

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN COMMERCE, IT & MANAGEMENT

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CONFLICT RESOLUTION TACTICS IN 'IT' SECTOR: LEADERSHIP VIEW

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ABSTRACT

The work from home scenario made a drastic change in work culture in entire world especially the IT sector change its working nature and major work done in remote area. When kept within tolerable limits, conflict can be a source of creativity and performance enhancement; it becomes destructive when these limits are exceeded. An optimum level of conflict needs to be maintained by an organization, i.e. there should be enough conflict to prevent stagnation, stimulate creativity, allows release of tension and initiate the seeds of change and rejuvenation, yet not so much as to be disruptive or deter co-ordination of activities. Conflict surface due to limitation of resources, competition and differences in values, goals, attitudes, expectations, etc. If conflicts are not managed properly they may adversely affect the organization. Effective Management of conflict requires the understanding of the concept of conflict. Various attempts to understand the conflict show that the conflict it is a process and moves from one stage to another and finally takes the form of individual, group or class conflicts. Conflict between individuals takes place owing to several factors, but most common are personal dislikes or personality differences. When there are only differences of opinion between individuals about task-related matters, it can be construed as technical conflict rather than interpersonal conflict. Conflicts between an Individual and Groups or intra group conflicts arise frequently due to an individual's inability to conform to the group norms. The present paper focus of what type of leadership qualified can resolve these problems in IT Projects.

KEYWORDS

project, stake holders, mediations, conflict, policies.

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INTRODUCTION

Leadership is the activity of influencing people to strive willingly for group objectives. A Leader through a style of functioning influences attitudes and expectations, which in turn encourage or discourage the follower's activity or achievement, enhance or diminish the follower's commitment to the work. The Leaders should develop Trust and Influence the Individuals and Groups and Contractors and Suppliers with dynamism and should be able to resolve conflicts arising between any of these parties. Conflict resolution involves recognizing and managing the particular conflict. This is an essential part of building emotional intelligence, and nurturing relationships. Poorly handled conflict can affect both the employees and the clients thereby impacting the company's bottom-line. To maintain your competitive advantage, we need the entire organization to focus on developing conflict resolution strategies to quickly and effectively resolve conflict, while building trust and commitment with clients and colleagues. Leaders try to resolve problems and conflicts in any Software Projects as long as they have authority over those conflicts or issues in conflict by using the powers given to them such as Formal, Reward, Penalty, Referent etc.

RESEARCH SIGNIFICANCE

Conflict in the software projects and IT workplace can be incredibly destructive to good teamwork. Managed in the wrong way, 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.

No leadership model exists that will totally eliminate disagreements or clashes of personality conflicts. In fact, the tension that comes from conflict can be healthy and beneficial to growth if dealt with correctly. But it has to be looked at wisely and humanly. When a Leader and other groups meet their mutual expectations, the relationship should produce mutual trust and favorable results and minimize conflicts between the parties.

In many cases, conflict in the workplace just seems to be a fact of life. Different people with different goals and needs have come into conflict. And it will result often-intense personal animosity that can result. The fact that conflict exists, however, is not necessarily a bad thing. As long as it is resolved effectively, it can lead to personal and professional growth. In many cases, effective conflict resolution skills can make the difference between positive and negative outcomes. However, if conflict is not handled effectively, the results can be damaging. Conflicting goals can quickly turn into personal dislike. Teamwork breaks down. Talent is wasted as people disengage from their work. And it's easy to end up in a vicious downward spiral of negativity and recrimination.

CHART 1

Conflict Management Action Plan

The conflict management action plan will help in keeping the track of various potential issues that are existing in the firm. The person responsible in handling the conflicts will keep track of the duration in which issues are resolved.

Conflict Identification		Issue Treatment		
Event	Action	Plan	Person Responsible	Resolve Date
Failure in project delivery due to interpersonal disagreements	Compromise	Facilitating compromise	Team Leader	4 Nov 2019
Failure to meet compliance obligations	Avoid	Develop and implement compliance monitoring process	Add text here	12 Dec 2019
Add text here	Add text here	Add text here	Add text here	Add text here
Add text here	Add text here	Add text here	Add text here	Add text here
Add text here	Add text here	Add text here	Add text here	Add text here
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LITERATURE

