

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of
MSc in Project Management

***The Effect of Project Level Activities
On Portfolio Management Efficiency
In UAE Organizations***

تأثير النشاطات المتعلقة بالمشاريع على كفاءة إدارة البرامج والمحافظ
في المؤسسات الإماراتية

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List of Abbreviations

PPM: Programme and Portfolio Management

PM: Project Management/ manager

PMO: Portfolio Management Office

PMT: Portfolio Management Team

IT: Information Technology

EPMO: Enterprise Project Management Office

SPD: Strategic Planning Department

PPMF: Professional Project Management Firm

OPMM: Organizational Project Management Maturity

OPM3: Organizational Project Management Maturity Model

PMP: Project management professional

PMI: Project Management Institute

DEGP: Dubai Government Excellence Program

WTO: World Trade Organization

DSP: Dubai Strategic Plan

SOW: Statement of Work

D.M : Decision Making



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Problem Statement

Although several studies have been conducted on Project management roles & activities, and Programme and Portfolio management (PPM) concepts, few of them have attempted to look at the links between them. Up to now, there is a lack of evidence about the nature, significance and strength of relationship between poor project level activities and PPM efficiency, especially when we take into consideration the multidimensional & interdependence nature of PPM and project management practices. As far as the United Arab Emirates and other middle east countries are concerned, the library search shows that there are no studies in this field .

1.2 Research Background

Today, almost all organizations face dynamic environment characterized by rapid technological change, shortening product life cycle, and globalization (Lale and Arzu, 2007). Organizations especially technologically driven ones, need to be more creative and innovative than before to survive, to compete, to grow and to lead in current global recession (Keith, 2003). The creativity in allocating the resources, prioritizing and selecting the all right criteria for selecting the projects is important aspect in the current projectized organizations.

Recently, the Portfolio and Program management (PPM) is widely implemented in many organizations around the world. PPM perceived as one of the vital elements in organizations success. PPM is vital due to the numerous number of running projects simultaneously which need to be controlled and monitored in order to reach the success of projects and organization. Also, the huge money invested in equipment, machinery...etc; leads to boost the need of PPM as international concept.

PPM clearly helps the organizations in various ways. The PPM provides the organization with correct balancing and maximizing the value of the projects in their portfolios. Furthermore, PPM helps in aligning the projects objectives with the corporate objectives. Also, the efficient PPM increases the project performance as well as business performance by highlighting the gaps and future development opportunities (Miia and Paivi, 2007).

On the other hand, the success of the portfolio depends on the project success and the project success is dependable on the project manager success in managing the project. Hereafter, there are many factors for project and project manager success. (Muller, and Turner, 2007).

In this concern, the research is mainly searching for the barriers to effective implementation of the PPM from project management perspective in UAE organization. This research tries to discover the effect of project management level activities on the PPM efficiency.

1.3 Aim and Objectives

The aim of the current study is to investigate the significance of the relationship between project-level activities and PPM performance as global concepts, as well as multifaceted constructs for the first time in the UAE context.

In order to achieve this aim, the research has the following objectives:

- Examine the importance of PPM to corporate and project success.
- Evaluate current measures of PPM effectiveness and their relevance to corporate objectives and project objectives.
- Examine the relationship between project level activities and PPM effectiveness.
- Investigate barriers to effective implementation of PPM in government agencies from project management perspective.

1.4 Scope of work and Timescale

The aims and objectives are the borders that identify our scope of work. Extensive literature review will be conducted in order to develop conceptual frame work. By developing conceptual framework, we will be able to test the relation between different variables (project level activities) and PPM efficiency. Eight weeks is the time line to develop the final research proposal of this study. It started in October 2009, so the proposal and research plan should be ready by December, 2009. While January, 2011 is the dead line to finish this study.

1.5 Dissertation structure

This assignment encloses six chapters as illustrated below:

Chapter One: Introduction

The main aim for this research is to investigate the barriers to effective implementation of PPM from project management activities side in UAE government agencies. The research objectives are positioned in order to achieve this aim.

Chapter Two: Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

In this chapter, the researcher tries to answer the research questions / objectives through the literature review. The researcher investigates and discusses the main objective topics related to PPM efficiency and project manager activities. The chapter starts by background information on the PPM importance, performance measurements, and general problem areas and after that moves to project manager's roles and activities, and its relation to PPM performance efficiency. Also, other topics are presented by the researcher like communication effects on organization levels and solutions to improve PPM performance in inadequate project-level activities environment. Next, depending on the extensive literature review and researcher knowledge, the conceptual framework is introduced in order to examine the effect of the project manager's activities or factors on PPM efficiency for the first time in the UAE context.

Chapter Three: Methodology

The researcher methodology and framework in this research is introduced in this chapter. The researcher presents his research approach, participants, and instruments for this dissertation in details. Mainly, qualitative approach is selected as best methodology for this research (with simple quantitative method). The research main tool in the case studies is interviews, while simple questionnaire along with secondary data observation are used also in order to have better reliable results.

Chapter Four: Case Studies

Multiple case studies are preferred and used by the researcher. The case study chapter starts with introduction and general information about organization A,B and C. Then, the chapter focuses on PPM, PMO, and Project management processes and practices in the three organizations.

Chapter Five: Analysis and Discussion

Comparative analyses of the three organizations are introduced based on interviews, questionnaire and secondary data observation. The researcher describes the general findings in tables headed by ten categories or parts. These tables are the base for the discussion part.

Chapter Six: Recommendation and Conclusion

Finally, recommendations are suggested by the researcher based on the collected data from literature review, case studies findings and analysis & discussion. General and specific recommendations were introduced by the researcher to eliminate the barriers to effective implementation of PPM in UAE based government agencies from project management perspective.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW & CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



2.1 Introduction

As mentioned earlier, the research aims to investigate the effect of project-level activities on PPM efficiency. Accordingly, the researcher divides this general topic into four smaller focus questions which can lead us to answer the research topic. The research questions which the researcher tries to answer in the following part are:

- 1) How PPM is important to corporate and project success, and what are the different performances indicators that should be used to evaluate PPM performance in different contexts.
- 2) Is organizational communication has effect on project management and PPM performances.
- 3) What are the project level activities that may affect PPM performance efficiency.
- 4) How to improve PPM performance in inadequate project-level activities or poor project environments.

The literature review will be divided into four parts to have deeper focus on different aspects of the research.

2.2 Project Portfolio Management (PPM): Importance, performance measurements, and general problem areas

PPM is "a dynamic decision process, whereby a business's list of active new product projects is constantly updated and revised. In this process, new projects are evaluated, selected, and prioritized; existing projects may be killed, accelerated, or deprioritized; and resources are allocated /reallocated to the active projects" (Robert, Scott, and Elko.1999).

According to Bruce (1997), the new structure of Portfolio management approach has been identified because there are many organizations worldwide use IT projects to implement their strategic objectives, so they apply some criteria to prioritize the projects and allocate the resources. However, some organizations don't apply all criteria to select and prioritize the project and allocate their resources.

Traditionally project management and program management have focused on "doing work right" while portfolio management focused on "doing the right

work". Thus, Wessels (2007) had revealed the importance of the portfolio management as follows: 1) portfolio management moves the organization forward because it facilitate in selecting, managing, and supporting the set of projects. 2) Provides a rational framework for decision making build on well analyzed data and criteria. 3) PPM leads the organization to focus on selecting the projects based on their importance and priority. 4) Focuses on delivering the projects efficiently according to their planned time and budget.

On the other hand, several global issues had been identified concerning the portfolio management in organization such as 1) organization has a lot of active projects in their portfolio. 2) Projects are not linked to the organization's strategy. 3) Some wrong projects are going in process due to wrong selecting criteria (Kendal and Rollins, 2005).

Hence, PPM is vital so as to attain organization and business success. The most important objectives for PPM are to maximizing the value of portfolio projects by allocating recourses properly and effectively, balancing the portfolio projects in terms of duration (short/long), risks (high/low), variety(of projects markets/type/tech..etc), and finally reflecting the business's strategy in portfolio projects. Thus, PPM works as mirror that reflects their strategic direction and priorities (Robert, Scott and Elko.2000).

Tomas and Ralf (2006) introduce the importance of PPM as a subset of corporate governance. The aim of project management governance is to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of: 1) portfolio direction 2) project sponsorship 3) project management 4) disclosure and reporting. So, interconnectedness of overall projects objectives to maximize the overall outcomes is one perspective of PPM. While the second perspective is worried with interrelationship of management requirements from those projects in order to achieve the organization's overall business results.

Effective PPM can give the organization competitive position and advantages in any business environment. That's through strategic alignment with projects, effective resource allocation, and by being focus on adequate number of projects with the limited recourses (Robert, Scott and Elko, 1999). The question here would be how the PPM performance can be judged as efficient and effective or not. In general, the degrees in which PPM achieving

its objectives (strategic alignment, balance across projects, and maximization of value) can be one major dimension indicate that the PPM performs effectively and efficiently (Cooper et, 1997a; cited at Ralf, Miia and Tomas 2008). It is proved in a study that portfolio management are multi dimensional, so the performance cannot be judge by its own performance. Overall organizational performance should be an indicator for PPM efficiency (Ralf, Miia and Tomas, 2008). In Robert, Scott and Elko (1999) study paper, they found linkage and relation between portfolio level, business level, and product level performances. Thus, the quality of PPM can be affected by complicated variables. But in many cases, successful management and performance of single projects don't mean or guarantees the success at organization business levels (Perttu and Paivi 2005).

Further more, Munns and Bjeirmi (1996) highlighted overlap that exist between projects and project management objectives and how project management emphasis more toward achieving more specific and short term targets compared to wider aim of a project.

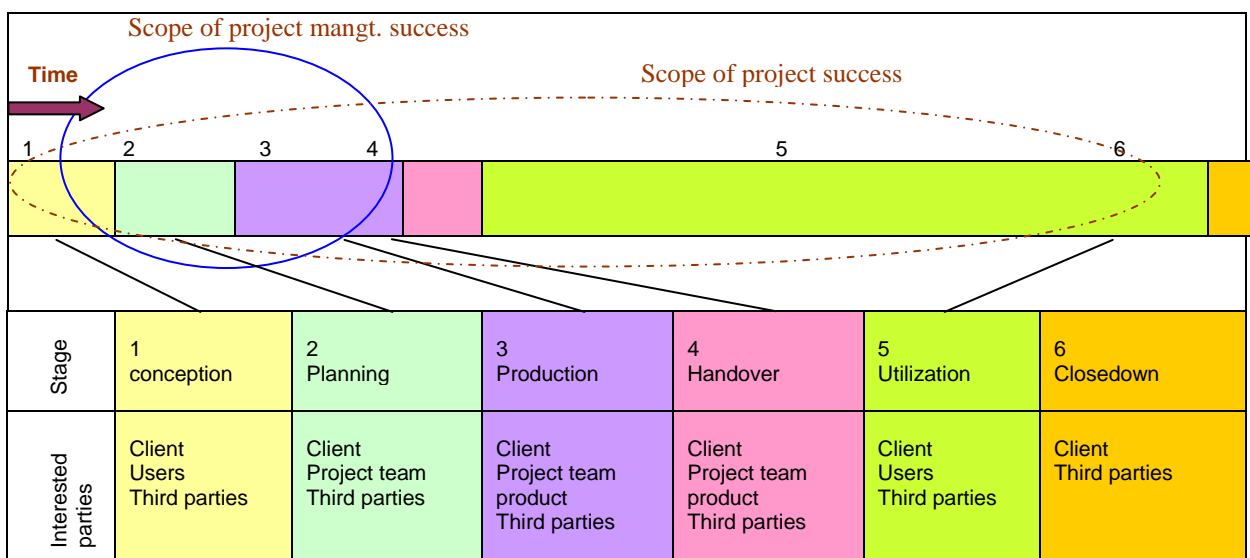


Figure1. The overlap between project and project management objectives(source: Munns & Bjeirmi, 1996)

Muller (2008) determined the forces that impact the quality of project management. In summary, they found that education 'what can be done?',

management demands 'what should be done?' and perceived economic pressure 'what is done?', for example cost overruns, drives down the project management quality, are factors that effect project management positively. Each organization needs to focus on these three drivers by balancing financial investment in project management (return on investment). So, in project base organizations, in order to have significant financial gains, they should invest more on project management capabilities and quality.

Muller suggest model for governance of project management as follows in a three step process:

Portfolios			
Programs			
Projects			
Step	1	2	3
What can. be Done?. Education	Methodology use and basic training	Certification	Advanced training & Internal certification
What should be Done?. Management demand	Steering Committees	Project Management office (PMO / PSO / PO)	Benchmarking
What is done?	Audits / reviews	Mentor programs	Maturity Model

Figure2. Muller governance model for project management (Muller, 2008)

This governance measures used by organization represents equilibrium point (balance) between economic pressure and management demand. In order to move from step to step, the investment in project management should be increased for more quality and capabilities for them. There are main constrains and enablers to shift from step to next one. Very strong technology focus, strong project control focus, and resistance to change existing practices are the main constrains to move from step 1 to 3 sequentially. On the other hand, better project results demand, role and career for project managers, and project management as strategic capability are the main drivers for moving from step 1 to 3 in sequence (Muller, 2008).

Now a day's Organizational Project Management Maturity (OPMM) widely used by many organizations. OPMM is defined as "The ability to efficiently deliver projects while driving your organizations' strategy." In order to measure the maturity of the organization, several models were developed. OPM3 is one of these models which are considered as a global standard that help the organization to manage their projects and to know the capabilities of the projects management. Moreover, this model helps to measure the project maturity and compare it with the best practice. OPM3 model focuses on three stages which are project management's knowledge, assessment and improvement.

Firstly, the project management knowledge is concern learning more about hundreds of managing projects best practice. The second stage is assessment, which is evaluating the recent capabilities of the project management and defines the weak areas that need to be improved. Third stage is improvement which comes after completing the assessment and map out how to achieve the improvement goals.

Reviewing the existing practices in the organization against the best practice will facilitate the organization to map out the areas that need to be improved.

OPM3 works in alignment with the strategy of the organization in order to choose the right projects to achieve the success for the organization. This is done by collecting the best practice and to identify whether the project is in the right path or it need to change the direction of implementing the projects.

This model keeps the business moving toward success by:

1. Using the project management principles and practices to link the strategy and individual projects
2. Having knowledge about best practice to apply within the project management in the organization.
3. Measuring the maturity by knowing the capability of the on going projects.

Using OPM3 assessment to outline and prepare the improvement plan in order to achieve them effectively (PMI website, 2010).

Practically, there are many managerial issues in PPM implementation. The main problem areas were identified by Suvi and Karlos (2003). By examining two cases in PPM, They found that the main issues or problem areas are:

- 1) Conflicts regarding matrix organization (this issue represents 3% of total issues in PPM implementation). It's about the authority of the functional organization and the management of cross organization.
- 2) Inadequate strategic planning (5%).
- 3) Poor information flow (6%).
- 4) Improper portfolio level activities (16%). For example, overlapping in projects tasks in one portfolio, weak project boarder defining, weak decision making process, and no management commitment to review projects work.
- 5) Lake of commitment and improper responsibilities identification (17%). For example, there is no common data base for projects, no clear responsibilities between managers, rapid changes of responsibility structure in organization, work load pressure on managers because of operational duties, and lack of commitment of management in reviewing projects.
- 6) Resource shortage and improper allocation (24%). For example, too many projects and roles per project manager, recourses and schedule too strict, no common database leads to overlaps, and lack of resource allocation methods.
- 7) Inadequate single projects activities and management (29%). This was the major issue in PPM implementation. There are different dimensions in this issue. For example, improper management of projects likes improper planning, controlling, monitoring, and progress reporting. Some external factors lead to such issue such as too strict resources, too strict schedule, and improper quality of subcontractor work. Neglecting the pre project phase plan was other aspect of the problem (Suvi, and Karlos 2003).

Inadequate single projects-level activities were the most problematic area in PPM implementation. In this regards, the following parts will discuss those activities and its relation with PPM performance efficiency.

