

## **Project Management Skills and Effective Utilization of Organizational Resources in Somalia: A Survey of ZAD Real Estate Corporation**

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### **【Abstract】**

This study investigated the role of project management skills in effective utilization of organizational resources. The main objectives were to assess the effect of communication skills, risk management skills, leadership skills, and time management skills on utilization of organizational resources. The used a quantitative approach by administering a survey to a sample population of 66 respondents based at ZAD real estate development organization. The study found that there is direct relationship between managers' leadership style and utilization of organizational resources, most of the respondents suggested that leadership can enhance employee motivation through effective communication, among other project management skills. The findings imply that organizations should prioritize the development of communication, risk management, and leadership skills among their employees. Training programs focused on these areas could enhance overall organizational performance and employee satisfaction.

### **【Keywords】**

project management skills, communication skills; leadership skills, real estate

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## Introduction

Project management is a discipline that has evolved over centuries, adapting to the changing landscapes of business and technology. The roots of project management can be traced back to ancient civilizations, where large construction projects, such as the Mosques of Al-Haramain in Mecca and Medina, or ancient cathedrals in Europe. Construction of massive structures such as the Great Pyramids of Egypt and the Great Wall of China required intricate planning and coordination. The building designers, architects, and builders needed to coordinate their efforts and monitor the construction to ensure successful completion. Similarly, at the beginning of the industrial age in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, massive infrastructure projects such as railroads and canals in Europe and the Americas required the coordination of materials and personnel, there were no official “project managers” to oversee this work, but the business procedure was comparable to modern project management: the construction project had a sponsor, a reason, and a chartered status (APM, 2024; Vault.com, 2024).

The modern concept of project management began to take shape in the early 20th century, with the development of scientific management principles by Frederick Taylor. However, it was not until the mid-20th century that project management became a distinct field with the advent of techniques like the Critical Path Method (CPM) and Program Evaluation and Review Technique (PERT) (APM, 2024). As industries grew in complexity, the need for effective project management became increasingly evident. The Project Management Institute (PMI), founded in 1969, played a crucial role in standardizing project management practices. (Vault, 2024). The publication of the PMBOK (Project Management Body of Knowledge) further contributed to the professionalization of project management.

Today, project management is a critical competency across various sectors, from construction and engineering to information technology and healthcare. It involves a diverse set of skills, including planning, scheduling, risk management, and leadership. The demand for skilled project managers continues to rise as organizations recognize the importance of efficient project execution in achieving their strategic objectives. Project Management has increasingly become a pivotal factor in the success of organizations worldwide. Traditionally, the focus was primarily on the financial and technical aspects, but there has been a huge shift towards integrating effective project management skills and resource utilization. Globally, organizations face the challenge of executing projects within the constraints of time, budget, and scope while maximizing resource efficiency (Baker et al., 1998).

Project management is a critical function within organizations across the globe. In today’s fast-paced business environment, effective project management is not just a necessity but also often the determinant of an organization's success. The genesis of the problem lies in the ever-increasing complexity of projects and the need for organizations to efficiently allocate and utilize their resources to achieve project goals. This study will explore the global and local perspectives of project management skills and the effective utilization of organizational resources to prevent failures of projects, which can undermine an organization’s reputation, with a focus on understanding the

challenges faced by project managers and the significance of addressing these challenges (Meredith & Mantel, 2017).

Project managers often find themselves in the unenviable position of balancing competing demands, managing risks, and coordinating diverse teams. In many instances, they lack the essential skills needed to navigate these complexities effectively. Furthermore, the misalignment of project objectives with the overarching strategic goals of the organization can lead to resource wastage, project delays, and, in some cases, project failures. The consequences of these challenges are far-reaching. According to recent statistics, The Project Management Institute (PMI) reported that for every \$1 billion invested in the United States, \$122 million is wasted due to poor project performance. A significant percentage of projects do not meet their objectives on time and within budget (PMI, 2016). This issue results in not only financial losses but also tarnishes the reputation of organizations, eroding trust among stakeholders.

