates from hidden personal factors.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Harolds, Jay et al. "Conflict Management and Resolution" When people work collaboratively, conflict will always arise. Understanding the source of conflict and its progression and stages, resolution, and outcome is a vital aspect of leadership. Causes of conflict include the miscomprehension of communication, emotional issues, personal history, and values. When the difference is understood and the resultant behavior properly addressed, most conflict can be settled in a way that provides needed change in an organization and interrelationships. There are serious consequences of avoiding or mismanaging disagreements. Informed leaders can effectively prevent destructive conflicts.

Moe, Nils Brede et al. "Understanding a lack of trust in Global Software Teams: a multiple-case study" - Many organizations have turned towards globally distributed software development (GSD). However, this kind of development has often been reported as being problematic and complex to manage. There are indications that trust is a fundamental factor in determining the success or failure of GSD projects. This article studies the key factors that cause a lack of trust and the effect of lacking trust and present data from four projects in which problems with trust were experienced. They found the key factors to be poor socialization and socio-cultural fit, increased monitoring, inconsistency and disparities in work practices, reduction of and unpredictability in communication; and a lack of face-to-face meetings, language skills, conflict handling, and cognitive-based trust. Further, the managers increased monitoring, which reduced the level of trust even more. These findings have implications for software development managers and practitioners involved in GSD.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

To improve the quality and on time delivery of the deliverables, project teams should work as a cohesive team in a friendly environment with less conflicts and having collaborative work practices in place. To achieve this desired functionality there is a requirement to have an effective conflict resolution processes should be in place to be implemented in the projects. To complete this process, we need to know what are the important human resource conflicts and why they are arising during software project management and resolution methodologies and process should be clearly defined to minimize conflicts and hence creating good working environment to deliver the project on time with in budget and with quality.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This research emphasizes on the human related software conflicts and machinery required to resolve different software conflicts with appropriate conflict resolution techniques.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To know the most important factors influencing human resource conflicts during software project implementation.
- Find out the importance of various factors in HR conflict resolution process.
- To know the contribution of recognition patterns and fulfilling career aspirations of associates during project implementation.
- To know the mode of factors impact for HR conflict resolution success.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data collection made through electronically (through E-mails) and hardcopies circulation by a short questionnaire. After collecting the primary data, the interpretation done by using SPSS 19.0, relevant statistical tools are used to check the efficiency of the results.

PERIOD OF THE STUDY

The study conducted in December'11-April'12 at different software organizations within Hyderabad city.

SAMPLE &SAMPLE SIZE

Sample Respondents are the Project Managers, Account Managers, Group Leaders from various Software organizations in Hyderabad city. Questionnaires distributed 500 (320 Received) for above said respondents with in time period of 150 days.

THE STUDY

This paper is an outcome of an analysis of responses received from 320 respondents who include Project Managers, Account Managers, Group Leaders working in different software companies in Hyderabad city. They express their views about concept of Human resources related conflicts in software industry for their resolution process. They express their views about human resources related conflicts arising because of work allocations within the project, lack of recognition and appreciation for their achievements, creation of opportunities to enhance career prospects in the organization, not resolving personal complaints to their satisfactory levels, providing comfort working environment and flexible working hours in the project and how managers facing intra individual conflicts while playing several roles simultaneously on different tasks of the projects and conflicts arising with senior management while providing resources on time to the project.

STUDY STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

1) Conflicts arising because recognition and appreciation of team member's achievements.(RECAPP)

Test Statistics	
	RECAPP
Chi-Square	15.392 ^a
df	3
Asymp. Sig.	.0340

Inference: The obtain chi-square value is equals 15.392 at 3 degrees of freedom, the significance value is less than 0.05 suggest that there is significant importance for recognition and appreciation of team members in the conflict resolution process.

2) Conflicts arising because associate's personal complaints to not resolved to their individual's satisfactory levels (PERCOMP)

Test Statistics	
	PERCOMP
Chi-Square	8.260 ^a
df	2
Asymp. Sig.	.0230

Inference: The obtain chi-square value is equals 8.260 at 2 degrees of freedom, the significance value is less than 0.05 suggest that there is significant importance to be given for associates personal complaints to be resolved to their satisfactory levels.

