

Beyond Profit for Social Good: Project Management Practices in the Operations of Not-for-Profit Organizations: A Case Study of Performance for All Northwest

David Oyekunle* , Ifeoluwa Victor Anibaloye

Salford Business School, Project Management Departments, University of Salford, Salford, UK

Email: *davidoyekunle69@gmail.com, Ifevictor@yahoo.com

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Abstract

The aim of this research is to examine the level of adoption and application of project management practices in a not-for-profit organization within a case study of performance for all northwest. The growing competition for limited resources amongst organizations, both profit making and not-for-profit, continues to be a major driver for these organizations to adopt project management practices that can improve project performance efficiency and increase project success. Many research activities carried out on application of project management principles have been focused on profit-making organization especially the large companies. However, this research attempts to investigate the level of project management application within a not-for-profit company in the United Kingdom. This research was conducted based on Performance for All Northwest (PFA) as a case study. The company is a small social enterprise in the Northwest of England. A review of literature on project management framework, methodology and best practices across various disciplines was conducted. A qualitative method was adopted in the research and semi structured interview was conducted with the founder and a selected employee. The data obtained were subjected to qualitative evaluation, review of literature and a comparative analysis of the current project management practices within the organization with project management best practices was also conducted. The study utilized purposive sampling; a targeted selection process deemed suitable for its focus on individuals with specific insights into the organization. Purposive, or judgmental sampling, is preferred when researchers aim to engage a particular segment of the population that meets predefined criteria. Despite the limited sample size due to company size constraints, two respondents were identified as fitting the criteria based on their substantial experience within the organization. The result of the analysis

shows that project management best practices regarding scope, time, and cost management are still lacking within the not-for-profit industry. It also reveals that inadequate knowledge of the importance of project management to organizational efficiency and project performance exists within the organization. The research further made recommendations for Performance for All North-west and other not-for-profit organizations. The study confirms that although an increasing number of organizations are beginning to adopt modern project management methodologies, many are still using the conventional style of managing projects. The research has highlighted some important issues relating to project management practices at PFA. The research findings have identified some crucial gaps in the adoption of project management practices and will therefore recommend project planning, training, development, and lessons learned strategies to help improve project outcomes. While other studies on project management practices are centered on profits organizations, this study goes on to indicate specifically that not-for-profit organizations have not fully understood and appreciated how project management principles and methodologies can assist them in project performance and easier attainment of organizational objectives.

Keywords

Project Management, Not-for-Profit, Efficiency, Scope Management, Project Performance, Not-for-Profit Organizations

1. Introduction

An increasing number of organizations, whether large or small, have recognized and appreciated the role of strategic management of activities and operations in their overall success. Hodgson (2002) expresses that many businesses have seen the value of dividing their company activities into manageable projects for better success. In today's business world, the application of project management to various projects across different industries is evident. According to Kerzner (2015), there is a literature on the range of applications and uses of project management as a management technique in various sectors.

The concept of project management has historically been determined by the intrinsic distinctions between projects and operations, with project management considered relevant to managing a distinct, capital-intensive, non-operational set of processes in development sectors like construction and defense. However, emerging types of project management, according to researchers, have a greater range of applications than traditional project management (Hobbs & Aubry, 2010; Kwak & Anbari, 2009; Martinsuo et al., 2006). The evolution of project management practices is viewed as an instrument for managing all sorts of change and transformation across various areas and organizations (Kerzner, 2015). Researchers have emphasized the ability of project management principles to help in the effective management of various activities across different

departments and organizations (Thomas, 2009). According to Pellegrinelli and Bowman (1994), areas of business change and process transformation such as process reengineering, quality improvement, production substitution, organizational rebranding, concurrent engineering, new product/process design, value creation, and benchmarking have continued to adopt project management practices to deliver improved outcomes. Some experts believe that project management will become more frequently utilized in businesses that are not project-based (Kerzner, 2017).

In today's commercial world, project management is used to handle a wide range of projects. Thomas (2009) argues that project management processes and procedures should be used uniformly for every project. This unified approach would assure resilience and adaptability to different types of projects, from small and uncomplicated ones to large and sophisticated ones (Bollen, 2014; Jha & Iyer, 2007; Shenhar et al., 2007; Whitty, 2005; Zwikael & Globerson, 2006). The traditional project management approach aims to maximize efficiency and effectiveness in executing a project following a sequence of activities starting from a detailed project plan and ensuring that it is completed within the project management constraints of time, cost, and scope (Shenhar & Dvir, 2007; Wysocki, 2007). The application of project management currently transcends various industries, including profit and not-for-profit organizations. The impact of project management is often restricted to profit-making organizations with limited resources because of its effects on not-for-profit companies.

Moreover, non-profit organizations have a significant role to play in the development of healthy communities; they are major contributors to critical services that help communities with better living conditions and promote stable economic, health, and social conditions for people within a community (Shenhar et al., 2007). It is imperative that the impact of project management practices in the sector be evaluated. Scott (2001) defines not-for-profit organizations as legal entities established for social and public benefit and not for profit-making. They include charities, social enterprises, trade organizations, and advocacy groups.

Non-profit organizations also contribute to the betterment of communities in other ways. Leaders of non-profit enterprises often serve as representatives of the people and provide voices for them. These groups typically understand their communities' needs and the best ways to satisfy them better than anyone else, thanks to strong communal relationships and deep knowledge of the peculiarities of their localities. Well-established nonprofit organizations that have strong connections to the decision-making process regarding infrastructure can help stimulate growth and sustainable development in their communities (Besner & Hobbs, 2008).

