INVESTIGATING THE CHALLENGES FACING THE INFORMATION SERVICES TEAMS AT VOLKSWAGEN GROUP SOUTH AFRICA

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Abstract
Many organisations have teams in place to handle daily tasks; these organisations include small start-ups all the way to large multi-national corporations. VWSA is no exception to this and as such they have three teams that together make up the Information Services department. Another worldwide phenomenon is the fact that the global economy has been suffering of late and most, if not all companies are looking to save on costs. One way to do this is to cut down the personnel costs, which can be a considerable amount of a company’s, spend. If this is to happen, then the teams within the organisation will change, either just by restructuring or by loss of members. The problem then arises as to whether or not the teams originally put into place still function well together to achieve their tasks. Teams need to have a balance in them in order to function at peak efficiency as discussed in the literature. The aim of this study is to investigate the challenges facing the Information Services department along with the level of cohesion felt amongst the team members. This study also aims to determine the roles that exist or are lacking within the teams as well as to provide recommendations to swap certain people within the teams based on the roles present in the teams.

Key Words: Challenges; Teams; Information Services; Organization; Multi – National Corporations; Global Economy; Personnel Costs; Restructuring

Introduction
This study investigates the challenges facing the teams within the Volkswagen Group South Africa (VWSA) Information Services (IS) department and the roles that are present within the various teams. The cohesiveness of the teams will also be addressed during this study in order to try and improve the performance of each team.

These teams are made up of very diverse individuals. The diversity arises from multiple factors such as gender, race, age, education and culture etc. This diversity can be a source of conflict within the teams. This study aims to find out how cohesive each team is.
This study also tries to determine each person's team profile. Each team requires certain roles to be present within a team in order for it to be successful. Therefore this study will find each person's role and measure whether the team has a good complement of roles or if there any roles conflicting with other roles or even if any roles are absent from the team, this is especially important since the teams within the VWSA Information Services department have been getting smaller recently. Therefore there is a higher likelihood that certain roles, which may have been present previously, are no longer present.

The results of this study will provide information into any current team problems requiring attention by the VWSA Information Services department management.

Literature Review

A literature review is a description of the major theories, themes, methodologies and arguments in the scholarly literature surrounding this subject (Andersson and Beveridge, 2007). The literature review will also connect and compare the arguments made in other literature as the central focus of the literature will be to examine and evaluate what has been said before and also any gaps in the literature.

Definition of a Team

A team can be considered as a group of people within an organisation working towards a common goal, usually by working on similar tasks. Katzenbach and Smith (1993) have also defined a team as a basic unit of performance having a small number of people who are committed to achieving common goals whilst having complementary skills and therefore a mutual accountability for the goals.

Teams in the workplace fall into three categories; organic teams – which are based on organisational structure, project teams – which have been put together for a specific project and non-organic teams – which have been created for a certain task or process (Entsgo, 2009).

In the workplace, teams are formed based on different areas of the business. For example the Information Services department at VWSA is broken up into 3 three teams based on which area of the overall business they support. Therefore these three teams provide support for any computer systems in place by their business area.

Effective Teams

High performance teams will make use of the experience, insights and skills of the various team members. Good teamwork will apply to the whole organisation as it represents a set of values that will promote certain behaviours such as good communication etiquette, providing support to team members and acknowledging the achievements of others Katzenbach and Smith (1993). Effective teams will empower the organisation they belong to since every member complements the other which in turns creates synergies. Using the different knowledge from each member gives the whole a wider base of knowledge. An effective team will be able to use conflicts and disputes to growth in the team. When team members share on a personal level, it allows them to commit to achieving its goals (Entsgo, 2009).

Teams will also have a better chance of being effective if they minimise group pressure and not allow one person to dominate the team. Related to this is the phenomenon if 'Groupthink' which can be one of the most harmful characteristics of a team and should thus be avoided by any and all means. Teams can also perform effectively by keeping the main goals of the team in mind, some teams lose effectiveness by shifting focus onto to other issues (Entsgo, 2009).

Characteristics of effective teams

There are various characteristics that make up an effective team, a few of these found in the literature are discussed below.
Communication
Loxley (1997) says that communication is vital for team effectiveness since it is an observable interaction where information is transferred; therefore it is necessary for team meetings to have clear agendas and for them to be conducted in a language that all team members can understand. Headrick, Wilcock and Batalden (1998) further emphasize this by stating that decisions should be made with input from all parties concerned, which can be done within a team meeting. The team members should feel comfortable enough to voice their opinions and should not be afraid to put forth an idea even if it seems extreme.

Clear goals and purpose
Every organisation should have a mission and a vision which would give direction to the company by providing the employees with a common purpose and give them a common sense of values. According to Beatty (1987) and Headrick et al. (1998), a mission helps to synchronize the values held by the organisation and also motivates the employees to achieve more, as this gives the employees something in common to base a relationship on. A common example is found in the healthcare industry where nurses are in agreement and form relationships because they have the common goal of putting the patients' needs first (Bassoff 1983; Headrick et al. 1998).

Appropriate culture
The culture that exists within any organisation is formed over time and is shaped by the leadership and employees alike. However, new employees may not immediately recognise the prevalent culture or behaviours since it is not formally documented anywhere. Therefore Sundstrom, De Meuse and Futrell (1990) argue that organisations must define their expectations and how they hold employees responsible for their behaviours and actions clearly. These must also be fulfilled equally by all members, even the senior group members who can sometime feel that the rules do not apply to them Kane (1975).

Proper leadership
As an organisation grows the tasks that the teams will have to fulfil will inevitably become more complex. With this added complexity, the role of a leader becomes increasingly important. The leader should be able to adapt to the team's stage of evolution and maintain a strategic focus while making time to give feedback on individual achievements (Barczak 1996; Proctor-Childs, Freeman and Miller 1998).

Self-awareness and commitment
A team is made of many individuals and it is imperative that each team member pulls their own weight so as to not force other team members to feel overloaded. Each team member can bring a unique perspective to the team, influenced by their personality and this will affect how the team functions (Maple, 1987).

The individuals can become committed to the team once they are self-aware and are then able to trust their team members. The establishment of team goals as mentioned earlier will help to form this commitment. According to Goleman (1998), team members are willing to make small personal sacrifices in the short term for the good of the team as they feel that the team as a whole is more important than them as an individual.

