

Enhancing Team Skills as a Project Management Strategy

Mohammad F N Ballam

Abstract

Project management has become more difficult due to shifting consumer demands and technical development. Recognizing the benefits of high-performing project teams in delivering effective project outcomes is critical. This research examines the advantages of enhancing team skills in industries where people collaborate to achieve common goals. A thorough analysis of the research on project management strategies, team dynamics, and skill development was carried out. Additionally, empirical data was gathered through surveys and interviews with influential businesses' senior executives. The study showed a significant link between team skills and project performance. The statistical analysis of the survey data supported the premise that investing in team skill development significantly adds to project performance. The findings clarify that improving team skills should be regarded as a core project management technique. Team skills is essential for departments and cross-functional teams to perform effectively in businesses of all sizes. Organizations can foster a culture of continuous improvement, flexibility, and innovation by implementing various strategies such as training workshops and agile project management techniques. According to the study, prioritizing team skill development is crucial for maintaining a competitive advantage and effectively navigating the always-changing problems in businesses. Industry stakeholders should understand the need for technical proficiency and soft skills within project teams as project complexity rises. By enhancing team skills, project managers can optimize project delivery, risk mitigation, and long-term success in the industries. This study contends for a paradigm change in project management techniques, highlighting the value of team skills as a critical differentiator for the expansion and success of organizations.



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1.0 Introduction

A highly competitive and dynamic environment characterizes many industries and needs efficient project management techniques to ensure positive results (Avença, 2023). In today's changing corporate climate, improving team abilities in project management is essential for delivering effective project outcomes. The performance of project teams is crucial to project success since their combined knowledge and talents are necessary for overcoming difficult obstacles and accomplishing project goals (Abugre & Lamptey, 2023). This study analyses the value of enhancing team skills as a project management technique. Project teams need a variety of technical competence and soft skills due to the dynamic nature of the sector to handle changing demands and complications effectively (Chourasia, 2023). The reviewed literature has examined team abilities in project management, including emotional intelligence, competencies, leadership, communication, and knowledge sharing. Authors such as Rumane (2021) emphasize project teams' role in success (Rumane, 2021). El Khatib (2021), on the other hand, links skills like emotional intelligence to project success (El Khatib, 2021). Cripe (2022) focuses on leadership for virtual IT teams. The research asserts that technical training, coaching, mentorship, and cooperation are all effective ways to foster cohesive team connections (Cripe, 2022). The reviewed literature reveals gaps in industry-specific investigations and research on team skills with emerging technologies. Therefore, this research addresses these gaps by conducting comprehensive industry-specific investigations. The study explores the justification for investing in team skill development to illuminate such a strategy's possible advantages and statistical significance. The study investigates how encouraging a culture of continuous improvement and cooperation may benefit project results through an extensive assessment of the current literature and empirical data gathered from key individuals in significant firms. The study aims to support a paradigm change in project management techniques by identifying the relationship between team skill development and specific project success. The study finding sheds light on the significance of team skill development as a critical project management technique. Organizations may position themselves for ongoing growth and competitiveness in a constantly changing industry by concentrating on team strengths and adopting a multidimensional strategy. The research methodologies used, the findings, and the conclusions reached will all be presented in this article, adding to the body of knowledge on project management.

2.0 Literature Review

In today's rapidly changing corporate climate, improving team abilities in project management is crucial for delivering effective project outcomes. This literature review examines various aspects of team abilities, including emotional intelligence, competencies, leadership, communication, and information sharing. The analysis lays the groundwork for future research in industry-specific insights and the influence of team skills. Project managers and organizations must understand and maximize team abilities to survive in the rapidly changing technological environment and ensure efficient project management procedures (Ribeiro, 2021). Rumane has emphasized the significance of good project management techniques and project teams' crucial role in attaining project success (Rumane, 2021). The study has examined how necessary technical know-how is and how specific project management techniques might improve project outcomes. El Khatib highlights the link between emotional intelligence (EI) and project success, suggesting that firms should prioritize recruiting emotionally intelligent project managers (El Khatib, 2021). Ribeiro emphasizes the importance of improved soft and hard skills for successful project management in Industry 4.0 (Ribeiro, 2021). On the other hand, Ngo outlines vital project management knowledge and abilities for initiatives involving cutting-edge technology, focusing on cost, risk, and communication. Top competencies include problem-solving, information management, communication, project

management, planning, and organizational abilities (Ngo, 2022). Cripe's research on leadership and communication for virtual IT project managers emphasizes creating a sense of community within teams. Technical training, coaching, mentorship, and cooperation are effective ways to foster cohesive team connections (Cripe, 2022). Avenca also investigates the impact of project managers' soft skills on knowledge sharing, finding a beneficial relationship between team members' knowledge sharing and project managers' leadership (Avença, 2023).