In the global context or perspectives, organizations are constantly competing to stay ahead in their respective industries. This competition has led to an increased emphasis on innovation and the rapid execution of projects. The global economy demands organizations to deliver products and services faster, cheaper, and with higher quality. As a result, project management has become a core competency for businesses worldwide. The ability to effectively manage projects ensures that organizations can meet customer demands, respond to market changes, and remain competitive (PMI, 2024b).

Globally, businesses are facing the challenge of managing complex projects with efficiency and effectiveness. The Project Management Institute (PMI) has noted that the demand for skilled project managers is continuously growing, with organizations recognizing the value of structured project management in achieving business objectives. Most leaders refuse to claim sole credit for any success or important initiatives in an organization, instead they recognize the importance of the cumulative work of their teams (PMI, 2016). Effective leadership requires leaders to be actively aware that there is a partnership as well as a spirit of collaboration between leaders and their teams. In the context of project management, effective team leaders tend to create a collegial and collaborative attitude among team members. As Peter Block (2013) notes, a key component of effective project management is the idea of leadership as partnership, which highlights the vital role that team members play in accomplishing project goals. Successful project managers create a cooperative atmosphere that promotes candid communication, respect for one another, and shared accountability because they understand that they are ultimately dependent on their teams for success. Block (2013) defines the four essential components to encourage collaboration as:

1. Exchange of purpose,
2. A right to say no,
3. Joint accountability, and
4. Absolute honesty.

In the local or regional context, the challenges faced by organizations in project management are often compounded by unique cultural, economic, and regulatory

factors. Different regions and industries have distinct requirements and constraints that affect project management practices. The current case study on ZAD real estate development organization emphasizes that the scarcity of resources and the need to align projects with organizational strategies are issues that are prevalent in the local, Somali, context. This research study will specifically address the local challenges which the real estate development organizations or companies face from the infrastructure contracts and why these organizations fail to deliver on time and within the budget requirements during the project implementation process.

In the aftermath of so many events, which ZAD real estate organization has been encountering for the past three years, managers, team leaders and staff are under extreme pressure to implement corrective actions to get their organizations back on track. This pressure can blind team members to the actual drivers that lead to an adverse event and set up the organization for repeated failures. Normally, those involved in an adverse event come to the investigation with what they believe is a firm grasp of what happened, why it happened, and what needs to be done to put the issue behind them. Many teams fail at this crucial juncture because they don't take the time to comprehend the facts completely, how the personnel, tools, or procedures differed from the set performance requirements, and the actual consequences of the deviation.

A significant percentage of projects do not meet their objectives on time and within budget. This issue not only results in financial losses but also damages the reputation of organizations (Cleland & Ireland, 2006). Effective project management can mitigate this issue, however, it does not come cheap. According to recent statistics, it takes up to 20% of the overall project budget. Despite the cost, running a project without solid project management, or inept project management, will cause more harm than benefit, though, since a staggering 70% of initiatives fail to deliver on their promises to clients, making failure a significant possibility. Implementing a management process effectively, on the other hand, has been demonstrated to lower the failure rate to 20% or less (PM360, 2023).

The difficulty of implementing effective project management is the inherent multi-dimensional nature of the profession. It requires a variety of discrete skills from planning and risk management to communication and leadership (Cheng et al., 2006). Many managers possess some of the necessary skills, but few master them all equally effectively, which may affect their ability to navigate the complexities of a challenging project. In the real world, projects are mired in uncertainty, the circumstances are constantly changing as clients change their expectations, resources become unavailable, or unexpected technical issues arise. The list of unexpected situations seems to be endless.