Challenges Facing Teams
There are various sources that can be the cause of challenges in the workplace team. These may include challenges arising from the diversity of the team members, absence of a team identity, poor communication, lack of participation and creativity, groupthink and ineffective leadership amongst others.
Diversity challenges
Diversity consists of many different aspects, these include: Gender, Race and Age amongst others. These three components are discussed below.

Gender
Balderson and Broderick (1996) found that when the Belbin Team Role Self-Perception Inventory (BTRSPI) was conducted and a comparison was made between males and females, the team-roles of monitor Evaluator” and “Plant” significantly discriminated between gender, with women scoring themselves higher on both of these team roles than the men did. Balderson and Broderick (1996) also concluded that the BTRSPI can provide insights into the differences associated with occupation and gender. However, Anderson and Sleap (2004) claimed to find a bias in favour of “Co-Ordinator/Chairman” and “Shaper” for men and “Team Worker” for women.

According to Umans (2011), a higher percentage of females within a team could lead the team to better performance. However having a team made up of only a single gender, either male or female, will not yield the best possible output due to the lacking variety of opinions and inputs. LePine, Hollenbeck, Ilgen, Colquitt and Ellis (2002) also looked at how the gender composition of a group influenced the decision making in the team. If a team was performing traditionally masculine tasks, they found that the team decisions grew more and more aggressive as the percentage of male team members increased.

The mixture of both genders becomes particularly relevant when individuals from different backgrounds and experiences come together to work as a team; this provides a means of recognizing the different ways in which contributions can be made to a team by both genders. A study conducted in Norway by Hoogendoorn, Oosterbeek and van Praag (2011) found that when there are 55% females in a team, it would perform at its peak. However, if a quota system is introduced, to force teams to have a certain number of females; it could be detrimental to the overall result. This may be attributed to the fact that if a quota system is enforced; experienced male members would have to be replaced with inexperienced female members. If they had sufficient experienced female members to deploy into the team then the adverse effects would be largely bypassed, albeit finding sufficiently experienced female members is no easy task, especially in executive roles.

A study conducted by Lee and Farh (2004) conclude that if the individuals in a team are of the same gender and they base their assumptions of how well the team will perform on the same characteristics, their assumptions would be over-inflated since the objective performance is actually lower. The same view is held by Jackson, Bandrett, Sessa, Cooper, Julin and Peyronnin (1991). This can have a negative impact on decision making and therefore overall performance. According to Jackson et al. (1991) and Kirchmeyer (1995) the more homogeneous a team is, the higher their job satisfaction will be. This can be attributed to the fact that there may be less conflict due to the members having similar thought processes and values. Gender diverse teams will tend to have lower levels of cohesion and more conflict which can harm the team performance (Williams and O’Reilly 1998).

Race
Racial Diversity has become commonplace in the South African workplace, this has been helped by programmes such as Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) and Affirmative Action which came into place after the apartheid era. The post 1994 South African workplace has become more racially diverse; this indicates the move towards building so called heterogeneous teams. These teams, according to Holtzman and Anderberd (2011), yield higher quality and efficiency. Shachaf (2008) states that heterogeneous team will outperform homogeneous teams in the long run. However Williams and O’Reilly (1998) state that if a diverse team is left unattended; it is
likely to have negative effects on the total performance by causing breakdowns in the processes such as communication and cohesion. There may be language barriers that exist between different racial groups within a team and that can lead to this breakdown of cohesion and communication, this view is also held by Jehn (1995).

According to a study conducted by Kochan, Bezrukova, Ely, Jackson, Joshi, Jehn, Leonard, Levine and Thomas (2003), racial diversity within a team did not significantly impact the performance of the team. Another study by Richard (2000), found also found that merely having a diverse team in place cannot guarantee an increase in performance, that depends on by the strategies put in place. However, Kochan et al. (2003) found that racial diversity did impact on communication amongst the team members in a negative way.

Age
There have not been any studies looking at team roles and taking age into consideration (Belbin 2010), this is because there is no known difference in the preference of team roles except that the employees who are in a particular environment for a long period of time tends to have more polarized preferences. This can be attributed to the fact that when an employee is in the same environment for an extended period of time, the individual's strengths and weaknesses can be identified.

Multiple studies have come to the conclusion that age diversity in teams has a negative effect on the team performance (e.g. Tsui, Egan, and Xin, 1995; Williams and O'Reilly, 1998). However, Wegge, Roth, Neubach, Schmidt and Kanfer (2008) found that while age diversity had negative effects on team performance when the team had to perform routine tasks but when dealing with more complex tasks, the age diversity in a team actually helps the team to perform better. This can be attributed to the fact that with a difference in generation, the differing age groups view complex tasks differently and since they work together, they can combine these views and choose aspects from each of them that suit the situation.

Other challenges
The following challenges also have an impact on teams and team cohesion.

Team identity
A team identity can be described as ‘the way we do things here’. It is formed by the members’ attitudes, customs and expectations. Therefore it is important for team members to share similar attitudes and expectations as it will make working within the team easier (Institute of Leadership and Management and QMD Ltd, 2006).

The identity of a team gives the members a sense of belonging and therefore may suppress individual interest in favour of team interest (Eckel and Grossman, 2005). Somech, Desivilya and Lidogoster (2009) state that team identity is very important in allowing teams to benefit by using task interdependence and transforming them into milestones and achievements.

Groupthink
Groupthink occurs when the individuals that make up the team tend to form the same opinions and therefore are unable to come up with new ideas or even accept new ideas. A lesser degree of groupthink is when a new idea is presented but the team does not analyse it critically due to overemphasis on team agreement.

Peterson, Owens, Tetlock, Fan and Martorana (1998) explain that groupthink affects decision making within a team and will therefore influence the outcomes. Groupthink can be viewed as a defective process that should be avoided (Aldag and Fuller, 1993).

Although team cohesion, which is discussed in more detail below, is largely viewed as a factor that will increase the performance of a team, high team cohesion and team efficacy may lead to groupthink and will deter the individual members from conducting any independent and critical
thinking about the matter at hand which can result in poor decisions being made (Lee and Farh, 2004). While lower cohesion in a team is generally considered a bad thing, it can avoid the phenomenon of groupthink from occurring and will bring additional viewpoints in from all team members since none of them will feel the need to keep the others happy by not voicing their opinions (Kochan et al., 2003).

