



Identifying a Theoretical Framework for Megaprojects Success and Failure Factors: A Meta-Synthesis Approach

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Abstract

Megaproject means projects with a wide range of efforts to achieve strategic goals in time, financial and qualitative macro frameworks. Megaprojects have deep, comprehensive and lasting outcomes. For this reason, it is important to identify the factors related to megaprojects success and failure. This research aims to identify a theoretical framework for megaproject success and failure factors with a meta-synthesis approach. The research is applicable with a qualitative methodological approach and meta-study strategic approach. The statistical population includes megaproject management research, sampling method is judgmental, and sample size is 23. The research data analysis method includes the steps of extracting and coding data, analyzing in case-specific level, synthesis on cross-study level, and building theory with meta-synthesis. Theoretical framework of megaprojects success and failure factors has 139 concepts, 21 subcategories and 6 categories. These categories include local level, national level, governance level, international level, available capital and megaproject management process. In this theoretical framework, the categories of local level, national level and governance level have mutual influence on each other. These categories also have effect on available capital. Available capital also has effects on megaproject management process. Ignoring cultural capital and symbolic capital and focusing on physical capital and social capital is evident in megaproject management research. Also Ignoring or exaggerating international factors is evident in megaproject management research. While, in this research international factors identified as a contextual factor in the network of supra-causal relationships of the success and failure factors of megaprojects.

Keywords:

Megaproject,
Megaproject
management,
Project management,
Success and failure
factors,
Meta-synthesis.

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Extended Abstract

Introduction

Different projects have different levels of importance and accordingly different projects success and failure have different levels of importance. Megaproject is a concept to explain the differentiation of projects with strategic importance from other projects (Cerić et al., 2021). By defining a large range of activities and allocating a large range of resources to achieve a large range of achievements, the megaproject causes the formation of new power relations in industry and politics (Locatelli et al., 2021). Many researches have introduced megaproject success and failure factors. However, there are scattered theoretical aspects and discrete practical aspects about megaprojects success and failure factors. In this situation, identifying megaprojects success and failure factors depends on a comprehensive review of the literature of megaproject management. This research aims to identify a theoretical framework for megaproject success and failure factors with a meta-synthesis approach.

Theoretical framework

While ordinary projects have few stakeholders, megaprojects have many stakeholders. The rational reason for this issue is the mobilization of many resources and the definition of many activities (Zeković & Maričić, 2022). Also, project stakeholders have limited expectations, while megaproject stakeholders have high expectations. The expectations of megaproject stakeholders are to make strategic changes. Megaprojects are defined only in long-term periods. In long-term periods of time, the changes are transformative and sustainable (Wang et al., 2022). In fact, the megaprojects concept is an attempt to differentiate strategic projects with a wide range of stakeholders from other projects (Grubbauer & Čamprag, 2019). megaprojects are usually influenced by 4 types of goals. These goals include technology-related goals, policy-related goals, economic-related goals, and aesthetic-related goals. The megaprojects management process consists of 5 phasis. These phasis include initiation, planning, execution, monitoring and closing (Flyvbjerg, 2014). While megaprojects are defined in different contexts, these phasis are common to all megaprojects.

Methodology

meta-synthesis used in this research has eight steps. These steps including framing the research question, locating relevant research, inclusion/exclusion criteria, extracting and coding data, analyzing on a case-specific level, synthesis on a cross-study level, building theory from meta-synthesis and discussion (Hoon, 2013). The statistical population is all megaprojects management researches, sampling method is judgmental, and sample size is 23 researches. The statistical population identified using the selected keywords of megaprojects, megaprojects management and project management for searching in Google Scholar. Examining the titles of related researches led to the identification of 91 researches with related title. Examining the abstract of researches with related title led to the identification of 47 researches with related abstract. Examining the content of researches with related abstract led to the identification of 34 researches with related content. Finally, using inclusion/exclusion criteria for examining the researches with related content led to the identification of 23 researches for meta-synthesis. Date analysis includes four stages including extracting and coding data, analyzing on a case-specific level, synthesis on a cross-study level and building theory from meta-synthesis. The research data analysis tool is MAXQDA. Four criteria including credibility, dependability, confirmability and transformability used to evaluate the quality of qualitative research.

Results

Theoretical framework of megaprojects success and failure factors has 139 concepts, 21 subcategories and 6 categories. These categories include local level, national level, governance level, international level, available capital and megaproject management process. The local level category has three subcategories including sense of national belonging, sense of justice and sense of security. The national level category has four subcategories including skilled workforce, development perspective, social responsibility and public service. The governance level category has three subcategories including governance transparency, development programs and financial discipline. The international level category has four subcategories including Stability of international financing, stability of international supply chain, stability of access to information and stability of technology. The available capital category has two subcategories including social capital and physical capital. The social capital subcategory has three concepts including social participation, social trust and civil trust. The physical capital subcategory has four concepts including Financing dependence, financing chain dependence, financing continuity and supply chain continuity. The megaproject management process category has five subcategories including initiation, planning, execution, monitoring and closing. The initiation subcategory has five concepts including transparency in explaining goals, feasibility, identification of beneficiaries, cost and benefit estimation and support of senior managers. The planning subcategory has five concepts including attracting the opinion of government officials, paying attention to social responsibility, the range of authority of managers, the modularity and the flexibility of programs. The execution subcategory has five concepts including innovation, competence of managers, retelling of achievements, scope of group communication and freedom of information flow. The monitoring subcategory has five concepts including alignment with visions, access to contracts, transparency of financing, transparency of financial allocation and attention to schedules. The closing subcategory has four concepts including assessing sustainability, participation of local communities, welcoming national communities and recording the value creation process.

Conclusion

In theoretical framework of megaprojects success and failure factors, the category of international level placed in the context of meta-causal network, while this category neglected in many previous researches (Li et al., 2020). In fact, the extreme focus on national level categories or international level categories is clear in previous researches. In researches with an extreme focus on international categories, there is the viewpoint that the process of globalization has reduced the role of local categories and national categories. In theoretical framework of megaprojects success and failure factors, the categories of local level, national level and governance level have mutual influence. These mutual influences consistently emphasized in previous researches (Shenoy & Mahanty, 2021). However, less attention paid to the category of governance level in previous researches (Wang et al., 2022). It should be noted that previous researches have mostly focused on countries with a federal structure (with central and local governments). In theoretical framework of megaprojects success and failure factors the categories of local level, national level and governance level have influences on available capital category.