



ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

**SCHOOL OF COMMERCE MASTER OF ARTS IN PROJECT
MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**

**ASSESSMENT OF PROJECT PLANNING PRACTICES IN DIGITAL
BANKING PROJECTS: THE CASE OF DASHEN BANK**

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Declaration

I declare that this Project work entitled “**Assessment of Project Planning Practices in Digital Banking Projects: The Case Of Dashen Bank**” is my work and that all sources of materials used for this project work have been appropriately acknowledged. This project work is submitted for in partial fulfillment of the requirements for Master’s in Masters of Art in Project Management Program at Addis Ababa University. I honestly declare that this project work is not submitted to any other institution anywhere for the award of any degree or diploma.

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CERTEFICATION

SCHOOL OF COMMERCE, GRADUATE STUDIES PROGRAM

MA IN PROJECT MANAGEMENT

**“Assessment of Project Planning Practices in Digital Banking Projects: The Case Of
Dashen Bank”**

APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF EXAMINERS

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Acronyms

ATM	Automated Teller Machine
IT	Information Technology
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
DB	Dashen Bank
NBE	National Bank of Ethiopia
POS	Point of service
CPM	Critical Path Method
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science/Statistical Product for Solutions Services
PERT	Program evaluation and review technique
WBS	Work Breakdown Structure

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Abstract

The study assesses the practice of project planning in digital banking projects in Dashen Bank. The study was conducted based on the data gathered from selected 96 Dashen Bank branch employees from a total population size of 126. A mixed research approach was employed to answer the research questions that emerged through the review of existing literature. The data obtained through questionnaire has been analyzed using descriptive statistics. To acquire the intended information the researcher used structurally designed questionnaire. The result of the study indicated that most of the projects planning processes are practiced poorly in Dashen bank. The research findings reveal that Dashen Bank has a well-defined project planning process. While the project team demonstrates strong engagement, their decision-making empowerment could be enhanced. To improve digital banking initiatives, Dashen Bank should standardize its planning approach, strengthen risk management, and foster a more collaborative and innovative planning environment. The study recommended the bank more effort should be made at the planning stage of the project, more advanced project planning tools and techniques should be applied while preparing the digital banking project plan, the Project management offices need to have project planning department to conduct the project planning activities and to provide training about project planning practice to project managers and project team members on regular basis.

Key Words -: project planning practice

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Background of the study

Project management is the application of knowledge, skills, tools & techniques to project activities to achieve project requirements. Project management is accomplished through the application & integration of the project management processes of initiating, planning, executing, monitoring & controlling, & closing (PMI, 2004).

According to Kerzner, (2003) the major responsibility of the project manager is planning. If project planning is performed correctly, then it is conceivable that the project manager will work himself out of a job because the project can run itself. This rarely happens, however. Few projects are ever completed without some conflict or trade-offs for the project manager to resolve.

Project planning, according to Barbara, Allan (2004), is studying the project, planning ahead, & determining what has to be done, which will do the work, & how much it will cost. Furthermore, he mentioned that project planning entails spotting possible issues & creating backup plans. In addition, he separated the project planning procedure into three phases: project research, in-depth planning, & lastly, plan documentation & dissemination.

The activities carried out to determine the overall scope of the project effort, specify & hone the goals, & create the plan of action necessary to achieve those goals make up the planning process. The creation of the project management plan & the documents that will be used to carry it out, such as the schedule, budget, & work breakdown structure, are among them (PMI, 2008). Other ones include the development of the quality plan, the procurement plan, the risk response plan, the communication plan, & the human resource plan.

Due to inadequate project planning & issues during the planning stage of the project, many projects worldwide are not completed as intended. Donnelly, Ivancevich, & Gibson's (1998) study has demonstrated the significance of project planning & its impact on project success. The results of their investigation have demonstrated that increased project planning effort can lead to notable schedule & cost reductions, & that inadequate planning can also lead to a project's failure & escalate its cost. Project stakeholders want to see their projects completed effectively, on time, & in accordance with their schedule. However, because of the issue they cause at the project's planning stage, they are unable to accomplish their goals.

One of the cutting-edge services that allow banks to offer banking goods & services via electronic channels is digital banking. It emerged as a result of advancements in technology generally & the introduction of the internet specifically, which altered the long-standing traditional financial services model & allowed the company to provide clients with cutting-edge goods & services. A person with an account in one branch was not eligible to receive banking services, even across many branches of the same bank, when the banking services were first introduced under the branch-banking model (Equbamariam, 2018).

These days, the majority of banks aim to provide their clients with convenient banking options. These services include using an automated teller machine (ATM), sending & receiving money, banking on a mobile device, etc. Even while numerous banks can essentially replicate these services, the focus right now is on the caliber of the services offered. Banks are focusing more on service quality in order to obtain a competitive advantage because many of them offer similar products in a competitive environment. Mastering service quality can give banks a competitive edge in terms of increased revenue, client retention, & loyalty (Kumar et al., 2010).

Since, project planning was identified as extremely important project management function for the successes of project outcome (Atkinson, 1999). This study is particularly concerned with the practice of project planning in digital banking projects of Dashen Bank.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Planning is one of the key elements of every project & failure to plan intensely can cause the project's failure. One of the most frequent issues that lead to project failure is this one. Projects are prone to failure if deliverables & the means of achieving them are not specified in detail during the planning stage. Put otherwise, projects that are initiated without a thorough grasp of the project's objectives, baseline, & constraints are likely to fail. Actually, researchers pinpoint inadequate project planning as the primary reason of project failure (Pinto, 1990).

Information technology has transformed the business in corporate organizations & information technology strategies are emerging to replace the traditional way of business in an organization (Tsai, 2003). There are several factors for the success of Digital-Banking projects in banking. One of the key factors for Digital-Banking project success is having a sound project planning practices to have a clear goal & purpose under a specific time frame & budget with defined deliverables.

In Ethiopian banking context, digital banking is still a very raw & underutilized banking concept. This has contributed to lack of proper planning & control for digital banking projects. Lack of infrastructure & human resource are the common drawbacks in digital banking sector. Digital banking is a rapidly growing field, with new technologies & innovations emerging all the time. This has led to a need for banks to adopt new project planning practices in order to keep up with the pace of change. Therefore, the success of such digital banking projects becomes vital for the achievement of the bank's vision.

While existing literature provides insights into project planning practices in various industries, there is a noticeable gap in the specific examination of project planning practices within the context of digital banking projects in Ethiopian financial institutions. This research aims to address this gap by conducting a detailed assessment of project planning practices at Dashen Bank, focusing on digital banking initiatives. By filling this gap, the study contributes to the existing body of knowledge on project management in the digital banking sector and provides

valuable insights for practitioners and policymakers seeking to enhance project planning processes in this specialized domain

1.3. Research Questions

To address the issues mentioned under the statement of the problem, this study address the following research questions:

- i. What is the current project planning practice in digital banking projects within Dashen Bank?
- ii. To what extent does project planning tools & techniques are applied during planning stage?
- iii. To what extent the project team participates in preparing the project plan?

1.4. Objectives of the Study

1.4.1. General objective

The general objective of this study is to assess the practices of project planning in digital banking projects in Dashen Bank.

1.4.2. Specific Objectives

- i. To identify the current project planning practices in digital banking projects within Dashen Bank.
- ii. To assess the extent to which project planning tools & techniques are applied during the planning stage.
- iii. To evaluate the extent to which the project team participates in preparing the project plan.

1.5. Significance of the Study

Digital banking has become a major trend in the financial services industry, with banks increasingly offering customers the ability to conduct banking transactions online & through mobile devices. This shift has been driven by a number of factors, including the increasing adoption of smartphones & tablets, the growth of e-commerce, & the need for banks to compete with non-traditional financial service providers.

This research study aims to provide valuable insights the project planning practice in digital banking projects at Dashen Bank, as well as useful literature & documents for policy makers about the evaluation of project management in digital banking. The study will identify the strengths & weaknesses of the bank's project planning process & make recommendations for how it can be improved. The study will also provide insights into the challenges of project planning in digital banking projects & the best practices for success. The findings of this study will be of interest to banks that are considering investing in digital banking initiatives. The study will provide these banks with valuable insights into the project planning process & how it can be used to improve the success of digital banking projects.

1.6. Scope of the study

The scope of the study focus on the assessment of the practice of project planning in digital banking projects in selected branches & head quarter of Dashen bank. The data was collected through questionnaire & semi-structured interview.