3) Conflicts because of lack of creation of opportunities to enhance career prospects to team members.(CARPROS)

Test Statistics	
	CARPROS
Chi-Square	4.854 ^a
df	3
Asymp. Sig.	.0328

Inference: The obtain chi-square value is equals 4.854 at 3 degrees of freedom, the significance value is less than 0.05 suggest that creation of career prospects to associates plays an important role in resolving human resource conflicts.

4) Conflicts arising because of Work Allocations in the project. (WORKALLOC)

Test Statistics	
	WORKALLOC
Chi-Square	10.840 ^a
df	3
Asymp. Sig.	.021

Inference: The obtain chi-square value is equals 10.840 at 3 degrees of freedom, the significance value is less than 0.05 suggest that there is significant importance work allocations playing in resolving the human resource conflicts.

5) Conflicts arising because of lack of comfort working environment & flexible working hours.(FLXENV)

	FLXENV
Chi-Square	4.220 ^a
df	3
Asymp. Sig.	.3102

Inference: The obtain chi-square value is equals 4.220 at 3 degrees of freedom, the significance value is grater than 0.05 suggest that there is no significant importance working environment creation and flexing working hours in the project in resolving human resource conflicts.

6) Role Conflicts arising when managers playing several roles simultaneously on different tasks/projects. (ROLECONF)

	ROLECONF
Chi-Square	9.120 ^a
df	3
Asymp. Sig.	.032

Inference: The obtain chi-square value is equals 9.120 at 3 degrees of freedom, the significance value is less than 0.05 suggest that there is significant importance role conflicts playing when managers playing several roles simultaneously on different tasks/projects in resolving conflicts.

CORRELATIONS

		RECAPP	PERCOMP	CARPROS	WORKALLOC	FLXENV	ROLECONF
RECAPP	Pearson Correlation	1	-.236	-.391**	.158	.285*	.046
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.099	.005	.274	.045	.750
	N	320	320	320	320	320	320
PERCOMP	Pearson Correlation	-.236**	1	.145	.078	-.101	.089
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.099		.316	.591	.484	.539
	N	320	320	320	320	320	320
CARPROS	Pearson Correlation	.391	.145	1	.209	-.275	.092
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.005	.316		.145	.053	.526
	N	320	320	320	320	320	320
WORKALLOC	Pearson Correlation	.258	.078	.209	1	-.051	-.042
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.274	.591	.145		.725	.773
	N	320	320	320	320	320	320
FLXENV	Pearson Correlation	.485	.101	-.275	-.051	1	.108
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.045	.484	.053	.725		.455
	N	320	320	320	320	320	320
ROLECONF	Pearson Correlation	-.046	.089	.092	-.042	.108	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.750	.539	.526	.773	.455	
	N	320	320	320	320	320	320

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

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

First let us look at the correlation of all variables with each other. The correlation table is shown above the values in there correlation values are standardize and range from 0 to 1(+ve to -ve). All the variables Flexible working hours and comfort working environment, creation of opportunities to enhance career prospects, work allocations within the projects are highly correlated with human resource personal complaints resolution where as others role conflicts for the managers while playing several roles simultaneously, resolving personal complaints to associates satisfactory levels are negatively correlated. The point to be observed that correlation table is whether independent variables are highly correlate with each other. If they are of independent with each other and we may to use this table to predict dependent variable. As we will see later our regression ends up eliminating some of them independent variable, because all of six are not required some of them being are correlated with other variable, do not add any value to the regression model.

REGRESSION

Variables Entered/Removed

Model	Variables Entered	Method
1	RECAPP, CARPROS WORKALLOC FLXENV ROLECONF	Enter

a. All requested variables entered.

MODEL SUMMARY

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.284 ^a	0.08065	.016	.623

a. Predictors: (Constant), RECAPP, FLXENV, CARPROS, FLXENV.

