Factors enhancing team performance

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ABSTRACT

In the article, the researchers are trying to figure out what factors with in an organization enhance and effects team performance. At one end miss management at any level can result into a disaster in teams with in an organization, while effective and efficient integration of few factors can help team out perform beyond their desired vision. In the article team performance is measured based on four factors: leader skills, substitutes for leaders, collective effort, and empowerment. The result suggests that effective and efficient utilization of this model can enhance team performance within an organization.
Design/methodology/approach: Model based approach is used which contains four factors that helps understand enhancing team performance in any group or team with in departments in any organization.
Findings: With in groups or teams, a path can be defined or determined for integration of effective and efficient management of teams and results.

Introduction

Before heading further it is necessary to define team. Team in a net shell is few people ranging from two to maximum of twelve with same vision and mission work to accomplish desired goal. Accomplishment of that task basically depends upon how effectively and efficiently those people work together. Effectiveness and efficiency is referred as performance that could be positive and could be negative. If performance is positive then that team will perform outclass and will deliver results beyond the expectations but on the other hand if that performance is negative then there will be low quality results. Team performance in a nut shell is the measure of at what level team, team members, and team leader work. "Problem-solving capacities, such as adaptive performance, spontaneous collaboration, decision acceptance among members, shared situational awareness, and collective efficacy, are team outcomes directly related to a team's ability to address specific problems"(Purvanova & Bono, 2009). Take an example of soccer team in which there are eleven players playing together. The captain of that soccer team is the leader of that team and vision and mission of all the eleven players including team captain is same and that is to score more goals on the rival team. "Distribution of the leadership role indicate that it is positively related to a team's effectiveness in accomplishing goals, or, more directly, their problem-solving capacity"(Wendt, Euwemab, & Emmerik, 2009). To score more goals it depend upon the efficiency and effectiveness with which the team play. "Team performance parameters include characteristics of the team, problem conditions, and perceptions that the leader or team have that might direct or restrict the emergence of collective leadership and team performance" (Morgeson & DeRue, 2006). This research paper is basically a research based on previous findings that how team performance can be enhanced. Four factors leader skills, substitutes for leaders, collective effort, and empowerment based on previous findings were taken to explain enhancement of team performance.

Team Performance:

With globalization, firms believe in effective and efficient personnel that can help them compete effectively under competitive environment. Within firms team performance is base for achieving that effectiveness. Team performance can be enhanced with certain ways. Researchers came up with factor based on previous findings that can help enhance team performance as shown in figure above. According to (Zaccaroa, Rittmana, & Marksb, 2001) team performance depends upon how effectively team member collaborate with each other and can insist each other on unique ideas and results. Research done by these authors contributes to a new research in a way that effective team collaboration helps in enhancing team performance. In soccer game team performance depends upon the ability of captain, covering up of team players, coordination between team players, and balance of power between players. The correct balance of all the factors shown in the model below enhances efficiency and effectiveness of any team.

Figure 1: Factors Enhancing Team Performance

Tele:
E-mail addresses: m_asif@ciit.net.pk
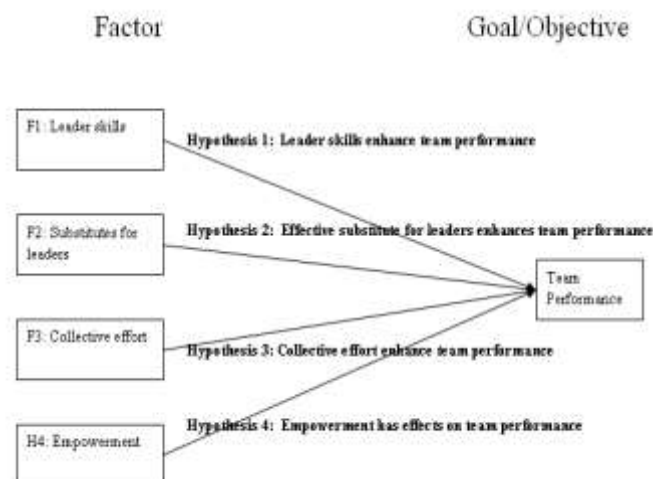
Leader Skills:

Firstly, it is well said that,

"It does not matter how intelligent you are but it does how organized you are".

