

The Effects of Technological Advancements on Team Performance in High Context Cultures: Egypt

Abdel Moneim M.K. Elsaid

Associate Professor, Business Administration Department
Faculty of Commerce, Ain Shams University, Cairo, Egypt

Drelsaid78@yahoo.com

Abstract

Numerous studies found that teams in organizations which communicate both effectively and successfully results in high team performance and employee satisfaction. This study examines the differences between face- to-face and virtual teams (both via Email and Portal), the impact of specific communication technology in task completion, and the ultimate impact on cohesion, team performance and employee satisfaction. 362 Masters in Business Administration postgraduate students in a European university operating in Egypt participated in a team exercise to accomplish a task. They were randomly assigned via computer software into teams to one of the three specific mediums (Email (virtual), Portal (virtual), or face-to-face) for intra-team communication. Results suggested that the impact of technology usage to facilitate communication amongst teams is significant and that organizations may be detrimentally affecting their teams' performance though the use or the lack of use of certain communication technologies. Results also suggested that all organizations utilizing teams and communication technology, and that strive to enhance performance, should implement the most effective communication practices, as per their culture specificity, that result in the greatest team performance.

Introduction

Organizations have been heavily depending on using virtual teams, for obvious cost saving economical and logistical reasons, which use technology to facilitate their communication. This in turn either positively or negatively impacts their performance and satisfaction. These same organizations are also increasing the use of teams and are beginning to use teams that no longer function in traditional ways. Only recently has literature begun to address differences in performance between face-to-face teams and virtual teams. The literature from the organizational behavior and human resource management fields have addressed the dynamics of the face-to-face work teams regarding personality, team cohesion, team trust, consensus building, and confidence in decision making. However, the literature has not addressed how technology could help or hinder a team when faced with having only a certain technology for communication. This study attempts to study the variables that impact affecting teams though the use or the lack of use of certain communication technologies.[truncated]