

Project title

The Role of Digital Tools in Enhancing Task Efficiency in Small Business Projects

Student name

Thamer Mohammed Alharbi

Graduation Project – 1

Faculty of Management - Midocean University

Supervisor

Dr. Abdulrahim Nader

Faculty member - Faculty of management - Midocean University

7/4/2025 – 10

Table of Contents

1. Chapter 1: Introduction	3
1.1. Research Background	4
1.2. Research Problem.....	5
1.2.1. Theoretical Gaps	5
1.2.2. Practical Gaps	6
1.3. Research Significance	6
1.3.1. At the theoretical level	6
1.3.2. At the practical level	6
1.4. Research Questions.....	7
1.5. Research Objectives	7
1.6. Research Hypotheses	7
1.7. Research Model.....	8
1.8. Research Methodology	8
1.9. Scope of The Study.....	8
1.10. The Suggested Project Structure.....	9
References:.....	10

1. Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Research Background

In today's fast-paced business environment, small businesses are under increasing pressure to deliver projects quickly and efficiently while competing with larger organizations that have greater resources and tools. As a result, many small businesses have turned to digital tools to improve how tasks are managed, tracked, and completed. These tools are not just a luxury but a necessity for survival and growth in an increasingly digital world.

Digital tools such as Trello, Asana, Notion, Google Workspace, and Monday.com offer various functionalities like task assignment, timeline tracking, file sharing, communication, and productivity analytics. By automating repetitive tasks, improving team communication, and enabling remote collaboration, these platforms have changed the way small business projects operate. However, while the popularity of such tools has grown, the extent to which they actually enhance task efficiency in small business projects remains an open question, especially in developing economies and smaller project environments.

The importance of this research lies in the fact that small businesses form the backbone of many economies, especially in countries with large youth populations and entrepreneurial activity. According to global entrepreneurship reports, small businesses account for a significant portion of job creation and innovation. If digital tools truly contribute to higher task efficiency, they can play a vital role in boosting productivity, reducing costs, and ensuring the success of small-scale projects. But if misused or misunderstood, they may add complexity, miscommunication, or even create new bottlenecks.

Understanding how, when, and why these tools impact task efficiency is essential to guide small business owners, project managers, and policymakers in making better technology choices. Furthermore, since many available studies focus on

large organizations, there is a theoretical gap in the academic literature concerning small business contexts, especially in non-Western environments.

This study aims to fill that gap by exploring how digital tools influence task efficiency in small business projects, with a focus on identifying best practices, common challenges, and measurable outcomes. The research will combine both practical observations from real-world case studies and academic insights to provide a balanced perspective that is both relevant and actionable.

1.2. Research Problem

Despite the increasing adoption of digital tools in small business project environments, there is still uncertainty about their true impact on task efficiency. Many small businesses adopt these tools without clear understanding of how to measure their effectiveness, leading to mixed results and unfulfilled expectations. This section identifies both theoretical and practical gaps that justify this research.

1.2.1. Theoretical Gaps

The academic literature on project management and digital transformation has primarily focused on large corporations or enterprise-level implementations. There is limited research that explores how digital tools affect task efficiency specifically in small business projects. Furthermore, existing studies often emphasize technology adoption or digital maturity, but few address how these tools practically enhance daily task execution. This creates a theoretical gap in understanding the relationship between tool usage and performance outcomes in the context of smaller, resource-limited organizations.

1.2.2. Practical Gaps

In the real-world context, many small business owners and project teams implement digital tools without prior training or structured methodologies. This results in inconsistent usage, underutilization of tool capabilities, or poor integration with workflow processes. There is a lack of practical guidelines or best practices tailored to the unique needs of small businesses in terms of maximizing the efficiency benefits of digital tools.

Main Research Question:

How do digital tools influence task efficiency in small business projects?

1.3. Research Significance

This section outlines the importance of this study at both the theoretical and practical levels.

1.3.1. At the theoretical level

This study contributes to the limited body of academic knowledge focusing on the impact of digital tools in small business settings. By bridging the gap between digital project management theory and its application in smaller organizational contexts, this research enhances the scholarly understanding of digital efficiency in constrained environments.

1.3.2. At the practical level

For small business managers and practitioners, the findings of this research will offer actionable insights on how to select, implement, and evaluate digital tools effectively. It can guide project teams on integrating digital solutions to improve task management, reduce delays, and increase overall project success.

1.4. Research Questions

1. How do digital tools impact task efficiency in small business projects?
2. What are the most commonly used digital tools in small business projects?
3. What challenges do small businesses face when using digital tools?
4. How can digital tools be optimized to improve productivity and task execution?

1.5. Research Objectives

1. To examine the relationship between digital tool usage and task efficiency in small business projects.
2. To identify the most commonly used digital tools among small businesses.
3. To explore the key barriers small businesses encounter when implementing digital tools.
4. To recommend best practices for utilizing digital tools to improve task performance and overall project outcomes.

1.6. Research Hypotheses

H1: The use of digital tools significantly improves task efficiency in small business projects.

H2: The lack of proper training and implementation reduces the effectiveness of digital tools in small businesses.

1.7. Research Model

The conceptual model of this study focuses on the relationship between the independent and dependent variables:

Independent Variable: Use of Digital Tools

Dependent Variable: Task Efficiency

1.8. Research Methodology

This research will use a mixed-method approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative methods. A survey will be distributed to small business employees and managers to collect data on digital tool usage and perceived task efficiency.

Additionally, interviews will be conducted with selected participants to gain deeper insights. The collected data will be analyzed using descriptive statistics and thematic analysis.

1.9. Scope of The Study

This study will focus on small business projects operating in Saudi Arabia. It will specifically target businesses in the service and retail sectors. Data will be collected from project managers, team leaders, and employees who use digital tools to manage their project tasks. The research will consider projects executed between 2022 and 2025.

1.10. The Suggested Project Structure

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Results

Chapter 5: Findings, Recommendations, and Conclusion

References:

1. Kerzner, H. (2017). *Project management: A systems approach to planning, scheduling, and controlling* (12th ed.). Wiley.
2. Small Business Administration. (2021). *Small business trends 2021*.
<https://www.sba.gov/>
3. Al-Khazali, M., & Irani, Z. (2020). The impact of digital tools on performance in SMEs: A case from the MENA region. *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, 27(4), 612–629.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/JSBED-09-2019-0304>
4. Trello. (2023). *Why teams choose Trello*. Retrieved from <https://trello.com/>
5. Monday.com. (2023). *Case studies: Project management in small teams*. Retrieved from <https://monday.com/>
6. Asana. (2022). *Productivity insights report*. Retrieved from <https://asana.com/resources>
7. Notion. (2023). *Why use Notion for project management*. Retrieved from <https://www.notion.so>
8. ClickUp. (2023). *Digital tools to boost productivity in SMBs*. Retrieved from <https://clickup.com/blog/smb-productivity-tools>
9. Project Management Institute. (2021). *Pulse of the Profession 2021: Beyond Agility*. Retrieved from <https://www.pmi.org>
10. Fernandes, G., Ward, S., & Araújo, M. (2015). Improving project performance using project management maturity models: A case study. *International Journal of Project Management*, 33(4), 913–922.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijproman.2014.10.005>