

Factors affecting project management development

[Engineering](#), [Project Management](#)



Factors Affecting Project Management Development

In the developing countries, the fundamental social issue of the country is the key economic sector for company management and organisation management. These concerns have affected the performance of the economic system in this sector. The performance economic system includes having a good management, executing the overall planning and administrating the systems. Besides, organisations in developing countries may face constraint from the dual nature of the economies, inexperienced in administration and management and lack of overall planning mechanism. However, Negandhi and Prasad, (1971) stated that the reasons behind these are largely due to the culture bound, insufficient technology system and communications that reflects to the national interest and problems. The challenge and problems become worse with the multifarious and the often unsolved political systems. This is because the developing countries and nations had experiment with different kind of systems in the attempt to discover suitable model for governance to manage. The following literature research discuss comprehensively on the factors such as culture and people's factor, technology challenges and communications difficulties that may bring effect in project management.

Culture and People's Factors

For the past decade or so, Japanese managers' successfulness had contributed extraordinary inspirations of interest in the cross cultural studies that at the same time had increased the awareness of the cultural dimension in different areas (Zeffane, 1989). Cultural are important to business

organization because it can integrate an individual into teams and likely to promote values such as dedication, loyalty, honesty and most important the cooperation and efficiency on work. Zeffane R. and Rugimbana R. (1995) supported that the cultural enables by strengthen the group to survive the external threats and opportunities. They also stated that the culture can positively manipulated by powerful individuals or an interest group. Hence, culture can be described as how things are done around here. However, Hofstede G. (1980) defined that culture is a collective of programming of the mind that can differentiate a member of one human group from another group. Thus, cultures in logical sense are considered as a part of the systems of values where the values are among the building blocks of culture Hofstede G. (1980). Consequently, in simply words that culture is a pattern of shared assumptions that were invented, discovered and developed to help to handle problems with adaptation and integration of external and internal factors. In some organisation, the cultural had worked well and were consider valid that to be taught to new members in the group as the correct way to distinguish, think and consider in relation during a problems faced. Schein (2004) supported that culture is view as a pattern of basic assumption that is shared by a group of people in order to cope with situation at time.

According to Zeffane R. and Rugimbana R. (1995), that it is recognized that the culture had strength and strong perspectives although the fact that cultural values and attitude may be different between one organization or individual to another. These perspective are believe to the strong elements of convergence among the cultural group as different group are more likely

to behave differently under similar situation according to their attitudes and morals. On constantly to Zeffane (1992) beliefs, he explain that the culture is perceived as a structure and functions that may serve purpose in a society by providing classification on people and matters. However, an idea of individual may have merits of respect for his or her inner worth and integrity that doesn't neglect the complementary on recognition of social position, dignity in some situation or in an established hierarchy of work in an organization (Zeffane R. and Rugimbana R., 1995). For example, when the Kentucky Fried Chicken expands its market into the China, it is discovered that the slogan "finger lickin' good" that had being used for years were came out as "eat your finger's off". Ali et al., 1992; Morris et al., 1993; Zeffane, (1994) research showed that having a culture in organization have not proved that it is convincing efforts to overcome the structures and management process problems. This is because culture often have different methods and comprehension, this it become another complex issue of developing it to a standard. Zeffane (1989) supported by stating that the essential methodology and analytical cultural approaches that is used by many cross-national studies and literature were not sufficiently convincing. Given example (Zeffane, 1989), that most studies have overlooked the results in comparison and implication of the cultural "degree" versus the "relational". He also stated that the studies in focus comparison tend to illuminate the marked organizational differences between developed countries and developing countries.

On the other hand, having strong culture may not necessarily a bad thing; it has its benefits too. Culture tends to create a strong bond within the team members in the group, it can provide the sense of purpose and identity that raises the satisfaction of an individual or a group (Huczynski A. A. and Buchanan D, 2007). On achieving that adaptation of culture, it can increase commitment on work and eventually endow with sense of distinctiveness. Peters and Waterman's (1980) view and emphasises that strong cultures is equivalent to excellence, this is because culture can supply informal rules to guide behaviour and as identification for worker that may reduces vagueness in organisations. Blunt (1992) testimony stated that there is an increase of cultural realisation in economic development and the extensive political and economic changes that in many developing countries are desired to look promptly for available business opportunity. These changes bring many benefits not only in developing countries, but also the organisation and multinational corporations that increases the import and export revenues and also expanding the marketplace that generates sales (Blunt, 1992). With the involvement of organisations worldwide, the developing countries eventually will be able to adapt their product, pricing and communications along with specific management structures. However, government of the developing countries play a role in adapting the culture of providing knowledge, information and also conveys the essence of vital cultural in order to have a healthy performance of economy Zeffane (1992). Further on to that, many developing countries found out that the cultural differences are an important aspect of project management. Reasons behind this that during the implementation of projects, often occur the socio cultural disaster,