2.3 Organizational Communication and Project Management

The organizational communication and the communication between the projects and the portfolio management is a vital part in the corporate failure or success. Even if the term communication is common between individuals, Fiske (1990) had defined it simply as "social dealings through messages". Whilst Oliver (1997) had defined it comprehensively as "an exchange of ideas, facts and emotions, by two or group of persons, with the use of words, letters and symbols that can be forwarded, precisely, the symbols communicate meaning which affects performance in the desired way".

There are many definitions and most of the researchers were considering the term communication is always defined as effective communication and two way process convincing (Spence, 1994).

According to Bovee and Thill (2000) effective communication would be gained just as soon as the preferred result is accomplished. The data or information receivers should understand the conveyed information and by this step the receivers encouraged to undertake the required actions (Kalla, 2005).

There are many obstacles to achieve effective communication in the portfolio management. Through research that had been conducted on communication which identified the type of obstacles, some of them come from employees and the other exists from the structure, procedures and the systems of the organization (Kelly, 2000).

Peng and Litteljohn (2001) illustrated the effect of communication on implementing the strategy in their research. The result showed that the effective communication is a primary requirement to implement the strategy successfully.

Another research in managerial communication shows that the managers play important role in term of communication. The managers should gain knowledge and in return they should utilize their knowledge and communicate that knowledge effectively in order to urge the employees to perform effectively. Therefore, the managers should have communication skills. As the study illustrates, there are many managers with excellent knowledge are not successful in their careers because of their inappropriate communication skills, they failed to communicate their knowledge and their goals to their employees (Brownell, 2003).

Another study had clarified that the organization performance can be improved only if the employees can communicate effectively. There are several best practices were listed in the study such as engaging the people in each stage of operating the organization. Moreover, facilitating the staff to accomplish the goals of the organization by communicating effectively. (Trahant , 2008).

An effective organizational communication framework was developed by Melcrum who used his five years best practice research findings. This framework defined the organization communication standards and expected response from the employees. Also, this framework simplified the term effective communication for the managers. This framework is available to managers in order to use it regularly to improve their communication skills. (Mellor and Dewhurst, 2009).

Bambacas and Patrikson (2008) examined relationship between effective communication and the commitment of the employees. The research showed that the managers can build the commitment of the employees by conveying clear and transparent information to them. Moreover, the honesty in communicating between the managers and the employees encourages the employees to understand the vision and perform effectively in order to accomplish the goals of the organization.

A survey was done by a communication supplier company shows how vital is the linkage of effective communication and employees commitment. The

commitment of the employees can be improved when they receive the feedback from their managers, also the managers should be capable to listen to their employees to enhance their commitment (Vuuren, Jong and Seydel, 2007).

Meyer (2002) mentioned that the human resources managers have vital role in developing the employees' performance through using effective communication methods. By using several communication methods such as conducting quarterly meetings with the employees, employees be engaged in each single stage of operating the business furthermore will help them to achieve the organization's vision, mission and goals.

Many authors recommended several methods and tools which help organization to implement effective communication. Wadman (2006) demonstrated one of the banks experience in communication. The bank had formed internal communication team and this team is responsible to enhance the engagement of the employees. The team set a framework in order to activate the communication between the employees while some senior managers had objected this framework. The team faced this obstacle by creating a scorecard that showed the importance of the effective communication. By the time, the employees understand the importance of the effective communication and gradually their opinion taken and discussed by their managers seriously.

Also, Rudy, Filip, Annouk and Elke (2000) concludes in their study that a company may use multiple strategy in order to have effective (i.e. to have information that is reliable and can add knowledge) and efficient (i.e. minimizing cost of communication and avoiding information leak) communication in multi national innovation project. To achieve this effective and efficient communication, they introduced a framework to organizations that help them to focus on important requirements and capabilities in different level in the management of communication flows:

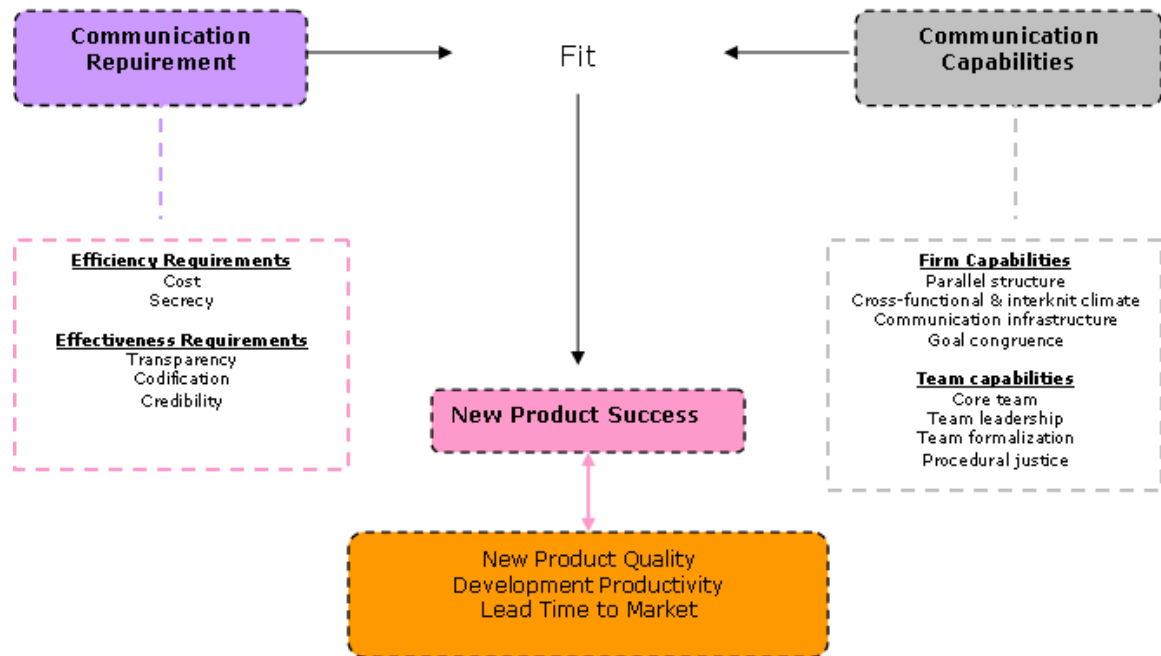


Figure3. The communication requirement and capabilities needed for product success (source: ,Rudy Filip, Annouk and Elke ,2000).

Another type of communication method is the agenda model which was introduced by Tukiainen (2001). This model contained table with information required that explaining how to behave in certain condition and what kind of communication tool to be adopted if the employees would like to plan and enhance the communication within the organization. Also this agenda help the employees to develop list of information (with time and sequence) that vital to be communicated within the organization.

Another remarkable communication experience for effective communication was done by Ernst & Young Company who has over 420 partners worldwide. This audit firm uses a different communication manner in meetings which was communication via audience engagement technology in conference events and these technology had been a successful tool to interrelate the ideas and information between the employees and senior management. Also, this

technology directly stores the conference and keeps it in a ready copy to convey it to other employees or to keep it for training purposes within the organization (Walton, 2008).

2.4 Project Management Roles and Activities, and PPM Efficiency

The importance of Project Management is vital especially in "projectizing" business environment. A lot of roles, practices, and activities played by project managers during and before projects execution, which leads to success of projects and enhance overall organization's performance.

Most of the projects are executed concurrently so it needs wide synchronization and planning. Portfolio management concerns this coordination of all projects. At the same time, project manager plans, monitoring progress, risk manage, and forecasting will lead the project to reach its objectives. Thus, PPM success will affect the success of project management and vice versa. Adding, the portfolio management team and the project manager should be accountable for creation of efficient portfolio, working according stakeholder's interest, and communicate between management, project team, and departments (Adri, Seidel, and Wadman 1994).

Recently most of organizations recruit project managers or making contracts with some project managers for certain period. The role of the project manager depends on the objectives of business. According to Atkinson (1986), the main role of the project manager is to make sure that the objectives for the project are defined and implemented regularly. Moreover, the project manager has a powerful role because he interacts with different type of stakeholders in the organization.

Cleland (1967) declared that the role of project manager in the organization is to convey his experience and knowledge to the stuff. Thus, The Project manager has the power to meet with executives, top management, client, and regular employees. Therefore, he can influence them easily and has a lot of information about the organization.

Anderson (1992) has classified the aspects of the project managers and divided them in different types as follows: human relation skills, leadership skills, technical experience, and administrative experience. There are many skills under each type, for instance, the project manager must be able to plan and obtain commitment, discover problems and risks and overcome them, and making decision. In human relation skills, the project manager must be able to motivate people, build team properly and communicate effectively. As a result, he will be capable to lead his team and act as a hub between management and employee.

Additionally, the research was conducted and showed that the project manager should have many traits and skills that identify his capabilities in managing the work, decision making, and communication, moreover the project managers should have honesty and integrity. The project manager's role and influence depends on the set of skills he has, and the need of those skills differ through the lifecycle of the project itself (Pettersen, 1991).

Activities and roles of project managers were identified by earlier researchers. According to Irja (2006) study, planning, organizing, networking, and informing are the most significance managerial practices in leadership of project management. Moreover, Project manager role should not be limited to project operation and execution. The project manager role should involve in resource procurement, identification of bad projects, steering groups, project reviews, and handling issues related to projects. He should communicate projects status by gathering reliable up-to-date information on projects, and using similar metrics for reporting purposes (Tomas and Ralf, 2006).

Information quality is very important for PPM. Depending on information, portfolio management assess Go/Kill decisions and therefore to reallocate the recourses effectively. As a result, quality and availability of information leads to better quality of project execution (Robert, Scott, and Elko 2000).

Adding to that, Miia and Paivi (2007) study shows that there is indirect relation between PPM efficiency and Information availability.

Robert, Scott, and Elko (2000) introduced Stage Gate model that improves the information quality as follows:

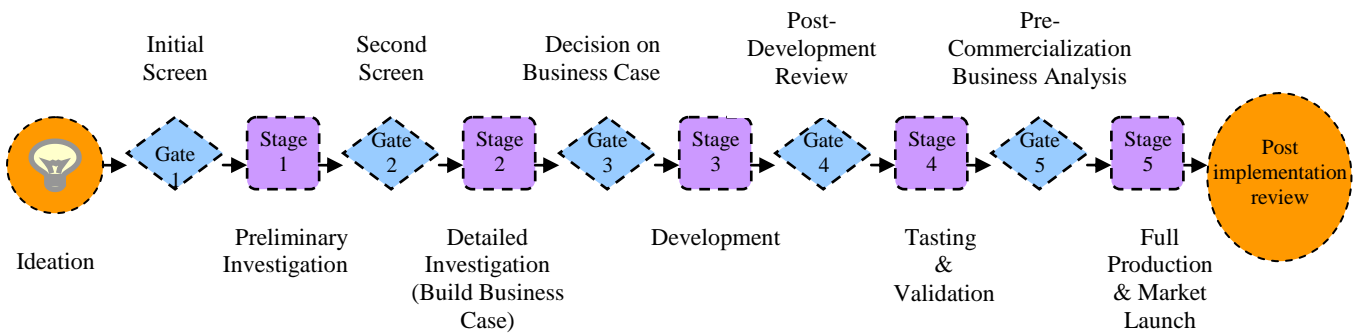


Figure 4. Stage gate information flow model (Robert, Scott and Elko, 2000)

The stage gate model for information flow encloses mainly five stages, every stage headed by a gate. Stages identify best practice activities and deliverables, while gates depend on clear criteria for Go/Kill assessments. Around 60% of American developers make use of a stage gate method to steer their improvement plan and work (Robert, Scott and Elko, 2000).

Another study shows that systematic decision making of project managers (in all phases), and goal setting (Time, Cost, and Quality), have indirect relation with PPM performance efficiency. In general, they conclude that there is direct relation between project management efficiency and PPM efficiency. They also suggested that top management support, Project management standardization, recourse sharing between projects, and project ownership are areas need to be study and investigate its impact on PPM efficiency (Miia and Paivi, 2007).

Moreover, project management commitment to annual business plan has effect on PPM efficiency. Throughout project execution, Project managers should recognize bad project, contribute in a steering group and execute administrative everyday jobs, and seek for efficiency enhancement throughout handling of issues, coaching of project members, and general improvement of organizational processes. By doing those activities, his decisions and contributions will be in favor of organization objectives, plans and interests (Tomas and Ralf 2006) .

Another research found that successful management of strategic intentions can be reached through PPM by reviewing objectives of ongoing projects in linking with strategy, and by structured discussion (with check list) in project review. In the same study, they found that successful multi project organization management approaches are characterize in formal decision making practices during project implementation phase. But, in many organizations, unstructured and informal decision-making practices could be more appropriate through the unclear front end stage of a project (for example; project idea emergence and project initiation) (Perttu and Paivi, 2005).

Adding, any project manager has particular decision making attitude or style (e.g. behavioral, directive, conceptual or analytical style). Naturally, due to multi different roles of project manager in different stages and situations, and due to the dynamic nature of the projects, the project manager should adapt to those changes when occurs. So, project manager should be ready to responds to those changes by more back up styles when needed or to use what the author call it as "whole brain approach" to project management (Terry and Wayne, 1999).

In addition, successful organizations should understand and support the different management styles to accommodate to different types of projects. The organization and PPM should find a "fit" space between chaos and flexibility depends on complexity of the projects of the portfolio (Joana, 2008)

Many researches show the importance and the effect of standardized project management (SPM) on project success. Now days, organizations commonly implement standardized project management, which can be define as "a standardized set of project management practices". Dragan and Peerasit (2005) investigate this relation in case study in order to recognize the major factors in standardized project management that efforts on the project management level. They conclude that the factors that impact project success are SPM tools, leadership skills, and SPM process.

Obviously the portfolio management efficiency and success depends on accomplishing its objectives, and aligning the projects objectives with the portfolio objectives. The project manager who is managing a single project or multi-projects is responsible for explain the objectives to the project team and hereafter; to the portfolio management office. The project manager should take in his thought all the factors that success the project and as a result they drive the portfolio to success.

There are many factors that were identified by the author such as: 1) Clear project goals. 2) The availability of the information. 3) Standardization of project management. 4) Support of the top management. The availability of those considered as the most important aspect for successful project and portfolio implementation. When the information is available, decisions can be made easily, and the goals and objectives can be identified clearly, and the support from top management is obtained (Miia and Piavi, 2007).

On the other hand, Mikkola (2001) has mentioned many advantages for using the portfolio management approach and how the role of the project manager can achieve the success of the portfolio: 1) making Decision regarding the investment and allocation of resources, prioritizing, and selecting the project. 2) Projects are tied to business performance. 3) Highlighting Gaps and future development opportunities. The most important aspect in accomplishing the success of the portfolio management is connecting the objectives of all projects in the portfolio pipe with the objectives of the portfolio itself. The project manager is responsible about this connection whether in a direct or indirect way.

In addition, a research demonstrated that the success of the portfolio depends on the project success and the project success is dependable on the project manager success in managing the project. Hereafter, there are many factors for project and project manager success. The research argue that selecting the competent project manager who has right competencies for the project is the most important factor to success the project portfolio and enhances its efficiency. In addition to that, setting up a suitable methodology for completing the projects will facilitate the project manager to successfully complete the

project on time and budget. Accordingly, when the project manager success in completing projects and fulfilling the objectives, as a result the portfolio objectives will be achieved. On the other hand, the culture including the staff and the customers of the organization is considered as important factor for project portfolio success. The staff who are working on the portfolio or influenced by the portfolio management are the customers and they measure of the success of portfolio implementation. (Muller, and Turner,2007).

As mentioned previously, portfolio management is about managing a pipe of projects which have meaningful objectives. Consequently the project managers who are responsible for a certain project should be qualified and got strong competencies in order to accomplish projects and portfolio successfully. Some of the important competencies that were stated in the research are communication, strategic thinking, business sense, and customer coordination. These competencies will facilitate in communicating the strategic plans and the objectives of portfolio management to all related parties in the organization, hence this will lead to implement portfolio management successfully. Moreover, portfolio management is about managing multiple projects and hereafter, the success of project managers in managing multiple projects leads to successful implementation of portfolio management (Patanakul and Milosevic, 2008).

