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Research paper

Evaluating critical success factors and level of challenges in project life cycle (PLC)

Sallaudin Hassan* Natasha Farhana, Siti Aishah, Siti Mahirah, Khairul Firdaus Jimisiah. J

Universiti Kuala Lumpur Malaysia Institute of Industrial Technology (MITEC), Persiaran Sinaran Ilmu, Bandar Seri Alam, 81750 Johor Bahru Johor.
**Corresponding author E-mail: sallaudin@unikl.edu.my*

Abstract

This research aims to evaluate the Critical Success Factors (CSF) of project management and to assess the level of challenges at each steps in Project Life Cycle (PLC). Five Independent Variable (IV) is been selected as Critical Success Factors which is Leadership, Effective Communication, Teamwork, Organization and Project Nature. There are four main stage in project which is Defining, Planning, Executing and Closure. The scope of this research is on projects/events conducted under Student Development and Campus Life Style (SDCL). Five projects has been selected for assessment in this research. Survey questionnaire is been used as primary data collection. LIKERT Scale is been used to rank the answer from respondents. 50 respondents are involve in this research. Data is analyzed by using SPSS version 21. Result shows that the most critical success factors in project is Team Work while the least Critical Success Factor is Leadership. Meanwhile, the most challenges stage in project management is Executing, while the least challenges stage is Defining. The finding in this research is considered important discovery. More efforts should be focus on identified Critical Success Factor and the most challenges stage in Project Life Cycle. It is suggested that the scope of study to be extended to other universities or industries in future research.

Keywords: *Project Management; Critical Success Factors; Project Life Cycle.*

1. Introduction

Management is all about how we manage the organization to achieve the goals. Management occur, as the important element in order to perform well in any kind of job perception. Management represent the tool skills and knowledge in order to produce something. It is where the center of any description, information and knowledge on how to overcome something and how to achieve it successfully. Same goes to project management. Project management is the application of knowledge, skills, tools and technique to project activities to meet project requirement [1] Making successful project and to achieve our objective is hard if do not have any effective planning on the project. So, to ensure the success of a company or an organization we need to determine the important factors of the successful project. The committee must to the best to manage the project from start until the project is considered as success. A practice with implicit learning because of complex projects is the governance challenge of knowledge management under an uncertainty. Project success is often being a major title to be studied in discussing about project management [2] The Critical Success Factors covers Leadership, Effective Communication, Team work, Organizational and Project Nature. Leadership can be defined as a style of behavior designed to integrate both the organizational requirements and personal interests in the pursuit of some objectives. Managers have a leadership responsibility. Project managers are often selected or not selected because of their leadership styles [3].Effective leadership is crucial in temporary organizations, especially seeing as project members are often less committed than in permanent organizational settings [4]. Good communication and strong leadership go hand in hand. Project managers succeed by producing projects on time and within budget as well as effectively managing the interaction and communication between people and organizations. Next is effective communication. This is where all the subordinate of the project or event can communicate without problem and the works can be done clearly. Communication is very important as if one member gives the wrong instruction, overall of the event can be disturb. In addition, building team members from a different and various backgrounds might be difficult to work as a team at the first time. Communication in multicultural teams stimulated the formation of an emergent tem culture [5]. Project manager needs to establish cooperative relationships with the project team members ensure a good climate for communication, identify participants for the project to ensure commitment and adopt an appropriate leadership style [6]. Projects lacking effective main management support cannot deliver the expected business benefits to an organization. Institutional arrangements and systems are needed to facilitate interfaces between executive management and project teams. Such arrangements will enhance the value created for the organization by ensuring the strategic alignment of its projects, decentralization of decision-making powers, rapid resource allocation and participation of external stakeholders [7] Project nature involves the description and objective of the project including the theme, the schedule and type of the project. Understanding customers and their needs is important. It is very important to understand our target of customer, who is referring to the audience of event in project [8].

Project Life Cycle (PLC) is another way of illustrating unique nature of work. Some project managers find it is useful to use PLC as the cornerstone for managing projects. PLC typically passes

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sequentially through four stages: Defining, Planning, Executing and Closure [9].

To have further understanding, this research establish two objective which is to evaluate the critical success factors of CSR project and assessing the challenges at each of PLC stages and its components.

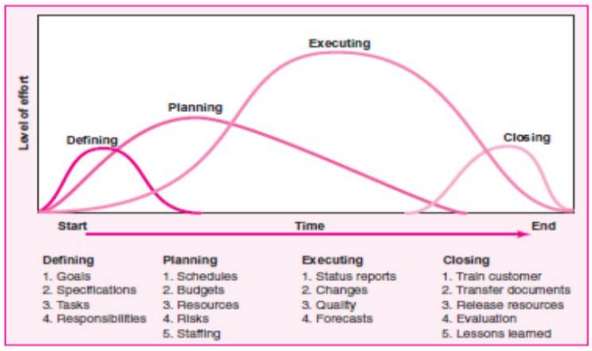


Fig 1: Project Life Cycle (PLC)

2. Main Results

Five critical success factors have been selected based on the literature review which is Leadership, Communication, Team work, Organizational and Project Nature. Table 1 show the mean analysis result of the survey.

Table 1: Critical Success factors of Projects

No	Critical Success Factors	Mean
1	Team work	4.12
2	Communication	3.24
3	Organizational	3.20
4	Project Nature	3.12
5	Leadership	2.88

Mean analysis result shows that the most critical success factors in CSR project is Leadership. This is followed by Communication, Organizational, Team Work and Leadership. The next analysis is to assess the challenges at each stages of PLC is varies. This student extended the analysis to each component of PLC stages. Table 2 shows that level of challenges at four stage of PLC.

Table 2: Challenges at PLC stages.

No	Challenges at PLC stages	Mean
1	Defining	2.82
2	Planning	3.06
3	Executing	4.04
4	Closure	3.34

This studies extended the analysis to each component of PLC stages. The results is as per table 3. There are 4 components for defining, 5 for Planning, 3 for Executing and 4 for closure.

Table 3: Challenges level at each component in PLC stages.

Stages	Components	Mean
Defining	Goals	2.7
	Specification	3.12
	Tasks	3.34
	Responsibility	3.2
Planning	Schedule	3.24
	Budget	3.4
	Resources	3.16
	Risks	3.24
	Staffing	3.2
Executing	Status report	3.6
	Changes	3.76
	Quality	4.08
Closure	Forecast	3.76
	Train Customer	3.3
	Transfer Document	3.34
	Released Resources	3.42
	Evaluation	3.32
	Lesson Learn	3.2

Based on the result, the most challenges component in PLC is to ensure the Quality (4.08). This is followed by Forecast (3.76) and managing changes (3.76) in the project.

3. Conclusion

Team work is important to ensure the successful of the project. The Executing is consider as the longest stages in a project. This is where the project deliver follow the customer requirement or expectation. Maintaining quality of projects requires integration from all functions. This research can be extended to other category of project such as manufacturing, construction and services.

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