misinterpretations, frustration and conflicts which caused the delays and waste of resources in completing a project (Huczynski A. A. and Buchanan D, 2007). Dadfar and Gustavsson (1993) conducted a study and revealed that culture that involved in project management tends to be project operating environment rather than the firm's organisation and most likely brings impact on the project management from the starts of the project process. For examples, project managers may arrange a group that consist different cultures so that it's creates competition among the team member to evoke pride and improves performance in work. But sometimes, these cultural arrangements may have the tendencies of bringing impact on management at all levels and functions. Hence in a project management, it is often carefully collaborate and implemented. In many cases, management principles are often originate from the proponent of personal cultures which emphasise more in individual interest and achievements. This is support by Zeffane (1994) that understanding of management demand need great comprehension of group orientation and group welfare rather than individual benefits and these explain the relevant of management differences between developed countries and developing countries. For example in developed countries, managers are more likely to hire an individual that have the best qualified to do the job that based on personal skills and expertises. In contrast to that, managers in developing countries will take count and tend to hire the individual that not only have the qualifications but also the loyalty, trustworthiness and compatibility to work with the existing co-workers (Zeffane R. and Rugimbana R. 1995). A survey done by Dlakwa (1990) found out that the reasons of obstacle and delays in projects were

essentially due to the inadequate and bureaucratic culture (behavior) of sector agencies in the project. Thus, Dlakwa (1990) concludes that the problems of bureaucratic obstacle were developed from mismanagement and improper time planning (delays).

According to Lane and Beamish, (1990) research, it is shown that the behavioural pattern and cultural perspectives at times may become a barrier to increase effectiveness in developing countries. These factors have affected the process of creating a good management in an organisation. Thus, organisations realised that developing a business in the third world country is a long term investment. Zeffane R. and Rugimbana R. (1995) supported with stating that some organisation are not willing to spend the required time in the developing country and consequently resulting lack of commitments to conduct the project. However, these may not necessarily be the case. Organisations used other method such as introducing a joint venture with local partners to run the management using the resources and support available that were well developed in the parent organisation (Dadfar and Gustavsson, 1993). With using the local manager which are more competent and ensure the fundamental knowledge of the local culture, politics and economics are suitable for the expansion of product market share (Blunt, 1992). This is another key strategy using human resource management and utilisations to manage the local employments and cultures. Within the field of human resource management, training is an essential to function well that is tailored to the organisation needs in developing countries (Coates, 1990). Training is the most important factors

to suppress the lack of economic management activities for resources and development. With training the employee or a team member in project will lead to a change in attitude to support and work hard in an organisation. Through training organisation and worker will gain guidance, help and teaching from other nation that their wisdom may be useful for businesses in the developing countries (Zeffane R. and Rugimbana R. 1995).

Technology Challenges

Almost over two decades, technology had constantly liberated with the associate policies and continuous growing among the developed and developing countries. Even some governments have created systematic framework for guiding the industries into the information age (Curtis G. and Cobham B. 2005). Worse case scenario when a developing country starts from a weak position that consists of low level of capital formation and rapid population growth. These may result a low level of investment into information structures and lack of public interest in modern information facilities (Zeffane R. and Rugimbana R. 1995). However in 1990, Heitzman (1990) said that a few governments of developing countries have moved away from the large scale centralised intervention and move towards to a more decentralised regional and national project. These had result some changes to a new dynamic of many multinational enterprises and consequently it is necessary to have a practical cooperative style to be developed and established (Zeffane R. and Rugimbana R. 1995). Kaynak and Dalgic (1992) had conducted a study on the construction industry, and the results indicate that technologies were transferred between Western

construction companies and companies from developing countries in order to stimulate their domestic and international business efforts.

An interesting statement made by Ajami and Arch (1990) that having a technology standard can provide a more competitive approach to operate internationally and not contradicting with the forces of the governance. Although there are issue on developing a modern information management, but it is found that the successful development of systems can be guarded by sensitivity knowledge of the information management and the technology issue (Zeffane R. and Rugimbana R. 1995). Therefore, the needs of effective information evaluation and coordinating function in an organisation are essential to overcome the process and difficulty of establishing a modern information management system. Most of the western models required the individuals or the managers to do technology development which is a normal task for developed countries, but this is not appropriate for the poorer countries to target on achieving the same task. For example given by Albala and Rubenstein (1994) that the technological development in some developing countries depends on their local strengths, but the others may own and have technology policies principles concern with creation and adaptation technology. Having such technology policies sometimes may neglect the importance of the demand and the impact of information technology to the organisations. Horton (1990) had examined the cross cultural dimension on technology systems development by comparison of wide variety of management group and pointed out that number of actions that could be undertaken by the organisation to improve the integration and