Currently the portfolio has several projects which are going in progress at the same time and simultaneously, which need extensive coordination and planning. Therefore, the portfolio planning should be aligned with the project planning in order to success the projects and the portfolio. In view of that, it is bounded activity where the success of project planning influences the success of portfolio planning and vice versa. Therefore, eventually, the successful project manager who plans properly for his projects can lead directly to the effectiveness and successfulness of the portfolio management. Additionally, the portfolio management team and the project manager must be in charge for the following responsibilities: 1) the building of feasible portfolio, 2) the tradeoff of stakeholder's interest. 3) The communication between management, project team, and the related departments. (Adri, Seidel, and Wadman, 1994).

Moreover, the research identified how communication in multi project organizations is vital in all phases, processes and levels.

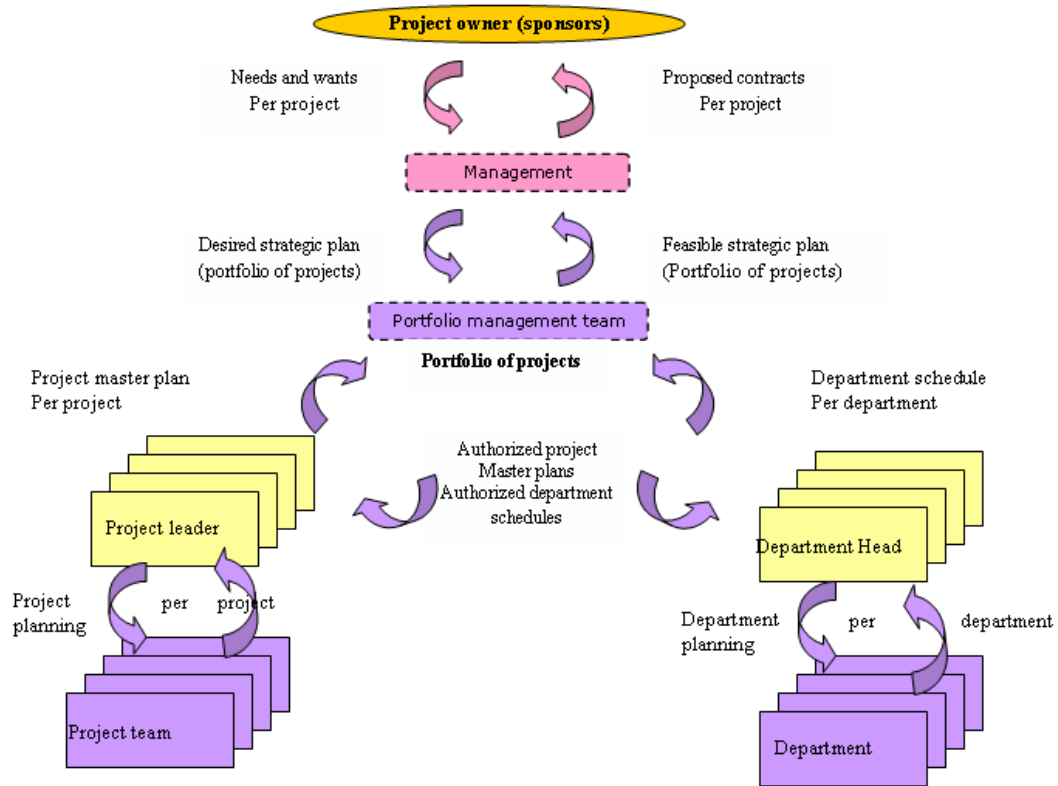


Figure 5. The communication flow importance in all phases and levels in multi project organization (Source: Adri, Seidel and Wadman, 1994).

The above figure shows the importance of communication in planning stage for example in all organization levels. Each planning cycle defines the communication between two succeeding organizational level. Effective communication is important between PPM, Project and department planning cycles. So, the planning cycle will be more efficient if it will be at both project and portfolio levels. As a result, considerable development is able to be accomplished through understanding and utilizing the concept of portfolio thinking and effective communication (Adri, Seidel, and Wadman, 1994).

Many studies show the importance of project ownership to project performance. Turner and Muller (2004), implement Principal-Agent theory to the project owner (as principal) and project manager (as agent). They defines the owner of the project as " the person or group who provides the financial

resources for its delivery, accepts project milestones and project completion". They also figure out that the greatest project performance is obtained from high cooperation between client "sponsor" and project manager, with medium levels of structure (when project manager is empowered and working in partnership with project owner). (Muller 2003 & Scott 2001 cited at; Turner and Muller ,2004).

However, in order to make this association work, proper communication is essential to deal with the owner's concerns linked to the principal-agent relation among them and the project manager. The owner needs to know that the project is managed by project manager to deliver the products as expected and functions appropriately at agreed quality, time and cost, which lead to make a profit. The owner also wants to make sure that the project manager behaving ethically and his decisions in best interest of the organization, so he need some level of control on project.

On the other side, most project managers desire to do the most excellent job for the client. So, they need the client support and communication differently in different stages of the project life cycle. For example, project manager needs to understand the client's requirements in early stages. While on implementation stages, they need the client (sponsor or owner) to review and accept the plans, and at closing stage, project manager will need information from client about the project outcomes and objective are as expected or not.

So, they need to use appropriate forms of communication forms such as:

1. Formal and informal communication
2. Regular (daily or weekly) face-to face meetings
3. Provide reports and records to evaluate performance as requisite by the client.

This will lead to not losing of comfort which leads to losing in collaboration. So as a result, the support from owner in guaranteed at all stages Turner and Muller (2004).

2.5 Solutions to improve PPM performance in inadequate project-level activities environment.

Although there are studies that suggests how to improve the performance of PPM in terms of project level management, but no clear solutions mentioned in these studies.

Podil and Pernile (2008) study suggests that all type of management should participate in managing the PPM, and the top management should know about what is happening in both middle and low (operation) levels in the organization. As mentioned in the study there is a major issue in the operation level which is the employees fail to fulfill their daily routine works and their assigned job by the project management. This issue makes the situation complicated and makes the employees contribute less in the managerial level. On the other hand, Project managers have two roles to play in two levels, firstly they should do the daily works for example; planning, controlling, etc. Secondly they should participate in managing the PPM in order to get resources. This situation creates another issue in the project management level as the PM contribution to PPM is likely to be poor. In this case the top management should plan properly the amount of projects and workload that have been allocated to each project manager. Along with that the project management should assign proper and adequate responsibilities to lower level employees in order to encourage them to participate in the managerial level (Bodil and Pernille, 2008).

Knowledge and experience are essential elements in managing the projects. By having lack of knowledge and experience there will be no connection between PPM expectations from project management and the actual results.

To overcome this issue, the organization should offer training programs for their project managers as well as encourage them to get professional certificates in the management fields such as Project management professional (PMP). Recently many organizations encourage their project managers to be certified by promoting them to higher grades and salaries. Generally, more knowledge and educated project managers can drive the organization or the projects to success by applying the best practice and the project management principles (PMP website,2010).

Another solution suggested is to use project management tools such as Project Management Office (PMO) which is widely spread out around the global. These tools could facilitate in increasing the efficiency of PPM. Unfortunately most of the organization worldwide (two third) can't depend on or trust these tools or they are claiming that these tools don't meet their expectations.

There are five determinants which are considered as main reasons behind not meeting those tools (like PMO) the organizations' expectations:

- ❖ *People*: PPM and project management require different output from PMO.
- ❖ *Processes*: the systems provide unreliable data in terms of PMO needs and not taking in the consideration of the need of the organization.
- ❖ *Tools*: needing extensive training, knowledge and experience in order to use such complex tools.
- ❖ *Information*: type of information that required by PPM such as allocation of resources. Sometime there is mismatching between the information needed and the information provided from the tool.
- ❖ *Organization structure*: different business drivers and measures of success (between PM and PPM), especially when the project don't aligned with the strategic objectives.

Eventually, the tools are useless and can't solve the issues in PPM unless the project management has enough knowledge and experience to use it. (Caoimhin, 2008).

2.6 Conceptual Framework

Effective PPM can help the organization in preventing duplication of work, tasks, and objectives among projects. Also, through good coordination, PPM can avoid the conflict of interests between and within projects.

Project management roles and activities is one of the major factors that could affect the successfulness of PPM. As discussed earlier, it has direct effect on PPM efficiency.

From the literature review, conceptual framework constructed in order to have road map to 1) test the PPM performance, 2) and to investigate the relation between different project management activities (variables) and PPM performance.

The different performance indicators that should be used to evaluate PPM performance was the starting point for this research. Thus, in collaboration with the literature review, PPM considered effective if it successfully reaches its objectives (strategic alignment, balancing in portfolio, and maximization of value). Business level performance and projects level performance should be taken in consideration as studies found relation between them and PPM performance. So, the PPM helps the projects and the whole organization success through good coordination and by avoiding the conflict of interests between and within projects. This will lead us to the core of the conceptual framework which is PPM performance measurements which can indicate the organizations' PPM efficiency and effectiveness.

The other research objective is to examine the relation between project level activities that may affect PPM efficiency. Accordingly, the aim is to identify the project level activities that have direct or indirect relation with PPM efficiency. Many activities determined in literature review part (2.4), which was taken as variables in the conceptual framework. Some of variables (activities) tested by others as explained in the above figure. Moreover, some of the variables where suggested to be tested and to investigate about its relation with PPM efficiency. All the variables were tested by different methods, tools, and business environments. For example, some variables tested qualitatively while other tested qualitatively in different sectors (industrial, agricultural, and service) and countries.

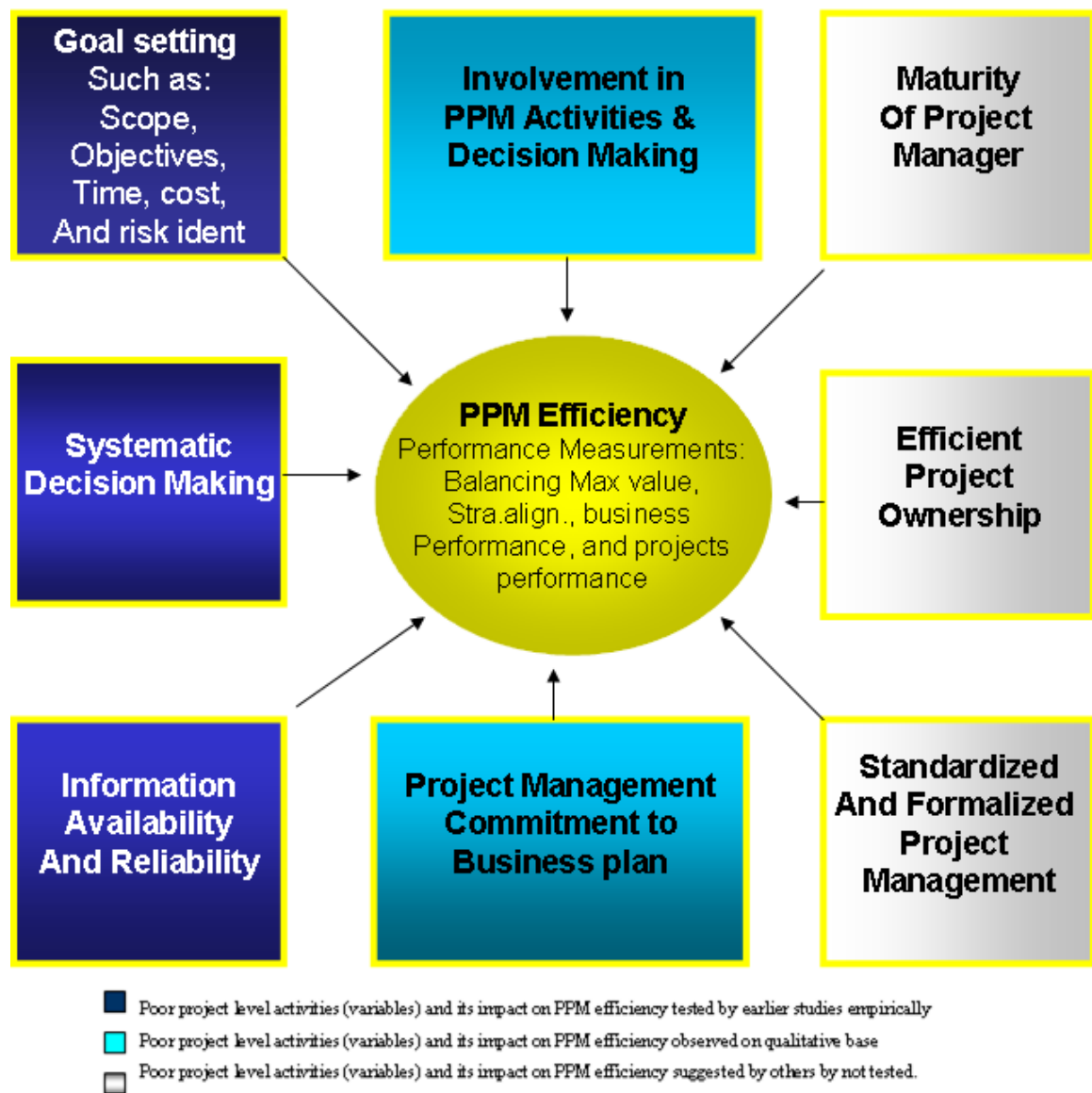


Figure 6. Conceptual Framework

The research aims to test all variables in the designed conceptual framework using a modified method and tool (qualitative), in UAE based government organizations. This will enable us to investigate the relationship between the different issues/factors, and if the answer was positive, which of these variables show themselves to be as barriers to effective implementation of PPM in UAE government agencies.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY



3.1 Introduction

As stated earlier, the aim of this study is to determine the reasons behind the failure of a number of projects in matured PPM organization from project manager's perspective. In addition, analyzing the project level activities that could have effect on the success of the projects and as a result the success of the whole portfolio.

In order to achieve the research purpose, the researcher gives a vivid description to justify the methods chosen to gather information concerning the portfolio management in the three organizations and how it complements with the middle level management to ensure that the projects implemented are executed perfectly within the assigned objectives and goals.

3.2 Research approach

To help achieve the research objectives, the researcher focuses on how to collect information concerning the portfolio management and project managers relationship to achieve the organization's goals. Also, the researcher investigates how the senior managers in charge of information flow synchronize with the project managers to ensure that the mini projects in the organization are well harmonized. The researcher aim to determine the key problem areas in portfolio managers and the middle level manager's roles relationship, so which areas need to join forces to enhance the organization performance as well as achieving its goals. Adding to this, the researcher tries to explain what activities at middle manager level most affect portfolio management performance.

In this study the researcher uses a descriptive method to collect information regarding the current existing condition (Creswell, 1994). Moreover, descriptive approach is quick, practical and allows a flexible approach. This technique is used to express the circumstances as it is at the time of the research and to investigate the cause of phenomenon. The descriptive method has many advantages due to its flexibility which gives the examiner superior options to choose the tool for data gathering (because the method allow to use qualitative, and/ or quantitative).

Quantitative and qualitative researches are different type of methods in which quantitative research is linked to testing theory, but qualitative method is connected to creation of theories (Bryman 1988 cited at; Robson 2000).

Michael (2003) presented the difference in qualitative and quantitative research in terms of "idealism vs. realism, induction versus deduction and neutralism vs. artificiality".

Quantitative approach is helpful because it leads to avoid bias in collecting and presenting data. Quantitative approach aims to avoid subjectivity and tries to establish particular research issues. While observations, experiments and other ways of qualitative research methods make data more dependable. Polgar (1995) finds that qualitative method generates verbal information rather than numerical values (quantitative).

For the purpose of gathering valid and sufficient information necessary for this research, the researcher uses both the qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. This in researching terms is termed as triangulation and it involves use of numerous data collection methods within one study so that they can complement each other , so affording the researcher trustworthy information which can be relied on for decision making. Also, the questionnaire tool used in quantitative research method is used to have better or wider view on the organizations PPM status and not for establish statistical relationships.

