



ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

**ASSESSING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PROJECT
MANAGEMENT PRACTICE IN NGO PROJECTS: IN
THE CASE OF ETHIOPIA READS**

BY

YEMISRACH WORKU TESHOME

JUNE, 2018

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**ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY, SCHOOL OF
GRADUATE STUDIES, FACULTY OF BUSINESS**

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ACRONYMS/ ABBREVIATIONS

CHSA: Charities and Societies Agency

EBCEF: Ethiopian Books for Children and Educational Foundation

ER: Ethiopia Reads

GO: Government Organization

HR: Human Resource

NGO: Non-Governmental Organization

PM: Project Management

PMBOK: Project Management Body of Knowledge

PMI: Project Management Institute

PMKA: Project Management Knowledge Areas

USAID: United States Agency for International Development

WBS: Work Breakdown Structure

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ABSTRACT

Project management is the way of managing change by designing activities that meet specific objectives by involving stakeholders and teamwork to achieve successful implementation. Project management generally accepted knowledge and practices are presented by the nine project management knowledge areas in terms of specific processes. The purpose of this research is to assess the effectiveness of project management practice in NGO projects in the case of Ethiopia Reads. Qualitative research design was employed and data was collected from 20 employees of the organization who are fully engaged in project work through purposive sampling and an in-depth interview questions were used to collect relevant data. The demographic data showed that the participants were between the age of 25 – 41 and they all have work experience of 3 years and above. The respondents are currently working as program managers, project finance officers, project officers, social workers and facilitators. The result showed that the participants have some level of awareness about the project management knowledge areas. Even though they hadn't been provided with formal project management training, they were practicing the knowledge areas without even recognizing and they have been managing projects applying these knowledge areas. And the result also suggests that quality, time, scope, cost and communication management from the knowledge areas were effective in realizing project success. To conclude, limited skills and knowledge of project management knowledge areas are being practiced in the NGO and therefore, there's a need to build the capacity of project teams through proper training to acquire and develop the knowledge and skills needed to achieve a better project and project management success in the organization.

KEY WORDS: Project Management, effectiveness, project management knowledge areas, NGOs

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

There are many Non-Governmental Organizations /NGOs/actively working in Ethiopia and their abilities to fulfill society needs mainly depends on project-based funding. However, while the livelihoods of many people depend on NGOs' ability to deliver project results effectively and efficiently, project management is rarely identified as strategic priority for these organizations (PM4NGOs, 2013).

Development projects especially those financed with international development aid play a vital role in the socioeconomic development process of developing countries. Most international assistance provided by government and NGOs to developing countries is provided via projects (Diallo & Thuillier, 2004).

According to Turner and Hulme (1997), NGOs are generally registered organizations, community groups, professional associations, trade unions, cooperate charity organizations whose aim is to improve the wellbeing of their members and of those areas in which they exists. NGOs operate both in the rural and urban areas where there is a need to meet according to their objectives to attain. But in most cases NGOs tend to focus on poorer communities that have that have focused problems even to meet their basic needs and often who were located in hardly accessible areas such areas usually characterized by limited existence, absence, or ineffective of government programs. In addition to the aforementioned facts, NGOs have strongly grassroots link that contribute to incorporate and integrate local inputs in to their efforts. In some cases there is a possibility of NGOs themselves to be a part of that community in which they operate (Sintayehu, 2016).

Ethiopia is the second most populous country in sub Saharan countries that receives a significant amount of aid from donors including United States, United Kingdom, World Bank, European Union and United States Aid for International Development (USAID, 2014). The operations of NGOs in Ethiopia and other countries are hindered by many factors which have implications on the NGO's autonomy. For instance, the operational environment of NGOs determines the effectiveness of programs and projects undertaken by those NGOs. There are both external and internal environments that impinge on NGOs' performance and output. Operational environment factors are: Economic, Donors, Political, Social, State departments, Beneficiaries, Law and Founders. For example the donors, the founders and the beneficiaries influences and drives the NGOs' operations (Muiruri, 2006).

Projects are the driving force for many organizations in most industries. Projects can be looked upon as the change efforts of society, and the pace of change has been increasing. Therefore, effectively and efficiently managing change efforts is the only way organizations can survive and grow in this modern world. Project management is the way of managing change by describing activities that meet specific objectives by involving stakeholders and teamwork to achieve successful implementation (AMA, 2011).

Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK) published by the Project Management Institute (PMI) represents the knowledge and practice that is generally accepted and unique or nearly unique to the field of project management. The PMBOK identifies nine project management knowledge areas which describe knowledge and practice in terms of its specific processes (Duncan, 1996).

According to Duncan (1996), the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK) is "an inclusive term that describes the collective (accumulated) knowledge within the profession of project management". The full PMBOK includes knowledge of proven traditional practices that are widely applied, as well as knowledge of innovative and advanced practices which have seen more limited use. The primary purpose of the PMBOK is to identify and describe the project

management practices that are generally accepted. Generally accepted means that the knowledge and practices described are applicable to most projects most of the time and that there is widespread consensus about their value and usefulness.

NGOs in Ethiopia start operation after receiving license from the Ethiopian Charity and Societies Association (CHSA) based on an agreement signed between the donor, implementing agency, and project implementing region, ministry office, etc. And they report by underling how the planned activity and budget were spent and challenges and progress, periodically and annually submit an audited report by independent auditors within 90 days of end of financial year. In line with above, Ethiopia Reads is one of the NGOs working in Ethiopia by signing agreement with CHSA and concerned government bureaus in ministry and regional levels, as well as different partners stakeholder and Donors (Ethiopia Reads, 2015)

Ethiopia Reads/Ethiopian Books for Children and Educational Foundation /ER/EBCEF/ works to improve literacy and create a culture of reading in Ethiopia, in order to bring hope, vision and educational skills to this generation of Ethiopian Children. ER/EBCEF holds the view that children have the right to read and learn. Having this as a philosophy and background, it was founded in United States of America on 1998 and registered to work in Ethiopia by Ministry of Justice on 2002. It re-registered again by the Federal Charities and Societies Agency on 2010. The Mission of Ethiopia Reads /ER/EBCEF as a Foreign Charity registered to work in Ethiopia is to create a reading culture in Ethiopia by connecting with Books, planting libraries for children, creating culturally appropriate reading materials and training educators to nurture a love of books. ER has met the needs of many children in a variety of unique ways. The organization has established the first free public library for children, Gebeta Children's Library in Addis Ababa and Public Library for Children & youth in Hawassa town and ER's unique horse-powered literacy program in the rural area of Ethiopia that have never had access to them before, reaching their villages by horses. ER also has established above 65 libraries in schools all over the country. Ethiopia Reads/EBCEF provides each partner school with furniture, books and educational materials as well as training in literacy and librarianship. Through trainings in library

skills and literacy and providing long-term support for the libraries and those who work in them; Ethiopia Reads capacitate teachers and caregivers to nurture the children's love for reading. Ethiopia Reads/EBCEF objectives are to establish and strengthen libraries for children at government schools and for the use of communities in urban and remote areas of Ethiopia through providing access to library programs for all children who wish to experience a library and the joy of reading, create and furnish materials that will facilitate learning and literacy, publish children's books in local languages, donating Imported books to different Schools and community libraries and train librarians and teachers to nurture a love for reading and books and increase the level of literacy training offered to library workers and teachers, Operate a peaceful, inviting, well-equipped, functional physical space in which children can read, learn and think and Create a welcoming environment for boys and girls of every age. ER/EBCEF shares the vision that all children in Ethiopia should have the opportunity to grow up physically and emotionally; have a strong sense and self-esteem. Even though there are different factors lacks in literacy, Ethiopia Reads believes that unavailability of standard school library or unavailability of children reading center (Children public library) in the area where children are living, unavailability of quality children's books and reading culture among the community have contributed significantly to these problems. By applying its library and literacy development strategic program Ethiopia Reads plans to strengthen the established libraries by ER and probably new libraries, give training on basic library, management and literacy development for school librarian and language teachers. Ethiopia Reads is working in commitment to change the lives of many through reading and education, supporting facilitators and teachers in their profession and achieving their goals. ER creates positive reading and learning environments through Rural Library and Literacy Development Project for thousands of children through the country (Ethiopia Reads, 2016).