The Project Management Institute defines project risk as “an uncertain event or condition that, if it occurs, has a positive or negative effect on one or more project objectives such as scope, schedule, cost, or quality” (PMI, 2017, p. 397). Such uncertainty underlies the idea of project risks and emphasizes the need to conduct sufficient risk management. Risk Management is a process that assesses the chance that a project encounters difficulties, predicts what such difficulties might be. The core “risk

management processes are risk identification, impact analysis, response planning, the response system, and the application of the resulting data” (Pym, 1987, p. 33). The difference between successful projects and those that fail lies not in the number of problems a project faces but in whether plans and contingencies are in place to respond effectively to issues as they arise (Meredith & Mantel, 2017).

## Literature Review

### Project Management Skills and Utilization of Organizational Resources

According to PMI, a project is a set of planned actions, objectives, and deliverables that are meticulously carried out in order to accomplish a certain goal. Projects come in all sizes, with some requiring budgets of millions of dollars, but they form a crucial component for an organization’s growth or future success, so the outcome of the projects is of paramount importance to organizational stakeholders (PMI, 2024a). Despite the high stakes attributed to any given project, it is a fact of life that projects sometimes fail due to various causes (Anantatmula, 2010). Considering this fact, the project management research and best practices outlines methods to maximize the likelihood of project success and limit the impact of any issues that may arise. (Ika, 2009). The term “project success” is applied in two ways in the literature. The first is a traditional view of project success related to deadlines and financial concerns (Crooke-Davies, 2002). A more modern view of project success is one which includes satisfaction of various stakeholder requirements (Jugdev & Müller, 2005). The current study uses this broader, more inclusive definition of success.

The project management literature describes numerous methods to positively affect project outcomes, one of the most important is to find the right people, inside our outside of the organization, who can best perform the duties of project managers as many projects fail due to interpersonal issues in the team, particularly mutual trust, or low levels of team engagement (Gray & Ulbrich, 2017; Tunji, 2022.). The selecting an appropriate project manager is critical for any project’s ultimate success. Research supports this assumption as scholars have observed and categorized certain personality traits, emotional intelligence aptitude, and leadership styles that can help predict the effectiveness of possible project managers across a wide variety of studies. (Adamu, et al., 2022; Watanabe, et al., 2024). Similarly, other researchers found that leadership ability is the most significant factor in determining project success (Cheng et al., 2006; Khan, Long and Iqbal, 2014; White & Fortune, 2002).

The leadership styles, behavioral characteristics, and professional competencies of project managers are therefore likely to be significant factors in determining the success of a project (Rehan, et al., 2024). Despite this knowledge and the widespread agreement in the body of current literature, few academics have taken an interest in this field of study. Project management research continues to under-examine the behavioral characteristics and competences of project managers or does not discuss it in a unified manner (Rehan, et al., 2024; Turner & Müller, 2005). To be clear, there are studies that look at whether a certain project manager's behavior increases an individual's efficiency,

but very few of them compile a list of the essential skills or character attributes of 21st-century project managers (Rehan, 2024; Strang, 2007).

The body of research on project management that looks at the variables that affect project success rates indicates that little is known about how project managers' characteristics, leadership philosophies, and skill sets affect project success (Turner & Müller, 2005). The literature on project management has disregarded this topic despite overwhelming data from the field of general management that links managerial conduct and organizational effectiveness (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991). Accordingly, there are several requests for research that creates a typical capability profile of a project manager in the literature on project management (Turner & Müller, 2005; Ulbrich, 2017). Considering this gap in the current research, this study aims to create a comprehensive list of the characteristics and attributes of a project manager that are essential to a project's success.