Case studies are the main instrument for the researcher in order to investigate and identify the major determinants or barriers that influence the effectiveness implementation of PPM in government agencies from project management activities side.

The researcher selects multiple case study approach in stead of single case (classic), because the single case study used when the case represents a critical test of existing theory, a rare unique circumstances or, representative (Yin, 2003). Multiple case studies have many advantages and disadvantages in comparison to single case. The replication logic (not sampling) is used for the multiple case studies. This design allows modification on the design during the investigation and discovery of any new information on the other hand, it's costly in term of time consumption.

3.3 Participants

In order to have valid data in this study, the researcher examined different views from different perspectives by involving senior/portfolio managers and middle level management. Further, the researcher uses combined quantitative and qualitative approaches to ensure reality in the final results by cross the result. Although both portfolio and project managers may feel solely responsible for the success of the project, however, projects can only succeed when there is a combined effort and an established working relationship between both PM and PPM managers.

The researcher eliminates biases in the research process by collecting information from two groups, this helped in triangulating the data collected and reduced the bias in "one-sided approach" to the research (Mendall, 2004). The numerous sources of information help to cross check the results deduced from all the interviewed parties to ensure that the findings are more reliable.

It is noticed in the examined organizations that portfolio management titles are not widely used or recognized. It is used to describe a role rather than a position.

Level	Project Manager	Senior / executive manager (PPM)	ORG
Title	1- IT dept. P.M	7- General Director	A
	2- Operation P.M		
	3- Development P.M	8- PMO head dept.	B
	4- IT P.M		
	5- PMO P.M	9- PMO director	C
	6- IT P.M		

Table1. Participants in the interview process

3.4 Instruments

The key findings and knowledge gathered from reviewing the literature was the base for the conceptual framework which helps to reach the research objectives. The researcher designed the conceptual framework in order to reach the paper objectives. Also, the researcher uses a modified methods and tools to investigate which variables shows themselves as barrier to effective implementation of PPM in UAE government agencies.

As mentioned earlier, case studies were the main instrument for the researcher. Questionnaire, interviews and review secondary data were used in order to gather information from the case studies.

3.5 Questionnaire

A questionnaire was conducted in the three organizations. The questionnaire used in order to have wider and more reality view on the organization status on the PPM efficiency, rather than to establish statistical relationships and its relation with the PM activities. Total of 24 project managers and portfolio /top managers participated in this questionnaire. The questionnaire was distributed via email and it includes six general questions about organization performance. Five point liker scales was used in the questions. The first set of questions was asked to explore the current status of overall projects success and progress. Questions like the project success rate, project cancellation rate, project on time and project on budget rates. Those questions were developed by the researcher in order to have wider view on the organization current performance in PPM and PM. While the second set of questions tries to explore the degree of harmonization between project management and portfolio management and if the PPM can work independently from PM. Also these questions aim to explore the current relation between PM and PPM which helped the researcher to set the interview questions type.

3.6 Interviews

UAE government organizations have different kinds of employees amongst which there are contract employees and staff on permanent basis. Moreover, the selected organizations are divided into several departments which are

located in UAE. Every department usually headed by the senior executive who serves as the top level manager. The top level managers are usually busy owing to the kind of responsibilities pegged on them. Therefore, the researcher opted to hold face to face interviews with the top level managers (PPM) because their number was small.

The researcher recognized that by interviewing the top level managers from their place of work since they were mostly in their offices and moreover being public servants made them easily accessible by prior organized appointments. All the executives sampled for this research were on-site thus they were easily accessible to the researcher.

In order to get the inherent views of the senior managers the researcher chose to use face to face method in order to get in-depth information which could only be obtained by asking a question and making a follow up on an opinion voiced by the executives. The researcher was thoughtful before establishing the right channel to use while interviewing the top executives, it seemed useful to interview a small cluster of the selected senior staff members rather than risk a pool of numerous responses which would not guarantee credibility in the information gathered. An invitation had been previously send ten to the executive managers from the three organizations requesting them to participate in the interview process and only three accepted to be interviewed hence the researcher get information from three executives only.

On the other hand, the invitation send to fifteen project managers, in all three organizations only six of them agreed to participate in the interview process.

By directly interviewing the senior managers and project managers the researcher created a room for incorporation of the areas that had been excluded before. The interview questions were cited in semi-structured way or approach, to get the ideas of the senior managers and project managers to see what they believe their role was and how they perceived the other level management could support them in their decision making responsibilities.

Prior to the interview, the researcher made personal telephone calls to the interviewees and set up the right time and place for the interviews to be

conducted. All the executives and project managers to be interviewed were given a summary brief of the interview and were sent the interview questions through email in order to allow them for preparations. Each interview takes on average a period of thirty minutes. The interviewer took notes during the interview session and with the permission of the interviewees the information obtained was recorded for future reference.

A total of nine executives and project managers from different departments in the three organizations were interviewed. The researcher was in a position that encourages the interviewees for more details analyzing the responses gathered.

Through the interview process the interviewer added some questions to help in gathering more info from the interviewees when needed. Also, the researcher cleared and sometimes gives examples when the question was fugitive for the interviewees to offer more appropriate responses to the questions phrased.

The researcher had selected four departments in each of the three organizations. IT, Operation, Development and PMO departments were selected rather than others because of their close relation and frequent dealings with the projects and PPM.

The following are the interview questions which used in this research:

Could you explain how project portfolio management performance measurement is important to PM, PPM and the whole organization?

-how PPM performance is measured?

-How do you think that project goals are mapped to organization goals before and after the project?

- Is the stockholder (or business) involved in setting goals for the projects? Explain

- His knowledge about selecting projects criteria, policies and procedures for maximizing the value of the projects, mapping the goals to Dubai strategic plan.

Is the goal setting in projects affecting the PPM performance? To how extend? How?

- How does the goal setting process is made and approved? Effective or not?
- is the business case and scope docs for the project is clear and available?
- does the business case represent up to date information of business requirements?
- His knowledge about project goal mapping with organization goals, monitoring and controlling of the projects, project communication planning, project risk identification and auditing.

Is the current Decision making system efficient and complying with PPM methodology?

- How does it help the project performance?
- His knowledge about D.M team work or individual, the support from PM to PPM and vice versa in Decisions, Decision making style of PM and PPM, and if there is any intervention from any party in other work or decisions.
- is the PM involved in PPM D.M Process??
- are the outcomes from the meetings executed and enforced?

To how extent you believe that PM and PPM using in their decisions accurate and up-to-date information? And how those information are effecting the project and PPM success?

- is there is any metrics to measure the quality of information?
- Where do you find usually the needed information? Is there is any common data base?
- explain the information flow or system from and between departments in your organization
- are the information in SOW, project charter, Scope of work... are existed and produced? How? Is it approved? How those docs are used in your organization?

What are the project manager practices in order to achieve the business case objectives? Is there is any relation between those practices and PPM success?

- To how extend PM projects achieves its business plans?
- Is the project schedule aligned with business case plan?
- how do you see the project management commitment to the projects, PPM and organization plans?
- What difficulties in your opinion that can affect negatively the project manager commitment toward the projects or PPM?

To how extent do you believe that the PM involved in PPM project activities? And to how extend these involvements help the success of the both sides?

- do you have any methodology toward PPM as project managers?
Explain
- is the integration points between both parties identified at earlier stages? By who? Do you know what the requirements for or from the both sides are?
- can you explain the type of involvement? what the meetings or the requirements are about?

How effective is the project sponsor / owner to the project management and PPM? Can you describe his roles and responsibilities toward the project?

- describe when and how project owner is identified or selected?
- is the Project owner ship involved in DM?
- Do you have support from him?
- explain the project owner responsibilities toward project and PM team.

Is the project manager experience and maturity is effect the project, PPM and the whole organization success?

- are there any criteria required by the project manager?
- can you describe the project manager practices in the project?
- How the project manager performance reviewed? By who?

To how extend do you think that the project managements are standardized and formalized? How these standardization levels effect the project and the organization success?

-in your organization, which standards or best practices have been used?

-are you aware of such standardize models? Explain how it's done and evaluate the current practices?

- can you describe PMO, risk register, templates, methodology, hand over system?

3.7 Observation and reviewing secondary data

Observation is an exceedingly capable way of collecting data if undertaken in a controlled, well structured manner and it taps straight into the goals of the subject under study. The researcher observe the project manager process and how they deal with PPM at the same time, in this stage, the researcher does utilize secondary information, rather he gets first hand information through express contact with the managers and this helps him to figure out the data just as it appears without any disturbs. The secondary data reviewed contains business strategy, S W O T analysis, meeting minutes, project's notes, project planning documents, and scope of work documents.

Through this methodology, the researcher avoids erroneous mistakes which could affect accuracy in data collected. The researcher in this case utilized a well structured check list which helped to observe the secondary data to have better understanding of the whole environment of the organizations and departments. under study. Also, it helps the researcher to understand the problem areas and to support the findings.

Unfortunately, the observation and secondary data reviewing were only conducted effectively in organization A and B.

The researcher had a check list applicable to both portfolio and middle level managers which enabled him to draw conclusions from the information he observed in order to have solid information required under the study. The researcher spent adequate time observing each of the managers enlisted for the exercise in order to assemble the perceptions they had concerning the

harmonized work between the portfolio managers the middle level to enhance effectiveness in execution of duty.

These were the observations objectives the researcher was to note during the survey process.

- Is the personnel allocated the responsibility of pinnacle management committed to involve the middle management in the myriad projects mired in the overall organizational goals.
- Whether there was an interactive working rapport in all managerial levels.
- The role played by the middle level management in the numerous organizational projects.
- Whether the top level management consulted the middle level managers before making decisions on a particular project.
- Whether the middle level managers seemed to enjoy a working relationship with their seniors in particular projects.
- Can either the middle level or portfolio manager head a project or must it be exclusively headed by the portfolio managers.
- Do the middle level managers ever head any project and make key decisions concerning it or do they solely rely on the portfolio managers.
- Do the Portfolio managers ever seek advice from the middle level managers?
- Do the opinions of the middle level management garner any support from the senior managers?

After observation and secondary data reviewed, the researcher had developed the questionnaire questions and distribute to the participants. After that, the interviews questions were developed and conducted.

3.8 Data processing, analysis and discussion

After all questionnaire and interviews were conducted and obtained from the respondents, the analysis part starts by comparative analysis table between the three organizations. The major findings were discussed by the researcher in order to figure out what the main determinants or barriers that affect the PPM implementation in UAE based organizations from project manager's perspective.

3.9 Ethical Research Considerations.

Before conducting the research, the researcher obtained a written permission from the three organizations to carry out this research with employees for a period spanning two weeks. Also, participants were provided with detailed information concerning the research and why it was being carried out. All participants taking part in the questionnaire and the interviews were given full details on the purpose of the research. The observation method was used to review secondary data like studying business case, initiation of project, performance, meetings, ...lessons learned of project. While the interview was utilized on nine middle and top managers picked from different departments in the organization.

The researcher provided information sheet which offered clear details on the back ground to the research, the aim and objectives of the research and the confidentiality with which the data would be handled. Further, the researcher made it clear to the research participants that they had the right to withdraw from the interview process when they like.

The participants were given assurance that the data collected during the questionnaire or interview process would be private and would be stored securely and the only people who could access that data would be the researcher and the supervisor. There was an assurance offered by the interviewer that all the responses would be truthfully analyzed and recorded. After the completion of the research, the researcher promises the participants to be given a summarized copy of the final results.



CHAPTER FOUR

CASE STUDY



4.1 Introduction

Single project level management and Portfolio Management are closely interlinked factors in the business operation environment. The relationship between the two reveals can be conceptualized at a logically general level as portrayed in the back ground information garnered in this study. The two factors stage a rapport where a set of underlying factors create an impact on a sequence of intermediary indicators. The pointers in turn determine the ultimate outcomes in terms of excellence in business management. Besides running multiple projects, PPM plays other key role like ensuring that all the projects are ran skillfully and is bound for the good of the organization.

The selected organizations are considerable governmental regulatory body which undertakes many projects simultaneously. This particularly ramified organization has got many projects taking place at the same time; all these projects are sponsored and headed by the portfolio management which decides the way the various competing projects can share resources. In order for any project to succeed the management must have the required resources, the valid working platforms and the various components necessary to enhance success in each individual project.

The middle level managers have the role of overseeing the activities necessary to enhance the project development process. In order for the organization to attain productivity the multi-project level (which coordinates and oversees all the single projects) must be interfaced with the many single-projects through the middle level managers so as to create a link through which the organizational goals are achieved.

Every facet of the portfolio projects must be assessed and aligned to business values and it must therefore settle towards the formulated strategies. The project managers have the obligation of ensuring that the projects drift towards the determined organizational goals. Moreover, they should have all the necessary information concerning the single-projects in order to keep the portfolio management knowledgeable. When single level project managers play their role of directing and overseeing the development of the project ,

they ease the job for the portfolio management by providing them with the detailed information on what is happening and what needs to be done in order for the project success to be achieved.

In order portfolio management to remain at par with management roles and activities, it must be designed in such a way to enhance achievement of the specific business objectives (Oliver, 2005). By directing each individual project appropriately the management makes sure that the organizational objectives are executed accurately. Moreover, when all projects in a business are directed successfully there is a surety of achieving the expected results.

4.2. Case Study 1 : Organization A

A- Organization overview

From the organizations' documents and website, the following information was taken by the researcher. Previously, Road and Transport was under management and control of governmental organization. Due to the huge development in all sectors, high level of infrastructure facilities was extremely necessary, thus organization A was formed in November, 2005 to specialize in all types of transport projects.

Planning, developing and executing of effective transportation system were the main reason behind initiating the Organization A. There are a lot of responsibilities and ongoing projects in Organization A (land and marine transportation). One of the most challenging projects is the metro- urban project.

B- Mission

"To prepare legislation and develop integrated solutions of road systems and land / marine transportation networks that are safe and in line with economic development plans and the highest international standards".

C- Vision

"Safe and Smooth Transport for all".

D- Organization A strategic objectives and Values

1- "Reliability and corporate reputation are honest reflections to the safe and reliable infrastructure we provide."

2- "a distinction is a true representation of performance based on efficiency, effectiveness and focus on continuous success".

3- "The professionalism and wisdom of our leaders are manifested through their deep respect for individuals and reinforcement of teamwork."

4- " achievements and the success of our strategic partnerships are true reflection of our response to customer expectations and the contribution to the development of our society".

5 "Acquisition and utilization of modern technology underpin our continuous journey towards quality and customer loyalty".