With in a team of soccer captain is the most skilled person who has power, knows different techniques, can do different moves to motivate team players and can take effective decision under stress and demand to enhance team performance. Same in case of organizational teams leader ship skills like self management, interpersonal and intrapersonal skills, problem solving abilities, effective decision making abilities, and soft skills are very important for a leader to have to keep the team unite and perform out class. According to (Friedrich, Vessey, Schuelke, Ruark, & Mumford, 2009) the characteristics of leader skills defined above are directly related to team performance but depends how an individual use them. These are the skills that leaders use to engage each member of the team in a positive way to turn the whole team perform beyond expectations. Self management is how effectively leaders organize and schedule their life and influence others to schedule their life to turn them an effective team member. Intrapersonal and interpersonal skills include leaders self marketing and networking that helps him influence other to make them follower and then those followers are ready to sacrifice everything for success because it is well said,

"Once a follower always a follower"

It is an art how one behaves under stress and comes out of that stress and difficult situation. In reality while working as an individual or in teams and groups confront many hurdles but a true leader act as a true guide and with his problem solving and effective decision making skills drag out the team from that hurdle. Having soft skills for a leader is must to lead any team or group effectively. It is being more like a democratic leadership where a leader listens to every idea presented by every team member and based on that a mid path is defined on which every one can work and perform out class happily. In a nut shell leader's every individual attribute counts a lot in how he or she engage the team members in performing beyond the desired result.

According to previous findings by (Friedrich, et al., 2009) experience, situational and transformational abilities of leader have positive effect on team performance. While working these leader gain experience and create social network that they use in situations that they face ahead to solve them. Based on experience and social network these leaders create path and then put their team on that path to achieve certain task effectively. Further more according to (Friedrich, et al., 2009) after having leader's own network can distribute responsibilities among team members, guide, coach and motivate them to pursue certain tasks. This strategy is very effective in enhancing team performance keeping every team member cool, calm, and happy. On the top (Balthazard, Waldman, & Warren, 2009) says that experience can itself reveal ideas to leader in structuring and organizing path and then assigning team members to certain tasks for working and performing outclass. The way leader sense the situation and make decisions is based on their skills and on the top based on their experience leaders can really enhance working process of team. According to (Ensley, Hmieleski, & Pearce, 2006) "Leader sense making is related to the way in which team missions are presented to team members and influences team processes". Self management is a key attribute of any leader and according to (Ford & Seers, 2006) leaders

after knowing the mission can really manage and speed up any process and team performance. Leadership has a positive effect on team performance but at the end it really depends what is the attitude of leader as well as team members and according to (Morgeson & DeRue, 2006) and (Friedrich, et al., 2009) team performance is directly related to team members interaction and collaboration and how team leader engage team members effectively in pursuing a goal. In a net shell it is a collective effort.

Substitutes for Leaders:

Every team player is also accountable for best performance of team. In soccer game if all the team players have the same skills that captain has, than in absence of captain each team player can act as a sub captain and can enhance the team performance. Same is the case in organizations that in absence of leader every team member should have ability or should have enough leadership skills to act as a substitute for real leader. In absence of true leader the team performance can be turn down but among the followers one can take the authority and can lead effectively. According to (Mehra, Smith, Dixon, & Robertson, 2006) the team themselves have some leadership characteristics that they use in the absence of true leader to stay on the desired path to accomplish goals in an effective way but within teams every member should have positive attitude towards achieving that vision or desired goal. According to researchers every team members if act as a leader can take over leader's role and can perform outclass. There can be a situation where leader are not there to guide a team and from team members one can come up and can take decision to lead the team to speed up the performance. This concept was introduced by Japanese known as JIT (just in time) where workers doesn't have to take permission from leaders and can instantly take a decision to speed up performance. According to (Mehra, et al., 2006) team members while managing their own tasks can look into and help other team members too to enhance performance and to catch up with the desired dead line. It is well said by (Morgeson & DeRue, 2006) that followers is a half leader. Within teams the members should have enough leadership qualities so that under any critical situation they alone should be able to lead and speed up processes to enhance team performance.

