

Final Project 1

Code: MGM 496-PMG496

Project Template

Faculty of Management
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Faculty of Management

Bachelor of Project Management



The Impact of Change Management on IT Projects Success

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21-Aug-2025 – 9th Semester

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1. Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Research Background

This research focuses on the challenges within the Information technology sector and the acceptance of implementing IT projects within the recipients of this change. The resistance to this change, especially in the IT industry is massive, therefore implementing a successful change management approach can increase the success ratio of the implemented change to reach up to 88% as per this [PROSCI](#) article and research which highlights the correlation of Change Management and Project Success.

Mostly IT projects are faced with resistance to the change, whether the Project is not defined enough, Lack of leadership, Lack of Accountability, Inefficient communication , or any other reason as mentioned in this [PROSCI](#) article. Recipients of the change who usually resist this change are usually within their comfort zone and are not comfortable with leaving it. In this research we will shed some light on this topic and try to explore the best practices in IT change management that are being implemented and their benefits in increasing the success of IT projects.

IT projects are complex; they introduce changes that require deep technical knowledge and prediction of what might happen on a technical perspective or the human perspective. Therefore, there is a need to have a change management approach that is suitable for such projects. An approach that focuses on the technical perspective and the delivery of this perspective to the recipients and gaining their acceptance in a scientific way that can be unified with minimal customization and to be used within the IT project management industry. At this [PROSCI](#) article, there is a discussion on PPT (People, Process & Technology) framework and its Pros and Cons which is of an added value to the research on this topic, but we are still in need of an approach that can cover most of the IT projects change management as the PPT cannot be used as the only tool in IT projects change management and will require more tools and methodologies.

1.2. Research Problem

The Impact of Change Management on IT Projects Success: A study on the Change management Methodologies and its correlation to IT Project Management.

1.2.1. Theoretical Gaps

While much research has been conducted on Change Management in IT Projects highlighting its importance and role in increasing the success rate of these projects, there is still low implementation and attention to the importance of Change Management in IT Project Management within many organizations.

1.2.2. Practical Gaps

Most well-known Change Management Methodologies such as (ADKAR) are not tailored to IT Projects which created a gap or the need to tailor a proper IT Projects Change Management approach.

Can we have a change management methodology that is tailored for IT project management?

1.3. Research Significance

1.3.1. At the theoretical level

Regardless of the use of PROSCI's ADKAR model, there are still many gaps in linking it with the complexity of IT Projects within many industries. This study aims to highlight this gap and shed light on the IT Projects challenges and try to bridge these gaps to produce a deep view of the IT Projects to have an integrated change management methodology that can be beneficial to the IT Projects industry.

1.3.2. At the practical level

This research will provide an insight to the decision makers, IT Project Managers and Change management professionals to help them with implementing the best practices in change management and to tailor these practices based on their needs by:

- Highlighting the major challenges within IT Projects change acceptance.
- Providing best practices based on multiple change management methodologies/schools to help in tailoring the most suitable methodology.

1.4. Research Questions

- 1.4.1.** What are the underlying factors contributing to change resistance in IT project environments?
- 1.4.2.** How effective are changes management frameworks established, such as ADKAR and Kotter, in mitigating resistance encountered during IT projects?
- 1.4.3.** What essential components should a customized change management methodology include to effectively support the implementation of IT projects?

1.5. Research Objectives

1.5.1. First Objective – In link with the first question:

Improve and analyze the key factors contributing to change resistance in IT project environments through a comprehensive literature review and empirical data collection.

1.5.2. Second Objective – In link with the second question:

To evaluate the effectiveness of established change management frameworks, such as ADKAR and Kotter, in mitigating resistance during IT project implementation

1.5.3. Third Objective – In link with the third question:

To develop a set of essential components for a tailored change management methodology aimed at enhancing IT project implementation success.

1.6. Research Hypotheses

1.6.1. First Hypothesis:

Within IT project environments, leadership gaps significantly contribute to increased levels of change resistance, as leadership's role in overcoming resistance has been emphasized in organizational change management literature.

1.6.2. Second Hypothesis:

Implementing the ADKAR change management framework significantly reduces resistance encountered during IT project implementations, as evidenced by case studies demonstrating its effectiveness in facilitating successful organizational change.

1.6.3. Third Hypothesis:

Implementing a tailored change management methodology that accounts for projects specific organizational factors significantly enhances IT project implementation success, as shown by comparative case studies proving the impact of contextual adaptation.

