



**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY**

**SCHOOL OF COMMERCE**

**MASTER OF ARTS PROGRAM IN PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

**PROJECT TEAM MANAGEMENT PRACTICE IN AGRICULTURAL  
PROJECTS: THE CASE OF THE ETHIOPIAN AGRICULTURAL  
TRANSFORMATION INSTITUTE (ATI)**

**A Research Project Submitted to Addis Ababa University School of  
Commerce in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Award of  
Master of Arts Degree in Project Management**

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**Advisor: Teklegiorgis Assefa (PhD)**

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## **STUDENT’S DECLARATION SHEET**

I, Solomon Legesse, have conducted independently a study on the topic entitled “project team management practice in agricultural projects: The case of the Ethiopian Agricultural Transformation Institute (ATI)” in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of Master program. This study is my own work that has not been submitted for any degree or master program in this or any other institution.

I have carried out the project work under the supervision of the research advisor, Dr. Teklegiorgis Assefa and all sources of information and reference materials used have been duly acknowledged.

Solomon Legesse

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **ADVISOR'S APPROVAL SHEET**

I certify that Solomon Legesse has carried out his research work under my guidance on the topic "Project team management practice in agricultural projects: The case of the Ethiopian Agricultural Transformation Institute (ATI)." This work is suitable for submission as a partial fulfillment requirement for the award of master's degree in Project Management.

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## **BOARD OF EXAMINATION SHEET**

Members of Board of Examiners approved that this research project titled, “Project team management practice in agricultural projects: The case of the Ethiopian Agricultural Transformation Institute (ATI)” undertaken by Solomon Legesse fulfills the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Project Management and is acceptable with regards to the standards and regulations of the University.

**Approved by the Board of Examiners:**

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## ACRONYMS

AAU	Addis Ababa University
ATI	Agricultural Transformation Institute
AVE	Average Variance Extracted
DATE	Development and Transformation for Ethiopia
HQ	Head Quarter
HR	Human Resource
INGOs	International Non-governmental organizations
MOSS	Mobile Operation System Software
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
PMBOK	Project Management Body of Knowledge
PMI	Project Management Institute
SNNPR	Southern Nations, Nationalities and People Region
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences

## ABSTRACT

*The success of a project is increasingly connected with the functioning of project teams. In turn it requires project team management that needs to be assessed to measure, evaluate, and promote its effectiveness. The purpose of this study was to assess the project team management practices and identify possible challenges of project team management in projects of Agricultural Transformation Institute. The study used a combination of quantitative and qualitative research approach as both qualitative and quantitative data were collected and analyzed. In this study a descriptive research design was employed, and a census was used as a sampling method. Self-administrative questionnaires were prepared and administered for forty-four members of the project team. In addition, semi-structured and open-ended interviews were executed with ten project managers and five HR staffs. Frequency, percentages, and mean were used to analyze the data obtained. The findings of the study revealed that project team acquiring were practiced well with few limitations of acquiring the required employee on time due to delay in hiring process and in having no staff retention plan to mitigate the frequent staff turnover. Team development practices were poor in major areas of team development practices. Among these practices, the practices of reward and recognition system were not good, teams have no specific written ground rules that guide the teams and the practices of motivating the team were inadequate. The team managing practices were promising with very few limitations. There were good practice of goal setting and performance measurement, conducting team regular meeting and performance evaluation even if it had problems on qualities of feedback. The study concludes that the practices of project team acquiring were moderately practiced, team developing practices were insufficient and the team managing practices were effectively practiced in projects of the organization. Major project team management challenges identified by the study were: Staff turnover, delays in getting staff replacement, lack of clear written rules to guide team members, lack of clearly defined reward system to motivate staffs; lack of employee retention plan to retain staff; overlapping responsibilities among team members and limitations in managing change process. Based on the findings, this study suggested that the organization has to give attention towards staff turnover and the hiring delay of project team acquiring practices; establish team ground rules and strengthen training, reward and team motivating practices of team development practices, and implement practices that can address stakeholders and change management related problems of managing project teams.*

**Key words:** *Project Manager, Project Team, Feedback, Practice, Team management, team building. Incentive, reward, acquiring, training, motivating*

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This section discusses on the followings: background of the study, background of the organization, statements of the problem, basic research questions, research objectives, significance of the study, scope of the study, limitation of the study, operational definition of key terms and organization/structure of the study. Each are presented consecutively here in this chapter.

### **1.1. Background of the study**

Projects are undertakings implemented everywhere. Wysocki (2013) defines the project as: “a sequence of unique, complex and related tasks, having a common goal, to be carried out within a given deadline without exceeding the budget set, in accordance with the assumed requirements.” In order to ensure that the project meets its goals within the planned quality, timeframe, and budget, it requires project management that has project team management which is the most important task of project management. Project team management is part of project human resource management knowledge area which includes the processes that organize, manage, and lead the project team (PMI, 2013). According to Burke and Baron (2014:1) project team management is defined as a process by which a project manager can direct, guide and influence the behavior and work of the project team towards accomplishing the project objectives.

The success of a project is increasingly connected with the functioning of project teams. The project team is comprised of the people with varied skill sets, who may be assigned full time or part time to carry out the roles and responsibilities for completing the project (PMI, 2013). It consists of the project manager and a group of people who undertake joint activities, implementing the project and achieving its goal. Members of the project team perform one of the most important roles in order to achieve the success of a given undertaking (Stoniec, 2015).

Although specific roles and responsibilities for the project team members are assigned, the involvement of all team members in project planning and decision making is beneficial (PMI, 2013).

In any project human resource management part plays the role of organizing, managing, developing, and leading men power of project. High team success necessitates effective team management. Evidence indicated that project performance is determined by how project teams are organized and structured, not by how the project schedule, budget, or quality management are planned (Adair, 2004). The aim of good team management is to build a positive environment in which project team members are professionally challenged, actively involved, and respected for their contributions, resulting in a high level of mutual confidence, and understanding, strengthened working relationships, enhanced motivation, and dedication to project objectives (Verma, 1997).

Effective project team management requires understanding of managing a project team is quite different than managing other types of staff. The project team has a start and an end, in terms of duties assigned to the project. Team members come to the project with different skills and experiences, and in many cases, it is the first time that they are working together. Due to the high level of uncertainty, roles and responsibilities, changes occur more frequently, and the team needs to be flexible enough to adapt to new challenges. Due to time constraints, there is more stress working on a project caused by the inherent uncertainty of working in new areas or with new groups of stakeholders, or in solutions that no one has ever explored before.

Based on this, organizations and their project managers need to understand the characteristic and fundamentals of project team management. According to Adair (2004) and Burke and Barron (2014) successful teams have the following characteristics: They have a small number of people to offer a variety of skills; have complementary skills in terms of technical/functional expertise; problem solving and decision-making skills and interpersonal skills appropriate for the task; are committed to a common purpose and performance goals that are documented, agreed and shared; roles within the team are clearly defined and provide all that is needed to ensure team success; Members take shared responsibility and accountability to the project goal and to each other. If one member fails, the whole team fails.

Besides, the dynamically changing environment may also force organizations and decision-makers to implement a different way of managing teams from permanently used one. In addition, project team management may be challenged by various factors, such as lack of collaboration, lack of motivation left among team members, poor communication, inadequate participation from team members, and others (Kerzner, 2003).

Therefore, it is crucial to assess effectiveness of team management practices that projects are employing to acquire, develop, manage project team and also uncover team management related problems to design and implement better practice that will, in turn, improve project team contribution towards achieving project objectives.

This study is based on the Ethiopian Agricultural Transformation Institute (ATI) which is government institute undertaking various agricultural projects contributing to improve farming approaches, facilitate access to inputs, services and markets, and thereby improving the livelihoods of smallholder farmers.

The study, therefore, will help to understand, investigate, and explain how project teams are managed in projects of Ethiopian agricultural transformation Institute and assess the practices of this government institution in acquiring, developing, and managing teams of its projects related to the standards and procedures of project team management.

## **1.2. Background of the organization**

Agricultural Transformation Institute (ATI) is a strategy and delivery-oriented government institute created to help accelerate the growth and transformation of the country's agriculture sector. Previously the organization name was Agricultural Transformation Agency (ATA) and recently changed its name to Agricultural Transformation Institute (ATI) with some additional mandates given by the government of Ethiopia. According to ATI's HR manual (2019), The Government of Ethiopia established the Agricultural Transformation Institute by Federal Regulation in December 2010 (Regulation No. 198/2010) (as amended by Regulation No. 380/2016), as a catalyst for positive, transformational, and sustainable change.

According to its annual report (ATA, 2015/16), it envisions to contribute to the transformation of the Ethiopian agriculture by 2030 through problem-solving, implementation support, and

capacity building of stakeholders involved in implementation of interventions that address the systemic bottlenecks and commercializing the smallholder farmers with greater incomes, inclusiveness, resilience, and sustainability.

The ATI has undertaken various impactful projects that have improved farming approaches, facilitated access to inputs, services and markets, and thereby improving the livelihoods of smallholder farmers. In its first decade of operations, the ATI has delivered over 250 studies and 45 projects, and 12 of the projects are currently under implementation.

The ATI's projects are carried out by the staff that currently employed in core, project, and regional staff positions. The majority of staff are based in ATI's Addis Ababa headquarter, and considerable number of staff are also available in ATI's regional offices located in the regional capital cities of Bahirdar (Amhara), Finfine (Oromia) and Hawassa (SNNPR).

ATI's program teams are supported by the performance monitoring, partnership, and communication teams to capture and communicate learning from their work. All these teams are further supported by the ATI's operation teams which provide the foundations for the work in the rest of the organization to happen from identifying and retaining the right talent, to effectively managing the organization's financial resources and procuring and maintaining assets and services needed to deliver the organization's commitments.

### **1.3. Statement of the problem**

For the success of the project, three project team management processes are basic, otherwise the project will fall. These three processes are acquiring a good team, developing team and managing an effective project team (Haugher, 1998). There are many literatures written that provide strategies for effective team management. Nevertheless, acquiring, developing, and managing an effective project team is a very challenging task for project managers due to various factors. Some of these factors include poor communication, the unavailability of competent personnel, the composition and structure of the team, the nature and duration of the project, the nature of the organization structure, the location of the team and other environmental factors (Kerzner, 2003). Because of such various factors and the changing situations, it demands organizations to assess projects practices in relation with acquiring, developing, and managing

project teams and related challenges to redesign their team management strategies to complete projects successfully.

As mentioned in the previous section, ATI has developed various projects to improve farming approaches, facilitate access to inputs, services, and markets, and thereby improving the livelihoods of smallholder farmers. To ensure ATI project teams successfully complete their projects, it is necessary for ATI project managers to promote, measure, and evaluate their project team management practices effectiveness and related challenges.

According to the literature review, research have been done on one project of ATI, which is Agricultural Commercialization Clusters project to assess its interventions impact and on upscaling the productivity performance of the project. However, there is no study done about the practice of project team management on ATI projects to assess the practices and challenges particularly in relation to the project team management standard and knowledge area as a benchmark.

In addition, ATI's projects are implemented in different regions of Ethiopia and some of the project members are remotely located from the head office and in this case required different mechanisms to manage geographically dispersed team. There may be also specific issues that need consideration related to managing teams in agricultural projects.

Therefore, in view of the above issues, this study examines and describes project team management practices and identify related challenges in projects of ATI that currently operating in different regions of Ethiopia.

#### **1.4. Research Questions**

In line with the problem statement, this study was expected to assess the stated problems through a guidance of a general research question: "What are the practices and challenges of project team management in projects of Ethiopian Agricultural Transformation Institute?"

The specific research questions were the following.

1. What are the practices of project team management in projects of Agricultural Transformation Institute (ATI)?

2. What are the challenges of project team management in projects of Agricultural Transformation Institute (ATI)?

## **1.5. Objective of the study**

### **1.5.1. General Objective**

The general objective the study was to identify and describe the practices and challenges of project team management in projects of Agricultural Transformation Institute (ATI).

### **1.5.2. Specific Objectives**

The specific objectives were focused on the following:

1. To identify and describe the existing practice of project team management in projects of Agricultural Transformation Institute (ATI)?
2. To identify and describe the challenges of project team management in projects of Agricultural Transformation Institute (ATI)?

## **1.6. Significance of the study**

This study attempted to assess project team management practices in agricultural projects of ATI. Conducting a study of this type benefits for future researchers in the field, project consultants, students, the society, and to various people and institutions/organizations.

This study covers information involving project team management practices and challenges. Thus, the findings of this study may be used as a source of information for those who are interested in conducting similar research on the subject matter.

In addition, as this study builds upon the various team management insights that have been undertaken by the various researchers in project team management field, the findings of the study contribute towards the reexamining of their project team management practices and help them for implementing effective project team management activities in their projects. That is to attain the goals of the project within planned time, under the given budget and at agreed or targeted product quality efficiently and effectively.

For project consultants, it can serve as reference while preparing feasibility studies and other project consulting activities of other project stakeholders, including government and non-governmental organizations. Furthermore, a detailed presentation on the practices and challenges of project team management involved in this research may serve as a tool for further studies to innovate the current practices and strategies being employed in project team management.

The organization, Agricultural transformation Institute (ATI), looking at the findings, the research conclusions, and recommendations, can learn from its project team management practices and address the issues raised in the study.

### **1.7. Scope of the study**

It is clear that a well-defined study scope enables a researcher to give clarity to the study outcomes that are to be investigated. It requires the research parameters that a researcher will and won't consider. These parameters usually consist of the sample size, the duration, inclusion and exclusion criteria, the methodology and any geographical or monetary constraints. Each of these parameters will have limits placed on them so that the study can practically be performed, and the results interpreted relative to the limitations that have been defined. These parameters will also help to shape the direction of each research question considered in the study.

The thematic focus of this study rests on the practices and challenges on project team management in projects of ATI. Even if there were plenty of team management practices, this study mainly focused on; team acquiring procedure and tools, team development practices (team building, training, motivation, and reward, etc.) and team management practices (team performance measure, feedback, etc).

Methodologically, this study considered responses from project team members, project managers and HR staff on practices and challenges of project team management in projects of ATI. The data required for statistical analysis, collected from only target population of 44 employees (team members) of the 12 active agricultural projects of ATI. Thus, the study didn't involve the responses of the stakeholders in the area. In addition, regards to the data collection the study uses survey questionnaire and interview. However, it doesn't use other methods like group discussion.

