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Dynamics of Decision Making in Cross-Functional Teams

Yetunde Anibaba¹, Godbless Akaighe¹

ABSTRACT

Group decision making is often associated with better qualitative decisions and outcomes than decisions made by individuals alone. The dynamics of the group decision-making process, as opposed to the consequences of such decisions, have received limited research attention. While there is considerable evidence to support that cross-functional team decision making facilitates easy implementation of decisions, and higher participation in decision making, the intricacies involved in the decision-making process remain underexplored. The paper aims to understand how different factors drive the behavior of the team members in the decision-making process in cross-functional teams and how decisions are reached in such teams. Under simulation conditions, we observed decision-making sessions involving six groups of six managers each, representing six different functions in a hypothetical organization. We find that the behavior of team leaders, the presence of 'dominant' team members and the self-interest of team members, drove the process and defined the final output.

KEY WORDS:

group decision making, cross-functional teams, consensus, leadership

JEL Classification: M1

¹Lagos Business School, Nigeria

1. Introduction

Extant literature suggests that the use of teams generally, and cross-functional teams, in particular, is an increasingly popular phenomenon in today's organizations (Lacerenza, Marlow, Tannenbaum & Salas, 2018). Cross-functional teams (CFTs) are becoming commonplace in areas such as research and development, manufacturing, marketing, new product development, launching a new technology, and other strategic areas of the business (Daspit, Justice Tillman, Boyd, & Mckee, 2013; Griffin, 1997; Kotlarsky, van den Hooff, & Houtman, 2015; Lovelace,

Shapiro, & Weingart, 2001; Mathieu, Tannenbaum, Donsbach, & Alliger, 2014; Sangeetha, & Kumaran, 2018). The logic is that team members bring a diversity of knowledge, experience, and expertise to organizational activities and processes, which could potentially improve team effectiveness and lead to more desirable outcomes for the organization. CFTs are also thought to ease the burden of decision making on individual managers in an increasingly complex and dynamic world, speed up decision making and product development, increase creative and innovative capacity of teams, facilitate team member interactions, and ultimately aid successful execution of decisions and of projects (Alper, Tjosvold, & Law, 1998; Cui, 2016; Daspit *et al.*, 2013; Katzenbach & Smith, 1992; Lin, Wang, & Kung, 2015; Parker, 2003; Sangeetha & Kumaran, 2018).

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to: **Yetunde Anibaba**, Lagos Business School, Nigeria. E-mail: yanibaba@lbs.edu.ng

However, the increasingly popular 'dark-side' metaphor finds expression in this body of literature, as team-based decision making is also thought to be associated with suboptimal outcomes. The latter are thought to stem from the diverse views and functional expertise of team members, information asymmetry, their personal interests and preferences, as well as a general lack of team competencies (Cui, 2016; Lacerenza, et al., 2018). In essence, it is important to understand the mechanisms that mediate the relationship between team-based decision making and the desired performance outcomes. Consistent with McGrath's (1984) input-process-output heuristic that has dominated much of team effectiveness research, it is evident that team processes are fundamental to team outcomes. As such, the decision-making process has been argued to affect not just the eventual outcome of the team, but also its overall functioning, including members' satisfaction, group interactions, participation level and socio-emotional behavior of group members (Nel, Pitt, Berthon, & Prendergast, 1996). As a result, extant research has focused extensively on understanding how team processes drive team effectiveness and outcomes. However, recent research suggests that our insight into the workings of cross-functional teams is still deficient.

In their study of the impact of team training on team performance in the aviation sector, Littlepage, Hein, Moffett, Craig, and Georgiou (2016) observe that adequate research into team coordination in cross-functional teams is still lacking. Cui (2016) suggests from their field study of micro-decision processes in BMW and Nokia that the intricacies of the micro-processes of decision making in cross-functional teams are still poorly understood, more so in light of the fact that research into interventions to facilitate team effectiveness are often carried out in isolation of one another. As a result, it is not clear how those interventions jointly affect team effectiveness and team outcomes, especially as data for different variables are typically collected at different points in time, often after the team event has taken place. A related issue is the need for researchers to move from the retrospective nature by which team processes are captured, in order to adequately account for the genuinely complex and dynamic nature of teamwork and team membership in today's organizations (Matheiu, Maynard, Rapp & Gilson, 2008; Cristofaro, 2017).

