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DECISION MAKING STYLES AND ITS INFLUENCE ON IT PROFESSIONALS

R. Anand

Management Wing, DDE Study Centre, Annamalai University

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ABSTRACT

In the current study investigated the decision making styles among the information technology professionals. The purpose of this paper is to identify practical approaches to the application of decision-making. These practical approaches are designed to instruct and aid decision makers to improve decision-making. The participants were 130 information technology professionals selected through convenient sampling method in Bangalore, India. The Decision-Making questionnaire of Leon Mann is utilized to develop a methodology for the practical application of decision-making. The 31 to 35 aged group information technology professionals were high in vigilance and hyper-vigilance decisional style. Self-regard has a negative relationship with vigilance style of decision-making. Further, implications of the study are discussed in this article.

Keywords: Decision-making and Information Technology.

1. INTRODUCTION

Decision making is the cognitive process of reaching a decision; "a good leader must be good at decision making." Decision-making is an essential aspect of modern management. It is a primary function of management. A professional's major job is sound/rational decision-making. He or she takes hundreds of decisions consciously and subconsciously. Decision-making is the key part of professional's activities. Decisions are important as they determine both managerial and organizational actions.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

Information technology professionals faces complex and changing internal and external environments, which forces them to have various skills and abilities decisions in order to deal with these extreme situations. Hence, the professional's should evaluate their current decision making skills and develop more creative and innovate ways in their decision making.

The need of the study was to investigate the styles of decision making among the professionals who works in information technology companies. Beside various organizational and environmental factors, professional's responses to decision making situations seem to be different because of their personal characteristics and orientations.

Therefore, researcher has to consider special factors that influence decision making. The professionals in information technology sectors should look for effective personal

characteristics that affect their responses to decision making situations positively, instead of just relying on traditional and bureaucratic approaches.

Researcher going to show this effect by investigating the six general decision-making styles; that is, vigilance, hyper vigilance, rationalization, buck passing, procrastination, and defensive avoidance. Thus this paper provides a critical analysis of decision making styles of the information technology professionals'. This approach should help organizations look and prepare for the future more effectively.

2. METHOD

A sample of 130 individuals who working full time and who resided in the Bangalore area completed self-report surveys containing items assessing the variables described below. The surveys contained the thirty one items of the Leon Mann, Radford, and Kalucy (1986) decision making styles inventory. The survey items designed to assess vigilance, hyper vigilance, defensive avoidance, procrastination, buck passing, and rationalization of their decisions. These items featured a three-point response format ranging from not true (one point) to true for me (three points).

Leon Mann et al. (1986) reported a test-retest reliability, ranging from 0.47 to 0.74 for all the sub-scales. In India, Amalor (1992) found test-retest reliability as follows: Vigilance 0.79, hyper vigilance 0.47, defensive avoidance 0.58, procrastination 0.76, buck passing 0.46, and rationalization 0.59. This tool possesses both content and

constructs validity. The factorial validity of the scale ranges from 0.56 to 0.83 for all the six dimensions.

HYPOTHESES

The following hypothesis are framed to study the decision making of the information technology professionals

1. There is a significant difference in decision making of information technology professionals’ basis of their age, length of service, marital status and number of dependents.

3.RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The ‘t’ test was used for testing the significant difference between the means of demographic variables viz. marital status and gender. The ‘F’ test was used for testing the significant difference between the means of demographic variables viz. age, years of service and number of dependents.

Hypothesis:1 - “Age of Information Technology Professionals has a significant influence on their decision-making”

From the Table 1, it is found that ‘F’ values are significant for the decision making dimensions viz. hyper vigilance, vigilance, buck passing and procrastination. It is concluded that the information technology professionals significantly differ in their decision making based on their age.

Table – 1: DECISION MAKING WITH RESPECT TO THEIR AGE

Decision-Making Styles	AGE				F-value	Posthoc
	1 Mean (S.D)	2 Mean (S.D)	3 Mean (S.D)	4 Mean (S.D)		
Hyper Vigilance	7.85 (1.31)	10.10 (1.59)	9.92 (1.64)	9.78 (1.50)	18.555*	2 vs 3 vs 4 vs 1
Rationalization	9.95 (1.38)	10.05 (1.56)	10.26 (2.02)	10.00 (1.18)	0.272	----
Vigilance	11.64 (1.61)	12.41 (1.90)	11.64 (2.90)	7.11 (2.75)	32.595*	2 vs 1, 3, vs 4
Defensive Avoidance	10.05 (1.52)	9.44 (1.60)	9.62 (1.60)	9.89 (1.63)	1.156	----
Buck Passing	9.82 (2.19)	11.02 (2.53)	11.67 (2.14)	13.48 (1.01)	16.422*	4 vs 3 vs 2 vs 1
Procrastination	9.56 (1.87)	9.41 (1.55)	10.31 (1.59)	10.59 (1.39)	4.210*	4 vs 3 vs 1 vs 2