**Poor communication**
Communication is vital in any team, particularly when teamwork is concerned as the team members will have to co-ordinate their activities in a highly detailed fashion. Face to face communication has been found to help reduce the feeling of being overloaded when presented with work (Fussel, Kraut, Lerch, Scherlis, McNally and Cadiz, 1998). This can be attributed the fact then when communicating face to face, body language and facial expressions are easily readable and the workload being given can then be adjusted or negotiated.

**Ineffective leadership**
Effective leaders produce effective teams, these leaders need to have social skills in order to be considered effective. Emotional Intelligence is one of the specific social skills that are required by an effective leader (Prati, Douglas, Ferris, Ammeter and Buckley, 2003). If the leader of a team is ineffective it can have dire consequences on the outcome and the performance of the team. An ineffective leader will also diminish the employee morale and that will contribute to the lower productivity as well as higher costs for activities such as team building that would be need to boost employee satisfaction (Phaneuf, 2008).

**Team Styles**
Parker (2008) has defined four Team Player Styles which contribute to an effective team, these styles are quite different from each other but have their own strengths and weaknesses which will be discussed below, each style also has the ability to be a leader, albeit with different strengths. The four styles are contributor, collaborator, communicator and challenger.

When team members take the survey to determine what their primary style is, they may have more than one primary style; they have a dual primary style or even possible three primary styles. This does not mean that this is the only style they exhibit; it just means that it is the style they use most of the time.

**Leadership**
Certain aspects of leadership have been discussed in this chapter already. This section discusses the characteristics of effective leadership.

As mentioned previously, effective leaders are required to have emotional intelligence (Prati et al., 2003). Palmer, Walls, Burgess and Stough (2001) state that emotional intelligence is one of the factors that are looked for in individuals when they are being considered for a leadership position. Palmer et al. (2001) hypothesized that transformational leaders have a higher level of emotional intelligence than transactional leaders. A transactional leader deals with subordinates in a 'give and take' manner, while transformational leaders look to satisfy the underlying motivators of subordinates.

Communication has been recognised as a characteristic that is important in an effective leader. The communication must be clear and purposeful, since there is input from many different sources competing for employees' attention (Zhivago, 2012). It is vital that leaders communicate the strategic vision and up to date performance information to their team. Equally important is to have an open two-way communication channel between lower levels employees and those in leadership positions (Economy, 2013).

Leaders have to have a sense of confidence about them, this is especially true when they are in fact not feeling very confident. This will help inspire the rest of the employees and allow them to
focus their goals since the leader's confidence will distil down to the employees (Economy, 2013; Prive, 2012) Leaders with a high level of confidence also has a superior ability to reaffirm their authority within the organisation (Scott, 2014).

Team members in general must always respect each other in order for the team to thrive; this is of greater importance when it comes to the leadership of a team. When a leader is respectful to the rest of the team, it shows them that their input is valued and it will therefore make them feel happy to contribute again in the future (Scott, 2014). In order for one to be a leader, they must have people to lead. It is important that the leader realises that they cannot complete all the tasks and as such they will need to delegate certain tasks to their subordinates. A good leader will pick out the strengths of each team member and delegate those types of tasks to those members (Scott, 2014; Prive, 2012).

Team members in effective teams will trust each other; the trust will develop from the top down, where the leader will be honest and open with the team, thereby allowing the team members to build trust between each other (Scott, 2014). Treating the team the same way the leader would like to be treated which is in an open an honest manner will instil in the team the same values of honesty and fairness (Economy, 2013).

**Ineffective teams**
An ineffective team does not need to be the polar opposite of an effective team. An ineffective team may excel in certain areas but fall short in other critical domains (Parker, 2008). For example a team can have a clear goal set out but still be considered ineffective if the team members are unable to communicate well with each other and listen effectively. A poor quality of communication has also been designated as a factor that makes teams ineffective (Smith, 2010).

Another reason teams may be considered is if they do not have the proper processes in place (Parker, 2008). So if there is an argument between team members, they are unaware of how to go about solving the issue. Also, according to Kaztenbach and Smith (1993), members criticise each other but not in a constructive manner and this therefore becomes a source of conflict. Certain employees may for their own sub-groups and exclude other team members which will then prevent the team from functioning as a whole. This may also lead to the sub-groups giving uncreative alternatives to problems (Smith, 2010). This uncreative participation is also a factor that will be investigated in this study.

**Research Methodology**
Research is a formal and systematic investigation for new information pertaining to a specific subject, in other words, research is used to obtain solutions to scientific and social problems using objective analysis (Rajasekar, Philominathan and Chinnathambi, 2013). This chapter discusses the important areas that need to be considered when conducting research as well as the methodology that was used along with a justification for each. Therefore this chapter will also elaborate on the research strategy and philosophy; it describes the target population and sample, validity and reliability and ethical considerations.

**Target Population and Sample**
With regards to statistics, the population will be the group of individuals that a study is concerned with. A portion of the population is chosen and tested, this is the sample. The sample should represent the overall population and in doing so, generalisations can be made about the entire population without having to test everyone.
When there are larger populations in question, it is not feasible to get feedback from each person within the population. This is due to time constraints, both on the collection of the responses and also the time it will take to analyse the mass of data. The budget would also be put under strain since there would be more resources needed to collect and analyse the data.

A sample size is also affected by the level of confidence that is required. The level or degree of confidence is usually 95%; this percentage indicates how likely the results will represent the broader population (Easton and McCall, n.d.).

The studies in which generalisations can be made use probability sampling methods, these include; simple random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified sampling and cluster sampling. Non-probability sampling also has varying methods which include; convenience sampling, purposive sampling, snowball sampling and maximum variation sampling (William, 2006).

The target population or this study is the IS Department at VWSA which consists of 60 permanent and long term contractor employees. In order to gain a true representation of the population, a sample of 56 would be needed – with a level of confidence of 99% - according to Roasoft.com (2004). Since this is quite a small population and the suggested sample size is so close to the population, the questionnaires will be handed out to all permanent and long term contractor employees in the department. This means that a census will be taken, encompassing all the employees thereby avoiding any sampling errors.