The purpose of this study is to assess the effectiveness of project management practices in NGO projects specifically at Ethiopia Reads. In this study, the researcher used qualitative data collection approach to study the Project Management practices used among the employees engaged in projects at this specific NGO.

1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Projects, whether it's a government project or NGO project, usually encounter many problems in developing countries in general and in Ethiopia in particular. Since projects are mostly initiated to increase organizational capabilities, meeting new demands, realizing new opportunities or to overcome the challenges faced due to very frequent change of organization's environment then it is more likely that problems could occur during execution of the project (Hailu, 2016).

According to Payne & Turner (1999), project management practices vary significantly from one type of product to another. In fact, different tools, techniques and approaches are applied to different types of projects even within the organization, in order to adapt the project management methods to the specific needs of each project.

And Salva (2008), also explain that large business initiatives needs effective program management practices for enhancing the predictability of outcomes. Program management helps in keeping the focus towards the objective and can be managed by various processes.

Additionally, according to Roba (2016), effective project management practices can improve strategic plan performance, the product feature and productivity by bringing together and optimizing the resources of cooperative effort of human talent, existing facility, information system and money and other opportunity necessary for the industry.

Furthermore, Smith (2002), states that in order to assess the effectiveness of project management practices, it's important to benchmark project management practices against generally accepted best practices and identify areas that may need development in order to enhance the effectiveness of project management and he further explained success of project is strongly influenced by its planning.

The above mentioned articles show that the effective project management practice is very critical in organizations. And it is important to study project management practices in the context of developing countries to better understand and to be able to manage projects successfully in developing countries. Unfortunately, adequate research had not been done in evaluating effectiveness of project management practices and trends to improve the success rate of projects in NGOs that exist in Ethiopia. Assessing the effectiveness of project management practices in NGO projects is mandatory in identifying and understanding which project management practice contributes highly to project success then, it will give a lesson to be drawn by other projects since this topic is less studied and literatures are very insufficient.

As result, this study critically assessed the effectiveness of project management practices in NGOs in the case of Ethiopia Reads which is based in Addis Ababa but also has other project sites in different regions of the country.

1.3. RESEARCH QUESTION

The research question that this study answers is, “What is the existing practice of project management for its projects at Ethiopia Reads”.

The study also addressed the following specific research questions:

1. To what extent project management is being practiced at Ethiopia Reads?
2. What are the challenges of project management practices at Ethiopia Reads?

1.4. OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

1.4.1. General Objectives

The general objective of this research paper is to assess the effectiveness of existing project management practices in NGOs particularly in the case of Ethiopia Reads.

1.4.2. Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To assess the extent of project management practices at Ethiopia Reads
2. To identify the challenges of project management practices faced at Ethiopia Reads.
3. To come up with a recommendation on effective project management practices in NGO projects that can contribute to a better project success

1.5. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

The importance of this research is to demonstrate the contribution of understanding the effectiveness of project management practices in NGOs to improve the success of projects in achieving its goals as well as the organization's within the planned time, budget and quality or performance effectively. Through this assessment, analysis and recommendations of the existing practice of project management in the NGO, other organizations might learn and assess their own trends on project management practices for their projects to achieve their objectives effectively. This study shall also be a useful input for further research on the area of effective project management practices in NGOs as well as in other sectors.

1.6. SCOPE OF THE RESEARCH

The intended research area is the NGO sector which is based in Addis Ababa but have different project sites in different regions as well. The particular NGO that this study focused on is called Ethiopia Reads/EBCEF/.

The concept scope of this paper is on the assessment of the effectiveness of project management practices in NGO projects particularly at Ethiopia Reads.

1.7. LIMITATION OF THE RESEARCH

The credibility of this research may be influenced by the data type collected from the primary data source in which all possible limitation can be encountered in all research area. Lack of prior

research studies on the topic was the main limitation to cite literature review and help the study to lay a foundation for understanding the research problems that the researcher wants to explore.

Due to the time limitation, some project management practices concept that would help understand the trend in the organization were not covered for instance project activities maturity level and the practice of project management office which have significant value for project performance improvement, and only focused on the project management knowledge areas that were actually practiced in the organization. Since this study focused on the case of one NGO, the result of the study may not be generalized but it can contribute as an input for further reaches.

1.8. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Project: A temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product or service. It is often organized under the direction of Project Manager, who will ensure that the project achieves its objectives.

Project Management: The application of knowledge, skills, tools and techniques to project activities to meet the project requirements

Effectiveness: A measure of the quality of attainment in meeting objectives.

Best Practices: A strategy, approach, method, tool or a technique that is particularly effective in helping an organization achieve its objectives for managing a project

Non-Governmental Organization /NGO/: is a legally constituted organization created by natural or legal persons that operates independently from any government.

Work Breakdown Structure /WBS/: a decomposition of all the work necessary to complete a project.

1.9 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

This study is organized into five chapters. The First Chapter deals with introduction that includes background of the study, statement of problem, research questions, general objective, specific objective, significance of the study, scope of the study, limitations of the study and definition of terms used in the study. The Second Chapter presents related literature reviews that provide the theoretical and empirical reviews. The Third Chapter deals with materials and methods of the study. The Fourth Chapter deals with data presentation, analysis and interpretation. Lastly, the Fifth Chapter presents the study summary, conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. THEORETICAL REVIEW

A project is a temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product, service, or result. The temporary nature of projects indicates that a project has a definite beginning and end. The end is reached when the project's objectives have been achieved or when the project is terminated because its objectives will not or cannot be met, or when the need for the project no longer exists. Temporary does not necessarily mean the duration of the project is short. It refers to the project's engagement and its longevity. Projects can also have social, economic, and environmental impacts that far outlive the projects themselves (PMI, 2013). The uniqueness with a project means that the provided service or product is different from all other services and products. Many organizations use projects to respond to requests that cannot be handled within the normal organizational limits (PMI, 2008). Projects arise out of unmet needs. Those needs might be to find a solution to a critical business problem that has evaded any prior attempts at finding a solution. Or those needs might be to take advantage of an untapped business opportunity (Robert K. Wysock, 2014).

A project has a beginning, a middle, and an end (Schachter, 2004); it is a sequence of unique, complex, and connected activities having one goal that must be completed by a specific time (Watson, 2009; Wysocki, 2007); it is a temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product or service (PMI, 2004); and it is an endeavor to accomplish a specific objective through a unique set of interrelated tasks and the effective utilization of resources (Gido & Clements, 2006). Project resources in this context could be in form of financial support, human resources, machinery, and computer software.