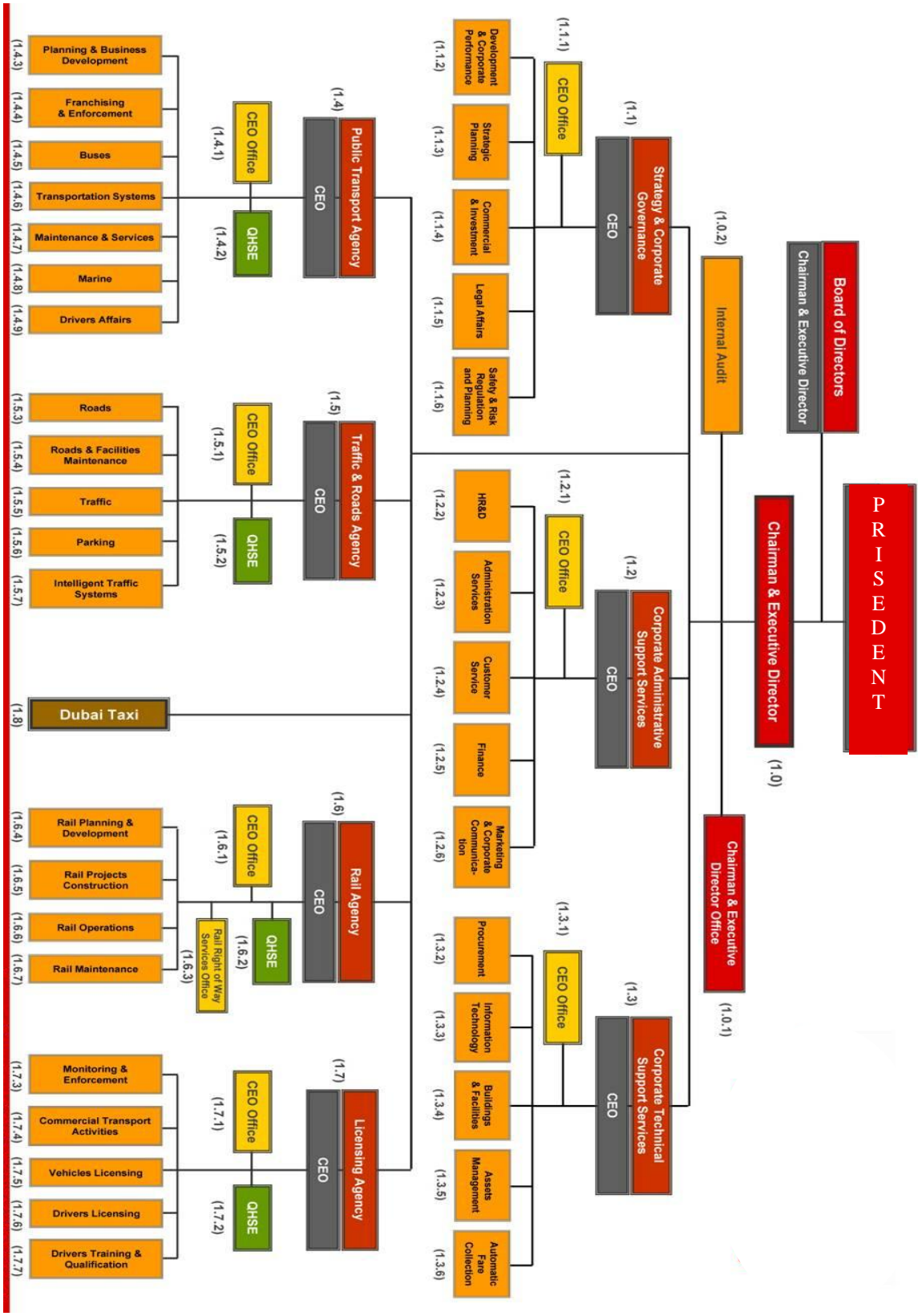


Figure 7. ORGANISATION A organizational Structure

From organization observation and secondary data reviewed, the researcher introduces the following information from organization A strategic document. Organization A aims to benchmark its project management practices against international leading practices. The standards issued by the Project Management Institute PMI are used as a high-level guide for all organization A project management practices.

The project management office was lunched in early 2006 because of high demand of managing multi-projects and adding value. Also, the new environment (after shifting the applications from the governmental organization) has increased the pressure to perform efficient and effective within the challenging deadlines.

The project management policy and associated templates provide a framework for implementing project management within organization A. Together; they provide the constitution of project management activities while the associated templates with the policy present the templates that need to be standardized across all projects in.

As mentioned earlier "a project consists of a temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product, service, or result". In Organization A's context, a project is an endeavor which:

- Is not an ongoing operation or repeated function.
- Is driven by a market or customer demand.
- Has clear start date & end dates.
- Uses internal and/or external resources.
- Produces a product/result which did not exist before.

Upon fulfilling the above qualification criteria, the project sponsor shall submit the project request form (PRF) to the portfolio management team (PMT) for evaluation/approval. After approval, the project is formally authorized and the approved (PRF) will serve as the project charter. In special cases where proposed projects do not satisfy the above mentioned criteria, the case to be addressed by the sponsor and Enter price P.M.O, and the project can be qualified upon agreement as an exception.

The primary responsibility of a project rests with the particular Sector/Agency/Department. All Sectors/Agencies/Departments are expected to manage their projects in line with their 'Annual Operational Plans', which should be directly linked to organization A's strategic plan. The Sectors/Agencies/Departments are responsible to adhere to this policy document. In addition, the sectors/agencies/departments should develop their own detailed procedures considering full compliance with this Policy.

The first revision of the policy document presents the starting point for standardizing project management activities within organization A. This document covers selected activities and deliverables according to their importance and impact on project management within organization A. Further releases from the document shall include more details and coverage. In addition, future release shall consider and/or refer to the outputs of other important deliverables that will result from several projects running in organization A seeking to standardize and enhance the project management activities. Any Comments or suggestions regarding the policy and its implementation should be sent to PMO in the respective agency/sector who should validate against the requirements of the agency, then forward the same to EPMO. Comments shall be studied and considered for inclusion in future policy revisions.

During the first implementation cycle, EPMO may circulate minor modifications to the policy or templates as errata sheets seeking to ensure best implementation of the policy. The Portfolio Management team (PMT) is the team responsible for carrying out organization A's projects portfolio management (PPM) activities. This team is part of SPD (Strategic Planning Department) in organization A. A Professional Project Management Firm (PPMF) is an entity that is outsourced the project management functions as per the outsourcing policy of organization A.

Project Management Office (PMO) is an entity responsible for centralized and coordinated management of all the projects under its domain. Moreover, PMO is responsible for defining all the processes, policies and templates for managing those projects.

Project Specialists are the heads of a PMO or individuals who conduct the PMO activities, where a PMO does not exist.

Project Management Policies must be adopted by all the Agencies / Sectors and departments.

These lay the foundation to manage a project in a standardized way.

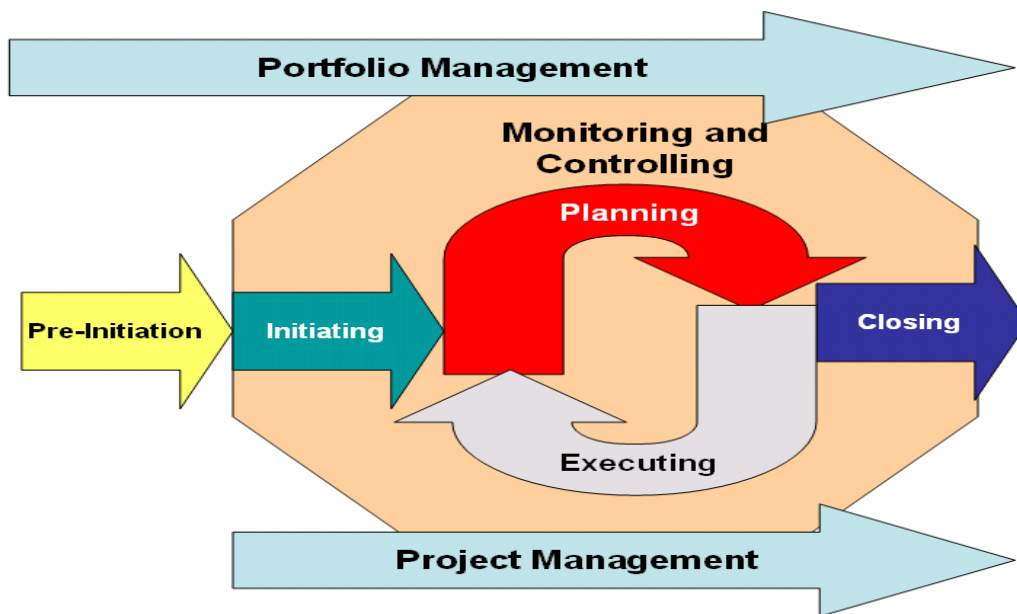


Figure 8. the portfolio and project management work in project life cycle in organization A.

In the above diagram, Portfolio management refers to "the centralized management of one or more portfolios, which includes identifying, prioritizing, authorizing, managing, and controlling projects, programs, and other related work, to achieve specific strategic business objectives".

In pre-initiation, a new project is defined and a project request form is prepared and submitted to PMT for project authorization.

During initiation, the type and scope of the project are identified. Also, understand of business environment is needed to ensure the success of the project.

Project planning primarily focuses on how "to set up the scope of the effort, define the objectives, and develop the course of action required to attain those objectives".

Project Execution covers the processes performed to complete the planned work to satisfy the project specifications. Project execution activities should be

part of the detailed Project Management methodology created by each Agency/Sector.

Project Monitoring and controlling covers the processes required to track, review, and regulate with identifying areas which needs any changes.

Closure includes the formal acceptance of the project and the ending. While administrative activities include the archiving of the files, documenting lessons learned, and releasing the project team.

E. Key Policy Principles

1- The sponsor is responsible for assessing the initiative to determine whether or not it can be classified as a project, and to initiate the project after approval.

2- In case where a project is part of the program, the program sponsor will act as the project sponsor.

3- In case a project is managed under a program, the program manager may perform functions related to Pre-initiation and Initiation activities, till the time a formal project manager for that project is assigned.

4- All projects sponsored by an agency / sector / department will provide necessary performance reports to their respective PMO. EPMO will require (from PMOs) to provide progress reports for selected projects.

5- The Project Sponsor will start with the Pre-initiation process wherein a complete filled out Project request form will be sent to the Portfolio Management Team. Upon approval, he/she will assign a project manager who will be engaged from the initiation till closure of the project.

6- Individual project managers may handle multiple projects. The project manager assigned from the sector/agency/department is responsible for managing the project. The project manager reports in addition to the sponsor to the agency/sector/department PMO.

4.3 CASE STUDY 2 : "Organization B"

A- Organization Overview

From the organizations' documents and website, the following information was taken by the researcher. Organization B is a governmental agency which aids in easing free trade at the same time helping to seal all the borders to avoid illegal imports. The corporate goals of this organization are to provide administration through innovative and practical service condition to the potential clients. In the supply chain the body enhances trade and movement of commodities from one locality to another. The body offers many services like goods transport, customs checks, validation of commodities' entry, securing the borders and many more.

Organization B is one of the leading governmental organizations in UAE. It is implementing state of the art technologies that are helping the organization achieving its goals and objectives. The overall organization B strategy was derived from the Dubai strategic plan 2013. Organization B strategy includes the organization's vision, mission and four key strategic objectives.

B- Vision

"To sustain economic development and to be one of the leading Customs administrations in the world supporting legitimate trade".

C- Mission

"Working in collaboration with government and key stakeholders to continuously improve compliance, meet national commitment and apply control in a seamless and cost effective way, in line with the Government Excellence Program (GEP)".

D- Organizational Strategic Objectives

- Play a major part in the economic & social development of the city.
- Adopt & share best practices in business processes and systems.

- Provide the best human and technological resources.
- Improve customer satisfaction & loyalty.

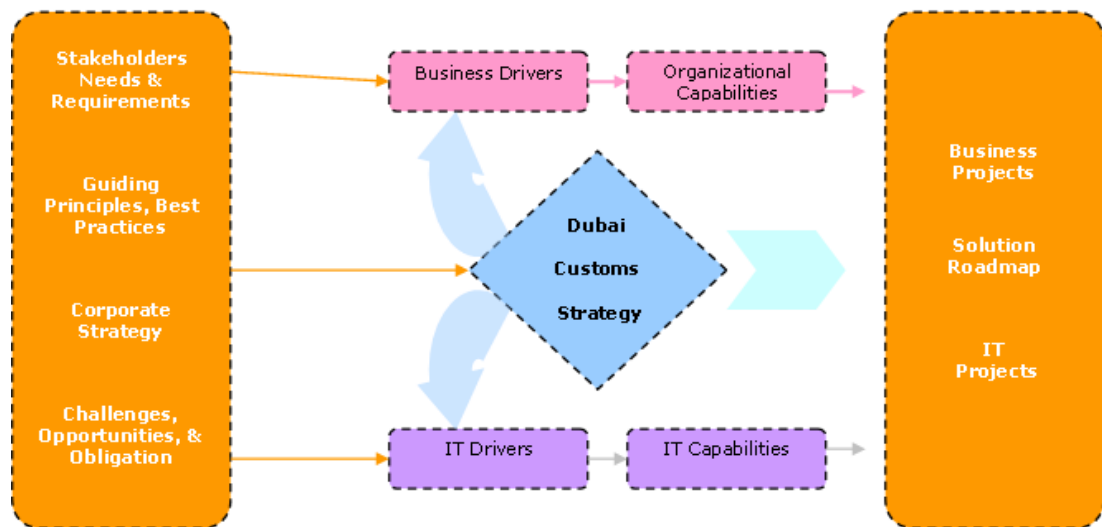


Figure 9. Organization B Strategy (OB 2010).

For many years now Organization B has been involved in facilitating fair trade exercises. There are other sub-projects in the Organization B body which help to ensure that traders comply with the exerted custom laws implemented by the government. Organization B owes accountability to the government and its mandate extends to general citizens and businesses and other international trade organizations like World trade Organization (WTO).

The organization body ensures that traders and business people stay behind the worldwide trade conventions and agreements. This body works the international network of customs authorities ([linkedin.com](https://www.linkedin.com)).

Organization B partners with Dubai and federal government in the governmental development initiatives. The portfolio managers in the organization take a leading role in establishing a working relationship with the potential clients and the business partners. The middle level management in the organization ensures that the clients get good services which conform to the regulations of the organization. The government entity ensures that the potential customers are familiar with the necessary information so that they can undertake their business deals in conformity to the authority.

Organization B has fervently sought to blend computer aided technology in their business transactions. Advance in technology has aided to boost their transaction speed, their ability to remain competitive in the global arena. E-Governance schemes and computer aided information networks have been merged in their transactions and have helped the organization to minimize risk and improve customer care services. The middle level management team has gone through training programs in order to keep pace with the modern times. Both the portfolio managers and the middle level managers have aided organization B to set a standard in typical in undertaking the numerous customs processing activities in a flawless, competent and cost effective style.

From organization observation and secondary data reviewed, the researcher introduces the following information from organization B strategic document. Recently, UAE is one of the countries that is implementing the best practices of the project management. There are many projects that are running simultaneously in many organizations and the need to manage them is a must. Organization B is one of the organizations that is focusing on project oriented objectives. The organization has over 65 projects on its roadmap for implementation and most of them are currently in progress concurrently. The organization has over 48 project managers that are well educated and certified. Those project managers are doing their best to complete projects on time and budget. However, the huge number of projects and money spent on equipment and resources forced the management to implement portfolio management. Portfolio Management is “The selection and management of all of an organization’s projects, programs and related business-as-usual activities taking into account resource constraints.” (apm.org.uk)

The project management structure in Organization B became more efficient after implementing the portfolio management. Following is a brief of the current structure:

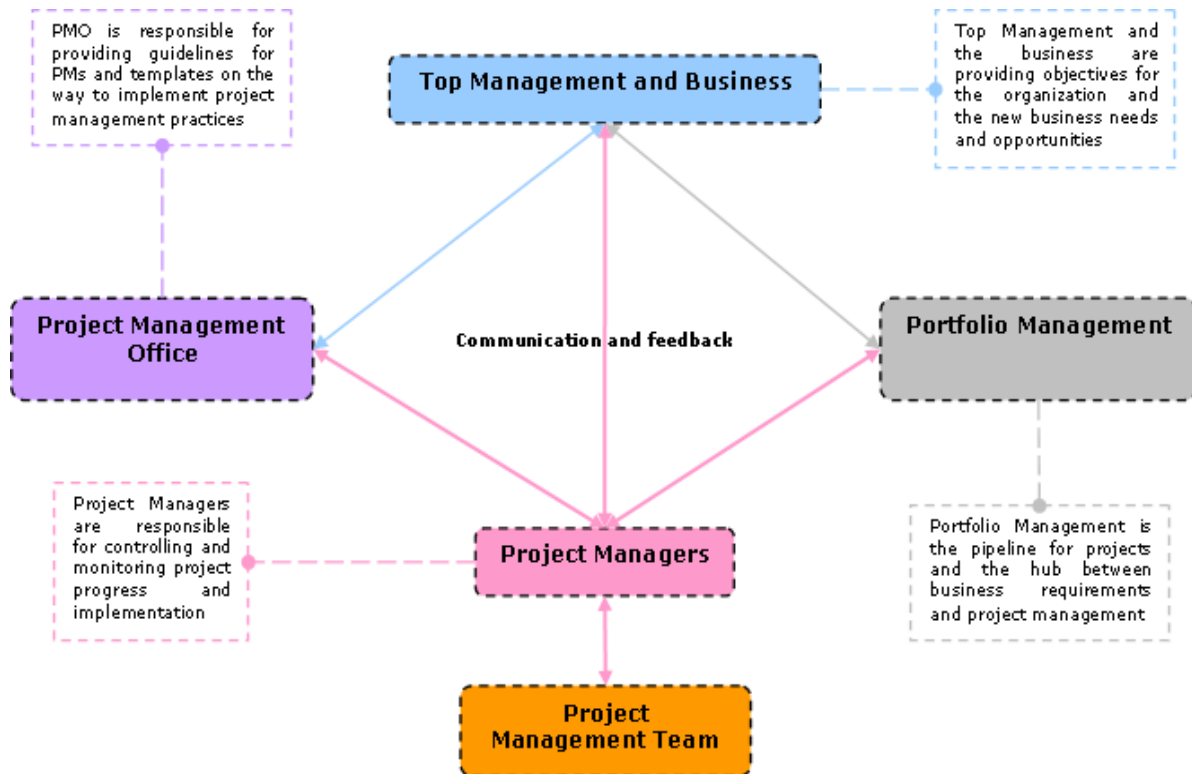


Figure 10. the project management structure in Organization B

As it can be shown from the above diagram, the project manager is communicating between all different entities involved in the project management implementation; PMO, Top Management and Business, Portfolio Management Team, and the Project Management Team. Therefore, the project manager is playing an important role in communicating the information between all parties involved in project management and other parties in the whole organization represented by the business.