Johns (2004) identified that not-for-profit businesses can also be faced with challenges in their operations and how to achieve strategic organizational goals. Goerke (2003) further observed that non-profits deal with numerous problems

daily in a bid to stay afloat and retain their relevance. Furthermore, limited research has been conducted on the operations of nonprofits and how varying management principles can affect their productivity and sustainability. It is also critical to note that nonprofit organizations are not usually financially big enough to sponsor major research activities aimed at improving their effectiveness. (Borzaga & Defourny, 2001; Defourny & Nyssens, 2010; Nyssens, 2006) classify social enterprises as not-for-profit organizational groups. They are also classified as non-profit organizations that provide goods and services with the avowed objective of helping the community. It is in this regard that this study seeks to identify and assess the quality of project management practices in a not-for-profit organization. To carry out a comparative analysis between best practices in project management and project management practices in a not-for-profit organization, to determine how project management techniques can increase productivity and to make recommendations on how a not-for-profit organization can adopt project management best practices for the improvement of project outcomes.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Project Management Concepts

The concept of project management has evolved over time to encompass planning, coordinating, and managing intricate and diversified processes involved in modern manufacturing, economic, industrial, and information technology (IT) projects (Maylor, 2010; Wysocki, 2007). Every one of these projects shares a commonality: the translation of ideas and concepts into new ventures. Due to the constant presence of risk and uncertainty, it is nearly impossible to predict all events and project outcomes with total confidence. Numerous projects have significantly surpassed their budgets, finished behind schedule, or even been terminated before completion. Project failures are commonplace in all types of projects in business, trade, and government (Wysocki, 2007).

The goal of project management is to anticipate or forecast as many risks and problems as possible, and to ensure effective planning, coordination, and supervision of project activities to achieve success despite these risks. However, there seems to be no universally accepted definition of what constitutes a project. Nevertheless, basic concepts of projects often include: 1) the determination of quantitative and qualitative objectives, 2) a collection of complex activities that require management (uniqueness), and 3) a set of tasks with a definite start and end time (temporary) (Cooke-Davies, 2001). These features are relevant to redefining what it means to be a project (Atkinson et al., 2006; Maylor et al., 2006).

PMI defines a project as “a temporary activity carried out to produce a specific product, service, or outcome” (PMI, 2017). A project is comprised of a collection of distinct deliverables/artifacts and the scope of work required to achieve the project’s goals (IPMA, 2015), and it is bound by time, budget, and preset performance criteria (Gaddis, 1959; Turner, 2014).

Söderlund (2011) defines project management as a branch of organization and management studies. Diverse definitions of project management exist, many of which are from project management professional organizations; yet they all refer to the same concept. Project management is defined by the Association for Project Management (APM) as “the process through which projects are defined, planned, monitored, controlled, and delivered in such a way that the stipulated benefits are met” (APM, 2012). According to Loo (2002), he defines project management as a set of processes that aims to improve work to attain high performance. It consists of actions or processes that deliver value to the project outcomes, and hence to the company in which it is executed. In this study, project management is described as a systematic approach to attaining well-defined objectives by utilizing tried-and-true tools and strategies for planning, coordinating, analyzing, and managing work.

Whenever project management practices are used effectively, the chances of attaining project success are improved (Thomas & Mullaly, 2008). However, every organization must evaluate the relevance of each practice to their projects since the implementation of these practices may not impact the organization in the same way as others. As a result, project management principles can be executed using tools and processes that are adapted to the organization’s needs.

According to PMI (2017), adaptation of project management processes, techniques, and strategies to fit the needs of each project by various organizations is important. More successes were recorded on projects when processes were adjusted to the type of project than when a universal approach was adopted. Fernandes et al. (2014) expressed that tailoring or customization of project management processes and techniques to each project is one of the key improvement initiatives identified in improving the practice of project management in various organizations.

2.2. Project Management Methodology

Project management is a well-known profession utilized to deliver projects by many of the world’s most prestigious firms. Using an effective project management technique, irrespective of the industry or size of a project, is generally believed to increase the likelihood of finishing projects on schedule, within project cost estimation, and to deliver project outcomes that will meet the expectations of all stakeholders (Milosevic & Patanakul, 2005; Munns & Bjeremi, 1996; Pitagorsky, 2003).

Avison and Fitzgerald (2003) opined that the terms project methods and project methodology are often misrepresented, making it necessary to define what project management methodology is. The word methodology is derived from the Greek word methodological, referring to a collection of methods applied in a certain study area or discipline (Pearsall et al., 2011).

Chin & Spowage (2010) define Project Management Methodology as a comprehensive set of best practices, methods, and processes that are flexible, adapta-

ble, and configurable to fit diverse projects in a given setting. As a result, the methodology should include a collection of procedures, layouts, techniques, and tools to aid in the conception and management of the project throughout its life cycle. The methodology's components include project management processes such as initiation, planning, execution, and monitoring and evaluation of the progress of the project, as well as a choice of tools and techniques for communicating project outcomes to meet stakeholder expectations, an aggregated and integrated set of effective project management values and ideologies, and appropriate referencing and list of terminology relevant to project management discipline. PMI (2017) further explains the need for project management professionals to strictly follow a set of procedures, methods, and rules known as PMM.

The literature is divided on whether project methodologies directly contribute to achieving organizational goals or to the relevance of project management (Lehtonen & Martinsuo, 2006). In most literature considered, methodologies are often considered as one whole unit or split apart depending on different management practices and how they influence project outcomes (Milosevic & Patanakul, 2005).

The basic proposition of project success factor variables is methodology elements. The distinction between a methodology element and a success factor variable lies in how they are described. The introduction of an adjective to the underpinning methodology element expresses the success factor variable. For instance, scheduling is a methodology component, whereas efficient project scheduling is referred to as a success factor variable.