There are a number of different project types that all have slightly different characteristics. In general these project types can be divided into two categories; external and internal projects. In

an external project the customer, or project sponsor, is outside the organization. These projects are often called delivery projects and starts with the signing of legally binding agreement. The agreement is drawn up between the customer and the supplier and it contains specific definitions of what work the project includes (Antvik & Sjöholm, 2007). To terminate or delay an external project the sponsor must be involved and financial compensation can be necessary if the agreement have been breached by either party. Internal projects have a customer within the organization and starts with a decision from the own organization (Walker, 2007). Internal projects often consists of development or change in work methods. These projects often have milestones or decision points where the project is evaluated, and the organization decides whether it will continue or be terminated (Antvik & Sjöholm, 2007).

Project management is the application of knowledge, skills, tools and techniques to project activities to meet project requirements (PMI, 2004). Project management is naturally carried out in different ways depending on which context the project is situated in. This aspect is very important to be aware of when work methods and structures between different countries, in different contexts, are compared (Friedman, Dyke, & Murphy, 2009). This difference, however, also suggests that there can be a great potential for improvements by comparing the methods of project management in different contexts. As many companies expand their business to the international arena, issues concerning culture and different conditions must be taken into account. Although multinational companies face many problems, they also have a great opportunity to develop their work methods by learning from other cultures with different approaches (Friedman, Dyke, & Murphy, 2009).

Project management is the application of knowledge, skills, tools and techniques to project activities to meet project requirements. It involves five process groups namely: Project initiation, planning, execution, monitoring and controlling and Project closure (PMI, 2008). It is a relatively new concept and new approach to managing projects and program. To get efficient feedback from drawn experience, the work in each phase should be evaluated as the project goes into the next phase. In the closing down phase it is important that the work and result of the

project as a total, is thoroughly evaluated and documented in order to benefit future projects (Tonnquist, 2007).

Van der Waladt and Knipe (1998) have the opinion that project management is a set of principles, methods, tools and techniques for the effective management of objective-oriented work in the context of a specific and unique organizational environment. Verma (1995) states that project management is the art of directing and co-coordinating human and material requirements throughout the life of a project to achieve project objectives within specified constraints.

Projects vary in terms of purpose, objectives, time of delivery, location, cost, and customers. However, effective project management demands that every project have a well-defined objective; a customer to pay for the services, as accomplished by a series of interdependent tasks (Gido & Clements, 2006); and inherent levels of risks and uncertainty (Söderholm, 2008). The management of these interdependent tasks that demands supervision of the tasks necessary to complete project objectives is termed project management (Phillips, 2004). Project management is a specialized field within the area of management (Besner & Hobbs, 2008) and incorporates general management functions of planning, organizing, directing, and controlling of company resources for a relatively short-term objective that has been established to complete specific goals and objectives (Kerzner, 2006).

Project management is the work methods that are used to control and manage activities in a project. Project management involves the application of knowledge, skills, tools and techniques in project activities to meet the project objectives. All management work is based on processes as: initiating, planning, executing, controlling and closing (PMBOK, 2004). The project manager is an important role in the project team. A project manager needs to have the right skills and personal attributes, and most importantly the skill to be an effective leader, to carry out the role (Antvik & Sjöholm, 2007). The main task for a project manager is to integrate all activities and personnel in the project. As the integrator it is not necessary that the project manager have

expertise within all areas, more important is the ability to bring out the other team members abilities and make them work together as a team (Briner, Hastings, & Geddes, 1996).

An important part of the project management is to manage the stakeholders in the project. A stakeholder can be an organization or a person with a will to influence the outcome of a project and the power to make an impact on the project (PMI, 2004). Stakeholder analysis should be carried out in an early phase of the project, where stakeholders are identified and classified into key, primary or secondary stakeholders. The classification is based on their potential motivation and power to influence the outcome of the project (Antvik & Sjöholm, 2007). To develop an accurate and effective stakeholder analysis it is important that all stakeholders are included and that measures are taken to limit the potential negative impacts that are identified (Antvik & Sjöholm, 2007). It is important to identify new stakeholders and address their needs continuously throughout the project. Continuous stakeholder analysis also facilitates the management of previous identified stakeholders as their needs and expectations may change over time (Antvik & Sjöholm, 2007).

Many organizations use a project management system to establish consistent methods in their work. An integrated project management system also facilitates the establishment of a certain level of professionalism in an organization. All areas and aspects of project management are included in the developed systems. There are several different established systems on the market; two of the most used are International Project Management Association (IPMA) and Project Management Institute (PMI), (Antvik & Sjöholm, 2007). These systems are developed as handbooks including management activities that should be conducted in a project, which can be used as a guide for the project management team in order to ensure that all required plans and activities in the project are handled (PMI, 2004).

Project management in its current form emanated from the atomic bomb development program by the US military at Los Alamos, in the 1940s. This was the first really complex, high-technology project operated by mankind. The level of complexity and large number of activities

involved created the requirement for new management and control practices if the project was to be completed on time and to the required standard (A.Robert, W.Wallace, 2004). In the 1950s, a conscious effort was made to devise specialized tools for managing the complex weapon systems being built for the Department of Defense in USA (Alan Stretton, 2007). During this time, the project network analysis and project planning techniques tools were devised. The major tools formed in the development of project management at that time which can be now widely used in all industries, both in public and private sectors as tools for project success evaluation (L. Crawford, J. Pollack, 2006).

Project management focuses on a project. Project management brings together and optimizes the resources necessary to successfully complete the project. These resources include the skills, talents, and cooperative efforts of a team of people; facilities, tools, and equipment; information, systems, and techniques; and money (Marion E. Haynes, 2002). Project management has relevance and applicability across most industries and it is unique in that it uses both international and industry-specific benchmarks. It has come a long way from its origins in engineering and construction. It is now used for a wide range of applications and is one of the most highly valued management tools. It is a highly professional branch of management which is used in all areas of industry, commerce and government (A. Roberts W.Wallace, 2004).

Now a day, the project management is rapidly becoming a standard way of doing business in organizations. It accomplishes a considerable portion of typical firm's effort through projects. Projects are becoming the tools of implementing the business strategy of an organization. It aims to contribute to organization strategic plan to be achieved successfully (ESI International, 2006).

According to Duncan (1996), the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK) is “an inclusive term that describes the collective (accumulated) knowledge within the profession of project management”. The full PMBOK includes knowledge of proven traditional practices that are widely applied, as well as knowledge of innovative and advanced practices which have seen more limited use. The primary purpose of the PMBOK is to identify and describe the project

management practices that are generally accepted. Generally accepted means that the knowledge and practices described are applicable to most projects most of the time and that there is widespread consensus about their value and usefulness.

PMI (2004), has defined nine categories of project management knowledge areas and these are project integration management, project scope management, project time management, project cost management, project quality management, project human resource management, project communication management, project risk management and project procurement management. The processes in these nine knowledge areas are depicted in the Figure below.