This is because of time and budget constraint of the study to travel and conduct group discussions.

Geographically the study is considered and conducted only in the 12 projects of ATI which are actively under implementation in Addis Ababa, Amhara, Oromia, and SNNPR regions of Ethiopia. However, the study didn't involve projects and participants found in other regions of Ethiopia.

Regarding the duration of the study, this study was conducted during April 15 - June10, 2022 and during this study time all 12 development projects were actively under implementation by ATI.

### **1.8. Limitations of the study**

The short period of time given for this study and the study time coinciding with the busiest time for agricultural projects and their team members create delay in returning the questionnaire by few of the project team members. This necessitated more effort and work by the researcher to communicate and remind respondent to response the survey questionnaire and the issue was creatively managed by the researcher. In addition, due to few project team members travel to rural area where internet access was limited to reply to the online questionnaire, only 44 (88%) participants were responded to the questionnaire out of the intended 50 respondents (project team members). Since the response rate was 88%, the researcher was not restricted by this factor. According to Baron (2009) Since limitations may be unforeseen and inevitable in many instances, the researcher must manage and strategize to limit or eliminate the negative implications of limitations. This is what will ultimately determine the impact of limitations on the research. A researcher should not just resign to fate when they confront limitations. They must brace up and creatively manage the limitations. There are always ways around limitations.

### **1.9. Operational definition of key terms**

Any term or phrase, central or key to this study that may be unfamiliar to the reader are defined in this section. Operational definition of terms refers to a detailed explanation of the technical terms and measurements used in the study. Below are some of derived terms from this study (from the research topic, research objectives or conceptual framework) and defined as follow:

**Acquiring project team:** This is the process of confirming human resource availability and obtaining the team necessary to complete project activities.

**Developing the project team:** This is defined as the process of improving competencies, team member interaction, and overall team environment to enhance project performance.

**Managing Project Team:** It is the process of tracking team member performance, providing feedback, resolving issues, and managing changes to optimize project performance.

**Dependent variable (DV):** The variable being tested and measured in an experiment and is 'dependent' on the independent variable.

**Independent Variable (IV):** The variable the experimenter manipulates or changes and is assumed to have a direct effect on the dependent variable.

**Mean:** is the average or the most common value in a collection of numbers. In statistics, it is a measure of central tendency of a probability distribution along median and mode.”

**Cronbach’s Alpha:** It is a way to measure the internal consistency of a survey or questionnaire. Cronbach’s Alpha ranges between 0 and 1, with higher values indicating that the survey or questionnaire is more reliable.

**Internal consistency:** It refers to how well a survey, questionnaire, or test actually measures what you want it to measure. The higher the internal consistency, the more confident you can be that your survey is reliable.

**Census:** The enumeration of an entire population of a defined area.

**Vignette:** A brief description of an event or situation to which respondents are asked to react

**Reliability:** The degree to which a measure of a concept is stable.

## **1.10. Organization of the Study**

This study was organized in five chapters. The first chapter is an introductory chapter. It provides an introductory part of the study, which consists of background of the study, background of the organization, statement of the problem, research questions, objectives of the study, significance of the study, scope of the study, limitation of the study, Operational definition of key terms, and finally presents the structure/ organization of the study. The second chapter deals with review of related literature. It contained theoretical and empirical parts that are used as framework and supportive information for the study. It explained about project team management and other related issues. The conceptual framework also presented towards the end

of this chapter. Chapter three presents an overview of the research design and methodology which covers the research approach, research design, sources of data, population of the study, method of data collection, method of data analysis and presentation, validity and reliability of the study and ethics of the research. The fourth chapter was devoted to cover the results, discussion, and analysis part of this study and the fifth (last) chapter deals with summary of basic finding, conclusion, and recommendation of the study.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

In this chapter, review of related theoretical and empirical literatures of the study are presented. Although this chapter does not encompass all theories developed for managing project teams, it is organized in a way to capture the important concepts related with the study under the following outline: Defining project and team; Defining the meaning of project team and its importance; Discussing the processes and challenges involved in acquiring, developing and managing effective project teams; the importance of team building, motivation, communication, participatory decision making, conflict and stress management to enhance team's performance; and providing the summary of the expected challenges involved in all processes. The available studies conducted on project team management practices by different researchers and conceptual framework of the study are also presented in this chapter.

#### **2.1. Theoretical review**

##### **2.1.1. Project**

It will be sensible to start on what project means before defining project team related topics. Project has been defined in various ways by different authors. However, there are common elements and similarities to it. Some of the definitions has been described in detail. Project Management Institute has defined project as a “temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product, service, or result” (2017). A unique endeavor that has a definite beginning and a definite ending is referred to as a project (B. Badiru, 2008). Similarly, Wysocki (2014) defines the project as: “a sequence of unique, complex and related tasks, having a common goal, to be carried out within a given deadline without exceeding the budget set, in accordance with the assumed requirements.”

Project Management By the 1990s, companies had begun to realize that implementing project management was a necessity, not a choice. The question was not how to implement project management, but how fast could it be done? Life-cycle phases that an organization goes through to implement project management. Today, a significant increase in the importance and universality of projects in organizations is perceived (Kerzner, 2006). The dynamically changing environment forces organizations and decision-makers to implement modern, different from

permanently implemented organizational structures, such as the structure of the project team, which enables the implementation of unique tasks such as projects (Lichtarski, 2007).

Today's ever-changing environment requires new approaches to project management, resource limitations, downsizing, and global competition. As market and project organizations become more dynamic, administrative, and technical skills alone are no longer sufficient to deal with the complexities of modern project undertakings. Project management may now be defined as the process of achieving project objectives through the traditional organizational structure and over the specialties of the individuals concerned (H.Kerzner, 2009).

### **2.1.2. What is the meaning of the term “Team”?**

Teams and their constituents are clearly one of the critical success factors in a project. Team concept has been variously defined in the literature. Katzenbach and Smith (1994) defined a team as "A small number of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose, performance goals, and common approach for which they hold themselves mutually accountable". Similarly, Newton (2015) defines a work team as a “group of people who share a common understanding of their mission and work together to accomplish it.”

Bearing in mind that a project is not the same as a normal day to day work, and its temporary nature, we may define a project team as being differentiated from ordinary work team. According to Lichtarski (2007), the project team is a temporary team of employees and / or people from outside, appointed for the implementation of specific projects or tasks, after which the team is dissolved.

### **2.1.3. Project Team Management**

Katzenbach and Smith (1994) defined a team as "A small number of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose, performance goals, and common approach for which they hold themselves mutually accountable" (Prakash, 2008). As of Cohen and Bailey (1997) team is a collection of individual who are independent in their tasks, who share responsibility for outcomes, who see themselves and are seen by others as an intact social entity embedded in one or more larger social systems, and who manage their relationships across organizational boundaries.

Project team includes the project manager and the group of individuals who act together in performing the work of the project to achieve its objectives. The project team includes the project manager, project management personnel and other team members who perform the work, but do not necessarily deal with project management. The team includes people from different groups who have the knowledge of a specific topic or specific skills needed to do the work in a team (Biskupek, 2016).

The structure and characteristics of a project team can vary widely, but one constant is the project manager's role as the leader of the team, regardless of what authority the project manager may have over its members (PMBOK, 2013).

According to PMI (2013), the project team consists of the project manager and a group of people who undertake joint activities, implementing the project and achieving its goal. The definition by Mohammed and Abi (2015) is more detailed. They defined project team as 'a group of people with complementary skills and knowledge who work together through continuing communication, making joint decisions, accomplishing a set of tasks, and motivating each other to accomplish a particular goal.

#### **2.1.4. The importance of project teams**

The most imperative resource to a project is its project team. Projects are much more complicated than the basic operational activity of the company (for example, the implementation of processes), therefore employees taking part in the project work as members of a project team have to meet higher requirements than employees of repetitive activities. That is why the stage of appointing, creating and managing a project team is so crucial (Skalik, 2009). For the success of any project, the skills, experience, and capabilities of the people who support the project is most significant. To complete the project on time the workload needs to be delegated and shared amongst the project team (Lutchman, 2011).

Teams are formed to bring together a set of balancing skills and capacities so that the project will have all the available competencies required to complete the task. The scope of work often necessitates a range of complementary skills, which one person cannot have, whereas a team of experts could have all the required skills. Teams are able to apply their different complementary

skills with collaboration and brainstorming sessions to create a number of possible solutions and alternatives (Adair, 2004).

If faced with several possible alternatives, study has proven that teams often make better decisions than decisions made individually. This advantage is also related with the fact that the team jointly having a different set of skills and experiences can make better decisions. The best decisions are collective decisions. The logic behind this is once a project team has made a joint decision, members will be committed to carry out the course of action accordingly by joint peer pressure (Kerzner, 2003).

Teams improve motivation because teamwork is stimulating, and creates more energy than working alone (Sidle, 2005). The support and help provided to each other when facing problems produce endurance, reduces frustration. In addition, team rules or norms have positive effect on members to have appropriate behavior which all lead to collaboration and productivity (Burke and Barron, 2014).

People make projects succeed or fail since they make the plans, the decisions, and also monitor and control the progress. The people, and how they interact within the project environment, are one of the major factors in the success of projects. Project management practice is team based. Project managers have to operate both as members and as leaders. The tools used for time, cost and quality management and control can only be effective if the project team operates properly (Mohammed and Abi 2015; Newton, 2015).

### **2.1.5. Understanding the composition and structure of teams**

Members of the project team can be members of the project organization or external representatives (for example, employees of a consulting company). The composition is then unstable, and the borders of such a temporary organization are difficult to determine. Each time a team is appointed to carry out a given undertaking, its structure, responsibilities, and hierarchy in the team must be determined anew. As a result of the creation of a temporary organizational structure set up to achieve a specific goal, each time new relationships arise between people within the team and between the team and the organization (Lichtarski, 2007).

The following discussed about some specific concepts related to composition and structure of teams.

**Heterogeneous Teams:** Heterogeneous teams exist when members are different from each other in terms of qualifications, experience, personality, ethnic or cultural background or other various factors that could affect team performance. In general, it is said that the greater the degree of heterogeneity, the more effective the team will be at solving problems because they will collectively have more information and will brainstorm more effectively. However, it can also be the major source of conflict (Burke and Barron, 2014).

**Cohesive Teams:** Cohesive teams exist when members of the team want to be members of that team, when their personal goals are well aligned to the team goals, and when there is unity, commitment to one another. If they work in proximity, if they have similarity in values and attitudes and if they are few, then the team will more likely be cohesive (Adair, 2004). In general, the more cohesive the team, the better it will perform. However, it can lead to the dangers of group think when team members are highly cohesive. In this case, cohesiveness will be more important to the team rather than evaluating decision making process critically and objectively (Verma, 1997).

**Cross-Functional Teams:** In matrix structured organizations teams are usually formed by combining multiple functional teams. These cross-functional teams are composed of experts from various functional areas like finance, information technology, communication, administration, logistics etc. and work in collaboration towards the project goal. Because these members are considered experts of their individual functional area, they are usually authorized to make decisions alone without often needing to consult the Project Manager. This is one of the key problems with the matrix organization structure, where the project manager coordinates staff individually from different departments (Burke and Barron, 2014).

In matrix structure, the project manager controls the technical decisions, and the functional managers control the administrative decisions. Division of power and responsibility usually leads to an overly complex situation and poor team performance. The lack of project commitment from a high number of tasks negatively affects efficiency (Verma,1997). The project manager should use team-building techniques to encourage the team members to work together effectively as it is multidisciplinary and as most teams are more comfortable in their own special area; must ensure that there are effective communication channels and effective information flow; must

ensure to have mechanisms to resolve interpersonal team conflicts effectively and make it constructive to generate innovative ideas and solve challenging problems (Adair, 2004).

**Virtual teams:** Virtual teams are teams with a shared goal who perform their roles and work to achieve the project's goals in different geographical locations. Project managers and team members use communication technology such as e-mail, audio conferencing, and video conferencing to coordinate communication and activities. Virtual teams are necessary for projects where project sites are located in different regions (PMI, 2013).

There are some challenges related to managing virtual teams, there is often misunderstandings, feeling of isolation from team members, difficulties in sharing knowledge and experience between team members, and the availability or cost of internet connection in rural areas. Therefore, planning for effective communication, setting clear expectations, facilitating communications, developing procedures for resolving issues and conflict, participating people in decision making, understanding cultural differences in that area, and sharing credit in successes are some of critical steps a project manager must take to ensure effectiveness in managing virtual project teams (Burke and Barron, 2014).

#### **2.1.6. Project team member's role**

Many people with different skill sets and experiences are required throughout the life of a project in order to see it through to a successful completion. The project team is responsible for executing tasks and producing deliverables of the project. Therefore, the roles and responsibilities of the various groups and individuals that make up a project team must be clearly defined and assigned. Depending on the scope and complexity of the project, not all roles identified may be required at any one time, or on every project. Project team members will be productive if they understand the significance of their contribution; common goals and values must be established for the team to be committed; and they must be given control over the work they perform, for them to have the feeling of usefulness and respect; and both progress and results must be recognized to create enthusiasm and motivate the team (Verma, 1997).

#### **2.1.7. Characteristics of effective project teams**

Apart from the skills that people bring to a project, what else should one look for? According to Verma (1997), there are several qualities as ingredients in team or project success. These are:

Competence, a clear and common goal, commitment to the common goal, an environment within which everyone contributes, and everyone benefits, and a supportive structure.

According to Adair (2004) and Burke and Barron (2014) successful teams have the following characteristics: They have a small number of people to offer a variety of skills; have complementary skills in terms of technical/functional expertise; problem solving and decision-making skills and interpersonal skills appropriate for the task; are committed to a common purpose and performance goals that are documented, agreed and shared; roles within the team are clearly defined and provide all that is needed to ensure team success; Members take shared responsibility and accountability to the project goal and to each other. If one member fails, the whole team fails.