adaptation of those technologies. Nevertheless, most of the developing countries are not prepared to accommodate the modern technology of the industrial countries. In addition with the method adapted have issue with assessment theory such as inadequate of data and difficulty in measurement and comparison used resources. Along side with the unskilled worker, insufficient capital and lack of experiences, thus they need imported technology and related research which is different type of technology to improve on gaining a competitive position among the developing countries. Lu et al. (1989) statement supported that the developing countries tend to have lack of human resources skill in developing a system that suit the needs of the organisation. Hence, Lu et al. (1989) suggested that the implementation should required an organisational change where the user or the person involved should contribute in analysis and designing the technology system. Moreover, the technology and machinery applications had to be handled in the simpler way than its innovative used because of the unskilled and poorly equipped workers. Nevertheless, cultural variation should also be considered during the decision making processes that may bring different impact and approach. When it is applied appropriately, the true value added technology processes will bring transformation to the organisation and the entire economies (Zeffane R. and Rugimbana R. 1995). To sustain in the application of the new technology, (Habibie, 1990) suggested to set up a centre of research, science and technology. The centre will provide support and facilitates technology difficulties and limited human skill resources. These methods will help to create a strong technology policy, strategy and planning for all industry and organisations in developing

countries. Since that the availability of information and guidance is sufficient, consequently there is a significant increase of effectiveness and this is considered as a crucial development effort for any country

- Rachid Zeffane and Robert Rugimbana Leadership & Organization Development Journal, Vol. 16 No. 8, 1995, pp. 26-36
- Negandhi, A. R. and Prasad, S. B. (1971), Management in the Developing Countries, Appleton-Century-Crofts, New York, NY.
- Zeffane, R. (1989), “ Organization structures and contingencies in different nations”, Social Science Research, Vol. 18 No. 4, pp. 331-69.
- Hofstede, G. (1980), Culture’s Consequences. International Differences in Work-related Values, Sage, London.
- Zeffane, R. (1992), “ Organization structures: design in the nineties”, Leadership & Organization Development Journal, Vol. 13 No. 6, pp. 18-34.
- Ali, M. R., Khaleque, A. and Hossain, M. (1992), “ Participative management in a developing country: attitudes and perceived barriers”, Journal of Managerial Psychology, Vol. 7 No. 1, pp. 11-16.
- Morris, M. H. and Pitt, L. F. (1993), “ Do strategy frameworks apply in the United States and abroad?”, Industrial Marketing Management, Vol. 22 No. 3, pp. 215-21.
- Zeffane, R. (1994), “ Utility theory and organization design”, American Business Review, Vol. 12 No. 1, pp. 66-86.

- Blunt, P. (1992), *Managing Organizations in Africa*, Walter de Gruyter, Berlin.
- Dadfar, H. and Gustavsson, P. (1993), “ Competition by effective management of cultural diversity: the case of international construction projects”, *International Studies of Management & Organization*, Vol. 22 No. 4, pp. 81-92.
- Dlakwa, M. M. (1990), “ Bureaucracy: key obstacle to project success”, *AACE Transactions*, Vol. 39 No. 3, pp. 41-5.
- Lane, H. W. and Beamish, P. W. (1990), “ Cross-cultural cooperative behaviour in joint ventures in LDCs”, *Management International Review*, Vol. 30, pp. 87-102.
- Coates, J. (1990), “ Management training in developing countries”, *Industrial and Commercial Training*, Vol. 22 No. 4, pp. 4-9.
- Heitzman, J. (1990), “ Information systems and development in the Third World”, *Information Processing & Management*, Vol. 26 No. 4, pp. 489-502.
- Kaynak, E. and Dalgic, T. (1992), “ Internationalisation of Turkish construction companies: a lesson for Third World countries?”, *Columbia Journal of World Business* , Vol. 26 No. 4, pp. 60-75.
- Ajami, R. and Arch, G. (1990), “ Co-operating to compete: using technology to link the multinational corporation and the country”, *International Journal of Technology Management*, Vol. 5 No. 2, pp. 165-77.
- Albala, A. and Rubenstein, A. H. (1994), “ Significant issues for the future of product innovation: the coming revolution in Latin America;

the urgent need for explicit technology policies/strategies in the firm”,
Journal of Product Innovation Management, Vol. 11 No. 2, pp. 156-61.

- Horton, F. W., Jr (1990), “ The information management communities on five continents”, Information Management Review, Vol. 5 No. 4, pp. 59-64.
- Lu, M., Hsieh, C. and Pan, C. (1989), “ Implementing decision support systems in developing countries”, Industrial Management and Data Systems, Vol. 21 No. 7, pp. 21-6.
- Habibie, B. J. (1990), “ Sophisticated technologies: taking root in developing countries”, International Journal of Technology Management, Vol. 5 No. 5, pp. 489-97.
- Huczynski A. A. and Buchanan D, (2007), Organisational Behaviour: An Introductory Text, 6th ed., New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Curtis G. and Cobham B. 2005 Business information systems : analysis, design, and practice. 5th edition, Harlow : FT Prentice Hall, 2005.