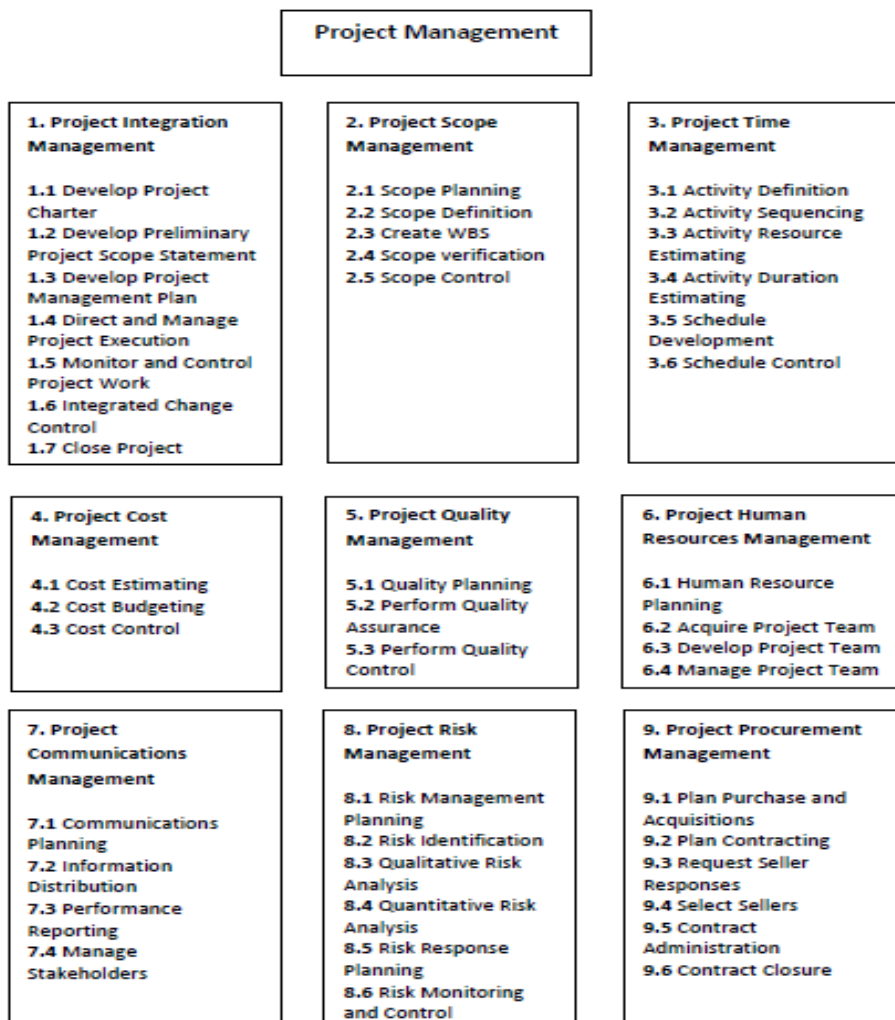


Figure1. Project Management Knowledge Areas (Source: PMI, 2013)

Duncan (1996) defines project Integration management as “the processes required to ensure that the various elements of the project are properly coordinated”. It involves making trade-offs among competing objectives and alternatives in order to meet or exceed stakeholder needs and expectations. The project integration management is the processes that are used to coordinate the various elements of the project. Prioritizing between competing objectives and alternatives are an important task in the integration management. It consists of develop project charter, develop preliminary project scope statement, develop project management plan, direct and manage project execution, monitor and control project work, integrated change control and close project (PMI, 2004).

Project scope management is the processes required to ensure that the project includes all the work required and only the work required, to complete the project successfully (Duncan, 1996). It is mainly concerned with defining and controlling what is or is not included in the project. It consists of five major processes; scope planning, scope definition, create WBS, scope verification and scope control (PMI, 2004). The importance of a well formulated scope of work has been shown several times in many projects. It is not unusual that a project is rushed into start without the proper planning and preparation. This often leads to problems for both suppliers and customers as extra costs and delays are likely to occur (Antvik & Sjöholm, 2007). A clear project scope facilitates for the project organization to realize the actual magnitude of the work and creates an understanding for the achievements that are required in the project (Briner, Hastings, & Geddes, 1996).

Project time management includes all processes that are required to ensure a timely completion of the project. Major processes in time management are activity definition, activity sequencing, activity resource estimating, activity duration estimating, schedule development and schedule control (PMI, 2004). The time schedule is one of the most important plans in a project. The development of time schedules should be based on the previously developed WBS. The level of work in planning, monitoring and controlling schedules in a project is often directly reflected in the execution and outcome of the project (Antvik & Sjöholm, 2007). An important consideration

is to ensure that the work to be done is described accurately and understood by those who must do the work.

Project cost management includes the processes of cost estimating, cost budgeting and cost control. The main objective of cost management is to complete the project within the approved budget (PMI, 2004). The project budget is very important and influences all areas in both planning and execution of a project. It is important to keep track of total costs as well as costs for different work packages in a project (Guo-li, 2010).

Project quality management is the processes required to ensure that the project will satisfy the needs for which it was undertaken. It includes all activities of the overall management function that determine the quality policy, objectives and responsibilities and implements them by means such as quality planning, quality control, quality assurance and quality improvement within the quality system (Duncan, 1996). The objective with quality control is to ensure that the quality plan is implemented in the execution of the project and that established standards are met. In order to perform quality control the project team must develop methods to monitor and control specific activities of the project (PMI, 2004). Project quality management must address both the management of the project and the product of the project. Failure to meet quality requirements in either dimension can have serious negative consequences for any or all of the project stakeholders. A critical aspect of quality management in the project context is the necessity to turn implied needs into stated needs through project scope management (Duncan, 1996).

Project human resources management is the processes used to ensure that the project organization is established in a way that provides the project with good conditions to succeed. Major processes in human resources management are human resource planning, acquire project team, develop project team and manage project team (PMI, 2004). Duncan (1996) defines project human resource management as “the processes required to make the most effective use of the people involved with the project”. It includes all the project stakeholders, that is, sponsors, customers and individual contributors.

Project communications management is the processes required to ensure timely and appropriate generation, collection, dissemination, storage and ultimate disposition of project information. It provides the critical links among people, ideas and information that are necessary for success (Duncan, 1996). It is the processes used to ensure that required information is distributed to the right person at the right time. The major processes in communications management are communications planning, information distribution, performance reporting and manage stakeholders (PMI, 2004).

The main objectives of project risk management is to increase the probability and impact of events that are positive to the project and decrease the probability and impact of events that are negative to the project. Risk management include risk management planning, risk identification, qualitative risk analysis, quantitative risk analysis, risk response planning and risk monitoring and control (PMI, 2004). All projects have uncertainties that can either turn out to be an opportunity or a risk. Uncertainties often occur in areas where the management has little information of the current conditions. By effective management many uncertainties can be evolved into an opportunity rather than a risk (Antvik & Sjöholm, 2007). Risk analysis is often carried out early in a project when the information is highly limited within several areas. To manage risks and opportunities effectively, the analysis must be iterated throughout the project as more and more information becomes clear to the management team (Kululanga & Kuotcha, 2010). The purpose of a risk analysis is to gain control of the uncertainties in the project. When risks are identified it is therefore important that a strategy is developed in order to response to the risk (PMI, 2004).

Project procurement management is the processes to control and administrate contracts and purchase orders from sources external to the project organization. The major processes in procurement management are plan purchases and acquisitions; plan contracting, request seller responses, select sellers, contract administration and contract closure (PMI, 2004). The planning of procurement management should be carried out early in the project and focus on analysis of

which products or services that need to be purchased. After the initial planning, a procurement plan should be developed that includes all major procurements that are needed in the project (PMI, 2004). The procurement plan is an important tool for efficient procurements throughout the project. It should be developed based on the project's WBS and time schedule in order to include all procurements and to be timely integrated in the project. The procurement plan includes budgeted cost and required finish date for each procurement (Eriksson & Westerberg, 2011).

Pinto (2007) asserted that there is an insatiable search for general standards of excellence against which firms can compare their practices, gain important tips for improvement, and continuously measure their outcomes. The search for effective practices in management clearly is an ongoing process. According to Kerzner (2006), best practice is defined as something that works, something that works well, something that works well on a repetitive basis; something that leads to a competitive advantage; something that can be identified in a personal to general business; something that keeps the company out of trouble and, if trouble occurs, the best practice that will assist in getting the company out of trouble.

