

PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW¹



Book Title: ***Designs, Methods and Practices for Research of Project Management***

Editor: **Beverly Pasion**

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Reviewer: **Sreehari Gothati, PMP**

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Introduction

Designs, Methods and Practices for Research of Project Management, edited by Beverly Pasion, is an essential resource for both project management researchers and practitioners. This book successfully bridges the divide between academic theory and real-world application, offering an array of methodologies applicable to a wide range of project environments. From small-scale IT projects to complex megaprojects and volatile post-conflict settings, the book provides cutting-edge tools and strategies tailored to address the intricate challenges faced in modern project management.

Divided into seven well-structured sections, the book explores foundational theories, advanced methodologies, and their practical application, making it invaluable to a diverse audience from students to seasoned professionals. The depth and rigor in its content, combined with real-world case studies, ensure that this work stands out as a comprehensive guide for anyone involved in project management research.

Overview of Book's Structure

The book *Designs, Methods and Practices for Research of Project Management*, edited by Beverly Pasion, is a comprehensive resource designed to guide both students and practitioners through the complexities of conducting research in the project management domain. It draws heavily from real-world applications across

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various industries and project scales, from small initiatives to large-scale megaprojects. Here's a more detailed breakdown:

1. Foundational Issues:

This section delves into the core theoretical frameworks, such as ontology and epistemology, that underpin project management research. It provides a philosophical base that is essential for developing rigorous, context-sensitive research methodologies applicable across diverse industries.

2. Focusing Your Research Effort:

This part offers strategies for narrowing down research topics and questions, emphasizing practical problem-solving in project environments. The Constructive Research Approach (CRA) is introduced, blending empirical data with theoretical insights to tackle real-world challenges in fields like IT and construction.

3. Specific Data Collection and Analysis Techniques:

Practical guidance on constructing research questions, conducting ethical research, and performing critical literature reviews is presented here. Methods such as interviews and case studies are explored in detail, supported by visual frameworks like the "Interview Typology," which aids researchers in gathering qualitative data.

4. Examples of Mixed Methods Strategies:

This section highlights the use of mixed-methods research, integrating qualitative and quantitative approaches to manage complexity in large-scale projects. Visual aids like "Integrated Use of Mixed Methods" offer a clear pathway for researchers to synthesize diverse data sets, making it particularly useful for projects in fields such as IT and construction.

5. Unique Environments for Project Management Research:

Tailored methodologies for high-risk and specialized environments, such as post-conflict regions and megaprojects, are discussed. Case studies and real-world examples offer valuable insights into adapting traditional methods to navigate complex, uncertain conditions.

6. Writing as a Future Researcher:

This section guides early-career researchers on how to share their findings through publications. Practical advice on transforming academic work into published articles is provided, encouraging researchers to contribute their insights to the broader project management field.

7. Benefitting from Experience:

Supervisors and Publications: The final section shares insights from experienced supervisors and project managers, offering practical advice on common research pitfalls and the publication process. Chapters like "Publish or Perish?" provide invaluable guidance for turning research into actionable outputs.

Highlights

The book *Designs, Methods and Practices for Research of Project Management* offers a wealth of knowledge that can directly enhance both research and practical project management endeavors. Each chapter introduces valuable methodologies, frameworks, and insights that are crucial for navigating real-world challenges:

1. Interview Methods for Project Management

This chapter provides a clear, structured approach to qualitative data collection, a cornerstone in understanding stakeholder needs and project dynamics. Interviews help project managers gain deep insights into project environments, fostering more effective communication and decision-making. This method proves indispensable for any project, especially when understanding complex stakeholder perspectives is key to project success.

2. Considering Case Studies in Project Management

Case studies offer a powerful framework for dissecting and learning from past projects, making this chapter particularly valuable. The real-world lessons gained from successful and unsuccessful projects ensure that managers can apply these insights to future initiatives, enhancing the likelihood of project success by adapting proven strategies.

3. Doctor of Project Management (DPM) Research Case Study

The application of doctoral research to practical project management challenges is explored here, demonstrating how academic research can contribute directly to solving real-world problems. This section encourages project managers to incorporate rigorous academic methods into their problem-solving toolkit, strengthening the link between theory and practice.

4. How to Gain and Sustain Access to Research Sites

This chapter outlines practical strategies for overcoming common challenges in gaining access to critical research sites. Establishing and maintaining relationships with stakeholders is vital for field research in live project environments, and this chapter provides actionable tips for researchers navigating these obstacles.

