Impact of Soft Skills on Public Power Utility Projects of Punjab: A View from Private Engineering Sector Companies Of Pakistan

NAME: MR. ALI HASSAN

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SUPERVISOR: Dr. GHULAM MOHEY-UD-DIN

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~~Dr. Rizwana Bashir~~
Associate Professor
Head of Management Sciences
Bahria University Lahore Campus

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Candidate's Name: Ali Hassan

Discipline: Project Management

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Dr. Rizwana Bashir
Associate Professor
Head of Management Sciences
Bahria University Lahore Campus

Date: 19.8.2016

Abstract

Hard skills such as scheduling, budgeting, and metrics etc. of project management are usually considered for successfully completing the project which are without any shadow of a doubt very important. It has been realized that big quantum of work and studies are in place for organizing and executing the project systematically. A number of hard skills are also in place to measure the progress and objectives of projects. However, the importance of soft skills is generally not considered to achieve project objectives. Public Power utility projects of Punjab are usually consisting of long procedure requiring step by step approval from respective approving authorities. Once the role of hard skills for these projects is completed, in order to attain timely approvals and dealing with the consultant throughout the life time of the project, the use of soft skills come into play. Strong follow ups are required with professional communication, effective decision making and stakeholder engagement management without which it is impossible to get any submitted technical data, drawings and specifications approved. The objective of the study was to determine the impact of soft skills (Stakeholder engagement management, effective decision making and professional communication) on achieving project objectives (In terms of meeting schedule and budget)

Power sector companies of Pakistan were contacted for this study. Through a detailed literature review soft skills were found to be a multidimensional construct. Soft skills were not directly observed, however, it is indirectly measured with the help of Stakeholder engagement management, effective decision making, and professional communication. Twenty one different dimensions have been identified in this study for measuring the impact of soft skills. These findings were aligned with the previous studies where researchers identified the importance of stakeholder engagement management, professional communication and effective decision making during the life of the project and its overall impact on the achievement of project objectives. The study measured impact of soft skills in Pakistani power sector projects and showed that stakeholder engagement management, professional communication and effective decision has significant positive relationship with project objectives achievement.

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