Other project practitioners have described best practices as past experiences that have worked well for the project manager or are known to the project manager based on the experiences of others in similar situation (Wysocki, 2007); a specific type of professional or management activity that contributes to the execution of a process and that may employ one or more techniques and tools (PMI, 2004; Qureshi, Warraich, & Hijazi, 2009); the right way of doing things (Angelides, 1999); what makes the real work a success (Watson, 2009); and understanding the inherent uncertainties, complexities, and variables that predict project success (Shenhar et al., 2007). In all of these definitions, however, is the common assertion that project best practices enhance the effectiveness and efficiency that will ultimately lead to success (Morrison & Brown, 2004); improve project performance; and help project management professionals to select priorities for future development (Besner & Hobbs, 2006).

Effective project management can give a strong competitive advantage in project delivery, provide quality services, and reduce project costs. Excellence in effective project management can also guarantee measurable and tangible results based on scope, time, and cost, which are the cornerstone to project success (Kerzner, 2010).

Research studies have shown that project managers and project staff members must have both technical and people skills to make the project a success, (Loo, 2003; Barad & Raz, 2000). In most organizations project managers who normally come from technical backgrounds, learn project management skills either from experience, or by observing other PMs. The acquired knowledge obtained by PMs may be limited due to the lack of experience in managing diverse projects and hence they need formal PM training (Chemuturi, 2013).

While the term NGO is very widely used, definitions of what actually constitutes an NGO tend to vary. There are also frequent references to other similar terms such as ‘non-profit’, ‘voluntary’ and ‘civil society’ organizations to name just few. NGOs vary from in terms of structure that they may be large or small, formal or informal, bureaucratic or flexible. They can also be varied in terms of registration and status of organizations, funding source, staff type and motivation. Voluntary and even if it doesn’t use volunteer staff as such, there is at least some degree of voluntary.

Vakil (1997), stated that NGOs are ‘self-governing, private, not-for-profit organizations that are geared to improving the quality of life for disadvantaged people. This definition suggests the NGOs has the following key characteristics among others: it is formal, that is , the organization is institutionalized in that it has regular meetings, office bearers and some organizational performance; it is private in that it is institutionally separated from government, it is self-governing and therefore able to control and manage its own affairs; and finally it is participation in the conduct or management of the organization, such as in the form of a voluntary board of governors.

In the cooperation sector projects represent the tools to get resources (Crawford et al, 2005). They have been characterized for being useful tools and alternatives for bilateral intervention and are often essential to align actions. Some studies suggest that cooperation projects should have strict controls; and tools and techniques should be used to monitor the project progress and project management (Ika, Diallo, & Thuiller, 2010). Moreover, NGO projects have different basic requirements, such as; transform reality, solve problems and improve the situation of the beneficiaries; present clearly defined objectives, be addressed to a particular human group; be limited in time and space; provide resources and ensure their effects endure over time. For these reasons these interventions should seek the highest level of efficiency, and project management is such great contribution. Donors aim to improve the planning and preparation of projects as well as the monitoring and evaluation throughout the project life.

A project in this sector is a proposal of activities organized around a specific objective to perform in a certain period of time, in a defined geographical area, for a group of beneficiaries with the aim of solving specific problems or improving a situation. They are unique type and differ from others, sine their objectives are related to social goal “human development” (Crawford et al, 2005).

Studies in project management practices in NGO sector are scarce, even though many financial resources are used in these interventions (Crawford & Bryce, 2003). However, the small number of studies available have interesting contribution about the advantages of the discipline application in this sector. This is significant, since management in this type of projects has gathered unified criteria to design, evaluate, approve and plan proposals but still has weakness in implementation process, so methodologies would be perfect for implementation.

2.2. EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Effectiveness is centered on doing the right thing (Zheng, Yang, & McLean, 2010; Drucker, 1954), and doing the right thing in a project implies adopting innovative strategies (Kerzner,

2004; Olsson, 2006) that support the achievement of organizational goals and effective practices in the form of processes, standards, and technological tools that enhance product, service, or project delivery. Effectiveness also is how well the output of the process meets the input constraints of the internal stakeholders and how well the inputs from the providers meet the constraints of the process (Wysocki, 2007).

Other researchers in the management field have defined effectiveness as the degree of achievement of organizational goals (Belout, 1998; Elmes & Wilemon, 1988; Iversen & Ngwenyama, 2006); Westerman, McFarlan, & Iansiti, 2006; Willis, Guinote, & Bailon, 2010); the degree to which an organization achieves its purpose (Brausch, 2010; Fey & Denison, 2003); the capability of an institution to accomplish its task through a balance of sound management, change control, and a relentless rededication to achieving success (Hsiu-Fen, 2006; Parhizgari & Gilbert, 2004) and the pathway to achieving the purpose of the whole organization (Scholefield, 1968; Vloeberghs & Berghman, 2003). According to Gregory et al. (2009) and Olsson (2006), organizational effectiveness has always measured how productively organizations accomplish their objectives through their strategic practices.

Zewudie (2016), stated that the triple constraints like cost, quality and time as well as communication processes of the subject groups are the most effective project management processes towards success of a project. Moreover, planning process from the process groups is effective for achieving success of a project. The result of this research showed that significant numbers of construction projects in Ethiopia are under failed category. Hence, the researcher recommends that effective project management processes like Planning, Time, Quality, Cost and Communication processes have to be given great attention during execution of a project since they are the main driving force for success of a project.

According to Menon (2015), better and effective project management practices are essential for the success of projects. Project management best practices increase project efficiency and

provide better guidelines, methodology, and processes that can be followed throughout the organization. Adopting project management best practices can produce the desired project outcome; thereby strategically help the organization to achieve its organizational goals and objectives. As a critical success factor, top management support is most essential for the development of best practices. Lack of senior leadership support, ineffective PMO, people factors, and lack of formal PM training are some of the significant challenges organizations face, while implementing project management best practices.

The above reviewed researches cover the effectiveness and project management practices. However, this study tries to assess the existing project management practices in NGO projects and the challenges they encounter during implementation. And it can be useful in providing relevant information about the existing trend of project management practices in NGO sector.

2.3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework outlines the concept and direction of this study and it is illustrated in Figure 2. It shows the contribution of each component has on one another.

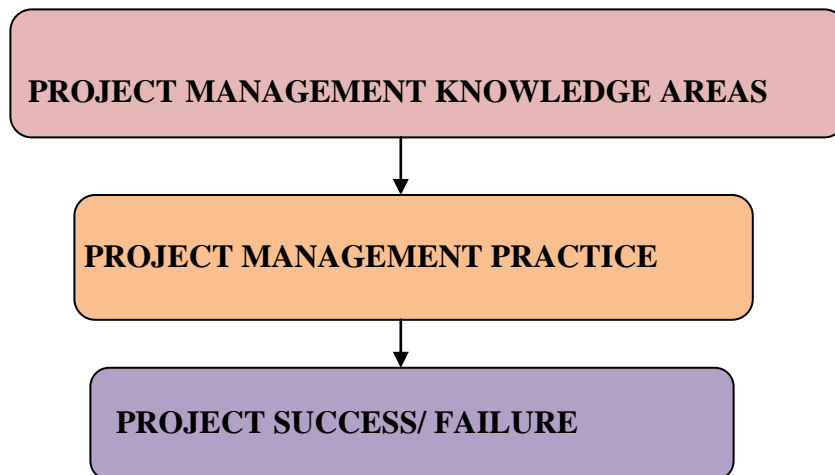


Figure 2: Conceptual Framework

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. RESEARCH DESIGN

In this study descriptive research design was used and a qualitative research approach was implemented to explore and identify project management practices by assessing the extent of project management practices in NGO projects and the challenges of practicing project management to achieve project success. As (Kothari, 2004) argued, a qualitative approach to research is concerned with subjective evaluation of attitudes, opinions, behaviors, and circumstances involving attributes which considerably relates to the researcher's insights and impressions. These will present a condition that the collection, analysis, interpretation of the data, and the final written report be flexibly designed and structured with a focus on individual meaning and the importance of rendering the complexity of a situation (Creswell, 2009). And in this research qualitative data were collected, analyzed, interpreted and presented.