Considering the effects of each methodology element on project performance one at a time does not provide a consistent picture of how these methodology elements influence project success characteristics. Some aspects of the approach have a stronger influence on performance than others. The term "project success factor variable" is used in literature to explain this, implying the significance of the fundamental methodological aspect. Not all methodology components are defined in a grammatical role as success factor variables, implying that they have a lesser effect on the attribute of project outcome or that their significance has not been discovered through study. The value of a methodological aspect fluctuates throughout the project life cycle, depending on the phase (Loo, 2002). This is true for every project success factor variable (Belassi & Tukel, 1996). Depending on the situation, methodology elements are utilized or not used. Similarly, during the project life cycle, success factor variables must be in order and implemented as needed (Pinto & Prescott, 1988). The pictorial representation of the project life cycle is expressed in **Figure 1**.

Project activities are the primary means through which organizations obtain commercial benefits, create and develop competitive advantages, innovate, and develop systems, services, and new organizational infrastructure (Davies & Hobday, 2005; Shenhar & Dvir, 2007). In the United Kingdom, sophisticated products and projects account for about 21 percent of overall value addition in

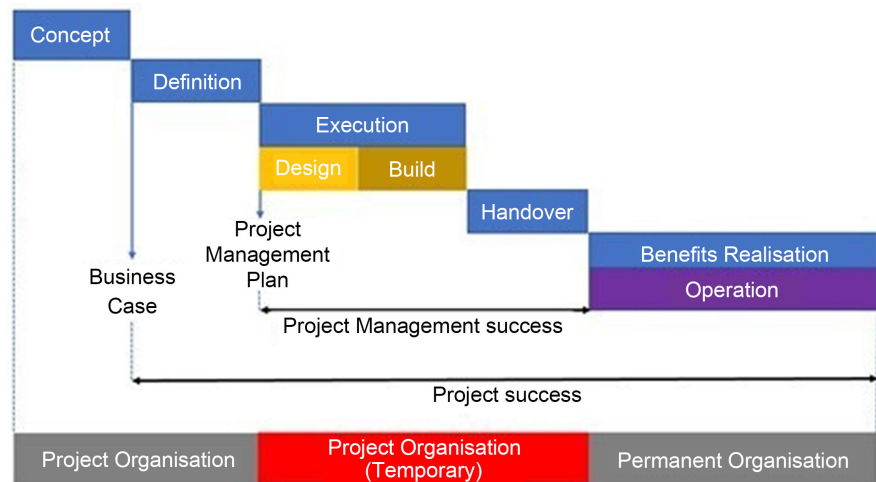


Figure 1. Traditional project life cycle. A pictorial representation of a project lifecycle, Source: Thompson & Williams (2021).

areas such as construction and manufacturing (Davies & Hobday, 2005). Consequently, the need to standardize project activities by adopting a formalized project management methodology is often considered (Gunnarson et al., 2000).

New project management methodologies (PMMs) are progressively being designed, adopted, and modified to assist and direct project planning, management, and implementation in the face of the demand to execute projects successfully in an ever-changing business climate (Charvat, 2003; Davies & Hobday, 2005; Morris & Pinto, 2004; Sauer & Reich, 2009; Thamhain, 1994). Despite the continuous rise in the popularity of some of these methodologies (e.g., PMP Agile, PRINCE2) across various industrial sectors, including government agencies, structured PMMs have been shown to have some limitations and drawbacks (White & Fortune, 2002).

One of the challenges faced by organizations, including those in the public sector, is the passivity of these methodologies towards their organizational goals and benefits beyond merely applying them to one project. The complications in adaptation and customization, leadership and strategy, dependence on certification, and inadequate flexibility to deal with change are some of the problems (Boehm & Turner, 2004; Shenhar & Dvir, 2007).

2.3. Project Management Practices

Many organizations in various sectors have started to acknowledge the advantages of implementing project management principles. The project management profession has continued to promote itself as a neutral set of techniques that can be applied to any type of activity across different sectors (Hodgson, 2002).

A study of the project management practices outlined in the Project Management Institute's Body of Knowledge (PMBOK[®]) (PMI, 2017) reveals that the Project Management Institute, a non-profit organization based in the United States, was established in 1969. The PMBOK[®] Guide defines project manage-

ment rules with the goal of promoting and expanding expertise in the field. The PMBOK guide highlights 10 knowledge areas, each with sets of processes, inputs, outputs, tools, and techniques. These knowledge areas are applicable to several types of projects across different sectors. Marchewka (2015) argues that project scope, time, budget, and quality management areas are often considered more important because they align with the main project management objectives. These factors are often referred to as constraints in project management, as shown in Figure 2.

The PMBOK Guide also presents a combination of project management process groups and project management knowledge areas, which are mapped as shown in Table 1. The project management process groups include the Initiation process group, Planning process group, Execution process group, Monitoring and Control process group, and Closing process group. The 10 knowledge areas outlined in the PMBOK Guide are Project Integration Management, Project Time Management, Project Scope Management, Project Cost Management, Project Quality Management, Project Human Resources Management, Project Risk Management, Project Communication Management, Project Stakeholder Management, and Project Procurement Management.

Pinto and Dominguez (2012) discovered in a study they conducted that project scope management and project procurement management were considered most important. The research involved 30 companies in the steel industry in Portugal. They further identified that project risk management and project integration were of least significance (Figure 3).

Over the years, empirical investigations have been conducted by various researchers to identify the most utilized tools and techniques in project management.