1.7. Limitation of the Study

The research is limited due to the challenge of obtaining information in accordance with the researcher's schedule. Furthermore, some of the limitations included the inability of some respondents to provide truthful and accurate answers during the interview and the lack sufficient

secondary data or current literature in several specific areas pertaining to Ethiopia's digital banking practice.

1.8. Organization of the Paper

The study is organized in to five chapters. Chapter one consists of introduction & background of the study, statement of the problem, research questions, objectives of the study, scope of the study, & significance of the study.

Chapter two contains the review of related literature. Chapter three provide research methodology. Chapter four contains data presentation, analysis & interpretation. Finally, chapter five summarizes the findings, conclude the work of the research & give potential recommendation.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1. Theoretical Review

2.1.1. What is a Project?

A project is a short-term endeavor that is initiated with the goal of creating a unique product or service. The fleeting character of a project does not ensure that its results will also be transient. Most projects are launched with the intention of achieving a long-term result. (PMI, 2004). Kim Heldman (2001) made a distinction between operational activities and projects, characterizing the latter as ongoing while the former are more temporary in nature. Projects have defined start and finish dates.

A project is a brief venture that is initiated with the goal of creating a unique product or service. Therefore, projects are acts undertaken to create something new that did not previously exist, something transitory, something with a time constraint, and something with a specific (PMI 2001).

A project is an organized effort towards a specific, mostly one-time goal. A project is intricate and has a lot of data. In addition, it has a beginning, a middle, and an end (Bender, 2008). A project is an undertaking that is not repeated; it is characterized by a logical flow of events with predetermined costs, resources, and quality requirements. It also has a beginning, middle, and end. A project's objective is to finish a certain task by the deadline. (Ricardo, 2008)

Projects are the primary source of inspiration for many organizations across most industries. Projects can be understood as society's attempts at change, and change is occurring more quickly. Thus, effective and efficient change management is the only option for organizations to succeed in this contemporary world. (Paul C. D. and Jeannette C. 2006)

A project usually consists of multiple phases, with each phase presenting a unique set of challenges for the project manager. These essential project phases can also be acknowledged as

important factors that influence the project's success from a broad standpoint. If one of these stages is not adequately planned or executed, there is a good probability that the project will not succeed. A project typically consists of four phases, according PMBOK PMI (2004):

1. Initiation
2. Planning
3. Execution
4. Closing

Patel and Morris (1999) assert that the life cycle is the only characteristic that distinguishes projects from non-projects. The chronological sequence in which the project's phases are completed will have a significant impact on its structure. The work finished in each phase should be evaluated as the project advances into the next in order to gather insightful input from drawn experience.

2.1.2. Project Planning

Barbara Allan (2004) defines project planning as analyzing the project, making plans in advance, and figuring out what has to be done, who will execute the work, and how much it will cost. In addition, he said that project planning comprises anticipating problems and developing contingency measures. Furthermore, he divided the process of project planning into three stages: project research, detailed planning, and plan documentation and distribution.

On the other hand, a project plan is a road map that outlines the steps required to accomplish an objective, according to Lester and Lester (2012). Effective project planning entails much more than just writing a document with due dates and a budget. Unlike small projects with a restricted number of activities, complex projects that beyond a certain threshold of magnitude should proceed based on a strong formal planning platform; otherwise, chaos could occur. The basis for allocating responsibilities to individuals and organizing the project's work is sound formal planning..

PMI (2004) states that the Planning Process Group's main duty is to draft and supervise the project management plan. As part of the planning processes, each component of the project management plan needs to be recognized, defined, and monitored. Iterating these steps allows

the project management approach to be modified whenever new information becomes available. The project plan is the primary tool for executing a project successfully. It is the cornerstone of all endeavors related to project management. This is a document with plans that might change in the future. The task of producing the project plan falls to the project manager; it ought to be as detailed and complete as possible without taking up a lot of space.

Project planning lays the groundwork for a project's success or failure, whereas project performance and project planning are two complementary facets of project management. The objectives of project planning, as stated by Faniran, Oluwoye, and Lenard (1998), are to establish quality standards, complete a project within the allotted budget, and meet time and deadline constraints. According to this assertion, a project's performance can be used to determine how effectively it was planned.

There are numerous definitions of "planning," each ascribed to a distinct scholar. Nonetheless, there are some commonalities among the definitions. Planning is seen by everybody as a means of choosing a course of action and serving as a roadmap for executing it. The following are the definitions offered by different academics. Planning is the continuous process of deciding on business strategies with an eye towards the future and carefully allocating the resources needed to implement them. Organizing goals is also made possible by systematic planning. A substitute for systematic preparation is to base decisions on historical experiences. Typically, reactive management comes next, which brings up crisis, conflict, and firefighting management. Planning is the process of figuring out what has to be done, by whom, and by when to finish a task that has been assigned to you. (Kernzer, 2009)

Planning is the foundation of management because it provides the overall structure around which all other management duties are based. The fact that a plan is necessary for the execution of staffing, leading, organizing, and managing tasks makes it more significant than the other managerial responsibilities. Thus, it is important to emphasize that every managerial job depends on the others; that is, none would be possible without the others, (Charles ,2003).

Because of this, the term "planning" is quite wide and has many different definitions among scholars. Thus, throughout this book, the term "plan" refers to the following idea. Planning is the process of figuring out what is needed to complete a project successfully. Planning in this context is arranging a project's timeline, budget, scope, stakeholders, contract, communication, quality, cost, and procurement.

2.1.3 Scopes of a plan

Plans can take many different forms, depending on the nature and scope of the activities we engage in. Plans that are long-term, short-term, and mid-term are all feasible in a given company or organization. The three primary scopes of a plan are as follows, per Rosen (1972). The scope/breadth dimension is used to classify plans based on the range of activities they encompass. Some plans focus on significant organizational goals and are broad and long-term. Others describe how the organization intends to allocate its resources in order to achieve these objectives Rosen (1972). As a result, plans are split into three categories based on how detailed or comprehensive they are. This includes plans that are tactical, strategic, and operational.

2.1.4 Benefits of Developing a Project Plan

Clearly defining all work needed (maybe by creating a documented project plan) is one of the primary goals of project planning, as it makes all project participants' responsibilities easily identifiable (Kerzner, Harold. 2006). The authors claim that this is essential in a project setting since a task's level of uncertainty determines how much information needs to be processed to guarantee successful completion. A large portion of the work can be planned ahead of time if the task is thoroughly understood before beginning. If the job is not understood, on the other hand, additional information is discovered during task execution, which results in adjustments to resource allocations, timelines, and priorities.

As per the authors' assertion, these factors hold significant importance in a project setting since every project is unique and necessitates diverse resources, all while being executed within strict

time, budget, and performance limitations with minimal room for error. In any given project, careful and thorough planning helps us to lower risk and, consequently, uncertainty. A well-planned project makes an effort to account for probable occurrences of uncertainty ahead of time. Meredith, J. and Mantel, S.J. 2010, on the other hand put the benefits of project planning as follows:

Planning reduces uncertainty: Planning the work enables us to take into account the likely results and implement the necessary corrective actions, even if we would never expect the project work to go perfectly as planned.

Planning increases understanding: The process of planning itself helps us to better comprehend the project's aims and objectives. We would still gain from the activity even if we were tossing out the plan.

Planning improves efficiency: We can schedule the work to take advantage of resource availability once we have specified the project strategy and the resources required to carry it out. Additionally, we can schedule work in parallel, which allows us to complete things simultaneously as opposed to sequentially. Concurrent task completion allows us to reduce the project's overall time. Compared to using alternative methods, we can finish the project work faster and make the best use of our resources.

According to Annie, I. (2003), project planning is crucial for construction projects since it lowers expenses, eliminates irrational approaches and duplication of work, fosters innovation and creativity among construction managers, and gives the business a competitive edge.

2.1.5. Challenges of Project Planning Activities

Creating a project plan involves more than just opening it and entering the tasks that must be done to finish the job. It necessitates the careful definition, ordering, and estimation of activities as well as their direct integration with the program's comprehensive development life cycle. One of the most important and initial steps in creating a plan that can accurately reflect the state of

progress is to create and utilize standard estimating models and templates that are in line with the program's development life cycle (Brisgone, A. 2007).

Numerous issues are noted by Brisgon, A. (2007) as having an impact on the standard of project planning and, in turn, the overall performance of the project. These include managing time effectively, setting a budget, setting priorities for project tasks, obtaining current information, finding skilled workers, ensuring the necessary quality, detecting hazards, and liaising with various stakeholders.