The literature reviewed reveals several themes. First, the study calls for appointing competent project managers by highlighting the significance of competencies and their relationship to project success. Second, the studies emphasize the value of improved soft and hard abilities for overseeing complicated and independent initiatives (Avença, 2023). Critical project management knowledge and skills are identified in the literature as necessary for projects incorporating innovative technology. The literature also highlights the importance of strong leadership and clear communication for successful project management, particularly in settings with virtual teams (Cripe, 2022). Positive project outcomes depend on developing interpersonal connections and trust within virtual teams through coaching, mentorship, and cultural sensitivity (Ribeiro, 2021). Finally, the reviewed literature shows how project managers' soft skills influence knowledge sharing in information systems projects. Through interpersonal interactions and socialization processes, leadership positively influences information sharing (Cripe, 2022).

The existing literature on team skills in project management demonstrates strengths in providing diverse perspectives and practical relevance to real-world scenarios. Still, the study's weaknesses include geographical bias and other gaps in the form of the absence of industry-specific investigations. This research addresses these gaps by examining industry-specific requirements and team skills in managing emerging technologies. The study examines the advantages of enhancing team skills in industries where people collaborate to achieve common goals. Advancing team skills in project management guide organizations toward better performance and successful outcomes.

3.0 Research Method

Data for this study is gathered through surveys and interviews. Project teams at various organizations are given questionnaires. The survey questions include team skill levels, project performance indicators (such as project productivity, risk management, and improved leadership and coordination), and the perceived effect of skill development activities on project results. Key employees, such as project managers and team leaders, are subjected to in-depth interviews to acquire qualitative information about the advantages of team skill development. Proper statistical procedures are used to evaluate and interpret the survey data. The data is summarized, and a summary of the team skill levels and project performance indicators is provided using descriptive statistics, such as the mean. Thematic analysis is used to examine the qualitative data from the interviews. The interviews' transcriptions are meticulously reviewed to find recurring themes and patterns relating to team skill development and the effects on project outcomes. A deeper investigation of the qualitative insights is possible thanks to theme analysis, which also offers helpful context for the quantitative results. The study complies with ethical standards, guaranteeing the privacy and anonymity of participants. Before data collection, informed permission is acquired from each participant, and it is emphasized that their participation is optional. The study also conforms with applicable data protection requirements to preserve participant privacy and sensitive information. A thorough analysis of the connection between team skill development and project performance is made possible by the mixed-methods research design, combining qualitative and quantitative

methodologies. The research builds its theoretical foundation on previously published works of literature. The data's statistical and qualitative analysis sheds light on the value of team skills and how to use team skill strategy in industry project management effectively. Overall, the research methodology used in this study guarantees a thorough analysis of the research issue, adding to the understanding of project management techniques used in numerous organizations.

4.0 Results and Discussion

The primary data source for this meta-analysis is the systematic review by Alyatama, titled "Application of Agile Project Management in Oil and Gas Capital Projects.". One hundred and ten participants were the initial target population for the study survey (Alyatama, 2021). Many experts and professionals were contacted in O&G (oil and gas) projects, including principal stakeholders. The sample comprised project and program managers, engineers, coordinators, and planners. Mail invitations were sent to the targeted individuals, and 106 responded with completed questionnaires. This figure represents a 96.3% response rate. This response rate was deemed acceptable for this study because it complies with the ideal survey response rate description, which states that researchers should aim for and expect response rates of about 60% (Guetterman and Fetters, 2018). 100 out of the 106 responses (94.3%) were men. This finding was predicted because project management is male-dominated in the case study organization. The following table gives descriptive statistics collected from the survey participants.