4.4 CASE STUDY 3 : "Organization C"

A- Organization overview

From the organizations' documents and website, the following information was taken by the researcher. Organization C is a government organization that offers its services to collaborate with the government organizations under the umbrella of the Government. Each organization has its projects which should be monitored and audited by organization C. Based on government strategic plan the following the organization strategic plan has been set for the period 1/1/2008 till 31/12/2012:

The organization C develops roles and regulation, future plans, and control and observes the performance of government organizations. One of the most important aims of Organization C is to ensure and support that the government strategic plans is implemented and executed in the government organizations.

The organization C is executive authority. It helps and supports the governor to execute his visions and plans. Improving the performance and developing the services of government organizations and government sponsored projects are the major responsibilities of organization C.

The Organization C have limited financial authorities on projects in the government organization. On the other hand, organization C committee has the full authority to change any thing related to the project (such as decisions on quantity, quality, price ... etc). Also, organization C plays the role of coordinator between governmental organizations in order to have better performance, sharing knowledge and evaluating any subject that have relation to the success of the projects which will lead to the success of implementation of government strategic plan.

There are many subcommittees in organization C. Each subcommittee has specific area of work or responsibilities to oversee and develop (such as

economic development, social development and Infrastructure sub committee).

B- Vision

"To facilitate the city to be regarded as one of the best five governments in the world".

C- Mission

"To develop government strategic plans and policies and champion their effective execution, while providing the necessary support for the Executive Council to carry out its duties efficiently".

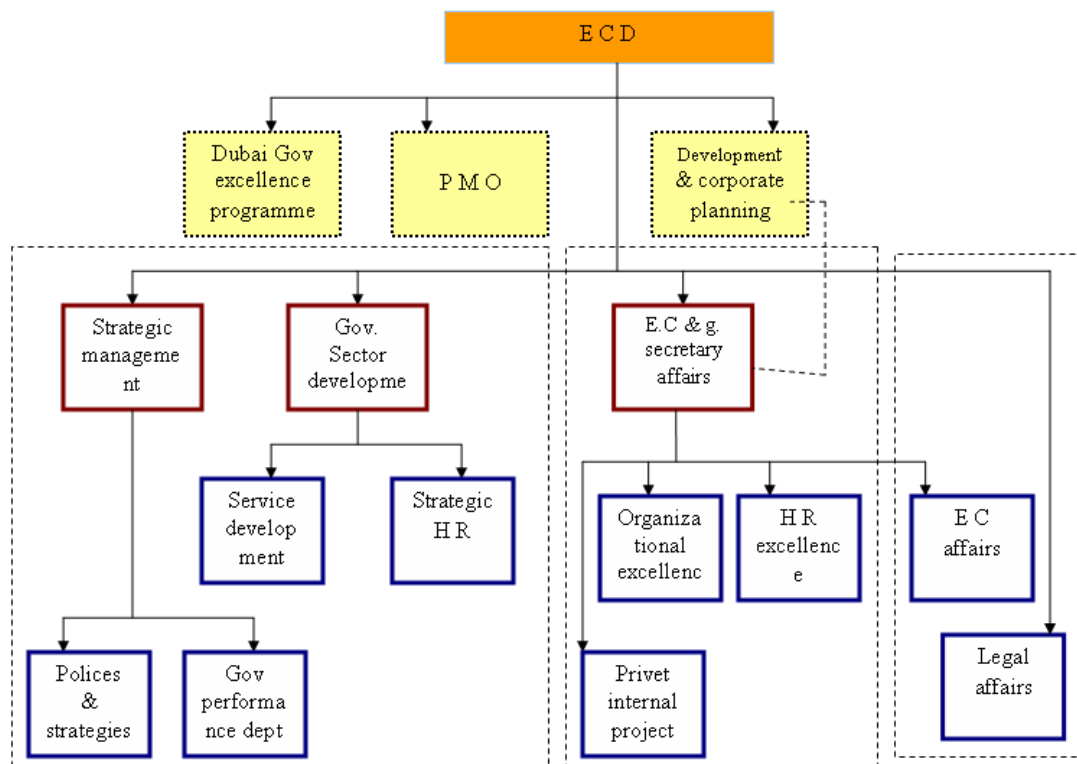


Figure11. Organization C organizational Structure

D- ORGANISATION C Strategic Objectives:

- 1 Auditing and following up the execution of the construction contracts for the projects to insure the legality of contracting, and proper execution, and that the exploitation of the project is in accordance to the objectives established for.

- 2 Ascertaining the extent of efficiency in using the resources (the inputs) to realize the objectives (outputs) as well as the extent of the efficiency the organizing, and running of financial operations.
- 3 Ascertaining that the works have been carried out with the minimum cost, time, and effort.
- 4 Studying and examining various financial and accounting laws, rules, regulations, and method of practicing financial operations to insure the extent of their safety. Determine the phases of imperfection and deficiency therein, and recommending corrective action to be taken for remedy.
- 5 Enhancement of the legality, consistency and soundness of public funds management by Contribution in the development of financial operations flow and administrative development of Auditees.
- 6 Contribution in the communal development by working towards the enhancement of understanding and care for the importance of financial audit , and the development of financial and administrative management , and the impact of that on the enhancement of performance quality in all sectors.
- 7 Creating a mechanism for checking and controlling auditees' projects.
- 8 Restructuring of the Department according to the requirements of the proposed law and its executive regulations

From organization observation and secondary data reviewed, the researcher introduces the following information from organization C strategic document. The Project Management Office at Organization C has been established in January 2008, with a clear mission and a twin mandate (cultural and process). PMO mission is to provide government with the program and project management framework and processes to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the deployment of the government Strategic Plan and Organization C decisions.

While the culture mandate is to develop project and program management culture throughout government. Process mandate is to ensure excellence in program delivery through project monitoring, reporting and delivery.

The PMO utilizes a three-phased approach to the setup of a PMO. Given the current situation of the target organization, the PMO tailor the approach to satisfy the organization's needs:

Phase I "The Foundation"

The main objectives of this phase were;

- Assign PMO Lead
- Develop PMO Vision & Mission
- Develop PMO Strategies linked to organization goals
- Develop tactics/actions related to each strategy
- Define measures for each tactic/action

Phase II "The Support"

- Develop processes
- Tailor tools and templates
- Establish appropriate infrastructure
- Establish software / IT tools to enable PMO function
- Setup a centralized information repository

Phase III "The Structure"

- Finalize PMO Strategy
- Develop PMO Implementation Roadmap
- Package PM Toolkit
- Conduct training, coaching and mentoring

Finally, The PMO is organized into three functional sections to achieve its objectives

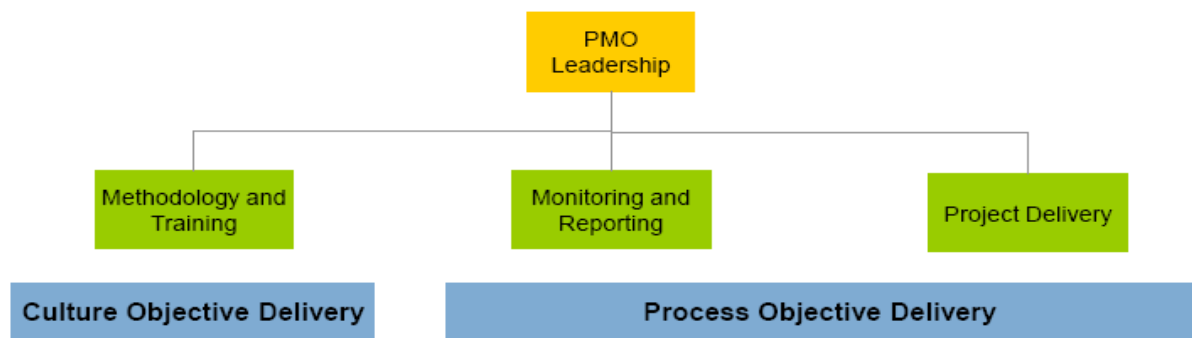


Figure 12. The PMO structure in ORGANISATION C

The PMO framework used a project management approach. They establish four main areas:

1- Project planning

The objectives or PMO steps of this phase are:

- Develop view of existing initiatives and select relevant projects to be included within the scope of the Organization C-PMO team
- Ensure consistency in planning and core project elements
- Gather information about new initiatives
- Assess core elements, select relevant projects and ensure planning consistency
- Include project in PMO activities and start review cycles

2- Progress Monitoring: managing obstacles

The objectives or PMO steps of this phase is to ensure activities, milestones, deliverables and actions of selected projects are progressing according to plan

3- Project Reporting

The objectives or PMO steps of this phase are:

- Provide visibility and tailored communication about selected projects

-Manage escalation path and support / facilitate decision making and action planning processes

4- Project Close-Out, Knowledge Capture and Sharing

The objective or PMO step of this phase is to close project and summarize in reusable format learning from the project

The Project Management Tool Kit collects the best known project management templates based on the PMI methodology in an easy -to- apply , accessible format.

4.5 Data collected from Interviews and Survey in the case studies

From the interviews and survey conducted and secondary data reviewed and observed by the researcher, the data comparative tables were introduced.

Those tables are considered as the basis for the discussion and findings parts.



CHAPTER FIVE

DATA ANALYSIS & DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

The researcher was in a position to obtain multifaceted approach to the same research problem due to the diversity of the respondents interviewed. The research data collected is compared against the back drop information deduced from the review of the literature previously conducted on this study.

This research seeks to underline the fact that Portfolio management and project management have to work in accord in order to obtain project success. Whilst portfolio management provides for the overall direction of a project, project managers oversee its intricate details ensuring that no detail or aspect of the project is without being seen.

From the interviews and survey conducted and secondary data reviewed and observed by the researcher, the data comparison tables were introduced.

Those tables are considered as the basis for the discussion and findings parts.

In discussion part, the researcher has summarized the general findings from the three cases and after that he discussed the problems areas or barriers to effective and efficient implementation of PPM in UAE government organizations.

5.2 Analysis Discussion

For the purposes of this study the researcher utilized content analysis, which was followed by thematic analysis which and further diverges to compare the results deduced through thematic ramification. The content analyzed includes views and opinions voiced by the respondents as they filled in the questionnaires and as they answered the interview questions.

The researcher categorized the data in two tabular forms whereby the group that supported the match up work of portfolio management and project managers was accorded one section and the other group shored up support

for independent operation of the portfolio management without being supported by the other levels of management. This kind of approach was highly inductive because the themes emerging in the final report are not obliged upon the respondents by the researcher; rather information was freely obtained from the respondents giving the information the desired integrity. The data obtained from all the respondents was analyzed, compared and contrasted until the researcher drew conclusive remarks to help answer the research question.

The researcher divided the analysis discussion into four major headings which enables him to reach the dissertation objectives:

- 1- The importance of PPM to corporate and project success.
- 2- Measures of PPM effectiveness and their relevance to corporate objectives and project objectives.
- 3- The relationship between project level activities and PPM effectiveness
- 4- Barriers to effective implementation of PPM in government agencies from project management perspective.

5.2.1 The importance of PPM to corporate and project success.

The data collected through research questionnaires and face to face interviews was tabulated to bring the final conclusions.

Questionnaire results in the examined three organizations' show high and strong support for the importance of PPM in their organizations (4.3 average in 5 point likert-type scale).

The interviews results show many reasons and justifications for such importance. For example, in organization "B" before launching the PPM, there were a lot of inconsistencies and mistakes in managing the projects to the end. One of the reasons being is the clash of interest among projects.

Each department or sector manager aims to get the approval for the projects which will allow his department to serve better but with no harmonization or coordination with different departments or sectors. Such behavior leads to duplication and repetition of projects and objectives but under different presented project titles.

Such duplication of projects was common in the agency before the PPM exist, and there was no systematic way or even project manager can do something to eliminate such phenomenon. Such implantation of PPM, allow all organization to realize the benefits of PPM, and it forced the teams (especially the PM) and departments to support it toward fully and efficient implementation.

In addition, project managers in organization A sturdily think that launching of PPM provide the PM teams the purpose to implement it effectively because of its effects in enhancing the operational environment. Also, PPM helps the organization in defining the objectives of each project that may be selected and approved, and linking those project objectives with PPM and business objectives.

Moreover, an executive manager from organization C believes that implementation of PPM provides the organization a common place or data base for all running and executed projects. Previously, the project was executed individually and separately from other (maybe related) projects. So, changing in project scope of work or schedule may strongly affect the other projects. The PPM plays in the organization the role of monitoring, coordinating and controlling of the projects pool. All projects plans will be aligned with the PPM planning cycle which will lead to better risk identification, better risk mitigation plans and better project and organization performance.

In the organization "A" interviews conducted by the researcher, the project managers were the key players in the success of PPM. There is a strong relation between PM and PPM in their every day activities and they complete and benefits each other. They believe that the success of one party is success for all.

According to the research questions framed a 67% of respondents answered that project management and Portfolio management should work in synchronization. The remaining 33% of the respondents was convinced that portfolio management could operate on its own and manage the projects without necessarily being complemented by the project managers.

From the interview in organization B, project manager says that "If the portfolio managers tend to neglect the role played by the project managers, a

rift between the two parties will be created. The gap between the project managers and the top level managers causes communication failure which causes the flow of ideas to stop".

When there is poor communication stream and rapport establishment ideas are blocked within individuals since they lack a working connection thus the ongoing projects are influenced by one group overlooking the opinions of the others causing it to have some operational lapses.

As stated earlier, the communication is important in all stages in all organization levels. The operation and planning cycles should be clear and defines the communication between two succeeding organizational level. So, effective communication is important between PPM, Projects and departments. As a result, efficient and clear planning and operation cycles will be more efficient if it will be at both project and portfolio levels. Moreover, considerable development is able to be accomplished through understanding and utilizing the concept of portfolio thinking and effective communication (Adri, Seidel and Wadman, 1994).

However, some PPM standardized tools such as Project Management Office (PMO) could help the PPM and organization to reach its goals, but taken into consideration that two thirds of such tools user are not happy with results or not getting the assumed benefits because of different complicated factors (Caoimhin, 2008).

5.2.2 Measures of PPM performance effectiveness and their relevance to corporate objectives and project objectives.

Although in the three organizations the PPM is a new concept, there are acceptable understanding and implementation of PPM. For example, in organization A, B and C, procedures and policies to maximize the value of the portfolio projects are existed but still being developed. Adding, the criteria of selecting the projects and allocating the resources are still under continuous development and improvements in all three organizations. Also, it is noticeable that sometimes (especially in organization C) the portfolio manager's titles which are related to the project are differently pronounced in different departments. For example, the project sponsor may not known under this title but he is known by the role which he is playing (e.g. project director).

