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Investigation of Grant Programmes Implemented by Development Agencies in Turkey in terms of PMI Standards*

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Abstract

In Turkey, there has been an increase in the number of projects being prepared. However, the quality of these projects is questionable due to various issues. As a result, the projects may not achieve the expected benefits, problems may not be solved, budgets may not be used rationally, and there may be indifference in project implementation. In addition, the ineffective and inefficient use of both EU and national resources allocated for projects in Turkey leads to serious labor and time losses. This study aims to determine the compliance of grant programs supported by Development Agencies in Turkey with PMI standards. The study analyses the forms and application guides used in grant projects and compares them with the process groups and knowledge areas in Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK) 6th version published by PMI. The purpose of this study is to raise awareness on project management methodologies and to serve the emergence of more qualified projects. The study uses document analysis as a qualitative research method. The documents related to the grant programs of Development Agencies were collected and analysed. The information in the documents was compared with the descriptions of 10 knowledge areas and 5 process groups defined in PMBOK 6. The findings of the study show that there are similarities and differences between the grant projects supported by Development Agencies in Turkey and PMI standards. The study contributes to the understanding of project management methodologies and the importance of using standards in the project management process.

Keywords: PMI, PMBOK, Development Agencies, Project Management Methodologies.

Article Type: Research Article

Türkiye'de Kalkınma Ajansları Tarafından Yürütülen Hibe Programlarının PMI Standartları Açısından İncelenmesi

Öz

Türkiye'de hazırlanan projelerin sayısında bir artış olmuştur. Ancak bu projelerin kalitesi çeşitli sorunlar nedeniyle sorgulanmaktadır. Sonuç olarak, projeler beklenen faydaları sağlamayabilir, sorunlar çözülemeyebilir, bütçeler rasyonel kullanılmayabilir ve proje uygulamasında ilgisizlik olabilir. Ayrıca Türkiye'de projeler için ayrılan gerek AB gerekse ulusal kaynakların etkin ve verimli kullanılmaması ciddi iş gücü ve zaman kayıplarına yol açmaktadır. Bu çalışma, Türkiye'de Kalkınma Ajansları tarafından yürütülen hibe programlarının PMI standartlarına uygunluğunu tespit etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Çalışmada hibe projelerinde kullanılan formlar ve başvuru rehberleri incelenerek PMI tarafından yayınlanan Proje Yönetimi Bilgi Birikimi Kılavuzu (Project Management Body of Knowledge - PMBOK) altıncı versiyonunda yer alan süreç grupları ve bilgi alanları ile karşılaştırılmıştır. Bu çalışmanın amacı, proje yönetimi metodolojileri konusunda farkındalık yaratmak ve daha nitelikli projelerin ortaya çıkmasına hizmet etmektir. Çalışmada nitel araştırma yöntemi olarak doküman analizi kullanılmıştır. Kalkınma Ajanslarının hibe programları ile ilgili dokümanlar toplanmış ve analiz edilmiştir. Dokümanlardaki bilgiler PMBOK 6'da tanımlanan 10 bilgi alanı ve 5 süreç grubunun tanımları ile karşılaştırılmıştır. Çalışmanın bulguları, Türkiye'deki Kalkınma Ajansları tarafından desteklenen hibe projeleri ile PMI standartları arasında benzerlikler ve farklılıklar olduğunu göstermektedir. Çalışma, proje yönetimi metodolojilerinin anlaşılmasına ve proje yönetimi sürecinde standartların kullanılmasının önemine katkıda bulunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimler: PMI, PMBOK, Kalkınma Ajansları, Proje Yönetim Metodolojileri.

Makale Türü: Araştırma Makalesi

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1. INTRODUCTION

Although the number of projects being prepared in Turkey has increased, there are significant quality problems. It is observed that project beneficiaries either revise old projects to fit their needs or receive paid assistance from private project preparation companies instead of preparing project proposals themselves. As a result, there are issues such as not achieving expected benefits from projects, being unable to solve problems, not using the budget efficiently, and non-standard interventions in project implementations (Akça, 2014). In a project that Dinçer (2013) analyzed in terms of Project Cycle Management in Turkey, activities were carried out with the aim of completing the project instead of achieving the purpose and targeted results, leading to an ineffective and inefficient use of both EU and national resources allocated for projects in Turkey, resulting in serious labor and time losses.