### **Agile Project Management Approach**

Agile Project Management (APM) is a technique grounded in a set of principles that strive to simplify the project management process, make it more flexible, and better able to attain superior performance metrics such as cost, time, and quality while at the same time requiring less management effort, ensuring greater innovation and added value for customers (Comforto, 2014). APM represents a shift from the traditional project management approach where the project team plans the entire project then implements the change plan when issues arise. The APM approach places a strong emphasis on project implementation through iterations and revisions throughout each project work cycle because it acknowledges that change is an unavoidable aspect of a project. The necessity of cooperation between the project team and other stakeholders throughout the project planning and implementation process is also emphasized by the APM approach. Making the project implementation process adaptable to changes in the project environment is the aim of agile project management. For the company, project team, clients, and stakeholders, APM is linked to numerous benefits. Reduced rework expenses, quicker project completion, improved customer satisfaction, team and individual growth, greater performance transparency, and greater creativity and innovation are some of these benefits (PMI, 2000).

Project management practice, according to Comforto et al. (2014), is a unique kind of "management action" that aids in carrying out the project management process and usually makes use of a variety of tools and approaches. In order to define distinct actions, tools, and strategies, the study also provides a few APM practices that are helpful for comparing traditional and agile management literature approaches. One of the eight variables identified by this study is the capacity to collaborate with team members from different disciplines.

Project managers must possess the abilities necessary for effective APM use. They should meet frequently with other members of the project team to confirm the schedule, make decisions, and ensure that information is provided transparently. According to Raz and Michael (2001), change management is a contractual requirement

in terms of the principles, norms of behavior, organizational structure, and procedures set up to address unforeseen events, communicate risks in a top-down manner, or speak directly to project members.

One of the variables in this case study is organizational factors. The resource-based view (RBV) will be used to discuss these factors. The RBV highlights the importance of resource organization skills in attaining exceptional performance. Creating a positive and profitable work environment and culture, investing in cutting-edge HR procedures, enhancing marketing-related competencies, and collaborating with suppliers to enhance procedures—including boosting their willingness to innovate and boost overall business performance—are all examples of developing and deploying organizational resources.

### **Role of Communication Skills**

A project manager is a person who thinks about how to use tools, techniques, knowledge, and abilities to describe, supervise, and regulate the different project processes that are going on in an organization. Given that a project manager's duties and obligations vary from business to business, it's critical to comprehend the position or tasks that a certain project manager will play within a given firm. The person in charge of overseeing the effective planning and implementation of a project is known as the project manager. Along with more general managerial abilities, he or she must be able to ask probing questions, identify implicit assumptions, and settle disagreements (Cheng et al., 2006; Elmezain et al., 2021). As previously stated, it is widely acknowledged that hiring a project manager is essential to the success of any design or construction project. The planning, assigning, directing, and managing aspects of a project are often the responsibility of a single project manager, who is also held accountable for the project's success. In an ideal world, every project manager would be given a single project to work on and would have numerous chances to apply their expertise to address any problems that may arise.

The project manager is responsible for the following tasks: Construction management is literally "where the rubber meets the road." All of the planning, preparation, design, and cost estimation are put to the test during this hectic phase of the project's life cycle. After the construction contract is awarded, this phase begins and continues until construction close-out (Duy Nguyen, et al. 2004). Among the most important responsibilities of a project manager are contract negotiations, communication, team development, system setup, planning, monitoring, control, evaluation of the project, and training. Effective project management relies on a project manager's competency, particularly on their leadership style or styles, which include emotional intelligence, managerial focus, and intellectual capability (Cheng et al., 2006; Elmezain et al., 2021); Gray & Larson, 2008).

### Conceptual Framework

The framework highlights the relationships between project management skills, resource utilization, and contextual factors.