We take our cue from the preceding, and with the aid of a simulated decision-making exercise, we explore the micro-processes of decision making in six hypothetical cross-functional teams. We aim to explore how different social interaction processes that have been identified in the literature interact to define CFT decision-making outcomes. By this, we hope to contribute to providing a more holistic understanding of the dynamics that facilitate or hinder decision making effectiveness in cross-functional teams.

Thus, the objective of the study is to explore the dynamics of cross-functional team decision making. In precise terms, the study seeks to provide deeper insights into how members of cross-functional teams interact during the decision-making process. This paper brings together the teamwork and group decision-making literature to offer a nuanced explanation of the dynamics of decision-making in multi-functional teams. We hope to shed some light, for example, on how teams may reach mutually acceptable decisions/consensus in spite of functional and personal interests, and how the nature of leadership may influence group interactions to achieve the desired outcome.

This paper is organized as follows. In the following section, we pool together some of the literature on group decision making, cross-functional teams and team effectiveness to form a conceptual framework for the study. Next, we describe the research method, including an overview of the simulation exercise, a description of the participants and the context of the simulation. We present a summary of the results and conclude with a discussion of those results, its limitations and fruitful areas for future research.

2. Conceptual Overview

2.1. Group Decision Making

Group decision-making (GDM) involves two or more individuals in a group arrangement evaluating alternative courses of action on a problem and selecting the best option for the benefit of the group, on behalf of the organization (Chen, Xu, & Xia, 2013; Lunenburg, 2011). Due to the complexities of organizational problems and the dynamic business environment, group decision making has become popular to assess all possible sides to an identified organizational problem towards ensuring that the best decision is taken

for the organization (Haslam et al., 2014; Rodríguez, MartíNez, & Herrera, 2013; Yates, & de Oliveira, 2016). GDM in modern organizations also considers the need to harness the skills, knowledge, and experience of the group members (Gillet, Schram, & Sonnemans, 2009; Kocher & Sutter, 2005), and is thought to strengthen innovation in the organization, qualitative debate, interpersonal relationship and problem-solving skills of individuals across functional areas of the organization (Amabile, Conti, Coon, Lazenby, & Herron, 1996; Choi, Raghu, Vinzé, & Dooley, 2017; Liao, Xu, Zeng, & Xu, 2016).

Extant literature suggests that group decisions are more reliable and tend to have more weight than individual decisions in organizations (Saaty, & Peniwati, 2013). An effective GDM process has the potential to ensure high participatory rate and ultimately achieve consensus decision (Chiclana, García, del Moral, & Herrera-Viedma, 2013). It facilitates the buy-in and engagement that required at the implementation stage.

2.2. Cross-Functional Teams

Cross-functional teams are made up of a “group of people representing a variety of departments, disciplines, or functions; whose combined effort is required to achieve the team’s purpose” (Wang & He, 2008, p. 753). The members of the team could also be experts in various fields, who can bring their knowledge and experience to bear on the team’s goals (Cohen & Levinthal, 1990; Dahlin & Wein-gart, 1996; Lovelace *et al.*, 2001). They are often established with the objective of achieving a set goal or taking a decision, such as closing a product line, improving product/service quality and productivity of an organization or launching a new product (Alexander et al., 2005; Athanasaw, 2003; Pakarinen, & Virtanen, 2017), usually in a temporary arrangement (Edmondson, & Harvey, 2017). While they typically involve different personalities and interests, thus potentially causing friction and reducing the effectiveness of the team (Kaufmann, & Wagner, 2017), extant literature suggests that cross-functional teams have become accepted across organizations for business analyses, information integration, knowledge sharing and decision making in both public and private sector organizations (Choi, & Lee, 2016; Littlepage et al., 2016; Piercy, Phillips, & Lewis, 2013).

The benefits of employing cross-functional teams for decision making include (1) the likelihood that they will make better decisions drawing from their varied backgrounds and experience (2) they promote decentralized decision making in the organization (3) the reduction of overload of decision making at the top echelon of an organization (4) the decision-making cuts across departments and vertical organizational structures (Henke, Krachenberg, & Lyons, 1993).