5. Mixed Methods Research in Project Management

One of the book's standout features, this chapter discusses the integration of both qualitative and quantitative research methods. In complex projects where data from multiple sources is essential, this approach allows project managers to create a more holistic view of project dynamics. Mixed methods ensure comprehensive analysis, enabling data-driven decision-making.

6. An Agile Approach to the Real Experience of Developing Research

Agile methodologies, when applied to research, offer a flexible, adaptive approach to developing and refining research strategies. This chapter mirrors the agile principles applied in project management, promoting iterative improvements and adaptability. It is especially useful in fast-changing project environments where responsiveness to new information is critical.

7. An Empirical Research Method Strategy for Construction Consulting Service Projects

This section provides a clear empirical framework for conducting research in construction projects, an industry where data-driven decisions are crucial for optimizing outcomes. The strategies outlined here enable managers to gather actionable insights and apply them to enhance project performance.

8. Using Multi-case Approaches in Project Management

By comparing multiple cases across different projects, this chapter offers a broader perspective on common project challenges and successes. The multi-case approach allows project managers to generalize findings, helping to identify best practices that can be applied to future projects.

9. Research on the Megaproject Experience

Megaprojects come with unique challenges, and this chapter equips managers with the tools to handle these complexities. Whether dealing with resource management, stakeholder engagement, or risk mitigation, the lessons drawn from megaproject research are invaluable for large-scale initiatives.

10. Project Management Research in Post-conflict Societies

This chapter addresses the unique challenges of conducting research in post-conflict environments, like Kosovo. The methodologies presented here are tailored to high-risk, volatile environments, where traditional project management practices may not suffice. It offers practical strategies for managing uncertainty and ensuring project continuity in these challenging contexts.

11. How This is Related to Today's IT Consulting

The principles and methodologies discussed throughout the book are highly relevant to IT consulting, where the rapid pace of technological advancement requires agile, adaptive project management approaches. Empirical research and case study methods help IT consultants navigate complex technical projects while ensuring client satisfaction and project delivery.

12. Common Flaws in Project Management

This chapter outlines frequent errors in project management research and offers solutions to avoid these pitfalls. By understanding common flaws, project managers can refine their processes, ensuring that their research is robust, actionable, and contributes positively to project outcomes.

13. "Publish or Perish?" Transforming Your Thesis into a Tangible Product

The final chapter encourages researchers to take their academic work and transform it into practical tools and methodologies that can impact the industry. This is particularly valuable for doctoral candidates and early-career researchers, highlighting the importance of making their research accessible and useful to the broader project management community.

Highlights: What I liked!

Several key sections of the book stood out for their practical relevance to modern project management:

1. Interview Methods for Project Management

This chapter provided an excellent guide to conducting structured interviews, an essential method for gathering in-depth, qualitative data from stakeholders. Understanding the perspectives of stakeholders is crucial for project success, particularly in dynamic environments where team dynamics are constantly evolving.

2. Considering Case Studies in Project Management

I particularly appreciated this section's emphasis on learning from real-world projects. Case studies offer valuable insights into successful strategies and lessons from past failures, allowing project managers to apply these findings to future projects.

3. Doctor of Project Management (DPM) Research Case Study

This chapter seamlessly integrates academic research with practical project management, demonstrating how rigorous research can address real-world problems. The DPM case studies encourage project managers to incorporate academic methods into their practical toolkit.

4. How to Gain and Sustain Access to Research Sites

Access to key research sites is a common barrier in project management research, and this chapter provides actionable strategies for overcoming this challenge. It outlines the importance of building and maintaining relationships with stakeholders to facilitate field research.

5. Mixed Methods Research in Project Management

One of the book's standout sections, this chapter details the integration of qualitative and quantitative data, which is critical for understanding project complexities. The comprehensive analysis allowed by mixed methods is particularly useful in large-scale IT or construction projects.

6. An Agile Approach to the Real Experience of Developing Research

This chapter introduced an agile approach to research development, emphasizing flexibility and adaptability. The application of agile principles to research

methodologies is an innovative concept, making this section particularly useful for managing projects in fast-paced, evolving environments.

7. Research on the Megaproject Experience

Megaprojects present unique challenges, and this chapter addresses the research methods needed to navigate such complexities. It provides valuable insights into risk management, resource allocation, and stakeholder engagement, key areas for any project manager involved in large-scale projects.

8. Common Flaws in Project Management Research

This chapter provided a practical guide to avoiding common mistakes in project management research, which I found particularly useful. By identifying these pitfalls, project managers can improve their research quality, leading to more reliable and actionable insights.