3.2. TARGET POPULATION AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUES

3.2.1. Target Population

This study focused on the above mentioned NGO named Ethiopia Reads that operate in Ethiopia. The target population is a well-defined set of people, events, groups of things, households that are being investigated (Ngechu 2004). It can also be described as the sample to which the researcher wants to generalize the results. (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). For the purpose of this study the target population refers to the 33 employees of the organization who are working in the organization on different positions.

3.2.2. Sample size and sampling techniques

According to (Crossman, 2018) A purposive sample is a non-probability sample that is selected based on characteristics of a population and the objective of the study. Purposive sampling is also known as judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling. This type of sampling can be very useful in situations when you need to reach a targeted sample quickly, and where sampling for proportionality is not the main concern. Thus for this study, the researcher used purposive sampling to collect qualitative data from 20 employees that are fully engaged in project works in the organization.

3.3. SOURCE OF DATA

Data for this study was collected from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data were gathered through an in-depth interview that was conducted with the respondents who work in various projects of the organization under study.

And the secondary data was acquired from projects document and reports of the organization regarding to the specific subject that the research is focused on.

3.4. DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT

The study has collected and analyzed a qualitative data. An in-depth interview questions was the main data collection instruments used for this study. The interview questions were developed by the researcher, specifically for this study to gather general information on the respondents and the practice in managing projects in the organization. In-depth interviews have been selected as a method, given the selected group and small number of individuals needed to provide information and insights on the subject. The other data collection instrument included document and article reviews which are supportive and supplementary.

3.5. PROCEDURE OF DATA COLLECTION

The management of Ethiopia Reads was briefed on the study to get the permission to undertake data collection. A total of 20 employees who are engaged in project works (that includes program managers, project officers, project finance officer, facilitators and social workers) participated in the data collection after permission has been granted by the management of the organization. An in-depth interview was conducted and it took about seven days to complete the interview with all the respondents. Confidentiality was also assured.

3.6. VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

Gerring (2007) states that validity and reliability are the two important factors in qualitative research as it help in evaluating and judging the quality of the research. Validity in qualitative research means “appropriateness” of the tools, processes, and data. Whether the research question is valid for the desired outcome, the choice of methodology is appropriate for answering the research question, the design is valid for the methodology, the sampling and data analysis is appropriate, and finally the results and conclusions are valid for the sample and context (Leung, 2015). Validity is identifying correct operational measures for the concepts being studies and it can be increase through clarifying back with respondents on the draft report. (Yin, 2009). In this research the validity was assured by ccollecting the data from different sources i.e. project officers, program coordinators and project finance officers and sharing the key information of the draft with the respondents. This study looked to contribute with stimulating ideas that might further be initiated by new studies. Therefore, it is not meant to be generalized.

The essence of reliability for qualitative research lies with consistency (Leung, 2015). Reliability is demonstrating that the operations of a study; such as the data collection procedures can be repeated with the same results Yin, 2009). Therefore, in this research more care was taken to have results that are more reliable. As a result, data collection process had been planned and structured in advance to minimize any doubt and possible blurred aspects.

3.7. METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

This study was designed to collect and analyze qualitative data that was extracted through transcription methods and mainly relies on meanings and word. This refers to the process and procedures that are used to analyze the data and provide some level of explaining, interpreting and translating the meaning and categorizing expressions into sub themes unified to the research objectives.

Qualitative research is concerned with describing phenomena in words to gain an understanding of the issues being researched. This type of research is concerned with subjective assessment of attitudes, opinions and behaviors and the data generated are not subjected to rigorous quantitative analysis (Kothari, 2003)

3.8. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical issues refer to conduct that guides the researchers' behavior while undertaking research (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2009). The researcher treated the information provided by the respondents as confidential and subsequently was only be used for the purpose of this study. The participants were not required to mention their names in the interview thus they remained anonymous. The researcher also sought permission from Ethiopia Reads' management.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The analysis and interpretation of findings of information collected from the 20 project team employees of the organization is presented here. It contains the demographic characteristics of respondents and the discussions of the questions rose in the interview questions. The collected data was analyzed and presented through narrative analysis by transcribing the answers of respondents from the interview conducted. The following details are findings from the interview questions and they reflect some of the interesting and enlightening results.

4.1 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

The study sought to find out the respondent's demographics characteristics which include; the gender distribution, age, their work experience and job titles in order to establish the ground of the research study.

The number of participants in the interview was 20 employees of the organization and 9 of them were females and 11 were males. This demographic show that the gap towards gender balance is almost being closed as more women empowerment take center stage.

From the total number of participants who participated in the interview, 2 of them holds the program manager positions, 2 of them were project finance officers, 5 were project officers, 6 were the social workers and the rest 5 holds the facilitators positions.

According to the data collected, the project team of the organization was with the age range of 25 – 41, i.e. the age range of 4 employees were between 25 – 30, the age range of 7 employees were between 31 – 35, the age range of 7 employees were between 36 – 40 and the rest 2 employees

were of the age of above 41. This shows that 80% of the employees who are engaged in project work are more than the age of 31 which indicates that the current project team is at the most energetic working age level.

All of the respondents had 3 years and above working experience, i.e. 6 of them have 3 – 5 years of experience, 9 of them have 6 – 10 years of experience, 4 of them have 11 – 14 years of experience and 1 has more than 15 years of working experience in the NGO sector. This shows that almost 70% of the respondents had more than 6 years of experience. The level of experience of the respondents gives additional confidence in the validity of the survey results.

4.2 EMPLOYEES' AWARENESS OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT KNOWLEDGE AREAS

The study found it valuable to review the employees' level of awareness about project management knowledge areas in general to assess the project management practice in the organization.

AWARENESS

The respondents were asked if they were aware of project management knowledge areas and about 11 of the respondents said they are not fully aware about the general concept of the project management knowledge areas and only 3 respondents stated that they have brief knowledge about the knowledge areas but not deep understanding.

TRAINING

The respondents were asked whether they had been provided with training that's related to project management. And 12 out of 20 stated they have taken training like project monitoring and evaluation, project proposal writing, Project planning, Project communication, Time management. But none of them had any kind of training that's about project management so far.

APPLICATION OF KNOWLEDGE AREAS/KAs/

The respondents were asked to what extent they apply the knowledge areas. They all stated that even though they don't have deep knowledge about the nine knowledge areas they apply some of them even without recognizing them when managing their projects frequently these includes, time, cost, scope and human resource management.

CONTRIBUTION OF APPLYING KAs FOR PROJECT SUCCESS

The respondents were asked the contribution of applying the knowledge areas for project success. Almost all of them said from their experience, they found out that in order for a project to be a successful one, managing project time, cost, scope and human resource effectively one way or another is crucial.