Projects can be successfully executed and achieve expected targets thanks to systems consisting of processes that balance values such as time, cost, and quality. This process is referred to as project management, and professional project management organizations offer information, tools, and techniques under different methodologies (Ata, 2009).

This study investigates whether the forms and application guides used in grant projects supported by Development Agencies in Turkey align with the process groups and knowledge areas in PMBOK 6 published by PMI. The aim is to determine the compliance of grant-supported programs with PMI standards in our country. Within the scope of this purpose, the relationship between the documents used by Development Agencies in the projects supported by grants and the knowledge areas and process groups in the PMBOK 6th version has been analyzed. This study is unique in that there is no academic study that considers application guidelines and forms in terms of project management standards, although Development Agencies in Turkey have been investigated in terms of parameters such as effectiveness and project diversity. This research is significant in terms of raising awareness on project management methodologies. Understanding what project management standards are and how important these standards are in the project management process for both program implementers and beneficiaries will undoubtedly serve the emergence of more qualified projects. The primary limitation of the study is that it considers the application guidelines and forms used in the grant programs carried out by Development Agencies in Turkey. While this study was in progress, the 7th edition of PMBOK was published, but due to time constraints, the evaluation of the analysis of the materials was limited to the 6th edition of the PMBOK, which refers to PMI standards.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section provides an overview of project management by presenting its fundamental concepts, historical background, and significance. Additionally, the global project management standards are discussed, followed by a detailed examination of the process groups and information areas outlined in the standards determined by PMI. These standards are a crucial aspect of the study and serve as the foundation for the research.

2.1. Project

The concept of project is defined by the Turkish Language Association (2022) as scientific study proposals approved by the administrations of institutions and organizations in different fields, by making plans, programs, and cost calculations, and accepted to be carried out in the short or long term on behalf of private institutions or the state. According to the Cambridge Dictionary (2022), a project is a planned piece of work or activity that is expected to be completed within a certain period of time to achieve a specific goal. The Project Management Institute (PMI), considered one of the leading organizations in the field of project management, defines a project as "a temporary effort to create a unique service, result, or product" (PMI, 2017:4). Sönmez (2007) defines a project as an organization in which resources

come together to achieve a goal within a limited time period and are assigned elsewhere at the end of the project. Naghizade and Erkollar (2017) describe a project as a set of activities whose location, duration, budget, and purpose are clearly defined to achieve clearly defined goals. Healy (1997) argues that repetitive activities cannot be considered as projects and that projects can be realized in any field. Therefore, any activity that has an endpoint, such as space exploration, large software program development, or searching for a rental house, can be considered as a project. Kursunoglu (2017) defines a project as a set of non-repetitive, complex activities with a definite start and end time, which are carried out within specified performance and cost constraints to produce a unique result, product, or service. When analyzing the definitions related to the project, it is seen that the terms "unique product/service/result" and "temporary effort" stand out. The service mentioned is explained as a product to be produced at the end of the project, a strategic position to be reached, the results obtained, or the goal realized.

2.2. Project Management

The historical journey of project management has been an intriguing research topic for many years. Researchers and authors have been working to understand its past in order to plan its future well and understand its development. Project management takes place in people's daily lives, perhaps without them realizing it. A person who leaves their house to buy something is actually managing a project in the decisions they will make. Therefore, complex and difficult structures that still amaze us today are examples of project management.

As noted by Morris (1994), project management is one of the oldest and most respected achievements of humanity. Despite incomplete management approaches in the past, projects have played a crucial role in driving innovation and shaping our society today. From the earliest buildings and military campaigns to religious festivals, mankind has demonstrated the ability to conceive goals, develop plans to achieve them, and successfully realize desired outcomes. In the past, these practices were almost instinctive, without explicit articulation or conscious reflection on our approach, as noted by Morris, Pinto, and Söderlund (2010).

