

A development of a team working effectiveness: A case study on SMEs in Thailand

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Abstract

There are many techniques and skills are applied to success an organization's goals and objectives. One of the techniques used by organizations is team working. This research paper presents an empirically based case study on an organization's team working techniques and also investigates the effectiveness of team working in SMEs. The firms that have been examined for the purpose of this research is focused on SMEs which amounted to 3,446,589.2 million baht representing 37.9 percent of Thai GDP. The number accounts for 99.8 percent of approximately 2,000,000 SMEs businesses in Thailand and generates employment for 9.7 million people, or almost 80 percent of all jobs in Thailand. Unit of analysis of present research is 2,400 employees and (400) executives all regions in Thailand was carried out using a developed questionnaire as the research tool to analyze the team working effectiveness and techniques adapted to form and develop teams respectively. Structured interviews were also conducted among selected four hundred (400) executives from a list of small and medium industrial institute (SMI) to understand the organization's rational for team working and techniques adapted to form and develop teams.

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROBLEM

This research intends to study the importance of team working in an organization for developing effective and smooth operations of a department. The study is a case study based research which took place at SMEs which estates in Thailand. This piece of research work mainly focuses on the analysis of the formation and development of teams and also investigates on how effective team working is. All the examinations will be done on the basis of Tuckman's model (1965) of team development on which views relating to the factors has been argued by various researchers. Later in this research, the researcher has looked at the relevancy of the theory in which the subject theory will be analysed by collecting primary data from the organization mentioned above.

The activity of a group of people working together to achieve a set of common organizational goals through differentiation of roles and using correct and detailed system of communication can be termed as 'team working'. Various skills and techniques are used to achieve goals and objectives of the organization. One of the techniques used by most of the organizations is team working. It is a way by which management of organizations divides and

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organizes employees in groups to work, so that the job can be done faster and efficiently (Markiewicz et al, 2003) "Team working has been a focal point of interest for practitioners and academics for more than half a century" (Bayerlein, 2000 cited in Van Hoetegem et al, 2005) Antoni (2005:174) brought to light that in the past few years many companies in order to increase their effectiveness and to cope with international competition have introduced team work. However according to Watson (1994), "The increasing popularity of team working may be a mixed blessing of success and failure"

The strong investment momentum among Thai SMEs was a result of the improvement of investment promotion policy launched in early 2010. Last year the BOI added 47 new business categories to its list of target SME businesses, bringing the total number to 57. Following the change, the BOI received applications for 147 SME projects with total investment value of Bt2.592 billion, which represented a growth of 12 times or 1,200 per cent the figure for 2009 when only 11 projects applied for the investment incentives. In concrete terms, 2010, the industry with the highest number of applications was the service and utility sector, which attracted Bt167 billion in investments. Major projects in this category are 79 electricity-generating projects with a value of more than Bt107.572 billion. The second top category is metal, machinery and transport equipment, with more than Bt67 billion, followed by the agro industry with Bt 66.1 billion investment value. The number accounts for 99.8 percent of approximately 2,000,000 SMEs businesses in Thailand and generates employment for 9.7 million people, or almost 80 percent of all jobs in Thailand

This research will offer an understanding of the effectiveness of SMEs in Thailand. It has also considered the organization and employees view on team working. First hand information was obtained from the employees as well as executives by interviewing a sample size. Questionnaires were used in order to know their views on effectiveness in terms of team working

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How organization's underlying principle for team working and the techniques adopt to form and develop teams at SMEs in Thailand
2. How team working is effectiveness at SMEs in Thailand
3. Which ways to develop team working within SMEs

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To investigate the organization's underlying principle for team working and the techniques they adopt to form and develop teams at SMEs in Thailand
2. To analyse the team working effectiveness at SMEs in Thailand.

3. To offer recommendations on ways to develop team working within SMEs.

EXPECTED OUTCOME

The contribution of this research would give deeper insights in the subject of team working and its importance. The assumptions of the theory would be considered intensely and tested with the collected primary information from the organization. It will also offer a better understanding of team formation and development techniques within the SMEs.