4.3 PROJECT MANAGEMENT KNOWLEDGE AREAS

The study sought to explore the practical experience of project management knowledge areas applied by the project team, in order to assess the trend of project management practice in the organization

INTEGRATION MANAGEMENT

The respondents were asked to explain their experience in developing project charter for projects. 6 out of 20 respondents stated that they develop project charter during the initial stage of the project to inform stakeholders and beneficiaries about the project and also get approval and cooperation from them to officially start the project. They added, they don't usually develop project charter for all projects especially not for short term projects but for the long term projects they develop them. And 2 of them explained they have seen and reviewed the project charter developed by others but they have never developed one by themselves. And the rest 12 respondents said they never developed any project charter.

SCOPE MANAGEMENT

The respondents were asked how they manage and control project scope. All of the respondents stated that in most of their projects, the scope of the projects gets changed due to request from donors or beneficiaries during execution phase. And at times they also face change of project scope with a request from stakeholders almost at the end of project and they had to redesign the project with additional budget, resources and time incurred. They added they try to manage project scope through regular follow up and feedback from project team and communicating with stakeholders.

TIME MANAGEMENT

The respondents were asked how they ensure their projects going according to the planned time. Almost all of the respondents stated that the projects take longer than the time they have planned mostly due to poor planning at the beginning of the project by under estimating the tasks and other factors, lack of adequate budget acquired from donors during the course of the project, change of donor's idea about the project consequently to change its objectives and direction from the original plan which will have negative impact on the time management through delay or unplanned phase out.

COST MANAGEMENT

The respondents were asked how they view cost management as contributing factor in project management and how they ensure their project is going according to the planned budget. Most of the respondents stated that the projects final cost exceeds the planned budget due to untimely project closure, poor budget planning, inflation in the country, unforeseen risks due to lack of proper communication, lack of communication between stakeholder and donors, delay in funding from sponsors. And they added that they try to manage cost through regular 'activity vs budget' follow up and crosschecking mechanism and by multi-tasking project activities to manage costs effectively and achieve best result.

QUALITY MANAGEMENT

The respondents were asked what tools they use to check performance of projects in the organization. 11 of the respondents said they are not sure if they have ever checked project performance in the organization. But the rest 9 respondents stated that there's frequent on-going monitoring and control throughout the project period thus, the performance of the final outcomes of the projects most of the time satisfy the needs and requirement of stakeholders despite the fact it might take longer time or more resources or so.

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The respondents were asked how they manage human resources in the organization. All respondents explained that there is limited skilled power in the organization which is a challenge in executing project effectively. Instead of providing on-the job training for less skilled staffs to share the load off others for effective implementation that leads to better project management success, the organization has poor human resource management when it comes to some projects where only a certain people get involved with various projects and it became too difficult for them to manage.

COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT

The respondents were asked what the communication challenges were in the projects and how it affects project success. All of them agreed that successful communication in each phase among all stakeholders, highly contributes to the project success. But they stated that their experience in their organization is different as there's a huge gap regarding to communicating stakeholders and donors about project progress status, scope, schedule and budget in a timely manner, . The main reason for this is lack of adequate staff on the project team and giving less attention for the importance of communication in general in project life.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The respondents were asked how they manage project risks. They all stated that they don't have risk management approach in the organization as there's loose communication channel and trend

between beneficiaries, stakeholder and the organization, early warning signs of problems that occur in the projects don't get timely response to avoid risks which in return was expensive at times to manage the damage after that.

PROCUREMENT MANAGEMENT

The respondents were asked what kind of purchasing and contract administration methods exists in the organization. 16 of them said they don't have structured purchasing or contract administration methods lined out in the organization and the rest 4 explained that the organization doesn't have well established purchasing/ procurement procedure but attempts to administer contract as carefully as possible but employees have less knowledge about the concept.

CRITICAL PMKAs FOR PROJECT SUCCESS

The respondents were asked which knowledge areas they consider to be critical for the success of projects. They stated that time, scope, cost, communication, human resources, and quality risk management were the most critical knowledge areas since they have seen practically their impact on project success but procurement and integration management were not mentioned at all as critical as they have less knowledge and also since they feel like they apply them by default even without structured system, they don't consider them as critical for project success.

4.4 PROJECT SUCCESS/FAILURE

PROJECT SUCCESS MEASUREMENT

The respondents were asked how they measure project success. The respondents explained that the project success in the organization is measured by proper management of time and budget which leads to the project objectives that meet stakeholder's requirement and satisfaction. Feedback from stakeholders and official lesson learner reports of previous successful projects are reviewed to guide through various project processes and practices and used as measurement

mechanism by comparing and contrast. Regular meeting among project team is also held to monitor closely the schedule, budget and quality of outcomes throughout project life cycles.

CHALLENGES OF PROJECT SUCCESS

The respondents were asked what the most common challenges of project success were. They stated that some of the most common challenges of project success were insufficient skilled manpower in the project team which could contribute to delay of project activities, frequent delay of funds from donors, low cooperation from stakeholders due to lack of information, time overrun and cost overrun, change of project scope during the project period, high communication gap among and between stakeholders and beneficiaries are the most common challenges that have high influence on project success in the organization.

CONTRIBUTING FACTORS FOR PROJECT SUCCESS/ FAILURE

The respondents were asked what contributes to project success or failure in the organization. They all stressed that they have strong belief that communication is one of the most critical part that need to exist in each knowledge areas as it contributes highly for project success. Communication among project team, and between stakeholders, donors or beneficiaries, facilitates informed decisions within the project, increase cooperativeness and create sense of belongingness and commitment on the project among the stakeholders and beneficiaries that can contribute highly to the overall project success. And all the challenges mentioned in the challenges of project success contribute highly to project success or failure.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Here, summary of the findings, conclusion and recommendations are stated. The purpose of the study was to assess the effectiveness of project management practices in NGO projects in the case of Ethiopia Reads.

5.1 SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS

The following is summarization of the selected knowledge areas where by the respondents identified the most critical knowledge areas in practicing project management in their organization that contributes to project success.

The perception that scope management is important for project success is well founded. Like all sector applications of project management, the control of the scope of a project in the NGO sector is crucial to keeping the balance between time, cost, risk and quality aspects of the project. Defining how to assess possible changes to scope is important to identifying when the scope is actually going to change. Besides the formal requests for scope changes, during the project there can be changes in the tasks being performed which together may constitute a change of scope. There should be a way to collect information about these task-based changes and review the deviations in relation to the scope of the project. It also may be beneficial to define the scope of groups of related tasks to provide a reference that any changes can be measured against. Involving project team leaders in the definition of the scope of task groups will provide a clear communication of the project requirements to the project team and give the project team members an opportunity to establish reliable definitions.

Time management shines as possibly being the top knowledge area over all. Having project work packages executed on-time is a key responsibility of the project manager. The likely reason for this is because time is the one thing that there can be no more of extra resources can be leveraged, customer expectations can be massaged, but if the project will be delayed by an unacceptable period of time, the impact can be widespread. With poor Time management of a project, other projects can suffer the consequences by being delayed, robbed of resources or placed under increased pressure in relation to time to make up for the delays in the earlier project. The importance of Time management can be visualized if you imagine the typical NGO projects to be the stages of a relay race – if the time taken to complete one stage is delayed, the next runner must put strain on their resources or take a short cut in order to remain competitive. Further, in the relay race example, if the runner in next stage of the race begins movement based on the expectation that hand-over is imminent, the runners may falter when the previous stage is delayed, causing more serious delays by compounding the effects.