We noted above that a typical characteristic of cross-functional teams is that members of the team come from different management / departmental functions so that each departmental function is represented in the team. In this case, the mandate of team members is to protect the interest of their functional departments, by ensuring due consideration is given to their viewpoints in the decision to be taken (Bitter, van Veen-Berkx, Gooszen, & van Amelsvoort, 2013; Pakarinen, & Virtanen, 2017). Herein also lies one of the problems with decision-making in cross-functional teams – the potential that one team’s interest will be maximized at the expense of another. For example, while the manufacturing team’s interest may be cost minimization, marketing may typically be focused on revenue maximization (Cui, 2016). These issues are amplified by the fact that such teams are often temporary/ad-hoc in nature, so that they do not have as much of an opportunity to ‘develop a team identity, shared mental models and trust’ (White, Eklund, McNeal, Hochhalter, & Arroliga, 2018) required to facilitate better interaction within the team. An important challenge CFT’s face, therefore, is how to coordinate the team to ensure that micro-objectives of team members align with the broader organizational objectives. In the following section, we briefly review the literature around some critical characteristics that the research suggests are essential in this regard.

The leadership style/behavior of the leader

In cross-functional teams, there is usually a leader who wields significant influence on the activities and outcomes of the team (Ehrhardt, Miller, Freeman, & Hom, 2014; Kozlowski & Bell, 2003). The leadership style/ behavior of the team leader either facilitates or hinders the decision-making process, encourages members to participate in the process or hold back their opinions. In essence, the contribution of team

members to the decision-making process can be significantly influenced by the leaders' style (Ehrhardt *et al.*, 2014; Gurerk, Irlenbusch, & Rockenbach, 2009). A cross-functional team leader that adopts an autocratic leadership style, for instance, controls the group and dictates the process, limits communication and dominates the decision-making process. This somewhat forces the group members to a narrow view of issues based on the subjective idea of the leader, because the autocratic leadership behavior places less emphasis on people (De Hoogh, Greer, & Den Hartog, 2015; Puni, Ofei, & Okoe, 2014). Typically, an autocratic leadership style is thought to hinder the free flow of communication, innovation and creativity in a team while a participatory/democratic leadership behavior in a team promotes a shared level of involvement in the decision-making process (Odoardi, Montani, Boudrias, & Battistelli, 2015; Rossberger, & Krause, 2015).

Influence of dominant members

Dominant members of a cross-functional team are great influencers of decision making due to their strong emotions, in-depth-knowledge and assertive personality, which wields some influence on the team (Lerner, Li, Valdesolo, & Kassam, 2015; Kirchhoff, Lemos & Dessai, 2013; Moon, Baxter, & Klein, 2015). The role of individual personality in a cross-functional team is a factor that can swing decisions in the direction of the dominant person's preference regardless of the validity of that preference. Individuals with strong personalities and authoritative postures tend to influence the debate more than team members who are quiet and not as opinionated (boldness and activity) (Brown & Irving, 2013; Planas-Sitja, Deneubourg, Gibon, & Sempo, 2015). The knowledge and expertise of team members could also position them to dominate the deliberations and influence the eventual outcome positively or otherwise (Hauer *et al.*, 2016; Oliveira, Rozenfeld, Phaal, & Probert, 2015; Pérez, Cabrerizo, Alonso, & Herrera-Viedma, 2014; Schickramm, Saenz-Segura, Schipper, & Handgraaf, 2015).

The interest of team members

Ideally, the overall benefit of the organization should be the motivating factor in cross-functional team decision making, but this is not always the reality. The literature suggests that individual team members tend

to protect their interest such their jobs, their reputation and also defend the position of their departmental units (Binderkrantz, Christiansen, & Pedersen, 2015). Such vested interests cause team members to hoard useful information, tend to heighten the debate, generate conflict and elongate the decision-making process unduly (Brown, & Irving, 2013; Evans, Hendron, & Oldroyd, 2014; Kish-Gephart, Detert, Treviño, Baker, & Martin, 2014; Mihalache, Jansen, Van den Bosch, & Volberda, 2014). The literature suggests that the leader has a responsibility to manage such situations, through transformational leadership, which will encourage the members to rise above their interest to the overall benefit of the group and the organization (Bouwman, Runhaar, Wesselink, & Mulder, 2017).