Ford (2017), opined that conflict remains an inevitable situation in everyday life either between individuals, groups, societies or organizations at large. It is logical therefore to say that, the manner in which conflict is controlled determines whether it is going to be beneficial or damaging in nature. Misinterpretation of a design drawing, a misunderstood change orders delays in delivery of critical components, and failure to execute instructions are all results of some type of communication breakdown. The communication skills of project managers are often put to the test by overlapping areas of responsibility, gray lines of authority, delegation problems, complex project organizational structures, and conflicts among participants. That is why communication is too important to be fully covered by administrative procedures alone. Project managers and their teams must also develop effective communication skills (especially listening skills) to resolve project conflicts. They must learn to create an atmosphere that encourages open communication in order to deal with conflict and gain team members' acceptance of and commitment to project goals. In general, all potential conflict fits one of three categories, although a particular conflict situation may be based on two or more of the categories: 1. Goal-oriented conflicts are associated with end results, performance specifications and criteria, priorities, and objectives. 2. Administrative conflicts refer to the management structure and philosophy and are mainly based on definition of roles and reporting relationships and on responsibilities and authority for tasks, functions, and decisions. 3. Interpersonal conflicts result from differences in work ethics, styles, egos, and personalities of the participants. 4 Project environments are particularly vulnerable to generating conflict. Thamhain and Wilemon have identified seven major sources of conflict in project management based on their research conducted in a private manufacturing company).

A number of studies have been conducted which discussed the influence of demographic variables on leadership styles. Krishnan and Park (2016) noted that demographic variables have considerable influence on the leadership styles of top managers. Hambrick and Mason (2019) proposed that demographic variables such as age, tenure as a leader, Primary Business Area the leader is working, and educational qualification are all important aspects of leadership that influence organizational success.

OBJECTIVES

1. To understand conflicts during creation of career opportunities to employees.
2. To understand schedule conflicts during over all delivery of the project on time.
3. To understand conflicts regarding Rewards and Recognition of team member's achievements.

METHODOLOGY

The aim of the research design is to ensure empirical evidence to be obtained to satisfy the selected objectives of this study and the empirical data, which can be interpreted to determine if the research hypotheses set for this research study could be confidently accepted or not accepted. The approach followed consists of identifying specific variables, developing hypotheses, collecting data by survey method through a structurally predetermined questionnaire that will yield data which can be statically tested in support of the hypotheses or not supported.

HYPOTHESIS

H01: There is no significant relation between specific project demographics (Company Type, Managerial Level, Primary Business Area, Software Organization, Project Management Certification, Project Management Experience, Number of people reporting, SDLC Phase, Management Style) and conflicts on *project schedules during integration leading in overall delivery of the project* as a Conflicting parameter during project implementation.

H02: There is no significant relation between specific project demographics and Project Manager's Interaction with customers to free Requirements and sign-off of deliverables on time as a performance management factor during project implementation.

RESEARCH SAMPLE

The target sample is from managers (Project Managers, Program Managers, Group Leaders and Delivery Managers) from different software organizations, who were well aware of the project management and implementation methodologies of the software projects in the organizations, which are located in Hyderabad and Secunderabad in Telangana, India. The researcher approached delivery heads and HR representative's software organizations to meet the respondents personally or by e-mail and distributed questionnaire and collected the filled questionnaires after one-week period.

SAMPLE COMPANIES & RESPONDENTS

The sample for the present research includes certified / non-certified project managers from different software organizations. The sample companies include all major software organizations which are located in Hyderabad and Secunderabad. A sample 462 respondents data captured with a structured questionnaire.

DATA ANALYSIS

Hypotheses based on “Frequently” occurring Conflicts

H₀₁: There is no significant relation between specific project demographics (Company Type, Managerial Level, Primary Business Area, Software Organization, Project Management Certification, Project Management Experience, Number of people reporting, SDLC Phase, Management Style) and conflicts on project schedules during integration leading in overall delivery of the project as a Conflicting parameter during project implementation.