1. Less than 30 years - 39 persons
*Significant at 0.05% level
2. 31 to 35 years - 41 persons
3. 36 to 40 years - 39 persons
4. Above 40 years - 27 persons

From the Table – 1, it is observed that 31 to 35 aged information technology professionals were high in vigilance and hyper-vigilance decisional style. It may be due to the nature of project allotted to the individuals make them to be vigilant in their decisions. Hyper vigilance refers to a tendency to make decision impulsively. When we have a lot of pressure due to nature of work we may get irritated and make decisions impressively.

More than 40 years of aged information technology were high in buck passing and procrastination decision making style. High in buck passing and procrastination may be due to the hierarchical flow of work and credit to the problem solving makes the individuals to avoid making decisions. It is concluded that the information technology professionals

significantly differ in their decision making based on their age.

Hypothesis:2 - “Information technology professionals differ in the decision making on the basis of years of service.”

From the Table 2, it is found that ‘F’ values are significant for the decision making dimensions viz. hyper vigilance, vigilance, buck passing and procrastination. It is concluded that the information technology professionals significantly differ in their decision making based on their service.

It is evident that the age and experience of the results almost the same. From the Table – 2, it is observed that 3 to 6 years of service as information technology professionals were high in hyper vigilance decisional style. It may be due to the insufficient time to make decisions in the organization though the individuals are optimistic about finding the solution to the problems in front them.

Table – 2: DECISION MAKING BASED ON YEARS OF SERVICE

Decision Making Styles	Years of service			F-value	Posthoc
	1 Mean (S.D)	2 Mean (S.D)	3 Mean (S.D)		
Hyper Vigilance	8.79 (1.87)	9.92 (1.67)	9.73 (1.42)	6.881*	2 vs 3 vs 1
Rationalization	9.98 (1.45)	10.16 (1.85)	10.09 (1.42)	0.178	----
Vigilance	12.03 (1.87)	11.71 (2.48)	8.15 (3.47)	28.902*	1 vs 2 vs 3
Defensive Avoidance	9.79 (1.53)	9.51 (1.62)	9.94 (1.65)	0.821	----
Buck Passing	10.21 (2.34)	11.61 (2.40)	13.00 (1.44)	18.636*	3 vs 2 vs 1
Procrastination	9.52 (1.78)	10.00 (1.61)	10.50 (1.44)	3.983*	3 vs 2 vs 1

1. Less than 3 years - 63 persons
2. 3 to 6 years - 49 persons
3. Above 6 years - 34 persons

Whereas less than 3 years of experience as information technology professionals were high in vigilance decisional style. It is quite natural that the young and energetic professionals are optimistic about finding the solution to the issues faced by them in the work environment. The sufficient time available to the individuals, makes them to consider all the possible alternatives and to make decisions.

The information technology professionals whose experience was more than 6 years are high in buck passing and procrastination decisional style. It may be due to the promotional system or the performance appraisal system adapted by the organization. The individual who waits for the promotion, who promotion were delayed further makes them to adapt the buck passing or procrastination decisional style.

Hypothesis:3 “Information technology professionals differ in their decision-making with respect to their marital status”

From the Table 3, it is found that ‘t’ values are significant for vigilance decisional style. Hence the hypothesis is rejected for decision making. It is concluded that marital status of the information technology professionals has no significant influence in their decision-making.

From the Table – 3, it is found that unmarried information technology professionals were high in vigilance decisional style. The conditions that characterize the real-world or naturalistic tasks places the unmarried professionals to the

luxury of implementing a more elaborate analytic procedure and adapt the best one suitable for the current situation.