2.1.6 The planning process

Planning is a methodical, scientific approach to problem solving and future projection. Planning for a project requires adhering to certain methodical and scientific guidelines. Various scholars employ distinct methods when it comes to planning.

According to Alexander (2010), the steps involved in creating organizational plans are referred to as the planning process. The impact of the outside world is a major planning problem. Therefore, it's critical to be aware of the outside dangers and opportunities that could have an impact on the planning process. Therefore, as part of the planning process, the organization must evaluate the following environmental scenarios in addition to others. Examining the state of the economy (competition, pricing, supply, demand, etc.), examining the social and cultural contexts (the society's culture, the path of cultural change, the society's attitude towards various products, etc.) as well as the political context (government policies, taxes, peace and stability, etc.)

In addition, it's critical to assess internal circumstances and identify the organization's current advantages and disadvantages. Planning, therefore, necessitates a realistic assessment of the organization's current prospects, threats, weaknesses, and strengths.

Choosing what needs to be done in the future is the process of planning. Consequently, knowledge of what the future might hold becomes crucial. Therefore, in order to correctly

prepare, the management must make certain assumptions based on future estimates. Finding the organization's aims and objectives is the next stage in the planning process. The goals set must specify exactly what needs to be done, where it needs to happen, who needs to do it, how it needs to be done, and when it needs to be finished. Measurable objectives are also necessary. As a result, while attempting to accomplish the goals, planned completion deadlines, quantity standards, budgetary constraints, and quality requirements should be defined beforehand.

After the objectives are set, various plans are created and carefully assessed. As a result, after several strategies have been identified, they need to be assessed. Alternative strategies or courses of action are typically assessed in relation to many aspects such as expenses, advantages, hazards, organizational resources, etc.

The next stage is to choose the plan (course of action) and create derivative plans. In this stage of the planning process, the best plan is chosen, and derivative plans are created. Choosing a single line of action to address upcoming obstacles puts rigidity into the planning process. Consequently, it becomes imperative to take many paths of action because the future is unpredictable. Derivative plans must be created to support the master plan once a decision has been made. In every functional area, derivative plans are developed inside the core plan's structure. The master plan's breakdown into departmental, sectional, and individual plans offers a realistic view of what lies ahead. In order to be effective, the planning process should also provide for a feed-back mechanism.

The manager must create an action plan to carry out the best alternative strategy or course of action after it has been decided upon. The manager needs to make decisions on the following at this point in the planning process: What will be done by whom? When are the duties going to be started and finished? What kinds of resources—both non-human and human—will be accessible for the procedure? How is the plan going to be assessed? Which reporting protocols are to be followed? And what kind and extent of power will be given to accomplish these goals?

After the plan is put into action, the manager is in charge of keeping an eye on and assessing the results. Depending on the findings of the evaluation, he or she could have to make the essential

adjustments. Plans are probably going to be impacted by external factors. Plan modifications become crucial in such a scenario.

Bender (2008) asserts that planning is a crucial component of every endeavor or enterprise. It aids in making sure objectives are fulfilled and resources are utilized efficiently. The planning process includes setting goals, outlining presumptions, specifying the work effort, providing detailed descriptions of tasks and products, estimating the work effort, choosing resources, creating a timeline, projecting expenses, and obtaining funds and permission.

Determining the project's or company's goals is the first stage in the planning process. This will make it easier to concentrate planning efforts and guarantee that they are in line with the main objectives. It's critical to enumerate every assumption being made about the project or businesses after the objectives have been determined. This will assist in locating any hazards or difficulties that could require attention. Determining the kind and quantity of work needed to accomplish the goals is the next stage. This will assist in developing a project budget and schedule that are reasonable.

It's critical to specify the tasks and outputs needed to meet the goals after the work effort has been determined. By doing this, you can make sure that the project is well-planned and that all required phases are completed. Estimating the quantity of work effort needed to finish each assignment is the next stage. This will assist in developing a project budget and schedule that are reasonable.

After estimating the work required, it's critical to determine and choose the resources needed to finish the project. This will involve personnel, tools, and supplies. After the resources have been determined, it is crucial to create a project schedule. This will make it more likely that the project will be finished on schedule and on budget. Estimating the project's expenses is the next stage. This will cover the price of the supplies, resources, and any additional charges that will be incurred.

Lastly, getting the project approved and funded is crucial. By doing this, it will be possible to finish the project on schedule and on budget. Any project or business must include the planning phase. It aids in making sure objectives are fulfilled and resources are utilized efficiently. It is possible to make a strategy that will assist you in reaching your objectives by following the procedures described in this article.

2.1.7. Project planning tools and techniques

Defining and determining all work to be done, the "planning phase" is one of the most crucial stages in project management. The most time-consuming task is planning, but when done well, it can be beneficial. Work breakdown structure (WBS), Gantt charts and networks, Program Evaluation and Review Technique (PERT), critical path method, and other methods are employed in this phase.

Work Breakdown Structure

Projects can be broken down into separately planned phases or subprojects using the work breakdown structure. These can then be planned and carried out independently.

The project can be managed more methodically and efficiently if it is divided into phases, with each phase ending before the next one starts. By doing this, you can ensure that there are no delays and that the project is finished on schedule and under budget.

It is easier to make sure that everyone working in the project understands their roles and responsibilities when the project is divided into responsibility areas within the organization. This can ensure that the project is effectively finished by enhancing collaboration and communication.

The project schedule can be divided into smaller schedules with established interrelationships to help manage and detect dependencies between various tasks and activities. By doing this, you

can ensure that there are no delays and that the project is finished on schedule and under budget.

Establishing a framework for monitoring project costs through the establishment of well-defined objectives (work packages) facilitates project progress monitoring and the detection of cost overruns. By doing this, you can make sure the project is finished on time and under budget.

It is easier to arrange the job and monitor progress when there is a hierarchical outline and coding for it. This can ensure that the project is effectively finished by enhancing collaboration and communication between various teams and departments.

Enabling integrated planning and project management from a financial and scheduling standpoint contributes to the timely, cost-effective, and quality-compliant completion of the project. This may contribute to the project's increased overall success.

There are never universally applicable solutions when it comes to determining how to use WBS most effectively; instead, it is always a heuristic and iterative process across many organizations and scenarios. The Work Breakdown Structure, or WBS, is an organizational chart that divides the project into manageable tasks, components, and subsystems. Pricing, scheduling, and resource planning all use it. It makes reporting and summarizing expenses and progress easier. A paradigm called Organization Breakdown Structure (OBS) divides resources into groupings for easier management. It can be used to monitor the distribution of resources and designated tasks. OBS and WBS are highly dependent on one another (Badiru and Pulat, 1995).

Gantt chart

A Gantt chart is a matrix with all of the tasks that need to be completed listed on the vertical axis. A single task identification, typically comprised of a number and name, is present in each row. The name of the person allocated to the assignment, the projected task duration, and the skill level required to complete the task are the columns that head the horizontal axis. A column

for each time period of the project's duration follows. You can express each period in terms of hours, days, weeks, months, or other time units. It might be required in some circumstances to designate the period columns as period 1, period 2, and so forth.

A horizontal bar connecting the period start and period ending columns for each task makes up the Gantt chart's graphical section. To show the estimated and real start and end, a series of markers is typically utilized. The name of each individual allocated to the assignment is on a distinct line, and each bar is on its own line. When using this kind of project plan, there is frequently a space left between tasks. A second bar, which begins in the period column when the task is actually started and continues until the task is truly done, is used in this row to show progress as the project moves forward. Comparison between the real start and the expected start and end additionally end should indicate project status on a task-by-task basis. (Pelin, 1996)

Gantt charts are a useful tool for visualizing project status, but they have a drawback in that they do not show task dependencies, making it difficult to understand how one activity's delay would impact other activities. This is what the PERT chart, another widely used project management charting technique, is intended to do. More details regarding tasks, including the people allocated to certain tasks and procedural comments, are stored in automated Gantt charts. They also have the advantageous quality of being simple to modify, which is beneficial. Charts may need to be often updated to represent the current state of project tasks, as they virtually always deviate from the initial plan.

Program Evaluation and Review Technique (PERT)

Task, time, and information are shown in Program Evaluation and Review Technique (PERT) charts. Every chart begins with an initiation node, which is where the first task—or tasks—come from. When several jobs start at the same time, they all start from the same node, branch, or beginning point. Each task is represented by a line that includes its name or other identifier, how long it will take to complete, how many people are assigned to it, and, occasionally, the initials of the staff members. Another node, which marks the beginning of a new task or any slack

time—that is, the period of waiting between tasks—terminates the task line at the opposite end (Pelin, 1996).