### **2.1.8. Acquiring project team**

Acquiring project team is the process of confirming human resource availability and obtaining the team necessary to complete project activities (PMI, 2013). Acquiring the project team is often difficult because of the fact that the project manager does not have direct control over everyone they would like to have involved in the project. They may need to negotiate with others who are able to provide the right number of individuals with the appropriate level of knowledge, skills and experience. This usually is the case in projects that cut across functional departments and failure to obtain the necessary human resources can increase the risk of project success in terms of schedule, budget and quality. This risk must be considered in the planning stages of the project (Burke and Barron, 2014).

According to PMI (2013) there are generally two ways of acquiring project teams:

- 1) Assembling of in-house talent: acquiring individuals who are already working in the organization through negotiation. This is advantageous because they may have knowledge related to the purpose of the project. The experience they possess will be transferred to the project task they will take upon and reduce salary cost.
- 2) Recruiting or contracting people from outside: when there is a need for additional human resources or if it is a necessity for an expert which is not available in the organization.

### **2.1.9. Developing project teams**

To start with, among many other authors, Wilemon and Thamhain (1983) define team building as the “process of taking a collection of individuals with different needs, backgrounds and expertise and transforming them by various methods into an integrated, effective work unit.” In this transformation process, the authors say, “the goals and energies of individual contributors merge and support the objectives of the team.” According to PMI (2013), developing the project team is the process of improving competencies, team member interaction, and overall team environment to enhance project performance (PMI, 2013:255).

Developing the project team results in improved teamwork, improved competencies, motivated employees with higher morale and trust among them, lower staff turnover, and increase overall project performance. It also creates an active, unified, and collaborative team culture to improve individual and team efficiency, team spirit, and cooperation to share knowledge and expertise among team members (Adair, 2004).

#### **2.1.9.1. Tools and techniques to develop project teams**

According to PMI (2013) tools to develop project teams include training, team-building activities, establishing ground rules for the team to be guided by, co-location, providing recognition and rewards.

According to Burke and Barron (2014) referring to Abraham Maslow’s motivation theory, reward will be effective if it satisfies a need which is valued by that individual therefore individual differences should be considered when determining recognition and rewards. People are motivated if they feel they are valued by the rewards given to them. Some types of rewards that are often can be mechanisms of a reward system include private office with a secretary, opportunity for training and further education, opportunity to attend symposiums and seminars, special rest and relaxation (R & R) and vacation benefits (Verma, 1997).

#### **2.1.9.2. Essential stages of team development**

Building a team takes time and effort. Much of the team building theories in the literature have been based on academic research that are rooted in psychology and sociology. And, in order to develop and lead the team appropriately, the project manager must understand how

teams are formed and how they develop. Burke and Barron (2014); Kerzner (2003); and Verma (1997) in their books discussed Bruce Tuckman's model for team development that has been widely used and adapted.

Accordingly, the following are the five developmental stages of a typical team:

The first stage is the 'Forming' Stage. Here, members, being newly assembled, are just getting to know each other, trying to understand their roles, and the goals they are to achieve. The leader at this point is concerned with orientations about the group's mission, goals and objectives and scopes of operation. The atmosphere is usually that of apprehension at this stage.

The second stage is the 'Storming' Stage. Since team members are new to each other, conflicts arise because they are uncomfortable with their fellow colleagues. Competition for roles and leadership may also arise as differences in perspectives and experiences collide with each other. At this point, the leader's role emphasis is to reduce tension through relationship building skills and personality orientations.

The third stage is the 'Norming' Stage. With proper relationship building, members at this stage start to communicate well together, they build trust among themselves, and everyone gets to know their roles. Leaders at this point emphasize communications between members that enable them start to start a stable teamwork.

The fourth stage is the 'Performing' Stage. In this stage, having achieved a high level of communication, understanding, and trust between the team members, individuals are working together efficiently to achieve their common goal. Group decision making, collaboration, motivation and effective development is happening here. At this point, leaders emphasize affirmation to the members individually and also as a team for their good performance.

The last stage is the 'Adjourning' Stage. This stage marks the project closure with the delegated roles and goals either having been completed effectively or not. According to whatever the accomplishments are, the team either becomes permanent or temporary - some members are forced to go back to the early stages due to their incapability of achieving what was desired, whereas others may be retained as a stable team taking on more responsibilities on future projects.

### **The role of the project team manager as the team transforms**

As explained above, team development goes through 5 stages and the project manager must adopt situational leadership style to lead the team according to the readiness of the team. At each stage, the role of the project team manager transforms to meet the need of the team members. According to Newton (2015), the recommended roles are as follows:

**Forming Stage:** The team manager's role is a hands-on approach that ensures clear communications as to dispel misunderstandings, and give directions, and guidance.

**Storming Stage:** Here the team manager's role assumes that of conflict management, offering supports, aiding, and explaining decision making processes, active listening, and altering team composition when necessary.

**Norming Stage:** At this stage, the team manager's role begins to transform from that of a coach, to being an observer, facilitator, and mentor.

**Performing Stage:** At this stage, the project team manager now serves as a delegator, overseer, and monitor.

**Adjourning Stage:** This is a time for appraisals, appreciation and learning from the project successes or failures.

#### **2.1.9.3. Major barriers to project team development and overcoming strategies**

Further helpful hints are given by Wilemon and Thamhain (1983) concerning the most common major barriers. They also gave helpful tips for overcoming them. For each of the major team-building barriers identified, they offer several suggestions that can be advanced for either minimizing or eliminating them. They are outlined below to help project managers in their team building and management efforts:

**Differing Outlooks, Priorities, Interests, and Judgments of Team Members:** The way forward is to make effort early in the project life cycle as to identify the conflicting differences; explaining the scope of the project and the rewards for successful completion; selling "team"

concept and explaining role expectations; and trying to blend individual interests with the overall project objectives.

**Role Conflicts:** This challenge could be minimized early in a project by asking team members where they see themselves fitting into the project; determining how the overall project can best be divided into subsystems and subtasks (e.g., the work breakdown structure); assigning/negotiating roles; conducting regular status review meetings to keep team informed on progress; and watching out for unanticipated role conflicts over the project's life.

**Project Objectives/Outcomes Not Clear:** This could be helped by assuring that all stakeholders understand the overall and interdisciplinary project objectives; ensuring clear and frequent communication with senior management and the client; engaging in status review meetings for feedback purposes; and adopting a proper team name that can help to reinforce the project objectives.

**Changes resulting from Dynamic Project Environments:** This creates a major challenge for stabilizing both internal and external influences. Success is achieved by ensuring that key project personnel work out an agreement on the principal project direction and selling this direction to the whole team; educating senior management and the customer on the harmful consequences of unwarranted changes; forecasting the environment within which the project will be developed; and designing contingency plans.

**Competition Over Team Leadership:** This could be helped if senior management help establish the project manager's leadership role; if the project manager fulfils the leadership expectations of team members; and where clear roles and responsibilities are defined to minimize competition over leadership.

**Lack of Team Definition and Structure:** This challenge is better coped with where project leaders sell the team concept to senior management as well as to their team members; hold regular meetings with the team to reinforce the team notion, tasks, roles and responsibilities; and ensuring visibility in memos and other forms of written communication with both senior management and client participation with the purpose of unifying the team.

**Lack of team member commitment:** the team members having professional interests in a different place, the sense of insecurity that is related with projects, and strong interpersonal

conflicts within the team can all result in lack of commitment. Project Managers must try to regulate lack of team member commitment on time and attempt to change possible negative outlooks toward the project. Resolving the team members' fears and intervening and mediating their conflicts quickly and discovering ways to fulfill part of their interests.

**Lack of senior management support:** if senior management support and commitment is unclear, if they cannot set the right environment for the project team from the beginning or if they do not provide the team timely feedback on their performance and activities, it can lead to low levels of enthusiasm and project commitment among project team members. Senior management support is an absolute requirement (Kerzner, 2003). Therefore, project managers must discuss and agree with senior management at the beginning of the program what resources are required and must maintain the interest and commitment of senior management in their projects. It is also critical for senior management to provide the proper environment for the project to function effectively. The project manager's relationship with senior management and ability to develop senior management support is significantly affected by his own credibility and the priority or validity of his project.

**Communication problems:** communication is a major element in effective team development. Poor communication can occur among team members, between the project leader and the team members, the project team and top management, and the project leaders and the donor. The problem is often a result of team members not communicating the major project progress or developments. The problem can be caused by low motivation, poor morale, or negligence. If there are no effective communication practices, it will lead to poor coordination and workflow. The project leader should dedicate a significant amount of time communicating with the team their requests and concerns. Regular and systematic communications with the team, sponsor and senior management must be established.

### **2.1.10. Managing Project Teams**

Managing Project Team is the process of tracking team member performance, providing feedback, resolving issues, and managing changes to optimize project performance' (PMI, 2013:279).

### **2.1.10.1. Managing Performance**

Project managers must set goals and definite target dates of milestones to help achieve a smooth rate of progress. Key personnel who are responsible for key functions must be assigned on a full-time basis to avoid potential priority conflicts and ensure they commit to their functions, goals and due dates. To increase team productivity, project managers must be the one to do the performance appraisals of team members for the duration of the project not functional managers (Verma, 1997). If teams face an obstacle and become stuck and unable to make progress, performance will fail and might be accompanied by confusion, discouragement, and conflict. Teams must have clearly established measures of performance that drives the team and clearly indicate how their effectiveness can be assessed (Burke and Barron, 2014).

According to Pinto, et al. (1998) accountability is effective when the performance assessment is effective. Accountability systems only work when the team has control over the results. When holding the project team accountable for its performance, the Project manager must take into consideration the accuracy of the performance assessment. If high accountability is enforced, using an invalid measure of the team's performance, this will lead to high levels of stress. As a result, the quality of work will be compromised, and the team's motivation to successfully complete the project will significantly suffer. Performance assessment must be relevant, precise and free of bias.

### **2.1.10.2. Providing feedback**

Feedback on the progress made is important. It helps to increase motivation because if people feel that they are progressing forward, they tend to put on more effort and feedback on lack of progress is also important because it helps to inform the team to concentrate on what yet needs to be done (Adair, 2004). Effective Project managers provide performance feedbacks which are not focused on criticism or what went wrong. They understand that performance feedback must be clear, accurate, adequate, timely, and unbiased and must be on priority areas, and must follow with providing alternatives to resolve the issue (Burke and Barron, 2014).

### **2.1.10.3. Managing Changes**

All projects, particularly large and complex projects, involve unanticipated changes. Changes can be requested by stakeholders involved with the project and may be requested verbally;

however, they should be recorded in written form and entered the change management system (PMI, 2013). Project managers must evaluate the impact of these changes on project schedule and cost and design a strategy to manage them (PMI, 2013). There should be a change management plan that documents how changes will be monitored and controlled. The impact of changes on budgets and schedules differs based on the nature of the change, the number of parties involved, and the timing of the changes in a project life cycle.

Project managers face the challenge of managing projects characterized by high levels of uncertainty, rapid changes and cross-cultural teams. They must seize change as an opportunity by optimizing team members' performance through building cohesive teams through effective communication, teamwork, leadership, which are all tools for inspiring high performance. Good planning and effective teamwork help in dealing with the uncertainty of project changes and resistance to change (Verma, 1997).

#### **2.1.10.4. Managing multi-disciplinary team**

Project teams tend to suffer from the inclination of members to identify with their own area of expertise rather than with the projects goal. For example, a team member might request a very expensive material however the finance manager will consider the available budget and might reject the request. If each member work on its own area, then there will be communication breakdown among support staffs and specialists. Therefore, there is an absolute need for team-building activities if teams need to perform collaboratively. Teams need to be aligned with the organization's vision, requirements, and the project's objective (Burke and Barron, 2014). There is also the issue of interdependency where members have to depend on inputs from each other to complete activities. Integration mechanisms are a fundamental requirement for multidisciplinary teams composed of individuals with different professions. The Project Manager must define responsibilities and control and ensure that everyone must abide by them so that everyone knows exactly what they have to do in order to meet the objective (Adair, 2004; Verma, 1997).

#### **2.1.10.5. Establishing ground rules**

Ground rules establish clear expectations regarding acceptable behavior by project team members. Early commitment to clear guidelines decreases misunderstandings and increases productivity. Discussing ground rules in areas such as code of conduct, communication, working

together, or meeting etiquette allows team members to discover values that are important to one another. All project team members share responsibility for enforcing the rules once they are established (PMBOK, 2013).

## **2.1.11. Critical elements of project team development and management**

### **2.1.11.1. Project team building**

Team Building is a tool and technique to develop project teams and involves activities designed to improve interpersonal relationships and trust among diverse mix of team members and increase team cohesiveness (PMI, 2013). While team building is essential during the initial stages of a project, a continued or a renewed team-building effort should be applied. The role of a team builder is to lead the multidisciplinary, interdependent team to be cohesive and productive (Sidle, 2005). Team-building approaches are particularly significant when team members operate from remote locations without the advantage of face-to-face contact. Informal communication, team outdoor activities and teambuilding games can help in building rapport and establishing good working relationships. Project managers should create an environment where all team members are personally and professionally satisfied and involved (PMI, 2013; Verma, 1997). According to Sidle (2005) there is perhaps no other topic in management literature as popular as motivation and team building as it is well known that teambuilding and motivational skills are exceptionally crucial in team management. Managers and leaders must be effective team builders and motivators to be able to achieve their goals and get the best out of their teams (Storey, 2004). The skills needed in both these areas should be practiced and improved continuously to ensure they help build and maintain effective and efficient teams (Adair, 2004).

### **2.1.11.2. Project team motivation**

According to Adair (2004) motivation is defined as the inner force that drives us to achieve our goals and is probably one of the most important aspects of team performance. Leadership and team building are important for good team performance, but the team has to be motivated, individually and collectively to be able to get the best out of them, and to maintain their high and consistent performance.

According to Wagner and Hollenbeck (2010) a motivated team is an effective and productive team. 'Effective teams enable innovative and coordinated action, most importantly, for organizations to succeed; they need involved and committed workers who are self-directed, creative, and inwardly driven to learn' (Sidle, 2005:138). To motivate the project team, a manager must have a clear picture of what motivates others and provide incentives accordingly.

Every individual is unique and will therefore respond to different incentives. Therefore, the project manager must be aware of different dimensions of motivation. Accomplishments or excellent work must be recognized with feedback and bonuses, or awards. Also, salaries must be reviewed if the budget allows.