Data Analysis
The aim of this study is to investigate the challenges that VWSA Information Services teams face. To achieve this aim, a quantitative questionnaire will be handed out to all the team members with the VWSA IS department as a census will be taken as opposed to a smaller sample.

Once the data is collected, it will be organised and analysed. Data analysis is a way of gathering, modelling and transforming data with the aim of highlighting information (Ader, Mellenbergh and Hand, 2008). Data collected from the survey will be entered into the statistical package, PSPP for analysis, discussion and presentation of the results in this research. The data will need to be properly set up. This process includes identifying each respondent’s questionnaire by assigning unique identification number to it, defining the variables properly, and entering the data. Frequency tables will be drawn and from these the data will be presented in bar graphs.

One of the reasons for choosing the quantitative approach is because it provides an easy and effective ways to apply the above measures. Gravetter and Fornazo (2009) explain that a low standard deviation would imply that most observations cluster around the mean whereas a high standard deviation would imply that there was a lot of variation in the answers. The chi-square test will be performed to determine if there are associations between the variables measured.

Limitations of the Research
All studies are limited and by accepting that, researchers know that their findings cannot be generalised too much, nor can it be perfectly conclusive (Marshall and Rossman, 2011).

This study was originally limited to the permanent employees within the VWSA IS Department. This is a limitation because, due to the nature of the field, there are quite a few contractors within the various teams, due to their high turnover; they sometimes cannot become fully cohesive or understand the challenges facing the team as a whole. In order to limit this, the long term contractors have been added to the study as they work with the permanent team members on a daily basis and therefore have constant interaction with them and play a big role in team composition.

Another limitation of this study, specifically, a portion research instrument is that it is based on Parker’s team styles, which has been adapted to suit the environment, meaning that some
questions may not be asked in a manner that Parker originally intended. The instrument also gathers data on the level of cohesiveness within the teams and the respondents may become confused with any similarities in the questions. The instrument also looks at challenges facing the team, however due to the vast number of challenges that are possible, a few pertinent challenges have been identified and only those specific challenges will be quantitatively assessed; the risk is that certain other challenges facing the teams will not be assessed.

**Statement of Results, Discussion and Interpretation of Findings**

**Response Rate**
Out of a total of 60 permanent employees and long term contractors within the VWSA IS Department, 58 responses were received (97%). Since the responses were gathered from the entire department, they fall into three team; the Infrastructure and Helpdesk team (Team 1 – 25 members), the Technical team (Team 2 – 15 members) and the Marketing, Finance and HR team (Team 3 – 18 members). The questionnaires were handed out in person and a few by email to those employees who are remote based and work from home for part of the week.

The results are separated into the different sections as per the questionnaire handed out. The first section is demographic data; the second is relating to the team player profile and third relates to challenges facing the team. There were however some responses that were not completed in full and therefore the sections that were not filled were not included in the analysis.

**Demographic data**
This section is broken down into various groups; gender, age, language, qualifications and years of service both within the current team within the VWSA IS department.

**Gender**
Table 4.1 below shows the split between males and females with the VWSA IS Department as well as the gender split between the three teams that make up the VWSA IS Department. Figure 4.1 represents this information graphically

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Team 1</th>
<th>Team 2</th>
<th>Team 3</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>21 (84%)</td>
<td>12 (80%)</td>
<td>9 (50%)</td>
<td>42 (72%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>4 (16%)</td>
<td>3 (20%)</td>
<td>9 (50%)</td>
<td>16 (28%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the total department there are 42 males and 16 females, which is a split of 72% and 28% biased towards the males. Team 1 and team 2 exhibit this difference even more severely with approximately 80% males each. Only team 3 has a balance of 50% male and female members. This shows that there is a clear bias of males within the department as well as in team 1 and team 2. Only team 3 has a balance of males and females. The overall bias is reflective of the IT industry, where there is still a struggle globally to get females involved in studying IT for their career. Studies done in South Africa come to the same conclusion, while there are more female
students attending universities, males still dominate the STEM fields (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) (Alexander, 2010; Suleman, 2011). The same trend has also been found on an international level (Kalwe, 2009).

**Age**

The breakdown of the various age groups within each team and the department as a whole is shown in Table 4.2 and Figure 4.2 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Team 1</th>
<th>Team 2</th>
<th>Team 3</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18 – 25</td>
<td>1 (4%)</td>
<td>1 (6%)</td>
<td>2 (3%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 – 35</td>
<td>11 (44%)</td>
<td>1 (7%)</td>
<td>6 (33%)</td>
<td>18 (31%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 – 45</td>
<td>5 (33%)</td>
<td>4 (22%)</td>
<td>9 (16%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46 – 55</td>
<td>9 (36%)</td>
<td>6 (40%)</td>
<td>6 (33%)</td>
<td>21 (36%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56 – 65</td>
<td>4 (16%)</td>
<td>3 (20%)</td>
<td>1 (6%)</td>
<td>8 (14%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The department total shows a split between two age groups; 26-35 with 18 members (31%) and 46-55 with 21 members (36%). The age distribution shows that team 1 has the youngest team; however this could be because team 1 includes the helpdesk which is predominantly made up of long term contractors. This may be a concern for the management since the expertise within team 1 and team 2 lie in the upper age groups. Team 3 seems to have a better balance between the different ages which will help for the knowledge to be transferred to the younger generation and thereby retained within the department. Team 2 and even team 1 after factoring in the helpdesk are at higher risk of losing the knowledge once the older generations retire.
Marital Status
Table 4.3 below shows the breakdown of the marital status of the employees within the department.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Team 1</th>
<th>Team 2</th>
<th>Team 3</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>14 (56%)</td>
<td>13 (86%)</td>
<td>13 (72%)</td>
<td>40 (69%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never married</td>
<td>8 (32%)</td>
<td>1 (7%)</td>
<td>4 (22%)</td>
<td>13 (22%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widow/ Widower</td>
<td>1 (4%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 (2%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>1 (4%)</td>
<td>1 (7%)</td>
<td>1 (6%)</td>
<td>3 (5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohabiting</td>
<td>1 (4%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 (2%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of members within the department are married, a total of 40 people (69%). Each team also has the highest percentage of its members married with 56% (14 members) in team 1, 86% (13 members) in team 2 and 72% (13 members) in team 3. One person in each team has been divorced.