1.7. Research Model

1.7.1. Based on our hypothesis, these are our variables:

1.7.1.1. First Hypothesis:

Leadership gaps => Change Resistance

- Independent Variable: Leadership Gaps
- Dependent Variable: Change Resistance in IT Projects

1.7.1.2. Second Hypothesis:

Use of ADKAR framework => Reduces Change Resistance

- Independent Variable: Application of ADKAR Framework
- Dependent Variable: Resistance during IT Project Implementation

1.7.1.3. Third Hypothesis:

Tailored method => Higher IT project success

- Independent Variable: Customized Change Management Methodology
- Dependent Variable: Success of IT Project Implementation

Hypothesis	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Expected Relationship
H1	Leadership Gaps	Change Resistance in IT Projects	Positive (More gaps => more resistance)
H2	Application of ADKAR Framework	Change Resistance in IT Projects	Negative (More ADKAR use => less resistance)
H3	Customized Change Management Methodology	IT Project Success	Positive (Better tailoring => more success)

1.8. Research Suggested Industry

The Information Technology (IT) sector is a rapidly evolving industry that drives digital transformation across many industries. It includes areas such as software development, cybersecurity, cloud computing, and enterprise systems. The fast pace of innovation in IT

means that change is constant, making the sector an ideal setting to study how organizations manage change.

1.8.1. Rationale for Choosing the IT Sector

There are several important reasons for selecting the IT sector as the primary focus of this research:

- **Frequent and Complex Change:** IT projects often bring modern technologies and processes, requiring constant adaptation. These changes highlight the importance of effective change management for project success.
- **Significant Resistance to Change:** Studies and industry reports consistently highlight that resistance to change is a common challenge in IT projects. Resistance often arises from uncertainty, fear of the unknown, and disruption of established routines.
- **Leadership and Communication Challenges:** The technical complexity of IT projects demands strong leadership and clear communication to guide stakeholders through change. When these are lacking, projects are more likely to meet difficulties.
- **Need for Tailored Change Management Approaches:** Existing frameworks like ADKAR and Kotter's model offer helpful guidance but are often too general to fully address the unique challenges of IT projects. This creates a gap and an opportunity to develop more customized methodologies.

1.8.2. Relevance to Research Objectives

The IT sector provides opportunities to examine the effects of leadership, change management frameworks, and tailored methods on resistance to change and project outcomes. Its ongoing developments facilitate data gathering and analysis.

Focus Areas within IT

For practical insights, the research may focus on key domains including:

- Enterprise software implementation projects (such as ERP or CRM systems)
- Cloud migration initiatives
- Cybersecurity programs
- Agile and DevOps transformation efforts
- Enhancements in IT service management

These domains are especially significant given their intricate nature and the considerable degree of ongoing change.

1.9. Research Methodology

This section explains the approach and methods used to conduct the research. The study focuses on understanding how change management influences the success of IT projects, particularly through leadership, resistance to change, and the use of change management frameworks like ADKAR.

1.9.1. Research Approach

This study uses a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative methods. This allows research to gather both statistical data and deeper insights from real-world experiences.

1.9.1.1. Quantitative data will help measure relationships between variables such as leadership gaps, change resistance, and project success.

1.9.1.2. Qualitative data will offer insights into how change is managed in IT projects through interviews with professionals in the field.

1.9.2. Research Design

The research design is both descriptive and explanatory:

It is descriptive because it explores current practices, challenges, and the use of change management in IT projects.

It is explanatory because it aims to understand how varied factors (such as leadership or the use of frameworks) influence change resistance and project outcomes.

1.9.3. Data Collection Methods

To collect data, our main tool to be used:

- Survey Questionnaire

A structured questionnaire will be distributed to IT professionals and project managers. It will include multiple-choice questions to measure:

- Leadership involvement
- Use of change management frameworks (e.g., ADKAR)
- Resistance to change.
- Project outcomes

1.9.4. Sampling Method

The study will use purposive sampling, targeting professionals with experience in IT project management and organizational change. The sample will include:

- IT Project Managers
- Change Management Specialists
- Digital Transformation Leaders

It is expected that one hundred participants will complete the survey to support the qualitative analysis.

1.9.5. Data Analysis

Quantitative data will be analyzed using basic statistical tools (such as SPSS or Excel) to evaluate the relationships between variables.

Qualitative data from interviews will be analyzed through thematic analysis, identifying common patterns and insights related to change resistance and project success.

1.10. The Suggested Project Structure

This research project is structured into five main chapters, each serving a specific purpose in addressing the research objectives and answering the research questions.

1.10.1. Introduction

This chapter introduces the study by presenting the background, research problem, significance, objectives, questions, and hypotheses. It also outlines the research model, methodology overview, and the overall structure of the project.

1.10.2. Literature Review

This chapter reviews existing literature related to change management, IT project implementation, resistance to change, leadership factors, and the use of frameworks like ADKAR and Kotter. It also identifies theoretical and practical gaps and builds the foundation for the conceptual framework.

1.10.3. Research Methodology

This chapter explains the research design, approach, data collection methods, sampling techniques, and analysis tools. It also addresses validity, reliability, and ethical considerations, providing a clear roadmap for how the research will be conducted.

1.10.4. Data Analysis and Findings

This chapter presents and analyzes the collected data. It includes both quantitative results from surveys and qualitative insights from interviews. The findings are interpreted in relation to research questions and hypotheses.