### **2.1.11.3. Project team communication**

Effective communication builds trust, partnership and collaboration. This is what creates synergy in teams' (Verma, 1997: 159). According to PMI (2013) Project communications management consists of the process required for proper collection and dissemination of project information. It includes communication planning, distribution of information, project meetings and reporting of project progress. Project managers must clearly communicate with their team about goals, responsibilities, expectations, individual and team performance.

Communication is vital to effective team building. All project managers must understand the importance and objectives of communication, obstacles to effective communication and corrective actions, modes of communication and roles and relationships between different communication channels (Burke and Barron, 2014).

**Developing a communication plan:** Project managers must establish methods for effective team communication by practical planning. Lutchman (2011) listed down different communication methods including several types of meetings, written status reports, memos, electronic mail or combination of these. Written communication is mostly advised because it addresses the problem of misinterpretation and forgetfulness specially when giving instructions and entering into agreement (Burke and Barron, 2014). Lack of information costs the team with poor decision and many unresolved problems. If communication system is well managed, it significantly affects project quality, efficiency and productivity (Lutchman, 2011).

The content, level of detail and the methods of communication must be planned. Meetings are mostly used to coordinate project activities. There should be proper planning to get the most out of project team meetings. Formal or informal communications must be determined in view of how often project goals and all communications related with the project are reviewed. The project manager must facilitate communications by responding to the information requirements (PMI, 2013).

The impact of effective communication for project team members leads to several important outcomes for the project: Clear roles and expectations, improved team productivity, quality of work, job satisfaction, team collaboration and problem solving and better working relationships among team members (Adair, 2004).

**Building effective team communications:** Burke and Barron (2014) discussed in their book about effective system of communication and information management. As projects grow and complexity, managing the information and communication flows will be difficult. Therefore, there is a need for establishing a unified system to provide instructions, monitor performance and report progress. Without an effective system, the information overload will lead to confusion. Arranging the offices for all team members to be in one location or close proximity can improve communication and teamwork. It is also effective in facilitating timely input and feedback.

Meetings provide a means of exchanging information, ideas and resolving issues. Project managers and team members spend a considerable amount of time in meetings. Therefore, it is very important to develop practical ways to make team meetings more focused and effective. The leader's role is to stay focused and on track and increase participation. Agenda must be distributed in advance so participants can prepare (Burke and Barron, 2014).

Project management meetings can be a helpful tool to keep all team members on the same page, however, holding too many meetings can lead to a decrease in productivity and can cause complaints for having to attend meetings when people could be working. Therefore, managers must determine if holding a meeting is truly necessary (Verma, 1997; Adair, 2004). Project reporting is one of the fundamental project requirements.

Project reports have standardized format. However, the user can modify when situations require. There are formal and informal project reporting format to report project progress, status, constraints, actual and planned activities, and expenditure (Kerzner, 2003). Project reports must

be properly used to inform current problem, its potential impact, and suggest corrective action. It must be timely, accurate and must be clear to be understood by all (Kerzner, 2003). Effective communication is crucial to high team performance. Open communication environment must be created, roles and responsibilities of all team members must be clarified and genuine participation of all team members in planning, team activities, and decision making must be continually promoted (Adair, 2004).

#### **2.1.11.4. Project team problem solving and decision-making**

Projects are characterized by various disciplines, technological uncertainties, complex financing arrangements, international interactions, and multi project environments. Project managers are not experts in all areas to solve all problems and make all decisions therefore information from different sources becomes a necessity for team decision-making to become more effective (Adair,2004; Verma, 1997).

Team participatory problem solving, and decision-making is also a practical technique for securing commitment and motivation from team members. Decisions made by teams integrate 29 more comprehensive information and knowledge and lead to increased acceptance of the solution and carry out the decision (Adair, 2004; Verma, 1997).

The classic and rational framework for problem-solving and decision-making according to Adair (2004) and Verma (1997) involves the following steps: first, the objective or problem must be defined systematically. Then information and data must be collected and reviewed. Next, Possible alternative solutions should be generated, and the best courses of action must be selected. Finally, the project team must evaluate how well the problem was solved and if they have made the right decision. The findings from their evaluation might lead to redefining the problem and generating more alternatives and reviewing and modifying the problem assessment procedure or their implementation plan (Verma, 1997).

Challenges of participatory problem solving, and decision making is time consuming and may lead to inefficiencies. And the pressures to follow the crowd, which is usually a common characteristic in teams, may lead to a desire to be accepted, and therefore not suggesting differing viewpoints which could be reasonable and worth considering. This is a decision made under the pressure of not disagreeing (Adair, 2004).

### **2.1.11.5. Project team conflict management**

Conflict and disagreements among team members are normal and should be expected (Pinto, et al., 1998). Project teams are expected to be energetic, vibrant and show high performance. Since individuals in teams are different in terms of backgrounds, expertise and interests, conflict is natural and inevitable and is said to be beneficial as it improves creativity, learning and solving potential problems. However, it might get out of hand if it is not properly controlled or if preventive measures are not taken. The ability to resolve and manage conflicts effectively requires an understanding of why they occur in the first place (Verma, 1997).

**Sources of conflict** - Kerzner (2003); Bertocci (2009); Burke and Barron (2014) have identified several possible sources of conflict. The major sources include; differing views on project scope, work design, activities or plans of execution and activity scheduling; misunderstanding of poorly defined project goals and strategies, poorly defined reporting relationships and responsibilities; lack of effective managerial and administrative procedures; disagreement on technical opinions and performance; disagreement and competition in personnel, material or equipment resource allocation; disagreements in communication resulting in poor information flow; disagreements on reward structure/performance appraisal; politics, ambiguous roles/structure, and interpersonal conflicts arising from selfish motives, prejudice or stereotyping.

**Choosing appropriate mode of conflict resolution** – There are different models of conflict resolution suggested by different authors. However, the most common approaches include withdrawal through denial or avoidance, smoothing through suppression, compromising by negotiation or confrontation through integration or collaboration (Verma, 1997).

For the project manager, choosing from these approaches may lead to either positive or negative consequences. A withdrawal or team conflict avoidance approach may escalate the conflict in the future as it is neglected and left unresolved. A smoothing approach may have the same consequences but, in this case, at least the conflicting parties identify some common ground in resolving the conflict. Choosing a forcing approach is not recommended unless it is a must resulting from urgency or other pressing issue. Before using this approach, a project manager should always assess the probable effects as it almost always leads to a win-lose situation and causing feelings of resentment among conflicting parties. The compromising approach can create

solutions which to some degree can be accepted by the conflicting parties however, they most probably are not the ideal solutions as it would be very risky to take this approach to resolve disagreements over quality or technical performance issues (Adair, 2004).

In project team management, the most effective approach in resolving conflicts is the confrontation approach. In this approach, the problems are confronted and solved by means of a collaborative effort from all concerned parties by identifying the root causes of the problem, considering possible alternatives and choosing the best course of action through open discussion. Conflicts are resolved through openness and the resolution process must focus on issues not on personalities. Open discussions in a team can reveal the differences, present different alternatives, and provide necessary checks and balances (Verma, 1997).

#### **2.1.11.6. Project team stress management**

**Sources of stress** - the unique and dynamic nature of projects, uncertainty, workload pressures, deadline pressures, accountability pressures, real or perceived inequities, team member turnover and several other variables can cause stress even if there is an effective leadership, team building and communications among the team (Verma,1997).

Galvin, Gibbs, Sullivan, & Williams (2014) in their article listed down four major sources of stress referring from Meredith's (2013) book titled Project Management: A Managerial Approach. Some of the major sources include, not developing a reliable and consistent set of procedures and techniques for managing work; taking on too much work or having too much to do; having a great desire for continuous success; and when organizations go through major changes. Managing team stress is one of the fundamental aspects of project leadership since harmful stress affects performance and, in the end, the overall success of the project.

**Managing Stress:** The goal of the project manager is to plan to avoid crisis and too much workload. Effective time management must be given priority. Problem must be addressed immediately, workload must be shared, plan of action must be set in advance to meet deadline on time. With proper planning, an understanding of the dynamics of change, open communications, and good teamwork, stress can be managed in a systematic and rational manner (Verma, 1997). A project manager must not show they are stressed; instead, they must be confident and positive

to boost the team's morale. In addition, team retreat must be planned to have fun and relaxation occasionally to reduce stress and be energized (Burke and Barron, 2014).

## **2.1.12. Major challenges in project team management**

### **2.1.12.1. Capacity and credibility of the project manager**

The project manager lacks technical, administrative, and managerial and leadership skills required to implement the project and lead the project team. The project manager lacks support from senior management to have full authority for resources required to acquire and develop his/her team. The project manager also lacks credibility (Kerzner, 2003)

### **2.1.12.2. Organization structure**

The organization's structure negatively affects project team management process. The organization implements several projects and assigns team members resulting in conflicting priorities, dual responsibilities, competition for resources, divided loyalties, confusion, unclear responsibilities, and conflicts (Burke and Barron, 2014).

### **2.1.12.3. Acquiring project team**

According to Burke and Barron (2014), in a matrix structure, the project manager does not have direct control over everyone they would like to have involved in the project. They may need to negotiate with others who are able to provide the right number of individuals with the appropriate level of knowledge skills and experience. Failure to obtain the necessary human resources can increase the risk of project success in terms of schedule, budget, and quality.

### **2.1.12.4. Composition of the team**

Team members do not have balancing skills, balancing roles, and the required competencies to complete the project. When the team is very large and highly heterogeneous conflict will result. When the team is small and highly cohesive, it will result in groupthink and decisions are not reached based on objectivity and critical thinking (Adair, 2004).

### **2.1.12.5. Developing project team**

When the project's duration is short, it is very challenging to build a cohesive and effective team, according to the team development stages. Conflicting outlooks, priorities, and interests, role conflicts, dynamic project environments, competition over team leadership, lack of team

definition and structure, lack of team member commitment, lack of senior management support, are some of the factors that are barriers to effective team development (Kerzner, 2003).

#### **2.1.12.6. Managing project teams**

Managing virtual teams is costly and requires more communication effort. Managing multi-disciplinary team is challenging as members often identify with their own area of expertise rather than with the projects goal. Participatory problem solving and decision making is time consuming and may lead to inefficiencies. When there is lack of integrated and unified system of communication, coordination, and control to manage teams, it is challenging to manage the team's performance effectively. It presents challenges when there is no effective accountability system for team members to produce strong and measurable results and when there is a constant state of change in the project scope and objectives. In addition, the expectation from the sponsor can be unrealistic to the extent that the team is discouraged (Burke and Barron, 2014).

### **2.2. Review of Empirical Studies**

As cited in the theoretical section above, several authors have examined the theoretical underpinnings of this study topic, but little actual empirical research has been done in this area. Even the available studies on project team management are not related to agricultural and government projects. Even so, the available studies on project team management practices and challenges of various projects assessed by different researchers are described as follows.

According to Adu-Darkoh (2014) in Ashanti region about recruitment and team selection stated that, few organizations had existing formal policy for recruitment and selection of workers. Adu-Darkoh also listed barriers of the choice of recruitment and selection and from Out of the seventeen barriers to the use of a choice of recruitment and selection method; the top six ranked, in the highest order includes, poor human resource (HR) planning, ineffective job analysis, competency level on the part of employee, cost of recruitment and selection of employees, lack of human resource department and poor working condition of workers.

Ashley et al. (1987) indicated project teams' participation; motivation, capabilities, consistency, and adaptability help elevate the effectiveness of a team and were found to be a major contributor to project success. Therefore, it is important for the team to establish good work

ethics and a great working relationship within the team. Poor coordination and management of change orders may increase dissatisfaction between the owner and the project team and may even cause team members to enter disputes. Therefore, it is important for the project team to have good project manager, especially when there are several change orders to be addressed (Azmy, 2012).

Having the right core team can make or break a project. Therefore, great care should be taken when selecting team members. you need the 'best and brightest' on your team, but even those people must work well together for the project to succeed. When selecting team members, give preference to individuals who are: concerned about and committed to the common purpose and interested in the project. Enthusiastic, optimistic, creative, flexible and open minded, proactive, good team players:-work effectively as a member of a team; respect the values, beliefs and opinions of others; relate to and interact effectively with individuals and groups; are willing to cooperate to reach common goals; will respected among peers and other leaders, can devote time to the initiative. It is also useful to develop their own 'exclusion criteria' about team members. Members should not be selected merely because of their high position within the system (Salas, 2007).

Dansure Debere (Jun 2017), have carried out a research work on the topic entitled 'Assessment of project team management practice of AAU, College of Health Science'. The study was conducted to assess the project team management practices and to identify possible gaps of project team management practices. The finding of this study identified that the team managing practices are encouraging with some limitations. The team had regular meeting; the team was available on the time needed regardless of the influence from functional units; and also, the team are evaluated for their performance even-if it had poor feedback. In general, the study concludes that the practices of team acquiring were not effectively practiced, team developing practices were insufficient and the team managing practices were effectively practiced.

A research project titled, 'Practice and challenges of Project team management in selected INGOs in Ethiopia' undertaken by Nardos Endale in 2018. This research project attempted to discover and describe how project managers in the selected INGOs, acquire, develop, manage and lead their project teams and the particular challenges they face. The results revealed that in

most areas effective project team management practices are applied whereas in some areas further improvement and investigation is needed. The study, however, indicated that a major area not being sufficiently covered in research is about project team management in non-governmental organizations.