LITERATURE REVIEW & CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The contribution of teamwork has played a major role in successful outcomes for many organizations in the past. For E.g. Sony Ericsson mobile phones, Fujitsu-Siemens computers have been featured as high performing teams. These teams have not only been successful for their innovation and product development but also for increased productivity and profit. It is therefore not surprising that more and more organizations world over are using teams to enhance their overall performance. However, if not implemented properly, the results can be devastating and can lead to decreased productivity, demoralization and also less profit. Xerox failed to commercialize the personal computer which was developed before Apple, due to poorly managed teams (Maginn, 2004). For an organization to successfully implement a team and attain positive results, it is important for an organization to understand the differences between a team and a working group. Larson and Lafasto (1989) cited in Manion et al (1996:5) defined that, "A team has two or more people and a specific performance objective or recognizable goal to be attained. Coordination of activity among team members is required for the attainment of the team goal or objective". Humphries (1998:11) defines team working as "As a group of people working together to achieve common objectives and willing to commit all their energies necessary to ensure that the objectives are achieved". On the other hand a group "is a collection of individuals each with their own thoughts, ideas abilities and objectives". (Humphries, 1998:11) From the above definitions it can be implied that the difference between a team and a group comes from the shared goal of the team.

In addition Archer, (1996:36) listed the characteristics of a team as follows:

- Successful teams have clearly defined short term and long term goals that are specific and can be measured.
- Successful teams have quantifiable and quantitative daily objectives to help them achieve their goals.
- Successful teams have Just-N-Time training.

Marchington (1992:32) defined team working as, "a form of work organization in which tasks are assigned to the group as a whole rather than to specific individuals or roles".

According to Robinson (2005) there are three team working arrangements. The first type of arrangement consists of problem solving teams, which consist of a nominal number of employees from the same department, who meet on a weekly basis to discuss on issues such as quality, efficiency and improving working conditions.

VIRTUAL TEAMS

According to Furst et al, (1999:249) virtual teams are those that work at different sites and do not have face to face communication/access to each other, but still execute team activities by mostly using electronic technology (e-mails, fax, phone, etc). The use of virtual teams is driven by an urgent business need for geographically dispersed employees to work together. In order to do so, the team members must share accountability for results, be committed to work together as a team and communicate actively and in continuation. It has now days become more common because organizations are becoming flatter for which quick communication is needed to remain competitive and increased globalization gives birth to virtual teams.

SINGLE DISCIPLINE AND CROSS FUNCTIONAL TEAMS

Cross functional teams have increased in use in a number of organizations now days. These teams claim to enhance organizational effectiveness, whereas research has seen mixed results. Teams of employees from different functional areas are formed with the expectation of producing more creative thinking and innovation (Jackson et al, 1995 cited in Webber, 2002). Webber, 2002 suggested that some organizations have introduced cross functional teams because

1. They enhance co-ordination and integration among groups
2. They reduce the time gap for new product development (NPD)
3. Complex problems can be tackled by bringing in diverse know-how (Webber, 2002)

Multi-Cultural teams, Multi-disciplinary teams and Multi professional teams

According to Gordon (2002, Pg. 201) a mix of people in a team with different age group, sex, race or ethnicity can bring about both advantages and limitations to an organization. Willmott et al (1998) further suggested that successful teams consist of some common factors like good leadership, effective communication, confidence, dedication, commitment, etc. He was also of the opinion that people working in a team achieve organizational goals more quickly, share information, knowledge and are self-motivated as well. Robinson (2005) suggested that working as a team can help to encourage mutual trust between organizations, its employees and the union. He also said that teams played a very important role for individual's promotion as well. Belbin (2003) argues that team working has great potential to improve the

modern organizational life. According to him it also increases flexibility, efficiency, unity and brings about some element of transformation when needed. Introduction of team working has helped organizations to reduce costs and increase productivity (Hardingham, 1995)

Jones et al (1998) said that team work helps both executives and their subordinates to work jointly to overcome hurdles in achieving the goals of the organization and also clears the path for innovation. He also said that when a company restructures itself, team work helps the employees to adjust themselves to the new methods adopted by the company.