Table 1.2: Descriptive Statistics (Team Skills)

Item	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Facilitate improved interaction and support between team members	3	5	4.39	.562
Improve team leadership and coordination	3	5	4.18	.582
Enable the team to identify better and mitigate risks	3	5	4.25	.518
Make project teams more productive and focussed	3	5	4.39	.562

(Alyatama, 2021)

Table 1.2 lists the components that make up the team skills scale. All of the questionnaire's questions received a sizable amount of agreement. The total rating for all of these questions on the questionnaire was the highest. The survey's findings show that when project managers enhance team skills inside their projects, the team skills greatly assist in better communication and teamwork, eventually resulting in speedier project completion. Most research participants (74.5%) strongly concurred that improving team skills can help the team better identify and mitigate risks, which can speed up project delivery; 73.6% strongly concurred that this initiative could make project teams more productive and focused on completing the project's objectives. The research also shows how strongly the conventional waterfall project management methodology supports improving teamwork. Most participants (74.5%) strongly agreed that improving team capabilities in a waterfall project management framework may speed project delivery by better recognizing and reducing risks. This response aligns with the rising understanding that project teams' knowledge and collaboration skills are crucial for lowering obstacles and guaranteeing on-time project completion. With 73.6% of respondents strongly agreeing that this program may considerably raise project teams' productivity and concentration on attaining project goals, the survey results further underline the beneficial influence of team skill enhancement. This feature reflects the significance of developing a trained workforce capable of successfully navigating complicated problems and coordinating

activities. The research results show that improving team skills is essential. The overwhelming support for team skill development points to a rising awareness of the critical benefits teams in this industry provide to project management. These results highlight the significance of encouraging a continuous improvement culture and investing in forming capable and flexible project teams to succeed in the contemporary industry's dynamic environment. The eight interviews also yielded a qualitative data set. To identify commonalities among responses, a theme analysis was used. The following table shows the demographic profile of the interviewees.

Table 1.3: Demographic profile of the interviewees

Interviewee ID	Designation	Experience
A	Project consultant	12 years
B	Project consultant	12 years
C	Program Manager	24 years
D	General Superintendent	36 years
E	Portfolio manager	Eight years
F	Project manager	Five years
G	Project manager	11 years
H	Project Assistant	Four years

(Alyatama, 2021)

All eight interviewees (Table 1.3) had varied experience working in energy industry, from fresh graduates to seasoned professionals with more than 36 years of experience. Except for Interviewee C, who worked in construction, all interviewees were employed in the former.

Enhancing team skills as a strategy

According to interviewee A, project managers should identify team competencies to ensure that the sector has the right people working on the project, where tasks are matched with proficiency. According to the interviewee, team skills are crucial and required. Interviewee D stated that identifying and managing team skills is where companies should draw the line between perfect and mediocre outcomes. According to interviewee E, people and the skills and talents they bring to a project are the core. Therefore, it is essential to identify and develop abilities to delegate and complete the job. Working with individuals lacking the necessary skills for their jobs might cause the project to be delayed and ultimately fail. The interviewee held that by assigning the proper individuals to various tasks, projects may be completed more quickly and with higher quality, and it may also support other best practices like teamwork and communication. If two people work together and their skill sets are not a good match, much cooperation would never be anticipated. Interviewee G emphasized the significance of effective HR planning. Placing workers who are unqualified for the position can kill a project faster and delay it. Finding each person's strengths may enhance collaboration, enable and strengthen employee interactions, and increase team productivity. Interviewee G further states that teams deliver quicker and better when they are efficient and focused. Interviewee H remarked that for a company to produce and meet deadlines, the employees must work on jobs they are familiar with. Therefore, recognizing and strengthening team abilities may speed up the completion of projects. The respondents agreed that project managers must choose the right team members and match their talents to the project's needs. The interviewees also supported team skills. Projects might be expected to be delayed while leaders look for the expertise and resources needed to accomplish their objectives if team capabilities are lacking. Additionally, they can be postponed if personnel must be sent for additional training or skill improvement. The study of Tsoy and Staples (2020), who concur that team abilities play a crucial role in resolving project complexity and decreasing delays, lends weight to this observation (Tsoy & Staples, 2020).