This leads the researcher to propose that the PMO, project and portfolio teams are still under development.

However, the selection of projects serves the organizations' goals and objectives which are clearly mapped to government strategic plan (2013). Executive manager from organization B says "before initiation of a project, the project goals are properly linked to or mapped to organization goals". Unfortunately, there is no measurement to realize the project benefits after completion of projects. In all three organizations, there is no clear mechanism to review the performance at portfolio levels which is considered as one of the most important aspects in development of PPM concept in any organization. The measurements are only done in the project levels. This issue will be discussed later in the problem analysis part.

In general, due to the new concept and implementation of PPM in the government agencies (two years or less in the three organizations), the PPM performance are acceptable by the stakeholders and the benefits from such concept are realized and will maximize the corporate as well as project success. Base on results, the researcher could mention that organization A and B are moderately matured, while organization C maturity is lower than its rivals.

5.2.3. The relationship between project level activities and PPM effectiveness and efficiency

The interviews and survey results and the data comparison table (at the end of the chapter) support the earlier studies. The researcher interview questions were developed mainly to cover the conceptual framework variables. The interviewees' responds in a different manner on each variable, they provide some example were applicable in their fields to clarify their answer and understanding of the variables questions in order to achieve PPM and organization success. For example in regards goal setting and its relation with PPM performance, a project manager in organization A stated that in his organization, projects goals are mapped to the organization goals which are checked by PMO and PPM before selecting and activating the project. In addition, executive manager from organization B believes that the most important role of PPM is to identify if the project objective serves and aligned

with the organization strategy. In the three organization, the project objectives and borders are well defined, along with monitoring and controlling of those projects during execution by PM and PMO.

Most of the participants in the three organizations agreed that the eight project level activities or characteristics from the conceptual framework have direct effect on project success, and as a result that will affect indirectly or directly the PPM efficiency and effectiveness.

In this study, there is evidence acquired from numerous cases giving its legitimacy back up. The data or evidence obtained through questionnaires, oral interviews and observation was stronger because there were multiple respondents obtained from a diverse pool of participants and organizations.

The goal setting processes are well implemented in the three organizations. It's clearly noticeable from the analysis table how each organization setting its project goals and milestones. For example, projects objectives, borders, risks, redline and milestones are developed properly. Also, communication plan and reporting system are well identified by the project manager at earlier stages. Moreover, the quality assurance and health check audit processes are strong in the UAE government organization. The only issue found is how the organization mapping its project objectives with the corporate level objectives after the completion of the project and the product/service launch.

Also, the required information in the three organizations by the project management and decision makers are available and reliable. The scope document, project charter, business case are produced and approved properly. Moreover, project manager from organization A added "if the project is long or stopped, updating of information is required by PMO to re kick-off". This means that the organization value the importance of reliable and up-to-date information to PPM. Also, the information flow is adequate only in one way (i.e. from project management to departments, not in both directions). In general, common data base for the projects is existed and utilized in acceptable manner. Executive manager from organization C stated that before implementation of PPM, there was no common place to go if there are any questions regarding on going or finished projects project. So PPM provides the organization a good project data base which can increase the knowledge in the organization and help in boosting the processes.

In rare cases, the project management commitment level is low toward the project or the portfolio management. The researcher asked the interviewees about the difficulties in PM contribution toward PPM. Organization C project managers believe that the daily work load and portfolio managers' deep involvement in project activities lower the commitment or inner enthusiasms of the PM and his team. They believe that such involvement limits their freedom to work as per their view for the interest of the project and organization.

In organization B, evidence shows that the PPM managers are rarely involved at all in PM projects. An IT project manager stated that it depends on the project owner's style, "but in our organization, most of them are not involved closely, in one of the projects, I was looking for the project owner for two months to acquire from him additional resources which could lead to increase the outcome benefits from the project". They have a lot of administrative work (i.e. Executive manager).

Unrealistic business case plan or unclear roles and responsibilities of the portfolio managers in the project could lower the level of commitment in organization A project manager's perspective. Generally, the good level of commitment is noticed by the project managers.

Another focal point that affects the project and the portfolio is the decision-making style or system of the project managers. The decision-making style of project managers is known by the team, but it can be changed depending on external factors or situations. Further, the organization and top management show good understanding and support for the project managers in their decisions.

Obviously, the degree of freedom or support given by the PPM to the project manager is depending on many factors. An executive manager from organization B believes that the degree of freedom depends on the level of maturity of the project manager. Most of the project managers in the examined organizations are qualified (PMP or other PM certificates), well experienced, and having the right skills (analysis, communication and reporting skills along with budgeting or accounting fundamental skills).

From the interviews conducted in organization A, B and C, the project managements are standardized and formalized. PMO is providing the templates and checking the performance of projects. Adding, organization and

project management maturity model (OPM3) used in project levels only. Throughout a wide collection of best practices, OPM3 helps the organization (besides measuring the organization maturity) to bridge the strategic gap, realize the top practices, and plan for development and improvement activities. Further more, the three organizations lay in step three in project management governance model which introduced by Muller. Roles and responsibilities, system and procedures, documentation, excellence model, benchmarking, quality assurance ...etc, are clear and used.

So as a result, activities, factors or characteristics related to project level in UAE based government organizations; can be categorized to barriers or non barriers factors, activities, or characteristics to effective implementation of PPM in government organizations.



Figure13. Barriers to effective implementation of PPM in the UAE orgs.

5.2.4. Barriers to effective implementation of PPM in government agencies from project management perspective.

Realization of project benefits after completion, the involvement of PM in PPM project activities & vice versa and project ownership showed themselves to be as barriers to PPM efficiency and effectiveness implementation more than other factors , activities or variables which impact project and portfolio management success.

On the other hand, factors or activities in the project level like goals setting, decision making process/style, information availability and reliability, project management commitment to business case (or project), maturity of project manager, and standardization & formalization of project management are not considered as barriers to effective implementation of PPM in UAE based organization. Such activities or factors, as mentioned in 5.2.3, are properly taken in consideration by the examined three organizations.

The question begging for an answer in this research is: why do portfolio projects fail sometimes irrespective of the careful details taken into consideration during their formulation and their commencement. The answer lies in the operation between the project managers and the portfolio management. In order for a project to stand a lot and mix efforts must be done by both the PPM and project management teams to ensure that no details are left out or overlooked. Further, the people who have the essential knowledge of the projects must be at the front position during the decision making process.

i. Realization of project benefits after completion of projects

One of the most important roles of PPM is selecting the right project for the portfolio that simply increases the business performance and help to achieve the strategic goals and objective of the organization. The PPM in evaluating and selecting the projects examine the extend of potential benefits of the new project that will add to the existing portfolio in which leads to best utilization of the resources (human, cash, equipment...etc), support strategic initiatives, and at the same time meeting and exceed the expectation of stakeholders in order to maximize the organization growth in long period.

The PPM in organization A, B and C, have good level of standardization and procedures in selecting the projects, which lead them firstly to understand and realize the benefits afforded by project before selecting them. Unfortunately, all the three organization don't have a clear system or approach to evaluate the benefits reality from those executed projects. In the interview process, it is clearly noticed from the answers regarding how PPM performance is measured that the assessment is done only at project level. IT project manager in organization C stated that, in one of the projects during the project execution, the scope has been modified in order to have better result and benefits as per PM and project owner view, but at the end of the project, we realized that the benefits from the project are not supporting the business and strategic objectives.

So as a result if there is poor planning for the project by PPM and PM, how it will discover if there is no revision of PPM performance which could help in examine the project outcomes after completing the project is really aligned and supports the organization strategy.

Thus, many cases shows that projects objectives (which are linked to organization strategies and objectives by PPM in selecting stage) are sometimes not really supporting organization objectives and strategy, so the corrective decision action where not made. Further, the realization of benefits milestone is not clear and in many cases not exited. As a result, the improvement level (in cost, quality, time ...etc) cannot be identified properly which prevent the organization from corrective actions and even from identification of the future next improvements.

In addition, the interview shows that there is a gap between PPM, PMO and project management (managers). The PPM focusing of strategies, business performance, satisfaction of stakeholder, mixes the portfolio, selection of the projects, resource managing and cash flow. The PMO is focusing on performance of the project (monitoring). While the project manager is focusing on successful delivery of the project within scheduled time, cost and quality (performance) along with stakeholder satisfaction. So, the project portfolio life span is uncompleted or improperly implemented. According to Harvey (2010), project portfolio life span consist of recognition of demands and opportunity, best mix up of projects, planning and execution, product or service launch and

finally recognition of benefits. So the gap between portfolio planning and portfolio management should be aware of by the organization.

ii. The involvement of PM in PPM project activities and vice versa.

The portfolio management has the duty of ensuring that all the projects and elements of the corporation work in harmony for the achievement of the organizational goals. In order for projects to function well they must be assigned to the specific individuals who are acquainted with their processes and procedures. The project managers become the custodians of the projects while the portfolio management plays the role of the overseer ensuring that the project managers are performing their tasks in accordance to the laid down procedures.

The project managers should continuously consult with the portfolio managers and keep them updated on the progress of their projects. Further, the portfolio managers should not play a hand on duty in managing the projects; they should give the directives to the accredited project managers and let them run the projects. When the top level interferes with the project managers and limit their capability to run and manage them, they create a vacuum so that the projects are left uncovered with no specific persons to watch over their progress. The portfolio management has got too many parts in an organization to deal with; they thus lack the capacity to give keen attention to every project on track.

As noticed from the cases (especially in organization C, and fewer in org.A), One of the most important reasons behind poor commitment of project manager is that the PPM involved deeply in projects work. The project managers in organization C feels that they are good implementers rather than thinkers and their duties only to satisfy the executive manager or project owner, even if the project owner put unrealistic plans. A project manager from organization A stated that depending on the project manager and his experience and competence in PM team, the degree of involvement will be given.

A high degree of freedom is required by project managers to do the work decisions as they sees it will be in interest of the project. The main reason falls behind such deep involvement of PPM is that losing of comfort which

leads to lose the collaboration between the project manager and PPM. losing of the comfort is happened or noticed when the PPM or the owner of the project is not confidence in the assigned project manager due to many reasons like the maturity considerations (for example experience of project manager) , or ethical considerations (taking decisions for his interest, e.g. stretching the projects). An executive manager from organization C think that sometime the Sometimes the collaboration is lost due to communication issues such as the non clarity of information requirement from each party to another especially those information regarding the project performance in different stages. In interview with executive manager in organization B, such miss communications are avoided or minimized due to the PMO requirement forcefully the reports and records that required from PPM or the project owner. Adding, the degree of awareness of the importance of informal communication is high. They provide excellent environment in all departments for the employees to meet and chat.

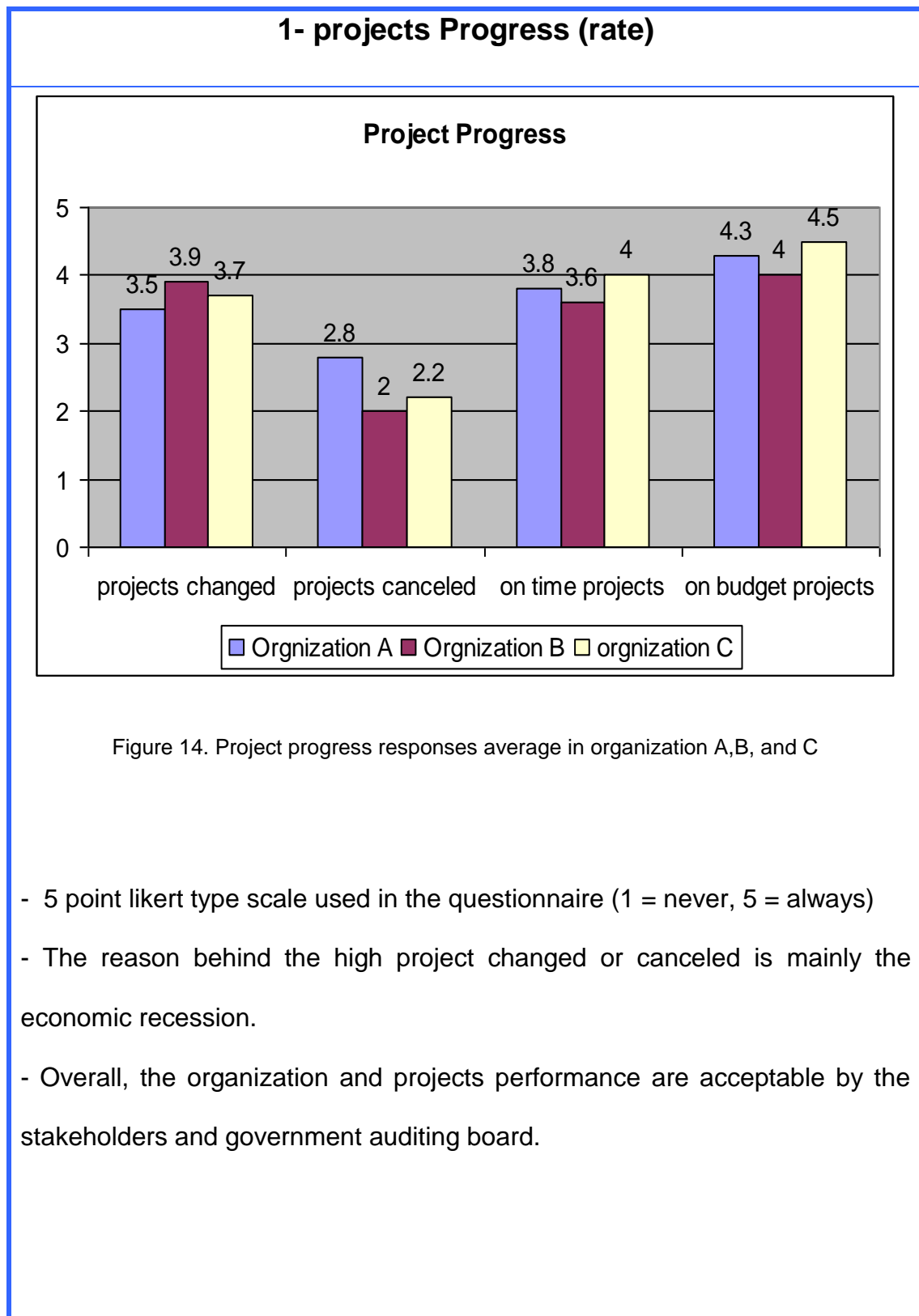
On the other hand, the project manager should be committed to or effectively involved in PPM project activities. Due to the human resources limitation (shortage) in the three organizations, most of the project mangers either having more than one project or having operational duties along with the project duties. The skills and abilities are varying from one project manager to another. Thus, the PPM should be aware to the work load given to each project manager which can lead to improper and inefficient involvement in higher level project activities (for example resource reallocation for the project, changing the scope for the interest of org, go/kill decisions, identifying bad projects ...etc). Project managers from organization B and C, agrees that they spending most of their daily duties in meetings. Thus , suck work load and meetings will effect the involvement in project activities or in PPM project activities.

iii. Project ownership

A project in an organization is likely to fail if it lacks good planning, organization and coordination. In order for a project to succeed it must have a workable plan with a boss or owner assigned to it. In other words, a project

must be carefully planned even before it is begin, once the plan is in pipeline, resources must be allocated to the project in order for it to activate its implementation process. Moreover, it must be given an owner who would watch over it and account for it incase of failure along with the project manager. The owner must be well closed to the project, he must be able to feel its pulse and communicate to the portfolio management incase of a set back. The project owners in organization A, B and C most of the time are either director or executive director, so they have a lot of responsibilities. The interview results shows that in many cases the interest in project performance from the project owner is low. Also, the owner motivation or enthusiasm to communicate differs from one owner to another. For example in organization B, one of the ongoing projects needed more resources and that lead to maximizing the benefits for the organization, the project manager team cannot meet the owner of the project (sometimes for two months) to describe and explain to him the importance of such change in scope which will require more resources for the interest of the organization. Therefore, a number of projects were at the end not having satisfied results, paused, or even cancelled. In Muller and Turner (2004) found that when the owner or sponsor of a project shows more motivation or interest to communicate concerning the project performance, this interest will lead to happy better results. Furthermore, in Helm and Remington (2005) study, they identified most critical success factors for any project owner/sponsor such as the motivation to connect the project and organization, fight with others in favor of the project, and enthusiasm to collaborate with the PM and the team which will required outstanding communication skills and time. additionally, as mentioned earlier in the literature review chapter, principal-agent theory to the project owner and project manager can help in obtaining high level of cooperation between PM and project owner, while not neglecting the importance of empowerment to the PM. In Addition to this, project managers in organization C believes that the project owner is deeply involved in their project work. Such involvement cause issues in their willingness to communicate effectively with the PPM.