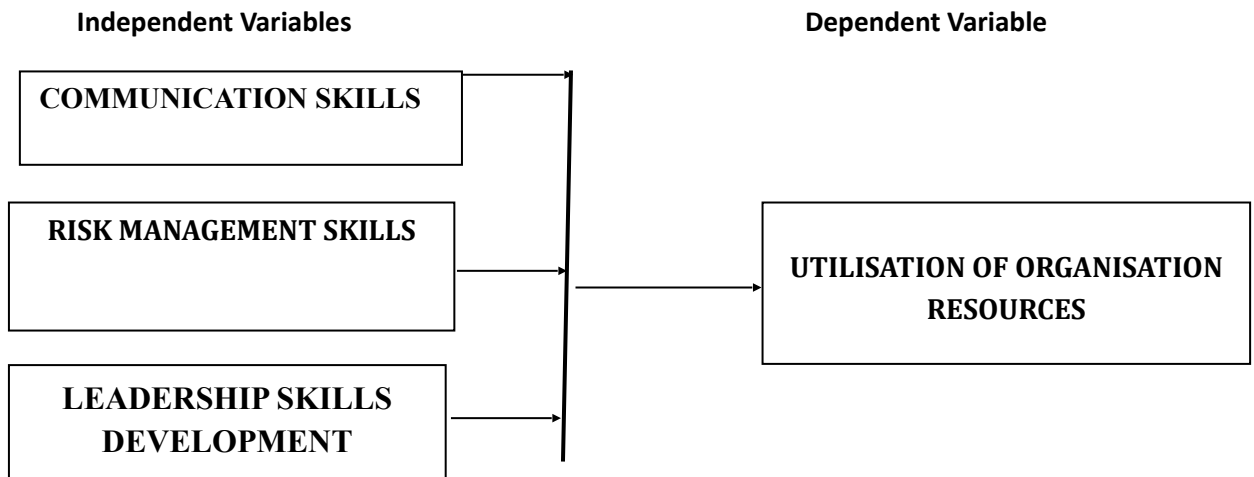


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the relationship between project management skills and utilization of organizational resources.

### Rationale and Aims of Study

The current study aims to identify the critical competences of project managers and fills this gap in the body of knowledge in the field of project management. This study attempts to create a checklist of the essential skills of project managers based on a survey. Although the focus of this research is on real estate development and construction, as Cheng et al. (2006) point out, behavioral competencies of project management are broadly similar to those in other management roles in other contexts.. This study not only fills a vacuum in the literature on project management, but it also has applications. It will assist practitioners tasked with choosing project managers by enhancing their selection criteria, shortlisting processes, and success indicators.

### Methodology

This study was conducted through a descriptive research design. The goal of a descriptive study design is to precisely characterize a phenomenon, population, or situation by methodically observing and gathering data, both qualitative and quantitative, about it without attempting to establish cause-and-effect links (Siedlecki, 2020). The main goal of this method is to collect statistical data and extrapolate it to other populations in order to provide information about a given phenomenon (Babbie, 2002).

In this study, data were gathered through different methods such as surveys and questionnaires. The sample size for the study was 66 respondents drawn from employees of ZAD real estate company as shown in table 1. The sample size was derived using Slovin's formula (Yamane, 1973, p. 727).

Table 1  
*Target Population of Research Study*

Category	Target population (N)	Sample (n)
Management Department	35	20
Human Resources Department	15	25
Finance Department	10	6
Marketing and Procurement Department	20	15
Total	80	66

This survey instrument consists of a questionnaire with many items comprised of statements related to key themes of this study: communication skills, risk management skills, and leadership skills. The statements were drawn adapted from similar surveys in the literature, including (Sandu, 2018). The survey was constructed using a Likert response format. This is one of the most popular tools to collect quantitative data in social sciences, such as sociology, psychology, and leadership. It uses numerical opinion scales to assess how subjects feel about an issue, candidate, or situation. The most common type of questionnaire uses Likert items which are statements to which respondents record the degree of agree-disagreement with the statement by using a limited coding scale, usually 1-5 or 1-7, called a range or Likert response scale, and the collected results produce what is known as ordinal data. These items can be used independently to measure opinions related to individual questions. or more powerfully they can be combined to create a *scale* (not to be confused with a *response scale*) which consists of a group of several similar *Likert items* used to measure a similar trait (e.g. communication ability or leadership style) or theme. We combine the responses to get a composite score. The terms ‘Likert item’ ‘Likert response scale’ and ‘Likert scale’ are often conflated, but the ‘item’ is a single question or statement, referring to a discrete opinion, measured individually. The ‘response scale’ is the range used to measure the strength of opinion. Finally, the Likert ‘scale’ is set of items related to a common theme (Trochim & Donnelly, 2008). The Likert response scale used in this study consists of: Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Strongly Disagree, Disagree. The survey items can be divided into three groups to form a scale related to the variables mentioned in the conceptual framework, communication skills, risk management skills, and leadership development skills. There are a total of eleven items from the survey analyzed in this paper, four questions are related to communication skills, three questions consider risk management skills, and three questions address leadership skills development.