However, having discussed the above mentioned advantages of team work there are also a number of disadvantages that have to be looked upon. According to Cohen et al (1991) to achieve a common set of goals and objectives people have to come together, because of which conflict situation arises due to disagreement among employees, ego clashes, better performance of one individual, difference of opinion, etc. Therefore conflict cannot be overruled when people come together to achieve similar objectives. Drexler and Forrester (1998) cited in Brooks (2003) say that the idea of team work has been wrongly used sometimes and has been put to use even in activities which require individual efforts. Butcher and Bailey (2000) cited in Brooks (2003) supported the above mentioned statement by saying that, "companies often saw teams as an end rather than a means, setting them up where they were not required. Raimo (1996) was of the idea that team working did not always work well and suggested that individuals working separately generated better quality of ideas. Lencioni (2005) author of "The five dysfunctions of a team" said that absence of trust and 'vulnerability-based trust' is one of the most common factors of an unsuccessful team. He also went ahead to point out that 'fear of conflict' was also a factor for a less efficient team. He said that without conflicts and debates everyone would agree with a decision which might be wrong for an organization. Therefore according to him some element of conflict and disagreement is necessary for staying effective.

Mullins (2002:466) stated that part of the problems may lie with the way teams are formed. Members of a team may fail to work properly together due to number of reasons like better performance of an individual, arguments, disagreements, etc. When the structure, leadership and operational techniques are relevant to the organizations requirements of the goal or task, it can be then termed as an 'effective team' (Canwell et al, 2004). In a survey conducted by Carl Larson and Frank LaFasto the qualities of effective members were made clear. Some of the tangible and intangible features that indicate an effective team consist of members with the following attributes:

1. Being open to others opinion and adapting to the ever changing environment within the organization.

2. Having the ability to support others success without the belief that this will harm your chances for growth.

3. Making sure that a new recruit brings in some expert knowledge and competence to the team.

The study concluded that an effective team member adds value to a team and an organization by bringing to light the issues, exhibiting personal leadership, trust and confidence and of all the things bringing out the creative thinking and positive attitudes. To ensure that there is success, another important factor that we need to realize is that any team requires time to develop. Prashad (2003) was also of the opinion that organizations do not offer enough training to the employees. Without proper training teams are most likely to fail. Due to immediate lack of benefits, employers feel annoyed to use their teams (Prashad, 2003)

A general overview of the stages of team development should be included in team training. One of the greatest challenges a coaching executive has is in moving his or her team through team development stages. A team needs to understand the different stages it will go through and also the changes in the behavior of the members. For team working to be efficient, training is needed to make sure that the members have the essential skills to execute a particular task. Internal and external team training can be given. Internal trainings can be in the form of courses or consultants whereas external training can take place in the form of two day course, outward bound training, etc. (Mackintosh, 2007)

According to Wheelan et al (1996) there are various models which talk about the development of a team. These include Bennis & Shephard, 1956; Bion, 1952; Gersick, 1988; Wheelan & Hochberger, 1996, but the most widely referred to and the most recognized model in organizational literature is the sequential stage model developed by Tuckman in 1965.

TUCKMAN'S MODEL OF TEAM DEVELOPMENT:

Tuckman's model (1965) explains that as the teams develop maturity and ability, relationships establish, and the leader changes leadership style. He suggested four stages which are Forming, Storming, Norming and Performing. In the first stage which is 'forming' there is high dependence on leader for guidance and direction. Little agreement on team aims other than received from the leader. The leader has to be prepared to answer lot of questions about the team's purpose, objectives and external relationships. Individuals' roles and responsibilities are unclear (Chapman, 2006). Processes are often ignored and everybody is busy finding out who the other people are in the team (Brook, 2003). In the second stage which is called 'storming', team members look to establish themselves in relation to other team members and the leader, who might receive challenges from team members. Uncertainties still exist within the group, though there is increased clarity than before. Decisions don't come easily within the

group. The team here needs to focus on its goals and stay away from relationships and emotional issues.