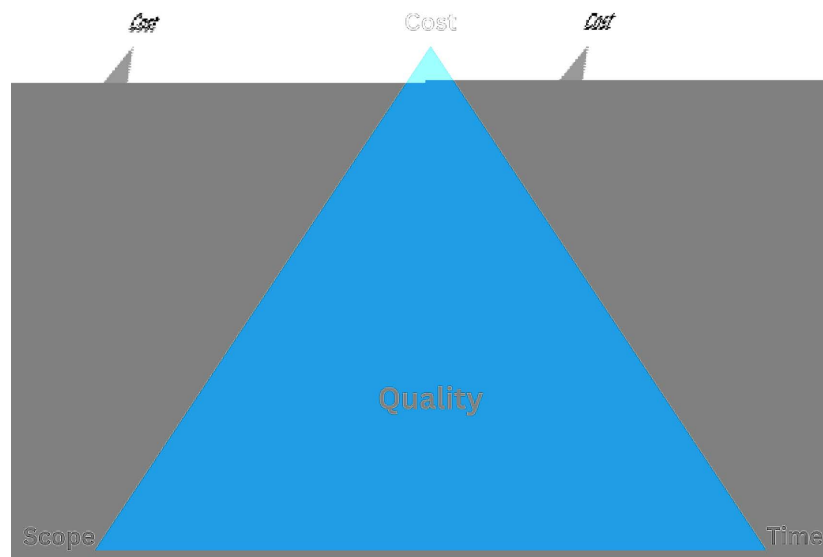


Figure 2. Project management tripple constraint. A Polarity Management Approach by Van Wyngaard, Pretorius, and Pretorius (2012).

Table 1. Project management methodologies.

Framework	Purpose
PRINCE2	PRINCE2 is geared toward the final product rather than focusing on task activities. PRINCE2 As such, it is a useful method for keeping the customer involved. PRINCE2 is useful in many industries other than IT and should be considered for non-IT environments. If the team is not very flexible and prefers dedicated roles as well as a project plan and clearly defined requirements, consider PRINCE2.
CCPM	Critical Chain Project Management is most successful in complex project CCPM environments where there are multiple activities and projects that share the same resources. By focusing on the chains of activities that are most likely to break down, CCPM allows projects to keep flowing and resources to be allocated in a level manner.
Lean	Lean methodologies are best for maintenance environments rather than new Lean product development. These are environments where the current process is well understood, but perhaps has not proven adequate. If the need is to eliminate defects, a Six Sigma approach is optimal. If the goal is to eliminate a recurring problem or a critical problem, the Deming Cycle approach can be employed. In a maintenance environment where there are recurrent changes in requirements or priorities, Kanban is an especially useful method.
XPM	XPM scales well to large, complex projects that are very flexible and have a lot of XPM uncertainty. If the customer is unsure of what he or she wants or has repeated changes, or if the industry itself is very unpredictable, with technology overtaking development, XPM is a method for getting things done before technology makes the tasks obsolete.
Scrum	Scrum, like XPM, embraces change, but not quite to the same extent. Scrum is a Scrum great method when you have a very involved customer. It can accommodate change easily, just like XPM, and is usually found in software development. A Scrum project has a defined beginning and end, so it is not a good method for an ongoing IT maintenance project.
Waterfall	Waterfall depends on specialization in roles, so if your team is highly specialized Waterfall and team members cannot wear many different hats, you may wish to stick with a Waterfall approach. It is highly predictable as well, which can be reassuring to customers.

Project Management Methodology by Author.

White and Fortune (2002) carried out a study to assess how much project managers utilize the available project management methods and techniques, as well as the efficacy of these methods and techniques. The authors asked respondents in the survey to indicate which of the 44 methods, procedures, tools, and techniques they have utilized before. The alternatives chosen for inclusion in the list were those featured in several major project management textbooks (e.g., Kerzner, 2017). They found out from the survey analysis that about 77% of participants have used project management software applications that are termed “off the shelf” and 37 percent have used cost-benefit analysis.

A similar study conducted by Fernandes et al. (2013) considered the most

Project Management Process Groups					
Knowledge Areas	Initiating Process Group	Planning Process Group	Executing Process Group	Monitoring & Controlling Process Group	Closing Process Group
Project Integration Management	Develop project charter	Develop project management plan	Direct and manage project work Manage project knowledge	Monitor and control project work Perform integrated change control	Close project or phase
Project Scope Management		Plan Scope Management Collect Requirements Define Scope Create WBS		Validate Scope Control Scope	
Project Schedule Management		Plan schedule management Define activities Sequence activities Estimate activity durations Develop Schedule		Control Schedule	
Project Cost Management		Plan cost management Estimate costs Determine budget		Control costs	
Project Quality Management		Plan quality management	Manage quality	Control quality	
Project Resource Management		Plan resource management Estimate activity resources	Acquire resources Develop team Manage team	Control resources	
Project Communications Management		Plan communications management	Manage communications	Monitor communications	
Project Risk Management		Plan risk management Identify risks Perform qualitative risk analysis Perform quantitative risk analysis Plan risk responses	Implement risk responses	Monitor risks	
Project Procurement Management		Plan procurement management	Conduct procurements	Control procurements	
Project Stakeholder Management	Identify stakeholders	Plan stakeholder engagement	Manage stakeholder engagement	Monitor stakeholder engagement	

Figure 3. Project management process group. Project Management process group “A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge 2013” (p. 61) by the Project Management Institute. Copyright 2014 by Project Management Academy.

useful project management practices and the ones with the highest benefit to project performance in their research instead of the most used project management practices. It was further discovered that project management is concentrated on three major constraints: time, cost, and scope (Jha & Iyer, 2007). The study’s decision to give attention to the most used practices rather than the most useful is because it is more complicated for project managers and other professionals to accurately appraise the utility of a project management practice in comparison to its scope of use.

2.4. The Value of Project Management

Mir & Pinnington, (2014) study to investigate the significance of project management by examining the connection between project management effectiveness and project outcomes. Research indicates that project success has not considerably increased despite innovations in project management procedures, tools, and systems. This suggest that the worth and efficiency of PM systems.

Over the years, the project management initiative has continued to grow in various organizations. However, more research is needed to determine the actual value, in quantitative terms, that the project management initiative brings to these organizations. According to Knutson (1999), most of the demonstrations in the past have been more qualitative. He suggests that calculating the direct return on investment can be a better way to justify the application of project management practices. However, Andreasen (2003) argued that the value of project management to an organization cannot be accurately measured by just determining the return on investment (ROI). He added that organizations will gain more measurable (but intangible) benefits, which might not always have an impact on ROI. Senior executives should take a broader approach to the value that project management brings to their corporations or organizations. With such a broader view, the worth of project management to an organization can be better estimated.