As shown above in Figure 4.3, the majority of people being married can be attributed to the age of the department with 66% of the people over 35 years of age. Another factor could be a reason for the high percentage of married members is that since married people are generally viewed as more than single people stable (not as likely to move or quit on a whim), the people who recruit may be taking that into account in their process.
Qualifications
Table 4.4 below shows the level of qualifications earned by the people within the teams.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>Team 1</th>
<th>Team 2</th>
<th>Team 3</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 12 plus diploma(s)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 12 plus degree(s)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate degree(s)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of members (35%) within the department have a diploma. The same phenomenon is noted within each team. Team 1 has 10 members (40%) with diplomas, 7 members (28%) with grade 12, 5 members with a postgraduate degree (25%) and 3 members have a degree (12%). Team 2 has an equal split between members who have a matric qualification, a diploma and a degree with 4 members each (26%), while members with a postgraduate degree are not far behind in team 2 with 3 members (21%). Team 3 follows the norm with 20 members (35%) who have a diploma, there is an equal distribution of members who have a degree and a postgraduate degree with 6 members each (33%) and 1 person (6%) with a grade 12 qualification. This is also shown in Figure 4.4 below.

![Figure 4.4 – Qualifications split across the department](image)

Since most professional jobs nowadays require the position to be filled by people with a degree, it may be considered strange to see that most people in the department do not have a degree. However, when the fact that most employees fall within the higher age groups is taken into account, it does make sense that most people do not have a degree as they would have joined the company in a different era - before the information age when having a degree was not a criteria for selection.

Language
Table 4.5 – Language split across the department

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Team 1</th>
<th>Team 2</th>
<th>Team 3</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>17 (68%)</td>
<td>10 (67%)</td>
<td>12 (66%)</td>
<td>39 (67%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afrikaans</td>
<td>7 (28%)</td>
<td>2 (13%)</td>
<td>3 (17%)</td>
<td>12 (21%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xhosa</td>
<td>1 (4%)</td>
<td>3 (20%)</td>
<td>3 (17%)</td>
<td>7 (12%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 4.5 above, English is used most often, with 39 members (67%) using it as their primary language at home. Afrikaans comes in second with 12 members (21%) using it at home while Xhosa has 7 members (12%) using it as their main language.
Figure 4.5 shows that English is the dominant language, both overall and within each team — accounting for approximately two-thirds of the population in each. This indicates that there should be a good level of communication and understanding between the members of each team. However, the results show that 14% (8 members) of the department feel that another language is used too often to communicate (rather than English). 3 members feel Afrikaans is used too often while another 3 feel that Xhosa is used more than it should while a further 3 members feel that German is used too much. This needs to be addressed as communication is vital for a team to be its best.

**Length of service**

Table 4.6 and Figure 4.6 below depict how long each member has worked for VWSA and subsequently Table 4.7 and Figure 4.7 show how long the members have been in their current teams.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Working at VWSA</th>
<th>Team 1 Team 2 Team 3 Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-5 years</td>
<td>11 (44%) 4 (22%) 15 (25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 years</td>
<td>3 (12%) 4 (27%) 2 (11%) 9 (16%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15 years</td>
<td>2 (8%) 2 (13%) 5 (28%) 9 (16%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16+ years</td>
<td>9 (36%) 9 (60%) 7 (39%) 25 (43%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The department as a whole has the majority of its people, 25 members (43%), working for VWSA for over 16 years. This does relate to the fact that the majority of the members are in the higher age group, so there are many members who have worked at VWSA for most of their careers.
As before, team one has 11 members (44%) only working for VWSA for not more than 5 years, this is attributable to the fact that the helpdesk forms part of team 1, with the helpdesk being mostly contractors as was the case with the age groups. Team 2 has 9 members (60%) that have been with the company for over 16 years while team 3 also has a majority of members working for VWSA more than 16 years, it has 4 members who have been with the company less than 5 years which indicates that there is a plan of succession in place.

Although most members have been working for the company for over 16 years as shown in the previous table, the years of service within the current team paints a different picture. As a department most people, 24 members (41%), have been in their current team for not more than 5 years. A further 20 members (35%) have been in their current team between 6 and 10 years.

Table 4.7 – Length of service in current team

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Working in Current team</th>
<th>Team 1</th>
<th>Team 2</th>
<th>Team 3</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-5 years</td>
<td>12 (48%)</td>
<td>6 (40%)</td>
<td>6 (33%)</td>
<td>24 (41%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 years</td>
<td>3 (12%)</td>
<td>3 (20%)</td>
<td>3 (17%)</td>
<td>9 (15%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15 years</td>
<td>5 (20%)</td>
<td>3 (20%)</td>
<td>6 (33%)</td>
<td>14 (23%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16+ years</td>
<td>5 (20%)</td>
<td>3 (20%)</td>
<td>3 (17%)</td>
<td>11 (18%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Again, team 1 has the most number of its members, 12 members (48%) only working there between 0 and 5 years. There is a similar trend with team 2 with 6 members (40%) in that team for not more than 5 years. Team 3 however has an equal number of members, 6 people (33%), who have been in their team between for less than 6 years as well as between 11 and 15 years.
Table 4.8 below shows the breakdown of each of the four team styles or profiles present within the department and within each team. 4 members (7%) did not fill in this section of the questionnaire correctly so their responses were left out in this analysis and discussion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Profile</th>
<th>Team 1</th>
<th>Team 2</th>
<th>Team 3</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contributor</td>
<td>6 (27%)</td>
<td>6 (40%)</td>
<td>5 (29%)</td>
<td>17 (31%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborator</td>
<td>4 (18%)</td>
<td>1 (7%)</td>
<td>3 (18%)</td>
<td>8 (15%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicator</td>
<td>4 (18%)</td>
<td>4 (27%)</td>
<td>2 (12%)</td>
<td>10 (19%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenger</td>
<td>4 (18%)</td>
<td>3 (18%)</td>
<td>7 (13%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributor + Collaborator</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 (7%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 (4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributor + Communicator</td>
<td>1 (5%)</td>
<td>1 (7%)</td>
<td>1 (6%)</td>
<td>3 (6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributor + Challenger</td>
<td>1 (5%)</td>
<td>1 (7%)</td>
<td>2 (12%)</td>
<td>4 (7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborator + Communicator</td>
<td>1 (5%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 (6%)</td>
<td>2 (4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborator + Communicator + Challenger</td>
<td>1 (7%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 (2%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contributors make up most of the department with 17 members (31%) using this profile as their primary style. 8 members (15%) use the collaborator profile as their primary style. Communicators make up 19% of the total with 10 members while 7 members (13%) are challengers. Parker (2008) also noted that people do not always have on single primary style, some have a dual style, some use three styles equally and a few display all 4. Similarly, the VWISA IS Department also has members that use more than one style primarily. The combination of contributor and collaborator makes up 4% of the total with 2 members. 3 members (6%) have contributor and communicator as their dual primary style. A further 7% (4 members) have the combination of contributor and challenger. 2 members (4%) have collaborator and communicator as their dual primary style. 1 person (2%) has three primary styles in collaborator, communicator and challenger form.
Team 1 displays a fair distribution between the 4 profiles with 6 members (27%) filling the contributor role and 4 members (18%) each in the other three primary styles. The team also has 1 member each (5%) in all dual roles mentioned above. Team 3 also has quite an even split of all profiles with 5 members (29%) in the contributor role, 3 members each (18%) in the collaborator and challenger primary styles. There are also 2 members (12%) with challenger as their primary style. The dual roles consist of 2 members (12%) with contributor and challenger combined, 1 member (6%) each in contributor + communicator and collaborator + communicator. Team 2 however does not seem to have as good a spread of styles with 40% (6 members) using contributor as their primary style, 4 members (27%) have communicator as a base and only 1 member each (7%) in each of the following roles: collaborator, contributor + collaborator, contributor + communicator, contributor + challenger and collaborator + communicator + challenger. Since team 2 does have one member with three primary styles that may help balance out its bias.