ANOVA^b

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2.738	5	.5476	1.0752	.002 ^a
	Residual	21.392	42	.5093		
	Total	24.13	47			

a. Predictors: (Constant), RECAPP, FLXENV, CARPROS, FLXENV.

b. Dependent Variable: PERCOMP

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1.278	.574		2.078	.042
	RECAPP	-.215	.126	-.279	-1.762	.082
	CARPROS	.039	.136	.059	.431	.675
	WORKALLOCC	.087	.189	.113	.826	.418
	FLXENV.	-.132	.128	-.189	-1.215	.194
	ROLECONF.	.046	.077	.082	.656	.522

a. Dependent Variable: PERCOMP

$$PERCOMP = 1.278 - 0.215(RECAPP) + 0.039(CARPROS) + 0.087(WORKALLOCC) - 0.132(FLXENV) + 0.046(ROLECONF)$$

Before we look at the equation however we need to look at the statistical significance of this model and the R² value the analysis of variance (ANOVA) table which are given above the last column indicate 0.042 the model is statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

The above equation indicates that the lack of resolution of personal complaints from team members positively depends on work allocations depending on associates' interests, creation of opportunities to enhance career prospects to team members, role conflicts by managers when playing several roles simultaneously and where as recognition and appreciation of achievements of team members and providing a comfortable working environment and flexible working hours in the project negatively impacted.

FACTOR ANALYSIS

ROTATED COMPONENT MATRIX

Factor	Component			
	1	2	3	4
RECAPP	.419	.769	.289	.289
PERCOMP	.376	-.296	-.681	.686
CARPROS	.621	.411	.629	.231
WORKALLOCC	-.187	.387	-.293	.587
FLXENV	.548	-.561	.895	-.368
ROLECONF	-.245	-.343	.745	-.345

Inference

Analysis by factor wise factor analysis the observation indicates that most successful factors for human resource conflict resolution. Factor analysis is a data reduction method where collected data creating complexity for judging. The influencing factors are depend on Eigen values where the value is greater than or equal to 1. According to the above factor analysis the extracted factors are creation of opportunities to enhance career prospects to team members is highly influencing factor for managers which decides their careers as a very strong in implementing factor in conflict resolution process in the organizations. Second influencing factor is recognition and appreciation of team member's achievements plays a vital role in resolving human resource related conflicts. Third influencing factor is creation of comfortable working environment and flexible working hours for the teams in the project will influence in lessening the conflicts between team members and managers. Fourth influencing factor is resolving personal complaints to associate's satisfactory levels will resolve human resources related conflicts.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Creation of opportunities to enhance career prospects to team members was recommended by most of the respondents because they want to move to higher roles as per their career aspirations.

Resolving associate's personal complaints to their satisfactory levels will decrease the conflicts in the project and whole in the organization, as associates will work with more interest towards organization as their need is fulfilled and completely satisfied, same is suggested by many project managers in the above said survey.

Recognition and appreciation of team member's achievements also plays a prominent role in resolving conflicts as this will motivate the associates to work more towards the projects without having any conflicts with others and managers.

Creating motivating and comfortable working environment including flexible working hours in the project is recommended by many experts to show miracles in their assigned works as they work in a highly motivated and cohesive working environment helping each other.

Assigning the work based on the associate's interests and skills will improve confidence in the team members to deliver the deliverable on time as they will work with more enthusiastic way in their daily work as before.

Providing correct resources on time is highly recommended as this will reduce the conflicts with management.

Training for managers who plays multiple roles in the projects (having role conflicts) is highly recommended where new methodologies and procedures can be learnt from senior experts in the relevant fields.

CONCLUSION

Human resources related conflicts resolution involves recognizing and managing the particular conflicts and resolving it rationally to satisfy both conflicting parties. This is an essential part of building emotional intelligence, and nurturing relationships. Poorly handled human resource conflict can affect both the employees and the project thereby impacting the on time delivery and company's image. To maintain competitive advantage, we need the entire organization to focus on developing conflict resolution strategies to quickly and effectively resolve human resource conflicts, while building trust and commitment between team members and managers.

Conflict in the workplace can be incredibly destructive to good teamwork. Managed in the wrong way and with incorrect leadership styles, real and legitimate differences between people can quickly spiral out of control, resulting in situations where co-operation breaks down and the team's mission is threatened. This is particularly the case where the wrong approaches to conflict resolution are used. To calm these situations down, it helps to take a positive approach to conflict resolution, where discussion is courteous and non-confrontational, and the focus is on issues rather than on individuals. If this is done, then, as long as people listen carefully and explore facts, issues and possible solutions properly, human resource related conflicts can often be resolved effectively.

SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Further research can be carried out detailing about the effects on Human resource conflicts taking into consideration of other dimensions of the projects like Project schedule, project costs, communication mechanisms defined in the projects, customer complaints etc. on the HR conflicts while implementing the software projects and how to manage and show leadership in the related conflicts in the software industry.

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