Throughout history, numerous challenging projects have been successfully completed despite the complexities and uncertainties that could have led to their failure. These projects often required an extensive workforce, involved a large scope, spanned several years, required sophisticated planning, and precise execution. Unfortunately, there is limited documentation available about the methods and techniques employed in these projects, as noted by Seymour and Hussein (2014). While project management in its current form is relatively new, some experts recognize the construction of monumental structures such as the Great Wall of China and the Pyramids of Egypt as some of the earliest examples of "project management" studies (Sönmez, 2007).

Lock (2007) summarized the 1970s and after in the light of technological developments as follows: "It is seen that the growth in information technology accelerated in the 1970s. Although industrial project management continued in its previous form, project management software became widely recognized. In this process, information technology (IT) project managers with technical and mental skills became very popular, despite their lack of project planning experience, interest, and enthusiasm. In the 1980s, project managers became less and less dependent on IT specialists because they had their own desktop computers on which to use project management software. Graphics were greatly improved with smaller printers available locally in the office that could produce complex graphics in many colors. In the following years, processing times were significantly reduced so that programs could run much faster for new projects. From the 1990s onwards, almost all software suppliers realized the need to make their products compatible with Microsoft Windows. Microsoft included Microsoft Project in the Office program suite. Project risks became more emphasized and contingencies

and risk mitigation strategies could be planned. Project management started to be seen as two separate branches as "industrial and IT project management"".

Özsoy (2021) analyzed the history of modern project management in four sections, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. History of Project Management

Before 1958
Hoover Dam, Interstate Highway Project and Manhattan Project
1958 and 1979
Management Science started to be applied
Basic project management tools such as PERT and CPM, Work Breakdown Structure approach started to be used
The world's first project management association, known as the Project Management Association (IPMA), was founded in 1965
In 1969, the Project Management Institute (PMI) was founded
Project management software companies and tools began to emerge in the 1970s when personal computers became cheaper
During the Polaris project, PERT was developed, which even today is a fundamental project management tool
Apollo was NASA's first formal project management system (in response to the need for standards in managing the complex, expensive and ambitious plan to land a man on the moon)
From 1980 to 1994
The efficiency of Personal Computers allowed the development of software capable of processing and organising the complex data needed to manage projects
In 1986, Scrum, an agile software development model that encourages software development by multiple small teams, was developed
In 1987 PMBOK® was published by PMI (PMBOK® guide became the global standard for the industry)
In 1994, the Standish Group published the CHAOS report, a collection of information about real project failures in Information Technology (IT)
1995 to the present
In 1996 PRINCE was upgraded to PRINCE2
In 1997 an alternative method called Critical Chain Project Management (CCPM) was introduced
In 1998, both the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) recognised PMBOK® as a standard
In 2001 the Agile Manifest was written (The Agile Manifest is based on a set of core values aimed at enabling software development teams to perform well as a team)
Between 1996 and 2017, 6 versions of PMBOK were presented
2021 7th version of PMBOK is presented by PMI

2.3. Project Management Methodologies

A standard is a document created by a consensus of opinion and approved by a recognized organization that provides specifications for common and repeated use, rules, guidelines, activities, or their results, aiming to achieve an optimum level of order in a given context (PMI Turkey, 2022). Project management methodology is usually expressed as the methods, techniques, procedures, rules, templates, and best practices of a project (Spundak, 2014). Project management methodologies, which began to be

used in the defense, naval, and space industries since the mid-1900s, started to take shape with the emergence of the critical path method. These organizations adopted project management methodologies to increase corporate success through effective target management. Thanks to the Waterfall technique, (sometimes referred to as the Waterfall model, is a sequential development process that moves through all project phases (such as analysis, design, development, and testing) like a waterfall, with each phase finishing up completely before the next one starts) which was the most common project management technique in the 1960s, humanity was able to land on the moon and return to earth safely (Dursun et al., 2022). Standards are the most powerful tools that increase productivity by supporting innovation for every organization, regardless of its size. Therefore, the use of standards is important in terms of ensuring competitiveness, profitability, access to new markets, and strengthening in the existing market (Sönmez, 2010). Many efforts are being made to standardize project management processes. The leading methodologies among the organizations managing these efforts are as follows: AIPM, PRINCE2, PMAJ, CMAA, IPMA, and PMI.