Research question three is to find out how to balance the teams by moving people with different primary styles around to create a balance within each team. In order to do this, only a single primary style must be compared. To do so, the members with more than one primary style are added to both of their roles. Table 4.9 below then depicts one style only.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Profile</th>
<th>Team 1</th>
<th>Team 2</th>
<th>Team 3</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contributor</td>
<td>9 (35%)</td>
<td>9 (45%)</td>
<td>8 (38%)</td>
<td>26 (39%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborator</td>
<td>6 (23%)</td>
<td>3 (15%)</td>
<td>4 (19%)</td>
<td>13 (19%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicator</td>
<td>6 (23%)</td>
<td>6 (20%)</td>
<td>4 (19%)</td>
<td>16 (24%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenger</td>
<td>5 (19%)</td>
<td>2 (10%)</td>
<td>5 (24%)</td>
<td>12 (18%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on Table 4.9 above, each team does have enough contributors while team 2 still has its majority as contributors with almost 50%. Team 1 and 3 also has a majority of contributors but not to such an extent. In order to create more of a balance and to represent the department as whole, team 2 can send a contributor to team 1 and receive a collaborator in return. Team 2 can also send a communicator to team 3 and receive a challenger in return.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Profile</th>
<th>Team 1</th>
<th>Team 2</th>
<th>Team 3</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contributor</td>
<td>10 (38%)</td>
<td>8 (40%)</td>
<td>8 (38%)</td>
<td>26 (39%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborator</td>
<td>5 (19%)</td>
<td>4 (20%)</td>
<td>4 (19%)</td>
<td>13 (19%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicator</td>
<td>6 (23%)</td>
<td>5 (25%)</td>
<td>5 (23%)</td>
<td>16 (24%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenger</td>
<td>5 (19%)</td>
<td>3 (15%)</td>
<td>4 (19%)</td>
<td>12 (18%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.10 above shows the outcome of this proposal. Each team now represents the department’s split of roles more evenly. Team 2 still may have too many contributors but this can be attributed to the fact that they are a smaller team.

The above changes are compared to the current situation graphically below in Figure 4.8. There still is a clear majority of Contributors within each team; however this was also the case for participants regarded as professionals with the study conducted by Parker (2008).

Figure 4.8 – Team profiles split- current vs. proposed
Cohesion

There were a total of seven questions relating to team cohesion. Each one will be discussed below. Since cohesion was asked in terms of the 3 teams and not the department as a whole the results will not be analysed in terms of the entire department. Also, as the teams have a varying number of team members, the discussion utilises percentages rather than actual numbers going forward.

**If given the chance I would join another team within IS**

Figure 4.9 below shows that all three teams had a majority of members strongly disagreeing and disagreeing to this statement. Team 1 has 52% in this category and team 2 has 60%. Team 3 has 83% strongly disagreeing and disagreeing in this category. All three teams only have one person strongly agreeing and 1 agreeing to this statement with the exception of team 1 that also has 16% agreeing.

![Cohesion scale item 1](image)

Figure 4.9 shows that in each team, most team members are happier where they are rather than in another team. This goes against the so-called ‘grass is greener’ syndrome where people sometimes feel that things are better somewhere else.
This question was reverse coded since it was phrased negatively; this has been catered for when the scale is combined.

**The members of my team get along well together.**

Team 1 and team 2 have most members choosing strongly agree (40% and 53% respectively) and the second highest frequency chose agree (36% and 40% respectively). Team 3 has similar results with 61% agreeing and 39% strongly agreeing. No members strongly disagreed to this statement across all teams. Figure 4.10 below reflects this information.

![Cohesion scale item 2](image)

This item shows that across all teams, the members within the teams are happy with each other and are not involved in much conflict, which can create a harmonious work environment. This is also good for productivity and efficiency within the team as it indicates that the members are doing actual work and not getting caught up in office quibbles or refusing to give their best because they don’t like someone.

**I socialise with members of my team outside of work.**

Figure 4.11 below shows that team 1 has 40% agreeing to this statement and the second highest frequency (28%) as neutral. Team 2 has 33% neutral and the second highest frequency (27%) as disagree. Team 3 has an equal number of members agreeing or neutral with 44% each.
These results are not as positive as the previous statements with more responses going towards neutral and more members strongly disagreeing with 2 members from each team choosing that option.

Socialising outside of work can be helpful to a team but too much of it can also lead to clicks forming and some people feeling left out. Another danger of too much socialising is that people inevitably start to gossip and then things that should be separate from the work place infiltrate the office and can cause problems.