2.5. Project Management in SMEs

A significant portion of academic literature focuses on improving project management, presuming that businesses benefit from it and that enhancements would lead to increased advantages for larger organizations. Reyck et al. (2005) investigated the effect of a strong asset management system on project performance, observing a correlation between the development of project management methods and eventual project outcomes (Mir & Pinnington, 2014). However, these studies primarily focused on the project level, leaving any organizational impact to inference.

In contrast, other researchers have delved deeper into the influence of project management on the organization. Ozelik (2010) examined the effect of specific project types on organizational achievement, while Lappe and Spang (2014) developed a simulation to determine if increased project management investment yields significant returns. Their study considered over 250 projects by an insurance company in Germany, revealing a connection between project management costs and subsequent benefits.

Furthermore, a study by Thomas and Mullaly (2008) aimed to understand the direct effect of project management on the return on investment of SMEs. Despite some organizations not actively collecting the required data, they established that about 50 percent of participating organizations received quantifiable

benefits from implementing project management principles.

Pollack & Adler (2014) investigated the influence of project management on company performance and business productivity in SMEs. They noted that a significant portion of project management studies focus on large projects, possibly due to the allure of their success or failure. However, this concentration may lead to inaccurate estimations of project management's impact, as mega-projects are fewer compared to those executed by smaller organizations with limited capital.

Recently, the significance of SMEs for the socio-economic sustainability of countries has been universally acknowledged and studied. In the UK, SMEs account for a large proportion of local economies, up to 80 or 90 percent in some cases, and contribute over half of the country's gross domestic output and nearly 70 percent of employment. Similarly, in Australia, more than 90 percent of businesses are SMEs, employing the majority of the country's workforce. A survey by the Australian Bureau of Statistics found that 15 percent of all SMEs and about 20 percent of active SMEs working on innovative solutions value project management as a critical talent, rating it higher than engineering, science, and research skills.

Moreover, project management has been recognized as a crucial skill for SMEs to achieve organizational success, alongside other business management skills such as human resources, negotiation, and marketing. While project management has long been acknowledged as a critical skill for corporate success, practitioners worldwide have developed frameworks for assessing proficiency in project management principles and methodologies. However, the evaluation of leaders and managers has been used to determine the influence of project management on performance rather than evaluating productivity at a corporate level based on the impact of project management.

2.6. Not for Profit Organizations

Since the 1980s, non-profit organizations across the world have developed significantly (Ebrahim, 2003). While organizations in the public sector continue to adopt management, strategies designed for the private, profit-making industries, this shift is also influencing the operations of non-profits (Eikenberry & Kluver, 2004). As many more non-profits strive for better service delivery, they are increasingly embracing the strategy and project management practices and beliefs initially designed for profit-making organizations (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Scott, 2001).

The main objective of establishing a business is to generate profits for its owners or shareholders. However, there are some organizations whose primary goal is to serve their community, and these organizations are referred to as not-for-profit or non-profit organizations. According to Scott (2001), non-profits are frequently founded around social or community issues or services to the communities (associations, religious organizations, clubs, humanitarian services, education grant sponsors, etc.). Any income a non-profit organization obtains

from goods, services, donations, or grants is re-invested in the organization to help it realize its objectives.

Not-for-profit organizations serve an important role in the development of healthy communities by providing essential services that help to maintain economic stability and mobility (Kotler, 1982). The leaders of non-profit organizations or charities are usually the representatives of the majority they serve (Kara et al., 2004). These groups typically understand their communities' problems and appropriate solutions to satisfy their communities better than anyone else; this can be attributed to their strong community relationships and detailed local expertise (McDonald, 1999). According to Bothwell (2001), vibrant and resourceful not-for-profit companies that have a strong influence on how communities make their decisions can stimulate growth and development within these communities. However, with growing demands and declining public supplies, organizations are faced with doing more with less funding, putting more pressure on their already stretched resources. Dolnicar et al. (2008) argue that rather than focusing on fundamental structure, organizational effectiveness, and effective leadership, funding opportunities for charities and non-profits, both from public and private sources, put an emphasis on establishing and expanding programs. Consequently, several organizations are in desperate need of the kind of help that may assist them to boost their processes, improve their service delivery, and contribute to creating a vibrant economy that will be beneficial to all segments of society. Not-for-profit leaders play a significant role in the utilization of various countries' resources and the delivery of critical community services since not-for-profit organizations contribute significantly to the supply of social services within the British economy (Reed, 2007). Akchin (2001) argues that the quality of life enjoyed by every citizen of the United Kingdom is dependent on the effective running of government, universal healthcare, and philanthropic, civic, and cultural institutions. However, in a strategic approach, not-for-profit management has been relegated and seen as peripheral, with the importance given to profit-making ventures.

Furthermore, not-for-profit organizations are frequently thought to be too diverse to be discussed as a group. Nonetheless, not-for-profit organizations' efficient provision of services necessitates an ongoing evaluation of their approaches to preserve coherence between their activities and the society in which they work. Akchin (2001) suggests that the implementation of strategic and project management techniques initially established for profit-making companies can also be beneficial to non-profit executives. Likewise, the most effective utilization of national resources necessitates both effective non-profit management and efficient profit-making management.

2.7. Social Enterprise and Community Interest Company

For over two decades, social enterprise has been a developing global phenomenon. While adopting a market-based solution to tackle social concerns is com-

mon in many communities, the phrase “social enterprise” characterizes a unique and often innovative approach to solving social issues (Alter, 2002; Austin, 2006). The concept of social enterprise was not fully embraced in the United Kingdom until 2004 when the parliament approved a new legal framework for it, referring to it as a “community interest company” (CIC) (Kerlin, 2010; Smallbone & Welter, 2001). The government defined it as follows:

“Businesses with primarily social objectives whose surpluses are principally reinvested for that purpose in the business or in the community, rather than being driven by the need to maximize profit for shareholders and owners” (DTI, 2004).