Although various statistical techniques can also be applied to survey data in some kinds of quantitative studies, if certain conditions are met (Babbie, 2010), the use of typical descriptive statistics, such as mean, does not have a clear meaning when used with individual Likert response items (i.e. not as part of a scale), as it ordinal data, the distance between values, such as Strongly Agree and Agree, is not necessarily proportional (Sullivan & Aritino, 2013). In this analysis, frequency and percentage are used to assess the degree of agreement withing the respondents on the importance of each of the three factors: communication skills, risk management skills, and leadership skills.

### Results

The descriptive data analysis presented in the tables include summaries of the survey results on items related to effective communication skills, risk management skills, negotiation skills, as well as leadership development skills.

Table 2

*Responses to item: “Effective communication skills are essential for successful teamwork”*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	9	13.6	13.6	13.6
Agree	33	50.0	50.0	63.6
Neutral	14	21.2	21.2	84.8
Strongly Disagree	6	9.1	9.1	93.9
Disagree	4	6.1	6.1	100.0
Total	66	100.0	100.0	

**Note:** Data obtained from authors’ primary research conducted in 2024.

Table 2 indicates the opinions of respondents regarding the effectiveness of communication skills and their essentiality for successful teamwork. Exactly 50% of respondents, Agreed, with the statement, while an additional 13.6 % Strongly Agreed. Of the remaining respondents, 21.2% were Neutral, 9.1% Strongly Disagreed, and 6% Disagreed with the statement. This indicates that a preponderance of respondents feel that communication is an important skill.

Table 3

*Responses to item: “Improving your communication skills can enhance your professional and personal relationships”*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	36	54.5	54.5	54.5
Agree	14	21.2	21.2	75.8
Neutral	4	6.1	6.1	81.8
Strongly Disagree	7	10.6	10.6	92.4
Disagree	5	7.6	7.6	100.0
Total	66	100.0	100.0	

**Note:** Data obtained from authors’ primary research conducted in 2024.

Table 3 shows the survey responses about whether the respondents feels it is beneficial for them to improve their own communication skills as a way to enhance professional and personal relationships. First, 54.5% Strongly Agreed with the statement, while 21.2% Agreed, and 6.1% were Neutral. On the negative side, 10.6% Strongly Disagreed, and 7.6% Disagreed with the statement. These figures indicate that a majority of the respondents answered positively.

Table 4

*Responses to item: “Conflict resolution often requires excellent communication skills”*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	40	60.6	60.6	60.6
Agree	15	22.7	22.7	83.3
Neutral	3	4.5	4.5	87.8
Strongly Disagree	3	4.5	4.5	92.3
Disagree	5	7.5	7.5	100.0
Total	66	100.0	100.0	

**Note:** Data obtained from authors’ primary research conducted in 2024.

Table 4 displays the feedback from survey participants about whether they feel conflict resolution often requires excellent communication skills. The majority of the respondents Strongly Agreed, 60.6%, while 22.7% also Agreed and 4.5% were Neutral. A small number of respondents had a negative opinion, with 4.5% replying Strongly Disagree and, 7.5% replying Disagree,

Table 5  
 Responses to item: “Effective negotiation relies heavily on strong communication skills”