In that light it is a good outcome that there is a spread of responses ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree for this item.

**I look forward to being with members of my team for my daily tasks.**

The results of this statement shows that members from all teams strongly agree or agree; team 1 has a combined 72% in this category, team 2 has 80% in this category and team 3 has 83% in this category. There are no members who chose strongly disagree with regards to this statement as shown in Figure 4.12 below.
This item shows that the majority of members enjoy working with their team members’ day in and day out. This is good for a company that wants to retain its employees since they would be with the same team for a number of years (as opposed to a call centre for example that has a high turnover of people).

The low percentage of people who do disagree with this statement are in line with the few people who feel the team does not get along well.

**I find that I generally do not get along with the other members of my team.**

Team 1 has 84% of its members strongly disagreeing and disagreeing to this statement. Team 2 has a similar result with 94% in this category and team 3 has all 100% in the same category. Figure 4.13 below depicts these results.
This is the second reverse coded item within this questionnaire and can be viewed as the opposite of the last item and as such the results are somewhat mirrored. This confirms that the members within each team do get along with each other, since there are only a few members agreed or strongly agreed with this reverse statement.

**My team members help each other out when needed.**

Figure 4.14 shows that for this item, 83% of the members of team 1 strongly agree and agree with the statement, while 8% disagree. Team 2 and team 3 have all there members in either strongly agreeing or agreeing with this statement.

Teams are formed in order to put people into groups that work on similar items and as such some
people will have skills that others do not have so being in a team allows them to call on one another’s skills and talents to help complete the tasks assigned to the team. This item shows that the team members are willing to go out of their way to help their team members. This creates an environment where knowledge sharing is promoted and can increase the longevity of the organisation.

**I enjoy belonging to this team because I think I could be friends with many of its members.** Team 1 had 76% of its members strongly agreeing and agreeing with this statement, 12% of the members in team 1 disagreed with the statement. Team 2 had 66% of its members strongly agreeing and agreeing with this item while 7% disagrees with the statement. Team 3 had 67% in agreement and strong agreement with this statement with no members disagreeing as shown in Figure 4.15 below.

![Figure 4.15 – Cohesion scale item 7](image)

This item shows that the members of each team feel comfortable with each other and also like each other in a manner that is not bound by the organisation's walls. This item can be viewed as similar to the item relating to socialising with team members above, however this is different in the way that socialising with team members only occurs when they are acquaintances rather than friends. However a similar danger also exists that if the team members are too friendly, the work may suffer due to someone not wanting to hurt their friendship by pushing them for a deadline for example. It is therefore a good scenario where most people agree with this statement rather than strongly agree.

**Challenges**

There were a total of four questions relating to challenges facing the team. Each one will be discussed below.
My team has a well-established team identity.

Figure 4.16 below shows that Team 1 had 79% of its members strongly agreeing and agreeing to this statement while 4% disagreed. Team 2 had 80% in agreement and strong agreement and 7% in disagreement. Team 3 had 78% of its members strongly agreeing and agreeing to this statement and no members disagreed.

This item shows that the members across all teams feel that there is a strong team identity in place. This has been recognised as a factor that gives members a sense of belonging and enjoyment as mentioned previously (Eckel and Grossman, 2005).

There is good communication within my team.

As shown in Figure 4.17 below, 50% of the members from team 1 agree and strongly agree that there is good communication within the team while 20% disagree. Team 2 had 73% of its members in agreement and strong agreement with the statement and 13% disagreed. Team 3 had a more positive view on this when compared to the other teams with 89% agreeing and strongly agreeing that there is good communication within their team and only 6% disagreeing with this item.
The results show that all three teams have good communication which is good news for the department since poor communication has been identified as one of the factors that may cause a team to be ineffective or to fail.

**My team members participate creatively to the team.**

Figure 4.18 below shows that 58% of team 1, 53% of team 2 and 84% of team 3 either agree or strongly agree that their team members participate creatively to the team. Team 1 had 8% disagreeing to the statement while team 2 had 20% in this category and team 3 had 6% in disagreement.
This item can be related to the issue discussed earlier known as of groupthink which occurs when the team members become stagnant and heavy-set in their views and opinions so none of the team members provide any new ideas, therefore this should be avoided (Aldag and Fuller, 1993). However this does not seem to be an issue with this department based on this item.

**My team has effective leadership.**

Team 1 had 62% of its members strongly agreeing and agreeing with this item. 46% of the members in team 2 strongly agree and agree that their team has effective leadership while team 3 shows 94% in strong agreement and agreement with this statement. There are more members, however, that are neutral on this matter from teams 1 and 2 as shown in Figure 4.19 below.

![Figure 4.19 – Challenges scale item 4](image)

Effective leadership is required in every team; leaders need to adapt their leadership style to the type of people they are leading. Without good leadership, teams may not achieve their full potential. However with the majority of members indicating that there is effective leadership within their team, it indicates that there is indeed effective leadership present within the department.

**Combined scale**

**Reliability**

As shown in Appendix C, the 7 items under the cohesion section were combined onto a single scale to allow for easier analysis between the teams. In doing so the reliability of the scale was acceptable with a Chronbach Alpha coefficient of 0.63. However when removing one item, socialising with team members outside of work (item 2), the coefficient rises to 0.71. Therefore that item is excluded in the analysis going forward. Item 1 and 5 were reverse coded for this scale.
The same approach was taken for the challenges; the four items were combined into a single scale. This scale received a reliability score of 0.73 on the Chronbach Alpha scale. No items were reverse coded for this scale.

**Mean and Standard Deviation**

Table 4.11 below shows the mean and standard deviation of total department. This is done for both scales defined above.

| Table 4.11 – Mean values for Cohesion and Challenges scales for department |
|-----------------|-----|----------------|
| **Mean** | **N** | **Std. Deviation** |
| Cohesion | 1.85 | 58 | 0.57 |
| Challenges | 2.16 | 57 | 0.66 |

Table 4.12 below shows the mean and standard deviation for each team with regards to cohesion and challenges.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cohesion</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.69</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.28</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With regards to cohesion, team 3 is the most cohesive out of the three and is also the only team that has a higher than average level of cohesion. Team 2 has an average level of cohesion while team 1 is the least cohesive of the three. However all three teams can be seen as cohesive since the mean for all are below the mid-point at 3.