Compromises have to be made to enable progress. Stage three is known as 'norming' where members start to agree to each other and also respond well to the instructions given by the team leader. Roles and responsibilities are clear and well understood. Vital decisions are made by group agreement. Smaller decisions may be left to individuals or small teams within the group. As the team members are familiar with each other they may engage in fun and social activities. There is also a strong element of unity in the group and among the team members. There is respect for the team leader in this stage. The final stage as suggested by Tuckman is known as 'performing' where the team is more strategically aware and the team also knows the reasons for the tasks it performs. The team is able to take its own stand with limited interference or participation from the team leader. There is focus on over achieving the targets. The team has a high degree of independence with most of the decisions against criteria agreed with the leader. Team members look after each other and resolve issues and other disagreements without the help of the team leader. The team in this stage is highly independent and does not need instructions or assistance. The only assistance that the team members may ask from team leaders may be in the field of personality development, interpersonal skills, etc. (Chapman, 2006)

To get a full understanding of the different stages in a team, there is a need to talk about the roles in which each individual participates in a team. According to Farrell et al, (2007) for the team to achieve its goals, the various behaviors of the team members must fit together. He also said that for people to work successfully in teams, you need people to behave in a certain way. Some people are needed to provide specialization; some are needed to concentrate on the task whereas you need some people to solve problems as they come. There are also people needed to check if the team is contributing and performing to the best of their abilities.

There were various personality theories and team role theories given by experts as Belbin, 1981, but the one suggested by Belbin (1981) has made the biggest impact in UK than others due to its extensive use and is also used extensively in university teaching programmes (Huczynski, 1997). The Belbin model is the most used one because of its easiness in applying it through the published inventory (Belbin, 1981). He suggested that for the teams to be successful and effective, the individuals should be capable of performing eight very important roles and also each member complimenting others strength and holding back their weaknesses. He named these eight characteristics as:

The Plant – Creative, imaginative, unorthodox, preoccupied with ideas and neglects practical manners, cracks difficult problems.

The Resource Investigator – Extrovert, enthusiastic, explores opportunities, makes good contacts, interactive.

The Shaper – Dynamic, challenging, has the courage to overcome obstacles, gets frustrated and irritated quickly, unable to cover up for situations with apologies or humour.

Team worker – Co-operative, mild, diplomatic, listens carefully, avoids situations which may require pressure Monitor-evaluator – Strategic, sober, good judge, serious, sober.

Implementer – Disciplined, reliable, practical, adheres to orthodox or things which are proven, does not like change, efficient and conservative.

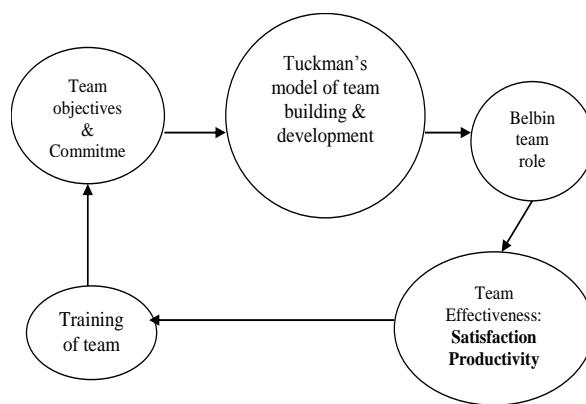
Despite of its popularity and extensive use, the Belbin team role model has been slammed for scarcity of facts of construct validity (Broucek et al, 1996). The use of Belbin's self-perception inventory which has been used by many researchers for their studies on teams has been challenged to the extent that the inventory should be discontinued (Manning et al, 2006). Nevertheless, in spite of such allegations mentioned above, no authors in the academic world have to date put forward a proposal to abandon the Belbin model.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK:

A conceptual framework is used in research to outline possible courses of action or to present a desired approach to a system analysis project. The framework is constructed from a set of concepts linked to a planned or existing system of methods, behaviors, functions, relationships, and objects. A conceptual framework might, in computing terms, be thought of as a relational model (Botha, 1989)

The framework shows how teams come together through the process of development engaged in the formation of teams by using Tuckman's model (1965). Belbin's model will help us to understand the role which every individual in the team takes up which later on leads to increased productivity of the organization and to attain the intention of setting it which would finally lead to satisfaction. This will help in clarifying the first objective of the research, while the second objective of team effectiveness will be taken up using the SMEs, Thailand. The grouping of the two objectives will explain both the objectives with recommendations about improving the effectiveness of the team with the help of continuous training of the employees or team members in order to increase the productivity and satisfaction as well.