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	30	45.5	45.5	45.5
Agree	15	22.7	22.7	68.2
Neutral	5	7.5	7.5	75.7
Strongly Disagree	7	10.6	10.6	86.3
Disagree	9	13.6	13.6	100.0
Total	66	100.0	100.0	

**Note:** Data obtained from authors’ primary research conducted in 2024.

Table 5 presents the survey results for the statement that a successful negotiation of the organization with the customers and partners relies heavily on strong communication skills. For that, a majority answered positively, with Strongly Agree at 45.5 % and Agree at 22.7%. On the opposite opinion, 7.5% were Neutral, as well as 10.6% replying Strongly Disagree and 13.6% Disagree.

Table 6

*Responses to item: “Effective risk management skills are essential for identifying potential threats and developing strategies to mitigate them”*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	30	45.5	45.5	45.5
Agree	21	31.8	31.8	77.3
Neutral	2	3.0	3.0	80.3
Strongly Disagree	8	12.1	12.1	92.4
Disagree	5	7.6	7.6	100.0
Total	66	100.0	100.0	

**Note:** Data obtained from authors’ primary research conducted in 2024.

Table 6 exhibits the opinions of respondents regarding the value of effective risk management skills for identifying potential threats and developing strategies to mitigate them. A plurality of the respondents, 45.5%, Strongly Agreed, in addition, 31.8% also Agreed with the statement. Of those who did not agree fully with the statement, 3.0% were Neutral, 12.1% Strongly Disagreed, and 7.6% Disagreed.

Table 7

*Responses to item: “Decision-making abilities are sharpened through risk management training, enhancing one’s capacity to choose the best course of action under uncertainty”*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	40	60.6	60.6	60.6
Agree	10	15.2	15.2	75.8
Neutral	5	7.6	7.6	83.4
Strongly Disagree	4	6.0	6.0	89.4
Disagree	7	10.6	10.6	100.0
Total	66	100.0	100.0	

**Note:** Data obtained from authors’ primary research conducted in 2024.

Table 7 describes the responses to the question of decision-making abilities and ways of sharpening it through risk management training. Most of the participants Strongly Agreed, at 60.6%, furthermore, 15.2% Agreed. In contrast, 7.6% were Neutral, 6.0% Strongly Disagreed, and 10.6% Disagreed.

Table 8

*Responses to item: “Effective negotiation skills can complement risk management, especially when dealing with stakeholders and risk mitigation measures”*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	30	45.5	45.5	45.5
Agree	17	25.7	25.7	71.2
Neutral	6	9.1	9.1	80.3
Strongly Disagree	5	7.5	7.5	87.8
Disagree	8	12.1	12.1	100.0
Total	66	100.0	100.0	

**Note:** Data obtained from authors' primary research conducted in 2024.

Table 8 described the responses to the survey item regarding their opinions regarding whether effective negotiation skills can complement risk management, especially when dealing with stakeholders and risk mitigation measures. Most of the respondents agreed with the statement, with 45.5% choosing Strongly Agreed and 25% choosing Agree. Those with a less favorable opinion were in the minority, with 9.1% as Neutral, 7.5% as Strongly Disagree, and 12.1% as Disagree.

Table 9

*Responses to item: “Developing strong communication skills is essential for effective leadership, as it helps in clearly conveying vision and goals”*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	35	53.0	53.0	53.0
Agree	12	18.2	18.2	71.2
Neutral	8	12.1	12.1	83.3
Strongly Disagree	4	6.0	6.0	89.3
Disagree	7	10.6	10.6	100.0
Total	66	100.0	100.0	

**Note:** Data obtained from authors’ primary research conducted in 2024.

Table 9 displays the responses to the item that states developing strong communication skills is essential for effective leadership, as it helps in clearly conveying vision and goals. Most respondents agreed with the statement with 53.0% Strongly Agreeing and 18.2. % only Agreeing. The other responses included 12.1% Neutral; 6.0%, Strongly Disagree; and 10.6% Disagree.

