Chapter IX

A Comparison of the Perceived Importance of Information Systems Development Strategies by Developers from the United States and Korea

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the perceptions of Information Systems (IS) developers from the U.S. and Korea with regards to the strategies that are considered crucial for IS success. The results of a principal component analysis revealed that the IS development strategies could be classified into four categories: (1) Organizational Integration, (2) Team Member Characteristics, (3) Project Leader Traits, and (4) Project Development Management. ANOVA results indicated that developers from both countries viewed Organizational Integration as the most important component and

Project Development Management as the least important component. However, while IS developers in the U.S. viewed Team Member Characteristics as the second most important component, Korean IS developers rated the Project Leader Traits as the second most important component. Moreover, the IS developers from the U.S. rated Organizational Integration and Team Member Characteristics as significantly more important than did the IS developers from Korea. The results were discussed in terms of Hofstede's model of national culture.

INTRODUCTION

In spite of significant technological advances and years of application experience, the development of information systems remains a difficult process plagued with uncertainty (Liebowitz, 1999). While many systems development projects have been successful, many others have failed (Clegg et al., 1998). Numerous studies have been conducted to investigate various development strategies that are associated with IS success (e.g., Abdul-Gader, 1997; Baker, Murphy & Fisher, 1983; Cleland & King, 1983). Most of these studies have been confined to data collected in the U.S. and other countries with a similar culture. However, the results of investigations conducted in the U.S. regarding the usefulness of various IS development strategies may not be relevant in a global environment.

It has been suggested that as corporations develop and implement global IS, it may be necessary to modify their operating procedures to accommodate the customs of IS developers in the host country (Katz & Townsend, 2000). Thus, a pertinent issue is, how do the IS development strategies believed to be most important in the U.S. compare with the strategies considered to be most important in other nations and other cultures? An understanding of national and cultural differences and similarities with respect to the perceived importance of IS development strategies could prove to be extremely valuable to managers of global IS.

Not only has most of the research on IS development strategies been conducted in nations characterized by a Western culture, but most of the investigations have assessed the value of IS development strategies based on the views of users. That is, measures such as user satisfaction, system usage, and the perceived benefits of the system as assessed by users are typically employed to determine the effectiveness of various IS development strategies (Ginzberg, 1981; McDoniel, Palko, & Cronan, 1993). To some extent, the views of IS developers have been neglected in research on IS development strategies (Lyytinen, 1998).

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