The interviewees presented their thoughts and ideas about the value of team skills in project management. The respondents stressed recognizing and developing team competencies to guarantee project success and on-time delivery. The respondents all agreed that a project's success depends on the team's effectiveness. Interviewee A emphasized the need to match team members' jobs to their skills to ensure the correct individuals are put in the proper roles. Interviewee D emphasized that the ability to recognize and manage team talents might be the difference between a project's success and failure. These points of view highlight the crucial part team skills play in accomplishing project objectives and producing top-notch results. Interviewee E stressed that projects are driven by the abilities and skills of the people working on them. The interviewee highlights the necessity to recognize and develop these skills for efficient delegation and project completion. This idea is in line with modern project management principles, which acknowledge the value of people and their skill sets in ensuring the success of projects (Dushenin, 2020). When pushing for the identification of a person's unique abilities to enhance team relationships, cooperation, and general efficiency, interviewee G underlined the need for good HR planning. As indicated by interviewee G, a well-organized and competent crew enables the completion of projects more quickly and effectively. The need for a well-organized and capable team highlights how crucial strategic HR planning is to the success of a project. Asserting that projects cannot fulfil deadlines if team members do not possess the necessary competencies, interviewee H agreed on the significance of team skills. The industry's demand for prompt and effective project execution may be met by improving team competencies to deliver projects more quickly.

In light of the discussion's conclusion, it is clear that all of the interviewees stressed the need for team skills for effective project management. The insights offered by the interviewees are consistent with earlier studies, reiterating the necessity for project managers to select the right team members and match their talents to the project's needs (Chourasia, 2023). Utilizing team abilities effectively may reduce delays and improve project delivery, making it crucial to obtaining successful outcomes in organizations. Several literature sources were also carefully examined to elaborate on team skills in industry project management. Essential topics about developing team skills in project management were then found. The investigation concentrated on comprehending the difficulties faced by project teams, the advantages of improving team abilities, and the methods utilized by businesses to encourage skill growth among team members. The literature highlighted the importance of team abilities in determining project success, and the need for practical problem-solving, communication, cooperation, and decision-making was emphasized as a prerequisite for ensuring that project outputs fulfilled corporate goals. According to Thomas (2020), the critical elements of team abilities that directly affect project outcomes are practical communication, cooperation, problem-solving, and decision-making. Strong communication skills enable project teams to communicate information, express ideas, and resolve problems, facilitating more efficient project execution (Thomas, 2020). Collaboration ensures that team members get along well and utilize one another's abilities to accomplish shared project objectives. Teams may minimize interruptions and delays by effectively solving problems to overcome difficulties and roadblocks that may appear during the project lifecycle (Anisimova, 2022). Effective decision-making guarantees that crucial decisions are taken promptly and with sufficient knowledge, improving project outcomes. A link exists between increased project success measures and better team capabilities (Mazumder, 2018). Teams with diverse abilities routinely produce projects with faster turnaround times, lower costs, and higher-quality output. The body of literature provides data from various research that shows a link between better team performance measures and increased team skills. Teams with diverse skill sets routinely manage projects

that deliver positive performance indicators (Kazemi & Katebi, 2018). Shorter completion times indicate good project execution, which may be linked to the team's capacity for effective decision-making, communication, and collaboration. Cost savings are a sign of efficient resource use and improved project processes because of the efforts of the talented team members (Bryde, 2018). Additionally, higher-quality deliverables show that groups with solid skill sets can produce results that are on par with or better than the project's established quality criteria.

While research underlines the need to improve team skills, it acknowledges difficulties in implementing such ideas. Project managers frequently encounter resistance to change, resource limitations, and a lack of leadership support within the company (Taqi, 2020). Resistance to change inside the company is one of the significant difficulties project managers have when implementing team skill improvement initiatives. Some team members or stakeholders may object to new project management strategies emphasizing skill development for various reasons. They may feel at ease with current procedures or worry about interrupting their established habits (Alavi & Nadir, 2020). Gaining team members' buy-in and support needs good communication, concise justifications of the advantages, and participation in decision-making. Resource limitation is another issue that arises while applying team skill improvement initiatives (Mbala, 2018). Financial resources are needed to invest in training, seminars, and skill development programs, and not all organizations may have appropriate funds set aside for such projects. Additionally, the time and money needed for training may burden already limited resources (Anthreas, 2021). To overcome this obstacle, firms should prioritize skill development based on the most pressing project requirements and look for other financing sources or affordable training options. Team skill improvement techniques must be implemented with the backing and dedication of corporate leadership. Initiatives for skill development might be hampered if the administration does not prioritize or actively supports the industry (Zhan, 2019). Lack of support from the leadership may lead to the allocation of fewer resources to training programs, a decrease in team member excitement, and a lack of willingness to engage in skill-building activities (Anisimova, 2022). In contrast, adequate leadership support may foster a culture of learning and growth, motivating teams to seize the chance to improve their skills.