Table 10

*Responses to item: “Leadership skills development includes learning to manage conflicts and mediate disputes within a team”*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	35	53.0	53.0	53.0
Agree	12	18.2	18.2	71.2
Neutral	8	12.1	12.1	83.3
Strongly Disagree	4	6.0	6.0	89.3
Disagree	7	10.6	10.6	100.0
Total	66	100.0	100.0	

**Note:** Data obtained from authors’ primary research conducted in 2024.

Table 10 shows that the majority, 63.6%, Strongly Agreed that leadership skills development includes learning to manage conflicts and mediate disputes within a team. A further 7.6. % only agreed, and 6.0% were Neutral. In contrast, 12% had chosen Strongly Disagreed and 10.6% had chosen Disagree.

Table 11  
*Responses to item: “Leadership skills development involves learning how to motivate and inspire others to achieve common goals”*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	21	31.8	31.8	31.8
Agree	33	50.0	50.0	81.8
Neutral	4	6.1	6.1	87.9
Strongly Disagree	5	7.6	7.6	95.5
Disagree	3	4.5	4.5	100.0
Total	66	100.0	100.0	

**Note:** Data obtained from authors’ primary research conducted in 2024.

Table 11 displays the responses for the item that states that leadership skills development includes learning to manage conflicts and mediate disputes within a team. The majority of the group answered positively, with 31.8 % selecting Strongly Agree, while 50 % chose Agree. The remainder of the respondents less than one-third, did not agree with the statement, 6.1% chose Neutral, 7.6% responded with Strongly Disagree, and 4.5% selected Disagree.

## Discussion

### Analysis of Essential Skills

The analysis of responses to the questionnaire regarding essential project management skills such as communication, risk management, and leadership revealed insightful trends and perceptions of the respondents.

### Communication Skills

Effective communication was deemed crucial for successful teamwork (50% agreed, 13.6% strongly agreed). Active listening was highlighted as vital for good

communication, although a significant proportion (33.4%) disagreed. A majority (54.5%) strongly believed that enhancing communication skills could improve professional and personal relationships. Conflict resolution and negotiation were heavily reliant on strong communication skills, with a substantial number of respondents agreeing on their importance (60.6% and 45.5%, respectively). Examining the responses to these four items it is clear that communication is widely held to be an important skill in project management contexts.

### **Risk Management Skills**

Effective risk management was considered essential for identifying threats and developing mitigation strategies (45.5% strongly agreed). Decision-making abilities were perceived to be enhanced through risk management training (60.6% strongly agreed). According to the survey response, project managers with excellent risk management skills were seen as better equipped to handle unexpected challenges (50% agreed). It is evident that risk management is broadly held to be an important element of an effective project manager's skill set.

### **Leadership Skills Development**

Self-awareness and understanding of strengths and weaknesses were identified as foundational to developing effective leadership skills (42.4% strongly agreed). Strong communication skills were crucial for conveying vision and goals effectively, with 53% strongly agreeing. Leadership development involved learning to manage conflicts and motivate others, with a significant number of respondents acknowledging this (63.6% and 50%, respectively). Flexibility and adaptability were also highlighted as important traits for leaders (39.4% strongly agreed). A project manager's main duties include leading teams, so it is not surprising that these common leadership traits were seen to be beneficial by the majority of the respondents.

## **Conclusion**

### **Summary of findings**

The data presented and analyzed in this study highlight several key findings. First, there is a strong consensus on the importance of communication skills for teamwork, conflict resolution, and negotiation. Second, risk management skills are highly valued for their role in decision-making and project management. Finally, leadership development is multifaceted, requiring self-awareness, effective communication, conflict management, and adaptability.

### **Implications and recommendations:**

The findings imply that organizations should prioritize the development of communication, risk management, and leadership skills among their employees. Training programs focused on these areas could enhance overall organizational performance and employee satisfaction.

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