2.3.1. PMI (Project Management Institute) and PMI Project Management Methodology

PMI, a non-profit organization established in 1969 in the United States, operates globally to support career advancement, organizational success, and equip project professionals and change-makers with new skills and innovative methods of working. Its offerings encompass a wide range of resources, including globally recognized standards, certifications, online courses, thought leadership, tools, digital publications, and communities. The PMI standards are developed through a process grounded in principles of consensus, openness, due process, and balance. These standards provide guidance for achieving specific outcomes in project, program, and portfolio management (PMI, 2023). To achieve these objectives, PMI publishes a project management know-how guide called PMBOK, which is renewed every four years. The 6th version was published in 2017 and the 7th version in 2022. PMI explains its standards in the PMBOK Project Management Body of Knowledge Guide, which has 5 process groups and 10 knowledge areas used in project management as shown in the table 2. This matrix expresses the intersection of the operations to be performed in each process group with the knowledge areas by numbers. Thus, the project is divided into 49 work sections.

Table 2. PMI Knowledge Areas and Process Groups Matrix

Knowledge Areas	Project Management Process Groups				
	Initiating Process Group	Planning Process Group	Executing Process Group	Monitoring and Controlling Process Group	Closing Process Group
4. Project Integration Management	4.1 Develop Project Charter	4.2 Develop Project Management Plan	4.3 Direct and Manage Project Work 4.4 Manage Project Knowledge	4.5 Monitor and Control Project Work 4.6 Perform Integrated Change Control	4.7 Close Project or Phase
5. Project Scope Management		5.1 Plan Scope Management 5.2 Collect Requirements 5.3 Define Scope 5.4 Create WBS		5.5 Validate Scope 5.6 Control Scope	
6. Project Schedule Management		6.1 Plan Schedule Management 6.2 Define Activities 6.3 Sequence Activities 6.4 Estimate Activity Durations 6.5 Develop Schedule		6.6 Control Schedule	
7. Project Cost Management		7.1 Plan Cost Management 7.2 Estimate Costs 7.3 Determine Budget		7.4 Control Costs	
8. Project Quality Management		8.1 Plan Quality Management	8.2 Manage Quality	8.3 Control Quality	
9. Project Resource Management		9.1 Plan Resource Management 9.2 Estimate Activity Resources	9.3 Acquire Resources 9.4 Develop Team 9.5 Manage Team	9.6 Control Resources	
10. Project Communications Management		10.1 Plan Communications Management	10.2 Manage Communications	10.3 Monitor Communications	
11. Project Risk Management		11.1 Plan Risk Management 11.2 Identify Risks 11.3 Perform Qualitative Risk Analysis 11.4 Perform Quantitative Risk Analysis 11.5 Plan Risk Responses	11.6 Implement Risk Responses	11.7 Monitor Risks	
12. Project Procurement Management		12.1 Plan Procurement Management	12.2 Conduct Procurements	12.3 Control Procurements	
13. Project Stakeholder Management	13.1 Identify Stakeholders	13.2 Plan Stakeholder Engagement	13.3 Manage Stakeholder Engagement	13.4 Monitor Stakeholder Engagement	

Source: PMI (2017)

3. RESEARCH METHOD AND MATERIAL

This study uses document analysis as a qualitative research method. Qualitative research aims to understand the meanings that individuals or groups attribute to a social or human problem. It involves developing research problems and process steps, collecting data from participants' environments, analyzing the data, and interpreting the researcher's inferences from the data (Creswell, 2017). Qualitative data collection methods such as interviews, observations, and document analysis are used in this type of research. Therefore, studies are conducted to determine events and perceptions in a realistic and holistic manner within their own environments (Yıldırım, 1999). Document analysis, on the other hand, is a scientific method in which various documents are gathered as primary sources, reviewed, questioned, and analyzed (Sak et al., 2021).

Based on this scope, a field and literature research on project management was conducted. The literature research covered university libraries, previous studies on similar topics, and documents and information on the internet. The relevant documents used by Development Agencies in their grant programs were accessed and compared with the project management methodology defined by PMI (PMBOK sixth edition) to understand to what extent they are similar to the standards expressed in PMBOK 6.