One tool for project management is the PERT chart, which is used to plan, arrange, and coordinate tasks within a project. The U.S. Navy created PERT in the 1950s as a management technique for the Polaris submarine missile program. Similar in nature, the Critical Path Method (CPM), which was created at the same time for project management in the private sector, has come to be associated with PERT, leading to the technique being known by any combination of PERT, CPM, or PERT/CPM. When activity completion durations are unpredictable, the Project Evaluation and Review Technique, or PERT, is intended for use in research and development type projects.

Critical Path Method

Project planning networks of the Critical Path Method (CPM) type are distinguished by their approximations of the typical time required to complete tasks. When activity periods can be precisely forecast, like in maintenance or construction, CPM is acceptable. PERT/CPM is another name for charts that resemble PERT charts. The critical route is shown in a CPM chart. A critical path is a sequence of interdependent tasks (each reliant on the one before it) that take the longest to finish all at once. A CPM chart can define numerous equally crucial pathways, although this is not typically done. It is important to identify tasks that are close to the critical path so that more care can be taken with them. One method is to use two lines rather than one when drawing critical path activities, (Pelin, 1996)

2.1.8 Overview of Digital Banking

Financial institutions employ digital banking, a contemporary method, to make their services more accessible to customers via mobile phones or other devices. Which provides opportunities for clients to use information and communication technology to obtain banking services and conduct business utilizing their mobile phones (Dineshwar & Steven, 2013). Without the

assistance of a mobile telecommunication device, mobile banking cannot function independently. Teshome (2016) claims that mobile banking uses mobile communications devices to give clients access to banks and financial services.

Digital banking services are operated similarly to traditional banking services with the help of information technologies. Because of this, bank customers can now receive services without having to interact with staff directly (Yaghubi & Sedin, 2015). Banks use a range of electronic banking service channels, including online, mobile, point-of-sale (POS), and automated teller machines (ATMs), to meet the needs of their consumers (Mohammed, 2018).

Although mobile banking—more specifically, SMS-based mobile banking apps—has been more popular since 3G and 4G smartphones hit the market, it is still not often used in various nations and areas (Ravichandra, 2016). In these situations, using the wireless service delivery channel is the ideal course of action for companies trying to generate chances. Additionally, personalities are the main reason why people choose mobile phones to PCs while shopping online.

Mobile banking services are primarily provided by financial institutions and banks to reduce costs, boost service fee income, create new service channels, improve business transaction flexibility, expedite transactions, reduce processing times, and reach new customers (Huili & Chunfang, 2011 & Ayo et al., 2010). By using the time saved by the mobile banking channel for more effective marketing and sales initiatives, banks can grow their clientele (Sunil & Durga, 2013). This helps banks stand out from the competition and cultivates a good rapport with its clients, which in turn boosts client loyalty.

Both customers and banks gain from mobile banking services, claim Sunil & Durga (2013). Customers do not have to stand in queue at the bank counter to ask various queries about their accounts. Because of this, customers who use mobile banking can cut down on travel costs and save valuable time while doing financial transactions in person at the bank. Users of mobile banking save time and resources by not having to visit bank locations (Deloitte, 2010). Despite

the growing prevalence of mobile phones and their numerous advantages, mobile banking is still not widely utilized (Riquelme & Rios, 2010).

2.1.9 Mobile Banking In Ethiopian Banking Industry

Automated teller machines (ATMs) were introduced by Commercial Bank of Ethiopia (CBE), the primary state-owned bank in Ethiopia, in 2001 to offer online banking services to local customers. (Gardachew, 2010) With the introduction of electronic banking, mobile banking was able to fully function after several years of trial and error. Since then, mobile banking has been progressively spreading to a wide range of locations in Ethiopia.

A review of the literature indicates that, in contrast to underdeveloped countries such as Ethiopia, established and emerging economies have conducted substantial research on mobile banking. Using a mobile device to access the primary banking system is the current definition of mobile banking in Ethiopia. in line with national bank order FIS /01/2012. Both public and private commercial banks are authorised to offer agent and mobile banking services. The first commercial bank in Ethiopia to provide mobile banking services did so in 2013.

Among the private banks, Dashen Bank was the first to offer mobile banking services to its customers in 2014. Over the course of the next four years, there will be an increase in the number of banks providing mobile banking services. By 2016, eight banks had started providing mobile banking services. As of 2017, there was one additional bank total compared to 2016. As of June 2019, there were eleven banks providing mobile banking services, with 4,526,434 active users. Mobile banking users in Ethiopia have made some progress since the service was introduced, but there is still space for improvement in terms of transactions and active involvement compared to the bulk of customers who traditionally prefer banking.

2.1.10 Mobile Banking Services

The delivery of financial services via mobile networks using mobile phones is known as mobile banking. These companies frequently handle deposits, withdrawals, payments, and money

transfers (Banges and Soderberg 2008). Amin (2007) defines m-banking as a type of banking transaction that is done through a mobile device.

Mobile financial transactions, which include account transactions, balance checks, and payments, aim to increase the effectiveness of microfinance by employing mobile technology to make transactions quicker, less expensive, and more secure (Gaffar, 2009). Financial transactions are now simpler because to mobile phone technology, according to Premalatha and Sundaram (2012), this is due to the fact that financial transactions are quicker and safer when done via a mobile device. Making use of mobile technologies can also facilitate knowledge sharing and increase audience reach.

2.1.11 Mobile Banking In Dashen Bank

One of the main functional divisions of the E-Banking Services Department's Mobile and Agent Banking Division is Dashen Bank's mobile banking operation. All mobile banking operations are under the direct supervision of the division's head.

According to (DB Agent and mobile banking manual) the head of mobile and agent banking division is responsible for planning, organizing, coordinating, and supervising all the activities of the division. They also assist and actively participate in the development of policies and procedures regarding mobile banking operations, draft mobile banking contracts and formats, and prepare annual work programs and budgets for the mobile banking activities.

The head of mobile and agent banking division also formulates and implements mobile banking operational and marketing strategies, develops and implements effective promotional activities to enhance customer awareness towards the business, identifies and takes corrective measures on performance gaps on mobile banking business within the country in order to ensure quality service, ensures the timely reconciliation of customers or individual accounts, makes sure that customers fulfill the minimum requirements to get the mobile banking service, keeps secrecy and

confidentiality of customer information, and in collaboration with the head, customer relation division of corporate planning department ensures that information, products, services offered and fee structure of the mobile banking is updated on the bank's website and other appropriate means once in a month.

The marketing officers are accountable to the head-mobile and agent banking division and are generally responsible for designing and implementing marketing strategies which drive the business motive behind the mobile banking.

The operation officers are accountable to the head mobile and agent banking division and are generally responsible for any kind of recording and reconciliation of transactions related to the mobile banking operations. The technical officers are accountable to the manager e-banking service department and are generally responsible for providing technical related support to the mobile banking system and ensure the business continuity of the mobile banking operation.

2.2 Empirical Review

Regarding the empirical literature review, according to a study by Lemma (2012), the success of the project is significantly influenced by the quality of the project plan. A project has a better probability of being finished successfully if it has a clear plan. A study by Garg and Yadav (2014) found that project planning and management is an essential framework for any project's successful completion. Any project must include planning, regardless of the instruments and techniques employed.

Performing well throughout the project's planning phase is essential to its success. While effective planning techniques result in successful projects, inadequate planning will contribute to a failed project. Without a well-defined project plan, it is impossible to ascertain what is required to finish projects within the specified budget, cost, schedule, and quality parameters. Regarding the empirical literature review, a study by Lemma (2012), Sadik (2017), Andineh (2017), and Endalkachew (2018) shows that the project plan's quality has a significant impact on the project's success.

A project with a well-defined plan has a higher chance of being completed successfully. According to a research report by Garg and Yadav (2014), project management and planning are

essential components of any project's effective completion. Planning is crucial for each project, regardless of the tools and methods used.

Morardet et al. (2005) provide evidence that one of the primary causes of the underwhelming outcomes of agricultural water development and management projects is a lack of planning and implementation strength. Antvik & Sjöholm (2007) assert that planning procedures are crucial, and that executing a project without properly developing a project plan frequently results in delays, excessive costs, and general project execution issues. The absence of a project plan that has been put into action has led to issues in every aspect of project management and prevented the management team from having the necessary control over project activities.