According to Kotler (1982), more people are interested in social enterprise because they think that market-based approaches to social welfare can help programs that help the poor become self-sufficient and grow over time. This is especially true in places where government and non-government funding is limited or nonexistent. Figure 4 illustrates how social enterprise can impact society in five areas.

According to Nyssens (2006), politicians and international assistance planners are increasingly turning to social enterprise as a means of assisting in the revitalization of communities, the provision of critical facilities, and the development of a robust and socially accountable economic powerhouse. However, one of the most significant obstacles that has been one of the key impediments to the debate, analysis, and development of social enterprise is the lack of appropriate awareness about the concept itself.

Although a significant amount of time and attention has been invested in attempting to define social enterprise, there is still no agreement on what such enterprise is. One of the most significant issues is that countries and regions all over the world have connected the term “social enterprise” with their own

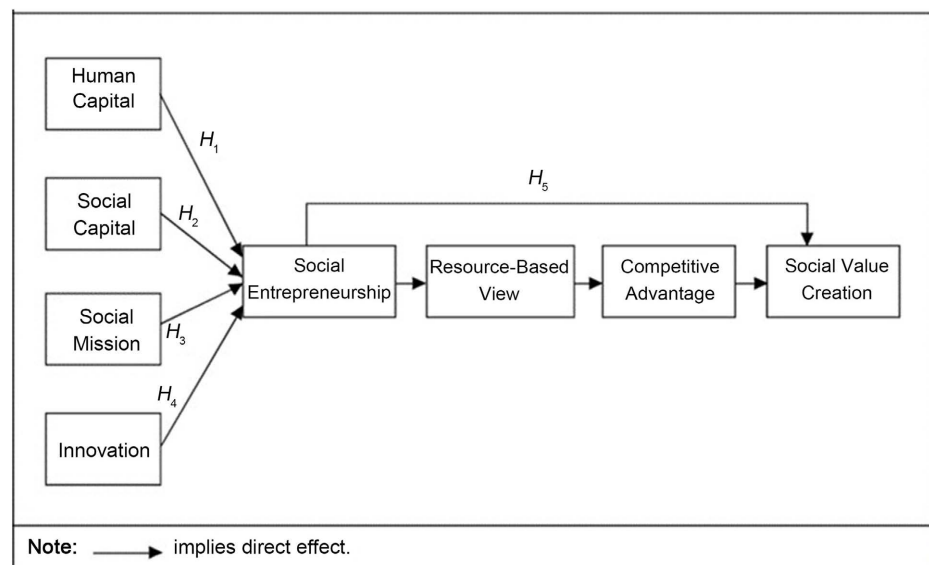


Figure 4. A research model for social entrepreneurship. A conceptual model for social entrepreneurship directed toward social impact on society by Jiao (2011).

distinct ways of doing things and activities. Because of this, the debate that occurs between different regions on the subject is complicated because everyone offers their opinion on the phrase based on their own locally defined conception of what it means. Additionally, the localized development of social enterprise concepts has resulted in the difficulty that creative social business solutions established in one region of the world are unfamiliar to many other regions (Nysens, 2006). This is a challenge that has been brought about because of it.

3. Methodology

The research uses a combination of online semi-structured interviews conducted via the Zoom app and direct observation methods were adopted. The direct observation process was utilized within the company.

Due to the uniqueness of this research and the size of the organization, an interview data collection method was chosen. Conducting interviews via Zoom allowed the researcher and respondents to interact closely, enabling the study to gain valuable insights from the managers' real-life experiences. The significance of this study was emphasized during the pre-interview discussions, particularly because employees of the organization were not particularly familiar with project management practices. The interviews guidelines ensured that the interviewed were conducted openly to address any unexpected findings during the process and were aligned with the research aim, objectives, and research questions.

Purposive sampling was employed for this research, leveraging the researcher's knowledge about the organization and its respondents who met specific criteria. Respondents were selected based on their experience within the organization to ensure the most valuable results. While the size of the company limited the number of available respondents, the researcher identified two participants who met the requirements based on their experience within the organization. It is a reasonable size given the fact that the organization only has two experienced professionals and the study to gain valuable insights from the managers' real-life experiences was a reasonable sample especially given also that employees of the organization were not particularly familiar with project management practice.

4. Results and Discussion

Introduction

A comparative analysis of project management competences and behaviors in terms of performance for all (PFA) is presented in **Table 2**. This analysis is compared to three methodologies for project management that are generally recognized. Among these methodologies are the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK) project management methodology, the PRINCE2 Methodology, and the APM framework. The objective of this comparative assessment is to provide insights into the alignment and divergence between PFA and these established methodologies by bringing into focus their various strengths

and potential for improvement in terms of achieving project success. This will be accomplished by focusing on the differences between the two approaches.

The findings of this study are discussed concerning the research questions, data analysis, and analysis of the literature reviewed on the subject. The findings in this report reflect the application of project management practices to the project activities at Performance-For-All Northwest. 1) What are the project management practices currently adopted by a Not-for-profit organization?

Table 2. Comparison of project management frameworks with PFA.

Emphasis on	PMBOK	APM	PRINCE2	PFA
Frameworks Type	Guide and Standard (Both)	Guide	Methodology	Not Standardized
Technical				
Project Lifecycle	X		X	X
Project Management and Execution	X	X	X	X
Customer Collaboration		X		
Technology Management		X		
Project tools and techniques	X			
Innovation and Value engineering		X		
Post Project Evaluation	X	X		
Early Risk Identification	X		X	
SWOT Analysis	X			
Project Handover Document	X			
Contextual				
Program or Portfolio				
Product Management			X	
Society and Environment		X		X
Marketing and Sales		X		
Health and Safety		X		
Legal issues		X		
Business Case		X	X	X
Behavioural				
Transparency in communication	X			
Competence of project manager	X			
Leadership	X			

PFA project management vs. best practise: Source by Author (2024).