5.3 Data comparison table.



Organization	2- PPM performance
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Procedures and policies to maximize the value of the portfolio projects under progress/ being developed. -Mix of medium / high priority projects. -organization strategy mapped to Dubai Strategic Plan 2013. -the projects goals mapped to organizations goals before initiation of project.. - After completing the projects, there is no tool to measure the goal mapping. -PPM in the organization is moderately matured (stage 3 in Muller model), but inadequate evaluation methods.
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good procedures and policies to maximizing the value of the portfolio, but still under modification and development. -good balancing of projects (good mix of high-low projects risks, length and priority). -organization strategy mapped to Dubai Strategic Plan 2013. -the projects goals mapped to organizations goals before starting the project. -there is no clear mechanism to review the performance at portfolio levels. - In general, the performance of the portfolio is acceptable, but the evaluation methods for the projects after completion are inadequate.

C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -procedures and policies to maximize the value of the portfolio projects under developing. -organization strategy mapped to Dubai Strategic Plan 2013. -there is no clear mechanism to review the performance at portfolio levels (also the OPM3 used in project level only). - In general, the performance of the portfolio is acceptable to the stakeholders, but in my opinion, it's lower than organization A and B.
Organization	3 – goal setting in projects
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -the projects goals mapped to organizations goals - good monitoring & controlling of project (time, cost and quality) -good risk identification/ mitigation -milestones and "red lines" are properly identified -health check "audit " - Good communication planning, reporting system and quality assurance.
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -projects objectives and boarders defined - good monitoring & controlling of project (time, cost and quality) -good risk identification -milestones and "red lines" are properly identified

C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - in general, good procedures in goal settings (almost same like other orgs.).
Organization	4 – Decision Making system/Style
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -depend on the situation; the D.M is made by the project manager. - Proper evaluation for external factors (recession). -good team work in D.M in general. - Generally, good organization support for the project manager in his decisions.
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -every manager have his style in decision making - In some situations, the project manager can change his style. -good team work environment in decision making process -Good support from the management except in view cases.
C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The project manager has a well known style in decision making. - Some intervention from portfolio management is noticed. -good team work environment in decision making process

Organization	5 – information availability and reliability
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Scope, SOW, project charter, business case ... produced & approved. - Good updating process of information (Updating business case required to restart the project). - Common data base existed and used. - There is adequate information flow from the Project managers to depts. "one way", but between departments the communication system existed with limits.
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -generally, the information system is acceptable -information is always updated, and reliable. - common data base for the projects is excited but still not perfectly utilized - There is inadequate flow of information especially horizontally between depts (info flow is not defined properly to and from projects).
C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - common data base for the projects is excited but still not rightly utilized -information is not always updated, but reliable (depend on the depts.) -generally, the information system is acceptable and the flow of information is adequate.

Organization	6 – Project managers commitment to project (business case)
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Generally , good level of commitment clearly noticed -in some cases, unrealistic business case plan by top management affect negatively the commitment of project managers - Roles and responsibilities of portfolio management in projects are not clear and well known by the project managers.
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Generally , good level of commitment clearly noticed -in few cases, the management doesn't seem to support project manager work due to many factors. -self commitment to the business case, project and organization objectives by the project mangers are visible.
C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commitment of project managers to the project is strongly exists. - in some cases, the power and involvement of project owner in the project progress causes such commitment when the self commitment is absent.

Organization	7 – PM involvement in PPM project activities
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fugitive roles and responsibilities between PM and PPM in the project part. - Some organization objectives (related to the project) is not communicated to the project manager. -mostly, feedback from PPM to project managers and teams regarding the meetings or performance. -project managers are involved directly in go-kill decisions. -generally, project managers are not involved properly in PPM project activities.
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - clear roles and responsibilities between PM and PPM in projects -mostly, feedback from PPM to project managers and teams regarding the performance, improvements, and the comments to maximize the benefits. -project managers are involved directly in go-kill decisions. -generally, project managers are not involved properly in PPM activities maybe because of overload of their operational and project duties.

C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - clear roles and responsibilities between PM and PPM in projects - Powerful role of PMO and PPM (or the project owner) is noticed in projects. -project managers are involved directly in go-kill decisions, modifications in projects, or any critical decision. Generally, the involvement of PPM in projects activities is not proper, while good involvement of PM in PPM project activities.
Organization	8 – Support of project Owner / Sponsor
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The project owner(s) well known at early stages of the project. -The degree of authority or freedom given to PM is depending on the owner "nature". -most of the time the owner or sponsor is not committed to review the project performance (along with PMO). - The project work not rewarded systemically like operational work.
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the situation is same to organization "A" but, -most of the time, the owner is not involved in the projects at all, and the owner doesn't support even when the PM may needs his help.

C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The project owner(s) well known at early stages of the project. -The project owner involved deeply in project activities and reviews closely the performance of his projects. -Continuous support from owner to his project team. -such close involvement causes issues in the relationship between PM and project owner sometimes. -Some of PMs feel that their freedom is minimized.
Organization	9– maturity of project manager
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At least the PM should have 5 years experience in managing projects. - Critical analysis skills is must (especially in budgeting / accounting/report). -Due to resource shortages, more than one project is given to the PM. - In general, the project managers matured enough to run the organization projects. - the PMO evaluate the performance of the project managers.
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Most of the project managers are well qualified and experienced. - To be promoted to project manager, certificates required. - Good implementations of project management practices. - Due to some resource shortages, more than project is given to the PM.

C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the project managers are experienced and well skilled in managing the projects. - Good implementations of project management practices. - The management reviews properly the performance of the project management. - In general, the project managers matured enough to run the organization projects. -Due to resource shortages, more than one project is given to the PM.
Organization	10 – Standardization and formalization of project management
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maturity model id used in the organization at project levels (OPM3). - Project management office is efficient and effective. -PMO provides the templates to the project managers properly. - Efficient quality assurance process. - Well defined RACI, documentation, auditing...etc - generally, they are in step 3 in R.Muller Project Mangt Governance Model

<p>B</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maturity model id used in the organization project level only (OPM3). - Roles and responsibilities, benchmarking, excellence model, documentation, system and procedures are clear and used. - generally, they are in step 3 in R.Muller Project Mangt Governance Model
<p>C</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maturity model id used only in the organization project levels (OPM3). - Well defined roles and responsibilities, documentation system, quality procedures ...etc. -PMO is playing the controller and improvement role in project management. - generally, they are in step 3 in R.Muller Project Mangt Governance Model



CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION

This chapter will go over the main points and summarize the research results together with applicable recommendations. Moreover, it will present the research conclusion and potential linked future work.

6.1 Results

This research main aim for this research is to investigate the barriers to effective implementation of PPM from project management activities side in UAE government agencies. In the analysis and discussion part, it is necessary to link the key findings with the four research objectives which were positioned earlier in order to attain the research aim. The research collaborates with the earlier studies about the importance of PPM and how its effects the corporate and project success. The literature part shows how to evaluate or measure PPM effectiveness and efficiency. Unfortunately, in the three examined organizations there is no evidence that they evaluate or, measure the PPM or corporate level performance. The organizational project management maturity is used on project levels only. On the other hand, the results show strong relationship between project level activities and PPM efficiency. The research findings support that all factors, variables or activities in the conceptual framework affect the PPM efficiency directly or indirectly. While investigating which of those activities were representing as barriers to effectiveness implementation of PPM in UAE government agencies, project level activities or factors like realization of project benefits after completion, involvement of project management (PM) in programme and portfolio management (PPM) project activities & vice versa and project ownership show themselves to be as barriers to effective and efficient implementation of PPM in UAE government agencies.

The researcher investigates and discusses the main objective topics related to PPM efficiency and project manager activities by extensive literature review. The literature review chapter starts by background information on the PPM importance, performance measurements, and general problem areas and after that moves to project managers roles and activities, and its relation to PPM efficiency. Also, other topics were presented by the researcher like

the communication effects on the organization levels and solutions to improve PPM performance in inadequate project-level activities environment.

Next, depending on the extensive literature review and researcher knowledge, the conceptual frame work is introduced in order to examine the effect of the project managers activities or factors on PPM efficiency for the first time in the UAE context.

The methodology and framework in this research presented the research approach, participants, and instruments for this dissertation in details. Mainly, qualitative approach is the best methodology for the research with simple quantitative method (in order to have wider or complete view on the organizations current status). The research main tool in the case studies are interviews, while simple questionnaire along with secondary data observation are used also in order to have better reliable results.

Multiple case studies are preferred and used by the researcher. The case study chapter starts with introduction and general information about the three organizations and then it focuses on PPM, PMO, and Project management processes and practices.

After that, comparison analysis of the three organizations are introduced based on interviews, questionnaire and secondary data observation. The researcher describes the general findings in tables headed by ten categories or parts. These tables are the base for the discussion part.

6.2 Conclusion

Generally, the portfolio management mainly pilots the initiation and finishing of a project. The major goals of portfolio management is to maximize profitability of the project, it offers project balance and helps in supporting projects to be in line with the strategies of the organization. The senior management has the duty to make key decisions concerning the project under way. It also conducts stage-gate appraisals of the organization.

The project managers on the other hand work under the portfolio management to ensure that all the details of the project are taken care of; they help in ensuring that the progress details are updated. In order to obtain maximum results achievable, project manager should be in a position to work harmoniously with the portfolio managers. Further, the project managers

should be involved properly and support PPM project activities. On the other hand, the portfolio managers or project owners / sponsors should not obstruct the operations of the project managers. They should allow them to make decisions independently, and steer their projects towards the organizational goals. The senior level management should not discourage the operations of the project managers, they should lead, advise and encourage them but not manipulate their operations.

The interviews results collaborate and support the earlier studies findings. All participants in the three organizations agreed that the eight project level activities or characteristics from the conceptual framework have direct effect on project success, and as a result that will affect indirectly or directly the PPM efficiency and effectiveness.

Further more, activities, factors or characteristics related to project level in UAE based government organizations can be categorized to higher or lower interest factors, activities, or characteristics that show themselves as barriers to effective implementation of PPM in government organizations.

Realization of project benefits after completion, the involvement of PM in PPM project activities & vice versa and project ownership showed themselves to be of higher interest to PPM efficiency and effectiveness implementation than the other factors , activities or variables because they impact project and PPM success.

On the other hand, factors or activities in the project level like goals setting, decision making process/style, information availability and reliability, project management commitment to business case (or project), maturity of project manager, and standardization & formalization of project management are not considered as barriers to effective implementation of PPM in UAE based organization. Such activities or factors are properly taken in consideration by the examined three organizations.

Finally, general and specific recommendations are introduced by the researcher to eliminate the barriers to effective implementation of PPM in UAE based government agencies from project management perspective.

6.3 Recommendations

It is clearly stated on the research paper that the project managers are the key success to the portfolio management. However, there are some recommendations that if applied would enhance the efficiency of the portfolio management and project management:

– The gap between portfolio planning and portfolio management should be recognized by the organizations. The gap between PPM, PMO and project management (managers) should be bridged. Project objectives should be really linked between supporting organization objectives and strategy. Neglecting the actual alignment of the project objectives to organization objectives after finishing the projects could affect the organization success negatively. As a result, if the corrective decision actions are not identified when needed, the potential improvements and benefits (even of the future improvements plans) cannot be identified. Project portfolio life span (PPLS) should be implemented totally. PPLS consists of recognition of demands and opportunity, best mix up of projects, planning and execution, product or service launch and finally recognition of benefits. Also, PPM as a hub should be fully understood and implemented (Harvey, 2010).

- Strategic alignment model should be used to map the project objectives to strategic objectives in the organizations. By assessing strategic alignment using the alignment measurement methodology to all levels (such as Luftman alignment model), the performance on organizations will improve, the efficiency will maximize and as a result the organization competitiveness will increase.

- The organization and PPM should focus on the effective involvement and commitment of project managers in PPM project activities. The barriers which limit this involvement should be eliminated. Proper work load (no. of projects and operational duties) per project manager and his team is vital, with taking to consideration the variety of skills and abilities from one project manager to another. Thus, the PPM should be aware of the work load given to each

project manager which can lead to improper and inefficient involvement in higher level project activities.

- The relationship between project owner or PPM, and project manager should be properly identified and addressed. Earlier studies show that the more project owner or sponsor motivated and interested to communicate concerning the project performance, the better results will be achieved. Furthermore, the type and degree of involvement in project manager activities should be carefully studied to prevent issues related to "freedom" and "commitment" of project manager. Additionally, as mentioned earlier in the literature review chapter, principal-agent theory to the project owner (as principal) and project manager (as agent) could help to smooth this relationship by knowing each party their roles and responsibilities in different phases of a project.

- The introduction and implementation of information flow and information process. This process will make the channel of communication between the portfolio team and the project team more efficient and productive, which will lead to the success of both (for example; stage gate information system process). Also standardization along with all the project managers and PPM in term of information needed to be shared is required.

6.4 Research Limitations

The main limitation for this research was the limit number of previous studies regarding the value or roles of project managers in achieving the PPM efficiency.

Other limitation for this study was the participant's willingness to provide comprehensive information about the organization current status were restricted due to the interviewee's tight schedules and work load. Moreover, each organization has different words for the same position, process or activities...etc, this may causes the participants to provide inaccurate information depend on his understanding even though the researcher efforts to clear the fugitive words or questions. Nevertheless, the whole survey

process was very successful. Though the time frame was restricted there was high response which enlarged the credibility of the information obtained.

Eventually, the generalization of findings from the samples to UAE government agencies may be limited in some areas, this needs more investigation and expansion of the study to further organizations.

6.5 Suggestion for Future Research

As mentioned earlier, the main aim for this research is to investigate the barriers to effective implementation of PPM from project management activities side only in UAE government agencies. To have a complete view, the PPM practices and activities should be properly investigate and liked to how it contributes to the project and organization success.

Another important issue is that how the UAE based government agencies measure their maturity level and how they map out the organization goals with the project goals after completion of the project.

Also, the role of the project owner or sponsor in project and PPM success could be another future subject to study.

Appendix A

Questionnaire

As discussed, I am in the way to get my master degree in project management. My topic is ***The Effect of Project Level Activities On Portfolio Management Efficiency In UAE Organizations***, I am aiming to explore the barriers to effective implementation of PPM from project management activities side.

I will be grateful If you can give five minutes of your valuable time to answer the following questions:

Recently in your experience in your department / project management team,

Q1: the projects objectives , goals or Scope of work are changed

1- Never 2- rarely 3- sometimes 4-most of times 5- always

Q2; the ongoing projects are cancelled

1- Never 2- rarely 3- sometimes 4-most of times 5- always

Q3: the projects delivery on time

1- Never 2- rarely 3- sometimes 4-most of times 5- always

Q4: the projects delivery on budget

1- Never 2- rarely 3- sometimes 4-most of times 5- always

Q5: in general, do you agree that the PPM is importance to your department / team / organization?

1-strongly disagree 2- disagree 3- neither agree nor disagree 4-agree 5- strongly agree

Q6:do you think that the portfolio management must work in synchronization of project management? Explain.

Yes No.

All the the provided information will be treated in a strictest confidence.

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