Conceptual Framework Diagram:



SOURCE : adapted from Weldon and Weingart, (1993:314)

DESIGN OF STUDY

The research followed the research strategy of a case study in order to investigate the role of team working. Therefore the methods selected were self-administered questionnaires, documentary secondary data and semi structured interviews. The use of secondary data offered information about the organization and also the employees' view of team working. Likewise, questionnaires used by Tuckman in order to identify the stages in which a team is, was adopted with some minor changes in the number of questions, language and also the use of secondary data.

QUESTIONNAIRES

According to Saunders et al (2003), questionnaires are techniques that can be used for case study research and experiment as well. Bell, 1999 cited in Saunders et al, 2003 used it as a general term which includes interviews that are conducted either face to face or over telephone. DeVaus, 2002 cited in Saunders et al, 2003, describes it as techniques of data collection in which a person is asked to respond to the same set of questions in a prearranged order. This involves structured interviews and telephone questionnaires as well as those in which the questions are answered without the interviewer present. Also questionnaires can be used for descriptive or explanatory research (Saunders et al, 2003). According to Robson (1993), questionnaires are very efficient in term of researcher's time and effort. Sekaran (2000) adds that they are less expensive when conducted to group respondents, doubts can be clarified, response rate is close to 100% and it can build rapport and motivate respondents. Questionnaire is one of the most commonly used and an important method to collect data. Use of questionnaire can be beneficial in many ways. Larger number of audience can be covered with the same medium. It is also considered to be cost effective and economical. Since one of the objectives of the researcher is to analyze the team working effectiveness using

in SMEs, self-administered questionnaires were used. These questionnaires were handed to the employees of SMEs. The employees or the respondents were asked to fill in the questionnaires which were collected later. Questionnaires were delivered to the respondents by hand or mail and were collected once they had filled in the details. Open ended questions were also used for this purpose so that the respondents could express themselves freely.

QUESTIONNAIRES DESIGN

The questionnaires prepared by Daedal training limited were adapted with some changes (if necessary) in the framing of questions. They had done a similar research on team effectiveness and their questionnaires were divided in six main categories that are power and authority, planning, use of resource, decision process, organization and co-operation and openness and development. They related each category to more than one question. In this research, questions like name, address and telephone numbers of employees and executives were left out. In this questionnaire a four point scale was used to gauge the feelings/opinion of the respondents about team effectiveness. This four point scale questionnaire is more suited to this research as the researcher attempted to gather attitude data.

The survey instrument had questions relating to six main categories that are power and authority, planning, use of resource, decision process, organization and co-operation and openness and development as well as other general questions relating to SMEs. The items were measured with an instrument designed by Broucek, (1996). In the case of instrument we examined the Cronbach's alpha values for reliability. These values were greater than 0.90. However, since the original instrument had been developed within a manufacturing context, appropriate modifications were made to this instrument for use in a SMEs context. The wording of the original items was revised and two items were deleted resulting in a 10-item instrument. Following the technique used by the designers of the original instrument, responses to the items were measured using a four point Likert scale ranging from agree, slightly agree, slightly disagree and disagree.

DATA COLLECTION AND SAMPLING

Data for this study were collected questionnaire that was mailed to the executives of 400 potential SMEs and 2,400 employees in a six-region (Northern, Northeastern, Western, Central, Eastern and Southern) in Thailand. Usable responses were obtained from 400 executives which response rate was 100% and employees and from 2,376 employees which response rate was 99 %. Therefore, most of people among the employees were required to respond to the questionnaires as their responses could be generalized for others in SMEs. If analysis is to be done at this level of detail, then data should be collected from all the

cases/respondents. The data from the interview was collected mainly by telephonic conversation. The response of the sample elements was jotted down by the researcher.

STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

Interviews can be categorized into structured interviews, semi-structured interviews and unstructured interviews (Saunders et al, 2003). This piece of work has used structured interviews. Structured interviews are questionnaires that have a fixed or identical set of questions. Questions are read out to the interviewee and the response can either be tape recorded or written down. This was used to ask questions to the executives and take their views to investigate the organization's underlying principle for team working and the techniques they adapt to form and develop teams. The questions were developed for selected 400 executives from a member list of small and medium industrial institute (SMI). The questions have been prepared in relation to the aim of the interview.

SECONDARY DATA

ACCORDING TO SAUNDERS ET AL (2003), SECONDARY DATA IS RE-ANALYZING DATA THAT HAVE BEEN COLLECTED FOR SOME OTHER PURPOSE. IT INCLUDES BOTH QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE DATA. ALSO IT CAN BE USED IN DESCRIPTIVE AND EXPLANATORY RESEARCH. SECONDARY DATA INCLUDES OFFICIAL RECORDS, DIARIES, ARTICLES, JOURNALS, NEWSPAPERS, MAGAZINES AND INTERNET. THESE MEANS ARE HELPFUL IN PROVIDING USEFUL INFORMATION OR ANSWERS TO FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS ABOUT THE RESEARCH OBJECTIVE AND ARE USED SIMULTANEOUSLY WHEN ABOUT TO START THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS. THE THIRD OBJECTIVE IS TO GIVE RECOMMENDATIONS ON WAYS TO DEVELOP TEAMS WITHIN THE FIRM. FOR THIS SECONDARY DATA WAS USED GIVING THE RESEARCHER AN OPPORTUNITY TO LOOK AT WRITTEN, UN-WRITTEN, OFFICIAL AND UNOFFICIAL DOCUMENTS. THIS HELPED TO GENERATE DATA BY COMPARING WHAT THE DIFFERENT DOCUMENTS HAVE SAID IN THE PAST AND PRESENT ABOUT SMEs IN THAILAND.

RESEARCH APPROACH

There are two research approaches namely inductive and deductive approach. Inductive approach means developing a theory by collecting empirical data, whereas deductive approach is used in scientific research where theory is developed using precise test (Saunders et al, 2003). This piece of work followed both inductive and deductive approach because the author had to collect data, test a theory and then develop a theory by analyzing the data.

TRIANGULATION

Triangulation refers to use of different data collection methods within one study in order to ensure that the data are telling you what you think they are telling you." (Saunders et al, 2003:99) It simply states that triangulation is collecting data from various sources to ensure

the reliability and validity of the information the researcher is collecting. The author has used three different methods namely questionnaires, structured interviews and secondary data. Faults and problems of these self-administered questionnaires can be solved with the help of structured interviews. In the case of problems or weaknesses encountered with the use of structured interview will be rectified by the use of documentary secondary data, which will give an insight into the written and non-written documents of the organization. With the use of above mentioned methods, the validity and reliability of the outcome can be enhanced.

DATA ANALYSIS:

Thorough reading has to be done in order to analyze the data for this research. Once the data is collected, it must be checked whether it is reliable, consistent and unambiguous. Filled up questionnaires should then be analyzed. Themes should be generated from the responses of the questionnaires and then responses should be categorised according to themes. Seven steps have been taken into consideration for the data analysis activity as suggested by Robson (cited in Wisker, 2001) 1) Counting and putting data into categories and measuring how frequently the categories have occurred. 2) Patterning and noting persistent patterns and themes 3) Gather groups, objects, persons, activities and so on with similar characteristics 4) Grouping of variables into smaller number of hypothetical factors 5) Relating variables 6) Building of underlying network 7) Relating findings to theoretical framework.