Un-structured project management approach

The company currently lacks a well-structured project management method, but the processes and sequence of events typically followed during its projects are closely aligned with conventional project management methods. Like many small-scale companies, organizational processes within the company are not standardized and can vary from one project to another. Additionally, the founder often intervenes in various work activities based on her perception of the project. The decision to employ different project management methods is usually influenced by factors such as funding conditions, project costs, and the availability of human resources at any given time. Due to its size, the organization relies on ad hoc staff (interns) for some projects, which results in project management methods not being deeply integrated into its organizational activities. The founder, as the visionary of the company and due to her expertise in business management, coordinates most projects.

Non-integration of project management practices

Currently, the organization does not have a clear set of project management methods. This is because the definition of a successful project frequently shifts based on the type of project being undertaken. When it comes to time, money, quality, and scope, the business owner is the one who selects which of these factors is the most significant. Although the cost of the project is typically the most important factor that is considered by the founder of the project that is funded by external sources, and this information is communicated to all members of the project team, the critical success factor of the project, which is what determines the project strategy, can also be stipulated by the funding company or provider. The project leader of each project is responsible for coordinating the planning phase of the project with the project team. Evaluation and control operations for a project are frequently carried out by the originator of the project. The firm has an excellent history of finishing its project within the essential project management parameters of time and money, according to the data that were retrieved; however, quality is not typically measured. There is a possibility that it will be challenging for a corporation that focuses on human wellness and fitness to ascertain the impact that the projects have had on the participants' overall perspective.

Project Cost Management

Performance For All Northwest is a small social enterprise that currently lacks a dedicated department for handling accounts and project costs. Project costs are typically decided and planned by the founder, without a formal procedure for allocating budgets to various activities. The costing of projects is often tailored to match the grant amount the organization is applying for, and other conditions attached to these funds. During project execution, the founder possesses information on many activities, while other prices are researched by the project team before a final decision is made by the founder, who currently controls the organization's finances.

Project Scope Management

Most projects conducted by the organization have a defined scope, usually determined during the application for funding stages. This is crucial due to limited funding, and donors appreciate clear scope information during funding applications. The company invests ample time in planning projects, especially those requiring external funding, due to stiff competition in securing grants. However, the scope management system is not formalized and is typically led by the founder. Projects are not divided into activities using tools like the Work Breakdown Structure (WBS).

Project Time Management

The allocation of time to project activities within the company is discretionary and not based on structured analysis. The founder relies on previous experience to determine likely timeframes for work activities. Considering the organization's size, investing in resources to assist in this regard is not a priority, according to the founder. Time resource allocation and monitoring are at the discretion of the founder, although adopting more efficient project management tools would be beneficial.

Project Communication Management

Effective communication is crucial for successful project execution. Oyekunle, Preston, & Ibeh, (2023) assert that to attain optimal performance and productivity in the project management process, it is crucial to have good communication, a conducive team environment, and a comprehensive understanding of the project's scope. The research stated that project managers can enhance and foster their communication skills. At Performance for All, communication during projects occurs using effective tools and daily virtual meetings. The project team meets every morning to discuss work progress and uses Google Docs as an online repository for storing and updating changes, accessible to all team members. This reduces hand-offs resulting from waiting for information. According to the founder, precise and adequate information is vital for the team to meet project objectives. Additionally, daily project review meetings are conducted using the Zoom platform.

Use of Technology

The influence of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) on project management and outcomes continues to increase. The founder mentioned that the company uses open-source information management applications for project monitoring and effective information management. Ibeh, Oyekunle, & Boohene, (2024) stated that progressive development of information technology has revolutionized the operational processes of enterprises and organizations. The most effective strategies for improving worker engagement and performance include selecting the appropriate communication technology. The COVID-19 pandemic influenced the adoption of these software applications. The company does not use Customer Relationship Management (CRM) or Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) applications due to its small size. Client da-

ta is managed personally by the founder using applications like Microsoft Excel. The Zoom platform facilitates seamless transition to remote working, while Google Docs aids information management and documentation within different teams.

2) What are the ways through which the application of project management practices can help social enterprises and Not-for-profit organizations become more effective and productive?

Lesson Learned Strategy and Project Review

Project review and lesson learned strategies are important tools for measuring performance, identifying weaknesses, and suggesting areas of improvement in future projects. Jugdev (2012) argues that lessons are often learned superficially and are met with resistance. Unfortunately, critical project knowledge is not always documented or disseminated for future reference. These issues contribute to higher project costs, longer timelines, lack of communication, numerous re-works, and costly errors. The founder admitted that the organization lacks a formal procedure for keeping records of issues identified in a project, stating, “I conduct project reviews and evaluations within the organization on my own but do not often keep records.”

Project Success and Benefits Management

Project success varies among stakeholders and can sometimes be difficult to manage. According to APM (2012), project success is expressed as meeting stakeholders’ needs and is determined through the measurement of success criteria set at the project’s outset. At Performance for All, project success is often measured in line with project objectives and through tools such as customer feedback, participant numbers, and customer satisfaction. The founder stated, “The company evaluates project success based on customer feedback and the number of participants enrolled in the project.” However, this method lacks organizational standards or requirements to benchmark project outcomes, making the determination of project success subjective.

Stakeholder Management

Effective stakeholder management aggregates different views and opinions to achieve consensus on project outcomes (Maylor, 2010). Stakeholder involvement in determining project objectives is significant. The founder stated, “The company often researches community pain points and problems before designing creative solutions. Research relies on online searches, academic journals, and customer feedback from social interactions and previous projects within the community.”

Project Planning Process

The goal of project planning is to determine project objectives in a structured way and design guidelines, processes, and programs to achieve them (Loo, 2002). The planning phase is crucial, requiring systematic planning and flexibility to accommodate various work activities. The founder expressed, “For our projects, we conduct careful planning, investigating various aspects before we start.”