Team cooperation

The level of collaboration of a cross-functional team is an essential factor in the decision-making process. The literature suggests that a lack of cooperation amongst the team members aided by self-interest and diverse orientation will create difficulty in arriving at early decisions, and subsequently impede the implementation of any decision(s) reached (Anthony, Green, & McComb, 2014; Carson, Tesluk, & Marrone, 2007; Pinto, Pinto, & Prescott, 1993). Team cooperation can be a function of the understanding of the overall objective, the common good of the decision to the organization and the team members' willingness to let go ego and self-interest as a result of their individual functional expertise (Bagozzi, Belschak, Verbeke, & Gavino, 2016; Kim, & Johnson, 2014; Ridge & Ingram, 2017). With respect to functional background and the tendency to operate at cross purposes, a number of authors suggest the need for behavioral integration (Hambrick, 1994; Simsek, Veiga, Lubatkin, & Dino, 2005; Soldan & Bowye, 2009) which is defined as "the degree to which mutual and collective interaction exists within the group" (Hambrick, 1994, p. 188) for the harmonization of the team. The argument is that, for people from various fields of expertise, there is bound to be divergent opinion, ideas, orientations, and positions, albeit insightful that will create a slow and torrid decision-making process without team cooperation, orientation and behavioral integration (Tekleab, Kacara, Quigley, & Tsang, 2016).

3. Method

3.1. Research design

This paper is an exploratory study aimed at capturing the dynamics of decision making in cross-functional teams via direct observation of the behavior of the participants during the decision-making process (Gummerson, 2000; Shukla, 2008). We use this method in an attempt to observe and document real-time interaction among team members in the simulated decision-making exercise, and circumvent one of the weaknesses Matheiu et al. (2008) identified in extant research on team effectiveness, that is the retrospective collection of data.

3.2. The exercise

The fictional case authored by Edmondson and Feldman (2003) forms the basis for this CFT decision-making exercise.

‘The case, inspired by a real decision facing a major telecommunications company, describes a cross-functional management team convened by the CEO for the purpose of developing a recommendation about whether to conduct a full-scale launch of a new high-speed Internet access service. In the class session, groups of six participants are asked to conduct team meetings to arrive at a consensus about the launch decision--drawing from the information contained in the shared case and from privately held information contained in individual role sheets provided separately to each member. Although different team members hold very different perspectives about the launch, teams can arrive at thoughtful recommendations by working together to share their knowledge.’ – *Harvard Business School Press*

3.3. The participants

To study the dynamics of cross-functional team decision making, we engage a total of thirty-six (36) subjects split into six (6) groups of six (6) members each. The overall study sample comprised of 55% male and 45% female, all working professionals and executives with average professional working experience of 10 years, from public and private sector organizations. In addition to the base case, each team member received a separate role sheet describing the role they were to play in their respective teams. To facilitate an in-depth

understanding of their roles participants with the same characters were asked to discuss the role among themselves to help them get into the parts. When they were ready, each team of 6 was led into separate syndicate rooms where the meeting was to be held. Each participant was also required to put a name/role tag in front of them for easy identification by their team members and the observer that was assigned to each team.

Five of the six groups had the same task, while the last group served as a control group. There were no roles assigned to the sixth group; they were merely given the base case and asked to make a recommendation to the CEO of the organization as best they could. They were asked to return to the classroom within 45 minutes.

3.4. Data collection procedures

Each team of six executives was assigned an observer who took notes on their team's interactions to the point when they made a decision or the time allotted for the meeting was up. The observers were briefed on the purpose of the simulation and were instructed not to make any comments throughout the process. Specifically, the observers were expected to make notes on 1. Whether their team was clear on the task at hand; 2. What (if any) specific procedures they use to address the problem; 3. Group behavior and participation pattern; 4. The energy/enthusiasm level of the group; 5. The participation level and dynamics of the team. 6. Whether the team reached a decision and how (consensus, bulldozing, voting, bargaining, or other).

4. Results

In the following section, we report the findings from the decision sessions across the groups below, first in a summary table and in more detail after that:

The table above shows a summary of the findings of the cross-functional teams' decision-making sessions involving six groups on the designated task of whether to launch a product or not. We discuss the findings in detail according to their groups:

Group 1:

The group leader began the deliberations by explaining the task at hand, so the task appeared clear to the group. In the beginning, the group leader directed the conversation by asking for the opinions of each team

Table 1.