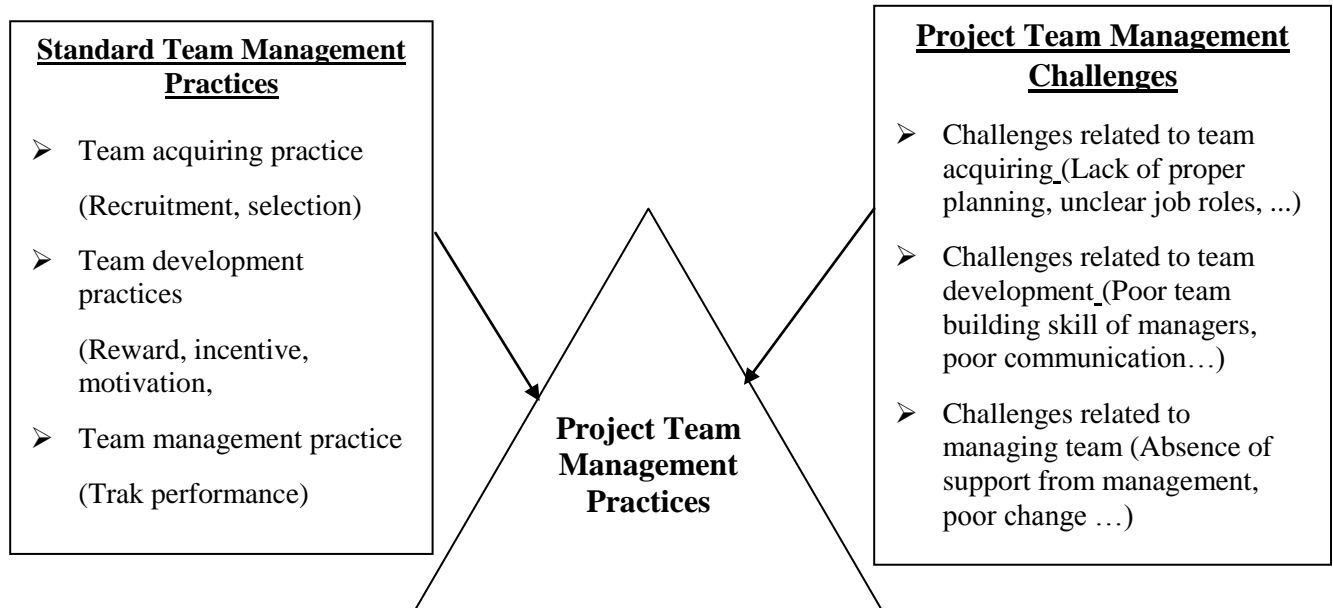
According to Kalkidan Esayas in 2021, an assessment of project team management practices was carried out which is a case study on development and transformation projects. The aim of this study was to evaluate project team management practices and identify potential gaps in the project team management practices. According to the findings, team-recruiting strategies are ineffective, team creation approaches are ineffective, and team management practices are successful. This study also recommended that the project team's plan, process, and structure should all be changed.

Though it is focused only on team development practices, research entitled 'The role of team building activities in sales promotion projects success' done by Fasika Yalew (2019) is another related study. The research was conducted on the role of team building activities in sales promotion project's success implemented by MOSS ICT consultancy in Addis Ababa. Project team building activities role on projects' success was the major concern of the research. The findings indicated that among the team building activities; structure, and Job design and training are the ones which were being used in the organization under study. With regards to roles of team building activities: Setting and achieving team goals, Trust among the team members as well as skill & knowledge development are found to be the major ones.

### **2.3. Conceptual framework of the study**

According to Imenda 2014, a conceptual framework is a synthetization of interrelated components and variables which help in solving a real-world problem. It is the final lens used for viewing the deductive resolution of an identified issue. The conceptual framework of this study is presented in figure 2.1. It was developed by reviewing theoretical and empirical literatures which are related with this study. The conceptual framework described systematically that following of PMI standard practices of project team management have a positive impact on overall project team managing practices at ATI and on the other hand challenges in project team management process have a negative impact on project team management.

*Figure 2.1. Conceptual framework of the study*



*Source: Own construction (2022)*

# **CHAPTER THREE**

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

In this chapter, research approach, research design, population, sample, sampling techniques, source and instrument of data collection, data collection procedure and methods of data analysis are presented. In addition, reliability, and validity analysis as well as ethical issues that were followed while conducting the study are presented in this chapter.

### **3.1. Research approach**

In this study, a mixed approach which combines elements of quantitative and qualitative research was used to answer the research questions. According to Mark et al. (2009:101) mixing qualitative and quantitative approaches gives the potential to cover each method's weaknesses with strengths from the other method. In addition, using different methods to collect data on the same subject can make research results more credible, strengthens the validity of conclusions as well as used as a methodological triangulation of using different methods to approach the same research question (Tegan George, 2022). Similarly, the interview responses were used to triangulate finding of the survey questionnaire in this study.

### **3.2. Research Design**

The research design employed for this study was a descriptive research design. This design was selected and considered appropriate for this study to gather as much information to understand the issue under investigation and describe it to the reader (Sekaran and Bougie, 2009).

The main characteristic of this design is that the researcher has no control over the variables and can explore one or more variables. It is purely on a theoretical basis where the individual collects data, analyses, prepares and then presents it in an understandable manner.

This type of design help to describe the state of project team management practices as it exists at present in projects of ATI. In most cases the information gained by descriptive study can be useful to evaluate certain practices and considering corrective steps for the future; for instance, if the project manager must consider changing its practices based on the findings.

### **3.3. Target population**

The target population of this study covered a total of 70 study participants consisting of project team members, project managers and HR managers/officers. The targeted population/respondents were identified as individuals who were familiar with practices and challenges of project team management in ATI projects. The 70-target population consists of 49 project team members (specialists/project officers), 12 project managers, and 9 HR staffs working in 12 active agricultural projects that ATI is currently implementing in Ethiopia. Geographically, these projects were implemented in Amhara, Oromia, SNNPR and Sidama regions of Ethiopia.

### **3.4. Sampling methods**

A census was used as a sampling method in this study. A census is a complete enumeration of the entire defined population. Census is more reliable and accurate for this study as the target population is small. According to Singh and Masuku (2014), a census is more attractive for small populations (e.g., 200 or less) and it also eliminates sampling error and provides data on all the individuals in the population. In addition, according to Robert Burns, (2008), a census is preferable to a sample only when: the population of interest is identifiable; sampling might eliminate important cases from the study; and credibility requires the consideration of all members of the target population.

### **3.5. Sample size**

As this study employed census method of sampling, the sample size was 70 employees which is the same as target population. The study considered the entire 70 population working under the twelve projects as a sample size.

The compositions of the 70 employees sample size were 49 project officers/specialists, 12 project managers/team leaders, and 9 HR staffs working on project staff acquiring, development and management across federal (HQ) and regional (Oromia, Amhara and SNNPR) offices.

## **3.6. Data source, types, and collection methods**

### **3.6.1. Data source**

The study used both primary and secondary sources. The sources for primary data were the study participants response obtained through questionnaires and interview. The other data sources used in this study were available documents. So, to hit the purpose of the study even further, detailed reviews has been made on available project documents and reports as much as possible.

### **3.6.2. Data type**

The study used both primary and secondary data. Primary data were those collected via questionnaires and interviews. Secondary data was also used in this study to supplement the information gained from the interview and questionnaires responses and triangulate and expand the findings from primary sources. Thus, secondary data was obtained by reviewing project documents, human resources plans, HR policy manual, and communication plans of the organization (ATI).

### **3.6.3. Data collection methods**

The study used both survey questionnaire and interviews to collect data. Project team members filled out questionnaires, project managers had semi-structured interviews and the HR staff had an open-ended interview.

A well-structured questionnaire is distributed to project team members via email to get adequate primary data on the research questions. The survey questionnaires covered three parts. The first part consists of questions which require basic information. The second part consists of questions constructed on the basis of a five-point Likert scale, where the responses are defined as: (1) Strongly disagree (2) Disagreed (3) Neutral/Undecided, (4) Agreed and (5) Strongly Agreed.

In addition, project managers/team leaders and HR manager/officers were interviewed via a semi-structured interview and open-ended interview respectively. Ultimately, it was the project manager and HR manager and officers who had the most impact during the staffing and growth phases of project team members. As project managers and HR staff are playing the major role in

staffing, building, and managing project teams, in-depth information was gathered from the semi structure and open-ended interview.

### **3.7. Data analysis and presentation**

Descriptive analysis procedure was employed to analyze the data obtained from the questionnaire and interview. The study employed a quantitative analysis method for the data collected via questionnaires and a qualitative analysis for qualitative information obtained from interviews.

Descriptive statistical method used to summarize the data obtained from survey and analyzed by calculating the frequency of the responses, the average/mean and percentages using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) software, version 20 and the result of the study presented in tables.

In analyzing the survey questionnaire data, respondents were asked to rate the practice of team acquiring, development and management as well as related challenges of project team management on a five-point Likert scale type ranging from 1 to 5 and the analysis of the mean score is based on the below assumptions:

If the mean statistical value is between 0 to 1.5 it implies the respondents strongly disagreed.

If the mean statistical value is between 1.5 to 2.5 it implies the respondents disagreed.

If the mean statistical value is between 2.5 to 3.5 it implies the respondents were neutral.

If the mean statistical value is between 3.5 to 4.5 it implies the respondents were agreed.

If the mean statistical value is above 4.5, it implies that the respondents were strongly agreed.

Based on the above assumptions from Burns, 2008, the mean score has been computed for each component of the variables and analysis is presented for each variables/item. The aggregate average mean result together with their respective variables was separately presented, analyzed and interpreted. About qualitative data, the qualitative analysis technique is used to evaluate qualitative data or interviews by bringing the common thoughts of the responses together into a common understanding. According to Kothari (2004) and Berg (2001), processes involved include editing, categorizing of collected data to identify patterns of relationship that exist among data groups, or differences with the data collected from literature and presented in narratives.

## **3.8. Reliability and Validity analysis**

### **3.8.1. Pilot-testing**

Pilot testing is important to pilot-test the data collection instruments before use for the study purposes. It is helpful to refine the questionnaire so that respondents will have no problems in answering the questions and there will be no problems in recording the data. In addition, it will enable the researcher to obtain some assessment of the questions validity and the likely reliability of the data that will be collected. The preliminary analysis using the pilot test data can be undertaken to ensure that the data collected will enable researcher investigative questions to be answered (Saunders, et al, 2009).

Accordingly, pilot-testing was also done for this study in short time using project employees of other organization. Accordingly, 8 questionnaires have been distributed for conveniently selected respondents who were not included in the study. Among 8 pilot-testing questionnaires, 6 of them (75%) were returned with valuable and relevant comments. Thus, based on which the questionnaire was significantly revised by the researcher. Once the revision was completed, it is distributed to the intended respondent for this study actual data collection.

### **3.8.2. Reliability**

Reliability is the extent of how reliable the said measurement model is in measuring the intended latent construct. It shows the extent to which the data collection techniques or analysis procedures will yield consistent findings (Saunders, et al, 2009). Also, reliability is as an indicator for measuring internal consistency which is the key to understanding reliability. In other words, if we use a certain scale to measure the same construct multiple times, we will get pretty much the same result every time, assuming the underlying phenomenon is not changing. According to Bhattacharjee (2012), the assessment for reliability for a measurement model was made using three criteria: internal reliability, composite reliability and average variance extracted (AVE).

This study has administered, from listed criteria measures, the most used internal consistency reliability measure of Cronbach's alpha. The internal reliability indicates how strong the measuring items are holding together in measuring the respective construct. The values of

Cronbach's alpha less than 0.6 are considered to be poor, above 0.7 are considered acceptable and those above 0.8 are considered good and commendable (Sekaran (2003).

For this study, therefore, reliability was assessed for dimension of practices and challenges of project team management. Therefore, Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the pilot and the study was calculated by SPSS version 20.00 and the result showed for the pilot test 0.71 and for the final survey 0.79. Accordingly, the value was in the acceptable range of Cronbach's alpha value and conclude that it was reliable for further analysis.

### **3.8.3. Validity**

Validity indicates to how accurately a method measures what it is intended to measure. Also, validity refers to the credibility of experimental results and the degree to which the results can be applied to the general population of interest or the accuracy of a measure and the extent to which a score truthfully represents a concept (Kallet, 2004).

The content validity was assessed for this study to validate the questionnaires and interview questions prepared for this study which were prepared based on a guide to the project management body of knowledge developed by the Project Management Institute as well as other literature review. This is done to have greater validity on representativeness of the items in the questionnaire to measure what it supposed to measure for a latent construct. The questionnaire and interview questions clarity, wording, and format ease of understanding by the respondents when responding were checked if valid or not valid.

### **3.9. Ethical consideration**

The ethical issues that need to be maintained in scientific research were also considered in this study. Respondents provided their response voluntarily and were assured that the privacy of their response was maintained. In addition, all participants of this study were treated with respect and courtesy with a strategy of 'informed consent' that included the aim and methods of the research being made clear to all participants. The study considered all steps to ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants. Also, all sources of information used in this study were appropriately acknowledged.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### ANALYSIS, DISCUSSION, AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter covers the response rate, respondent's demographic profile, and the results obtained from the survey and interviews as well as descriptive statistics of key study variables are presented which shows the findings on the areas of project team management practices in ATI. In addition, rating of key study variables, relationship among variables, discussions and interpretation of findings are presented.

#### 4.1. Response rate of respondents

*Table 4.1. Respondents' response rate*

Questionnaires Distributed	Questionnaires Returned	Percentage (%)
49	44	88

*Source: Own survey, 2022*

As shown in table 4.1 above, about response rate, 49 questionnaires were distributed to respondents and 44 were appropriately filled and returned with the rate of 88%. According to Cooper and Schindler (2014), 50% response rate is adequate for analysis, while 60% is good and 70% and above is excellent response rate for analysis. Accordingly, with this response rate, 44 (88%) is excellent to the next data analysis undertaken. In addition, this response rate was within the range of response rates of similar studies. For example, for example, Dansure (Jun 2017), and Kalkidan (2021) had a response rate of 87.5%; and Nardos (2018) had a response rate of 89% on similar studies.

#### 4.2. Demographic profile of the respondents

This study has effectively collected the background/demographic information of the respondents which includes gender, age, educational background, project related work experience and duty station /respondent location and presented the finding and discussed as follow.