However, the organization does not create a Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) to identify unique work activities or use planning scheduling tools such as Gantt charts in the planning process.

Conflict Management

Conflict is inevitable in projects and organizations. Conflicts can arise when stakeholders or team members have differing views, perceptions, or beliefs (Villax & Anantatmula, 2010). Conflict management is important for problem-solving, resolving personality differences, and achieving optimal team productivity. Oyekunle, Preston, & Ibeh, (2023) state that to actively and purposely foster conflict and accomplish the project's objectives, deliverables, and goals, strong group cohesion and positive team dynamics are necessary in project performance and productivity. PFA does not have a formal conflict management strategy. However, conflicts are addressed based on the merits of each situation, as the founder stated, "Each disagreement within a team is treated based on its merits, which has been effective in resolving differences during projects.

3) What are some of the limitations to adopting project management practices in Not-for-profit organizations?

The study indicated that the owner or founder has a key influence in the effective operations of not-for-profit organizations in the United Kingdom. Performance for All Northwest (PFA) and many other non-profit organizations operate their project management in a less formalized manner. The extent to which current project management techniques and technologies are valued and implemented typically relies on the owner's familiarity with these methods. The founder and CEO of non-profit organizations must have a strong understanding of strategic management, while the rest of the organization's personnel have limited expertise of project management. Not-for-profit organizations have not fully grasped the potential benefits of project management principles and practices in enhancing project performance and achieving organizational objectives, as indicated by findings from PFA and other literature.

Comparative Analysis

A comparative analysis of project management methodologies observed in the semi-structured interview was conducted. This provides a critical view of how well project management principles align with the company. **Table 2** compares project management skills and behaviors at Performance for All (PFA) with the PMBOK project management methodology, PRINCE2 Methodology, and APM framework. The comparative table emphasizes technical (Green), contextual (Blue), and behavioral (Yellow) aspects.

A comparative analysis of project management competences and behaviors in terms of performance for all (PFA) is presented in **Table 2**. This analysis is compared to three methodologies for project management that are generally recognized. Among these methodologies are the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK) project management methodology, the PRINCE2 Methodology, and the APM framework. The objective of this comparative assess-

ment is to provide insights into the alignment and divergence between PFA and these established methodologies by bringing into focus their various strengths and potential for improvement in terms of achieving project success. This will be accomplished by focusing on the differences between the two approaches.

Project implementation is an intricate process that requires proficient project management skills to guarantee the accomplishment of project goals. Multiple frameworks focus on improving project success rates by highlighting various contexts. PMBOK emphasizes individual projects and their completion while neglecting contextual elements and suggesting that projects are independent of each other. The PRINCE2 methodology is based on seven core principles that guide the project lifecycle, although it does not focus on the necessary technical specifics for the framework. APM's guidance focuses on marketing, sales, health and safety, society, and environment, which are issues that receive less attention in other frameworks. Success elements depend on the founder's human judgment, typically acting as the project manager. Projects may experience delays, increased expenses because of insufficient tools/techniques, lack of specified success factors, project team competencies, and leaders' understanding of project management.

5. Conclusion

Organizations worldwide are utilizing project management as a fundamental skill to expedite the accomplishment of organizational objectives in a deliberate, creative, and strategic way. Project management is crucial for providing essential information, skills, strategies, and tools for planning and executing projects. The study intended to pinpoint the primary areas where project management principles are utilized in not-for-profit organizations, with PFA serving as the case study. The qualitative examination of project management practices in the organization indicates that traditional project management methods are employed in project delivery within the not-for-profit organization.

While more firms are starting to implement modern project management practices, many remain rely on traditional project management approaches research found that project management practices showing a broadening of project management concepts and methodologies aligned with an emerging project management approach were unevenly implemented across organizations. Furthermore, the implementation of these principles was inconsistent in firms when they were present. Furthermore, the implementation of contemporary project management principles relies on understanding their effectiveness in enhancing project performance inside an organization.

The research emphasized that the support of senior management is essential for implementing contemporary project management methods and frameworks. Many managers often mistakenly believe that project management principles are only applicable to "hard" projects such as building and manufacturing. Considering small projects exempt from implementing project management standards is a myth. Project management tools are currently fo-

cused on tasks traditionally linked to project work, despite the acknowledgment that project management should be utilized for overseeing all forms of business-related change.

6. Recommendation

The analysis revealed key PFA project management concerns. The findings show critical gaps in project management adoption; hence the following recommendations are made:

Project Planning

Planning is essential to project management. Haughey claims it underpins project success. Although all employees participate in project planning, creating a project timeline and task breakdown structure will improve project delivery.

Training and development

Training personnel at all levels on the value of project management to project outcomes can help organizations apply project management approaches and align them with business operations. The founder, who has strategic management experience, can lead frequent training sessions. This should improve project management and performance by personnel.

Project Strategic Lessons

Project outcomes can improve with lesson documenting. The entrepreneur knows what worked and didn't work in earlier ventures, but without proper records, transferring these lessons to future efforts would be difficult. They must be included in organizational paperwork evaluated while planning and implementing initiatives.

The research outcomes in this study can provide valuable information for future studies on project management practices in Not-for-profit organizations in the United Kingdom. The available literature on project management practices in Not-for-profit organizations is currently limited. This study provides a basic understanding of the organizational structure and project-related activities within a Not-for-profit organization.

Research Limitation

The study primarily examined project management approaches that are relevant to not-for-profit organisations. However, it failed to thoroughly examine project success characteristics specific to projects in the not-for-profit industry, the level of project management awareness among employees, the organisational culture, and the intricacies of change management. Further research can be undertaken to analyse the cost-benefit of project management strategies for not-for-profit organisations and their impact on strategic growth and organisational performance.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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