

[DOI: 10.20472/IAC.2015.015.192](https://doi.org/10.20472/IAC.2015.015.192)

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PROJECT MANAGEMENT IN COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH PROJECTS: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Abstract:

Project management (PM) is the skill of planning and organisational effort set about to accomplish a task or goal (Chai, Zhou, & Wang, 2007). PM is perceived as being one of the main ways in assuring the quality of a project and is critical in a collaborative environment, which is typically more difficult to control and manage (Wong, B., & Bhatti, 2009).

Modern project management started between 1900 and 1950 – during this time the advance was specifically on the shortening of the project schedule caused by technology advancement. After 1958 the rapid advancement of technology changed the way that PM was done until we are now in a period where the internet changed business practices in the mid 1990s and ‘provided a fast, interactive, and customized new medium that allowed people to browse, purchase, and track products and services online instantly. Between 1995 and 2000, the project management community adopted internet technology to become more efficient in controlling and managing various aspects of projects.’ (Kwak, 2005:7).

Being connected created many opportunities and also opened new opportunities for collaboration over boundaries. Individuals are now able to do more for themselves, be able to do more with others and improves the capacity to do more in formal organizations. Miles & Trott (2008) summarize three lessons learned from several data collection activities, as being having a common purpose, sharing power and that if you do it right, it is worth it.

Collaborative research projects over countries introduce new challenges to the project manager of the project. For this paper we give feedback on the first phase of a collaborative systems development project between 5 countries and the lessons learned from the collaborative effort from a project management perspective.

Keywords:

Project Management, Collaborative Projects, Collaborative systems development

JEL Classification: O32, M15