SOFTWARE DEVELOPERS AND PROJECT MANAGERS: BAD NEWS REPORTING A CASE FROM SRI LANKAN SOFTWARE INDUSTRY

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V. Ginneliya

Department of Computer Science & Engineering

University of Moratuwa

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SOFTWARE DEVELOPERS AND PROJECT MANAGERS: BAD NEWS REPORTING A CASE FROM SRI LANKAN SOFTWARE INDUSTRY

By

V. Ginneliya

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Department of Computer Science & Engineering
University of Moratuwa
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Declaration

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university to the best of my knowledge and believe it does not contain any material previously published, written or orally communicated by another person or myself except where due reference is made in the text. I also hereby give consent for my dissertation, if accepted, to be made available for photocopying and for interlibrary loans, and for the title and summary to be available to outside organizations

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Signature of the Supervisor Date

Dr. Asoka Perera

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List of Abbreviations

IS	Information System
IT	Information Technology
MBA	Master of Business Administrator
PII	Perceived Important Indicator
PM	Project Manager
SW DEV	Software Developer

Abstract

Despite advancement in technology, software project failures remain a critical challenge to software development community. Oftentimes, status reporting is a key control mechanism of a software project and accurate status reporting is paramount concern to practitioners. Empirical evidence indicates that reporting quality is positively associated with project outcome.

The reluctance to report bad news in status reporting process in software projects is a known problem in software project management which affects the accuracy of status reporting. In this research, bad news refers to negative information or unfavorable information on project status. Reluctance to report bad news is more frequent in software projects and associated with unique features of software projects such as complexity, changeability and invisibility. Bad news reporting in software projects has been researched in different perspectives. However, most of the studies were conducted under laboratory setting to control extraneous factors. To date, there have been no field studies to explore the perceived importance of bad news reporting of the members in software projects. This knowledge is particularly important to create a conducive environment within software projects to facilitate bad news reporting to improve the accuracy of the overall status reporting process.

In this study, author explored the nature of bad news reporting, focusing on interaction between software developers and project managers in Sri Lankan Software Industry. A field study was conducted in large and medium scale software development organizations using a scenario based questionnaire. Sample was drawn based on disproportionate stratified random sampling of size 93. The Results revealed that there was a significant difference in perceived importance of bad news reporting between software developers and project managers, and the selection of communication medium and communication method were dependent on the bad news reporting scenario. Further, it was revealed that selection of communication medium and communication method on reporting a particular bad news reporting scenario were independent of each other.