TABLE 1

Parameter: Conflicts on project schedules during integration leading to delay in overall delivery of the project.					
Hypotheses	Demographic	Pearson Chi-Sq Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Hypotheses Result
There is no significant relation between specific project demographics and conflicts on project schedules during integration leading in overall delivery of the project.	A. Company Type	19.694	8	.012	Rejected
	B. Managerial Level	20.598	8	.008	Rejected
	C. Primary Business Area	26.610	16	.046	Rejected
	D. Software Organization	6.932	8	.544	Accepted
	Hc. Project Management Certification	18.078	4	.001	Rejected
	I2. Project Management Experience	96.420	76	.057	Accepted
	I3. Number of people reporting	323.550	200	.000	Rejected
	J. SDLC Phase	25.504	20	.183	Accepted
	K. Management Style	54.386	16	.000	Rejected

It may be concluded that there is no relation between Software Organization, Gender, Project Manager’s experience and SDLC phase demographics and conflicts on project schedules during integration leading in overall delivery of the project. It may be concluded that there exists a relation between Company Type, Managerial Level, Primary Business Area, Project Management Certification, Span of Control demographics and conflicts on project schedules during integration leading in overall delivery of the project.

H₀₂: There is no significant relation between specific project demographics and *Project Manager’s Interaction with customers to free Requirements and sign-off of deliverables on time* as a performance management factor during project implementation.

TABLE 2

Parameter: PM’s regular Interaction with customers to freeze requirements and sign-off off deliverables on time					
Hypotheses	Demographic	Pearson Chi-Sq Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Hypotheses Result
There is no significant relation between specific project demographics and PM’s regular Interaction with Customers to freeze requirements and timely acceptance of Deliverables.	A. Company Type	14.391	8	.072	Accepted
	B. Managerial Level	13.074	8	.109	Accepted
	C. Primary Business Area	39.799	16	.001	Rejected
	D. Software Organization	15.257	8	.054	Accepted
	Hc. Project Management Certification	6.707	4	.152	Accepted
	I2. Project Management Experience	92.066	76	.101	Accepted
	I4. Number of Projects Managed	87.940	100	.800	Accepted
	J. SDLC Phase	26.764	20	.142	Accepted
	K. Management Style	20.627	16	.193	Accepted

It may be concluded that there is no association between Company Type, Managerial Level, Software Organization, Project Management certification, Project Management Experience, Number of Projects Managed, SDLC Phase, Management style and Project Manager’s regular interaction with customers discussing about requirements freezing on time, on time sign of deliverables.

It may be concluded that there is association between Primary Business Area and Project Manager’s regular interaction with customers discussing about requirements freezing on time, on time sign of deliverables.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The data collected from 510 Project Managers, Program Managers and Group Leaders in various software organizations located in Hyderabad city were analyzed with the help of statistical tools for attaining the objectives.

The Analysis started with analyzing the conflicts occurring during software project implementation with respect to five dimensions (Schedule, Cost, Communication, Human Resource and Customers). In order to determine which groups are significantly different from the rest, researcher performed multiple comparison procedures. One of the procedures is *Post Hoc Duncan Analysis* Test, which arranges the group means in ascending order and provides subsets whose means are significantly different. Duncan Analysis was done for all the demographics for the conflicts parameters and top 10 conflicts occurring “Frequently” were extracted from this study and these were taken to frame hypotheses and for further study.

Conflict resolution processes and techniques provide a comprehensive and flexible system for maximizing delivery excellence and achieving better profitability for the projects. It has been considered as an inevitable approach to process improvements in the software organizations through effective use of statistical methods. This study resembles the key parameters any management team should consider before conflict resolution process is implemented in their projects. All these parameters are important for the successful implementation of conflict resolution process through appropriate leadership styles for any software project to consider.

CONCLUSION

Conflict resolution involves recognizing and managing the particular conflict. This is an essential part of building emotional intelligence, and nurturing relationships. Poorly handled conflict can affect both the employees and the clients thereby impacting the company's bottom-line. To maintain competitive advantage, there is a need for the entire organization to focus on developing conflict resolution strategies to quickly and effectively resolve conflicts, while building trust and commitment with clients and colleagues.

Conflict resolution processes and techniques provide a comprehensive and flexible system for maximizing delivery excellence and achieving better profitability for the projects. It has been considered as a inevitable approach to process improvements in the software organizations through effective use of statistical methods. This study resembles the key parameters any management team should consider before conflict resolution process is implemented in their projects. All these parameters are important for the successful implementation of conflict resolution process through appropriate leadership styles for any software project to consider. If any of these parameters are missing during the implementation of software projects, it would be the difference between a successful implementation of conflicts in the project and a non-successful delivery with non-cohesive team with conflicts within themselves and with other stakeholders and with managers and ultimately a waste of resources, energy, time and money by the sponsor of the project.

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