

Work Related Attitudes and Productivity of Software Engineers in Leading IT Firms in Sri Lanka

By

Ruchira Prasanga Ariyasinghe

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Supervised by

Dr. P.Ramachandran

Department of Management of Technology

University of Moratuwa

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University of Moratuwa



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Abstract

Concern for productivity of employees is of utmost concern for managers as there are significant gains to be achieved through increasing productivity. Productivity in the IT industry is of special concern due to the knowledge intensive nature of the tasks performed. Therefore optimizing of processes and work flows, automation of tasks need to be supplemented by increase in individual performance and personal productivity. Work-related attitudes may influence these.

Many studies have looked into the relationship between work-related attitudes and employee performance. Relatively lesser number of studies has looked at the IT industry. Some widely discussed work related attitudes are Job satisfaction, Job involvement, Teamwork, Communication and Organizational commitment. This research will focus on Job Satisfaction, Job involvement and Organizational Commitment only. The link between these attitudes is not necessarily straight-forward as for example a person who is satisfied does not necessarily provide superior performance. Also the result can differ based on a specific domain as professions and cultural aspects can influence the result. Thus the empirical investigation is necessary to establish whether there is a correlation between work-related attitudes and employee productivity.

This research attempts to look at the specific domain of the Sri Lankan IT industry and the subset of software engineers employed in leading MNC organizations in the country to identify if there is a correlation between their work-related attitudes and productivity.

A detailed discussion of the relevant literature is provided. Antecedent variables that are deemed to be suitable for Sri Lankan culture are suggested. In addition, the theoretical justification for the conceptual framework integration will be discussed.

The initial surveys carried out to identify the existing methods used to measure the productivity within the industry, critical factors of the productivity and the expectations

of the management over the Software Engineers working under them is discussed in detail in the report.

To conclude with the scope of the research with respect to various work related attitudes of the Software Engineers another initial survey is carried out and documented in detail in this report.

A questionnaire is used to gather information on work-related attitudes and the respondent's perception of its implication on their performance and productivity. The questioner first identifies the attitude of the respondent on intended concept, then the issues regarding it and finally with the recommendation section to further expresses their opinions.

This research that measured the relationship between work related attitudes and perceived productivity, found that the respondents indicated an agreement to the fact that their work related attitudes positively affected their productivity. Out of the three attitudes subjected to the research. Job Involvement is the work related attitude that Software Engineers felt most affected their productivity in the work place. Job satisfaction came as the second most significant factor whilst the Organizational Commitment is the least significant attitude affecting the productivity of Software Engineers as they felt.

From the findings of the research some recommendations are presented which can be included in policy planning to leverage the work related attitudinal factor in making an organization more productive.

With respect to the Job Involvement it is recommended that allowing for Software Engineers to participate meaningfully, enabling Software Engineers to achieve self esteem etc, will lead to increase the organizational productivity.

Providing competitive salary that match the current industry standards with benefit packages. Increasing the scope and breadth of the job, providing new opportunities for Software Engineers to be exposed to new technologies, good relationship building with

managers and immediate supervisors to enable the employee to communicate work related and even personal information that could make a difference to the productivity of that employee (Flexible work schedules in case of important family matters or emergencies) and facilitating a friendly and relaxed atmosphere within the organization through use of "Strong Culture" are some of the recommended ways of improving the job satisfaction of the individuals in means of increasing the productivity of an IT organization.

Through this research some recommendations are made to increase the Organizational Commitment of the individuals such as making sure that the employees are clear about the direction and goals of the organization, recognizing the individual's awareness of the organizational goals and values in means of contests or interviews and appreciate them by means of increased recompense or rewards, rewarding the individuals who pay extra effort to maintain the organization's sustainability and increase the organization's productivity and promoting the Life time workers and organizational loyal employees.

The findings of this research also bring forward the fact that organization's commitment over the individuals obviously plays a major role to increase the individual's commitment over the organization.