Although the project application forms and guidelines of Development Agencies are generally similar, there are nuances due to regional differences and types of support programs. Therefore, the "call for project proposal" standard application guide and application forms were also taken into consideration as they may be more appropriate for the research.

The steps involved in the data collection and analysis process for this study are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3. Data Collection and Analysis Process

1. Data Collection (Application Guidelines and Forms) Collection: In the first stage of the study, documents related to the grant programmes of Development Agencies were collected via the internet. After compiling general information about Development Agencies and grant programmes, the representative of Çukurova Development Agency was interviewed and informed about the research. In this process, it was decided to examine the grant programmes announced by the "call for project proposals" method and the documents to be used were requested from the Agency officials.
2. Creating a Table Considering Information Areas and Process Groups Regarding PMI Standards: Based on the sixth edition of PMBOK published by PMI, the descriptions of 10 knowledge areas and 5 process groups were defined in a way suitable for comparison.
3. Analysing the Documents Obtained from the Agency and Determining the Titles Corresponding to PMBOK 6 and Placing Them in the Table Created: After the completion of the second stage, the documents obtained from the Development Agency are analysed. At the end of the examination, the information in the documents and the additional documents of the projects are placed in the table according to their equivalents in PMBOK 6.
4. Formation of General Findings: Considering the table created in the previous stage, the findings for the documents of the Development Agency and PMBOK 6 information areas and process groups are formed.
5. Discussing the Findings with the Agency, Noting the Differences of Opinion, if any, and Adding them to the Findings: Re-meeting with the representative of Çukurova Development Agency. In this meeting, the findings and conclusions about the literature study and findings and results were shared.
6. Preparation of the Conclusion in the Light of the Findings Collected from the Document and the Agency's Opinions: Taking into account the evaluations of the Agency on the study, making the necessary arrangements and preparing the conclusion.

A three-stage process was followed to analyze the relevant documents collected within the scope of the study.

Firstly, a list of all sub-processes in the Project Management Process Groups and Knowledge Areas in PMBOK 6 was compiled.

In the second stage, the application guide, application forms, requested additional documents, and "Project Support Guide" used by Development Agencies in the call for project proposals were analyzed, as well as the Project Preparation Guide prepared by Çukurova Development Agency.

In the last stage, the similarities and differences in the project forms and guidelines of the call for project proposals based on PMI process groups and knowledge areas were presented in the findings section. The results are expressed in the report.

4. CONCLUSION

In this study, documents such as project application forms and application guides used by Development Agencies in their programmes for which they provide grant support were examined and similar and different aspects of PMI standards with knowledge areas and process groups were tried to be determined. For this purpose, 49 processes in the PMI knowledge areas and process groups matrix are explained. The documents of Development Agencies were tried to be evaluated by taking these processes into consideration. With the Regulation on Project and Activity Support for Development Agencies, Development Agencies Support Management Guide, Project Implementation Guide for Support Provided by Development Agencies and the project implementation guides prepared by the agencies themselves, the responsibilities and obligations of the beneficiaries from the planning process to the closing of the projects are explained. In addition, information meetings on the execution process are also held after the contract is signed with the projects whose applications are accepted by the agencies. When the project application and additional documents of the Development Agencies are analysed, it can be said that these documents are similar to PMI Standards in some points and differentiate in some points. It is noteworthy that the most important issues in the documents of Development Agencies are the parts concerning the financial aspects of the projects. It can be stated that detailed work breakdown structures, milestones and time planning are not detailed in the application forms. In this study, in which the similarities and differences between PMI Standards and the documents of Development Agencies are analysed, the conclusions and recommendations related to the knowledge areas can be listed as follows:

In terms of Integration Management, it can be suggested that the Project Initiation Document should be presented separately, considering its importance in terms of officially initiating the project and providing the first information about the project to the stakeholders.

In terms of Scope Management, it can be said that the detailed consideration and elaboration of the work breakdown structure will facilitate the implementation of the project, especially in terms of cost, time and human resources. In addition, milestones should also be included in the forms in order to point out important points in the project management plan and play an important role in ensuring that the project time is controllable.