Table 3: DECISION MAKING AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE: MARITAL STATUS COMPARISON

Decision Making	Marital Status		F value
	Married Mean (S.D)	Unmarried Mean (S.D)	
Hyper Vigilance	9.67 (1.65)	8.20 (1.66)	0.299
Rationalization	10.11 (1.63)	9.94 (1.45)	0.051
Vigilance	10.91 (3.29)	11.37 (1.55)	20.119*
Defensive Avoidance	9.66 (1.59)	9.97 (1.56)	1.360
Buck Passing	12.01 (2.12)	9.17 (2.13)	0.811
Procrastination	10.05 (1.57)	9.49 (1.95)	3.033

It is concluded that unmarried information technology professionals were high in vigilance decisional style.

Hypothesis: "Information technology professionals differ significantly in their decision making on the basis of their gender."

From the Table - 4, it is inferred that 't' values are significant for defensive avoidance and buck passing decisional style. Hence the hypothesis is rejected for decision making.

From the Table - 4, it is found that male information technology professionals were high in defensive avoidance and buck passing decisional style. It may be due to nature of the project that the solution to the issues or problem has to handle by the software engineers who developed the programmes or who maintains the same. They tries to shifts responsibility onto someone else or rationalizing the least objectionable alternative.

TABLE - 4: DECISION MAKING: GENDER COMPARISON

Decision Making Styles	Gender		F value
	Male Mean (S.D)	Female Mean (S.D)	
Hyper Vigilance	9.37 (1.82)	9.44 (1.67)	1.284
Rationalization	9.96 (1.62)	10.31 (1.49)	0.684
Vigilance	10.76 (3.07)	11.60 (2.68)	2.652
Defensive Avoidance	9.79 (1.71)	9.60 (1.27)	4.883*
Buck Passing	11.94 (2.09)	9.96 (2.63)	6.948*
Procrastination	9.57 (1.71)	10.67 (1.35)	2.980

Male - 101 persons
 Female - 45 persons
 *Significant at 0.05% level

It is concluded that the gender of the professionals does not have significant relationship with their decision-making styles.

Hypothesis: "Information technology professionals differ significantly in their decision making on the basis of the number of dependents."

From the Table - 5, it is noticed that 'F' values are significant for vigilance and buck passing decisional style. Hence the hypothesis is rejected for decision making.

From the Table – 5, it is noticed that information technology professionals who have less than 2 dependents were high in vigilance decisional style. Responsibility of these individuals to take decisions in all parts of life makes them to be vigilant in the decisional style. Moreover they searches carefully for a wide variety of alternatives and objectively weighs the costs and benefits before making the final decision. And professionals who have more than 4 dependents were high in buck passing decisional style. As someone in the family to take care of the decisions in the personal life may be the reason to prefer the same in the work life.

TABLE -5: DECISION MAKING BASED ON THE NUMBER OF DEPENDENTS

Decision Making Styles	Number of Dependents				F – value	Posthoc
	1 Mean (S.D)	2 Mean (S.D)	3 Mean (S.D)	4 Mean (S.D)		
Hyper Vigilance	8.87 (1.85)	9.72 (1.72)	9.90 (1.65)	9.57 (0.79)	3.323	----
Rationalization	10.00 (1.39)	10.19 (1.87)	10.10 (1.52)	9.71 (1.60)	0.250	----
Vigilance	11.52 (2.43)	11.70 (2.94)	10.10 (3.13)	6.00 (0.00)	10.853*	2 vs 1 vs 3 vs 4
Defensive Avoidance	9.73 (1.48)	9.70 (1.78)	9.70 (1.56)	10.14 (1.46)	0.164	----
Buck Passing	9.82 (2.41)	12.47 (1.65)	12.37 (2.06)	12.57 (1.51)	18.766*	4 vs 2 vs 3 vs 1
Procrastination	9.94 (1.69)	10.17 (1.72)	9.40 (1.63)	10.14 (1.35)	1.355	----

1. No dependents - 62 persons
 *Significant at 0.05% level
2. Less than 2 dependents - 47 persons
3. 3 or 4 dependents - 30 persons
4. More than 4 dependents - 7 persons

It is concluded information technology professionals with have less than 2 dependents were high in vigilance decisional style and who have more than 4 dependents were high in buck passing decisional style.

4.CONCLUSION

The present study examines the decision making styles of information technology professionals. This research provides a number of contributions to the theoretical debate decision making style, that is, "Decision Making Styles and its influence on IT Professionals." The first contribution is that this study explored the IT professional's tendencies to different decision making styles. Moreover, we constructed our research work on the valid model of decision making style. And the result of the current study tried to make professionals pay much more attentions to decision making styles.

5.REFERENCES

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