According to Wang and Gibson's (2008) study, investing time in project planning activities can lower risk and boost project success. According to the reviewed literature, project plans are therefore a combination of specific plans developed from each field of competence. To properly complete any task, a solid project strategy is also essential.

Chapter Three

Research Methodology

This chapter discusses the processes & techniques to be used in carrying out the study. It also gives a description of the respondents including information on the study population, the number of respondents & how they were selected. It also provides an outline of research design & the instruments for data collection. The methods to be adopted in the administration of the research instrument, data collection procedure, data analysis & measures will be used to ensure validity of the instrument used.

3.1. Research Design

A descriptive research design was selected for this research as it enabled the researcher to assess the project planning practices of Dashen Bank Digital Banking projects. The study employs both quantitative & qualitative methods to collect primary & secondary data. Relevant data & information will be gathered from senior & middle level managers, directors & project team members. The primary & secondary sources will help to triangulate data from different perspectives regarding the research problem. The secondary sources of information will be used to provide the conceptual framework & acquire a general picture of the problem.

The collection of the required data & information from the primary sources was done through questionnaires, which is used to get information on framework of the study. Only those with in-depth knowledge of the research topics contacted, as the availability of time, money, & the researcher's expertise was taken into account while deciding on the research design & how to obtain enough information for the aim of the study.

3.2. Sources of Data

The study took into account both data from primary & secondary sources. Semi-structured interviews & questionnaires were used to gather primary sources. Whereas secondary sources of data was generated through a review of relevant documents such as books, publications of previous research papers & web pages.

Questionnaires was distributed to Dashen Bank's selected staff found at Digital Banking Department, IT Department, & four purposely selected Dashen Bank branches staffs who have direct contact with customers up on delivering the service. Document reviews will be conducted to understand the key facts about the subject under study. The documents are going to be reviewed by referring most recent information from authorized documents of the Bank, annual bulletin, website of the Bank & different publications & reports made by the Bank.

3.3. Data Collection Instruments

The data from the target population of staffs was collected through the use of the following data collection techniques.

3.3.1. Questionnaires

Questionnaires was administered for 96 staffs from the two selected departments & four branches was administered to respond accordingly in order to assess the practices of project planning in digital banking of Dashen Bank.

3.3.2. Semi-structured interview

The semi-structured interview was conducted with line managers in the two departments & branch managers for the four branches.

3.4. The Target Population of the Study

The populations for the study consists of Dashen Bank's employees at Digital Banking Department, IT Department, & four purposely selected Dashen Bank branches found in Addis Ababa namely Dashen bank Goffa, Kality Masetegna, Yohannis & Lideta branches. The focus on the two Departments is considering their technical knowledge & support in relation with the digital banking projects as well as the know-how developed through the process of the project planning, & that of selected branches of Dashen Bank in Addis Ababa is based on their relative high digital banking service performances.

3.5. Sampling method & Sample size

The total population of Dashen Bank's employees at Digital Banking Department, IT Department, & four purposely selected Dashen Bank branches found in Addis Ababa is one hundred twenty six (126). Among of them the researcher will select ninety six (96). The sample size of the study is determined based on the following simplified formula proposed by Yamane (1997), as cited in Fisseha (2011) by considering the above size of target population:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e^2)}$$

When, n is sample size, N is the population size and e is the level of precision. A 95% confidence level and e = 0.05, is assumed for the purpose of determining sample size for this study. Accordingly, the sample size for the study is calculated as follows.

So: N=126

$$n = \frac{126}{1 + 126(e^2)} = 96$$

So the sample size of this study conducted was 96 staffs that are directly related with digital banking operations. The criteria to select the sample is based on the respondent experience, responsibility, position, activities, in addition to this the researcher will select respondents that have the expected good knowledge about the practice of project planning in Dashen Bank digital banking projects, as long as the researcher is allowed to have total autonomy in choosing people

who can supply pertinent data & in determining who can offer crucial answers to address the problem statement mentioned.

3.6. Data Analysis

Semi-structured interviews & questionnaires were used to collect both qualitative & quantitative data. It undergoes a methodical analysis using both qualitative & quantitative terms. The quantitative data was supported by the qualitative data, which also offer a thorough description of the circumstances. Percentages are used to display the quantitative data that was being collected via the questionnaire.

The study was including a combination of semi-structured interviews & questionnaires in order to enhance its dependability. To ensure the proper completion of the study, the data gathered from various sources was sorted & categorized. The statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 25 was used to process the data. The large, unstructured data was divided into a few smaller groups, totaled, coded, & tabulated for analysis, taking into account the explanations of the table percentages & the interview results.

3.7. Ethical Consideration

The consent of all respondents was sought before they were included in the study. Responses & data to be collected from the respondents were appropriately being kept confidential. Additionally, the researcher was respecting the participants' wishes during the data collection process & requests their consent on their voluntariness for response. The researcher was guarantee that the interviewees won't face any unfavorable outcomes & make sure of their anonymity. The researcher was in accordance with ethical principles, analyze the data honestly & refrain from using any made-up information.

3.8. Research Reliability & Validity

The researcher was adhering to protocols for the validity & reliability of this study from data collection to analysis. Before the questionnaires are given to the target groups, they were undergoing pre-testing by other personnel. Furthermore, scholarly publications, journals, & books were consulted to ensure the authenticity & dependability of the information. The majority of the analysis will be done statically; using programmers like SPSS & Microsoft Excel to examine the data to be acquired & improve its validity.

Before conducting the full data collection for the research, samples from 5 respondents were taken as part of a pilot test to assess the reliability of the research test. This pilot test allowed for the identification of any potential issues with the procedures and measurement tools, helping to ensure that the data collection process is valid and reliable. By analyzing the responses from these initial 5 respondents, the researcher made sure the reliability of the research test before proceeding with the full data collection.

Chapter Four

Results And Discussions

Chapter four deals with the data presentation, interpretation and analysis of the data gathered. The chapter has five sections; the first present's introduction to the chapter, the second section present demographic information of the respondents of their personal and professional characteristics and the third section presents the result and discussion regarding the current Project Planning Practice, the fourth section results and discussions regarding the Application of Project Planning Tools & Techniques and the last section present Project Team Participation in Project Planning. The chapter also includes answers of the interview from the managers and line managers.

4.1. Introduction

Data collected through different techniques were analyzed in this chapter. In the analysis, a total of 96 questionnaires were distributed to study participants. Out of the 96 questionnaires distributed, 94 were successfully completed and returned. The response rate was approximately 97.9 % of the total questionnaires distributed. In order to analyze the research results, SPSS (statistical package for social scientists) version 25 tool software was used. Descriptive measures of each question response presented in the following sections.

4.2. Background information of the Respondents

	Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age	18-30 years	31	33
	31-40 years	45	47.9
	41-50 years	15	16
	Above 50 years	3	3.2
	Total	94	100
Gender	Male	60	63.8
	Female	34	36.2
Marital status	Single	42	44.7
	Married	45	47.9
	Divorce	7	7.4
Position in the organization	Managerial	19	20.2
	Non managerial	75	79.8
How long you have worked in the bank sector?	1-4 years	57	60.6
	5-8 years	34	36.2
	Above 8 years	3	3.2
What is your educational level?	BA	66	70.2
	MA and above	28	29.8

Source: own data 2024

Table 1 Background information of the Respondents

The demographic analysis of the respondent's show that the majorities of the respondents are aged between 31-40 years (47.9%) and have 1-4 years of experience in the banking sector (60.6%). The research participants are predominantly male (63.8%) and non-managerial (79.8%) employees, with most holding a bachelor's degree (70.2%).

4.3. Result Analysis of Current Project Planning Practice

In a 5-point Likert scale the possible score ranges from 1-5 and 3 become the hypothetical average score. A calculated mean score less than 3, which is hypothetical average, can be considered as low mean score whereas greater than 3 can be considered as high mean score. Therefore the analysis will be made based on this assumption. In the following tables show the current planning practices of the Dashen Bank's analyzed.