In terms of Time Management, it is possible to say that defining the activities in general under only a few headings may cause significant problems such as not being able to deliver the projects on time. Instead, activities can be defined as dozens of work packages with a precise work breakdown structure, which makes the project more concretely identifiable and measurable. As a result, it is observed that there are deficiencies regarding the work breakdown structure in the application forms.

The detailed subdivision of each activity into sub-activities at the planning stage can enable the project preparer to make more precise estimates of the processes.

While preparing the timelines of the projects, it can be stated that it would be more functional and controllable to use applications such as MS Project, Primavera, Ecra etc. where each activity is connected to the predecessor activity and the start and end dates of each activity can be planned.

In terms of cost management, detailed cost analyses at the planning and initial stages of the project, i.e. from the moment project applications are made to Development Agencies, will facilitate the implementation and monitoring of the project and increase predictability.

In terms of quality management, it can be considered that expressions such as performance indicators and multiplier effects, where the term quality is not used in the application forms, fulfil this concept. The use of international quality standards may be important in determining the product/service quality and effectiveness of the project.

In terms of Human Resources, we cannot comment on the steps of developing and managing project teams, as we were not able to analyse the implementation phases of the projects. According to Ece and Kovancı (2004), who think that the success of projects depends on the performance of the project team as much as the project leader and that team members should not be physically and psychologically detached from their duties, team members should be selected from people who have a good command of technological developments, can contribute to teamwork, are experienced, have high problem solving skills and are experts in their fields. No section on these steps could be identified in the documents accessed. Including plans for the development and management of the project team in project application forms or additional documents will also facilitate the project management process.

Being able to monitor the project communication management, which has a very important role in terms of effective execution of the project with all stakeholders, in the field and observing the processes will enable more accurate and objective comments to be made.

For risk management, it is requested to determine the risks to be encountered in the assumptions/risks section of the Logical Framework Matrix. These assumptions should be filled in for activities, expected results and project purpose. However, there is no study on how to take precautions when possible risks are encountered. Therefore, it can be said that more space should be allocated in the Project Application Forms and Annex H-3.1. Logical Framework Matrix because the risks to be encountered with a detailed risk analysis for each area of the project should be identified and the actions to be taken in times of crisis should be specified. Thus, time and cost losses will be prevented by making quick decisions and implementations during the implementation process of the project.

It can be said that supply management overlaps with PMI Standards.

It is possible to say that the stage of identifying stakeholders is similar to PMI Standards. However, since we could not make observations in the field, we cannot comment on how the stakeholders contribute to the project, what is done by the project manager to increase stakeholder participation, in other words, the appropriateness of the stages of managing and monitoring stakeholder participation.

Due to reasons such as the lack of a complete project management culture in the society, the level of education of the applicants to the grant programmes, and the fact that consultancy firms prepare similar projects through uniform formats, the one-to-one equivalent of the PMI Methodology is not seen in practice. Due to the nature of the Development Agency grant programmes, it can be stated that it is reasonable to partially apply the PMI Methodology by developing its own specific processes due to factors such as applicant profiles and time constraints.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The fact that this study was conducted using the document analysis method on printed documents made it difficult to answer some questions, especially regarding the implementation processes of the projects. In future studies, it would be beneficial for Development Agencies, as well as institutions and organizations conducting project studies in Turkey, to consider different qualitative and quantitative research methods that follow the implementation processes of projects receiving grant support. Additionally, analyzing different institutions that implement grant programs through various project management standards, such as Prince2 and IPMA, would be useful in increasing awareness of project management methodologies.

This study is based on the PMBOK 6th edition. However, during the study process, PMBOK 7th edition was published. This new edition contains radical changes in terms of project management methodology compared to previous versions. Conducting new studies while taking this version into consideration will enrich the literature. Increasing research in this area will also lead to the determination of a project management standard specific to Turkey. It is understood that culture is an important determinant in the process of developing project management standards. In Australia, Japan and the UK, project management standards developed by taking into account their own cultural structure are successfully implemented. Similarly, the need for efforts to develop a culture-centred project management standards in Turkey is obvious. In future studies, pioneering research in this context will be original and useful in terms of contribution to the literature.

