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AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF MANAGEMENT AND PERCEPTION OF GLOBAL VIRTUAL SOFTWARE TEAMS

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This Dissertation was submitted to the Department of Computer Science & Engineering of the University of Moratuwa in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the Degree of Master of Business Administration.

Department of Computer Science & Engineering
University of Moratuwa

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Declaration

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgement to the material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university to the best of my knowledge and I believe it does not contain any material previously submitted for a written or orally communicated by other person except where due reference was made on this text.

Jayalath Pathiranage IS

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Date

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The above given particulars are correct to the best of my knowledge

Research Supervisor:

UOM Verified Signature

02/02/2009

Date

Dr. Sanath Jayasena
Senior Lecturer,
Department of Computer Science & Engineering,
Faculty of Engineering,
University of Moratuwa,
Sri Lanka.

Abstract

Global virtual software teams are becoming an inevitable aspect of the modern competitive information technology marketplace and software development environments as they provide access to low cost and high expert resources while eliminating the time space barriers significantly. Team members are no longer located at a same place and they only communicate via electronic means. They belong to different cultures, time zones and have diverse work ethics, attitudes and career goals, still work towards achieving the common objectives of the team.

This research attempted to identify challenges when managing virtual software teams in Sri Lankan context and to investigate how those challenges correlate with success of team leadership. Apart from that, IT professionals' perceptions regarding global virtual software teams have also been examined.

The research design included a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches. A sample of 45 IT professionals was selected and the correlation analysis was performed using Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient with two-tailed test. Prior to this a pilot study was conducted in order to identify the variables that should be included in the conceptual framework and developing hypotheses.

The physical distance among team members of virtual teams amplifies the common challenges belonging to conventional face-to-face teams. Yet many people perceived these challenges as an interesting aspect. This study indicates that dealing with cultural differences, developing trust and relationships, dealing with different time zones and holiday, achieving cohesive team work, motivating distance team member, individual performance monitoring and effective requirement elicitation should be given a high priority and attention when managing a virtual software team in order to be a successful team leader.

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Keywords: Virtual Software Teams, Management Challenges, Team Leadership, Manager Perception

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List of Abbreviations

BPO	-	Business Process Outsourcing
ICTA	-	Information and Communication Technology Agency of Sri Lanka
IT	-	Information Technology
SPSS	-	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

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