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
The project planning process at Dashen Bank is clearly defined and well-understood	94	1	5	2.7979	0.96809
Project objectives in digital banking projects are well-established and communicated	94	2	5	3.1064	1.06224
There is a structured approach to project planning that is consistently followed	94	2	5	2.8723	0.90677
The project planning process considers potential risks and uncertainties effectively	94	1	5	2.3511	1.15197
Project milestones and deliverables are well-defined and tracked throughout the project	94	1	4	2.1277	0.94168
Project planning decisions are based on data-driven insights and analysis	94	2	5	3.2447	1.02324
The project planning practice aligns with the specific needs and challenges of digital banking projects	94	1	5	3.0532	1.19467
Adequate resources are allocated for project planning	94	2	5	2.9894	0.98913
Stakeholders' expectations are considered in project planning	94	1	4	2.4043	0.95399
Valid N (listwise)	94				

Source: own data 2024

Table 2 Result Analysis of Current Project Planning Practice

According to the finding of the analysis the descriptive statistics provide valuable insights into the perceptions of the project planning process at Dashen Bank. Regarding the project planning process appears to be relatively well-defined and understood by the respondents (mean = 2.7979). The relatively low mean score suggests that the project planning process at Dashen Bank is generally not well-defined and understood by the respondents. This indicates that there is low level of clarity and familiarity with the project planning procedures within the organization.

Regarding the question Project objectives are generally well-established and communicated the (mean = 3.1064). This show that, project objectives in digital banking projects of Dashen Bank are generally well-established and communicated to the employees. This is a positive finding for the bank, as clear and communicated project objectives are crucial for successful project. However, the project planning process seems to lack a structured approach that is consistently followed (mean = 2.8723). This may lead to inconsistencies and potential gaps in the planning process of the project.

According to the respondents, the statement the project planning process may not effectively consider potential risks and uncertainties got (mean value of 2.3511). This show that the project planning process may not effectively consider and address potential risks and uncertainties associated with digital banking projects. This could expose the Dashen Bank to unexpected challenges and negatively impact project outcomes.

Project milestones and deliverables are well-defined and tracked throughout the project

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	24	25.5	25.5	25.5
	Disagree	46	48.9	48.9	74.5
	Neutral	12	12.8	12.8	87.2
	Agree	12	12.8	12.8	100.0
	Total	94	100.0	100.0	

Source: own data, 2024

Table 3 show project milestones and well-defined and tracked throughout the project

Responses captured in the above table shows that the question Project milestones and deliverables are not well-defined and tracked throughout the projects got (mean = 2.1277) from the respondents. With (25.5% strongly disagree, 48.9 disagree, 12.8 neutral, 12.8 agree) this indicated that there is poorly defined and tracked project milestones and deliverables in Dashn Bank. This may make difficult for effective project monitoring, control, and timely completion of project tasks.

The statement project planning decisions are based on data-driven insights and analysis got high (mean = 3.2447). The result suggests that project planning decisions are generally based on data-driven insights and analysis. This is a positive finding, as data-driven decision-making can lead to more informed and effective project planning for the bank.

Regarding the question the project planning practice appears to align with the specific needs and challenges of digital banking projects got mean value 3.0532 which is above 3.this suggest that the project planning practice at Dashen Bank appears to be aligned with the specific needs and challenges of digital banking projects. This alignment can help ensure that the planning process is tailored to the unique requirements of the digital banking domain.

Above all the result of the analysis put insights that can help Dashen Bank identify areas for improvement in their project planning process, particularly in the areas of risk management, milestone tracking, and consistent implementation of the planning approach and also respondent from interview question state that Dashen Bank's digital banking project planning has strengths, like aligned objectives and data-driven decisions, but lacks consistent structure, effective risk management, and collaborative use of planning tools. Empowering the team and actively seeking feedback can enhance planning practices to better address the unique needs of digital banking initiatives.

4.4. Analysis of Application of Project Planning Tools & Techniques:

In a 5-point Likert scale the possible score ranges from 1-5 and 3 become the hypothetical average score. A calculated mean score less than 3, which is hypothetical average, can be considered as low mean score whereas greater than 3 can be considered as high mean score.

Therefore the analysis will be made based on this assumption. In the following tables show the Application of Project Planning Tools & Techniques:

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Various project planning tools and techniques are effectively applied during the planning stage	94	1	5	2.4149	1.29024
Project planning tools and software contribute significantly to the efficiency of planning	94	1	5	2.3085	1.12667
Dashen Bank invests in updating and implementing the latest project planning tools and techniques	94	1	4	2.0745	1.04972
The project planning process integrates feedback from previous projects for continuous improvement	94	1	5	3.4149	1.15851
The project planning team utilizes technology for collaborative project planning and tracking	94	1	4	2.2021	1.00086
Continuous improvement processes are in place to adapt project planning methods when necessary	94	2	5	3.5851	1.10141
Project plans are communicated effectively to all team members	94	1	5	2.3936	1.23757
Continuous monitoring and evaluation of project planning effectiveness	94	1	5	2.6489	1.23312
Lessons learned from project planning are documented for future projects	94	1	5	3.1596	1.39356
Valid N (listwise)	94				

Source: own data, 2024

Table 4 Result of analysis of Application of Project Planning Tools & Techniques:

According to our respondents the statements various project planning tools and techniques are effectively applied during the planning stage get low Mean value of 2.4149 which is below the hypothetical average of 3. This shows that, the various project planning tools and techniques are not being effectively applied during the planning stage at Dashen Bank. This suggests that there is room for improvement in the utilization and application of appropriate planning tools and techniques.

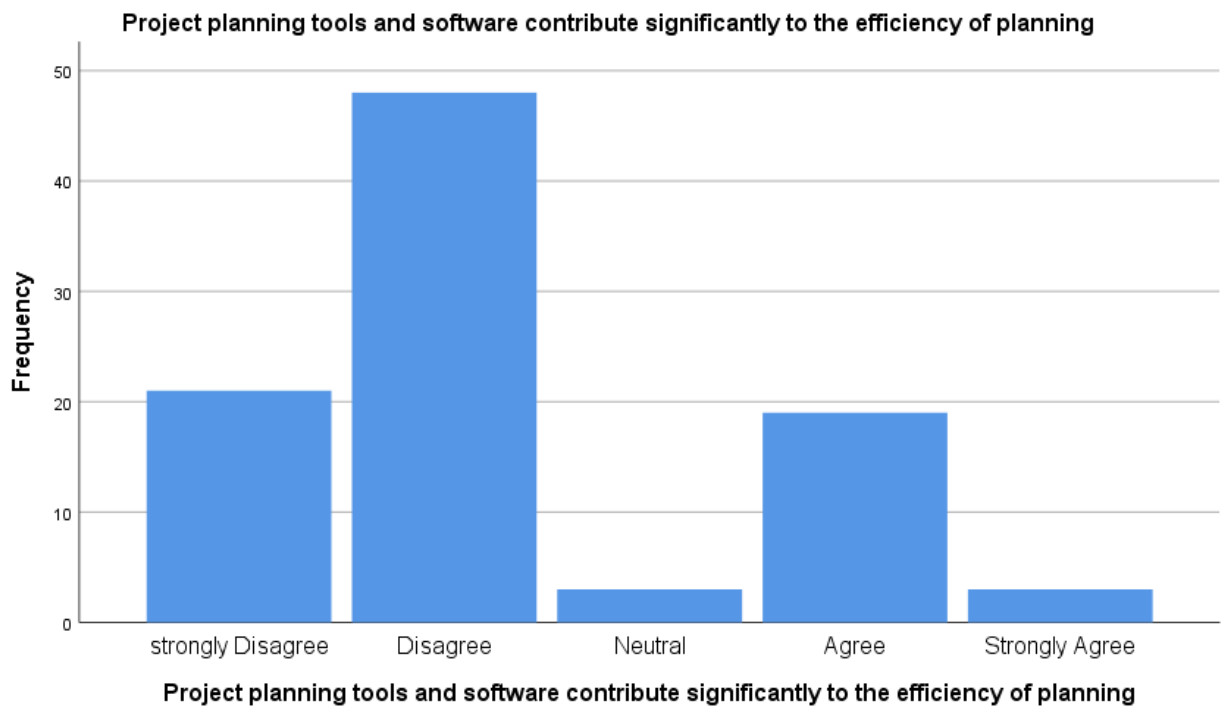


Fig 1 result of project planning tools and software contribute significantly to the efficiency of planning

The second question Project planning tools and software contribute significantly to the efficiency of planning have low mean value of 2.3085 and higher disagree and lower agree. This implies

that the project planning tools and software currently used by Dashen Bank do not significantly contribute to the efficiency of the planning process. This could show that there is a need to re-evaluate the effectiveness and suitability of the planning tools and software employed. The same as the above statement the sentence Dashen Bank invests in updating and implementing the latest project planning tools and techniques also get low Mean value 2.0745. This suggesting, that Dashen Bank does not invest sufficiently in updating and implementing the latest project planning tools and techniques. This could potentially show that Dashen Bank is not giving enough attention to project planning tools.