**Table 4.2. A demographic profile of the respondents**

Variables	Category	Project team members (n=44)		Project managers (n=10)	
		Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sex of Respondents	Male	37	84	10	100
	Female	7	16	0	0
Age of respondents	20 -30	3	6.8	0	0
	31- 40	21	47.7	1	10
	41-50	18	40.9	6	60
	51-60	2	4.5	3	30
Educational status	Certificate	0	0.0	0	0
	Diploma	0	0.0	0	0
	First Degree	12	27.3	0	0
	Master's degree	32	72.7	9	90
	PhD & above	0	0.0	1	10
Work experience	1-5 yrs	11	25.0	2	20
	6-10 yrs	12	27.3	0	0
	11-15 yrs	8	18.2	4	40
	above 16 yrs	13	29.5	4	40
Duty station /Respondent location	Addis Ababa	21	47.7	10	100
	Oromia	8	18.2	0	0
	Amhara	10	22.7	0	0
	SNNPR & SIDAMA	5	11.4	0	0

Source: Own survey data (2022)

**Gender:** As shown in table 4.2 above, concerning gender distribution of respondents, 37 (84%) of the respondents of the team members were male and 7 (16%) were female. Regarding project managers, all (100%) of them were men. This indicates that most of project team member respondents were men who were overly available in the projects of this study.

**Age:** According to the age of respondents (project team members), as shown in the table 4.2 above, 21 (48%) were in the age range of 31 to 40, 18 (41%) in the range 41 to 50, 3 (7%) in the range 20 to 30 and about 2 (5%) were in the age range between 51 to 60. In general, the data clearly shows that, majority of respondents (89%) were in the age group of 31-50 years and this matured majority group with different work experience could be taken as a good opportunity to effective implementation of project activities.

Regarding the age category of project managers, the majority of them (60%) were between the ages of 41 and 50, and three (30%) were between the ages of 51 and 60, and the remaining 1 (10%) were between the ages of 30 and 50 years.

The age structure of the respondents showed different levels of job experience in their respective projects. The age structure of the respondents revealed different levels of job experience in their respective projects that could bring a reliable source of information for this research.

**Education level:** As indicated in table 4.1, the educational status of the respondent project team members, about 12 (27%) of the respondents have BA/BSc, the 32 (73%) respondents have MA/MSc degree holders in different specialists and there is no other educational status of project team members. The above data clearly shows that young and educated men dominate the project teams.

As shown in table 4.2 above, concerning educational level of project managers, 90% hold a master degree, while the remaining 10% were PhD holders. This indicates that the organization's project managers are professionally qualified.

**Work experience:** In terms of experience in development project works, about 18% of respondents had experiences ranging from 10 to 15 years, 27% had 5 to 10 years, and about 30% had more than 15 years of experience. This result suggests that the respondents had considerable experience in development project life cycle management and can clearly respond to the questions raised in the questionnaire based on their experience in the projects.

Regarding work experience of project managers, about 80% of respondents had experiences above 11 years. This result suggests that the managers/project leaders had considerable experience in development project life cycle management and can clearly respond to the questions raised in the questionnaire based on their experience in the projects.

**Location/Duty station of staff:** Project team members are found across regions distributed in Amhara, Oromia and SNNP regions, and the largest portion of project team members (48%) found at head office level (Addis Ababa office). However, regarding project managers, all of them worked full-time on the project based at head office in Addis Ababa.

### 4.3. Analysis of project team management practices in projects of ATI

Practice of project team management is assessed by taking mean scores of the responses of respondents for each question under each team management practice and results are discussed in the following sections.

#### 4.3.1. Practices in project team acquisition in projects of ATI

The practices of staff acquisition at the projects of ATI which involves getting the needed human resources to work for the project was assessed by this study using about eleven items/questions that are highly related with team acquisition. Thus, the survey results are presented and discussed in the following sections.

**Table 4.3. Analysis of responses on project team acquiring practice**

No	Item	Rating Scales					Mean
		1	2	3	4	5	
		# (%)	# (%)	# (%)	# (%)	# (%)	
1	Projects have a human resource plan contained within the project management plan.	0 (0)	2(5)	1(2)	22(50)	19(43)	4.32
2	Project human resource plan documents requirements	0(0)	1(2)	3(7)	28(64)	12 (27)	4.16
3	Team members' technical, professional competence, & management skills, considered in selecting teams	0(0)	1(2)	2(5)	25(57)	16(36)	4.27
4	Project team members have complementary skills for the task.	0(0)	2(5)	3(7)	24(55)	15(34)	4.18
5	The roles, responsibilities & competency defined when employees sign agreement.	1(2)	1(2)	2(5)	21(48)	19(43)	4.27
6	Employees got an orientation about the project and working environment before starting work	0(0)	0(0)	4(9)	18(41)	22(50)	4.41
7	You are available on the project within the period needed.	0(0)	23(52)	8(18)	11(25)	2(5)	2.61
8	You don't have other responsibility	3(7)	11(25)	6(13)	17(39)	7(16)	2.33
9	You competent to the required competencies	0(0)	0(0)	1(2)	30(68)	13(30)	3.7
10	You are not delayed to start work after you sign for agreement	0(0)	0(0)	4(9)	18(41)	22(50)	4.01
11	If the team members are not available or leave, you are not sharing their work.	9(21)	23(52)	3(7)	7(16)	2(5)	2.32
<b>Overall (aggregate) mean</b>							3.68

Key: 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral; 4 = agree and 5 = strongly agree

Source: Survey Result (2022)

Table 4.3 illustrates the various practices in project team acquisition. Regarding the practice of having a human resource plan within the project management plan, the respondents agreed with a mean value of 4.32 which indicates that human resource plan is part of the resource management plan of projects in the organization. Majority of the respondents have also agreed with a mean value of 4.16 for having detail on projects human resource plan documenting the requirements, i.e., when resources will be needed, how long they will be needed, and details of the roles and responsibilities. Similarly, respondents agree with mean value of 4.18 on the idea of considering the complementary skills like problem solving, decision-making and interpersonal skills during team members acquiring process. These are appropriate for the task ability to work as a team for ATI projects.

In addition, the response of team members showed that there were good practices of defining roles, responsibilities of staff at time of hiring that is majority of the respondents, with a mean value of 4.27, stated that the roles, responsibilities, and competency were defined when they sign for agreement. The results confirmed that project teams have clear and understandable roles. The teams act cohesively with high level of cooperation. This in turns positively affect the overall team performance. This line of findings is consistent with many other scholars who remarked clarity of roles as one of the requirements for teams to be successful (Bernold and AbouRizk, 2010; Hoigaard et al., 2006; Stevens and Campion, 1994).

According to Katzenbach & Smith (2006) if roles, responsibilities, and competency are properly defined team members will be clear about what they must do (and what they must not do) and demonstrate their commitment to the team and to support team success. Pfeiffer and Bellew (1991) further expressed that competency of members to execute their roles affect productivity of projects greatly. All these past study determinations affirm the significance of clarity of roles and responsibilities towards the project success.

Similarly, the same percent of the respondents revealed that there is a proper induction procedure, orienting and guiding the professionals towards the overall goal of the organization as well as the objectives of the project. In addition, this study identified that a proper induction procedure, orienting and guiding the project team members towards the overall goal of the organization as well as the objectives of the project. This report is consistent with views of various literatures (PMI 2013) which stated that organizations that have good induction programs

get new people up to speed faster and have better alignment between what new people do and what the organization needs them to do, which results in lower staff turnover rates. An effective, carefully planned orientation or induction process will not only teach technical skills, but it will educate new team members about organizational values, the organization's history, and provide valuable information about "who is who" in the organization.

Regarding the availability or hiring team on the required time, 23 (52%) of team members disagree on available within the period needed by the project, 8 respondents remain neutral whereas 11 respondents agree on this issue and the remaining 2 respondents strongly agree. According to the responses, the team acquiring process took longer time and employees were not available in a required time for some of the project. But literatures showed that to be successful on project, recruitment and the selection should be done as per the required time to avoid effects on projects budget, scope and time. In support of this idea Kaxihunda (2014) said that effective recruitment will minimize cost, source quality incumbent, and save time.

Generally regarding the project team acquiring practice majority of the respondents are agreed on the listed practices, and the aggregate average mean of the team acquiring practices which is 3.68 revealed that the organization under the study has a good practice. It showed that there is a proper planning and team acquiring procedure and processes which ensure that each member has the right competencies and skills for the job and that their skills complement each other's to complete the activities of the projects in ATI.

According to the interview conducted with human resource manager/officers, ATI's projects have a staffing (HR) management plan and there is specific procedure that will be followed by the HR department to hire employees for the projects. A staffing management plan of project is part of the overall resource management plan of projects which are specifically focus on the manpower aspects of the projects that details how to acquire the right staff with right skills at the right time. The details on the recruitment and selection Process are guided by the ATI's Recruitment and selection guide. So, staffing process for projects which were under study passed through all these procedures. This is consistent with the survey result of this study.

Almost all project managers have mentioned as project teams understand the concept and importance of teamwork. According to project managers' interview responses, the required

number of employees was not available on time because of problems related with budget release and approval process. However, being projectized organization, the project managers had direct control over everyone they would like to have involved in the project. They don't negotiate with other managers to get the right number of individuals with the appropriate level of knowledge skills and experience.

The result of interview with project managers also showed that some team members may not possess all the required competencies, but they took some proactive measures to improve team members competences. These include mentoring, close follow up activities, organize awareness creation meeting, workshops/programs to establish clarity and skill upgrading training to the project team.

All the project managers and leaders reported the higher staff turnover and they stated that it had an impact on projects' schedule and quality. As they stated, though they understood the negative impact of sharing assignments to other existing staff, vacant position assignments are shared among existing staff until new staff is recruited to undertake the possible gaps created because of staff turnover.

According to PMI 2013, projects human resource plans require as input the organization environmental factors (values, laws, and regulations) and organizational policies procedures and guidelines, knowledge and competence bases, and any historical examples from previous similar projects. Accordingly, the document reviews and interview findings of this study supported this input factors of human resource plan. ATI has important HR documents that form a vital part of the documentation process. Policies, procedures, performance management, and statutory documents form the core of important HR documents. The HR policy manual that guides the ATI's human resources management is entirely based on the integration of basic human resource management principles as stated in Federal Civil Servants Proclamation No 1064/2017, relevant regulations and directives.

### 4.3.2. Practices in developing project teams in projects of ATI

In this study eleven critical items/questions related to team development practices which reflect training, team-building activities, establishing ground rules for the team to be guided by, co-location, providing recognition and rewards were used to assess the practices. Mean scores of the responses of respondents were used for each question of team development practice and results are discussed in the following sections.

**Table 4.4. Analysis of responses on project team development practices**

No.	Item	Rating scale					Mean
		1	2	3	4	5	
		# (%)	#(%)	# (%)	#(%)	#(%)	
1	The mission and goals of the team are well aligned with organizations and the projects' goals	0(0)	2(5)	0(0)	28(64)	14(32)	4.23
2	Roles and responsibilities of team members are clearly defined	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	38(86)	6(14)	4.14
3	The project manager/lead understands team development stages and lead the team accordingly	3(7)	32(74)	1(2)	8(19)	0(0)	2.36
4	The project manager/lead uses team building techniques to increase the team's cohesiveness.	0(0)	7(16)	3(7)	31(71)	3(7)	3.68
5	The team has clear ground rules for acceptable behavior and activities.	0(0)	35(80)	1(2)	8(18)	0(0)	2.39
6	There are various forms of training available to develop and improve team member's competencies.	13(30)	9(20)	8(18)	13(30)	1(2)	2.54
7	The project has a retention plan to maintain the project team until the end of the project.	4(9)	21(48)	5(11)	14(32)	0(0)	2.66
8	There is reward and recognition system	4(9)	33(75)	2(5)	5(11)	0(0)	2.18
9	Team members are valued, appreciated and respected for their contribution.	0(0)	5(11)	5(11)	34(77)	0(0)	3.66
10	Project manager motivates other project team members for work by intangible motivators.	1(2)	14(32)	9(21)	20(45)	0(0)	3.09
11	Project manager/lead motivates employ by tangible motivators.	5(11)	39(89)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	1.89
<b>Overall (aggregate) mean</b>							<b>2.98</b>

Key: 1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral; 4 = agree and 5 = strongly agree  
Source: Own Survey Result (2022)

Table 4.4 illustrates that majority of the respondents agree on the alignment of mission and goals of the team with organization's mission and the projects' goals with average mean of 4.23. Also, majority of the respondents believed that roles and responsibilities of team members are clearly defined in the projects of ATI as the mean shows 4.14. The result implies that the organization under the study has good quality planning practices. It is indicated by many researchers that common team goals are the cause of team motivation to attain these goals with a smaller number of internal conflicts and issues (Larson and LaFasto, 1989). Goals that are agreeable by all team members (Pearson, 1987; Stevens and Campion, 1994) would result in the improvement of team performance.

Most of the respondents were certain on the project managers' team building techniques to increase the team's cohesiveness with mean value of 3.68. In addition, most of the respondents were placed themselves on strongly disagree and disagree scale regarding with the factor of having specific written team ground rules for acceptable behavior and activities. The average mean for this practice is 2.39 and from this result it can be understand that the project/organization is not paying more attention on having recorded /written ground roles that guide the project teams for acceptable behavior and activities. This report is seeming inconsistency with some literatures view regarding the importance of written ground rule. According to PMI (2013), establishing ground rules is a good way to ensure every member of project team understands their expectations. The more project team members understand appropriate ground rules, the more effectively they can apply them to their team.

About half of the respondents were also under the category of disagree and strongly disagree on receiving various forms of training provided to them by the projects to develop and improve their competencies. The average mean indicates 2.54 and this indicates that training and development practice are not adequately practiced in projects of ATI to develop and empower project team members. According to PMI (2013) tools to develop project teams include training, team-building activities, establishing ground rules for the team to be guided by, co-location, providing recognition and rewards.

Regarding the reward and recognition system, majority of the respondents were placed themselves on strongly disagree and disagree scale with the mean value of 2.18. Also, almost all respondents disagree on motivational practice by project manager using tangible motivators

(money, bounce) with mean value of 1.89. According to the result of this study, the reward and recognition system as well as tangible motivating activities were poorly practiced. This suggests that the importance of tangible incentive like recognition paper, reward and incentive have got less attention by the projects in ATI.

Many studies have shown the importance of tangible incentives to motivating project teams. Krotz (2003) states on his study the need of tangible rewards for better motivating and retaining employees. Although it is important to create a plan for rewarding team members who exhibit desirable behavior on a project, rewards are effective when they satisfy a need that is valued by that individual. The differences between individuals should be considered when determining recognition and rewards. It is not just tangible awards like money that motivate people, but intangible rewards supported with written recognition helps also to build confidence and self-esteem.