CROSS MAPPING MATRIX

Cross mapping matrix is an important tool for researchers to ensure correspondence for the three key elements of the research: conceptual framework, objectives and the chosen research methods for the study. It allows researchers to take an overview of whether triangulation is likely to occur across all the research objectives (Saunders, 2007)

Objectives	Conceptual Framework	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY		
		Questionnaire	Interview	Secondary data
Objective 1	Team objectives and commitment, Tuckman's model of team building and development	Questionnaire 2 (For executive): Questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Telephonic structured interviews conducted with 400 executives.	Trade journals, electronic scholarly journals, magazines, text books
Objective 2	Team effectiveness: Satisfaction Productivity	Questionnaire 1 (For employee): Questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10	Questionnaire-s sent through e-mail and unstructured informal interviews.	Text books and internet sources.
Objective 3	Training of team		Questionnaire-s sent through e-mail	Website and Magazine

Table 1: Cross Mapping Matrix for this research

RESOURCES:

It is important for any researcher to plan on resources such as finance, data access and equipment. This research was conducted considering the following constraints like finance, time and access to data. The research would be carried out without time constraint as a convenient sample was created which allowed the author to complete the research within the stipulated time of three months. This piece of work also has access to the targeted organization SMEs in Thailand to gather enough data for this research. Therefore access was not a problem. Enough number of questionnaires was printed and the interviews were conducted without too much cost involved. In short all the costs involved, minor and major were met by the researcher and well managed.

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS**FINDINGS:**

The rationale of this is to present the data and analyse it, collected from the primary research. This allows the researcher to identify and find answers to the research objectives and also to establish the reliability and validity of the discoveries. In all 2,400 questionnaires were given out to the 2,400 employees of SMEs all regions of Thailand. Four hundreds (400) questionnaires were given out to four hundreds (400) selected executives. Two types of questionnaires were designed, one for the executives and other for the employees in order to look for their views of both employees and executives. This type of questionnaire design helped the employees as well as the executives to freely express their views on team working within SMEs. It also gave the author a good broad view of team working at SMEs.

RESEARCH POPULATION:

For this research, the number accounts for 99.8 percent of approximately 2,000,000 SMEs businesses in Thailand and generates employment for 9.7 million people, or almost 80 percent of all jobs in Thailand. Unit of analysis of present research is 2,400 employees all regions in Thailand and Four hundreds (400) of various SMEs in all region of Thailand were chosen as mentioned before in the methodology section. The whole population could have been used, but due to time limit for the research, it would not have been possible to survey a larger research population. Most people among the employees would be required to respond to the questionnaires as their responses can be generalised for other. A sample size will help to give an inside view as to what goes on in the whole population of the employees as well as the executives of SMEs

ADMINISTERED QUESTIONNAIRES:

All the questionnaires were returned back on time which helped the researcher to analyse the data in a timely manner. The questionnaires were designed in a way that the employees could give their feedback in four different ways i.e. agree, slightly agree, slightly disagree and disagree. While designing the questionnaires certain questions regarding sex, age, and religion were ruled out, and also the information given was kept very confidential. From the questionnaires received, it was noticed that most of the answers fell into three categories i.e. agree, slightly agree and slightly disagree. The reason for this could be that both employees and executives believed that the subject matter (team working) is very vital for the way organizations work and also could be due to the fact that different cultural background form the department. Results for each question have been diagrammatically represented by percentage graphs and pie charts which show the response of employees and executives.

FEEDBACK ON EMPLOYEES QUESTIONNAIRES

The questionnaires were designed in a way that the employees could give their feedback in four different ways i.e. agree, slightly agree, slightly disagree and disagree. While designing the questionnaires certain questions regarding sex, age, and religion were ruled out, and also the information given was kept very confidential. From the questionnaires received, it was noticed that most of the answers fell into three categories i.e. agree, slightly agree and slightly disagree. The reason for this could be that both employees and executives believed that the subject matter (team working) is very vital for the way organizations work and also could be due to the fact that different cultural background form the department. Results for each question have been diagrammatically represented by percentage graphs and pie charts which show the response of employees and executives.

RESULTS

To conclude this piece of research work which includes a case study on SMEs in Thailand working in teams has great potential to contribute to organizational ways of working. Introduction of team working has been known to transform organizations completely and also encourages flexibility, involvement and efficiency. In this research, it has been shown that team working has helped the employees to achieve the task quickly which leads to improved performance. The employees and the executives of SMEs in Thailand believe in team working and think that it is essential for an organization's success and also enhances performance. In today's era of competition where all companies are trying to attract customers, team working plays an important role for an organization to get the work done quickly and make the product available to the ever growing demand of the people.

