

DETERMINANTS OF THE SUCCESS OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PROJECT MANAGEMENT IN THAILAND

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ABSTRACT

A theoretical model of information technology (IT) project management was formulated based on the results of previous studies incorporating transactional and transformational leadership styles, team diversity, and team culture as determinants of team processes and project outcomes. The study addresses the lack of previous studies of IT projects and is concerned with infrastructure and software projects conducted in cross-functional environments with co-located teams in the context of Thailand. The model was tested and developed to a final model using data collected from a sample of 219 professionals with experience in IT projects in Thailand. The results confirmed several reported effects of leadership styles, team diversity, and culture on team cooperation, cohesion, and conflict and their subsequent effects on performance and psychosocial project outcomes. The findings highlighted results not commonly reported in previous studies of IT project management concerning the role of dominant cultural characteristics of Thai society at the level project teams as well as important direct effects of leadership styles and aspects of team diversity on performance and psychosocial outcomes. Based on the findings practical recommendations for improving IT project outcomes are presented.

Keywords: Leadership; team culture, diversity, and processes; performance and psychosocial outcomes.

1. INTRODUCTION

Managing projects to allow organizations to realize the benefits of information technology (IT) is a challenge particularly in complex and technology intensive situations characterized by change and high uncertainty (Thamhain, 2004). IT project delays, cost overruns, and abandonment are reported frequently (Hartman and Ashrafi, 2002).

A project can be viewed as a temporary organization to which resources are assigned to undertake unique, novel, and transient endeavors under the constraints of time, budget, and other resources to achieve specified objectives (Turner and Müller, 2003; PMI, 2004; Shenhar and Dvir, 2007). Three perspectives on a project may be adopted: an operational/process view; a team/leadership view; and a strategic/business view. The operational/process view regards it as activities that have to be performed and completed according to a plan. The team/leadership view regards it as a team that requires leadership and motivation. The strategic/business view regards it as business-related activities that are needed to achieve business results (Shenhar and Dvir, 2007). This study focused on the influence of leadership and team attributes and adopted the team/leadership perspective regarding a project as the collective effort and collaboration of individuals within and between organizations in order to accomplish objectives under business constraints where the unique aspects of an IT project are not only the end product but also the synergy and attributes of the team.

A project team is assembled for the performance of designated non-routine activities for the organizations it represents (Scott-Young and Samson, 2008). Members are engaged