Generally, based on the survey finding the overall average mean, which is 2.98, indicates that team development practices were not in a good position or poorly practiced under projects of the study organization (ATI).

According to the interview with the project managers, they have used various team building and development techniques to increase the team's cohesiveness, competencies, and performance. Accordingly, they stated that outdoor activities, coaching, and mentoring are some of the teams building and developing techniques provided to build project teams. In addition, project managers have replied towards the possible way of motivating, recognizing, and rewarding activities of team members and they have mentioned that most of the motivations are limited to intangible once. Moreover, almost all project managers stated that teams have no ground rules that guide them for acceptable behaviors, and this response is consistent with responses obtained from the survey.

#### **4.3.3. Practices on managing project team in project of ATI**

The following sections presented findings and discussed the practices of managing project team in projects of ATI in relation to the process of tracking team member performance, providing feedback, resolving issues, and managing changes to optimize project performance.

**Table 4.5. Analysis of responses on project team management practices**

No.	Item	Rating scale					Mean
		1	2	3	4	5	
		#(%)	#(%)	#(%)	#(%)	#(%)	
1	There is clear process for goal setting	0(0)	1(2)	2(5)	24(55)	17(39)	4.31
2	There are clearly established measures of performance that set expectations.	2(5)	2(5)	0(0)	26(59)	14(32)	4.09
3	Status review meetings are regularly conducted.	1(2)	1(2)	2(5)	34(77)	6(14)	4.07
4	There is regular performance evaluation	1(2)	1(2)	3(7)	28(64)	11(25)	4.12
5	Project managers provide each team member constructive feedback.	2(5)	1(2)	1(2)	30(68)	10(23)	4.02
6	Feedbacks on performance and progress are clear, accurate, timely, and focus on priority areas.	1(2)	7(16)	0(0)	31(70)	5(11)	3.91
7	The project manager/lead focuses on strategic and priority issues	1(2)	2(5)	0(0)	36(82)	5(11)	3.96
8	There are no overlapping responsibilities.	2(5)	12(27)	8(18)	22(50)	0(0)	3.32
9	There is effective accountability system for team members to produce measurable results.	1(2)	6(14)	4(9)	31(71)	2(5)	3.61
10	There is a mechanism in place to monitor progress and results.	0(0)	2(5)	5(11)	27(61)	10(23)	4.02
11	There is a change management plan to monitor and control changes	1(2)	19(43)	8(18)	13(30)	3(7)	3.23
12	The project team are flexible to changing situations and needs	0(0)	1(2)	0(0)	36(82)	7(16)	4.11
13	There is effective mechanism to coordinate activities of team members located in different regions	0(0)	1(2)	6(14)	30(68)	7(16)	3.98
<b>Overall (aggregate) mean</b>							<b>3.90</b>

Key: 1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral; 4 = agree and 5 = strongly agree

Source: Survey Result (2022)

Table 4.5 demonstrates the project team management or performance appraisal practices which the study used to assess with list of questions. Majority of the respondents were in the strongly agree and agree category with average mean of 4.31 on clear process of goal setting by projects. Similarly, the same trend of response from the respondents seen on existence of clearly established measures of performance that set expectations with mean value of 4.09. Again, majority of the respondents agree that the performance appraisal was done at regular level without interruption with the mean value of 4.0. These result support project team performance measures procedures stated at ATI- HR manual (2014) and result of project managers' interview. According to ATI human resource manual (2014), employees perform goal setting and set expectations to measures performance.

Majority of the respondents agreed that they had received feedback regarding their performance from their superiors with the mean value of 4.02. though some proportion of the respondent disagree, majority of the respondent agree as feedback has limitation in its clarity, accuracy, timely, and focus on priority areas with mean value of 3.91. All these about feedback indicate how important practice is it in projects of ATI. As reported by different researchers, (Alimo-Metcalfe, B. (1998), Chivers, W. and Darling, P. (1999) Sharma, R. (2002), feedback can increase the individual's awareness of how their performance is viewed by their colleagues and indeed how it compares with their own view of their performance. It can serve as a strong stimulus for development and behavior change. It's also very power means that it needs to be managed professionally.

According to ATI performance management system manual (2022), ATI has an annual cycle with two times a year performance evaluation period and use 360-degree performance evaluation method which provides each project team member the opportunity to receive performance feedback from his or her immediate supervisor, and team members. According to Kankana (2006) the 360 - degree appraisal is the systematic collection and feedback of performance data on an individual or group, derived from a number of the stakeholders in their performance which in turn helps the organization to build the required competencies amongst individuals and groups.

Majority of respondents have agreed on having effective mechanism to coordinate activities of team members located in different regions with mean value of 3.98. This indicate as there exists good communication mechanisms used to coordinate activities of team members indifferent locations. Based on interview response of project managers: having strong network for virtual work environment, establishing transparent processes, responsibilities, and mechanism to review progress at reginal levels, and putting in place a robust communication plan backed with the proper communication technologies are major contributors for effective coordinate activities of team members located in different regions. Similar mechanisms are proposed by literatures to mitigate such challenges. According to Preetha Deepak (2021), facilitating a positive virtual work environment that breaks virtual walls, using proper communication technologies and establishing team ground rules to review progress are proposed for such challenges.

Generally, as indicated on table 4.5 above, the total average mean of 3.90 showed the project team management practices at projects of ATI were promising and well-practiced and most of the information obtained through interviews also confirm this and showed as there exists good practice of managing project teams.

#### **4.4. Challenges of project team management in projects of ATI**

Challenges in project team management of ATI projects were identified using a survey questionnaire having a set of common problems that teams encounter in most projects as well as using an interview with open ended questionnaire's part, by asking to list the major challenges of project team management practices in the organization (ATI). Accordingly, challenges are assessed by taking mean scores of the responses of survey respondents and interview findings analyzed by bringing the common challenges of the responses together into a common understanding.

High staff turnover and absence of related of mitigating activities, delay in hiring process to get the required project team member, difficulty of getting staff with the required training preparation and experience, inadequacy of budget or lack of adequate financial resources were the challenges identified under project team acquiring practice of the organization. Team development practices are challenged by lack of team members commitment, lack of clearly defined reward system to motivate staffs and budget constraints for team development practices.

Some limitations in understanding project objectives by stakeholder, change management and overlapping responsibilities among team members are identified by this study as a challenge under the practices of managing project teams. The sections below presented detail the challenges related to team acquiring, team development and managing project team.

#### 4.4.1. Challenges related with project team acquiring practices in projects of ATI

**Table 4.6. Analysis of responses on project team acquiring challenges**

No.	Item	Rating Scales					Mean
		1	2	3	4	5	
		# (%)	# (%)	# (%)	# (%)	# (%)	
1	There is no proper planning and acquiring of project team members.	9(20)	28(64)	6(14)	1(2)	0(0)	2.00
2	The organization's structure negatively affects project team management process.	8 (18)	28 (64)	5 (11)	3 (7)	0 (0)	2.07
3	There is high team member turn over.	2 (5)	4 (9)	5 (11)	28 (64)	5 (11)	<b>3.68</b>
4	Team composition is not balanced	8 (18)	32 (73)	0 (0)	4 (9)	0 (0)	2.00
5	Team roles and responsibilities are not clear.	8 (18)	28 (64)	6 (14)	2 (5)	0 (0)	2.04
<b>Overall (aggregate) mean</b>							<b>2.34</b>

*Key: 1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral; 4 = agree and 5 = strongly agree*

Source: Survey Result (2022)

Table 4.6 illustrates challenges of project team acquiring. Majority of respondents were disagreed to consider lack of planning, organizational structure, unbalanced team composition and unclear roles and responsibilities as major challenge. Though the overall mean showed low value 2.34, most of the respondents were with in agree and strongly agree category on project team/staff turnover challenge with mean value of 3.68. This showed that staff turnover was major problem in projects of ATI. Thus, the survey result showed that except this challenge, the other listed challenges related with proper planning and acquiring of project team members which include the lack of competencies of the project manager, organization structure, communication and coordination systems, or conflict resulting from misunderstandings from role and responsibilities are not major challenges.

From this study it can be concluded that team turnover is the major challenge, and the study suggested the requirement of employee's turnover mitigation activities. According to various

research (G. D. Dess, and J. D. Shaw,2001, J. D. Shaw, N. Gupta, and J. E. Delery,2005), the human capital theory suggests that turnover weakens performance by reducing the stock of human capital in the form of knowledge, skills, and abilities. Turnover is expected to have a negative linear relationship with performance since it diminishes human capital which directly relates to productivity and workforce performance.

However, in addition to the challenge identified by the survey finding, the interview result of project managers showed additional challenges related with acquiring project team. These are delay in hiring process to get the required project team member, difficulty of getting staff with the required training preparation and experience, and inadequacy of budget or lack of adequate financial resources.

#### 4.4.2. Challenges related with project team development in projects of ATI

**Table 4.7. Analysis of challenges related with project team development**

No.	Item	Rating Scales					Mean
		1	2	3	4	5	
		# (%)	# (%)	# (%)	# (%)	# (%)	
1	Most team members are part of other project teams within the organization resulting in conflicting priorities and lack of commitment	9 (21)	35 (80)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1.80
2	There is no effective communication (poor communication) plan in place.	3 (7)	39 (87)	0 (0)	1 (2)	1 (2)	2.05
3	Team member's ideas and approaches to problem solving are very conflicting.	1 (2)	33 (75)	7 (16)	2 (5)	1 (2)	2.30
4	Team member's personalities are very conflicting.	3 (7)	40 (91)	1 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1.95
5	The project manager/lead has no experience and skill in team development, management, and leadership	3 (7)	23 (52)	10 (23)	8 (18)	0 (0)	2.52
<b>Overall (aggregate) mean</b>							<b>2.12</b>

Key: 1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral; 4 = agree and 5 = strongly agree

Source: Own Survey Result (2022)

As indicated on table 4.7 above, most of the respondents were placed themselves on strongly disagree and disagree scale regarding with all listed challenges. The overall mean value 2.12 show that the listed challenges are not significant team development related challenges at the project teams of the study organization (ATI).

However, according to result of the interview with project managers some more challenges are listed and among these lack of commitment by some team members and financial constraints for training activities are the major once.

#### 4.4.3. Challenges related with managing project team in projects of ATI

**Table 4. 8. Analysis of challenges related with managing project team**

No.	Item	Rating Scales					Mean
		1	2	3	4	5	
		# (%)	# (%)	# (%)	# (%)	# (%)	
1	The project manager/lead has no support from senior management	2 (5)	33 (75)	9 (21)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2.16
2	There is lack of integrated communication and coordination system among team members assigned in different regions.	7 (16)	28 (64)	9 (21)	0 (0)	0(0)	2.05
3	There is a constant state of change in the project scope and objectives.	3 (7)	29 (66)	8 (18)	4 (9)	0(0)	2.30
4	Stakeholders have limited understanding of the overall and interdisciplinary project objectives.	0 (0)	5 (11)	2 (5)	23 (52)	14(32)	4.05
<b>Overall (aggregate) mean</b>							<b>2.64</b>

Key: 1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Agree and 5 = Strongly agree

Source: Own Survey Result (2022)

Table 4.8 demonstrates challenges in managing project team which the researcher tried to assess with list of challenges. Majority of the respondents were in the strongly agree and agree category

with average mean of 4.05 on the existence of challenge in understanding of the overall and interdisciplinary project objectives by the stakeholders. However, for the other proposed/listed challenges, most respondents were strongly disagree and disagree with mean value around 2.00.

The challenge was lack of adequate project management knowledge within key stakeholders of the project. This creates miscommunication between the project team and key stakeholder of the project. This was due to the organization was not identifying key stakeholders properly and also weak in creating a methodology and approach for how the project team will communicate with those stakeholders. As a result of this problem the project teams were not getting adequate top management support.

One of the important questions in the interview with the project managers was if there was challenge in managing their teams dispersed in different regions. However, they mentioned as this was not major problem. As managers replied, engaging regional team members from planning up to reporting system through developing and sharing templates, conducting regular meetings, and sharing the required updates were among the practices they used to manage team members assigned in different regions. In addition, they mentioned that different tools like regular emails and phone calls, virtual team meetings have been used to effectively communicate and coordinate activities with the teams in different regions.

Project managers also have mentioned that changes are happening in some project, and they mentioned as there is a process in place to manage the changes which include receiving information about the nature and magnitude of the change; Evaluate its impact on project schedule, budget and how much workload it is going to cause; prepare a recommendation about whether it is worth the cost. Then securing a final decision or approval from the project donor and senior management about whether the changes should be implemented.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, COCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

This chapter presented summary of findings, conclusion drawn and makes suggestions and recommendations as per the finding of the study to strengthen project team management practices of projects in ATI.

#### **5.1. Summary of the findings of the study**

The study's main purpose was to look at project team management practices and challenges in the areas of team acquisition, development, and management in projects of ATI. To achieve the study's aim, a descriptive survey design was used and as research instrument questionnaires were administrated to forty-four project team members, and ten project managers and five human resource officers were interviewed with semi structured and open-ended interviews. Data obtained through questionnaire described by frequency, percentile and means were supported using SPSS software version 20.00. Whereas data obtained using interviews were qualitatively analyzed. The following sections presented summary of the findings on the assessment of the current practices and challenges of project team acquiring, developing, and managing in agricultural projects of ATI.

##### **5.1.1. Project team acquisition**

On team acquiring practices, even though the aggregate mean findings show a moderate response, ( $M=3.68$ ), the survey finding showed good practices in most of specific practices of project teams acquiring through objective planning, followed appropriate procedures, considering skills and competencies, proper induction procedure and in defining roles, responsibilities of staff at time of hiring. The survey finding has also showed that team acquiring practice has some limitations in getting the required employee on time because of delay in hiring process and in having staff retention plan to mitigate high staff turnover.

From the interview with HR team and document review, this study identified that ATI has important HR documents like Policies, Procedures, Performance Management, and Statutory documents which are among the core of important HR documents. Each project in ATI has a staffing (HR) management plan which is part of the overall resource management plan of

projects which specifically focus on the manpower aspects of the projects that details how to acquire the right staff with right skills at the right time. It documents the requirements of human resources needs, roles, and responsibilities, required skills, reporting relationships, and creating a staffing management plan.