In terms of having challenges facing the teams, a similar picture is portrayed with team 3 showing up as the team with the least amount of challenges, below the department average. Team 1 and 2 have more challenges facing their respective teams.

Table 4.13 below shows the means and standard deviations of each profile found in the department.

| Table 4.13 – Mean values for Cohesion scales for department |
|-----------------|-----|----------------|
| **Profile type** | **Mean** | **N** | **Std. Deviation** |
| Cohesion Contributor | 1.77 | 17 | 0.49 |
| Collaborator | 1.71 | 8 | 0.6 |
| Communicator | 1.9 | 10 | 0.83 |
| Challenger | 2.29 | 7 | 0.5 |
| Contributor+Collaborator | 1.92 | 2 | 0.12 |
With the mean of the department at 1.85 for this scale, the 1 member with a triple primary style shows the most cohesion with a mean of 1.17, the dual style of collaborator and communicator, collaborator and then contributor are all also below the mean.

**Table 4.14** – Mean values for Challenges scales for department

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges</th>
<th>Profile type</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contributor</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborator</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicator</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenger</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.61</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributor+Collaborator</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributor+Communicator</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributor+Challenger</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.19</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborator+Communicator</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborator+Communicator+Challenger</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown above in Table 4.14, the mean for this scale is 2.16. The triple style member still shows that challenges are not a big issue. The contributor and communicator dual profile is also below the mean of the team, as are the individual contributor and collaborator profiles. This indicates that these styles are better suited to handle the discussed challenges and also be more cohesive with the team.

**Relationship between level of cohesion and challenges faced**

A cross-tabulation was done with the cohesion scale and the challenges scale. The results show that there is a significant positive correlation between them. The Spearman correlation was .631 with a significance of .000, these results are presented in Appendix D. This means that the higher the level of cohesion within the teams, the better they were able to cope with the challenges tested.

The results show that the majority of the members from all 3 teams are in cohesion with their respective teams and the specific challenges that were tested are generally not an issue for the team members. There were differences between the teams as to the extent of cohesion and challenges felt, with team 2 having the lowest level of cohesion and highest challenges.

**Conclusions and Recommendations**

**Findings from the Literature Review**

As the first objective of this study was to investigate the challenges facing the department, the literature was reviewed and included specific challenges faced by teams in general. These challenges were: ineffective leadership, poor communication, lack of team identity and team
members not participating. Various other factors were also found but were not included in this study.

Issues of diversity also came up in the literature; race, gender, language, ethnicity and even age were shown to be a potential source of problems for teams. However properly managed diversity was shown to be beneficial to the productivity of the team.

Literature around team roles and styles claim that each team needs a certain mixture of the various possible roles. Parker (2008) also goes further to explain that certain industries will require differing combinations and proportions of some styles when compared to teams in other industries. Parker (2008) found that professionals tend to have a higher composition of contributors in the team with the other styles (collaborator, communicator and challenger) making up the minorities.

Cohesion within the teams was another factor that was highlighted during the literature review. Teams that had higher levels of cohesion generally tended to perform better at their tasks. This could be attributed to the fact that the members of a cohesive team enjoy spending time within that team.

**Findings from the Primary Research**

The primary research found that there is a slight discrepancy between the profiles found in each team. However, by just swapping around people with three profiles across the three teams the spread will become more balanced by reflecting the overall department more closely. There still will not be an equal number of members with all profiles in each team albeit Parker (2008) noted that professionals tend to have a higher concentration of contributors, as was the case with all three teams studied.

**Conclusion**

Combining the two areas, literature and primary research, it is evident that cohesion is a weighty factor in the effectiveness of a team. As mentioned previously, the teams within the VWSA IS department are completing all their tasks with reduced resources therefore they can be considered effective. The effectiveness of the teams may be attributed to the fact they were found to be cohesive and they also had a fair amount of well-managed diversity within each team, which also contributes positively to team effectiveness.

**Recommendations**

The management of the VWSA IS department can look at moving a few members across different team in order to create more balanced teams. By just swapping around people with three profiles across the three teams the spread will become more balanced by reflecting the overall department more closely. There still will not be an equal number of members with all profiles in each team albeit Parker (2008) noted that professionals tend to have a higher concentration of contributors, as was the case with all three teams studied.

Team 1 in particular may need some sort of team building activities to help increase their cohesion, which although is positive, is less than the other two teams with a mean of 1.97 while the overall average for cohesion is 1.84. Team 2 has less of an ability to handle the challenges examined when compared to the average with a mean of 2.28 while the overall average of
challenges has a mean of 2.16. Only team 3 performed better than average in both cases with the mean of cohesion at 1.69 and the mean of challenges is 1.97. Team 1 and 2 should look at employing more females which may help with increasing cohesion and help cope with challenges better, this is supported by the fact that team 3 has an equal number of males and females and objectively performs better when using these scales.

**Areas for future research**

Since the challenges identified appear not to have much of an impact on most of the members of the department, in future the study can be extended to look at other challenges that face the team perhaps by doing interviews rather than questionnaires to allow for a more informal flow of information. The study can also be expanded by replicating it across other departments within the company to measure their challenges and also their balance of team profiles, based on their area of work. For example the marketing department should not have as many contributors as the IS department has.

**Conclusions**

The primary research conducted aided in answering the research questions that were composed for this study. The study concluded that all teams are cohesive and do not have much difficulty with the challenges examined. Since the teams with the VWSA IS department are still managing to produce results without many failures, it can be deduced that the department contains effective teams. Therefore the fact that the teams are cohesive points to items in the literature that state that cohesion is necessary for an effective team. The teams were also found to have appropriate proportions of team profiles for the industry. By maintaining the high levels of cohesion and managing the challenges effectively, the department will be able to push their performance even higher.

Note: This study was presented by the principal researcher in 2014 to the Regent Business School for the award of the Master of Business Administration Degree (MBA). The dissertation was supervised by Dr Shaun Pekeur and edited by Professor Anis Mahomed Karodia for purposes of producing a publishable journal article.

Kindly note that the full bibliography of the dissertation is cited and the references applicable to this article are contained within the cited bibliography.

**Bibliography**