The wisdom of the decisions made during the project will be based on the quality of information available that can highly affect the cost management. There's a perceived requirement to reduce costs associated with projects, there could be movement from a Project Management mentality of doing the project right to doing the right project. Even with the occurrence of cost overrun, project management might not be successful but it's possible that there could be project success as long as the required objective is achieved and stakeholders and beneficiaries are happy.

Communications management is not an aspect of a project that is used to assess project success, unlike Time, Cost, Scope and Quality which are direct reflections of common project success indicators. Communications management is instead the one knowledge area that functions with all the other aspects of project management in a continuous and influential way. The way communications are managed in a project can make or break the project, no matter how well the other knowledge areas are managed. Communications can be thought of as the project “glue” that holds parts of the project together. One simple example of this function is the communication of project objective requirements to the individuals performing project tasks and

in return, communicating progress and issues occurring at the project WBS level back up to the other aspects of the project such as Time and Scope management. Communications management is at the heart of projects and should be given formal consideration on the same level as the other knowledge areas.

Risk management for the NGO sector has not yet gained full recognition or understanding. But it is very important to increase the probability and impact of events that are positive to the project and decrease those that are negative to the project. Effective risk management can turn many uncertainties into opportunities rather than risks. It covers risk assessment, control, communication and review. Therefore, it's important to have risk management tools and apply quality risk management in NGO projects for project success.

5.2 CONCLUSION

The results of the interview questions provide an insight into how program managers, project officers and the overall project team in the organization perceive the use of project management knowledge and tools in their sector.

Generally the respondents in organization faces challenges execute projects successfully with the poor time and budget planning in projects, frequent change of project scope, loose communication and integration and lack of qualified man power in the project team. Despite all these challenges, the team was able to manage the projects fairly through the experience they got in the field and trying to work closely with stakeholders, beneficiaries and donors to achieve project success so far. However, this clearly shows that projects are being managed traditionally and without adequate the proper knowledge and background to the field and the practice of effectively managing projects is very low in the sector.

The study concluded that by focusing on the project management knowledge areas highlighted by this research, the project team in the NGO sector can hopefully realize improvements in overall project success rates. This focus can also enhance the ability of the project managers to maintain increased level of control over the project's scope, duration, communication and inherent risk profile – all key factors in achieving overall project success. With an observable increase in project success and the related benefits to the organization, it will support the formation of stronger project management practice in the NGO sector. This in turn is a step forward in raising the level of maturity of project management in the sector and underlines the important role project management can play in the execution of successful projects.

It can also be concluded that project management practices could help to meet the challenges of project success mentioned above by improving communication among project team members, developing work performance, better controlling of resources to reach project success in an efficient way for NGO projects.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The NGO sector is extremely diverse and populated by organizations with hugely varied size, scope, targets and structures. Therefore, they face a lot of challenges which together with the absence of proper project management practices, usually cause poor project planning, scarcity of accountability and stakeholder involvement, unmotivated project team and eventually project failures.

Even though the respondents stated they achieve project success in an environment with very little information about project management knowledge areas, the organization and its project can benefit tremendously from a project team with high knowledge of project management practice the theory and science behind it for better project management success as well as project success. This could be achieved through supporting the project team with proper regular training

to capacitate them, managing the human resource efficiently and make the most effective use of the project team to execute projects, ensure timely and appropriate distribution of information where studied communication channel can be applied, make sure that all the project team as well as stakeholders are aware of the detail breakdown of work required to complete projects from the project planning stage to closure and finally ensure various events of projects are properly coordinated from start to end by including all the necessary knowledge areas.

The researcher believes undertaking this research has opened many venues for further research initiatives which are presented below:

- This research may have opened the doors for researchers to explore the project management practices in other public sector in Ethiopia to validate the research
- Researchers can also investigate the effectiveness of project management practices in the private sector in Ethiopia to have an overall picture of the management practices and the need for more attention and improvement in the field.
- Researchers can also research on short term and long term planning, strategies, and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for the public sector organizations to reach the higher maturity level in project management practice.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Permission Letter

Yemisrach Worku
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

May 22, 2018

Dear respondents,

I'm a post-graduate student pursuing a Master's Degree in Project Management at St. Mary's University. As part of my course work, I'm conducting a research thesis on Assessing the Effectiveness of Project Management Practice in NGO Projects in the case of Ethiopia Reads. The purpose of this interview question is therefore to collect data on effectiveness of project management practice in NGO projects in the case of Ethiopia Reads. I'm therefore requesting that you kindly provide information as accurate as possible.

Your honesty in answering these questions is of great importance as it will go far in assessing the effectiveness of project management practice in NGO projects. The data collected will be treated with outmost integrity and will be used only for the purpose of this research study. Your identity remains anonymous as you won't be requested to indicate your name. Your cooperation will be highly appreciated.

Thank you.

Best Regards,

Yemisrach Worku

St. Mary's University

Appendix B: Research Interview Guide for Project Team

This is a study intended to assess the effectiveness of project management in NGO project in the case of Ethiopia Reads. Thank you for taking this interview. I would like to kindly ask you to answer the questions as accurately as possible. The information provided here will be confidential and used only for research purposes.

I/ PERSONAL DETAILS OF THE RESPONDENTS

1. **Gender :** _____
2. **Age:** _____: 24 years & below_(____), 25 – 30 years (____), 31 – 35 years (____), 36 – 40 years (____), 41 years & above_(____)
3. **Work Experience:** _____: 2 years & below (____), 3 – 5 years (____), 6 – 10 years (____), 11 – 14 years (____), 15 years & above (____)
4. **Job Title / Position:** _____

II/ EMPLOYEES’ AWARENESS OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT KNOWLEDGE AREAS

5. What project management knowledge areas are you aware of? (Integration Management, Scope Management, Time Management, Cost Management, Quality Management, Human Resource Management, Communication Management, Risk Management, Procurement Management)

6. What specific training have you had related with project management so far?

7. To what extent do you apply these knowledge areas in your projects?

8. What do you think is the contribution of knowledge areas for the success of project in your organization?

III/ PROJECT MANAGEMENT KNOWLEDGE AREAS /PMKAs/

9. Explain your experience in developing project charter for projects in your organization?
(When do you develop? And why?)

10. How do you manage and control project scope? How frequently do you face scope creep in your project?

11. How do you ensure that your project is going according to the planned schedule?

12. How do you view cost management as contributing factor in managing projects in your organization? How do you ensure your project is going according to the planned budget?

13. What are the tools you use to check the performance of projects in your organization?

14. How do you manage the human resources in your organization to achieve project success?

15. What are the communication challenges in your projects? How does communication affect project success?

16. What are the procedures in managing risks in your organization/ projects?

17. What are the procedure/ method in your organization for purchasing and contract administration?

18. Of the above PMKAs, which one do you consider as the most critical for the success of projects in your organization?

IV/ PROJECT SUCCESS/ FAILURE

19. How do you measure the project success in your organization?

20. What are the most common challenges to project success in your organization?

21. What do you think contributes to project success and failure in your organization?

Thank you again for taking the time to answer these interview questions!!!

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work, prepared under the guidance of Dejene Mammo (Asst. Prof.). All sources of materials used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged. I further confirm that the thesis has not been submitted either in part or in full to any other higher learning institution for the purpose of earning any degree. It is offered for the partial fulfillment of the degree of MA in Project Management (MA).

Name

St Mary's University, Addis Ababa

Signature

June, 2018

ENDORSEMENT

This thesis has been submitted to St. Mary's University, School of Graduate Studies for examination with my approval as a university advisor.

Advisor

St Mary's University, Addis Ababa

Signature

June, 2018