Collective Effort:

Relationship between team players plays an important role in enhancing team performance. In soccer game the understanding and correct passing between the team players result in effective moves that can lead team to sore more goals. If there is no coordination between team players that can lead to miss management and every players will play an individual game and will reduce the team performance. Same way team members together with their collective efforts enhance team performance. Infect team performance is enhanced as an individual effort by every individual. The understanding between team members, distribution of duties, self motivation of every team member and enthusiasm collectively enhances team performance. By previous findings about collective efforts indicates that collective effort of every individual working in a team is responsible for team performance that how effectively and efficiently team can pursue any task, module, or goal. After having a substitute for leaders every team member should have an ability of being team leader and many team leaders working in a group should share powers and collectively speed up process. Having leaders within teams is directly related to effective problem solving and decision making. Experienced sub

team leaders will then suggest solutions for many problem and team collectively can make an efficient decision that will wrap up things rapidly. According to (Friedrich, et al., 2009) collective effort enhances team performance. On the top according to (Zaccaroa, et al., 2001) communication and effective coordination between team members also have very positive effects on overall performance of team. If every member of team communicate and coordinate in a positive way with out any biasness than a team can head further on a unique path with out distraction.

Empowerment:

Balance of power between players is very important in soccer team. If every player plays at the right position and does not exceeds its limits and doesn't leave its position than play will be effective but on the other hand if the players leaves their positions and go beyond their powers than game will be messed up. Same is the case in organizational teams where empowerment has positive as well as negative effects over team performance. Too much of empowerment in the hands of leader turn him into an autocratic leader while on the other hand shared power between group members and leaders can enhance team performance. According to (Shawn Burke, et al., 2006) empowerment is a leader action through which a leader manage the work and team members. Through empowerment a leader also correct and manage team member's behavior, character, and can also set a goal. Goal setting could be participative or can be set by individual. If the goal setting is set by individual without the participation of team members than the team performance can be reduced but if it's a collective goal setting than every individual team member will be satisfied and will work with positive attitude enhancing team performance. If the leader acts as an autocratic leader mean one man show than a team members can't work effectively and they more feel like a slave. On the other hand too much freedom can also distract team member from working together. If leader is just having an overview of what team should do then team will perform well. Overview means monitoring and coaching of whole team. The limits and boundaries of use of power should be known to all the team members so that they can fully utilize those powers to the extreme to turn their work successful.

Conclusion:

In a nut shell the main theme of this research paper started from defining team. Team is a collection of few people ranging from two to minimum of twelve working together under same vision and mission for accomplishment of any task. Accomplishment of that task basically depends upon how effectively and efficiently that team worked together to pursue that task. Effectiveness and efficiency is referred as performance which can be positive or negative or can be positive. If performance is positive then team performed well. Positive result is the theme that how that performance can be enhanced. After research and based on previous findings the author picked up four factors which can be a base of how team performance can be enhanced. Factor like leader skills, substitute for leader, collective effort, and empowerment are used to determine how this factors help in enhancing team performance. Leaders are the

spirit of any team and team totally depends upon these spirits to live. Without these spirits the teams are dead and can't do anything. With in teams every team member should have an ability to take over in absence of team leader under certain limitations. Having team members with leadership qualities then have to work as a collective leadership with balanced empowerment to accomplish any desired goal. According to (Zaccaroa, et al., 2001) teams performance totally depends upon team members and team leader and how they communicate and share powers while coordinating with each other. Throughout the paper leader skills, substitute for leaders, collective effort, and empowerment was the basis for how team performance can be enhanced. This research work can be further used by scientists to build a system that can be used to choose members based on characteristics and qualities defined to make a specific team that can work effectively and efficiently and can perform out class.

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