### **5.1.2. Project team development practices**

The overall survey finding on team development practice showed that projects team development practices were not good in projects of ATI. (M=3.19). Among the survey findings of specific practices, the study revealed that project teams have no specific written ground rules (M=2.39) that guide the project teams for acceptable behavior, training practices not sufficient (M=2.54), the reward and recognition system (M= (2.18) as well as tangible motivating activities (M=1.89) were poorly practiced.

Interview findings showed that outdoor activities, on the job online training, coaching, and mentoring are some of the teams building and developing techniques provided to build project teams. In addition, project managers have replied towards the possible way of motivating, recognizing, and rewarding activities of team members and they have mentioned that most of the motivations are limited to intangible once. However, almost all project managers stated that there were no developed ground rules that guide teams for acceptable behaviors, and this result is the same with responses obtained from the survey of team members.

### **5.1.3. Project team management practices**

The overall survey finding (M=3.90) on practices of project team management showed that team management practices are good and well-practiced in the projects of ATI. There were good practice of goal setting and performance measurement, the project performance was assessed at regular level without interruption, the appraisal parameters were clearly communicated for the project team, and they were integrated with the project goals and objectives. Project team members also feel that they received immediate feedback from their supervisors with some limitations in getting clear, accurate, timely feedback. Similarly, the survey finding of this study showed as there is good practice in managing teams dispersed in different regions (M=3.98).

Interview findings have also consistent with this survey result and showed as there exists good practice of project team management. The interview with project managers showed that changes

are happening in some project and in such cases; they followed important steps to evaluate the change impact and get approval from the project donor and senior management to implement the change.

Review of ATI's documents showed that as the fundamental goal of ATA's performance management is to promote and improve employee effectiveness and to manage and follow up team members' performance, result based management is adopted. Also, for measuring performance, 360-degree performance evaluation method is in place.

#### **5.1.4. Challenges in project team management**

Regarding challenges related with team acquisition, though the aggregate mean showed low value ( $M=2.34$ ), project team/staff turnover is identified as a major challenge with mean value of 3,68. This showed that staff turnover was major problem in projects of ATI. In addition to the challenge identified by the survey finding, the interview result of project managers showed additional challenges related with acquiring project team. These are: delay in hiring process to get the required project team member, difficulty of getting staff with the required training preparation and experience, and inadequacy of budget or lack of adequate financial resources.

According to result of the interview with project manager, lack of team members commitment was one of the challenges listed in relation with team development. In addition, challenges of having no clearly defined reward system to motivate staffs and budget constraints for team development practices.

Regarding the challenges related with managing project team, the major team management challenge identified was the problem in understanding of the overall and interdisciplinary project objectives by the stakeholders ( $M=4.05$ ). Similarly overlapping responsibilities among team members and limitations in managing change process are also identified by the interview process.

### 5.3. Conclusions

The general objective of this study was to identify and describe the practices and challenges of project team management in projects of Agricultural Transformation Institute (ATI). According to the results and data analysis of the study, the following conclusions were drawn.

1. Project team acquiring practices were practiced moderately. However, high staff turnover and absence of related mitigating activities, delay in hiring process to get the required project team member, difficulty of getting staff with the required training preparation and experience, inadequacy of budget or lack of adequate financial resources were the challenges identified under project team acquiring practice of the organization. Thus, the study concluded that ATI needs to work more on effective project team acquiring practices.
2. Team development practices at projects of ATI were poor in major areas of team development practices. Among the practices, the practices of reward and recognition system were not good, teams have no specific written ground rules that guide the teams and the practices of motivating the team were inadequate. Also team development practices are challenged by lack of team members' commitment, lack of clearly defined reward system to motivate staffs and budget constraints for team development practices. Thus, it can be concluded that the team developing practices in projects of ATI were insufficient.
3. Based on the study result and analysis conducted, project team managing practices in ATI projects were good, well-practiced and effectively practiced in projects of the organization. There were good practice of goal setting and performance measurement. Performance measurement and feedback procedures were clearly communicated with project team members and aligned with the goals and objectives of the project. Some limitations in understanding project objectives by stakeholder, change management and overlapping responsibilities among team members are identified by this study as a challenge under the practices of managing project teams.
4. Based on these findings it can be concluded that projects of ATI, except for some limitations, apply similar procedures and principles in acquiring, developing, and

managing their teams and there is no as such big divergence from the information obtained from literature and project management body of knowledge.

## **5.4. Recommendations**

The study forwards the following recommendations to improve the practice of project team management practices and to tackle problem areas in the practices of project team management in projects of ATI.

1. ATI needs to work more on effective project team acquiring practices that mitigate team members (staff) turnover, and delay in acquiring/hiring team members. As the cost of recruiting and training new member has great implication on project schedule and cost, retaining the existing staffs with appropriate action is the best alternative.
2. The project managers should have to develop a ground rule for acceptable behaviors. Ground rules with clear expectations about acceptable behavior by project team members decreases misunderstandings and increases productivity. Ground rules in areas such as code of conduct, communication, working together, or meeting etiquette allows team members to discover values that are important to one another.
3. Strengthen team development practices using continuous and effective training program, reward and recognition system as well as team motivating practices by combining the intangible with the tangible motivating practices.
4. Identify, incorporating and implement practices that enhance stakeholders' understanding and participation in projects. Such practices can minimalize challenges related with problems of understanding project objectives by stakeholder.
5. The scope of this study is limited to the assessment of the team management practice of acquiring, developing, and managing the project team in projects of ATI and the results revealed that in most processes of team management, effective practices are applied. However, there are some limitations on research time, and obtained data/information consistencies, and as a result, generalizations could be difficult and further research is recommended.

6. Even though this study tried to analyze and assess team management practices, from this study future research studies can be recommended to see the correlation between team management practices and the project success variables so that the research will be more completed with evidence and more scientific result can be developed.

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# APPENDIXES

## ANNEX I. Questionnaire

### Introduction and consent

Hello!!

My name is Solomon Legesse. I am student at Addis Ababa University Business and Economics school of commerce. I am conducting research for the partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master in Project Management on title of project team management practices among projects in ATI. The information acquired through this questionnaire is purely for academic purpose and will be kept confidential. There is no right or wrong answer here. Rather, your genuine, honest, and timely response is vital for the accomplishment of this study.

Therefore, you are kindly requested to give your response to each question. Please note that you are not required to give your name in this questionnaire, and I would like to take this opportunity to extend in advance my thanks, appreciation and sincere gratitude for your participation and dedication to sacrifice your time to fill out the questionnaire.

### Survey questions for project team members

#### Part I: General Information

1.1. Sex

- a) Male      b) Female

1.2. Age

- a) 20 -30    b) 31-40    c) 41-50    d) 51- 60

1.3. Educational background

- a) Certificate    b) Diploma    c) First Degree    d) Master's degree    e) PhD    f)  
Other (If any) .....

1.4. Position in organization:

- a) Project Manager    b) Team Leader    c) Project officer/specialist  
 d) HR management    e) HR officer

1.5. Total years of experience in ATI:

- a) <1 year    b) 1–2 years    c) 3-4 years    d) 4-5 years, e) Above 5 years

1.6. Years of service in your current project:

- a) < 1 year    b) 1–2 years    c) 3-4 years    d) 4-5 years    e) Above 5 years

## Part II. Practice of acquiring, developing, and managing project teams.

### 2.1. Question on acquiring project team practice

Items	Strongly Disagreed (1)	Dis-agreed (2)	Neutral (3)	Agreed (4)	Strongly agreed (5)
Projects have a human resource plan contained within the project management plan.					
Project human resource plan documents requirements					
Team members' technical and professional competence, management skills, communicating skills considered in selecting teams					
Project team members have complementary skills technical/ functional expertise, problem solving, decision-making and interpersonal skills appropriate for the task.					
The roles, responsibilities and competency are defined when employees sign for agreement.					
Employees got an orientation about the					

project and working environment before they start the work					
You are available on the project within the time period needed.					
You are not delayed started working after you sign for agreement in the scheduled time frame.					
You have experience in similar projects					
You don't have other responsibility or involvement to other duty.					
You competent to the required competencies					
If the team members are not available or leave the project, you are not sharing their work.					

## 2.2. Questions on team development practices

Rate for the practices of team development activity based on the following parameters by marking tick (✓) in the box

Items	Strongly disagreed (1)	Disagreed (2)	Neutral (3)	Agreed (4)	Strongly agreed (5)
The mission and goals of the team are well aligned with organization's mission and the projects' goals					
Roles and responsibilities of team members are clearly defined					
The project manager/lead understands team development stages and lead the team accordingly					
The project manager/lead uses team building techniques to increase the team's cohesiveness.					

The team has clear ground rules for acceptable behavior and activities.					
There are various forms of training available to develop and improve team member's competencies.					
The project has a retention plan to maintain the project team until the end of the project.					

### 2.3. Questions on practices of project team management

Rate for the practices of team management activity based on the following parameters by marking tick (v) in the box

Items	Strongly disagreed (1)	Disagreed (2)	Neutral (3)	Agreed (4)	Strongly Agreed (5)
There is clear process for goal setting					
There are clearly established measures of performance that set expectations.					
Status review meetings are regularly conducted.					
There is regular performance evaluation					
Project managers provide each team member constructive feedback.					
Feedbacks on performance and progress are clear, accurate, timely, and focus on priority areas.					
The project manager/lead focuses on strategic and priority issues					
There are no overlapping responsibilities.					

There is effective accountability system for team members to produce measurable results.					
There is a mechanism in place to monitor progress and results.					
There is a change management plan to monitor and control changes					
The project team are flexible to changing situations and needs					
There is effective mechanism to coordinate activities of team members located in different regions					

**Part III: Challenges of project team management in projects of ATI**

**3.1. Questions on challenges acquiring, developing, and managing project team members.**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Strongly disagreed (1)</b>	<b>Dis-agreed (2)</b>	<b>Neut ral (3)</b>	<b>Agreed (4)</b>	<b>Strongly Agreed (5)</b>
There is no proper planning and acquiring of project team members.					
The organization's structure negatively affects project team management process.					
Team roles and responsibilities are not clear.					
Team composition is not balanced (i.e. mix of skills and special strengths).					
The project manager/lead has no support from senior management to have full authority for resources required to acquire and develop his/her team					
Most team members are part of other project teams within the organization resulting in conflicting priorities and lack of commitment to this team or the project's goal.					

The project manager/lead has no experience and skill in team development, management and leadership					
Team member's ideas and approaches to problem solving are very conflicting.					
Team member's personalities are very conflicting.					
There is high team member turn over.					
There is lack of integrated communication and coordination system among team members assigned in different regions.					
There is a constant state of change in the project scope and objectives.					
Stakeholders have limited understanding of the overall and interdisciplinary project objectives.					

## Questions for project managers

### Part I: General information (Project managers)

1. Sex
  - a. Male      b) Female
2. Age
  - a. 20 -30    b) 31-40    c) 41-50    d) 51- 60
3. Educational background
  - a. Certificate    b) Diploma    c) First Degree    d) Master's degree    e) PhD and above
4. Total year of work experience in project management (in ATI and other organizations)
  - a. 1 – 5 years    b) 6 – 10 years    c) 11-15 years    d) Above 16 years
5. Total years of experience in ATI:
  - a. 1 – 2 years    b) 3 – 4 years    c) 5 - 6 years    d) Above 7 years
6. In how many projects you have participated while working with ATI?
  - a. 1    b. 2    c. 3    d. 4 and above

7. Years of service in your current project:

- a. < 1 year    b) 1–2 years    c) 3-4 years    d) 4-5 years    e) Above 5 years

**Part II. Question on practice of acquiring, developing, and managing project teams**

1. Did you negotiate and influence others who are in a position to provide the required project team while employees are selected? a. Yes b. No
2. Do you think the number of team members acquired as you requested (as a project needs)?
3. If the answer is no what are the possible reasons and influence on projects?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Did you acquire project team members in the scheduled time frame? \_\_\_\_\_
5. If the answer is no, what were the possible reasons and what were the influence on projects? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Did you acquire the necessary skilled and competent employees for project? \_\_\_\_\_
7. If no, what were the possible reasons and influences on the project's schedule, budget and quality? \_\_\_\_\_
8. If the project team members do not possess required competencies, what proactive responses did you take? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Do teams understand the concept and importance of teamwork? a. Yes    b. No
10. Did you have a motivating, recognizing, and rewarding program for desirable behavioral activities? \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, in what possible ways? \_\_\_\_\_
11. Did the project team develop ground rules for acceptable behavior? \_\_\_\_\_
12. Did the project management assess the team for stress and dissatisfaction?  
\_\_\_\_\_ If yes, how you manage it? \_\_\_\_\_
13. What are the tools you used to enhance effective communication?
14. How are decisions made within your team?
15. What kind of common problems do you have in your team and how are they solved?
16. What are the sources of conflicts in your team and how are they resolved?
17. Did you have a regular meeting with the team?
18. Is there an effective team members performance evaluation and accountability system?
19. Did you give feedback to the team member regularly? a. Yes    b. No
20. What kind of feedback mechanism do you use?

21. Did you clarify revised roles and responsibility for the team as needed? a. Yes b. No
22. How do you manage team members assigned in different regions?

**Part III. Question on challenges of acquiring, developing, and managing project teams**

23. What are the challenges associated with acquiring project team?
- 

24. What are the challenges in building and developing your project team?
- 

25. What are the challenges associated with managing your project team?
- 

**Questions for HR staff**

**HR department interview questions**

1. What approaches or policies do you use in the undertaking to acquire new staffs?
2. Is the HR plan providing guidance on how project human resource should be defined, staffed, managed, controlled and eventually released?
3. How is the process of acquiring staff for projects in your organization?
4. What resources do you use to discover project work openings?
5. Did you acquire the necessary skilled and competent employees for project? If no what were the possible reasons and influences on the project's schedule, budget and quality?
6. Did you have a motivating, recognizing, and rewarding program for desirable behavioral activities? If yes in what possible ways?
7. In what interval venture overall performance appraisal and assessment takes place?
8. What has been done as a human aid unit to advance knowledge and ability of employee?
9. What have been accomplished for the undertaking to motivate the team?