The next statement the project planning process integrates feedback from previous projects for continuous improvement has Mean of 3.414 which is above the hypothetical average of 3, indicating that the project planning process at Dashen Bank does integrate feedback from previous projects for the purpose of continuous improvement. This is a positive finding, as it demonstrates the organization's commitment to learning and adapting the planning practices.

According to our participants the project planning team utilizes technology for collaborative project planning and tracking (Mean = 2.2021). This can suggest that the project planning team at Dashen Bank does not effectively utilize technology for collaborative project planning and tracking. This could reduce the team's ability to efficiently coordinate and monitor the planning process of the project. However, Continuous improvement processes are in place to adapt project planning methods when necessary got Mean value of 3.5851 which is above the hypothetical average of 3, indicating that Dashen Bank has continuous improvement processes in place to adapt its project planning methods as needed. This flexibility and adaptability can help the bank respond to changing requirements and challenges that may face the project.

Project plans are communicated effectively to all team members got Mean value of 2.3936. According to the data project plans are not being effectively communicated to all team members at Dashen Bank. This could lead to a lack of shared understanding and alignment among the project team members.

Regarding continuous monitoring and evaluation of project planning effectiveness (Mean = 2.6489), implying that Dashen Bank does not have robust processes in place for the continuous

monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of its project planning practices. This could make difficult Dashen Banks ability to identify and address gaps for improvement.

The last question for the section Lessons learned from project planning are documented for future projects has low mean (Mean = 3.1596) which can show Dashen Bank does document lessons learned from project planning for the benefit of future projects. This is a good practice that can contribute to organizational learning and the continuous enhancement of project planning capabilities.

So, the analysis highlights that Dashen Bank faces several challenges in its project planning practices, including the ineffective application of planning tools and techniques, underinvestment in updating planning tools, lack of collaborative technology use, and ineffective communication of project plans. However, the bank also demonstrates some strength, such as the integration of feedback from previous projects, the presence of continuous improvement processes, and the documentation of lessons learned. To enhance the overall effectiveness of its project planning, Dashen Bank should focus on addressing the identified areas for improvement while building on the positive practices already in place. The interview respondents also reply the use of project management tools and procedures during the planning stage at Dashen Bank is limited. There is room for improvement in effectively applying various planning tools and techniques, as well as leveraging project planning software to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning process.

4.5 Result of Project Team Participation in Project Planning

The last analysis show result of project team participation in project planning. The same as the above statements it has also use Liker scale with the same value.

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
The project team actively participates in creating and refining the project plan	94	2	5	3.5745	1.04201
Input from team members is considered and integrated into the project planning process.	94	2	5	3.734	1.04907
Collaboration and communication among team members are encouraged in project planning	94	1	5	3.6702	1.23034
Dashen Bank values the diverse perspectives and expertise of its project planning team	94	1	4	2.3298	0.96596
The project team is empowered to make decisions and adjustments during the planning process.	94	1	5	2.4468	1.0738
The project planning process fosters innovation and creativity within the team	94	2	5	3.4255	1.07252
Dashen Bank actively seeks feedback from the project team to enhance project planning practices.	94	1	5	2.8936	1.25696
Valid N (listwise)	94				

Source: own data, 2024

Table 5 result of Project Team Participation in Project Planning

Regarding the project team actively participates in creating and refining the project plan get Mean value of 3.5745 and SD of 1.04 which means the mean is above the hypothetical average of 3, indicating that the project team at Dashen Bank actively participates in the creation and

refinement of the project plan. This suggests there is high collaboration and inclusiveness approach to project planning in the team members.

The second question input from team members is considered and integrated into the project planning process got minimum of 2 and maximum of 5 with a mean of 3.7340 which is above the hypothetical average of 3, implying that input from team members is effectively considered and integrated into the project planning process at Dashen Bank. This suggests that there is a commitment to incorporating diverse perspectives and expertise into the planning process.

Regarding collaboration and communication among team members are encouraged in project planning got above the hypothetical average of 3 which is Mean value of 3.6702. This suggests that Dashen Bank actively encourages collaboration and communication among the project team members during the planning process. It is also a positive practice that can increase teamwork and coordination. However, Dashen Bank values the diverse perspectives and expertise of its project planning team got low Mean of 2.3298, which suggesting that Dashen Bank may not effectively value the diverse perspectives and expertise of its project planning team. This may reduce the team's ability to contribute meaningful insights and solutions to the planning process.

The project team is empowered to make decisions and adjustments during the planning process.

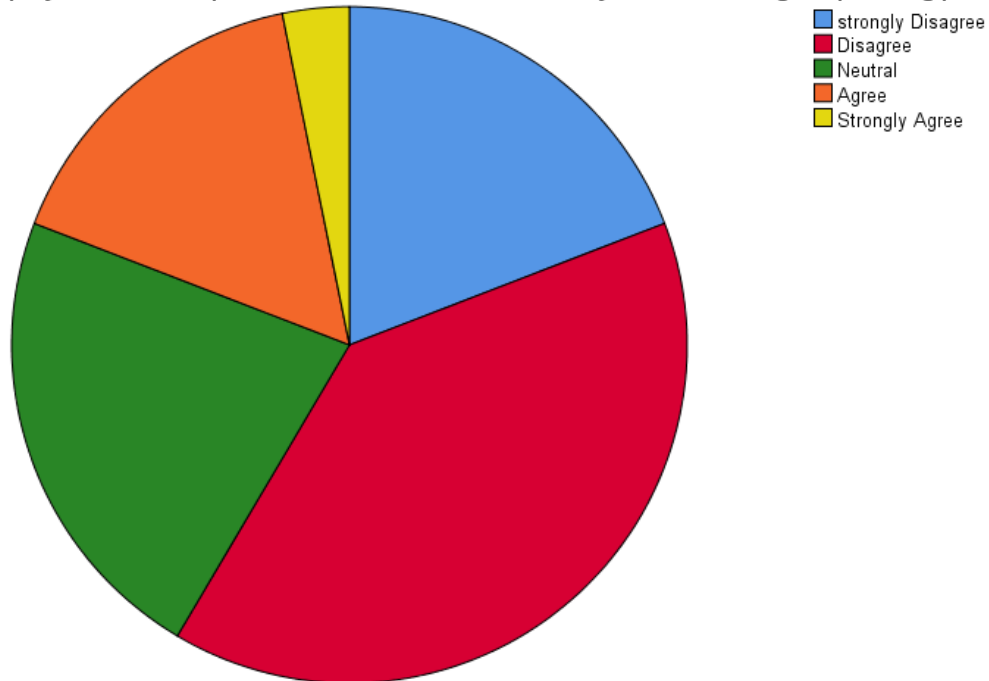


Fig 2. Pie chart of result project team is empowered to make decisions during the planning process

The pie chart show that the statement got higher disagree and lowest strongly agree. The statement also have a mean of (Mean = 2.4468) show that the project team at Dashen Bank may not be fully empowered to make decisions and adjustments during the planning process. This might limit the team's ability to be responsive to changing requirements and adapt the plan according to changes.

The project planning process fosters innovation and creativity within the team got low mean value of 3.4255. The project planning process at Dashen Bank does appreciate innovation and creativity within the project team. This can lead the bank to the development of innovative solutions and approaches.

The last question Dashen Bank actively seeks feedback from the project team to enhance project planning practices has low Mean of 2.8936. Dashen Bank may not be actively seeking feedback from the project team to suport its project planning practices. This may reduce the banks' ability to continuously improve its planning processes based on team member experiences and insights.

Above all, the analysis highlights both strengths and gaps for improvement in Dashen Bank's project planning practices related to team involvement and empowerment. The organization demonstrates a collaborative approach, with the project team actively participating in planning and having their input considered. But, there are opportunities for improvement in terms of valuing diverse perspectives, empowering the team to make adjustments, and actively seeking feedback to enhance planning practices. By addressing these areas, Dashen Bank can further strengthen its project planning capabilities and foster an environment that encourages innovation and continuous improvement.

From the open end question participants replayed that the project planning team at Dashen Bank demonstrates strong engagement in the creation and refinement of the project plan. They actively participate in the planning process and their input is well-integrated, reflecting a collaborative approach. However, the team's empowerment to make adjustments and decision during planning could be further enhanced. For the last two questions our respondents talk about the challenges and put their suggestion as followed key obstacles include lack of structured planning approach,

ineffective risk management, and underutilization of planning tools/technology. To enhance planning, Dashen Bank should standardize planning processes, strengthen risk practices, support collaborative planning tools using, empower the team, and actively seek feedback to drive continuous improvement of the planning procedures for digital banking projects.