Decision-making processes	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5	Group 6 (control)
Clarity of group task	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes (eventually)
Group behavior and participation pattern	Free participation, various perspectives were aired	Open minded and strong voices	High participation, differing views, constant interruption, dominant members	Low cohesiveness, dissenting voices, dominant member control	Poor group coordination, robust discussions, dominant member imposition	Open participation, mutual trust, knowledge sharing, leadership discovery
Leadership in the group	Weak leadership	Strong leadership	Laissez-faire leadership	Weak leadership	Democratic leadership	Leader Emergence
How decision was reached	Voting	Consensus	Bullying	Voting	Voting	Consensus
Satisfaction about the decision	Low satisfaction	High satisfaction	Low satisfaction	Low satisfaction	Low satisfaction	High satisfaction

member and coordinated the deliberations. While the group demonstrated considerable enthusiasm and energy during the deliberations, there was cautious optimism in the group about the decision to launch the product immediately. Initially, team members didn't quite disagree with the team leader. They responded to his 'body language' with low participation. However, at a point, the members began to participate freely almost tending towards 'analysis paralysis.' They expressed many different perspectives on the pros and cons of each decision alternative, ostensibly because of their various areas of functional expertise. In the end, the leader could not quite channel the discussions towards a consensus decision, and the session ended with a call for a vote. , and it appeared that those who were the minority were not satisfied with the final decision at the end, which was to launch the product.

Group 2:

The group took the time to understand the task. A detailed analysis was carried out by group members. The members were open-minded albeit with some dissenting voices. There was trust in the group leader who

displayed a courageous persona in leading the task. There appeared to be a high level of consensus in the decision-making process, with a good level of interest and a pretty much smooth decision-making process. However, there was a flash of dominance by a particular group member who wanted to be in control and be always heard, but the leader managed to direct the proceedings. In the end, the decision was taken to launch the product in a consensus manner, and the members appeared satisfied with the decision.

Group 3:

The group task was clear. At the initial stage, there was a mutual understanding in the group and adequate consistency in the participation level, as members seemed to defer in opinion from the team leader. However, after each member expressed their preference, the conversation heated up, members constantly interrupted one another, and they stopped listening to each other. The leader 'withdrew' in the face of the heated discussions, and an informal leader emerged as some members became adamant about their positions; this went overboard at some point and affected

the team spirit. The leader was not assertive, and a few dominant members of the team decided to delay the product launch, by bullying the other members, leading to low satisfaction with the decision by other group members.

Group 4:

The task was unclear in the beginning as the leader did not sufficiently articulate it to group members. It became clear much later as some members of the group began to explain. The team leadership appeared weak, and a dominant member capitalized on the lack of direction and guidance in the team to influence the discussion. In the process, there were dissenting voices, and the cohesiveness of the group was low. The decision was put to the vote. Based on the voting, a decision was taken to launch the service, but the satisfaction level was low amongst other team members as the decision makers ignored their concerns.

Group 5:

The group found it difficult to establish the task initially, lead to confusion and lack of coordination in addressing the problem. The group leader demonstrated a democratic leadership style. The discussion in the group became robust, but the 'body language' of the group leader hindered decision making. Put in another way, the team leader was not decisive, appearing over democratic, and providing no clear direction on many occasions. During the decision-making process, a group member took advantage of the democratic nature of the group leader to impose his views on the group. In the end, there was no consensus, and members had to vote, deciding to launch the product. As may be expected, those not in favor of the decision were not satisfied as they resigned to the decision of the majority.

Group 6:

This group was a control group for leadership emergence. In this group, there were no defined roles and no leader assigned. The group members began by trying to understand the task. During the deliberations, a leader emerged because of the need to guide the discussions and provide direction for other members. There was mutual trust between members and high interest in solving the problem. The team members

did not hold back their participation. As deliberations became more intense, another group leader emerged, apparently as a result of his superior knowledge and information on the technical issues around the industry. The second leader proved his mettle in establishing industry trends and galvanizing opinions towards a well-informed decision. Other members trusted the experience and knowledge of the new leader. The group came to a consensus on the strength of the information and analyses provided by the new leader. Members were happy with the decision to delay the launch of the product until there was more information available.