Ethical Statement

During the writing and publication of this study, the rules of Research and Publication Ethics were complied with, and no falsification was made in the data obtained for the study. Ethics committee approval is not required for the study.

Contribution Rate Statement

All of the authors in the study contributed to all processes from the writing of the study to the drafting and read and approved the final version.

Conflict Statement

This study did not lead to any individual or institutional/organizational conflict of interest.

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Extended Abstract

Investigation of Grant Programmes Implemented by Development Agencies in Turkey in terms of PMI Standards

The increasing number of projects in Turkey is accompanied by significant quality problems, leading to inefficiencies, budget mismanagement, and non-standard interventions in project implementations (Akça, 2014). Dinçer's (2013) analysis of a project in Turkey revealed an ineffective use of EU and national resources due to a focus on completing rather than achieving project goals. To address these issues, effective project management is essential, balancing time, cost, and quality through professional organizations offering information, tools, and techniques (Ata, 2009).

Project management is ubiquitous in daily life, with individuals unwittingly engaging in it, exemplified by a person making decisions when leaving their house. Morris (1994) highlights project management as one of humanity's oldest and most esteemed achievements, crucial for innovation and societal development. Early practices, often intuitive, lacked explicit articulation, as stated by Morris, Pinto, and Söderlund (2010). Throughout history, numerous challenging projects have been successfully completed despite the complexities and uncertainties that could have led to their failure. These projects often required an extensive workforce, involved a large scope, spanned several years, required sophisticated planning, and precise execution. Unfortunately, there is limited documentation available about the methods and techniques employed in these projects, as noted by Seymour and Hussein (2014). While project management in its current form is relatively new, some experts recognize the construction of monumental structures such as the Great Wall of China and the Pyramids of Egypt as some of the earliest examples of "project management" studies (Sönmez, 2007).

This study explores the alignment of forms and application guides in grant projects supported by Development Agencies in Turkey with the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK) 6th edition published by the Project Management Institute (PMI). The uniqueness of this research lies in its focus on application guidelines and forms in the context of project management standards, an area largely unexplored despite previous investigations into Development Agencies' effectiveness and project diversity in Turkey.

Employing qualitative research through document analysis, the study examines the relationship between Development Agencies' documents and PMBOK 6th edition's knowledge areas and process groups. The document analysis involved a three-stage process. First, a comprehensive list of sub-processes in PMBOK 6 was compiled. Second, Development Agencies' application guides, forms, and support documents were scrutinized, along with the Project Preparation Guide from Çukurova Development Agency. Finally, similarities and differences between Development Agencies' documents and PMI process groups and knowledge areas were presented in the findings.

The study concludes that while Development Agencies' project application forms and guidelines generally align with PMI standards, there are nuanced differences due to regional variations and support program types. Notably, financial aspects of projects are emphasized in Development Agencies' documents, but detailed work breakdown structures, milestones, and time planning are sometimes lacking. The research offers specific recommendations aligned with PMI standards:

1. Integration Management: Suggests presenting the Project Initiation Document separately for official project initiation.
2. Scope Management: Advocates for detailed consideration of work breakdown structures and inclusion of milestones in application forms.
3. Time Management: Encourages a more granular definition of activities with a detailed work breakdown structure, using project management applications for timeline planning.
4. Cost Management: Recommends detailed cost analyses at the planning stage for increased predictability during project implementation.
5. Quality Management: Proposes incorporating expressions like performance indicators and multiplier effects to emphasize quality aspects.
6. Human Resources: Calls for the inclusion of plans for developing and managing project teams in application forms.
7. Communication Management: Highlights the importance of monitoring project communication management for effective stakeholder engagement.
8. Risk Management: Urges detailed risk analysis in Project Application Forms to identify potential risks and specify actions to prevent time and cost losses.

While acknowledging the absence of a complete project management culture and challenges in applicant education levels and uniform project formats, the study suggests a partial application of the PMI Methodology by Development Agencies, tailored to their specific processes and constraints. This research contributes to raising awareness of project management methodologies in the context of Development Agency grant programs in Turkey, aiming for the emergence of more qualified projects with improved efficiency and effectiveness.