The findings of the research shed light on the project planning practices within Dashen Bank's digital banking projects. The three main sections, Current Project Planning Practice, Application of Project Planning Tools & Techniques, and Project Team Participation in Project Planning - provide a comprehensive analysis of the existing practices and areas for improvement within the organization.

The research findings reveal that Dashen Bank has a generally well-defined project planning process with clearly communicated project objectives. However, there is a notable absence of a consistent and structured methodology in their planning approach. This finding aligns with the literature reviewed in Chapter Two, which emphasizes the critical role of a structured project planning process in ensuring project success . Effective project planning involves setting clear objectives, defining scope, identifying risks, and establishing a roadmap for project execution. The lack of a consistent methodology at Dashen Bank underscores the importance of standardizing planning practices to enhance project outcomes.

The study indicates that the application of project planning tools and techniques at Dashen Bank is limited, suggesting a need for improvement in leveraging collaborative planning software and technology. This finding resonates with the literature review, which underscores the benefits of utilizing modern project management tools to enhance planning efficiency and effectiveness. Project management tools such as Gantt charts, risk registers, and project management software play a crucial role in facilitating effective decision-making, resource allocation, and communication within project teams. By enhancing their utilization of planning tools and technologies, Dashen Bank can streamline their planning processes and improve project outcomes.

The research findings also highlight the strong engagement of the project team at Dashen Bank in the planning process, with their input being well-integrated. However, there is a suggestion

that empowering the team to make decisions and adjustments during planning could further enhance project outcomes. This finding aligns with the literature review, which emphasizes the importance of fostering a collaborative and empowered project team for project success. Effective team participation in project planning promotes knowledge sharing, creativity, and ownership of project goals. By empowering their project team members to contribute actively to the planning process, Dashen Bank can harness diverse perspectives and expertise to drive project success.

Chapter Five

Conclusions and Recommendations

In this section, the research is dealt about the summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations. The researcher strived to take the summarized results of the study from the discussion of analysis part; following this, the conclusions were derived on the basis of the research objectives and research question. In the last part of this section, the recommendation part drew from the literature and theoretical concepts context.

5.1 Conclusion

The research findings provide valuable insights into the current state of project planning practices at Dashen Bank, particularly focusing on for their digital banking projects. The results indicate that the organization has a generally well-defined project planning process, with clearly communicated project objectives. However, the planning approach lacks a consistent, structured methodology, and the effective consideration of risks and uncertainties is lacking.

The application of project planning tools and techniques is limited, and there is room for improvement in use of collaborative planning software and technology. On a more positive result, the project team demonstrates strong engagement in the planning process, with their input being well-integrated. However, the team's empowerment to make decisions and adjustments during planning could be enhanced.

The result show Dashen Bank should focus on standardizing its planning approach, strengthening risk management practices, and optimizing the use of planning tools and technology. Fostering a more collaborative and innovative planning environment, where team input is valued, can further contribute to the success of their digital banking initiatives.

5.2 Recommendation

Effective project planning is a critical factor for the success of Dashen Bank's digital banking in projects. The research findings suggest that the bank's current project planning practices have room for improvement. To improve the practice of project planning and increase the likelihood of successful project delivery, the researcher recommends the following points

Standardize the project planning approach:-Dashen Bank should establish a consistent, structured methodology for project planning that is applied across all digital banking projects. This will help ensure a more effective planning process.

The bank should place greater emphasis on the effective identification, assessment, and mitigation of risks and uncertainties associated with digital banking projects. Active risk management should be integrated into the planning process for better success.

Optimize the use of planning tools and technology: Dashen Bank should invest in and utilize a wider range of project planning tools and collaborative software to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning process. This includes using the latest advancements in project management technology.

Foster a collaborative and innovative planning environment: The organization should empower the project team to actively participate in the planning process, integrate their diverse perspectives, and make necessary adjustments during the planning stage. This will encourage innovation and responsiveness to changing requirements.

Dashen Bank should establish a system for documenting and sharing lessons learned from previous digital banking projects. This will enable the bank to continuously improve its planning practices and avoid repeating similar errors.

The bank should ensure that project managers and team members receive comprehensive project planning training before being assigned to digital banking projects. This will build the necessary competencies to effectively plan and execute these critical projects. Planning tools and techniques are poorly applied in a limited manner, it is important to use them all in a more advanced way while preparing the project plan.

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Appendix

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF COMMERCE MASTERS OF ART IN PROJECT MANAGEMENT

ASSESSMENT OF PRACTICE OF PROJECT PLANNING IN DIGITAL BANKING
PROJECTS: THE CASE OF DASHEN BANK

Survey Questionnaire

Dear Respondents:

First of all, I would like to express my appreciation for your generous time, honest and prompt responses.

The title of this project work is “**Assessment of practice of project planning in digital banking projects in case of Dashen Bank**” Please note the response is only for academic purpose therefore you are assured that your views on the content of this questionnaire shall not be used in any way that might cause damage to your reputation as an individual or otherwise, integrity, emotions, or indeed professional conduct as the information provided will be treated with high level of confidentiality. Individual responses will not be identifiable as they will be treated in aggregate when reporting the findings.

I would like to thank you in advance, for completing this questionnaire and assisting me in my project work.

Part One: Background Information (General information)

Put '√' for the multiple choices questions and state your opinions briefly for the short answer questions

Q1. Age category

18-30 31-40 41-50 Above 50

Q2. What is your gender?

Male Female

Q3.MaritalStatus

1. Single 2.Married
 3.Divorce 4. Widow

Q4. Level/Position in the organization

Managerial Non-Managerial

Q5. How long you have worked in banking sector?

Less than a year's 1-4 years 5-8 years above 8years

Q6. What is your Educational Level?

1. Certificate
 2.Diploma
 3.BA
 4.MA & Above

Part Two: Items related to Project Planning (for Likert Scale questions)

Please put tick (√) in the table provided for each given statement using the following scales

1= Strongly Disagree; 2=disagree; 3=Neutral; 4=Agree; 5=strongly Agree

No	Items	Rating Scales				
		5	4	3	2	1
I	Current Project Planning Practice					
1	The project planning process at Dashen Bank is clearly defined and well-understood					
2	Project objectives in digital banking projects are well-established and communicated					
3	There is a structured approach to project planning that is consistently followed					
4	The project planning process considers potential risks and uncertainties effectively					
5	Project milestones and deliverables are well-defined and tracked throughout the project					

6	Project planning decisions are based on data-driven insights and analysis					
7	The project planning practice aligns with the specific needs and challenges of digital banking projects					
8	Adequate resources are allocated for project planning					
9	Stakeholders' expectations are considered in project planning					
II	<i>Application of Project Planning Tools & Techniques:</i>					
10	Various project planning tools and techniques are effectively applied during the planning stage					
11	Project planning tools and software contribute significantly to the efficiency of planning					
12	Dashen Bank invests in updating and implementing the latest project planning tools and techniques					
13	The project planning process integrates feedback from previous projects for continuous improvement					
14	The project planning team utilizes technology for collaborative project planning and tracking					
15	Continuous improvement processes are in place to adapt project planning methods when necessary					
16	Project plans are communicated effectively to all team members					
17	Continuous monitoring and evaluation of project planning effectiveness					
18	Lessons learned from project planning are documented for future projects					
III	<i>Project Team Participation in Project Planning</i>					
19	The project team actively participates in creating and refining the project plan					
20	Input from team members is considered and integrated into the project planning process.					
21	Collaboration and communication among team members are encouraged in project planning					
22	Dashen Bank values the diverse perspectives and expertise of its project planning team					
23	The project team is empowered to make decisions and adjustments during the planning process.					
24	The project planning process fosters innovation and creativity within the team					
25	Dashen Bank actively seeks feedback from the project team to enhance project planning practices.					

Part Three: Semi Structured Interview

The following questions are Interview questions prepared in order to fulfill the research.

1. How is project planning currently done for Dashen Bank's digital banking initiatives?
2. How much are project management tools and procedures for project planning used during the planning stage?
3. How much of the project team's effort goes into creating the project plan?
4. What obstacles and difficulties exist for successful project planning in Dashen Bank's digital banking initiatives?
5. What suggestions are there to enhance project planning procedures for Dashen Bank's digital banking initiatives?