The management of the SMEs believes that working together can bring out the best from the employees because aspects such as knowledge and experiences of different people come together at one place, which is why the management has tried to introduce team working in organizational ways of working. Beersma et al (2003) is of the view that companies which have got its team working in the right place help the employees to work in an efficient manner, experience less stress and contribute more to their work. It helps them to stay with the company for a longer period of time and also prevents absenteeism due to sickness or other reasons. Employees contribute new ideas and try to improve the way they work. These practices finally help the organizations to function better internally thus saving money and becoming more competitive in the market.

According to the researcher when the productivity levels increase due to the combination of ideas and knowledge of the whole team which are trying to accomplish the same task it is understandable that profit levels of the organization will increase which is the ultimate goal of every organization practicing team based working. However, it should also be noted that with advantages come disadvantages as well. Team working at SMEs in Thailand has associated problems, but it can be safely assumed that the positives of team working overshadow the negatives. During this case study research it was found that for the department to have effective communication several meetings and time was spent on team dynamics since individuals came from different backgrounds culturally, academically and characteristically as well. Executives and subordinates complained that team working was a stressful procedure because of the process involved in selecting the members of the teams and also the series of trainings and meetings they have to undertake before they can work as a team.

Another objection raised was the different developmental stages that a team has to go through to be ready for the task. The personnel executives agreed that it is a time consuming process but is fruitful in the end to develop successful team working. These are some of the problems linked with team working in SMEs in Thailand and also some views of employees and executives on the subject. Nevertheless from this research work, it can be seen that team working plays an important role in an organization's way of working and it enables their employees to work with smarter ways towards achieving organizational objectives, thus increasing productivity and profits.

DISCUSSION

After conducting this case study research in close association with SMEs in Thailand the researcher makes the following recommendations: For a team to be successful effective communication is a very important tool and the researcher believes that the management of

any organization should explore and make things better on communication factors operating on a team and also general aspects related to the organization and the team's role in it. All this can be achieved by encouraging executives to keep some time reserved for periodical reviews on performance. This can be done by regular meetings to make clear what they are trying to achieve and assess to what extent they have known each other as well as helping each other on weaker areas. In addition when a team is in forming stage, executives should not be in a rush to form their teams. They should take time to study an individual in such a way that the employee's role is identified and when they get together to work as a team, the importance of forming a team can be accomplished. Furthermore, since disputes cannot be controlled or put an end to, management should try to create an environment where individuals care and respect other person's beliefs and ideas. This will help to reduce frequent conflicts among team members that may emerge due to disagreements on beliefs.

RESERCH RECOMMENDATIONS

As with most academic work, this piece of work has certain limitations. Although much effort has been made during the data collection process, the sample size of this study is fortunately at over expectation. Since the study was done from here, with the subject organization being in Thailand, there are some limitations which make the collected data inaccurate. The main drawback of the study is the less number of individuals used for this research, although the study has helped the researcher to discover some key findings.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Due to time limitations, this research was undertaken on a small scale within a confined area of an organization. For further research on this topic, future researchers are recommended to conduct the study at a macro level within an organization which may take into consideration 3 to 4 departments rather than just one department. Resources like time and finance also have to be taken into consideration for conducting this research at a macro level as it can prove to be more costly. A lot will depend on the organization's culture for future research to be carried out on a larger scale. The management of an organization will allow more such researches if an organization follows autocratic culture or has an open culture. The scale (time, finance) used in this current piece of work can be carried out in all organizations (small, medium and big). In medium and big scale enterprises this research can only be carried at a micro level and not at macro level (spanning 3 to 4 departments). According to the researcher this kind of study is most suitable for small organizations considering the time and finance used. Large and medium organizations can also be used, but only to a certain extent in terms of the number of people used for survey (sample size), like a

single department used in this study. More time and finance will be required to do this research on a larger scale.

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