Who might benefit from the Book?

Designs, Methods and Practices for Research of Project Management is an indispensable resource for a broad audience, including:

1. Project Managers in IT and Non-IT Sectors

Whether managing IT projects or traditional construction projects, the book's methodologies on case studies, mixed methods, and empirical research provide invaluable tools for tackling complex challenges.

2. Researchers and Academics in Project Management

Scholars will find the book's exploration of research methods particularly helpful, especially chapters like Doctor of Project Management (DPM) Research Case Studies and empirical research strategies, which offer academic rigor applicable to practical problems.

3. Consultants in High-risk or Complex Environments

Consultants in fields like IT, construction, or post-conflict regions will benefit from the book's actionable strategies for managing complex projects. The emphasis on case studies and megaprojects equips consultants with methodologies to improve project delivery.

4. Managers of Megaprojects and Large-scale Initiatives

The book's focus on megaproject research is essential for managers handling large-scale projects with multiple stakeholders and significant risks. The insights into risk management and resource allocation provide project managers with the tools they need to succeed.

5. Professionals in Post-conflict or Developing Regions

Project managers working in fragile environments will find the book's research methodologies on post-conflict societies invaluable. The tailored strategies ensure project continuity in volatile settings.

6. Doctoral Students and Aspiring Academics

The chapter "Publish or Perish?" is especially helpful for doctoral students, offering guidance on how to turn academic research into tangible, practical outcomes that contribute to the broader field of project management.

Conclusion

Designs, Methods and Practices for Research of Project Management is an invaluable resource that expertly balances academic rigor with practical application, making it indispensable for both researchers and practitioners. The book offers a comprehensive toolkit of methodologies that can be adapted to various project environments, from small-scale IT initiatives to complex megaprojects.

A key strength of the book is its integration of qualitative and quantitative research approaches, such as Mixed Methods Research, Agile Approaches, and Empirical Research Strategies. These methods are crucial for managing projects in dynamic industries like IT, where flexibility and data-driven decision-making are essential. Real-world case studies provide actionable insights that help project managers tailor strategies to specific challenges, including volatile environments like post-conflict regions.

The book effectively bridges theory and practice, with chapters on Doctor of Project Management (DPM) Research Case Studies and Project Management in Post-conflict Societies showcasing how academic research can directly solve real-world challenges. Additionally, it emphasizes the importance of qualitative data through Interview Methods and Case Studies, which are vital for informed decision-making.

The discussion on common pitfalls in project research, as outlined in the chapter on Common Flaws in Project Management, offers guidance for improving research quality, while the chapter on "Publish or Perish?" provides valuable advice on transforming research into practical contributions.

In summary, Designs, Methods and Practices for Research of Project Management is a must-read for anyone involved in project management. It offers the frameworks and strategies needed to achieve success across a variety of project environments, from IT and construction to megaprojects and high-risk settings.

For more about this book, go to:

<https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/edit/10.4324/9781315270197/design-methods-practices-research-project-management-beverly-pasion-rodney-turner>

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About the Reviewer



Sreehari Gothati

Plano, Texas, USA



Sreehari Gothati is a seasoned leader in project management, enterprise architecture, and digital transformation with over 22 years of experience. He combines technical expertise with strategic insight to deliver impactful solutions across sectors like manufacturing, pharmaceuticals, IT, and electronics. His leadership has facilitated large-scale digital transformations for industry giants like Tata Consultancy Services, Cognizant, Tech Mahindra, DXC, and HCLTech, consistently improving operational efficiency and cutting costs.

Currently, Sreehari serves as an Enterprise Solution Architect at Intel Corporation, specializing in semiconductor manufacturing operations through SAP environments. His expertise spans SAP & SAP S/4HANA modules, including MM, PP, QM, EWM, Ariba, and P2P. He integrates advanced methodologies such as Agile project management, Artificial Intelligence (AI), Generative AI, and Robotic Process Automation (RPA) to enhance decision-making and business agility. He is also proficient in navigating compliance frameworks like GDPR and SOX, which further bolsters his enterprise architecture strategies.

Sreehari holds numerous certifications, including PMP, ITIL, SAP Activate, TOGAF 9.2, AWS, and Azure Solution Architecture. He actively engages with professional associations such as IEEE, IEEE-EMBS, SEMI, ISPE, and AEA, staying at the forefront of industry advancements while driving innovation in enterprise and project management. Email address: sgothati@gmail.com

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