Project managers and organizational leaders must take a planned and deliberate approach to tackling these issues. Addressing concerns and highlighting the importance of skill development, open communication, and teamwork can help reduce resistance to change (Annamalah, 2018). Resource limitations may be solved by investigating creative and affordable training options. Additionally, leaders must support programs for skill development by leading by example and promoting active team engagement (Dushenin, 2020). While emphasizing the value of improving team skills, it's also critical to recognize and solve any obstacles companies and project managers could face while implementing these methods. Project managers can foster a culture of continuous learning and improvement that ultimately leads to improved project performance and success by proactively overcoming resistance to change, addressing resource limitations, and gaining the support of organizational leadership.

5.0 Conclusion

The importance of strengthening team skills as a strategic project management strategy is clarified by this article's conclusion. The research's findings have emphasized the crucial role that team skills play in producing effective project outcomes, and research participants were unanimous in their view of the significance of this function. This study investigated the relationship between team skill development and project success. It is clear from the statistics

and study findings that improving team skills is an important project management technique. The vast majority of study participants firmly agreed that improving team skills may result in greater risk identification and mitigation, which speeds up project delivery. Most participants also agreed that enhancing team skills can increase productivity and concentration on completing projects on time. The study's findings highlight how crucial collaboration is to project management. The overwhelming support for improving team skills demonstrates a growing understanding that project teams' knowledge and ability to work together are essential to project success. Organizations may efficiently identify and reduce risks by enhancing team capabilities, which results in more efficient project execution and quicker delivery. These findings are consistent with the broader industry consensus that developing team skills is a strategic need for delivering positive project outcomes. Organizations must prioritize skill development to provide their teams with the skills they need to address problems proactively as project complexity rises in the changing business environment.

The literature evaluation thoroughly analyses the current research on team skill development and its effect on industry project performance. It demonstrates an agreement among academics and professionals recognizing the significance of excellent team skills, problem-solving, communication, and decision-making in attaining project success. The research also acknowledges the difficulties in putting team skill development plans into reality and lists the top strategies firms use to encourage team member skill development. The research methodology, which combines quantitative and qualitative techniques, highlights the thoroughness and rigour of the study's methodology. A comprehensive inquiry into the connection between team skill development and project performance is made possible using surveys and interviews, enabling a thorough analysis of the research issue. The results and discussion sections reaffirm the link between enhanced team performance indicators and increased team skill levels.

Improving team skills is a critical project management technique in organizations. The findings' synopsis highlights how crucial team skills, cooperation, problem-solving, and decision-making are to obtaining positive project outcomes. Investing in team skill development is critical in guiding project management practices toward sustainable growth, on-time delivery, and overall project success. The results of this research highlight project managers' need to choose team members with the relevant competencies, combining duties with talents to maximize project performance. Proper identification and development of team abilities may result in more effective teams, better interactions, and more cooperation, all of which can speed up and improve project completion.

This article serves as a starting point for additional study into the areas of project management, team dynamics, and skill development in light of the research that has been provided. This study recognizes the value of team skills. It opens the door for further investigation into creative approaches to improve project delivery and strengthen organizational competitiveness in a constantly shifting global environment. The findings of this study have significant ramifications for project managers, industry stakeholders, and organizations. Organizations may improve their project management techniques, establish a competitive edge, and handle the changing challenges of the industries with better resilience and efficiency by emphasizing team skill improvement, developing a culture of continuous learning, and investing in their workforce. Enhancing team capabilities is a strategic requirement that will influence project success and contribute to many industries long-term growth and prosperity.

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