

A new framework for complexity analysis in international development projects – Results from a Delphi study

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ABSTRACT

The main objective of this paper is to develop a framework for characterising project complexity in International Development (ID) projects. Contemporary challenges in ID projects have led to their growth in their complexity, which in recent years has driven researches in recent years to publish numerous papers that deal with this topic, demonstrating its importance in current project management research. Nevertheless, existing literature lacks in generally accepted framework that considers specifics of project complexity in ID projects. Thus, new framework was developed, based on a two-round Delphi survey, building upon existing TOE (technology-organisation-environment) framework with new empirical insights given from the experts in the field of ID projects. The main contribution of the paper is the validation of existing TOE complexity factors, in the context of International Development projects. Additionally, eight new complexity factors were proposed by the experts, and it was concluded that Environmental complexity had the biggest impact on International Development projects. From a managerial perspective, proposed complexity framework can be used for making a complexity footprint, which could indicate the critical areas of the project where complexity could be expected. In addition, the model represents a novel theoretical lens for assessing complexity in ID projects.

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