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A new framework for determining critical success/failure factors in projects

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Abstract

Only a few studies in the project management literature concentrate on the critical factors that affect project success or failure. Whereas many of these studies generate lists of critical success factors, each list varies in its scope and purpose. The success factors are usually listed as either very general factors or very specific factors affecting only a particular project. However, lacking a comprehensive list makes it difficult not only for project managers but also for researchers to evaluate projects based on these factors. In this study, we suggest a new scheme that classifies the critical factors, and describes the impacts of these factors on project performance. Emphasis is given to the grouping of success factors and explaining the interaction between them, rather than the identification of individual factors. An empirical study is conducted to test the practicality of using such a scheme. The statistical analyses of the results demonstrate the differences between the critical success factors identified in a previous study from

literature and the factors identified with the use of our scheme. Many critical factors, such as factors related to project managers' performance, factors related to team members and environmental factors, became apparent with this study. The results are encouraging, in that practitioners support the use of this scheme for determining and analysing critical success factors and how systems respond to these factors.



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Keywords

success/failure; factor groups; system response; a new framework

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