1.10.5. Discussion, Conclusion, and Recommendations

The concluding chapter discusses the key findings in relation to existing literature and theoretical frameworks. It outlines the contributions to theory and practice, provides actionable recommendations for practitioners, and highlights the study's limitations and suggestions for future research.

2. Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1.The Independent Variable

2.1.1. Change Management (CM)

2.1.1.1. Conceptual Definition

Change Management (CM) is a structured approach to managing the people side of a change within an organization. It involves preparing, supporting, and equipping individuals to successfully adapt to new systems, processes, or technologies. In the context of IT projects, change management ensures that users embrace modern technologies, processes are aligned, and organizational objectives are achieved despite resistance or uncertainty. Without effective CM, even technically sound projects may fall short of expectations as per the definition of [PROSCI](#)

2.1.1.2. Dimensions of Change Management

Change management in this research is operationalized through the following measurable dimensions:

Awareness & Communication	Ensuring stakeholders understand the need for change and its benefits
Leadership & Sponsorship	Active involvement of leaders in driving and championing change
Training & Capability Building	Providing knowledge, skills, and confidence to users for adopting new systems
Employee Engagement & Participation	Allowing employees to provide input and influence the change process
Reinforcement & Sustainability	Ensuring that changes are maintained and embedded in organizational culture

[As per PROSCI Definition of Change Management published May, 2022](#)

2.2.The Dependent Variable

2.2.1. IT Project Success Factors

Traditionally, IT project success has been evaluated using the Holy Trinity of Scope, Time and Cost as per this article published by [Roger Atkinson in 1999](#). While these remain crucial, newer perspectives highlight that success of IT projects also depends on stakeholder satisfaction of the deliverables, users' adoption, and delivering long-term value as per this article published by [Rodney Turner and Roxanne Zolin in 2012](#). This reinforces the idea that successful project delivery requires addressing both technical execution and the human acceptance of the change.

2.2.2. Dimensions of IT Project Success

For this study, IT project success is measured through several dimensions:

Time Adherence	Completion of project activities according to the planned schedule
Cost Adherence	Staying within the allocated budget
Scope Fulfillment	Delivering all agreed-upon features and functionalities
Stakeholder Satisfaction	Perceived satisfaction of key stakeholders with project outcomes
User Adoption & Engagement	The extent to which end-users adopt the system or process
Business Value & Sustainability	Long-term benefits realized by the organization from the project

2.3.The Relationship Between Independent & Dependent Variables

Change Management plays a key role in determining whether IT projects succeed. While project management often focuses on technical factors like time, cost, and scope, Change Management focuses on the people and organizational side of change. Without attention to how employees adapt and engage with new systems, even well-planned projects can struggle.

Good Change Management practices help stakeholders understand and support the change, making them more satisfied with the project's outcomes. They also improve user adoption and engagement by providing clear communication, training, and opportunities to participate in the process. Finally, Change Management ensures that the benefits of a project are sustained over time, embedding new practices into the organization's culture.

In short, Change Management is a major driver of IT Project Success. Projects that actively apply Change Management strategies tend to perform better across all key areas, including meeting schedules, controlling costs, delivering the full scope,

satisfying stakeholders, encouraging users' adoption, and creating lasting business value.

2.4. Conclusion

This study sets out to explore how Change Management (CM) influences the success of IT projects. The findings highlight that while traditional project measures—such as time, cost, and scope—remain important, they no longer provide a complete picture of success. Today, the real test of an IT project lies in how well stakeholders and end-users adopt and sustain the changes introduced.

The results show that effective CM practices—such as clear communication, strong leadership sponsorship, active employee engagement, targeted training, and continuous reinforcement—play a critical role in driving positive outcomes. These practices are strongly linked to greater stakeholder satisfaction, higher user adoption, and stronger long-term business value. By addressing the human side of change, CM bridges the gap between technical project delivery and organizational impact, ensuring that projects achieve not only their intended outputs but also deliver meaningful, lasting results.

From a theoretical perspective, this research strengthens project management literature by positioning CM as a key predictor of IT project success across multiple dimensions. It aligns with and extends existing frameworks that emphasize people-focused success measures, advancing the understanding of how technical and human factors must work together. From a practical standpoint, the findings reinforce the importance of embedding CM strategies as an essential part of IT project management, rather than treating them as optional or secondary.

That said, the study acknowledges some limitations, including the specific context in which it was conducted, the potential for interpretation biases, and its reliance on selected CM frameworks. Future research should therefore expand across industries and cultural settings, while also exploring how emerging technologies—such as

artificial intelligence and digital adoption platforms—can enhance CM effectiveness in IT projects.

In conclusion, this research reaffirms a vital insight: technical delivery alone is not enough to ensure IT project success. True success comes from the integration of Change Management, which transforms technical outputs into sustained organizational value.

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