5. Discussions

One of the findings that stood out in this simulation is the role of leaders in facilitating the decision-making process. We saw that leadership effectiveness was not a function of the position, as much as style and competence of the leader. It was also evident that a leader will often *emerge* when there was a task to be accomplished not so much to control as to guide the decision-making process. Hence where leaders with formal authority do not step up to their role, others with influence (or informal authority) will, otherwise as we observed in the study, other team members will capitalize on the leader's weakness to dominate the discussions, leading to a slower decision-making process and possible bullying. It is possible that those teams without effective leadership eventually decided because the researcher timed simulation and told the teams they had to reach a decision within the stipulated time. Research supports our position that individuals who are willing to take up responsibility in decision-making processes often emerge as leaders (see Ertac & Gurdal, 2012). The finding of our study on leaders' role in facilitating group decision making aligns with the literature on leaders' authority in group decision making. Verbeek (2017) research supports the position of having a persistent leader, such that the leadership style in decision making can be responsible for the poor performance of a group, especially in crisis situations. Previous research also established that the steadfastness and consistency of leaders' behavior, and their ability to channel group members to make informed choices on novel strategies to solving organizational problems in the face of

pressures, is important for business success and sustainability (Smith, 2014; Smith, Binns, & Tushman, 2010). In leadership emergence, dominant personalities as group members have also emerged as leaders where the team leader shows laissez-faire or passive leadership. From our study, members with dominant personalities capitalized on the leaders' passiveness or lack of decisiveness to 'control' the decision-making process. Peng, Xiao, Yang, Wu and Miao (2014) research supports our finding that dominant personalities in groups eventually control decision debates and sway the decisions in some ways through their strong opinions, information use, and vocal dispositions.

From our findings, one of the factors that contributed to conflict in the teams was the fact that the role sheets given to each team member contained information about the personal and departmental interests of that team member, which was supposed to influence their contribution to the discussions. For example, the VP, Finance had his bonus tied to the launch of the service, so he was naturally predisposed to it. The HR Director, on the other hand, was worried that he would not be able to hire and train staff for it in good time and was expected to be against the launch. However, where the leader encouraged open communication and was able to extract the relevant information from the team members through structured questioning, other team members conceded some of their preferences to arrive at a consensus decision that worked for everyone. However, when the interests of the members are mostly undisclosed, it hinders the decision-making process. The literature supports our findings that the personal interest of team members tend to interfere with the overall interest of the group in decision making. Liu and Wei (2000) found that personal interest and emotional factors becloud the judgment of decision makers especially in complex decisions, hence the need for the analytical hierarchical process (AHP) to quantify and rank decisions in areas such as project evaluation, risk assessment, and performance evaluation, to reduce the self-serving interest of decision makers. Yan, Liu, and Skitmore (2018) research also supports our findings on how personal interest impair sound judgment in group decision making by positing that organizations must be aware of the conflict between company interest and personal interest of members in factors affecting

group bidding decision for construction projects and take steps to mitigate such conflict of interest through collaboration and learning orientation.

Team cooperation is a fundamental ingredient in cross-functional decision making. From our findings, we observe that a team with a high level of collaboration for the decision-making task had quality debates, free flow of information, coordination and faster decision making. This finding implies that team cooperation promotes considerable team consensus, focus on the core of the decision tasks and effective decision making. This finding is consistent with previous research by De Jong, Dirks, and Gillespie (2016) that team cooperation and teamwork interaction plays a vital role in the accomplishment of teams, pointing that intra-team trust and team coherence facilitates team interaction, effective communication, and decision making. Pinto et al. (1993) also established that interpersonal relationship and personalities of group members are antecedents of cross-functional team cooperation. Similarly, Alper et al. (1998) research are consistent with our findings on team cooperation for quality debates and faster decision making that controversy in group decision making is curbed by team cooperation, and well-coordinated team management, leading to faster decisions regarding their internet affairs and set tasks. Thus, we suggest that the leader of cross-functional teams should continuously ensure that the integration mechanism of the team is active, to harmonize the divergent orientations and opinions of team members to achieve cohesion of ideas and thoughts, towards smooth decision-making process and optimal decision for the group.

6. Limitation of the study and conclusion

The findings of this study are observations from a decision-making simulation conducted under classroom conditions during an executive education programme at the Lagos Business School and should be interpreted in that light. The use of proxy team members for executive positions in the simulation is a limitation to the extent of generalization of the dynamics of decision making in cross-functional teams. As research on decision making in cross-functional teams continue, our understanding of how leadership defines the willingness of team members to let go of

self-interest in favor of the organization's interest will be illuminated.

In conclusion, we believe that perhaps the single most crucial factor to the effectiveness of the decision-making process in cross-functional teams is leadership, and our study offers essential insight into the role of the leader in that respect.

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